



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, DC

CORNELIUS KERWIN
PRESIDENT

MEMORANDUM

November 17, 2008

TO: Campus Community
FROM: Neil Kerwin, President
SUBJECT: Status of the Draft Strategic Plan

I am pleased to transmit the [draft strategic plan](#) (my.american login required) that will be considered by the Board of Trustees at its November 21 meeting.

The draft plan consists of a brief preamble, our Statement of Common Purpose, a vision statement, and a set of goals that will provide a focus for our work over the next decade. You will also find an appendix that includes a representative set of “metrics” that illustrate various ways we may measure progress under the plan.

Consideration and approval of the draft plan is a crucial milestone in setting the course for our university. But, a number of processes and decisions will follow, and these are very important, as well.

On November 21, the board will also consider and approve a set of budget development guidelines that are the product of deliberations of our University Budget Committee, co-chaired by Provost Bass and Vice President Myers. These budget development guidelines are based on the goals in the draft strategic plan and mark the first step in the board’s consideration and approval of a new two-year budget for the university. Taking both actions at this meeting—approval of the strategic plan and budget development guidelines—assures careful alignment of our resource allocation decisions with the larger goals of the university.

If the strategic plan is approved, we will then proceed to formulate a set of university-wide action steps for each goal. The action steps will be developed by the provost and vice presidents in consultation with their respective constituencies and the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. The action steps will inform and shape the initial phase of strategic plan implementation. The action steps will also drive the revenue and expenditure proposals contained in the new two-year budget.

At the February 2009 board meeting, the trustees will consider the action steps along with our proposed two-year budget. With the proposed budget we will also set forth what we expect to achieve during the first two years of strategic plan implementation and how that progress will be measured. Where appropriate we

will identify the university officials and offices responsible for carrying out the related work.

With the approval of the new two-year budget and action steps, we will direct the schools, colleges, and divisions to complete unit-level plans detailing their first round of efforts to implement our university-wide goals. My expectation is that these unit-level plans will be completed by the end of this academic year.

We will also continue our practice of broad consultation with campus constituencies throughout the implementation process.

While current economic uncertainties require us to be flexible and vigilant, we have reached an important point in the process of securing the future of American University.

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