



# ONLINE LEARNING STRATEGIC PLANNING

*Get Online and Grow Online*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This document provides an introduction of an SPL strategic “getting online and growing online” planning session. Provided are common terms and definitions, and initial recommendations that can help any institution around setting-up and scheduling a strategic planning session for consideration and further discussion as they may be most appropriate to meeting growth goals.

## TERMS / DEFINITIONS

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The SPL Strategic Planning Session follows the “Get Online and Grow Online” model. There are several key terms that are the foundation for driving the session. To provide a context for these terms as they relate to “online” they are defined within this section.

**Feasibility Analysis:** The process by which an assessment is undertaken that assesses the “readiness” of an organization to move into the “online” learning market-space. This process includes: local market analysis, industry market analysis, institution analysis (programs, content, staff, faculty, budgets, technology, senior management support/buy-in). This process explores the institutions historical and current data around enrollment growth and development, support systems and retention. There is a focus on the core aspects that impact online learning: marketing, academics, technology and support services.

**Strategic Planning Preparation (SPP):** The SPL SPP process is defined by providing an institution a series of questions that typically include yes/no, qualitative, and quantitative questions that establish the framework for the 1 to 2 days of the strategic planning session. This activity typically takes about 4 to 10 hours of an institutions time in advance to review and respond to. Subsequently, SPL then analyzes the data (typically 8 to 10 hours) and frames the strategic planning session around the key areas.

**Strategic Planning Session:** The activity of meeting and processing through the key agenda items framed by the SPP. Typical sessions range from 1 to 2 days and include SPL’s key consulting team and an institution’s leadership that will support online learning implementation and growth as well as the institution’s project manager/online coordinator that will support the day-to-day/weekly activities fostered from the strategic plan that is created.

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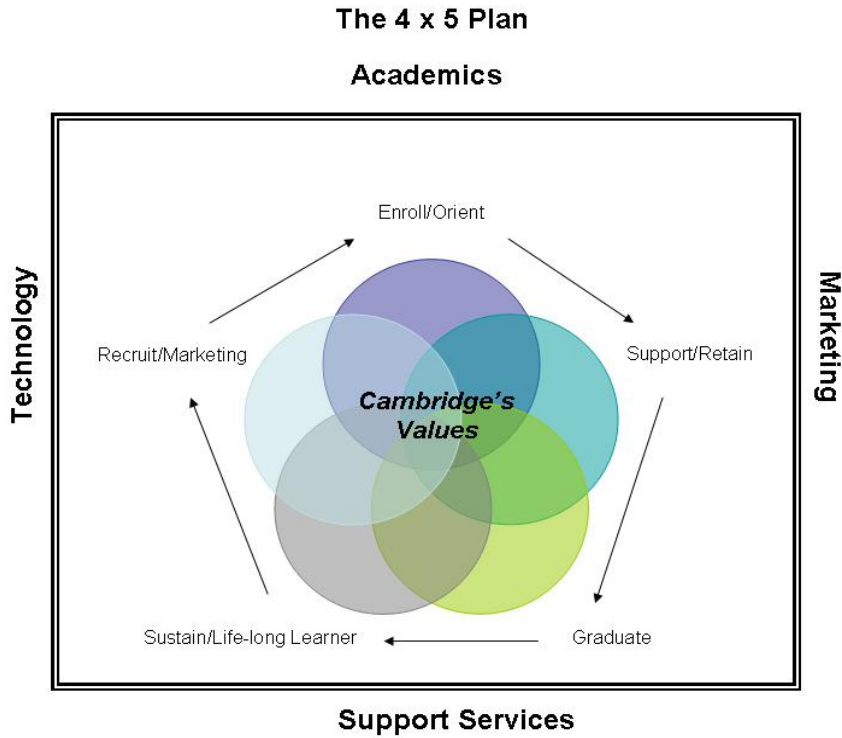
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# PRESCRIPTIVE PROTOCOL

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SPL’s Strategic Planning Process follows the 4 x 5 Plan Approach.



The structure for strategic plan creation proposes to use: Academics, Marketing, Support Services and Technology as the lead topic areas. Prescribed core sub-topics include applying to each primary area all or certain activities that follow:

- recruitment/marketing,
- enrollment/orientation,
- support services / retention,
- matriculation/graduation, and
- sustainability of an institution

The 4 x 5 also assures that we pay attention in the strategic planning process of each institution’s values and commitment to its students.

## THE PLANNING SESSION

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Provided in this section is an overview of a “typical” session, note that it is tailored to the results of each institutions Feasibility Analysis process and Strategic Planning Preparation. These two activities frame and drive the session. The Strategic Planning Session offers a forum to discuss the results and concepts/ideas brought forward from the initial activities including their opportunities and challenges, and assess their merit based on the ability to achieve established goal (Get Online and Grow Online). There is also opportunity to create new initiatives or concepts if something critical has been overlooked that will offer significant “impact” or further support our efforts. Although it may not be the deciding factor, for each aspect financial implications must be considered as it could impact how the initiative is prioritized.

### Attendees:

- Institution Key Stakeholders
- SPL Senior Consulting Team with facilitator/note-taker

### Day 1:

- Review Summary Results from FA and SPP process.
- Develop strategy and initiatives for:
  - o Focus – Marketing: marketing / recruitment / enrollments
  - o Focus – Academics: enrollments / orientation
  - o Focus – Technology: features / functionality / accessibility
  - o Focus – Support Services: support / retain / sustain –life long learner / graduate

### Day 2:

- Day 1 review
  - o Outstanding items: areas not completed, areas for follow-up
- Financial Implications and Planning
  - o Resources: staff, facilities, vendors/service providers
- Framing the plan:
  - o Strategy
  - o Key Initiatives (priority items)
  - o More long-term initiatives
- Next steps:
  - o Who owns what and by when

Within 5 to 7 days of event – a draft document is produced for the institution.

The above outlined agenda can be done in as short as one full-day (8 working hours with 1.5 hours additional for breaks). However it is recommended to occur over 1.5 to 2 days as the overnight period often facilitates additional discussion and thought processing about the planning and brings participants back with additional ideas/concepts to improve the plan/results.



## S P L R E C O M M E N D A T I O N

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SPL recommends that any institution considering undertaking a move to the online learning environment or wanting to further grow online should have a comprehensive strategic planning session. SPL can typically schedule these within 30-days of the request.

## N E X T S T E P S

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Call SPL and schedule an initial conference call to start planning for your institutions online growth.

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