



Client: Defense Acquisition University



Key Learning Indicators

- Mission Performance
- Mission and Support Processes
- Transformation Enablement
- People
- Customer Focus

When it comes to strategic planning for learning organizations, Defense Acquisition University (DAU) leads the pack in both forward thinking and process maturity. The DAU strategic planning process includes: a Strategic Plan that covers 6 years but is updated annually as a living document; an Annual Performance Plan that establishes tasks and performance measures for the current year; an Annual Performance Report that assesses the actual versus planned accomplishments for the year; and an Annual Report that informs DAU customers and stakeholders of DAU's achievements for the preceding year. With a thorough planning process and flawless execution, it's no wonder that DAU President, Frank Anderson, was named the 2005 Chief Learning Officer (CLO) of the Year by CLO Magazine.

DAU structures its strategic plan this way: strategic challenges are translated into five strategic goals. Each of the DAU goals represents a major part of the business – customer, mission, infrastructure, people, and transformation – that are considered broad areas and represent statements of strategic imperatives. Each of these goals is covered through a small, but encompassing set of enabling strategies (objectives) and measures. These enabling strategies are more detailed in nature and contain the direction needed to understand the precise areas to target their attention and are used as strategic goal composite measures of progress. In addition, and in alignment with the strategic goals, separate and discrete performance tasks are defined in the DAU Annual Performance Plan and are to be accomplished during the year. These tasks are projects, each with a project manager. Key outcomes / output measures and indicators of success define progress toward the higher level enabling strategies. The collection of enabling strategies' metrics is further aggregated into indicators of goal progress. An Annual Performance Report is prepared to assess performance plan tasks and overall program progress of the strategic goals, as well as University strengths and opportunities for improvement.

The strategic planning process starts with identifying opportunities; threats; major shifts in technology, market, competition, or regulatory environment; and long-term organizational sustainability within an annual environmental scan. Each year, the environmental scan activities cover analyses of Defense transformation and strategy documents, Under Secretary

of Defense (Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics) strategies, and benchmarking studies. Analyses are performed by reviewing periodicals and attending conferences as well as other outreach opportunities as they arise, to determine the utility of best practices and to perform comparative analysis of performance. In addition, the University President meets three times a year with an external group of advisors called the Board of Visitors who bring an assessment of DAU's progress and sustainability. From the environmental scan and strategic assessments, strategic challenges are defined for the University. DAU's strategic plan addresses these challenges.

A complete copy of DAU's 2006-2010 Strategic Plan & FY06 Performance Plan is available at the DAU website. The document is a great model to follow and a testament to the outstanding leadership and direction of DAU.

[Direct link to DAU's 2006-2010 Strategic Plan & FY06 Performance Plan ...](#)