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June 24, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Strategic Planning Council
Joseph F. Sheley, Chair

FROM: Alexander Gonzalez
President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Alexander Gonzalez'.

SUBJECT: SPC Annual Report, 2009

I have received the 2009 Annual Report of the Strategic Planning Council regarding implementation of the University's *Strategic Plan*. Thank you for a very thorough analysis of the distance traveled and your thoughts concerning continued implementation of the *Plan*.

I am in agreement that the *Strategic Plan* appears to have become the reference point for many discussions and decisions on campus. This is especially the case regarding attention to the *Plan's* first priority, stabilizing and increasing recruitment, retention, and graduation rates. Further, it is also clear that resources have been allocated specifically in order to attain improvements in these rates. I agree too that, as our budget difficulties grow, we will need to remain focused on *Strategic Plan* priorities as we make hard decisions regarding resource allocation. Tradeoffs attendant to these priorities should be transparent to the campus community.

I also agree that the activities of the Cabinet, UBAC, and SPC should be better integrated, at the very least through enhanced communication, and better yet through enhanced levels of interaction among the three entities. Having initiated such efforts through a recent joint UBAC/SPC/Cabinet meeting, I will move further forward in this regard as we seek reasonable and targeted budget adjustments. Hopefully, such integration and overall alignment of purposes and activities not only will provide direction in resource allocation, but also will assist in maintaining momentum in pursuit of the *Strategic Plan* priorities beyond the first, and with special attention to the fifth (improving connections to the region). It is clear that, in line with the second *Plan* priority (evidence-based decisions), we must focus budgeting efforts on setting goals and assessing outcomes rather than simply on making adjustments to historical financial distributions across campus divisions.

Finally, I am very much in accord with the recommendation that we establish long-term benchmarks for those features of our *Plan* priorities that can be easily accessed and monitored by the various segments of our campus community. These benchmarks and commentary regarding their movement up or down over the years will help everyone stay focused on our priorities and will more

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systematically promote adjustments to efforts to accomplish priority goals. We will implement the new benchmarking system in Fall 2009.

Again, thank you for your hard work and an excellent annual report.

AG/ch