
Building an Academic Partnership Through a Strategic Plan

University of Kentucky Auxiliary Services

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Abstract

The University of Kentucky's Auxiliary Services department provides services that enrich the campus experience for students, faculty, and staff. To build upon their existing role on campus, an Academic Partnership containing student employment and projects for course-credit is a future goal for leadership. Through interviews, benchmarking results, and institutional data, results show that a sustainable partnership will increase the Auxiliary Services brand and create opportunities for student growth. Strategic analysis tools including a SWOT/C and stakeholder analysis, goal-setting, and performance metrics will provide strategies for success.

Executive Summary

Background: The Auxiliary Services department at the University of Kentucky (UK) is a far-reaching department on campus that contains everything from housing to dining to events. If there is an office or activity on campus that provides a service to a student, staff or faculty member, it is most likely within Auxiliary Service's jurisdiction. Some of the departments and/or offices that fall under this umbrella include all residence halls, dining locations, the Gatton Student Center, University Events Management, and the UK Bookstore. Auxiliary Services also manages the partnerships with external companies that provide services to the campus like housing (Greystar), dining (Aramark), and the bookstore (Barnes & Noble). Through a reorganization effort and rebranding launch, the department looks to create and implement an Academic Partnership. This will include both paid student employment internships and collaborations with classes on projects benefiting the department and campus community.

Research Design/Results: Interviews were held with key stakeholders in the beginning stages of this partnership to gauge their current position and determine what strategic tools would

be most helpful to them moving forward. A preliminary SWOT/C Analysis, Stakeholder Analysis, Goal-Setting, and Performance Metrics were developed based on results. These show the potential for an Academic Partnership and the impact it would have on the UK's campus should it be successful. A key element of the results was an emphasis on performance metrics and a schedule to measure success. Because the purpose of this partnership is to ensure sustainability, tracking progress will be important to maintain for all stakeholders involved.

Introduction

The Auxiliary Services department prides itself on providing value-adding services to the University Community to walk alongside students, faculty, and staff. Most of these activities generate income for both the department and the University to minimize the fees that a student pays in addition to tuition. During the 2020-2021 school year, Auxiliary Services went through a variety of organizational changes and restructuring with implications for staff, departments, and income streams. As an example, a few offices that were moved under the Auxiliary Services umbrella had different parent departments before and are now learning alongside the leadership where they fit in the new landscape.

Working in tandem with the need to bring all the various offices underneath the Auxiliary Services umbrella together is the desire to branch out and creatively interact with the campus community in new ways. Because there is not a clear path or mission to change the way an office operates, this becomes difficult for the staff to navigate new partnerships or initiatives. An example of a proposed collaboration within Auxiliary Services is with the Office of University Events. This office oversees all events, meetings, tabling, and other activities on campus by working with organizations and departments to schedule space, book service providers, and work

through the event planning process on campus. Director Dr. Ashley Reed has a goal to develop an Academic Partnership with various colleges and departments on campus to bring students in to not only learn event management skills, but to gain experience in all areas of hospitality to work with the other offices within the Auxiliary Services sphere. However, because there is a lack of coordination between the upper leadership of Auxiliary Services, the other offices, and campus partners, this goal becomes harder to design and implement. Working through elements of a strategic plan to identify strengths and challenges, while also envisioning how Auxiliary Services can continue to contribute to the greater campus community within 5-10 years, can greatly aid a variety of new initiatives, not just the Academic Partnership path.

This type of change in the department can be described through the lens of the Competing Values Framework. Kim Cameron and Robert Quinn describe different organizational cultures by using this framework and placing organizations in the Collaborate, Create, Compete, or Control quadrant to better improve individual and organizational performance.¹ By analyzing the descriptions of each quadrant and comparing the current activities of Auxiliary Services with the proposed partnership, Auxiliary Services is attempting to move from the Control Quadrant to the Collaborate Quadrant. The current activities of following typical processes in each office with efficiency as a priority are typical of an organization in the Control Quadrant. However, this new venture of an academic partnership is indicative of new strategies the leadership is attempting to implement that surround increasing involvement with the campus community which are characteristics of the Collaborate Quadrant.

Below is the department's mission and vision statement created before the restructure. At this time, it has not been updated.

¹ Cameron, Kim S. and Quinn, Robert E (2011). *The Competing Values Culture Assessment: A Tool from the Competing Values Product Line*. The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument.

Mission Statement

"The mission of Auxiliary Services is to provide a variety of services that support a living and learning environment fostering personal, professional, and academic growth for the University community."

Our Vision

"Support the University's vision to help transform the lives of our students, staff, and faculty, and advance the Commonwealth we serve --and beyond--by providing high-quality services and facilities, efficient and cost-effective processes, top-quality customer service, and a qualified and diverse personnel."

While UK has been creating and finalizing a new strategic plan for the next 5 years, it presents an opportunity for individual departments to also take stock of their goals for the future and establish practical steps to get there. If the COVID-19 pandemic has taught higher education institutions anything it's that acting proactively can create effective results. By not having an updated strategic plan or vision for the future, the Auxiliary Services department went through a restructure, staff dismissals and hires, procurement of new offices, and change in goals without a clear direction forward. To operate more cohesively moving forward, strategic planning tools can guide new ventures and programs further.

The desire for better goal-setting also comes from the top. Dr. Andrew Smith, the Assistant Vice-President for Auxiliary Services and Assistant Provost for Student Well-Being, has been working with his team for the past year to re-vitalize the department as well as generate ideas for different revenue streams. In the coming semesters, much of the department's marketing materials will be branded as Campus Hospitality to better encapsulate the mission of the department. While he has not taken his team through the strategic plan process, he has taken

steps that work directly with the process in an unofficial way such as team strategy meetings, brainstorming sessions, and changing job titles to better reflect the new direction the department is headed.

In the Fall of 2021, UK had an enrollment of 31,536 students with 4,721 of those enrolled classified as First Time in College, or students who are enrolling in college for the first time at an undergraduate level.² The retention rate for students who are returning for their Spring semester has held around 93% with that slightly dropping to 84% to reflect students returning for their 2nd academic year.³ A key effort by higher education institutions is tracking these retention rates and implementing measures to ensure students return to their courses of study. The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) commissioned a study in 2019 with the research question, “How are institutions maximizing student employment funds to support student retention?” to address this exact connection.⁴ Exploring ways to increase student employment for Auxiliary Services is not only beneficial to the department, but to the University as a whole.

Problem Statement

When college students participate are given the opportunity to participate in internships, co-ops, or on-campus student employment they not only gain a source of income to alleviate some of the many expenses associated with higher education, but also gain valuable experience in the workplace, networking opportunities, and have higher rates of student success both inside

² Enrollment & Demographics | Institutional Research and Advanced Analytics. (2022). Retrieved 12 February 2022, from <https://www.uky.edu/irads/enrollment-demographics>

³ Graduation & Retention | Institutional Research and Advanced Analytics. (2022). Retrieved 12 February 2022, from <https://www.uky.edu/irads/graduation-retention>

⁴ “Employing Student Success: A Comprehensive Examination of On-Campus Student Employment.” National Association of Student Personnel Administrators

and outside the classroom. UK's Auxiliary Services has gone through a significant restructuring over the past year and will rebrand itself as Campus Hospitality over the next year. An element of this rebranding effort is to introduce an Academic Partnership with colleges and departments to increase and improve student employment in the various departments that fall under Auxiliary Services. The department lacks a strategic plan to effectively implement this goal and does not have designated performance metrics to gauge the success of such a program. Because longevity is a critical outcome for the program, key performance indicators and other success measurement tools should be selected before the partnership begins.

Literature Review

Considering the operations and logistics of a college campus on any given day, the role that student employees play is crucial in everything from residential advisors, tour guides, front desk workers, event setup crew to teaching assistants. Providing students the opportunity to gain real-world experience outside the classroom during their academic careers is an exciting opportunity for every stakeholder involved. Not only do students reap the benefits of extra income in most scenarios, but the staff who supervise the students get an insider's perspective on the current culture among students on campus. This is a mutually beneficial relationship between students and faculty/staff where positive outcomes may not even be measured in dollars or hours worked. In one study done on the University of Arizona's campus, students who participated in internships reported finding a sense of community inside their place of work that was different from the classroom but encouraged them to seek out post-graduate career placements that offered the same sense of belonging.⁵

⁵ C.F. Brooks. "Performed Identity and Community Among College Student Interns Preparing for Work." 2014.

However, some student employment opportunities may primarily be seen as a means to an end in order to provide the institution with cheap student labor in lieu of paying for a full-time employee's salary and benefits. Internships, co-ops, and other means of student employment have the potential to enrich learning, but should be created with intentional learning outcomes. One approach to a structured internship program is IOWA GROW, a framework developed by the University of Iowa to facilitate productive learning-centered internships. Referred to as a "guided reflection on work", it maps out conversations to be held by students and their supervisors that connect the student's job responsibilities to what they're learning in the classroom. Outcomes showed that students who participated in the conversations with their supervisor were more likely to identify "key skills gained from student employment" than students who did not participate.⁶

Unfortunately, these types of initiatives are not common among colleges who regularly employ students. Out of 83 colleges surveyed by NASPA in 2019, only 35% reported analyzing data that was not needed for compliance purposes for hourly student workers.⁷ The most common student success factors measured included grade point averages and retention which are commonly used not only for compliance, but also for end-of-year reports and promotional materials. This shows the potential for colleges to take advantage of their student workers and the opportunity of increased insight into student success data based on employment. Some examples of usage of this type of data by colleges who do track it include:

- Improve student employment structure
- Predictive studies and models
- Support recruitment

⁶ S.L. Hansen & A. B. Hoag. "Promoting Learning, Career Readiness, and Leadership in Student Employment." 2018.

⁷ Ibid

- Recognize student employment learning/achievement⁸

While the benefits to students can be reported in quantitative findings, like retention or post-graduate job placements, the benefits that faculty and staff can experience may be best experienced through collaboration with students. There is a lack of studies done on the outcomes related to the supervisors or offices where students work, but an underlying message of many studies is that staff feel more connected to the campus itself. At Birmingham City University in England, researchers talked to over 100 staff who each partnered with a student employee and found that “meaningful staff-student relationships” was the catalyst for any positive outcome the study had.⁹ There were designated conversation topics provided to each partner by the researchers that facilitated a collaborative environment, once again emphasizing the importance of intentional efforts to increase student success. In future studies done on college student employment, some focus needs to be placed on the supervising staff and how their department or office is affected by a change in employing students or through academic collaborations like class projects.

Some recommendations for adding intentional outcomes into student jobs can be found in performance evaluations or clear job descriptions. This is where the buy-in from supervisors and leadership is key to draw attention to the “why” behind a student’s job and not the task itself. For example, resident assistants (RAs) regularly handle conflicts between roommates or entire floors. During evaluations each semester, their director could draw attention to leadership styles and conflict-management skills that directly translate into career skills based on the RA’s specific experience.¹⁰

⁸ Ibid

⁹ R. Freeman, L. Millard, S. Brand, & P. Chapman. “Student Academic Partners: student employment for collaborative learning and teaching development.” 2014.

¹⁰ JS. Lewis. “An Empirical Study of the Role of Student Employment in Leadership Learning.” 2019

There is no shortage of studies and available data on the positive outcomes of student employment, but at the core of each study is why there were positive outcomes to begin with. Colleges who prioritize continual evaluations and intentional learning outcomes for student employees have a greater chance of seeing results that reflect the values of higher education: providing students with opportunities both inside and outside the classroom to grow in their personal and professional lives.

Research Design

To approach the problem of wanting to increase collaboration with students while continuing the development of the Auxiliary Services department, examples of strategies to gauge success and ensure continuity can potentially guide the department in the right direction.

Question & Hypothesis

The Auxiliary Services department at UK contains everything from housing to dining to events in order to provide a variety of services to support the personal, professional, and academic growth of students, staff, and faculty of the University community. What priority strategies and performance metrics should UK Auxiliary Services pursue to more effectively incorporate students through academic collaborations and/or employment?

By working with the various departments under Auxiliary Services and leadership to determine advantageous areas for student involvement and partnering with academic units for potential collaborations, such as a pairing between Marketing classes and re-branding efforts, Auxiliary Services will be able to develop and implement an Academic Partnership Program that is aligned with UK's overarching strategic plan and initiatives for student success. This initiative will be cohesive with the rebranding the department is currently working through and will be

able to integrate class projects, student jobs, and internships seamlessly into Auxiliary Service's mission to support the academic and personal growth of students and the campus community.

Data Plan

Creating a strategic plan for any organization requires in-depth knowledge of its existing vision, goals, and structure to construct a plan for the future as a starting point. After the leadership team is confident in their desire to have a new or updated strategic plan, they can decide internally what the outcome of the process needs to look like. To provide the best support to the team, multiple interviews must be held with key stakeholders in the process who will have a hand in enacting new changes and the subsequent evaluations. This leads to the following research question: *What priority strategies and performance metrics should UK Auxiliary Services pursue to more effectively incorporate students through academic collaborations and/or employment?* A data plan will include interviews to begin to answer this question and UK institutional data will provide context to what trends are already happening across campus.

Three stakeholders were chosen and interviewed due to their relationship to the department and interest in how a strategic plan can help them meet priority goals and achieve success. Given that the department currently does not have a strategic plan, in many ways this is starting from scratch. However, UK has a 5-year strategic plan that should be referenced and used as a model moving forward. This includes organizing goals and action steps into the same intentional categories listed in the University's strategic plan. During the interviews, the individuals provided departmental context, their experience, and their vision for the future.

Interviews were held with Dr. Ashley Reed, Acting Director for Marketing and Engagement, Dr. Andrew Smith, Interim Assistant Vice President for Auxiliary Services, and Dr.

Leslie Vincent, Senior Lecturer in the Gatton College of Business and Economics. Through questions asked (see Appendix A for a list of interview questions), insight was gained about the partnership and goals for student involvement. Furthermore, institutional data¹¹ from the UK was consulted for the following statistics: Enrollment, 2nd Fall Retention Rate, Credit Hours, 4-Year Graduation Rate, 6-Year Graduation Rate.

The discussions and data above gave insight into the overall goal for the academic partnership program and what steps need to be taken next. Specifically, the following analyses were created to better show where the department currently is, who they serve, and how they can ensure the longevity of the program itself.

SWOT/C Analysis	
What are Auxiliary Services' strengths?	What are Auxiliary Services' weaknesses?
What are Auxiliary Services' opportunities?	What are Auxiliary Services' threats and/or challenges?
Stakeholder Analysis	
Who are Auxiliary Services' customers?	Who are Auxiliary Services' partners?
Who are Auxiliary Services' competitors?	Who are Auxiliary Services' employees?
Goal-Setting	
What are Auxiliary Services' short-term goals?	What are Auxiliary Services' long-term goals?
What timeline are the goals operating on?	
Performance Metrics	
What does success look like for partnerships with an Academic Class?	What does success look like for a paid internship?
What does a schedule of evaluation look like for performance metrics?	How should changes be implemented based on performance measurement outcomes?

¹¹ Ibid

These analyses listed above each focus on a specific element of the Auxiliary Services department as a whole and how this will affect the academic partnership program. The SWOT/C analysis examines the current internal position of the department and external threats and opportunities. By focusing on both strengths and weaknesses, this will show how the department can capitalize on what they are already doing well and recognize areas that may need more development before attempting any major changes. Using this as a starting point, opportunities can be selected based on the strength capitalization and threats or challenges can be monitored. A stakeholder analysis will then identify the key organizational players inside and outside the department. Customers, suppliers, investors, employees, administration, and the community can all be considered stakeholders in the success of the Auxiliary Services department. This process explores the different needs and interests of each group. By identifying the varying interests and how they align with the department's internal position, it will help the leadership team set the most effective short-term and long-term goals. In John Bryson's book, *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*, he discusses the importance of completing a stakeholder analysis for the benefit of leadership to place themselves in the shoes of outsiders.¹² Each stakeholder has different influences and the power each one holds over the department will guide decision-making.

To ensure longevity of the academic partnership program, it is important to set clear expectations for how success will be measured and evaluated. Because there are multiple facets to the partnership, each has separate requirements for performance metrics. For example, the collaborations with academic classes will have final deliverables that can be evaluated by a rubric, but an internship will have ongoing projects and daily tasks throughout the semester that

¹² Bryson, J. M. (2018). *Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations : A guide to strengthening and sustaining organizational achievement*. John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated.

could be evaluated on a case by case basis. To help develop new guidelines and best practices in the future, describing how performance metric outcomes can be implemented will be crucial to safeguard the program.

Benchmark Institutions

In addition to understanding the Auxiliary Services department at UK, it is important to compare the institutions UK uses for benchmarking. A total of 12 universities were researched and results showed a similar landscape with regards to auxiliary services offered at each. (See Appendix B) What did not change between universities was the core reason auxiliary services exist: to enhance the experience of campus life for students, faculty, and staff. Each took a different approach to how these services are offered which suggests that departmental coordination combined with clear leadership is the determining factor in the success of an Auxiliary Services department. For example, some universities, like the University of Arkansas, do not combine services like dining or a campus bookstore under one umbrella department with similar services. Instead, each makes autonomous decisions and reports to leadership directly. Seventy-five percent of universities have an Auxiliary Services department, normally reporting to the Finance and Administration parent department, that combines revenue-generating services. These universities sometimes have different names for the department, such as Enterprise Operations or Student and Auxiliary Services, depending on how they have chosen to brand themselves.

What also stays similar across the board is what type of services are included in each department. Campus bookstores, university-specific ID cards, student center or union, dining, vending, and mail are often mentioned with student employment opportunities for each. When a

unique service is included in an Auxiliary Services department, like Auburn University's airport or the University of Georgia's golf course, it means there is an increase in both investment in campus life and student employment opportunities. Also included in the benchmarking results (see Appendix B) is the retention rate of each university. The specific rate that is compared across the board is the 2nd Fall Retention Rate: how many students return after their first year as an undergraduate student at each university.

By looking at benchmark universities to compare and contrast UK's actions, it offers a chance to adjust course on the new strategy of the Auxiliary Services department. For example, the University of Georgia has a section on their Auxiliary Services department's website specifically for student employment and how it benefits the experience of full-time employees as well. This is a best-practice that could be duplicated on a beginning stage at UK with a vision for scaling-up in the future. Benchmarking can also validate the decisions UK has already made and steer leadership away from decisions that did not benefit other universities.

Analysis and Findings

Through interviews and benchmarking, multiple strategies can be formulated from the information gathered to create a successful academic collaboration. The most effective tools that the department can use moving forward are a SWOT analysis, stakeholder analysis, goal-setting, and by developing performance metrics.

Interview Results

After speaking with the three stakeholders involved in the creation of the Academic Collaboration, some phrases and key ideas were brought up multiple times. These all centered

around: Student Input, Department Growth, Student Success, and Outcome Expectations. It's clear that the success of the collaboration will be evaluated based on the outcomes of these four categories.

Student Input

Student Input centers around the idea of what students will bring to the internships and projects they will work on for the department. Dr. Ashley Reed touched on this in our interview when she mentioned how she was looking forward to hearing the fresh ideas students may bring to the projects she will assign her interns. While she oversees the marketing of UK Housing and Dining, there will be interns that work tabling events for prospective students to share information about the services. By bringing in student interns instead of full-time staff, these prospective students and their families will be able to hear first-hand experiences about living and eating on campus. Outside of staffing events, students also have a pulse on what the campus culture is outside of the areas faculty and staff work in. Dr. Leslie Vincent is excited about the class projects designed to gather data on the student experience, like how the brand of Auxiliary Services is perceived. She has an opinion on how the department could re-brand, but she recognizes that students are a bigger stakeholder in the projects her classes will be working on.

Department Growth

Dr. Andrew Smith is anticipating progress in Department Growth as his focus has been on the current staff and how these collaborations can benefit them. Because of the departmental reorganization, he believes that each office he oversees will benefit from new faces to work with and learn from. While specific strategies are still in progress, more assistance on projects that coincide with the department's goals will be a boost to office morale and the collaboration's sustainability. Dr. Vincent also touched on this idea when she emphasized how much insight and

work ethic college students bring to the table. She has worked with a number of outside clients in class projects and each one has seen measured success in one way or another from the work completed by students.

Student Success

Student Success is two-fold: academic success and professional growth. UK has emphasized their commitment to student success in numerous ways throughout the years with entire departments and offices dedicated to providing services relating to it. Through academic partnerships, Dr. Reed is hopeful that students will grow their interpersonal skills by building working relationships with staff members in addition to any academic outcomes. Networking and potential opportunities for full-time jobs are an added bonus for participating students whether being paid as an intern or by working on a class project. Research discussed in this paper has examined the benefit of supplementing course material with work-studies and Dr. Vincent echoes this as well. She has recognized that students who actively participate with these types of projects successfully make connections between the material and application for a holistic approach to higher education.

Outcome Expectations

Finally, Outcome Expectations attempts to consolidate the different expectations that stakeholders have of the partnership's end result. Dr. Vincent focuses on a grade given to a student's final completed project, Dr. Reed wants to ensure students are gaining experience and their involvement is worthwhile, and Dr. Smith will gauge the department's benefit at the conclusion of a semester. Each of these require different measurements and outlined expectations before students are brought in. Separating these visions ensures each stakeholder is understood by narrowing down expectations to three categories: academic, student, and department.

SWOT/C Analysis

After completing the three interviews and finding similarities, it was also clear how a SWOT/C analysis could help the department develop some of these strategies before launching the partnership. Much of the focus is placed on how the department is able to help students grow academically and professionally while acknowledging where Auxiliary Services requires help of their own. These also translate into opportunities and threats and/or challenges which will guide goal-setting. A full SWOT/C analysis is recommended for the department to work through to gather input from all identified stakeholders, but a preliminary one is included below (Exhibit 1) based on interview results and UK data.

Exhibit 1

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety of services offered by Auxiliary Services for collaboration • Staff buy-in • Experience with current student employment • Current student involvement and campus influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited time to dedicate fully to develop a partnership • Small budget for paid student employment • Only one staff member assigned to oversee the partnership • Past department reorganization
Opportunities	Challenges/Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing UK academic partnerships for comparison and benchmarking • Upcoming Summer and Fall events • Many classes with similar goals for partnering • Future department reorganization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one identified class • Competing student internships on campus • "Selling" the partnership to classes • Chance of changing priorities from top leadership

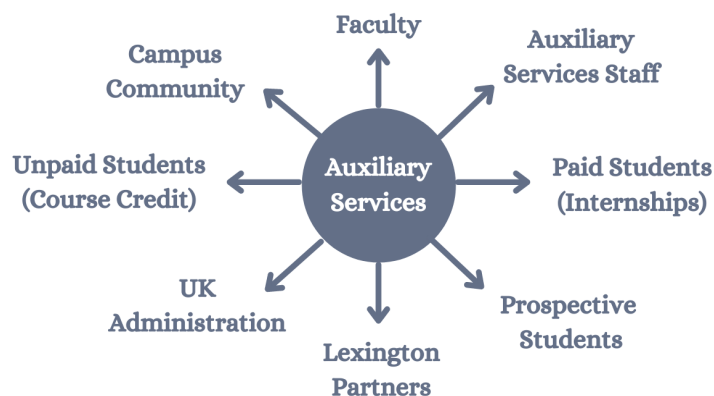
A well thought-out and detailed SWOT/C analysis provides the department with a starting point to build strategies for an academic partnership. Because they will think critically about their current internal strengths and weaknesses alongside external forces, it gives a birds

eye view to potential intersections of opportunities and strengths that solve challenges and overcome weaknesses.

Stakeholder Analysis

In addition to a SWOT/C analysis, a stakeholder analysis identifies their primary audiences for the different elements of the collaboration. As mentioned in the conducted interviews, each party has different expectations for outcomes. By conducting a stakeholder analysis, it presents the opportunity for leadership to uncover even more parties who may have different interests in the development and execution of the partnership. Like the SWOT/C analysis, a stakeholder analysis is recommended to be constructed by the leadership while an initial outline is below. (Exhibit 2)

Exhibit 2



By identifying the varying interests associated with each stakeholder, it can help the leadership team set goals aligned with the partnership. Adding additional levels to the diagram above can be included that separates the stakeholders into groupings that reflect their immediate connection to the department and how it relates to the partnership. For example, students and

faculty that regularly interact with Auxiliary Services should be considered more than a Lexington partner organization that supplies produce to a UK Dining facility. Some decisions should be made by considering all stakeholders, but low-stakes goals and changes can be planned more efficiently if only those closest to the decision need to be involved.

Goal-Setting

After working through SWOT/C and stakeholder analyses, the next step for the department is to set both short-term and long-term goals for the academic partnership. Because the interview results revolved around 4 main topics, goals can be derived from those answers. The benefit of short-term and long-term goals working in tandem is that it offers stepping stones to achieve the overall vision which will be more tied to long-term goals. Short-term goals will be more specific to groups of stakeholders and outcomes will be tied to performance metrics that can be easily measured. Long-term goals will relate to the department's mission statement and purpose of the program. After the leadership has finalized the intended path for the partnership, goals can be discussed and agreed upon by key stakeholders. Preliminary goals based off of interview results are below. (Exhibit 3)

Exhibit 3

Student Input	
<i>Short-Term Goals</i>	
Gather data on the student perspective on the Auxiliary Services brand.	Assign students to tabling events at New Student Orientations, Merit Weekends, and other events throughout the semester.
<i>Long-Term Goal</i>	
Evolve internship tasks and academic class projects based on student experience and input.	
Department Growth	
<i>Short-Term Goals</i>	
Offices lacking staff support gain student employees or academic class designations.	Auxiliary Services creates new programs and improves existing services.
<i>Long-Term Goal</i>	
Department improves their service on campus through collaboration with students and staff.	

Student Success	
Short-Term Goals	
Participating students gain valuable professional skills by working with staff members outside of the classroom.	Student academic performance improves through combining classroom instruction with project-based objectives.
Long-Term Goal	
Students graduate with a holistic education experience based in the classroom and on campus.	
Outcome Expectations	
Short-Term Goals	
Expectations are set for all academic and Auxiliary Services stakeholders.	Opportunities for adjustments are scheduled and welcomed to increase the efficiency of the partnership.
Long-Term Goal	
Relationships between stakeholders are productive and sustainable to ensure the longevity of the partnership.	

The benefit of setting these goals with partnership in mind will allow additional focus on what the outcomes need to be. By working through short-term goals first to achieve the long-term vision, momentum of the department and coordinating academic partners can be sustained through multiple academic terms. Continual improvement of the program is contingent upon knowing what the actual goals are. Employees will also have direction that they can reference if decisions need to be made so they can ensure they're on the right path to success.

Performance Metrics

Much like goal-setting, success cannot be achieved if there is no way to measure it. As previously mentioned, there are various stakeholders involved with this academic program and each have different outcomes they expect. Performance metrics can dictate how success will be measured in multiple ways to gauge how the organization is meeting its goals. Typically, organizations will focus on quantitative data for their metrics like sales, number of customers,

profit growth, costs, or return on investment. Popular qualitative measurements will include customer satisfaction, employee retention, the reputation of the organization, or the quality of available products. While selecting key performance metrics should be an important step in the creation of a strategic plan, it is equally as important to follow through on the tracking of each one to adjust the organization's course.

After the three interviews held with Dr. Reed, Dr. Vincent, and Dr. Smith, there were a few performance metrics that stuck out as imperative to implement and monitor. Much like the goals, these focus on both student success and departmental success. If the partnership were to fail one, the other would suffer. If students are not finding their role to be worthwhile or helpful to their own academic and professional growth, they may not want to continue with their role leading to the department's growth suffering. At the same time, if the department cannot see success by spending valuable time and money investing in student employment and classroom participation, there will be no opportunities for student growth. Making sure there are ways to track the progress of both sides ensures the longevity of the partnership. Listed below are the initial performance metrics that were identified by Dr. Andrew Smith in his interview. (Exhibit 4)

Exhibit 4

#1: Student Development	
<i>Student Success</i>	
Assess the level of impact these experiences have on student participants	Experiential Satisfaction, Professional Development, Gained Knowledge
#2: Partner Satisfaction	
<i>Departmental Success</i>	
Assess level of satisfaction from internal and external partners	
#3: Financial Opportunity	
<i>Departmental Success</i>	
Increase rates of academic conferences/events within Gatton Student Center	

#4: Brand Recognition

Departmental Success

Increase awareness of services and opportunities offered by Auxiliary Services throughout the campus community.

By identifying these as the measurements leadership will be tracking, it sets the objectives for the partnership evaluation moving forward. These are intended to be baseline measurements to use as benchmarks for review at specific times in the future. The next step will be to set a schedule to monitor the progress of each metric and how each relates to the goals they will be working towards. Some may be easier to track such as a pre-test and a post-test for gaining student knowledge, but others may be on a continual scale throughout each semester. An example of a schedule that can be followed per academic year is listed below. (Exhibit 5)

Exhibit 5

#1: Student Development	
August	
Pre-test given to all paid student interns AND unpaid course credit students to establish a baseline	Questions: Experiential Satisfaction, Professional Development, Gained Knowledge
December/May: dependent on Semester vs Academic Term class participation	July
Post-test given to all unpaid course credit students with the same questions as the pre-test	Post-test given to all paid student interns with the same questions as the pre-test
#2: Partner Satisfaction	
July	
Survey sent to internal and external partners to establish a baseline	Questions: Attitudes towards identified partner satisfaction metrics such as price points and customer service
June	
Same survey sent again to internal and external partners.	

#3: Financial Opportunity	
<i>July</i>	
Count of past conferences and events held at the Gatton Student Center from the previous fiscal year to establish a baseline	
<i>June</i>	
Count of conferences and events held at the Gatton Student Center from the current year to compare increases or decreases.	
#4: Brand Recognition	
<i>July</i>	
Count of outreach events and tabling representation from the previous year to establish a baseline.	
Survey distributed to individuals who recently utilized on-campus services via email	Questions: Identified brand recognition standards to track such as asking respondents to recall marketing materials or other offerings through Auxiliary Services.
<i>June</i>	
Count of outreach events and tabling representation from the current year to compare increases or decreases.	
Survey distributed to individuals who recently utilized on-campus services via email with the same questions as the July survey	

After comparing the answers to the different surveys created by the department, scores can be calculated from the difference and converted to quantifiable data. The count of conferences and events can easily be compared and calculated as percentage increases or decreases to indicate the level of success. While the schedule should follow UK's Fiscal Year of July to June, students are typically not on campus until August unless working over the summer. Due to this, and the academic schedule, the student success performance metrics would be measured more easily from August to July to accommodate the difference.

The last element of performance metrics falls under action items. Once a measurement is found and analyzed, some type of action should be taken based on the result. Otherwise, it will not be an effective tool to increase the sustainability of the partnership. Actionable steps will

vary from year to year depending on the metric outcomes. These may focus on improving elements of the student experience, like increasing feedback from supervisors if the results from one year show that students feel unprepared for the tasks they were assigned. Some may not be able to be solved quickly, like if the partner satisfaction survey indicates unhappiness with price points or contracts. But, it will still be helpful feedback to hear when re-evaluating strategies for the department as a whole.

After enough data has been gathered from these metrics, the department may find it in their best interest to increase measurements throughout the year to paint a more accurate picture of the progress they are making. This can easily be implemented if the metrics are already identified and their outcomes are valued by all parties. Separate from Auxiliary Services as a whole, the academic element of this partnership already has a reliable performance metric in grades and course evaluations. These are already utilized by professors and will be used to gauge the quality of the course credit opportunity given to the students. To protect student privacy, professors will be able to work directly with the leadership to share results and feedback to adapt the partnership for the next academic semester or year.

Recommendations

Following the preliminary analyses, some implementation strategies are recommended for the Auxiliary Services department. To begin, key leadership and stakeholders should be identified and committed to developing a strategic plan for the academic partnership. These individuals should be able to not only contribute to the creation of strategies, but be willing and able to see the steps through to evaluation and adjustments, if needed. From there, a SWOT/C analysis can be completed from the starting point laid out in this document. A Stakeholder

Analysis will have already been discussed in some fashion after the individual identification, but it will only help the department to have a more detailed one on file with additional context and layers added. Both of these two documents together will aid the goal-setting agenda and subsequent pinpointed performance metrics.

The performance metrics are the most important recommendation moving forward for this academic partnership. Not only does it incorporate different successes for different stakeholders, but it outlines ways to evaluate progress towards goals as well. The vision of this collaborative project between Auxiliary Services and classes is to provide students an opportunity to grow academically and professionally while also giving the department an opportunity to grow their brand on campus. Strong performance metrics and their accompanying measurement schedule will only help the sustainability of this partnership. Following through on results will guide the department's execution of its vision and mission statement, creating a dynamic and engaging department on UK's campus.

Reflection

After interviewing the three individuals, it was clear that there was a significant amount of passion from all parties regarding the potential of this partnership. However, there was a lack of strategy or coherent plan that consolidated all the expectations and steps that needed to be taken. This presented an opportunity to provide real feedback and recommendations at the ground level of the partnership's creation. All parties had ownership of their individual roles and there is little doubt of the potential failure of follow-through.

Due to the nature of each individual's busy schedule, there may not be a time moving forward where some recommendations can occur soon. Instead, each was looking forward to

working with their own colleagues and bringing back results to begin the partnership officially in a future semester. Currently, work is in progress to increase UK Housing and Dining's presence at events for admitted students. Discussions are in progress to select classes on campus who may have content that coincides with marketing and graphic design to aid the rebrand of Auxiliary Services. These actions will help the department recognize their strengths and weaknesses in working with students before finalizing strategies in the future.

Limitations and Concerns

The preliminary strategic plan elements had some limitations with the largest being the lack of direction from the individuals who were interviewed. Each had clear visions for their own role in a final vision, but there was not a coordinated direction overall. These results also were only based on these individuals as students had not been identified to work with this partnership yet. In the future, students who work with Auxiliary Services both in the new internship roles and in classes will be able to share their experience and help shape strategies. There was also a time constraint as it was difficult to find time to conduct interviews, let alone attempt a full strategy session.

While it is not known how the leadership will use the initial strategies outlined, it is a concern that recommendations may not be followed. Because the recent history of Auxiliary Services has been reorganized without a clear direction from top leadership, there is a concern that an academic partnership will be seen as an initiative that can propel the department forward without considering the implications of not having a clear path to follow. This may hinder the potential success and sustainability of the partnership or significantly limit the impact it can have on the campus community.

Conclusion

UK's Auxiliary Services department has a wide variety of opportunities for student involvement that range from paid internships to collaborative projects for course credit. Their mission to foster a living and learning environment on campus coincides with many professor's wishes to give students opportunities to practice their academic learning outcomes outside the classroom. By using strategic tools like a SWOT/C analysis, stakeholder analysis, goal-setting, and performance metrics, Auxiliary Services can create an Academic Partnership Program that increases their brand and presence on campus. Having clearly defined goals and measurements for success will ensure a sustainable partnership for students, staff, and faculty both today and in the future.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocols

Interview #1: Dr. Ashley Reed, the Director of University Events and currently leading the Academic Partnership Initiative

- *In what ways can students directly help Auxiliary Services?*
- *Which offices could benefit the most from student employment?*
- *What are some desired outcomes from the Academic Partnership?*
- *What do you think will be the most difficult to accomplish in the planning or implementation process?*
- *What are some performance metrics you are looking to implement?*
- *Where do the strengths of this department lie? Weakness?*

Interview #2: Dr. Andrew Smith, the Assistant Vice-President for Auxiliary Services

- *What are some desired outcomes from the Academic Partnership?*
- *In what ways can students directly help Auxiliary Services?*
- *How far into the future are you planning this partnership for?*
- *What are some performance metrics you are looking to implement?*
- *Do you think any new staff positions will be created as a result of the partnership, should it be successful? If so, which ones?*
- *Where do the strengths of this department lie? Weakness?*

Interview #3: Dr. Leslie Vincent, Gatton College of Business & Economics Senior Lecturer

- *What are the benefits of student employment and extracurricular involvement outside of the classroom?*

- *What do you hope to see out of a partnership between Auxiliary Services and a class like yours?*
- *How would you measure success in this collaboration?*
- *Will this be something you want to include in your course planning moving forward?*
- *How will you grade the students on their work?*
- *If you've had students work with clients before in the past, has it been successful?*

Appendix B: Benchmark Universities

Benchmark Institutions					
	Department Name	Defined Mission Statement?	Offices Within Department	Parent Department	Student Employment
University of Kentucky	Auxiliary Services	✓	-Student ID Card -Dining/Catering -Housing -Bookstore -Student Center/Events -Bulk Mail/Printing	Finance & Administration	-Dining -Housing -Events -Bookstore
University of Alabama	Enterprise Operations	✓	-Student ID Card -Dining -Contracts -Bookstore -Printing	Finance & Operations	-Dining -Supply store
University of Arkansas	No department, all services under Academic and Student Affairs in separate offices				
Auburn University	Auxiliary Services	✓	-Student ID Card -Airport -Transportation -Parking -Bookstore	Budget & Bus Operations	-Bookstore
University of Florida	No department, all services under Associate Vice-President for Auxiliaries/Director of Housing				
University of Georgia	Auxiliary Services	✓	-Golf Course -Dining -Vending/Solicitation -Bookstore -Transport/Parking	Finance & Administration	-Bookstore -Dining -Golf course -Transportation -Parking
Louisiana State University	Auxiliary Services	✓	-Student Center -Event Management -Student ID Card -Theater -Dining -Bookstore	Finance & Administration	-Student Center -Theater/Box Office -ID Office -Event management -Finance/Copier
University of Mississippi	Contractual Services Management	✗	-Student ID Card -Dining -Contracts -Bookstore -Licensing/Vending	Finance & Administration	-Bookstore -Dining
Mississippi State University	No department, all services under Vice-President for Student Affairs				
University of Missouri	Student & Auxiliary Services	✓	-Student Center (2) -Bookstore (9)	Student Affairs	-Student Center -Bookstore
University of South Carolina	Campus Auxiliary and Support Services	✓	-Custodial -Dining -Bookstore -Vending -Mail	Finance & Administration	-Bookstore -Catering
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga	Auxiliary Services	✗	-Student ID Card -Dining -Bookstore -Parking -Mail	Finance & Administration	-Bookstore -Dining
Vanderbilt University	Auxiliary Services	✗	-Catering -Dining -Bookstore -Concessions -Mail -Printing	Administration	-Dining -Bookstore -Concessions