



## Chapter Three

# Mission, Planning, and Governance

This chapter addresses the following **General Institutional Requirements** for Accreditation of a University:

1. It has a mission statement, formally adopted by the governing board and made public, declaring that it is an institution of higher education.
2. It is a degree-granting institution.
3. It has legal authorization to grant its degrees, and it meets all the legal requirements to operate as an institution of higher education wherever it conducts its activities.
4. It has legal documents to confirm its status: not-for-profit, for-profit, or public.
5. It has a governing board that possesses and exercises necessary legal power to establish and review basic policies that govern the institution.
6. Its governing board includes public members and is sufficiently autonomous from the administration and ownership to assure the integrity of the institution.
7. It has an executive officer designated by the governing board to provide administrative leadership for the institution.
8. Its governing board authorizes the institution's affiliation with the Commission.
17. It has admission policies and practices that are consistent with the institution's mission and appropriate to its educational programs.
23. It accurately discloses its standing with accrediting bodies with which it is affiliated.

This chapter provides evidence for **Criterion 1**:

The institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education.

This chapter provides evidence for **Criterion 2**:

The institution has effectively organized the human, financial, and physical resources necessary to accomplish its purposes.

This chapter further provides evidence for **Criteria 3 and 4**:

The institution is accomplishing its educational and other purposes. The institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

This chapter provides evidence for **Criterion 5**:

The institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships.

## 3.1 Introduction

Because this chapter focuses on the planning processes and governing structures of the university, in a sense it is informed by all the goals established in *Next Steps 2000-2005* (stated in Chapter 1). At the same time, Goal 3, Enrollment Management, has particular salience for this chapter since it articulates a shift in institutional mission: “The university will increasingly become an institution of choice for students while remaining an institution of opportunity.”

This chapter addresses the process by which the SVSU Mission and Vision were reviewed and the current five-year plan developed. The chapter also looks ahead to the next planning cycle, which will build on the attainments of the current plan but shift in emphasis from growth to “right sizing” and a renewed commitment to building distinctive programs at SVSU.

As SVSU has grown, university planning processes and governance structures have adapted to reflect the changes of the past decade. The 1994 Vision, reflecting the institution’s growing awareness of its role in providing solid baccalaureate and masters programs for regional students, also described the relationship of the university to its stakeholders in a larger context:

*“SVSU’s mission and goals statement evolved in harmony with the institution’s dynamic nature, growth and regional constituency . . . [and] will continue to be examined on a regular basis to affirm its relevancy to the changing needs” of the student population, the region, and the larger culture.*

The 1994 SVSU Self-Study discussed the institution’s evolving self-definition and its respect for a diverse student and community population, its commitment to professional programs, its fostering of general and liberal education, and its advancement of the research and creative potential of the professoriate. Since then, the guiding principles for the evolving mission have been the continued enhancement of students’ intellectual and personal growth, their interaction with highly qualified faculty, and the benefits of a highly educated population for the larger community. The mission, likewise, has evolved in response to institutional/stakeholder needs.

Thus, the 2000 Mission and Vision statements, which articulate the current direction for the university, enlarge the context of earlier statements:

**Mission:** The University produces value for the Region, State and Society by preparing highly qualified graduates who contribute to the

Section 3.1  
*SVSU has increasingly become an institution of choice for students while remaining an institution of opportunity.*

betterment of a culturally diverse world and by providing intellectual and cultural opportunities that enrich the lives of people.

**Vision:** Saginaw Valley State University will provide academic and professional programs and services for its students at the highest levels of quality and value, and be recognized as among the finest teaching universities in the United States. Our graduates will rise to key positions in economic, political, cultural and civic leadership and will distinguish themselves and our University through their accomplishments and service. Our University will also be the premier cultural and intellectual center and resource for the schools, governments, businesses and people of the East-Central Region of Michigan.

These Mission and Vision statements were developed as part of the University planning process that produced the *Next Steps 2000-2005* document. The six goals derived from these statements serve as a framework for on-going institutional assessment. And, as previously explained, that document provides the organizational foundation for this self-study.

The self-study subcommittees that addressed Mission, Planning, and Governance reviewed many materials: previous planning documents, foundational documents of the institution, Board of Control Minutes, university handbooks, and the Faculty Contract. The subcommittee on Planning also carried out an extensive survey of 56 university leaders (deans, vice-presidents, department chairs, and program directors) who were asked to assess the importance of various issues to the planning process with their units. Findings from that survey inform this chapter.

Section 3.2  
*SVSU's strategic plan  
Next Steps 2000-2005  
sets the direction for  
the university.*

## 3.2 University Planning Processes

During the past decade, planning processes have evolved from statements of purpose (*Promises to Keep, 1990*, and *Constancy to Purpose, 1995*) to the strategic plan (*Next Steps 2000-2005*) which currently sets the direction for the university. The plan is action- and outcomes-oriented and undergoes regular revision.

A consultant from Dow Corning was hired to facilitate this more complex strategic planning process. A diverse campus group with 41 members of the campus community was assembled to execute the task. The group included administrators from multiple divisions, academic deans, directors, staff from multiple units, 16 faculty, a member of the Board of Control, and a member of the SVSU Board of Fellows. Divided into committees, each focusing on discrete aspects of the mission, the group developed what would become the six defining goals of the plan. Members from each of the committees formed an additional task force to review and revise the Mission and Vision statements.

The committees met during Spring/Summer 1999 and held two open forums with the campus community that fall. Diverse ideas were solicited, considered, compiled, condensed, and ultimately distilled to the current document. The Mission and Vision statements and *Next Steps 2000-2005* were then approved by the Board of Control to become the organizing document for a 5-year planning cycle.

These documents are comprehensive, addressing all aspects of university life. The goals are presented in table format with Indicators listed for each goal. Goals are further defined by “Critical Success Factors,” “Direction Toward Goal,” and “Key Actions.” Progress toward the goal is indicated in the final column for each goal. Units responsible for addressing specific goals are identified, although there is considerable and intended overlap in this regard. Vice-Presidents report periodically on unit progress to the Institutional Planning Officer, who revises the document. The Board of Control reviews and approves these updates.

The execution of SVSU’s 5-year plan is coordinated by the President with the Board of Control and the President’s Planning Council. These processes are facilitated by the Planning Officer and implemented by the President’s Staff. The structure of the plan and annual institutional review invite self-assessment by all divisions, although units vary in their utilization of this planning/implementing/assessing/revising process.

Input for on-going institution-wide planning as well as assessment of current plans is based on the efforts of various committees and task forces. Some of these are standing committees, while others are *ad hoc* groups charged by the President to review specific issues, such as diversity in the curriculum, graduate program enrollment, and university website revision. A notable example of this approach is the work of the Long-Term Enrollment Planning Group. As noted previously, the group, which included selected faculty, staff, administrators, and community members, produced *Right Sizing the University: Enrollment Goals for the Next Decade*. This document was presented to the Board of Control for consideration and approval, and has been pivotal in assessing future institutional priorities after four decades of steady growth.

Although in some respects institutional planning is centered in the President’s Planning Council, in other respects it is decentralized, or at least compartmentalized, and carried out by individual units. Planning in each division is guided by the university strategic plan, around which unit goals are set. These goals then guide the annual development of department goals. Administrative staff

performance evaluations are tied to the achievement of office and individual goals. Thus goals that are the responsibility of an individual unit can be monitored effectively.

However, when inter-divisional and intra-divisional collaboration and cooperation are necessary for the achievement of office and divisional goals, those in leadership positions report that governance and organizational structures of the institution make the resolution of certain kinds of issues problematic. As a result, issues that cross division boundaries and/or demand university-wide resources and commitment to address may go unresolved (e.g., multi-disciplinary program development, university-wide assessment, diversity), or fall to individuals who lack the power or institutional status to address such concerns systemically and directly.

The aforementioned task forces are a typical means used to plan across institutional boundaries. Individuals appointed to serve on such groups do not represent defined institutional constituencies, although there is an attempt to include individuals from different sectors of the university. Multiple successive task forces are frequently organized to address complex issues (e.g., diversity, graduate programs). Such task forces can serve to break down structural barriers and bring together faculty, staff, and administrators from across the institution to discuss issues of common interest and generate ideas for resolving issues of common concern. However, such task forces and committees are advisory only; because they work outside established university structures with no direct responsibility for subsequent review or implementation, task force members may see little or no evidence of their work or how it contributes to institutional planning. Thus they may question the value of this work and the time commitment it requires.

The creation of *Next Steps 2000-2005*, itself, is an extended example of this process. As noted above, a variety of faculty, staff, and administrators worked in various task forces to develop the plans and create the document. Although individual faculty and staff members may have been involved in the original planning process, once it was approved by the Board of Control, it became the responsibility of the President and his Planning Council and Staff to implement; the update of the plan occurs at the vice-presidential level.

**Resource allocation** is an additional component that is integral to the university planning process. Planning that takes place at division, college, department, or task force level is brought to the President's Planning Council by the Vice-Presidents for inclusion in the overall strategy and for resource allocation. (See Chapter 4 for an expanded discussion of Resources.) Budgets are then allocated

for each office within a given division. Office directors have some discretion to request additional resources; such requests are judged against division-wide and university-wide resource allocation requests. Individual projects may also be brought directly to the President for approval and resources.

As the sub-committee's planning survey indicates, at the Vice-Presidential level resources are defined as a significant aspect of planning, and Vice Presidents control the resources necessary to implement planning processes. At the program, chair, and director levels, however, resources, particularly human resources, are viewed as a constraint in planning. Department chairs, who lack control over resources, have expressed the most distance from the university planning process. Both faculty and staff indicated they would do more in terms of program development if there were resources available to develop and carry out plans without time-consuming negotiations. Faculty and staff indicated that because of these constraints, they often limit their initiatives to what they personally are able to do. Support staff for projects is often provided through work-study students, who may or may not have the necessary skills or long-term commitment to carry out particular projects. Creative ideas and commitment to larger goals may thus be lost.

### 3.3 University Governance Structures

SVSU is governed through a traditional hierarchical structure (see Organizational Chart, Figure 1-8) working within the two collective bargaining agreements described in Chapter 1. These structures have been adapted and expanded as needed to accommodate institutional growth and change.

Recent reorganizations within the division of Administration & Business Affairs, as well as the combining of Student Affairs with Student Services & Enrollment Management, are intended to enhance institutional effectiveness, especially in the context of the increased number of residential students, the extensive expansion of facilities and technological infrastructure, and the current climate of budget cuts. The Public Affairs division has also been reorganized recently under a new Vice-President.

**The Board of Control** is the legal governing body of the university as defined by the State of Michigan Constitution of 1963, Article 8, Section 6. Enrolled House Bill No. 4490 (Regular Session of 1987) amended Act No. 278 of the Public Acts of 1965 concerning SVSU as a state institution. These Acts provide the University's governing board certain powers, including the authority to confer degrees and grant diplomas. (SVSU is considered a political subdivision of

Section 3.3  
*SVSU governance structures have been adapted and expanded to accommodate institutional growth and change.*

the State of Michigan, and as such is exempt from federal income tax. Although the University does not have an Internal Revenue Service determination letter, it in effect acts as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization.) The Board has 8 members appointed by the Governor for 8-year terms. Because Michigan's universities are constitutionally autonomous, the Board of Control has the controlling influence, although it is affected by the decisions of the state legislature.

Decisions with statewide implications are also affected by the consultative relationships the university maintains with other public universities through the Council of Presidents and its subcommittees of Academic Officers and Financial Officers. Most of the members of the Board of Control come from the service region, though a few are from other areas of the state.

Action items for the Board of Control are brought forward through the two standing Board Committees: the Academic, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee, and the Business, Finance, Audit and Facilities Committee. The Board functions in ways appropriate to its role, providing clear guidance to the President on policy matters, budget planning, and personnel decisions. The Board meets once a month and meetings are well-attended. Vice Presidents, staff members, the president of the Faculty Association, and a representative of the Office of University Communications are always present. Members of the press are often also present. Deans, faculty members, and student representatives are welcome to attend and frequently make presentations; selected members of the university community are also invited to meetings to present overviews of university programs or to receive awards such as Employee of the Month. Minutes are recorded and archived in the university library.

**The President of the University** is elected by the Board of Control. The Board of Control delegates the authority to conduct all University business to the President except that the Board reserves authority for those items specified in the bylaws (3.101 Article III). The University bylaws define the President's role: "The President shall be responsible for all functions of the University, be the official medium of communication between the Board and University faculty, staff and students, implement policies of the Board, and have authority to issue directions and executive orders not in contravention with law or the Board's bylaws and policies" (2.102 Article II). The President of the University is a non-voting member (*ex officio*) of the Board.

The current President has served at SVSU since 1989. The President works closely with his Planning Council to administer the university, including the University budget. He also works with the wider community, including government, business, financial, and education leaders, to promote the interests of the institution.

A number of administrators who have responsibilities that transcend individual units report directly to the President:

- Special Assistant to the President for Government Relations
- Special Assistant to the President for Diversity Programs
- Special Assistant to the President for International Programs
- Executive Assistant to the President/Planning Officer
- Executive Director of Information Technology
- Executive Director, Center for Business and Economic Development
- University Ombudsman

**The President's Planning Council**, an advisory body that meets twice a month, is composed of the 4 Vice Presidents (Academic Affairs; Student Services & Enrollment Management; Administration & Business Affairs; and Public Affairs/Executive Director, Development & SVSU Foundation). Planning Council members also serve as general staff for the Board of Control by attending all meetings and reporting to it on a regular basis. Vice Presidents are also responsible to be sure the 5-year plan is disseminated and reviewed in their units. In general, decisions about the allocation of resources are made as part of the planning process by the President's Planning Council in consultation with, and approval of, the Board of Control. One Vice President serves as staff for each of the two Board of Control committees. (Currently, the Vice President for Academic Affairs serves the Academic, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee; the Vice President for Administration & Business Affairs serves the Business, Finance, Audit and Facilities Committee.)

**The President's Staff** consists of the 4 Vice Presidents; the Deans of the 5 Colleges; the Executive Director of Information Technology; the Special Assistant to the President for Diversity Programs; the Special Assistant to the President for International Programs; the Special Assistant to the President for Government Relations; the Executive Assistant to the President/Planning Officer; the University Ombudsman; and the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs. Each of these is responsible to manage his/her respective responsibilities and contribute to the attainment of University goals. The Deans of the Colleges and the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs normally report to the President via the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Other members of the President's Staff report directly to the President, scheduling individual meetings as needed.

The administrative structures of the institution are organized to disseminate information to the campus community and to provide feedback on the ways in which institutional goals and objectives are being achieved. Because all members of the President's Staff are expected to inform the group on operations in



their respective areas through round-table briefings, information exchange occurs across the institution, and unit heads are able to understand the impact of their decisions upon other segments of the institution. These briefings are discussed by the group, and the President makes inquiries for clarification and provides feedback. Decisions are then disseminated to the members of the President's Staff for communication to their units. The various members of the President's Staff, both line officers and special assistants, maintain an "open door" policy to all members of the University community.

However, as with the recommendations of task forces, faculty and staff have indicated that at times they are informed after the fact on decisions that directly affect them. The recent unit reorganizations as well as changes in criteria for and designation of Programs of Qualitative Distinctiveness are instances cited in this regard.

#### Section 3.4

*Each major division of the institution has a significant role to play in accomplishing university goals.*

### 3.4 Unit-Level Governance Structures

Recent reorganizations among three of the four major divisions of the institution were carried out to improve institutional effectiveness in the context of institutional growth and transformation, as indicated previously. Each of the four major divisions of the institution is headed by a vice president. Each has a significant role to play in accomplishing the goals of the university.

#### **Academic Affairs**

Academic Affairs, with 240 full-time faculty and 119 staff, is responsible to ensure the effective delivery of the curriculum, the development of new programs, and the employment of a properly credentialed faculty in sufficient numbers to maintain the quality of the curriculum as well as instructional support. It also is responsible for the library and the three academic student support centers.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs, the chief academic officer of the campus, provides leadership for the overall administration and quality of all academic programs. This includes promoting academic excellence among the faculty and efficiency in instructional operations. The Vice President presides over Deans and Directors meetings and over Deans and Chairs meetings, and serves as a member of the President's Planning Council and the President's Staff. The Director of the Library and the directors of the academic student support programs report to the VPAA.

The Vice-President for Academic Affairs oversees an important aspect of academic planning: the creation of the course schedule for each semester. The course schedule must take into account student needs and the deployment of instructional resources, both human and physical. Input from academic departments and consultation with departments relative to student needs are essential phases in this academic planning process.

The Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for the implementation of academic program assessment, the institutional self-study, the Office of Sponsored Programs, the Advisory Council for Graduate Programs, university awards committees, and other tasks as assigned.

**The Academic Deans** are the chief academic officers of their respective colleges:

- College of Arts & Behavioral Sciences
- College of Science, Engineering, & Technology
- College of Business & Management
- College of Education
- College of Nursing & Health Sciences

Deans are responsible for College budgets and faculty recruitment (subject to approval) and coordinate department search committees and faculty evaluation teams. They also work with department chairs to evaluate and implement academic staffing requests, plan curriculum changes, and work with the Vice President for Academic Affairs to make academic staffing recommendations to the President. Deans also appoint and supervise graduate program Coordinators. The College of Arts & Behavioral Sciences, the largest college, has a full-time administrator serving as Assistant Dean; the other Colleges have Acting Assistant Deans (faculty members generally serving half-time with 6 credit/semester teaching load).

The extent to which academic colleges engage in college-wide program planning varies, and most initial planning occurs at the academic department level. All departments are required to undertake a departmental self-study every ten years. These studies provide an opportunity for departments to assess their effectiveness and identify needs for curricular changes. It is not clear how well departmental self-studies are incorporated into the academic planning process; some faculty feel they are ignored. Externally accredited professional programs are subject to additional oversight. Academic program assessment is carried out at the department level, although the Assistant Vice-President for Academic Affairs is charged with monitoring these activities and developing a more com-

prehensive program assessment plan. (An expanded discussion of Academic Program Assessment can be found in Chapter 5).

**Governance within Academic Affairs** is informed by the Faculty Contract, which details the procedures for curriculum ratification and faculty evaluation decisions. Committees comprised of elected faculty members and administrative appointees make recommendations to the President and Board of Control for approval and implementation. These decisions, of course, have implications for university-wide planning, resource allocation, and policy implementation. (For a fuller discussion of these processes, see Chapter 5).

The Curriculum and Academic Policy Committee (CAPC), the Graduate Committee, and the General Education Committee (GEC) are responsible to review, clarify, and evaluate curriculum proposals and identify issues for further discussion. Proposals that emerge from these committees are then presented to the faculty at large for ratification. However, the administration allocates resources to colleges and departments. This two-way structure provides a series of checks and balances that may result in conflict or collaboration. (As will be discussed more fully in Chapter 5, the development and eventual approval of the new General Education program was based on contractual processes and successful negotiations between the faculty and administration.)

**Department Chairs** are faculty members and thus are in the Faculty Association bargaining unit. They are spokespersons for departments and liaisons to the dean and administration. Chairs are elected by the department's faculty for two-year terms and have no formal authority over the faculty. They work with their departments and Deans on curricular planning, staffing needs, and course schedules.

Chairs oversee the development of departmental curriculum change proposals; these are submitted to CAPC, Graduate Committee, or the GEC. Chairs may take responsibility for tracking departmental assessment processes or they may ask someone else to do so. Chairs also monitor departmental budgets and send funding requests to the Dean. Chairs receive release time annually, as determined by the faculty contract, depending on the size of their departments. They receive no summer compensation, although they often have duties to fulfill during this time.

### **Administration & Business Affairs**

Administration & Business Affairs, with 143 employees, is responsible to ensure that the university achieves its purposes with fiscal integrity in a cost-

effective manner that is consistent with the institutional mission, and that it can continue to deliver programs and services in a changing economic climate. In addition to the Controller, this unit includes Construction and Maintenance, Housing, Employment & Compensation Services, and other auxiliary functions.

As noted in Chapter 1, the growth in size and complexity of the university has led to significant reorganization of Administration & Business Affairs departments over the past two years. Housing has been separated from Residential Life and now reports to this division, as do other auxiliary services. Auxiliary services are expected to be self-sustaining, as is the case with the Conference and Events Center.

Human resource functions report to this division. Employment and Compensation Services is under the administration of the University Controller, while the Director of Staff Relations reports directly to the Vice-President of Business Affairs. The Director of Staff Relations is responsible for representing the university in labor negotiations with both faculty and support staff unions. The Director of Staff Relations also organizes or otherwise makes available faculty/staff development activities and works with faculty and staff to address workplace issues.

The division is currently pursuing goals and objectives which support commitments such as the following:

- Divisional reorganization and related performance improvement initiatives
- Identification and implementation of operating cost efficiencies
- Initiation of staff development and organizational performance improvement programs
- Identification and implementation of cost-effective process/service improvements
- Utilization of assessment techniques to measure divisional/departmental performance.

Individual departments have specific goals that complement and support the divisional goals referenced above. All departments are identifying appropriate benchmarks and best practices to assist in objective assessment of departmental and divisional performance.

The division has also made a commitment to create a collaborative work environment. The objectives of this approach are to provide staff with opportunities to contribute to broader divisional initiatives rather than just their immediate areas of responsibility, as well as to encourage staff involvement in the establishment of goals and objectives.

Although Administration & Business Affairs has consistently maintained cost-effective practices and has managed the resources of the institution in an economically prudent manner, the most significant recent challenge to the division Vice President has been to develop a fiscal response to the current adverse economic climate, while ensuring the institution continues to meet its goals. That fiscal response, presented to the Board of Control for approval, informs institutional planning processes. (See Chapter 4 for a fuller discussion of Institutional Resources).

### **Public Affairs**

Public Affairs, with 18 employees, is largely responsible for maintaining effective relations between the university and the community, as well as helping ensure that the university makes significant and sustained contributions to the quality of life in the region. This is accomplished in multiple ways, through the work of the SVSU Foundation, the Alumni Board, and the Office of University Communications.

This division also has undergone a recent reorganization. Development, communication, and fundraising functions were incorporated into the unit, while its government relations function is now carried out by the former Vice-President of the division, as one of the Special Assistants to the President. Continuing Education has been reassigned to the Executive Director of the Center for Business and Economic Development, who also reports directly to the President.

The Public Affairs division currently is comprised of University Communications, Alumni Relations, and Annual Giving & Development, each with its own director. The Vice President of Public Affairs is also the Executive Director for Development and the SVSU Foundation. The SVSU Foundation is an independent corporation with its own Board of Directors, which raises private funds to support the strategic initiatives of the University and supports SVSU Foundation grants for student-focused initiatives. (See Chapter 4 for further discussion.)

The Public Affairs Division is directly responsible for how the university is perceived as adding value to the region: judged not only by its graduates, but also by its relationships with internal and external constituents (stakeholders and opinion leaders). This Division is responsible for shaping the university's relationship with the community, including donors, parents, students, businesses, legislators, foundations, media, faculty, staff, and other universities. As will be discussed more fully in Chapter 6, the work of this division has particular implications for campus culture. Through its fundraising efforts and its relations with community leaders, Public Affairs provides resources for a variety of programs. Through the

University Communication unit, it enhances the University's image as a key cultural and intellectual resource in the community, aligning internal and external communications and publications with institutional goals.

While the division has internal goals for its effective functioning, it does not generate institutional priorities for fundraising or engage in independent planning. Rather it facilitates the relationship between university planning bodies and potential donors in order to realize institutional objectives.

### **Student Services & Enrollment Management**

Student Services & Enrollment Management, with 104 employees, provides both academic and extracurricular support services for students. It also has responsibility for graduate and undergraduate admissions, including policies and practices, as well as for implementing Board decisions regarding “right sizing,” etc. “Creating and sustaining a culture and environment that fosters and supports the personal and intellectual growth of the campus community” is the responsibility of many of the departments within this unit, from Residential Life to Athletics.

As noted in Chapter 1, there have been two reorganizations of the Division of Student Affairs since the last accreditation visit. The first reorganization occurred during the 1994-1995 academic year when the Division of Student Services & Enrollment Management was created. The second reorganization occurred at the conclusion of the 2002-2003 academic year, when the Division of Student Affairs was merged with the Division of Student Services & Enrollment Management under the leadership of one Vice President. The new divisional structure is intended to increase efficiency and effectiveness to better address enrollment increases, retention, and higher academic qualifications of accepted applicants.

Four Assistant Vice President positions were created in this division in the 2003 reorganization, with each office assumed by a current director:

- Assistant Vice President & Director of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions; also includes responsibility for the Office of Graduate Admissions and the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid
- Assistant Vice President & Director of the Office of Career Planning and Placement; also has responsibility for the Office of Disability Services, the Student Counseling Center, and the Student Life Center
- Assistant Vice President & Registrar; also has responsibility for the Office of Institutional Research, the Academic Advisement Center, and the Office of Evening Services

- Assistant Vice President & Director of Residential Life; also has responsibility for the Office of Student Conduct and the University's Substance Abuse Education Program.

All four Assistant Vice Presidents report directly to the Vice President for Student Services & Enrollment Management. In addition, the following also report directly to this Vice President:

- Director of Athletics
- Director of the Office of International Programs
- Director of the Office of Minority Student Services.

This division coordinates with other divisions on campus and with the Office of the President to meet university goals and objectives. Goals for the division are derived from *Next Steps 2000-2005*. With this plan as the foundation, the division determines how each office will meet its individual objectives and assist the division in meeting its broader goals.

This division has particular responsibility for ways in which the goals for a revised institutional mission are being achieved. Although much of the responsibility lies with the Academic Affairs division through Academic Improvement and the development of Qualitatively Distinctive programs, the movement to become an institution of choice while remaining an institution of opportunity has implications for this unit through admissions standards, recruitment policies, and scholarship availability, and the range of student services, including an enhanced residential life. This unit also has responsibility for the athletic program. The recent success of SVSU in Division II football also has implications for addressing these new goals.

Another key institutional goal is enrollment management and “right-sizing” the institution. Even as recruitment efforts are intensifying in some respects, in others there is a recognition that the university will reach a sustainable level of enrollment for the region. To move beyond that level would have implications for capital as well as program expansion. While communication between Academic Affairs and Student Services & Enrollment Management is essential for developing and coordinating successful programs, close communication must be maintained with Administration & Business Affairs to address growth issues.

The work of the various units in this division is reflected in the transformation of campus culture, with a growing residential population and the increased diversity of the student body. (See Chapter 6 for a fuller discussion of Campus Culture.)

### 3.5 Conclusions

The past decade's growth and transformation have been accomplished within the administrative structure described. The periodic revision of the Mission Statement, as a consistent part of the overall University planning process, ensures continued validity and relevance of the Mission and Vision. *Next Steps 2000-2005*, the university strategic plan, established measurable goals, objectives, and outcomes to achieve that Mission and Vision and identified university units responsible for key actions.

Due to careful planning and conservative fiscal management in the current budget climate, SVSU has been able to maintain services without layoffs or major cuts in programs, in spite of a significant expansion of the student population and of the physical plant.

*Next Steps 2000-2005* is used, in varying degree, by all major divisions of the University to shape their planning. However, not all units or university faculty and staff feel equally engaged in planning processes or achievement of defined goals. It is generally acknowledged that the planning process is top-down; some feel this is an effective approach, but others contend that individual units are too removed from the process, becoming involved only as it directly affects their own work.

Department self-studies and surveys indicate *Next Steps 2000-2005* is not fully integrated into curriculum planning, and it is not clear whether department and college curriculum planning figures into *Next Steps 2000-2005* revisions. Department chairs, who lack control over resources, have expressed the most distance from the university planning process; by contract, chairs are not vested with planning responsibilities and receive only limited release time for their work. Faculty participate in curriculum development through the process delineated in the Faculty Contract. Both administrative appointees and elected faculty serve on curriculum committees and participate in deliberations on proposals submitted to them. The faculty votes on committee recommendations at two ratification meetings each year. The allocation of resources for implementing curriculum decisions rests with the administration. This collaborative process requires that administration and faculty continue to communicate effectively.

While information from departments, task forces, and committees may be used in the planning activities of the university administration, the university community often does not see how such input from advisory committees and task

### Section 3.5

*Effective communication and strategic collaboration will be required for SVSU to successfully build on the growth and transformation of the past decade.*



forces informs planning and implementation, even when individuals have been directly involved. Many in the campus community feel inadequately informed of specific initiatives or how progress toward goals and objectives is measured.

The university is governed through a traditional hierarchical structure in the context of two collective bargaining units. The effectiveness of governance structures is perceived quite differently by different units and by individuals within these units. The impact of recent institutional reorganizations to accomplish both university goals and division objectives will need to be assessed. Many units noted the importance of student and alumni feedback in their ongoing planning process and regularly carry out student satisfaction surveys. However, outcome-based assessment efforts are uneven. Many units are only beginning to establish assessment procedures to measure their effectiveness and do not yet consistently use assessment information to plan for improvement.

Although the university operates efficiently to accomplish its purposes, those purposes have been tied primarily to institutional growth. In an era with diminished resources, tensions may develop in the dual commitment to build qualitatively distinctive programs while remaining an institution of opportunity. Thus strategic alignment and broad engagement in the planning process will become more critical.

