

STRATEGIC PLAN
OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

**UNIVERSITY EXCELLENCE
AND DISTINCTION**

TASK FORCE REPORT

OCTOBER 1, 1993

OPEN HEARING

OCTOBER 15, 1993

**10:00AM - 12:00
479-480 VARNER HALL**

MEMBERS

Dr. Lizabeth A. Barclay, School of Business Administration
Dr. Karl Boelter, College of Arts and Sciences
Dr. Robert Brown, School of Education and Human Services
Dr. Frank Giblin, Eye Research Institute
Dr. Brian Goslin, School Health Sciences
Mr. Peter Hovland, Athletics
Mr. William Marshall, Oakland Center
Dr. Donald McCrimmon, Research and Academic Development
Ms. Jean Ann Miller, Residence Halls
Dr. Brian Murphy, Honors College
Dr. Margaret Pigott, College of Arts and Sciences
Dr. Fiki Shillor, College of Arts and Sciences

UNIVERSITY EXCELLENCE AND DISTINCTION TASK FORCE

I. Introduction

Task Force Charge:

"...TO IDENTIFY SELECTED AREAS OF EXCELLENCE AND DISTINCTION AND DEVELOP PLANS TO ENHANCE EXTERNAL RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT OF THESE AREAS."

Proposed Vision Statement

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY WILL BE RECOGNIZED AS AN INSTITUTION OF EXCELLENCE, RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF ITS CONSTITUENCIES, AND PREEMINENT IN SELECTED AREAS OF TEACHING, LEARNING, RESEARCH, AND SERVICE.

Process

In order to fulfill its charge, the Task Force engaged in the following activities:

1. Met as an entire committee to generate discussion on the assigned task involving the draft vision statement.
2. Divided into teams to independently pursue the task. This was done to provide multiple approaches to the problem.
3. Held four open hearings:
 - a. March 29, 1993 12:00-1:00 (students)
 - b. March 29, 1993 5:00-6:00 (students)
 - c. March 30, 1993 5:00-6:30 (all university)
 - d. March 31, 1993 12:00-1:00 (all university)
4. Each team independently collected information. The Blue Team engaged in brainstorming to identify 25 areas to investigate. The Red Team sent out a one page self-evaluation to all units across campus. Team investigation led to some common as well as different areas.
5. Individuals were assigned semi-finalist areas to investigate in more depth. No one was assigned to his/her own area.

6. A list of finalists was picked based on team discussion. The recommendations in this report are based on this discussion. Rather than present the areas in an overall priority list, we have assigned selected programs to either a first or second tier ranking. A first tier ranking indicates that these programs/areas are areas which we believe can provide Oakland University with a distinctive niche. Second tier programs are also excellent; however, because of a variety of reasons, may not currently be on the cutting edge of distinction.

Many aspects of Oakland University are currently excellent. The Task Force approached its charge by selecting a small group of areas which could become preeminent on a national level.

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

FIRST TIER

BEGINNING SCHOOL MATHEMATICS PROJECT INSTITUTE FOR ACTION RESEARCH AND SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES

STRENGTHS

- Top primary math project
- Correlates well with state and national goals/needs
- Currently involves school districts, 20 teams, 140 teachers, 3,500 children
- Innovative and exciting
- Teacher mentoring
- \$953,000 received to date in funding
- Comprehensive

WEAKNESSES

- Need to expand funding for national dissemination
- Need to try to publish reports widely
- Need funding for assessment

OPPORTUNITIES

- We could become the North American Training Center
- Potential for 1.3 million funding
- Helps with training for disadvantaged children

THREATS

- Other institutions could start marketing similar programs
- If we don't move quickly, we will lose our advantage

Specific Activities/Tactics

1. Increase funding applications (provide support for these efforts)
2. Examine staffing levels
3. Free current IAR Director from other duties to enable him to devote time to developing proposals for support for his project

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

FIRST TIER

BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH

This is not one unit; but a wide ranging effort based on the large percentage of biomedically related grant dollars generated at Oakland University and the potential for growth in the area. The SWOT analysis will cover several aspects of biomedical research at Oakland University. Possible interdisciplinary work with medical physics, chemistry, exercise science, physical therapy and psychology also exists.

EYE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

STRENGTHS

- Internationally recognized faculty
- Outstanding publication and grants record
- National and international reputation for ophthalmic research
- Strong relationships with other clinical services, research centers and health care organizations

WEAKNESSES

- Limited involvement with academic programs and the teaching mission of Oakland University
- Limited local visibility

OPPORTUNITIES

- Increased involvement with academic programs
- Increased involvement with the teaching mission of Oakland University

THREATS

- Dependence on external grants with very limited general fund support
- Change in Oakland University priorities regarding support for research

BIOTECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE

STRENGTHS

- Director well respected and entrepreneurial

WEAKNESSES

- Need more focus
- Director spread too thin with other (service) obligations

OPPORTUNITIES

- Environmental remediation
- Biosensor technology
- Possible graduate programs

THREATS

- State of biotech in Michigan
- Other schools have more resources

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

SELECTED ASPECTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

STRENGTHS

- History of significant external funding
- Several faculty work with the ERI and/or the Biotechnology Institute
- Biomedical research is a significant departmental focus
- Commitment to undergraduate and graduate research

WEAKNESSES

- Graduate stipends not competitive
- Ph.D. program not operational
- Only 13 students in graduate program

OPPORTUNITIES

- Expand biomedical focus
- Molecular biology is a dynamic and expanding field

THREATS

- Ageing faculty
- Loss of faculty

Recommendations

1. Existing infrastructure (laboratories, animal care facilities, radioactive waste disposal, etc.) must be maintained. It is essential that the construction of the new science building with a state-of-the-art animal care facility be initiated soon
2. Attract and hold strong biomedical research faculty
3. Investigate establishment of a "Directorate of Biomedical Research" to help maintain a sense of unity and coordination of efforts. This could promote interdisciplinary efforts such as in biomedical research related to gerontology.

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

FIRST TIER

DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

STRENGTHS

- Outreach to local industry - applied statistics - Ford Co-operative, scholars
- Research/technical level of faculty
- Delivers significant number of graduate math credits - 3rd highest in Michigan
- External reviewers (45) of potential Ph.D. speak highly of the skills and programs of the department

WEAKNESSES

- Continued perception of some students that math is not "user-friendly"
- Possible need for someone in the area of scientific computing

OPPORTUNITIES

- Market additional programs to industry (i.e., expand to Tech Park)
- Need for mathematicians/statisticians in environment
- Examine additional ways to assist in math teacher training with School of Education and Human Services
- Proposed Ph.D. program includes collaborative partnership with industry

THREATS

- Business takes over own training via internal mechanisms
- National trend - poor math skills of entering students
- Image of mathematics as "hard" and/or not useful

Recommendations

1. Act to implement Ph.D. program in Applied Mathematical Sciences
2. Support student research in Industrial Mathematics and encourage department's continued involvement with industry

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

FIRST TIER

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

STRENGTHS

- Good grant record
- Productive/recognized faculty
- Unique Ph.D. in Medical Physics
- Ties with local hospitals

WEAKNESSES

- Research equipment budget
- Assistantships not competitive
- Oakland University does not receive direct benefit from hospital grants
- Recent loss of two faculty

OPPORTUNITIES

- Possibility of world class magnetics center (almost critical mass of faculty)
- Could grow Ph.D. medical physics

THREATS

- Continued loss of faculty
- Ford Hospital is affiliated with Case Western so weakening of medical physics could result in loss of collaborative efforts

Recommendations

1. Increase number of graduate scholarships and stipend level
2. Consider Center for Magnetism if Professor L'Vov is hired

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

FIRST TIER

DEPARTMENT OF READING AND LANGUAGE ARTS

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES

STRENGTHS

- National reputation for literacy education
- Success with minority doctoral students (10 of 30 candidates)
- Only pure Reading Ph.D. in Michigan
- Provides literacy services to schools, business and government
- Interdisciplinary contacts with Oakland University
- National Reading Recovery site
- State-of-the-art Multimedia Center

WEAKNESSES

- Aging faculty
- Classroom and clinic space problems
- Assistantship levels

OPPORTUNITIES

- Major USA source of minority PhD. leadership in literacy education
- Major research and teaching center for Reading Recovery training
- Could provide innovations in multimedia technology in literacy

THREATS

- Better funded competitors may lure potential doctoral and MAT students
- Rival master's programs may be established

Recommendations

1. Seek funding for minority doctoral candidates (like Park/King/Chavez program)
2. Investigate costs of maintaining/expanding multimedia literacy efforts
3. Investigate costs of expanding doctoral program (staff, assistantships)

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

FIRST TIER

HONORS COLLEGE

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

STRENGTHS

- Undergraduate research a component of Honors College experience
- Provides a forum for the interaction between scholars and enthusiastic students
- Low direct cost, high efficacy experience which increases the quality of the undergraduate experience at Oakland University
- Offers a forum for faculty to create and offer truly great, innovative, and interdisciplinary undergraduate courses. An arena for unique educational offerings
- Director does outreach "orientation" talks
- Interest via scholar-athletes

WEAKNESSES

- Limited administrative support
- Teaching support is dependent on the willingness of various department chairs to release faculty to teach Honors College classes
- Lack of scholarships directly from Honors College

OPPORTUNITIES

- Increased interest in Honors College from students
- Many talented students available in region who might be attracted to Oakland University by the Honors College

- An existing structure to offer truly innovative, interdisciplinary courses at Oakland University

THREATS

- Lack of administrative support
- Lack of funding
- No appeal to bottom-line types
- Low number of graduates (language requirement, senior colloquium conflicts with major requirements)

Recommendations

1. Publicize that Honors College course can substitute for general education requirements to advisors across campus
2. Investigate alternative ways of staffing Honors College courses

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

FIRST TIER

MEADOW BROOK HALL

STRENGTHS

- In the upper level of "grand" houses in the United States
- Concours d'Elegance provides regional and national exposure
- High utilization rate
- Self-supporting - no general fund dollars
- Part of Oakland University heritage

WEAKNESSES

- Need better relations between academic units and Hall
- Telephone hold system is not service friendly
- Use of maid rooms for guests

OPPORTUNITIES

- Use in Oakland University marketing efforts
- Continued interest by corporation's for use of Hall as retreat site
- There may be additional research projects which can help tie Hall to rest of Oakland University

THREATS

- Cost of maintenance

Recommendations

1. Project financial needs of Hall over next 10 years
2. Identify ways to continue high utilization

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

FIRST TIER

PHYSICAL THERAPY

SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

STRENGTHS

- Faculty strongly committed to teaching
- Nationally recognized faculty (K. Kulig one of 20 post doc PT in U.S.A.)
- National reputation
- Provides clinical and academic experience
- Unique program for international certification of PTs
- High market demand for graduates (4-10 jobs/graduate)

WEAKNESSES

- High teaching load
- Not all faculty currently possess Ph.D.
- Insufficient research activity to date (teaching, doctoral training demands)
- Insufficient equipment
- Insufficient student stipends

OPPORTUNITIES

- Considerable growth potential
- "...program is poised to become a premier example of physical therapy education and research." (external program reviewer)
- Increasing demand for advanced degree PTs

THREATS

- Loss of faculty to competing institutions/private practice
- Scholarly activity will suffer more without adequate support

Specific Activities/Tactics

1. Teaching load should be consistent with Oakland University research expectations
2. Examine ways to expand staff to allow research trained PTs to engage in grant/publication activities.

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

FIRST TIER

STUDENT ATHLETICS

STRENGTHS

- Academic record of our student athletes (3.17 gpa)
- All American Awards
- Women's Program Commitment
- National Records
- Tracy Huth (Division II Coach of the Year 3 times)
- Award winning coaches
- Graduation rate
- Swimming
- Students achievement in other aspects of campus

WEAKNESSES

- Scholarship dollars weak

OPPORTUNITIES

- Intramural expansion
- Improved recruiting
- Summer camps (potential students)

- Olympic potential
- Coaching/training
- Expand physical activity education
- Sponsor tournaments
- Media recognition

THREATS

- Old facility
- Football mentality (desire for football team which could draw resources from currently excellent programs)
- Could lose coaches
- Pool needs to come up to code

Recommendations

1. Facility issues should be resolved. Old facility can negatively impact current program
2. Actively seek more media coverage
3. Explore ways to expand summer programs

Costs

Backup documentation provides cost estimate on new facility. This is the major cost.

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

FIRST TIER

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

STRENGTHS

- Highly distinctive
- Reinforces culture of Oakland University as student oriented
- Part of Oakland University tradition

WEAKNESSES

- Time intensive
- Funding environment may change

OPPORTUNITIES

- Expand publicity beyond current item on chemistry and biology
- Recruit high school students

THREATS

- Changing funding environment
- If shift to many more graduate programs - what will happen to undergraduate research
- Possible loss to other schools now undertaking undergraduate programs
- Lack of Oakland University scholarship opportunities

Specific Activities/Tactics

1. Publicize breadth of undergraduate (see attached documentation)
2. Reinforce and reward faculty for undertaking these efforts
3. Promote undergraduate research meetings/events

Resources

List of potential external sources in backup documentation. These sources include grant opportunities for the College and Professional Schools.

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

SECOND TIER

CENTER FOR ROBOTICS AND ADVANCED AUTOMATION

SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

STRENGTHS

- Strong director with international research reputation
- Strong co-director
- Good location for collaboration with industry
- Good publication record

WEAKNESSES

- Equipment/instrumentation ageing
- Maintenance is expensive (20K for 1 year/ machine)
- Difficult to compete with University of Michigan and Oakland Community College - they have newer equipment
- Robotics not as popular
- Only few engineering faculty involved

OPPORTUNITIES

- Clinton administration interest in technology
- Potential for courses for industry

- Potential for collaboration with industry
- Advanced automation interest increasing

THREATS

- Faculty mobile
- Decrease in defense spending

Specific Activities/Tactics

1. Investigate cooperative research/teaching with Oakland Community College - they have state-of-the-art robotics
2. Generate list of possible new funding focusing on advanced automation
3. Revive artificial intelligence conferences on a more interdisciplinary basis

Resources

1. New equipment may be cost prohibitive (i.e., 100K for software)

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

SECOND TIER

DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

STRENGTHS

- Only science based environmental health program in state
- Traditionally a high research funded department
- Undergraduate research record

WEAKNESSES

- Faculty/staff reductions
- Undergraduate instructional equipment outdated
- Equipment maintenance funds lacking

OPPORTUNITIES

- Biochemistry area ties into biomedical research
- More clearly differentiate industrial health and safety (HS) from environmental health (CHEM) or develop interdisciplinary focus

THREATS

- Book collection (Kresge Library) in chemistry
- Entering students have poor math skills

Recommendations

1. Investigate costs of maintaining/updating needed equipment
2. Encourage continuation of undergraduate research
3. Explore potential for expanding Environmental Health Program

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

SECOND TIER

DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES

STRENGTHS

- Only graduate program in Oakland and Macomb Counties leading to mental health professional licensing
- Strong clinical focus with both a practicum and internship
- Faculty have experience and involvement in professional organization
- Graduates are involved in professional leadership positions and many continue for Ph.D. (not available at Oakland University)
- Significant community service (i.e., 42,000 internship hours since January 1993)
- Active student organization - has sponsored yearly conferences for eleven consecutive years
- National Center for NOICC grant
- Operates Adults Career Counseling Center

WEAKNESSES

- Small faculty
- Outdated video equipment
- Space limitations for clinical training

- Large number of part-time students
- Limited interdisciplinary focus

OPPORTUNITIES

- Strong student demand
- Students interested in Ph.D. currently enroll in University of Toledo
- Develop and enhance relationships between mental health services and community schools

THREATS

- Potential changes in mental health system
- Lack of interdisciplinary focus
- Resource limits

Recommendation

1. Investigate cost/benefits of Ph.D. in Counseling
2. Expand community ties

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

MEADOW BROOK ART GALLERY

STRENGTHS

- Well known and innovative/creative director
- Strong regional gallery; well thought of in community
- Fits liberal arts tradition of Oakland University

WEAKNESSES

- Director - while known within art community - is somewhat low profile

OPPORTUNITIES

- Expand display of collection to higher traffic areas (i.e., Oakland Center)
- Expose more students to collection - beyond art history classes
- Continue tradition of unconventional shows

THREATS

- Limited support funds

Recommendations

1. Provide some support staff
2. Have University Relations work with gallery to explore ways of increasing external visibility
3. Examine feasibility and security of "roving" collection in a variety of Oakland University buildings

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

SECOND TIER

MEADOW BROOK HEALTH ENHANCEMENT INSTITUTE

STRENGTHS

- Energetic Director
- Good facility
- Accepted training site for physicians, etc.
- Diverse and loyal clientele
- Recognized as a site for wellness based preventative medicine
- Clinical data base
- \$543,832.66 of \$654,000.25 (1992-93) generated by institute [general fund support is fringe benefit]

WEAKNESSES

- Program is clinical and service oriented because of emphasis on self-sustaining revenue - this has diverted attention from research
- Teaching opportunities with School of Health Science not adequately developed

OPPORTUNITIES

- Health consciousness continues to grow
- Research opportunities
- Programs may have a hook for Oakland University fund raising
- Could have national preventative health maintenance leadership

THREATS

- External competition by non-academic facilities in Northern Oakland County
- Lack of medical school connection makes program unique but vulnerable

Specific Activates/Tactics

1. Exploit data base in research capacity
2. Investigate further interdisciplinary research/teaching links
3. Investigate space needs for research vs. client needs (trade off exists here)

Resources

1. Possible need to replace/update equipment for research
2. Provide assistance in marketing programs