

Strategic Operations Plan 2017-2023



Established 2016

Vision

The vision is to develop a premier 21st century university that prepares people to think critically, respond creatively, act with professional and ethical standards, and embody Christian compassion and caring to have an impact on the world.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a Christian learning community that equips students for lifelong leadership and service through a Christian higher education that is grounded in truth and academic excellence.

The ultimate goals of the University are:

- To provide educational opportunities for nontraditional (age 22 and above) students through an intensive face to face format, and
- To provide viable and useful education opportunities to traditional (age 18-24) students in an on-campus living experience.

The **Strategic Operations Plan** covers the three main areas for growth of Summit Christian University that includes Students, Academics, and Resources. There is an overall **Three-Phase Development Plan** that stretches across the first five years of development. The initial phase (Phase I) of operation has been directed toward nontraditional aged students for a one night per week intensive program that focuses on one class at a time. Phase II is to build a traditional campus from the foundation of the nontraditional success. Having a Community College within 25 miles of the campus will allow us to recruit locally for the student that is looking to do a completion program in the least amount of time while still being employed. We can deliver the completion of a student's junior and senior years in approximately 24 months without having to sacrifice their fulltime jobs, family, or life. Phase III allows us to do the addition of an online component to the educational process. Continued growth of the student body and traditional campus is dependent upon the success of Phase I and II. The ideal campus would sustain 600 students, 200 employees plus needed adjunct professors, and facilitate 600 non-traditional students.

In order for the **Three-Phase Development Plan** to be successful, the **Strategic Operations Plan** must be put in effect. The purpose of the **SOP** is to establish the principles and practices that will facilitate the achievement of fiscal sustainability and success. It is our calling and responsibility to address the need for a Christian university in Western Kentucky, and to provide the training and leadership to meet the nontraditional educational needs. The Business Plan gives guidance to those community members that wish to understand our vision, purpose, and mission. That Plan was best understood through the identified **Content, Communication, Collaboration, and Capacity of the University**. These four areas are better defined and understood through a more specific and comprehensive **Strategic Operations Plan**. The following plan pertains to the first phase of the overall plan for the future. As with any plan, it is believed that this plan reveals the priorities and guidelines to follow for a successful and sustainable University in the Areas of Students, Academics and Resources.

Strategic Operations Plan

Area 1 – Students

The greatest asset of any university or institution of higher learning is its students. It is the desire and intention of SCU to provide the best Christian learning environment and format possible for students to do their best work and reach completion of their degrees and graduation.

Objective 1.1

We will recruit and admit students wishing to complete their college degree.

Action Needed:

- Hire appropriate personnel to recruit and admit students in the four programs offered.
 - o Choosing dynamic personalities to contact and connect with potential students
 - o Orient and train new hires about the operational side of the University
 - o As the University grows so will the personnel
- Appropriately advertise what the University has to offer students seeking a Christian-influenced degree.
 - o Avenues of advertising- Social Media, Television, Billboards, cards and flyers distribution, speaking to civic clubs, churches, and businesses, word of mouth
 - o One-on-one contact with individuals that make application
 - o Graduation Planning with registrar and Adviser
- Identify the population that is seeking to complete their college degree
 - o Survey past student databases for students that have not completed degrees
 - o Request present students to suggest names of potential students
 - o Contact students from the local Community College and former students to secure names for possible recruits
- Develop a simple and user-friendly Application process
 - o Develop the Application on the website for ease of use
 - o Offer a No-Fee Application to the first 50 students
 - o Develop the Application Packet to help students complete the item checklist for admission acceptance
- Fully inform each student during the Admission process of the University's accreditation status and have them sign the Student Acknowledgement Form provided by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
 - o Complete the student's Admission's Packet

Objective 1.2

Each student will meet with their adviser at least once per term.

Action Needed:

- Prior to each Quarter's registration, the Adviser will meet with the student to determine the graduation plan and that the student is on the fastest path to graduation.
 - o This will take place by phone, in person (preferable), or via Skype or another VOIP.
 - o The student will receive a copy of their Graduation Plan that includes course they have taken and those courses that they will need to take.
 - o The student will be able to map out the length of and path to graduation.
- Advisers will be trained in the three different bachelor programs and one associate program.
 - o Part of the orientation process will be to familiarize Advisers with the Programs.
 - o More seasoned and experienced Advisers will mentor new Advisers until they are comfortably expert in the Program requirements.
- Advisers will maintain close communication with the Registrar's office to communicate any changes and ensure that the student is on track for degree completion and graduation.
 - o Advisers will have access to the STARS student information system.

Objective 1.3

Students will have access to the tools needed to complete coursework at the highest level possible to help ensure student success.

Actions Needed:

- Students are required to have access to a computer and have knowledge of how to use it for research and writing papers.
 - o It is understood that not all students in a rural area have the capability to purchase a computer. The University provides access to the student in need of a computer.
 - o It is understood that not all students in a rural area have access to the internet. All classrooms and offices have internet access and can be accessed at any time at the classrooms and during office hours at the office.
- Students are required to pay a textbook fee.
 - o Textbooks are provided for students to have during the course. If they wish to keep the text, then a \$10.00 charged is assessed.
- Maintain the use of the Kentucky Virtual Library (KYVL) for students.

- Students have access to the KYVL resources at any time of the day from anywhere in the world.
- Students are given username and password information to use the KYVL.
- Students are trained in the use of KYVL during their Orientation course and some instructors will give researching tips in class.
- Students are offered tutoring services for each class.
 - Students can request help for courses from the Admission's Office.
 - Initial application interviews will help to determine any ADA needs the student has. Notification to the faculty will be made in order to make arrangements for the student.

Objective 1.4

Students will have access to career guidance and career guidance tools.

Actions needed:

- Students will be instructed in resume writing skills.
 - As part of the Orientation course and the end course, resume writing skills are taught.
 - Examples of resumes and do's and don'ts are given to students.
 - Writing communication skills are developed throughout their programs through writing research papers and discussion questions.
- Students will be trained in interviewing skills.
 - This is done through didactic practicing in the Orientation course and the capstone course to teach interview skills.
 - Students have some courses that have a speech component or group presentation to learn speech skills.
- Students will have access to career and job sites in the local community and the internet.
 - Internet access and local job boards are always available to students.
 - Students will be directed to internet site in the specific fields of interest they may have.
- Provide access to career guidance for each student.
 - The Adviser is the beginning point of contact for the student seeking career guidance.
 - Career Guidance Counselors are trained and available for access by the student.

What is needed – Appropriate training for Advisers, Admission Counselors, and Career Counselors; MOU's with KYVL, Community Fellowship BC (Classrooms), and FBC-Mayfield; Curriculum review in the General Education courses; Current textbooks, technology, and classroom equipment.

Area 2 - Academics

Our goal is to identify areas of potential growth and match students with appropriate majors to enhance that growth. As we reimagine the way that learning and teaching takes place, we can develop innovative ways that education takes place. The success of the non-traditional approach to offering courses is a vital part of the foundation of SCU.

Objective 2.1

Implement student curriculum that is innovative and enables the student's success.

Actions Needed:

- Determining the occupational areas of need within the local and regional job market to lead the Curriculum committee in program development.
 - o Needs assessment of local businesses.
 - o Communication with local churches, local government, and local businesses for possible internships and apprenticeships for students.
- Review and Assess curriculum yearly.
 - o Each department is responsible for the review and assessment of their program to ensure that students receive up-to-date information in their fields.
 - o Develop Assessment plans according to the Assessment Plan Guide.
- Recruit faculty members that are experienced in their field and adept at information delivery systems – including classroom skills, facilitating skills, technology skills.
 - o Advertise for faculty members that have at least three years' experience in their fields of instruction.
 - o Make sure that faculty is credentialed (at least a master's degree) and have 18 hours in the field they will be teaching.
- Equipping faculty with up-to-date technology, text books, and access to resources.
 - o Providing each classroom with up-to-date technology, whiteboards, and environmental controls.
 - o Provide each faculty member with a textbook and ancillaries necessary to provide the best information possible.
 - o Providing faculty with KYVL access information.

With the initial success of the programs offered, we will continue to reach potential students with course instruction that is practical and experienced filled. Students need to hear from professors that have done what they are teaching. Working within the community with

business leaders, civic leaders and church leaders can help with the student's success in the classroom.

Objective 2.2

Develop a robust array of programs to meet the learning needs of the student.

Actions Needed:

- Determine the most needed programs based upon the occupational needs of the local and regional job market.
 - o Develop a "sample" list of local entities and assess their employment needs, job skills need, and growth numbers.
 - o Communication with the "sample" of the local businesses, churches, local government, and non-profits.
- Implementing curriculum that is focused on active problem-solving, project-based learning and research methods.
 - o Determining the needed job skills as well as the critical thinking skills, decision making skills, and problem-solving skills needed to do an array of occupations.
- Implementing decision making skills strategies in selected introductory courses to enable students to be prepared for different occupations.
 - o Curriculum in the Orientation course and other courses as well to be developed with decision-making skills.
- Developing a reading and writing across the curriculum included in each syllabus.
 - o Organizing the syllabus of each course to have at least one component of reading and one of writing to enhance the student's ability to communicate clearly and effectively.

Objective 2.3

Positioning students within businesses, civic groups, and churches where students can apply the concepts and theories they are learning in the classroom.

Actions Needed:

- Developing a list of businesses, churches, government agencies, and nonprofit groups that will partner with SCU and provide intern/apprenticeships for experiential training for students.
 - o Communicating with local business owners, churches, government, and non-profits to develop partnerships where students can have an internship or apprenticeship.
 - o Developing supervising liaisons at the listed businesses, churches, government, and non-profits to watch over the volunteer work of the student.

- Develop experience checklists within the program’s curriculum to keep up with hours and expected learning outcomes while on the job.
- Creating working syllabi that guides students to apply, reflect on and know how to articulate how their knowledge and skills are applicable to their futures.
 - Developing job evaluation checklists for students to measure their experience to their course curriculum.

Objective 2.4

Working with the local Economic Development leaders to ensure that there are pathways for students to complete degrees and move into lifestyle sustaining jobs.

Actions Needed:

- Encouraging students to attend local job fairs.
 - Keep students aware of job fairs, job postings, and Economic Development news in the local community.
- Maintaining job possibilities through access to a local and regional job board.
 - Encouraging faculty to add a simple assignment of sharing job postings in the classroom.
- Recognize the “pipeline” – Identify, inventory and strengthen connections with businesses to understand the human capital needs.

Objective 2.5

Enhance the knowledge and thinking skills of students to develop resiliency and transferability of those skills.

Actions Needed:

- Supporting innovative teaching practices that enhance student engagement and promoting greater academic performance and achievement.
 - Provide professional development opportunities for faculty to enhance and grow their teaching skills
 - Create a first-rate teaching workshop to improve instructional skills and enhance the creative use of modern technology in the classroom
- Offering quarterly seminars to enhance Student Success experiences for students
 - Provide an opportunity for students to attend tutorial workshops to enhance their reading, writing, and computer use skills.
 - Create an online workshop for students to use in between the face to face quarterly sessions.

Objective 2.6

The goal of any institution that plans to continue offering a practical, adaptable and advantageous degree must acquire accreditation. The highest priority of the University is to achieve accreditation from SACSCOC.

Actions Needed:

- Continue and maintain the operation of the University.
 - o Work closely with the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education to maintain licensure to offer and grant bachelor's degrees in Business Administration, Christian Ministries, and Psychology, and an associate degree in General Studies.
 - o Work closely with SACSCOC to complete the application process and become a candidate for accreditation.
 - o Continue the relationship with SACSCOC through to full accreditation.

What is needed – Recruitment of Educated, Credentialed and Diverse professors that are successful business owners and managers for Business Administration; Counselors, Social Workers, Researchers, and Motivators for Psychology; Church Administrators, Pastors, Missionaries and Theologians for Christian Ministries; Historians, Mathematicians, Music Masters, Writers, Artists, Computer Scientists, and Biologists to teach in the General Studies. These people need to know their fields and how to apply their fields to life. Develop a reservoir of educators from area high schools and colleges.

Area 3 – Resources

Effective communication between the University and the community only enhances and engages both to be successful. Openness and transparency with the students enhances the connection and loyalty of the student to the University. This creates a better foundation for retaining students through to graduation completion and establishes the foundation for developing sustaining resources.

Objective 3.1

A quality academic environment that has a strong career development, support services, and partnership with the community that enhances the growth of the student and adds to the capacity of the University.

Actions Needed:

- Recognize the “pipeline” – Identify, inventory and strengthen connections with businesses to understand the human capital needs.
 - o Enhance the networking with local entities for career development and job placement.

- Develop a Career Services program to open opportunities for local and regional businesses, local governments, and churches to express their needs for career positions.
 - o Develop the communication lines between local businesses, churches, and nonprofits for job openings.
- Listen to students about their goals and aspirations at the completion of their degrees. Some of these students will become employees of SCU at some point in their careers. (Problem solving skills)

Objective 3.2

Expanding and enhancing the resources of the University to promote a strong relationship within the community maximizing the capacity for growth. The Board and Administration is responsible for seeking out and engaging philanthropic individuals to support the vision and mission of the University.

Actions Needed:

- Develop public relations to promote the University's special attributes and its worthiness for investment.
 - o Utilize the relationships between Board members and possible donors.
- Develop a University-wide climate of fundraising and grand solicitation.
- Continue the strong grant writing program for the University.
 - o Search for new grant foundations that align with the mission and vision of SCU.
- Continue the recruiting and retention of students.
 - o Transparency with students, faculty, and staff enhances trust and faith in the University, which maintains retention across the University. This is a vital part of Retention plans. Transparency with state and regional accreditors enhances relationships, encourages cooperation, and increases long-term sustainability.
- Develop relationships with local philanthropists and entrepreneurs that can donate time, money and expertise to the development of a traditional campus.

Objective 3.3

The expansion of the nontraditional program to other venues located within the Jackson Purchase region.

Actions Needed:

- As growth of expanding local cohorts happens, reaching out into surrounding communities will take place.
 - o This will call for increased faculty and support staff to ensure smooth flow and transition for students.
- The future purchase of property to establish the permanent home of Summit Christian University.
 - o Developing relationships with local philanthropists and entrepreneurs that can donate time, money and expertise to the development of a traditional campus

- Survey, maintain, upgrade, and improve learning environments of classrooms.

Objective 3.4

The key to successful operations is found in the personnel carrying out the directions of the leadership.

Actions Needed:

- Develop an orientation and training program for personnel to understand their job, their role and their contribution to the University.
 - o Develop a dynamic orientation process.
- Develop a Leadership Institute for designated faculty, staff and students to learn leadership skills, “next man up” mentality, and decision-making responsibilities for future University employees.
 - o The leadership of the University that includes the Administration, the Board, the Staff, and the Faculty must weave into their curricular and extra-curricular activities the opportunity for the student to receive a “complete” education.
 - o Increasing the non-traditional students’ and working learners’ access to education through the *Summit* experience gives people the opportunity to get an education while keeping their present jobs.

What is needed – As with any higher educational institution, financial resources allow the continuous and smooth operation of the educational program of SCU; Experienced and seasoned leadership in the appropriate positions to ensure the operations of the institution.

The Strategic Operations Plan is a guide for the leaders, both present and future, to understand the direction and intent for Summit Christian University. Providing the Christian higher education alternative to the Western Kentucky region is the vision and mission of SCU. Although this SOP is somewhat comprehensive, it is subject to change as the University grows and priorities change.