



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER™

Writing an Effective Mission Statement

FOUR QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

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Hello everyone! My name is Leslie Collins, and I am the Senior Director for Institutional Planning in the Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment here at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. This presentation is the first in a series of Weave training sessions.

In this particular presentation, we will be discussing how to write an effective mission statement, which is a completion requirement of your Weave plan. It is important to start at the top, and take the time to create a worthwhile mission statement. Everything else in your Weave plan will stem from this statement, because if written correctly, the mission statement will capture the essence of your program or department.

The main resource I used to develop this presentation is a document entitled "How to Write a Program Mission Statement" from the University of Connecticut. This reference and link can be found at the end of the presentation.

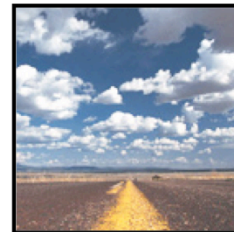
So, let's get started!

WHAT IS A MISSION STATEMENT?



A mission statement is a brief statement of the general values and principles which guide the program curriculum and/or department goals.

- Sets a tone and a philosophical position from which objectives are developed.
- Communicates the overall purpose.
- Distinguishes the program or department from similar areas.
- Aligns clearly with the mission of TTUHSC.



So what is a mission statement? A mission statement is a brief statement of the general values and principles which guide the program curriculum and/or department goals.

If you are affiliated with an Academic Program, your mission statement may be slightly different than an Administrative Unit. However, there are several standard items that all mission statements should include.

A mission statement sets a tone and a philosophical position from which objectives are developed. It communicates the overall purpose of a program or department. It distinguishes the program or department from similar areas, and it aligns clearly with the mission of TTUHSC.

It is also important to note that a Mission Statement is different than a Vision Statement. A Vision Statement looks to the future, where a Mission Statement is focused on what you are doing right now.

WHAT IS THE MISSION OF TTUHSC?



The mission of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center is to improve the health of people by providing high quality educational opportunities to students and health care professionals, advancing knowledge through scholarship and research, and providing patient care and service.



Click [HERE](#) to view the TTUHSC 2013-2018 Strategic Plan, Mission, and Vision.

As previously stated, the Mission of each Program or Department should align clearly with the mission of the Institution. Each school has their own Mission Statement, and many departments do as well.

Accrediting bodies expect that Program or Department Mission Statements are in harmony with Mission Statements of the Institution and School. Therefore, a good starting point is to consider how the mission of the Program or Department supports or compliments the larger mission and goals of the Institution and School.

THE FOUR QUESTIONS TO ANSWER



Here are four essential questions your mission statement must answer:

- ***Who** are we?*
- ***What** do we do?*
- ***Why** do we do it?*
- ***For whom** do we do it?*



What do I mean by:

Who are we? -- It's as simple as it sounds. State the name of your program or department (i.e. "The mission **of TTUHSC** is _____"). Avoid vague pronouns like "Our mission is..."

What do we do? – This includes the primary functions or activities of the unit. Here, you will illustrate the most important functions, operations, outcomes, and/or offerings of the program or department.

Why do we do it? – The purpose of the program or department. Should include the primary reasons why you perform your major activities or operations.

For whom do we do it? – These are the stakeholders of your program or department. This is a term used in the business world, but is very much applicable here. The stakeholders are groups or individuals that participate in the program and those that will benefit from the program or department. Those of you who are writing a mission statement for an Academic Program, your stakeholders will most likely be your students.

STRUCTURE OF A MISSION STATEMENT



The mission of *<the name of your program or department>* is to *<your primary purpose(s)>* by providing *<your primary functions or activities>* to *<your stakeholders>*.

(Any additional clarifying statements.)

Note: The order of the pieces of the mission statement may vary from the above structure.

This is what your mission statement can look like when you take those four questions, and put them in sentence form. This is a good example of a structure you can follow.

It is important to note that your mission statement doesn't have to look like this. The different pieces may vary.

EXAMPLE: ACADEMIC PROGRAM



Program Name: *Who*

Stakeholders: *For Whom*

The mission of the Department of Pediatric Dentistry at the XYZ School of Dentistry is to educate students in childhood growth and development as it relates to oral health in order to produce competent and compassionate dental professionals.

Primary Purpose: *Why*

Primary Functions: *What*

Here is an example of an Academic Program's mission statement.

EXAMPLE: ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT



Program Name: *Who*

Primary Functions: *What*

The mission of the Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center is to promote institutional effectiveness through ongoing, systematic planning and assessment efforts in order to support faculty and staff in achieving the institutional mission.

Primary Purpose: *Why*

Stakeholders: *For Whom*

Here is an example of an Administrative Unit's mission statement. This is the actual mission statement from our office, here in the Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment.

CHECKLIST



Checklist for a Mission Statement:

- Is the statement clear and concise?
- Is it distinctive and memorable?
- Does it clearly state the purpose of the program or department?
- Does it indicate the primary function or activities of the program or department?
- Does it indicate who the stakeholders are?
- Does it support the mission of the department, school, and institution?
- Does it reflect the program's priorities and values?

Once you have written a draft of your mission statement, this checklist is a good resource for you to look at to ensure you have all of the elements that you need.

REFERENCES



- <http://assessment.uconn.edu>
 - *How to Write a Program Mission Statement*
 - *Based on material from the University of Central Florida: “UCF Academic Program Assessment Handbook”, 2005 and material from the University of San Diego.*

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I want to thank everyone for watching! Please contact me any time if you have a question regarding how to develop a mission statement for your program or department. Many additional Weave resources can be found on the OIPA website. Thank you for joining!