



Annual Planning Guide
October 2020

Purpose and Overview of Annual Planning and Budgeting

The annual planning process at ECC articulates the priorities that will be addressed within a single fiscal year by a reporting entity (area, unit/division, or office/program). It is a part of the broader planning cycle at ECC where the plan of each entity informs and aligns to the plans of other entities. (See Figure 1). The priorities identified in the annual planning process will inform the annual budgeting process where the budget needs are articulated and prioritized to align to the goals and objectives across the institution.

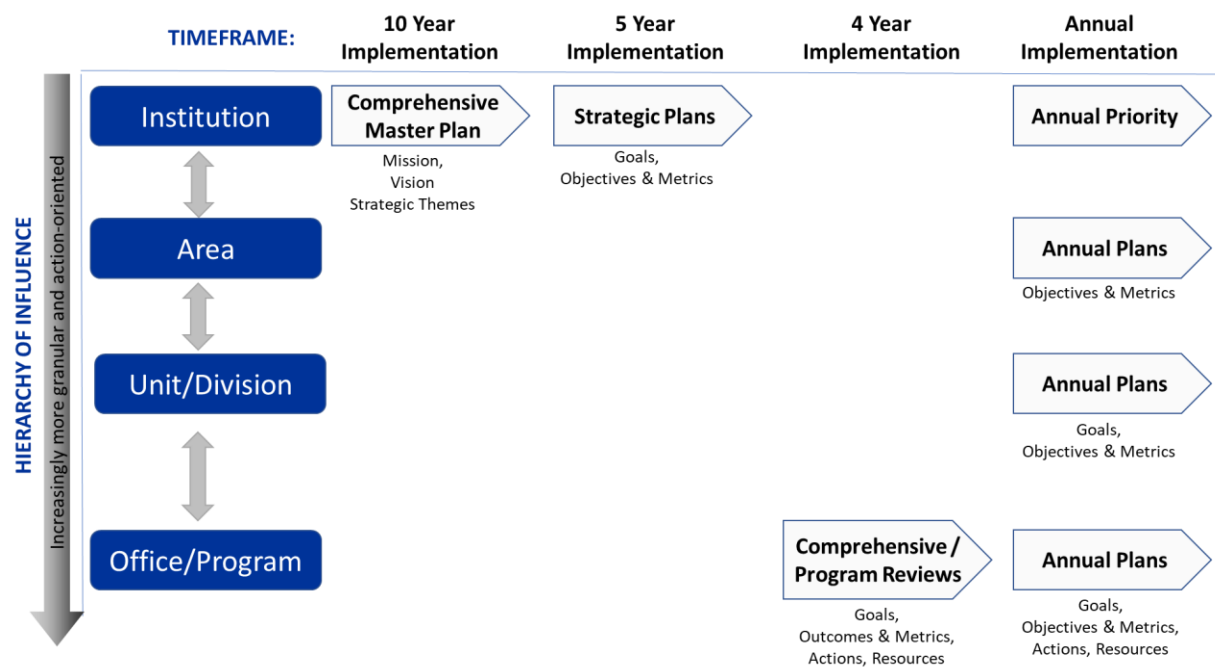
The annual planning and budgeting process begins in October of every year to plan for the following fiscal year. For example, FY2021-22 planning would begin in October 2020. It involves all five areas of the College (President's Office, Academic Affairs, Student Services, Administrative Services, and Human Resources) and every level within each area: programs/offices, units/divisions, and areas themselves (see Appendix 2).

Nuventive is the online planning platform where the annual planning process (including all goals, objectives, performance indicators and targets, resource needs) is documented and tracked. Goals and objectives should cascade down from the institution to areas to units/divisions and to offices/programs. The relationships between these goals and objectives are documented and mapped within *Nuventive*. As goals and objectives are cascaded down throughout the institution, resource needs should also be cascaded down to align the resource allocation throughout the institution.

Note: The following document articulates the annual planning process that will be introduced for FY2021-22 in Administrative Services, Human Resources and the President's Office. Although the definitions and concepts are the same, please refer to [Appendix 1](#) for a modified annual planning process for FY2021-22 for the Academic Affairs and Student Services areas that will not be a part of the FY2021-22 annual planning pilot. All areas will be implementing this new process for FY2022-23 annual planning which will begin in October 2021.

As presented in Figure 1 below, the area annual plans contextualize the institution's goals, objectives and annual priorities for each area. The area objectives will provide direction to units/divisions as they articulate unit/divisional goals and objectives. At the same time, the unit/divisional goals and objectives will provide direction to the office/program's annual plans. Each annual plan aligns and contributes to the annual plans at the next level and so on. In addition, multi-year plans such as the Comprehensive or Program Review documents serve as input into the annual planning processes of the offices or programs.

Figure 1: Alignment Between ECC Planning Processes



Planning Process: Setting Annual Goals and Objectives

Goals are long-range, broad statements that express desired results. They reflect the key role and responsibilities of the entity and will help set the direction of the entity. Goals provide the framework for determining specific objectives and performance indicators or accomplishments.

Example of a goal (from IRP): *“Champion the annual planning processes across all areas, unit/divisions and office/programs.”*

More specifically, to develop annual goals:

- Step 1: *Roles/Responsibilities*: List the unique role and responsibilities of the area, unit/division or office/program.
- Step 2: *Strengths and Challenges*: As it relates to the area, unit/division or office/program’s roles and responsibilities:
 - What does your team do well and what are some challenges that your team faces?
 - What external conditions could help or hinder your team’s ability to contribute to ECC?
- Step 3: *Contribution and alignment to the goals of others*:
 For the areas, each of them should contribute to the Institutional Goals and Annual Priority.
 For the unit/divisions, each of them should contribute to the corresponding area’s objectives.
 For the offices/programs, each of them should contribute to the corresponding unit/division’s goals, and also to four-year goals from the last Comprehensive or Program Review.
 - How may your team’s unique roles and responsibilities contribute to the achievement of the goals of others?
 - How could your team empower other teams within ECC to help achieve their goals?

- Step 4: *Prioritizing Strengths*: From step 2:
 - Considering your team’s current strengths, which role or responsibility is the most critical and that most directly supports the goals of your manager or the four-year goals? In other words, if your team is not able to fulfill this role well in the next fiscal year, no progress in these goals would take place.
- Step 5: *Prioritizing Challenges*: From step 2:
 - Which challenges are the most critical to address in order for your team to be well equipped to contribute to the progress of goals of your manager or the four-year goals? In other words, if your team does not address these challenges in the next fiscal year, no progress in these goals would be possible.
- Step 6: *Drafting Goals*: In order for your team to fulfill its most critical role (from Step 4) and address the most critical challenges (Step 5), what must your team do in the next fiscal year?

Objectives are short-term, action-oriented statements that describe what must be done to achieve the desired goals. As an action-oriented statement, an objective should start with a word such as: improve, increase, reduce, decrease, enhance, strengthen or grow to reflect progress towards the desired result.

In general, objectives should be S.M.A.R.T. (Smart, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound).

- Ensure objectives are quantified and are time-bound:
 - *Bad objective*: “Significantly increase X” (“significantly” is subjective and can’t be measured)
 - *Good objective*: “Increasing X funding from 5% to 10% by June 2021.”
- A good objective should answer: How much? By when? Objectives may be quantified by one of the following metrics:
 - Time – e.g., a decrease in time required to provide a service
 - Dollars – e.g., a decrease in cost or increase in funding
 - Percentages – e.g., a decrease in time to fulfill a service or increase in student/staff
 - satisfaction
 - Numerical counts
 - A specific accomplishment is used to demonstrate that an objective has been carried into effect (e.g. a completed document, the installation of a software, etc.)

Example of an objective: *“In Fall 2020, all areas, units/division, and office/programs will have clearly articulated annual goals and objectives.”*

Actions are tasks to complete in order to progress toward a desired objective (e.g., update procedures, refurbish technology, etc.).

Offices and programs are the only teams that would need to articulate specific actions. Although the areas and unit/divisions would provide guidance to the office/program, areas and unit/divisions usually do not unilaterally execute actions without the involvement of an office/program.

Example of actions: *“Provide training to equip new deans and directors to lead the annual planning process within their unit/division or office/program.”*

In this example above, the action (e.g. provide training) will contribute to the objective (e.g., all areas, units/division, and office/programs will have clearly articulated annual goals and objectives) which in turn will support the goal (e.g., IRP champions the annual planning process).

Resources are assets needed to achieve the goals (e.g. personnel hire, software/hardware, instructional equipment, non-instructional equipment, furniture, facilities, contracts/services/memberships/travel and conferences).

Since the role of the office/programs is more operational and action-oriented, office/programs should reflect on the resource requirements needed to support the desired actions. The resource requirements of the office/program would then inform the resource conversations at the unit/division and area levels. Thus, the offices/programs are the only teams who would need to articulate resources requirements in *Nuventive*.

Once the office/program articulates resource needs aligned to the goals and objectives of the office/program, the unit/division will review and prioritize these resource needs to ensure they are also fully aligned to the goals and objectives of the unit/division. Thus, as annual plans and budget priorities are cascaded up from office/programs to unit/division and from unit/division to areas, there are intentional opportunities to confirm that the annual plans and budget allocations are fully aligned throughout the institution.

Figure 2: Information to input into *Nuventive*¹

Annual Plans should include:	Goal	Objectives, Performance Indicators & Targets	Actions	Resource Requirements
Areas		✓		
Unit/Division	✓	✓	✓ *	✓ *
Office/Program	✓	✓	✓	✓

* Note: Units/Divisions without offices/programs reporting to them would need to articulate actions and resource requirements. Units/divisions with offices/programs reporting to them do not since actions and resource requirements will be defined by the office/program.

Example of resource requirements: *“Additional online team collaboration tools and hiring an additional staff member to coordinate and facilitate the training, and to develop training materials.”*

In the example above, in order to execute the action (e.g., provide training) and contribute to the objective (e.g., all areas, units/divisions, and offices/programs will have clearly articulated annual goals and objectives), additional resources are needed.

¹ In *Nuventive*, there are entities that are considered “units” but do not have offices/programs that report to them. For the purposes of planning, these units function as if they were offices/programs. For example, Institutional Research and Planning is considered a “unit” within *Nuventive* because it reports to an “area”. However, since IRP does not have any office/program that reports to it, IRP develops annual plans as if it were a program (develops goals, objectives, performance indicators, targets, action and resource requirements).

For the offices/programs, after assessing the goals and objectives from the previous fiscal year, and clarifying specific actions needed to achieve the goals and objectives for the next fiscal year, determine what resources are needed in the next fiscal year. For each of the following resource types: a) staffing, b) technology/software, c) instructional equipment, d) non-instructional equipment, e) furniture, f) facilities, and g) contracts/services/memberships/travel and conferences

1. What resources does the office/program currently have?
2. Of the current resources of the office/program, could these resources be repurposed to support the actions of the office/program for the next fiscal year?
3. If current resources cannot be repurposed, what additional resources may be needed?

These resource requirements are then inputted into *Nuventive* for prioritization across all office/programs relative to the goals and objectives of the unit/division.

Planning Process: Performance Indicators/Accomplishments

Performance indicators/accomplishments are measures used to track progress towards achieving an objective. Actionable objectives must be bound by both a baseline and a target. What is the current state and what can each area, unit/division, or office/program reasonably achieve in the next fiscal year?

While performance indicators are usually quantitative, some objectives may be linked to the successful completion of a project (e.g. drafting a document, installing software, etc.). In these cases, the performance indicator is not quantitative, but whether a particular project has been completed (accomplishment).

Example of a performance indicator: *“Percentage of office/program managers who participated in the annual planning training who are comfortable articulating clear goals and objectives for their programs.”*

Example of an accomplishment: *“Office/program managers received materials and templates for the annual planning training.”*

Assessment Process: Reviewing Goals and Objectives

As with any of the planning processes within ECC, the activities involved in the annual planning process are cyclical. Thus, the assessment process, which is the last step in one planning cycle, becomes the first activity needed for the annual planning of the next fiscal year.

The assessment process seeks to determine to what extent the goals and objectives have been achieved. The process begins by evaluating goals and objectives from the previous year based on the data available relative to the established targets. Relative to the established targets, has there been significant progress towards achieving the objectives? Why or why not?

If the objectives have not been met, assess whether existing goals are still aligned to the goals of other ECC entities. A discussion with the next-level manager (i.e., area VP for the unit, Dean/Director for the office/program) may be needed to ensure the goals and objectives align with the manager’s vision of the area/unit/division he/she leads.

If the office/program goals and objectives are still aligned and relevant, implementation of the same goals and objectives could be extended for the next fiscal year. If the existing goals and objectives are no longer relevant, how can they be revised or should the office/program establish new goals and objectives for the next fiscal year?

The office/program should also consider external circumstances that may hinder the pursuit of the goals and objectives. How have changes in the circumstances (e.g., changes within ECC, in the demographics of students, with policies/regulations, etc.), affected the ability to achieve the goals and objectives? What new actions may be needed to support existing goals and objectives?

Budget Prioritization and Approval

Once resource requirements are entered into *Nuventive*, managers review and prioritize budget requests using standard rubrics to ensure a transparent and fair process. Rubrics provided in *Nuventive* will allow administrators to categorize requests under high-priority, moderate-priority, and low-priority.

Deans/managers and Vice Presidents review requests coming from the offices/programs and units/divisions, under their leadership. Deans/managers communicate only high-priority budget requests to Vice Presidents. The Vice Presidents do likewise within their areas. High priority budget requests will be presented to the Executive Cabinet for prioritization across all areas.

The Office of Purchasing and Risk further evaluates budget requests related to the health, safety and liability of the institution. These requests are reviewed in light of the known current risks to the College's health, safety, and liability.

The Institutional Research and Planning office will run reports to bring high priority budget requests to Executive Cabinet for review and recommendation. Executive Cabinet members then will meet to discuss the highest priority budget requests as recommended by the Vice Presidents and the President for the five areas of the college, as well as requests recommended by the Office of Purchasing and Risk Management.

The Vice President of Administrative Services provides a recommendation to Executive Cabinet about the type of fund that will pay for budget requests approved. The Superintendent/President makes the final decision on type of fund used to pay annual budget requests that have been approved.

After prioritization of new budget requests have been completed, high priority budget requests would be submitted to Fiscal Services as part of the regular budgeting process.

Budget Prioritization Rubrics

As previously mentioned, ECC uses rubrics to prioritize the budget requests at the program/office level, unit/division level, and area level. Executive Cabinet also uses rubrics to prioritize budget requests coming from the five College areas.

The *unit/division level rubric* includes three prioritization criteria: alignment of the program/office budget request with the unit/division goals, alignment of the request with the annual priority, and the request's alignment with the last program review conducted by the program/office.

The *area level rubric* includes two prioritization criteria: alignment of the unit/division budget request with the area objectives and alignment of the request with the annual priority.

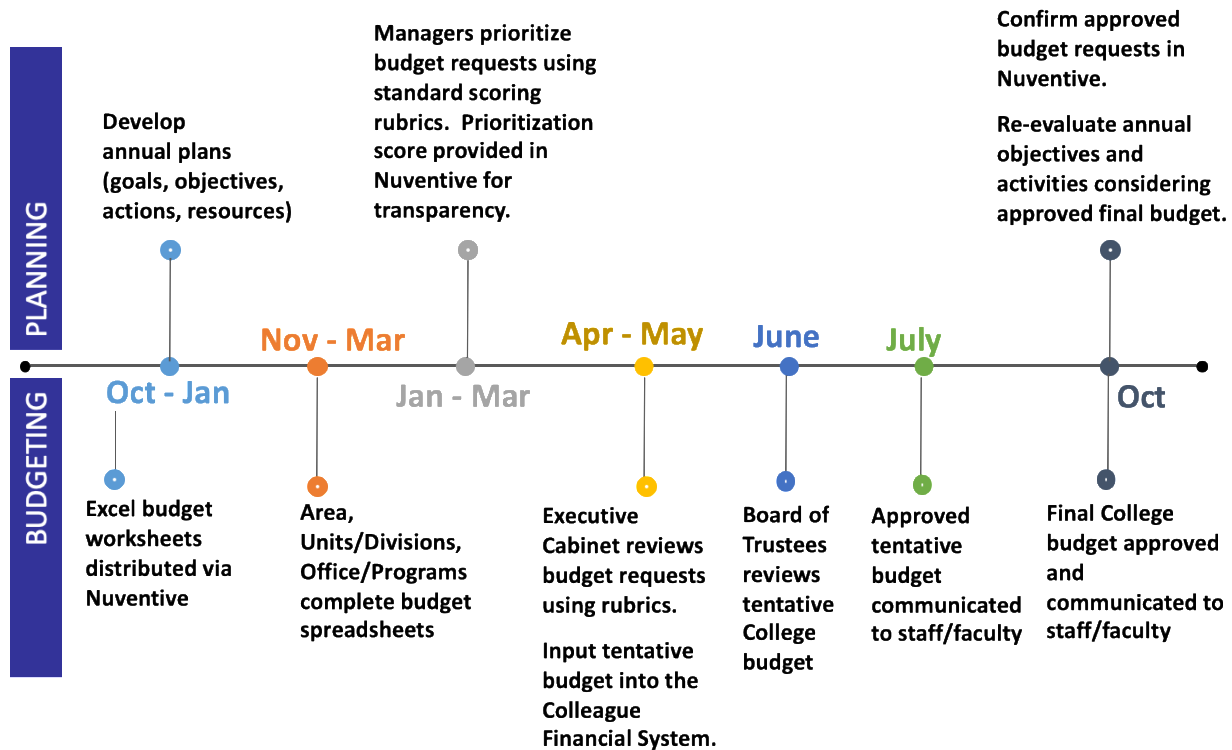
To prioritize area budget requests, these are organized into four types: technology, facilities, classified/confidential staff, and equipment. The *Executive Cabinet* uses *four rubrics*, according to the four types of requests.

Approved Budgets and Implications for Annual Plans

After budget requests have been approved, Fiscal Services will communicate this information to the Vice Presidents of each area. The Vice Presidents will do so with Deans/managers that report to them. Deans/managers will communicate this information to office/program planners. The Program Annual Planners will then enter the approved budget requests in *Nuventive*, the online planning platform, so all stakeholders would be notified of the approval or rejection of each budget request. All managers will be able to see which actions those budget requests supported and which goals and objectives are affected by the approval or rejection of the budget requests. This process will ensure clarity and transparency regarding the approval or rejection of each budget request.

Once the budget has been approved and communicated to all stakeholders, the areas, units/divisions, and offices/programs will re-evaluate the proposed goals, objectives and activities. If needed, the goals, objectives, targets or actions will be adjusted to accommodate the budget provided.

Annual Planning and Budgeting Calendar



Appendix 1: Annual Planning Process for FY2021-22 for the Academic Affairs and Student Services Areas

The current *Nuventive* online platform has been redesigned to better accommodate the annual planning process outlined in this document. To manage the scope of change and to accommodate a phased roll-out of this new system to ensure all technical issues are properly addressed, the Student Services and Academic Affairs areas will not be using the new *Nuventive Improve* platform for FY2021-22. Although the current system has been simplified to some extent, the Student Services and Academic Affairs areas will continue to use the existing *Nuventive* platform until August 2021 when FY2022-23 annual planning begins.

The primary change in the new *Nuventive Improve* platform is the inclusion of goals, objectives, performance indicators & targets, actions and resources. This will allow for greater transparency and alignment of the priorities across all ECC entities.

In this transition year, the Academic Affairs and Student Services areas will not be asked to enter additional information into the existing *Nuventive* platform. This means the goals and objectives within these two areas will not be intentionally monitored in *Nuventive*. However, ***the reflection and thought behind the planning process where the goals and objectives are defined is still an important exercise as it will inform the budgeting process where budget needs are prioritized.*** Managers should still meet with their teams offline to discuss these goals and objectives.

To ensure alignment between the annual planning and budget process using the existing *Nuventive* platform, the Student Services and Academic Affairs areas may upload documents repository with their goals and objective in to the existing *Nuventive* platform under the document repository. This will serve as input for their units/divisions as the units/divisions reflect on their goals, objectives and resource needs. Units/Divisions may do the same for their corresponding offices/programs and upload the goal and objective documents to the existing *Nuventive* platform.

Appendix 2: Annual Planning and Budgeting Process: Three Levels

