



Regional Campuses Strategic Assessment

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Executive Summary

This report summarizes the work and recommendations of a strategic assessment focusing on Miami University's Regional Campuses from March through June 2007. Also included is a brief treatment of national and local trends that provide context for the strategic recommendations.

A series of reports, studies, and position papers have been developed over the past ten years regarding regional campuses and their role at Miami. This report builds on this earlier work, and is based on a series of interviews, focus groups, and facilitated work sessions, plus internal document review, external research, and the professional experiences of the consultant.

Miami and its regional campuses are well-positioned for planned action. There is a sense of urgency among all Miami stakeholders to take decisive steps in order to capitalize on strategic opportunities. The recommendations in this report will enable Miami to:

- Increase enrollment through greater geographic reach, a focus on more diverse, nontraditional students, and an emphasis on regional workforce needs.
- Broaden its financial base by reaching and retaining students who are currently going elsewhere.
- Establish Miami and its regional campuses as the economic driver for the region.
- Position regional campuses as a test bed for innovation for the University – an incubator of new learning initiatives.
- Utilize regional campuses as integral assets of the University and significant contributors to Miami's strategic priorities.

The recommendations in this report are not independent, but are elements of an integrated strategy. The outcome of this strategy is to maximize access to Ohio residents and increase enrollment at regional campuses by serving a more nontraditional and diverse student body, and doing so through innovative delivery channels. Miami should utilize the combination of the VOA Center and a focused online learning strategy as a transformational moment in re-thinking regional campuses and their role within the University.

Four strategic and two operational recommendations are presented. Each recommendation includes the rationale, a descriptive "business case," short-term actions (within two years) and longer-term actions (within five years).

Recommendation 1: Pursue a strategic approach to the expansion of bachelor's degree programs through the Regional Campus System.

Short-term actions include:

- Launch the Bachelor of Technical Studies and the Bachelor of Liberal Studies by Fall 2008 and move aggressively to add concentrations that respond to local workforce needs.
- Establish 2+2 articulation agreements with local community colleges for the new degrees.

Longer-term actions include:

- Have a full complement of BTS concentrations that meet Ohio's workforce and economic development goals.
- Utilize technology-enhanced course scheduling, technology-enhanced learning (hybrid and online), and collaborative scheduling among regional campuses to maximize student access.

Recommendation 2: Establish Regional Campuses as a catalyst for innovation with regard to new ideas in learning and service delivery with an emphasis on responsive scheduling and online program delivery.

Short-term actions include:

- Complete upper level Bachelor of Science in Nursing program ("plus 2") online.
- Accelerate the use of technology-enhanced course scheduling (i.e., Saturday Select) and course delivery (hybrid, online) with an emphasis on BTS and BLS. Have one concentration online by Fall 2009.

Longer-term actions include:

- Strategically integrate physical assets (Middletown, Hamilton, VOA) and virtual assets (online and hybrid courses) to develop an on-demand learning network throughout the region.
- Establish University-wide infrastructure to support technology-enhanced course delivery.

Recommendation 3: Utilize regional campuses as integral assets in advancing the University's goal of becoming a more diverse institution.

Short-term actions include:

- Admit all Ohio residents to regional campuses that are denied admission to Oxford, meet the profile of the Miami Access Initiative, and need additional academic support.
- Partner with community colleges to create a pathway for students from underrepresented groups to easily transfer to Miami.

Longer-term actions include:

- Establish scholarship programs for all of Miami's regional campus students who are part of underrepresented groups. Establish scholarship programs for community college transfer students.
- Extend partnership model to community colleges throughout the state, establishing Miami as the statewide leader in recruiting the most talented community college transfer students in Ohio.

Recommendation 4: Develop practices, policies, and organizational relationships that encourage a system-wide approach to regional solutions, improved service, and the effective use of resources.

Short-term actions include:

- Establish a business model that optimizes the regional campus system, not individual campuses.
- Establish an office of new learning ventures headed by an associate dean, reporting jointly to the regional campus deans.
- Extend Citizens Advisory Board approach to engage regional stakeholders.

Longer-term actions include:

- Establish Miami and its regional campus system as the partner of choice for each school district, county commission, and employer in the Butler-Warren Corridor.
- Combine physical assets (Hamilton, Middletown, VOA) with virtual assets (online learning) to establish a regional learning network serving each community in Butler and Warren Counties.

In addition to the four strategic recommendations, two operational recommendations should be considered. Work in these areas should begin immediately. In both cases, work in these areas is currently being done, but without a strategic context.

Recommendation 5: Develop a marketing and communication strategy that effectively articulates the Miami University Regional Campus value proposition of quality, value, and convenience.

Recommendation 6: Develop an academic master plan for Regional Campuses that encompasses all program areas (relocation, associate's degree, bachelor's degrees, graduate programs) and all locations (Hamilton, Middletown, VOA Center, Oxford, virtual).

Background and Context

Project Overview

The project champion for this work was Dr. Jeffrey Herbst, Provost and Executive Vice President, who outlined the overall scope in a May 31, 2006 memo to Drs. Kelly Cowan and Daniel Hall. Work on this project began with initial phone conferences and data collection in March 2007 and concluded with an executive presentation of recommendations in June 2007.

This project built upon the work of a 2005 task force whose charge was to prioritize the issues facing regional campuses and developing recommendations for action. The current project included a series of interviews, focus groups, and facilitated work sessions, plus substantial internal document review, external research, and the professional experiences of the consultant. The table below summarizes the project steps, contributors, and timeframe.

Project Step	Timeframe
A questionnaire was prepared by the consultant to provide baseline data and background information prior to the initial focus groups. Review of background documentation was conducted.	Late March
Focus groups with deans, academic council, student support professionals, staff directors and members of the Citizens Advisory Board at both the Middletown and Hamilton campuses were conducted.	April 5 – 6
Focus groups with deans and department chairs on the Oxford campus were conducted, as were open forum sessions with faculty and staff at both the Hamilton and Middletown campuses.	May 14 – 15
A series of interviews were conducted with key Miami stakeholders in person and via teleconference. Contributors included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o David Hodge, President o Jeffrey Herbst, Provost and Executive Vice President o Stephen Snyder, Executive Assistant to the President and Secretary to the Board of Trustees o John Christie, Vice Chair – Board of Trustees o Kay Geiger, Secretary – Board of Trustees o Donald Crain, Board of Trustees o Carolyn Gard, Sr. Director of Academic Technology Services 	April – June
A series of interviews were conducted with stakeholders from Sinclair Community College. Contributors included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o David Ponitz, President Emeritus o George Sehi, Dean of Engineering and Industrial Technologies and Executive Dean – Mason Campus o Other faculty and staff 	April – June
A structured working session was conducted with the regional campuses joint leadership group assembled by the two campus deans. <p>Hamilton contributors included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Daniel Hall, Dean o Michael Carrafiello, Assistant Dean o Peter Haverkos, Director of Learning Assistance o Robert Rusbosin, Associate Dean and Director of Student Services o Lee Sanders, Senior Associate Dean <p>Middletown Contributors included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Kelly Cowan, Dean o Catherine Bishop-Clark, Assistant Dean o June Fenig, Assistant Dean and Director of Student Services o Jeffrey Sommers, Associate Dean o James Ewers, Associate Dean for Student Affairs 	May 31 – June 1
Regular conference calls were conducted with Kelly Cowan and Daniel Hall throughout the project.	April – June

National Context

As the population shifts throughout the United States, many states are re-evaluating their approach to higher education. They are driven by different factors, including population growth, population decline, over capacity, under capacity, an undereducated citizenry, a changing industrial base, and others. While states are following different paths for different reasons, all share the prominent role that politics and budget restrictions play. The impact of these two factors on an individual institution's ability to respond strategically is enormous.

One common objective that many states share is expanding access to higher education to people throughout the state, with an emphasis on serving students who cannot or do not wish to attend a main residential campus. These "nontraditional" students are a fast growing group. According to Oblinger (2003), the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported that three-fourths of all undergraduates are nontraditional, defined as having one or more of the following characteristics:

- Delayed enrollment, and did not enter postsecondary education in the same year that he or she graduated from high school
- Attend part time, for all or part of the academic year
- Work full-time, thirty-five hours or more, while enrolled
- Are financially independent, as defined by financial aid
- Have dependents, other than a spouse, including children or others
- Are single parents, having one or more dependent children
- Lacked a high school diploma

While states are employing many strategies to respond to the needs of these students, most are using some combination of university regional campuses, online learning, university centers, community college baccalaureates, and public subsidy of private institutions. A brief summary and examples of each of these approaches follows:

University Regional Campuses

Common in Ohio, Florida, Texas, Washington, and other states, regional or branch campuses of state universities take many forms. In states such as Washington and Ohio, students complete the first two years at a regional campus and transfer to the main campus. In other cases, University regional campuses are self-contained branches with separate faculty and regional accreditation. The University of South Florida follows this model. Other models follow a "2-plus-2" partnership model with community colleges. The University of Central Florida brings junior and senior level coursework to six community college campuses throughout a seven-county region.

Online Learning

Many universities have embraced online learning as a means of providing convenient access to students in their region, in their state, and beyond. The University of Illinois, the University of Maryland, Penn State University, and the University of Massachusetts have adopted online learning as an important strategy for access. At the University of Central Florida, where 47,000 students are enrolled, 15% of its student credit hours are generated through online learning.

University Centers

Often housed and managed by community colleges, university centers invite multiple university partners to offer upper level coursework and bachelor's degree completion programs to their campuses. Mature examples of this model can be found at Lorain County Community College in Ohio, North Harris-Montgomery Community College in Texas, and St. Pete College in Florida.

Community College Baccalaureates

Much national attention is being paid to the growth of community colleges expanding their mission to offer bachelor's degrees. To date these degree programs have been primarily focused on addressing local workforce needs such as teacher education, nursing, technology, business, and criminal justice. Florida, Arkansas, Texas, Utah, and Nevada are among the states that have authorized community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees on a limited basis.

Public Subsidy of Private Institutions

In recent years the state of Florida has provided increasing public support to students enrolling in private institutions. These grants have caused more Florida residents to attend private institutions in the state.

Local Context

A convergence of events over the past 24 months has created a sense of urgency within Miami to take strategic action with respect to regional campuses. Board members, executive leadership, and regional campus faculty, staff, and administrators agree that the time is now for purposeful action. Emerging competition along the I-75 Corridor between Cincinnati and Dayton has elevated anxiety levels on regional campuses and has put pressure on enrollment numbers. The University of Phoenix, Indiana Wesleyan, and Sinclair Community College have all established a presence in Butler or Warren Counties in recent years. Sinclair recently announced a partnership with the University of Cincinnati at their new facility in Mason, six miles from Miami's Voice of America Learning Center.

Other factors driving the need for the University to show strategic movement in the next twelve months include:

- Clarified Board expectations regarding regional campuses in conjunction with the search and selection of Dr. David Hodge as Miami's president in 2006.
- A new governor who has higher education as a priority and has stated publicly the need to dramatically expand the number of college graduates in Ohio.
- The opening of the Voice of America Learning Center in 2009.
- More focused regional economic development initiatives creating a stronger community expectation that higher education play a strategic role.
- Growing frustration on Oxford, Hamilton, and Middletown campuses with lack of role clarity and strategic direction regarding regional campuses.
- The success of the Saturday Select program, demonstrating the promise of innovative delivery to serve nontraditional students.

Strategic Opportunities

Miami University is operating from a position of strength with regard to the opportunities at hand. The “Miami brand” signifies quality in Ohio and throughout the U.S. Miami’s regional campuses have earned respect from the Hamilton and Middletown communities as valued assets. Both campuses are blessed with strong, energetic leadership. The campus teams are inspired to do their best work. Regional campus faculty are respected throughout the University for their teaching and contributions to research and scholarship.

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Through responsive combinations of traditional, online, and blended approaches, Miami’s regional campuses could become the preferred provider of higher education for working adults and other nontraditional students.

A number of innovative ideas are emerging with regional campuses including Saturday Select and early-stage online course development. Miami should utilize the combination of the VOA Center and a focused online learning strategy as a transformational moment in re-thinking regional campuses and their role within the University. Through responsive combinations of traditional, online, and blended approaches, Miami’s regional campuses could become the preferred provider of higher education for working adults and

other nontraditional students. Such an approach would significantly expand the effective radius of influence of regional campuses.

But time is not Miami’s ally. Increasing competition, enrollment pressures, political uncertainty, and financial concerns are all factors that must be addressed within the next twelve months. By committing to a limited number of strategic priorities, Miami’s regional campuses can show rapid advancement in key areas. In a short period of time, Miami and its regional campus system have the opportunity to:

- Increase enrollment through greater geographic reach, a focus on more diverse, nontraditional students, and an emphasis on regional workforce needs.
- Broaden its financial base by reaching and retaining students who are currently going elsewhere.
- Establish Miami and its regional campuses as the economic driver for the region.
- Position regional campuses as a test bed for innovation for the University – an incubator of new learning initiatives.
- Utilize regional campuses as integral assets of the University and significant contributors to Miami’s strategic priorities.

Strategic Recommendations

The following recommendations are not independent, but are elements of an integrated strategy. The outcome of this strategy is to maximize access to Ohio residents and increase enrollment at regional campuses by serving a more nontraditional and diverse student body, and doing so through innovative delivery channels.

Four strategic and two operational recommendations are presented. Each recommendation includes the rationale for the recommendation, a descriptive “business case” providing supporting details and explanation, actions to be taken within two years, and actions to be taken within five years.

Recommendation 1: Pursue a strategic approach to the expansion of bachelor’s degree programs through the Regional Campus System.

Rationale:

- These new degree programs will enable Miami to serve students who are currently going elsewhere.
- This approach will provide role clarity within Miami for faculty and academic administrators.
- These programs can be a benchmark for interdisciplinary undergraduate work at Miami.
- By engaging community colleges in program design, this work can be a catalyst for enhanced 2+2 relationships.

There is broad support by all Miami stakeholders to expand bachelor’s degrees at Regional Campuses. By developing new degrees that complement the assets of the regional campuses and do not conflict with current offerings in Oxford the overall reach of the University will be extended. Initial designs for the Bachelor of Technical Studies and the Bachelor of Liberal Studies show promise and should be pursued in detail. The modular design of these degree programs provides flexibility for students who come to these programs with different academic preparation and different career aspirations, and enables Miami to serve key regional needs in areas such as business and technology, health care, and public safety.

The Bachelor of Technical Studies should be positioned as a strong response to regional workforce needs.

The Bachelor of Technical Studies should be positioned as a strong response to regional workforce needs. Faculty are already in place to initiate concentrations in business and information technology. Work should begin right away on developing concentrations in healthcare (beyond nursing) and public safety/criminal justice.

The I-75 corridor near VOA is an emerging cluster of medical and health services. These businesses should be engaged immediately to determine their workforce needs at the technician and managerial levels, and one or more BTS concentrations should be developed in response. These four concentrations would quickly establish Miami as the higher education partner of choice among employers and the economic development community in the region.

The Bachelor of Liberal Studies will provide access to Miami's renowned liberal education for students who cannot or choose not to relocate to Oxford. By allowing students to pursue moderate depth in more than one field, students from a variety of backgrounds can complete their degree in a timely manner with an appropriate balance of rigor and flexibility. This interdisciplinary design fits well with one of Miami's academic priorities, is responsive to employer needs, and addresses the needs of many students.

Since this model requires less depth in any one field compared with a standard major, the current faculty mix at the regional campuses should be sufficient to initiate these programs. Current 300- and 400-level course offerings can be refocused to address the needs in these two degree programs. As new faculty are required, it is suggested that regional campuses be permitted to expand the use of lecturers. Faculty in lecturer status are recognized by deans and chairs as full members of the department. By increasing the number of lecturers and decreasing the number of part-time faculty, academic departments will feel more ownership in the success of these new baccalaureate programs and will be better assured of the quality of student learning.

The modular design of these degrees has other advantages as well. Instead of an unplanned migration to more upper level courses at regional campuses that do not lead to a degree, through planned coordination with Oxford students can pursue certificates or minors that are part of the BLS or BTS, or as part of an Oxford degree. By approaching this strategically, the number of upper level courses at regional campuses can be managed and schedules can be coordinated with Oxford in a complementary manner. Additionally, providing a predictable grouping of upper level courses will help regional campus faculty in the tenure process, and enable regional campuses to attract and retain scholarship-focused faculty in recruiting efforts.

While the regional teams have been appropriately focused on curriculum design and approval, priority must also be given to support services for these new programs. Advising, admissions and financial aid, marketing and communication, registrar functions, and other services must be aligned as these programs are developed and launched. These services must be aligned on all campuses, ensuring a consistent message and standard of service to students and other stakeholders.

These new bachelor's degree programs provide an opportunity for Miami to become a 2+2 leader with community colleges. Articulation agreements with community colleges are often cumbersome, and do not always reward the student for completing their associate's degree. By engaging Sinclair, Cincinnati State, and other partner community colleges, Miami's regional campuses can become a statewide leader in this regard and can become a transfer destination for AA and AS graduates. Since Hamilton and Middletown offer their own associate's degrees, building the new bachelor's degree programs on a 2+2 platform would provide the best option these students and graduates as well. By demonstrating a willingness to collaborate at this level, Miami could quickly become the preferred partner of community colleges throughout Ohio.

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Within 2 Years:

- Launch the Bachelor of Technical Studies and the Bachelor of Liberal Studies by Fall 2008. Focus initial BTS concentrations on business and information technology.
- Develop concentrations in healthcare and public safety/criminal justice by Fall 2009. Launch healthcare program in conjunction with opening of VOA Center.
- Establish 2+2 articulation agreements with local community colleges for the new degrees.
- Increase the number of lecturers at regional campuses to provide the necessary linkage to the academic colleges

Within 5 Years:

- Have a well-articulated BLS strategy that incorporates the following features:
 - Collaborative scheduling among all campuses (Oxford, Middletown, Hamilton, VOA) to maximize student access.
 - Clear faculty roles and expectations regarding upper level offerings with a regional campus focus on selected minors, concentrations, and certificates.
- Have a full complement of BTS concentrations that meet Ohio's workforce and economic development goals.
- Utilize alternative scheduling, technology-enhanced learning (hybrid and online), and collaborative scheduling among regional campuses to maximize student access.

Recommendation 2: Establish Regional Campuses as a catalyst for innovation with regard to new ideas in learning and service delivery with an emphasis on responsive scheduling and online program delivery.

Rationale:

- Expand the effective radius of influence of Hamilton, Middletown and the VOA Center to serve the entire region.
- Drive enrollment growth with an emphasis on increasing service to nontraditional students.
- Serve as a test-bed for the University, pilot testing alternative learning and service strategies.

The physical assets of the two regional campuses are not located in growth areas of the region. A thoughtful approach to online learning would enable Miami to leverage the regional assets to serve a broader geographic area. Online course and service delivery can also bring additional resources to the VOA Center without adding the full cost burden. By strategically integrating course offerings at Middletown, Hamilton and the Voice of America Center with selected online coursework, Miami can serve the entire Butler-Warren corridor with a single strategy. Using the three physical campuses as learning “hubs,” online and hybrid coursework can be used selectively to establish a regional learning network that provides convenient access for students who might not otherwise consider Miami as an option.

The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation captures such a strategy in a new program thread they term “localness.” The Sloan Localness Initiative provides grant funding in a selected number of cases to institutions that propose to deploy programs which demonstrably increase access to college education for local populations through creative combinations of traditional, online, and blended approaches.”

Expanding Service to Nontraditional Students

This approach can serve as a catalyst to re-focus Miami’s regional campuses toward serving adult and nontraditional students. For both the Hamilton and Middletown campuses, service to nontraditional students is at or near an all-time low, despite the fact that this is a growing student market. At the Hamilton campus, 60% of its students were nontraditional in 1967 compared with 26% today. The Middletown campus peaked in 1978 with regard to serving nontraditional students at 50%. Today, approximately 34% of Middletown’s students would be considered nontraditional (Hall and Cowan, 2006)

The University of Phoenix and Indiana Wesleyan have established a presence in West Chester to serve this student group. By employing responsive combinations of traditional, online, and blended courses, Miami's regional campuses can recapture market share and drive growth throughout the system.

Online students tend to be older, and often hold additional employment and family responsibilities, as

compared to the more traditional student (Allen and Seaman, 2006).

Participating in distance education allows nontraditional students to overcome some of the difficulties they encounter in coordinating their work and school schedules or in obtaining the classes they want (Mayadas, 2006). Nontraditional students are more likely than other students to participate in distance education (Choy, 2002).

The success of Saturday Select demonstrates the effectiveness of responsive scheduling and the appropriate use of technology in reaching adult learners. This approach should be brought to scale and incorporated as an integral part of the regional campus strategy.

The High Performance Workplace

A thoughtful online strategy can also position Miami as the regional leader in workforce development and support of employer needs. Online learning assets make it easier to respond to emerging employer needs, and make it easier for employees to take advantage of corporate tuition reimbursement policies. For profit institutions such as the University of Phoenix have utilized this approach to fuel growth. Work has already begun at Miami to bring the junior and senior year coursework for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing online. This work should be accelerated and used as a learning process to determine needs of students, faculty, and staff.

Internal Advantages

In interviews, academic deans and department chairs at Miami are conceptually supportive of a more aggressive migration to online learning, and many see it as a natural fit with the mission of regional campuses. The consensus view is that respected, full-time faculty must lead the way.

By employing responsive combinations of traditional, online, and blended courses, Miami's regional campuses can recapture market share and drive growth throughout the system.

Without online learning as an option, each new program or program delivery alternative will be filtered through a series of questions about geography: Which campus should offer this? Can we do it at multiple campuses? Won't that split the market? A thoughtful online learning strategy will enable Miami to take a regional view. By combining the physical assets of Hamilton, Middletown, and VOA with the virtual assets of online learning, Miami's regional campuses can bring full program offerings to almost any community in the Butler-Warren Corridor.

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A regional innovative learning strategy with an emphasis on compressed scheduling and a steady migration to online programs would allow the University to assess the efficacy of online learning on a broader scale. By supporting faculty leaders as early developers, and employing accepted assessment methods, judgments can be made regarding academic quality relative to other Miami learning experiences. This "test-bed" approach will allow regional campuses to respond to the needs of nontraditional students in an innovative, entrepreneurial manner and allow the University as a whole to migrate to new ways of engaging students at an appropriate pace.

Within 2 Years

- Complete upper level BSN program ("plus 2") online.
- Identify faculty leaders for online learning and build support structure around their needs.
- Establish faculty development and support approach that is sufficient and scaleable.
- Accelerate the use of alternative scheduling (i.e., Saturday Select) and course delivery (hybrid, online) with an emphasis on BTS and BLS. Have one concentration online by Fall 2009.
- Develop a detailed course and program development plan, with sufficient development staff to maintain the agreed upon pace.

Within 5 Years

- Strategically integrate physical assets (Middletown, Hamilton, VOA) and virtual assets (online and hybrid courses) to develop an on-demand learning network throughout the region.
- Establish university-wide infrastructure to support alternative delivery, including:
 - Faculty support and reward processes
 - 24/7 student support

Recommendation 3: Utilize regional campuses as integral assets in advancing the University's goal of becoming a more diverse institution.

Rationale:

- The student body at Miami's regional campuses is significantly more diverse than at Oxford.
- Regional campuses are very successful in helping students overcome poor academic preparation to become successful college students.
- Important opportunities exist for deeper partnerships with community colleges.

Miami's goal to become more diverse is admirable. As selective universities throughout the U.S. seek to diversify their student bodies, competition for academically gifted minority

By utilizing regional campuses more intentionally and developing strategic alliances with community colleges, Miami could quickly become a statewide leader in helping students from all backgrounds earn degrees.

students is intense. By utilizing regional campuses more intentionally and developing strategic alliances with community colleges, Miami could quickly become a statewide leader in helping students from all background earn degrees. While Miami should continue to compete for the best students in America, many talented students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds are already in the local area and would be eager to be considered for an opportunity at Miami.

Regional campuses and community colleges are both relatively untapped sources for academically talented students from underrepresented groups. By many measures, Miami's regional campuses are more diverse than Oxford. The average age of a regional campus student is nearly 25. Over half of regional campus students attend part-time, compared with only 6% of Oxford students who do so. Regional campus students are three times more likely to receive federal financial aid than Oxford students (Hall, 2005).

According to the Ohio Board of Regents (2005), first generation college students are more likely to meet the SES profile targeted by the Miami Access Initiative.

- Of 2003 Ohio high school graduates, 55% of students from low income districts were first generation college students compared with 31% of students from high income districts.
- Statewide, of freshmen from families with an income between \$30,000 and \$50,000, 52% were first generation college students.
- Of those from families with an income of less than \$30,000, 62% were first generation college students.

The following table shows that Miami's regional campuses serve many more first generation college students than Oxford, as do area community colleges.

Institution	First Year Ohio Students	% First Generation
Cincinnati State Tech & CC	190	52%
Miami University – Hamilton	507	55%
Miami University – Middletown	369	58%
Miami University – Oxford	2,202	18%
Ohio State University	5,427	27%
Sinclair Community College	1,621	54%
University of Cincinnati – Clermont	391	59%
University of Cincinnati – Raymond Walters	414	51%
University of Cincinnati	3,180	39%

Data Source: http://regents.ohio.gov/perfpr/hs_2005/

At 18%, Miami's Oxford campus had the lowest percentage of first generation college students in Ohio among the state University main campuses.

When considering racial and ethnic diversity, all of Miami's campuses fall short when compared with statewide averages. However, community colleges in the state are more diverse than Miami, creating an opportunity. As the table below demonstrates, the student body at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College is 36.2% minority, and 27.4% at Sinclair.

Institution	Enrollment		% of Undergrad Enrollment by gender			% of Undergraduate Enrollment by race/ethnicity				
	Total	Undergrad	Male	Female	Black	Am Indian	Asian	Hispanic	White	Not Known
Cin State T&CC	8,470	8,470	43.3%	56.7%	25.1%	0.2%	1.3%	0.9%	63.8%	7.7%
Miami University - Hamilton	2,937	2,868	41.6%	58.4%	7.3%	0.5%	1.3%	1.8%	82.9%	6.0%
Miami University - Middletown	2,306	2,270	40.2%	59.8%	6.8%	0.4%	1.0%	1.6%	87.6%	2.6%
Miami University - Oxford	16,722	14,951	46.9%	53.1%	3.3%	0.6%	2.8%	1.7%	85.9%	5.0%
Sinclair CC	22,786	22,786	43.3%	56.7%	15.4%	0.5%	1.6%	1.3%	72.6%	7.9%
University of Cincinnati – Main Campus	27,932	19,512	49.7%	50.3%	14.0%	0.3%	2.8%	1.6%	75.3%	4.7%
University of Cincinnati- Clermont College	2,815	2,815	37.4%	62.6%	1.9%	0.5%	0.8%	0.7%	82.5%	13.3%
University Of Cincinnati- Raymond Walters College	4,497	4,497	32.3%	67.7%	14.5%	0.5%	2.4%	1.5%	73.4%	7.3%
Wright State Lk C	910	828	32.6%	67.4%	0.5%	0.1%	0.6%	0.8%	91.3%	3.3%
Wright State Main	16,207	12,268	43.7%	56.3%	12.2%	0.4%	2.2%	1.3%	76.7%	5.6%

Data Source: US Dept of Education (Institute of Education Sciences): <http://www.nces.ed.gov/> - Enrollment data Fall 2005 / IPEDS College

Highly selective institutions throughout America are starting to look at the large pool of prospective low-income students at community colleges as a means of augmenting their diversity efforts. Community college students who attend selective private colleges have demonstrated success at institutions such as Smith and Mount Holyoke, who view community college transfers as an important component of their diversity strategy (Wyner, 2006).

Miami should make a public commitment to recruiting and supporting community college graduates as transfer students to regional campuses and to Oxford. A recommended priority is to establish strategic pilot programs with Cincinnati State and Sinclair. Establish a small task force and give them the responsibility of learning more about student needs and design information materials, business practices, and academic services around these needs. Design it for success. Community colleges would be eager to partner with Miami. A collaborative diversity effort for their graduates would encourage more students to earn their associate's degree, would enhance the academic prestige of the community college, and would be a catalyst for fundraising for student scholarships.

A successful pilot with local community colleges would quickly gain notoriety for Miami around the state. Within a few years, Miami would be in a position to attract the best community college graduates in Ohio. Such an initiative would send a powerful message to stakeholders throughout Ohio that Miami was committed to becoming more inclusive and diverse.

Miami's regional campuses are uniquely positioned to provide a leadership role in the University's diversity efforts, for both incoming freshmen and community college transfers. They have an impressive history of working with students who are academically under prepared and helping them gain the math, reading, and writing skills they need to succeed in college-level work. Since many students from diverse groups come from lower financial positions, most must work while attending school. Regional campuses are well-prepared to help working, part-time students succeed. Integrating Miami's regional campuses into the University's diversity strategy will jump-start this effort by reaching an important group of deserving and capable students.

Miami's regional campuses are uniquely positioned to provide a leadership role in the University's diversity efforts, for both incoming freshmen and community college transfers.

Within 2 Years

- Admit all Ohio residents to regional campuses that are denied admission to Oxford and who meet the profile of the Miami Access Initiative but need additional academic support.
- Partner with community colleges to create a pathway for students from underrepresented groups to easily transfer to Miami. Modify the criteria of the Miami Access Initiative to include a pathway for community college transfer students.
- State this strategy publicly and follow up with an aggressive public relations and fundraising campaign.

Within 5 Years

- Establish scholarship programs for all of Miami's regional campus students who are part of underrepresented groups.
- Establish scholarship programs for community college transfer students.
- Extend partnership model to community colleges throughout the state, establishing Miami as the statewide leader in recruiting the most talented community college transfer students in Ohio.

Recommendation 4: Develop practices, policies, and organizational relationships that encourage a system-wide approach to regional solutions, improved service, and the effective use of resources.

Rationale

- Increase enrollment by gaining market share in a growing region.
- Increase geographic reach, and build deeper Miami loyalty in more communities.
- Optimize the use of University assets and establish a cost-effective model for growth.
- Regional campuses need to work to speak as one voice in interactions with Oxford.
- Miami is a more formidable competitor and more attractive partner with an integrated approach.

Each of Miami's three domestic campuses operates with a reasonable degree of autonomy, especially from a financial standpoint. This approach has been effective in enabling the Hamilton and Middletown campuses to develop deep relationships with their respective communities and to establish their own unique campus culture which is evident to faculty, staff, and students.

In order to fully capitalize on the opportunities of the region, and to do so in a fiscally responsible manner, it is recommended that Miami pursue a strategy that takes a regional approach, optimizing the regional campus system, not individual campuses. The opening of the Voice of America Center and a strategic emphasis on online learning provide Miami the opportunity to re-think its approach to serving the region. A regional strategy will provide the opportunity for Miami to leverage all of the University's assets to penetrate the growth areas of Butler and Warren Counties and establish Miami as the partner of choice for higher education in the region.

The opening of the Voice of America Center and a strategic emphasis on online learning provide Miami the opportunity to re-think its approach to serving the region.

To do so, Miami should consider redesigning processes between regional campuses and between regional campuses and Oxford, and should communicate an integrated message to each community in the region and to the region as a whole.

The following steps would improve the number of students who successfully relocate to Oxford and graduate on time, and would create much better understanding throughout the University of the unique and complementary role of Miami's regional campuses in the University's overall portfolio.

Relationship between Campuses

Proposed Strategy: Create an office of new learning ventures to maximize the impact of online learning, the VOA Center, and community partnerships.

In general, the Hamilton and Middletown campuses work well together. But this is primarily due to the people in place who work to do the right thing rather than through purposeful processes and procedures that encourage collaboration. Administrative processes, course scheduling, and other student-facing practices have evolved over the years based on the needs of each campus individually. While effort is put forth among staff to collaborate on scheduling and other tasks, it is primarily left to the student to navigate through two (or three, counting Oxford) bureaucracies to get the classes and services they need. This situation will become much more cumbersome when the VOA Center and online learning reach steady state.

In order to take full advantage of the growth opportunities in the region, the campuses need to function more as an integrated system. By optimizing the region

By optimizing the region instead of individual campuses, Miami will provide better access to more students and do so in a cost effective manner.

instead of individual campuses, Miami will provide better access to more students and do so in a cost effective manner. For new initiatives, staffing, scheduling, marketing, recruiting, virtual student and faculty support, IT, and institutional research should be system-wide functions. Enrollment growth due to online learning should be shared. As Miami extends partnerships, these need to be

partnerships with the University, not with individual campuses. Transfer services need to be consistent and university-wide.

Miami should establish an Office of New Learning Ventures, creating single point accountability for the VOA Center and online learning initiatives.

One approach is to appoint an associate dean, reporting jointly to the campus deans, to be accountable for new learning ventures. This individual would take the lead in online learning, administrative functions of VOA, placement and scheduling of new academic programs, and on new partnerships, especially articulation agreements with Sinclair and other partners. This new office would also manage the financial position of these new ventures, monitoring the new costs and revenues associated with VOA and online learning from a university-wide perspective. Currently, these strategic initiatives are being addressed on a part-time basis by busy people. By establishing such an office, there will be daily focus on these important initiatives, enabling more creative thinking and detailed planning to ensure the success of the VOA Center and the migration to online program offerings.

Currently, these strategic initiatives are being addressed on a part-time basis by busy people. By establishing such an office, there will be daily focus on these important initiatives, enabling more creative thinking and detailed planning to ensure the success of the VOA Center and the migration to online program offerings.

The associate dean would also have the responsibility of ensuring integrated and consistent practices, policies, and procedures throughout the regional campus system, and would be responsible for providing an overall financial picture of the system's impact. Reporting to both the Hamilton and Middletown deans, he or she would chair a task force comprised of key leaders from each regional campus and Oxford to manage key milestones and ensure timely decision-making.

Relationship between Regional Campuses and Oxford

Proposed Strategies:

- Promote a policy that enables Oxford faculty to teach on regional campuses and regional campus faculty to teach at Oxford.
- Improve student relocation processes by targeting a student cohort on a pilot basis.
- Include Miami's regional campuses in the student recruiting and admissions process.

One of the strengths of Miami's regional campuses is its faculty and the generally high level of integration that exists between regional campus faculty and their academic colleges and colleagues in Oxford. In general, tenured and tenure-earning faculty on regional campuses are seen as productive scholars and contributing colleagues by Chairs and Deans in Oxford. However, there is much room for improvement.

The lack of understanding and inconsistent communication between Oxford and the regional campuses is interfering with Miami's ability to capitalize on strategic regional and statewide opportunities. The following recommendations would help move Miami to a more integrated approach, utilizing the assets of all of its campuses toward a common strategy.

Promote a policy that enables Oxford faculty to teach on regional campuses and regional campus faculty to teach at Oxford. Such an approach already exists in departments such as English. Modest incentives may be required, and cooperation with regard to scheduling would be necessary, but the benefits would be worth the effort. Faculty and department chairs would get to know regional campus students and would gain an understanding of the important role these campuses play in their communities. Regional campus faculty would be able to gauge the differences, if any, in academic expectations and student performance between campuses and respond accordingly. Deans and department chairs would be better assured that the quality of instruction was consistent across all campuses.

Improve student relocation processes by targeting a student cohort on a pilot basis. While student relocation from Hamilton or Middletown to Oxford is not the highest priority for regional campuses, it remains an important role. As with college students generally, it has become harder to define a "traditional" relocation student. Some want to get to Oxford as soon as possible in order to participate fully in university life. Others seek a degree program offered only on the Oxford campus and attempt to arrange their work and family lives around commuting two or more times per week. These two groups of students have very different needs that would dictate different actions. It is recommended that Miami target one well-defined group of relocation students upon which to base practices and policies. Among the factors to consider would be curriculum (which courses should be scheduled on which campuses?), course scheduling (schedule coursework so that students can complete during either the day or evening throughout their 4 year program, regardless of campus), and support services (academic advising, financial aid, library and learning resources, etc.).

Use this student cohort as a standing focus group, have them capture their experiences in a journal, and use their input to design a sustainable approach. All relocation students will benefit to some degree, but by designing around a target group initially, repeatable practices and procedures will be developed and the university community will achieve a better understanding of student needs. Since new bachelor's degree programs and more flexible learning options at regional campuses will better serve adult learners, perhaps the initial relocation cohort should focus on traditional age, full-time students who hope to live on or near campus in Oxford and participate as active residential students.

Include Miami's regional campuses in the student recruiting and admissions process. Since regional growth is a priority, utilizing regional campuses as an overall university asset would enable Miami to enroll more students. By promoting regional campuses as an option for a selected group of students who were denied admission to Oxford, Miami would be able to serve those students with academic potential but who may not have had rigorous academic preparation in high school. Many students from underrepresented groups (race/ethnicity, SES, first generation) fall into this category. Utilizing regional campuses to serve these students would increase access to a Miami degree to important groups and do so without compromising the integrity of a Miami education since regional campuses have a record of success in helping such students become academically prepared. Such a position would be a powerful public statement. This strategy will be especially important as regional campuses become a strategic component of the University's diversity efforts (see Recommendation 3).

Relationship between Miami and the Community

Proposed Strategies:

- Become the partner of choice for employers, school districts, and governmental agencies.
- Bring all of the University's assets to bear on the needs and opportunities of the citizens of Butler and Warren Counties.

The Butler-Warren Corridor is growing rapidly. No higher education institution has established a leadership position in the region, but a number are trying. By employing an integrated strategy that includes the resources of the Oxford, Hamilton, and Middletown Campuses, plus the potential of the VOA Center and online learning options, Miami can become the recognized higher education leader in the region.

Become the partner of choice for employers, school districts, and governmental agencies. Virtually all regional economic development success stories in the U.S. have one or more universities as a key catalyst. While the I-75 Corridor between Cincinnati and Dayton shows elements of

By leveraging all of the University's resources, Miami can become the economic engine of this region.

economic success, to date no university as truly established itself in a leadership role. By leveraging all of the University's resources, Miami can become the economic engine of this region. In the same way that the Middletown and Hamilton campuses have forged strategic alliances with their closest high schools, Miami should extend this

strategy to touch each high school in Warren and Butler Counties. Develop personal relationships with superintendents, principals, and other administrators. Develop deep partnerships with key employers in the region, with an emphasis on the emerging health sciences cluster and the ongoing needs of General Electric and other large employers. Make sure all elected officials and staff understand Miami's new regional strategy, and tout it as a priority of the University's Board and Executive Leadership.

Miami has very little presence east of I-75. By partnering with Sinclair Community College and establishing a physical presence (advising, selected faculty) on their Mason campus, Miami would further its hold on higher education leadership in the region. While there has been publicity surrounding Sinclair's partnership with the University of Cincinnati at this location, there is still an opportunity for Miami to be the preferred partner. The new proposed bachelor's degrees would give Miami a solution none of the other public universities in the area can offer: a high quality, industry-focused, flexible bachelor's degree completion opportunity for both associate of arts and associate of science graduates of the community college. Incorporating selected online options would further establish Miami as the preferred partner for adult learners seeking to advance in the workplace – an important target for Sinclair.

Bring all of the University's assets to bear on the needs and opportunities of the citizens of Butler and Warren Counties. Miami should look at these two counties in

their entirety as a Miami "college town." Instead of looking only to the Hamilton and Middletown campuses to add this function to their current community outreach, the University as a whole should look for ways to connect to each community. Miami should ensure that each community understands that Miami is their state university, and all of its educational, research, and cultural assets are

Miami should ensure that each community understands that Miami is their state university, and all of its educational, research, and cultural assets are available to them.

available to them. The regional campus system can be viewed as a "portal" to the rich resources of the University. Examples include musical performances and art exhibits brought to local audiences, and research and service learning projects that address the needs of community constituents. By extending the "town and gown" principle to a broader region, Miami will increase its visibility in these growing communities, energize its alumni base, and make an important statement as a public resource.

Within 2 Years

- Change thinking of VOA Center and online learning from "avocation to vocation."
- Establish business model that optimizes the regional campus system.
- Appoint an associate dean, reporting jointly to the campus deans, to be primarily accountable for new learning ventures with an emphasis on online learning and the Voice of America Center.
- Establish incentives for Oxford faculty to teach on regional campuses and for regional faculty to teach on the Oxford campus.
- Locate advisors and select faculty at Sinclair's Mason campus to establish a presence in Warren County.
- Extend Citizens Advisory Board approach to engage regional stakeholders.

Within 5 Years

- Establish Miami and its regional campus system as the partner of choice for each school district, county commission, and employer in the Butler-Warren Corridor.
- Combine physical assets (Hamilton, Middletown, VOA) with virtual assets (online learning) to establish a regional learning network serving each community in Butler and Warren Counties.
- Extend "town and gown" principles to each community in the region.

Additional Recommendations

In addition to the four strategic recommendations, two operational recommendations should be considered. Work in these areas should begin immediately. In both cases, work in these areas is currently being done, but without a strategic context. By utilizing the strategic opportunities in this report as a framework for marketing and academic planning, these functions can provide important foundational elements for the new Regional Campuses organization.

Recommendation 5: Develop a marketing and communication strategy that effectively articulates the Miami University Regional Campus value proposition of quality, value, and convenience.

Miami's regional campuses currently do not have a well-defined market position. Their mission is different from Oxford, but many in the community – and many faculty and staff at regional campuses – do not know the mission or cannot effectively articulate it. Building on the brand recognition the University already enjoys, a well-crafted marketing and communications campaign that reflects the new priorities of Miami's regional campus system can quickly establish regional campuses as prominent resources in the minds of the public along the I-75 Corridor and throughout Ohio.

Regional Campuses brand identity. Consider establishing an overall Regional Campuses brand identity that complements the overall Miami brand and also incorporates the unique assets of regional campuses. The value proposition of quality, value, and convenience can be extended to include significant messages from the new strategy of Miami's regional campuses. These new messages may include:

- A focus on innovation
- A commitment to responsiveness to community and employer needs
- Convenient access to a Miami degree for nontraditional students
- A supportive environment for students from diverse backgrounds

AVP for University Communications. Incorporate the marketing and communications needs of regional campuses into the University's new communications structure and ensure that this work is a priority of the new Associate Vice President for University Communications.

Engage a consultant. Consider combining resources from both Hamilton and Middletown to engage a consultant to assist with establishing a brand identity for the system that incorporates the values of innovation, responsiveness, inclusiveness, and community focus.

Leverage the Miami brand to overwhelm any perceived competition along the Butler-Warren Corridor.

Leverage the Miami brand to overwhelm any perceived competition along the Butler-Warren Corridor. Miami's regional campuses are losing market share to providers such as the University of Phoenix and Indiana Wesleyan, especially in the nontraditional student market. These are higher cost, lower quality options and should not be competitors

of Miami. But because they market and recruit aggressively and provide predictable pathways to degrees, they draw students. Miami should use the launch of its new bachelor's degree programs to re-introduce its regional campus system to the community, with a focused message of providing convenient access to a Miami degree for nontraditional students.

Recommendation 6: Develop an academic master plan for Regional Campuses that encompasses all program areas (relocation, associate's degree, bachelor's degrees, graduate programs) and all locations (Hamilton, Middletown, VOA Center, Oxford, virtual).

The focus of Miami's regional campuses has evolved incrementally over time. These campuses serve students of highly diverse needs, goals, and interests, including:

- Students seeking an associate's degree
- Students seeking a bachelor's degree in nursing or engineering technology
- Students wishing to earn 20 hours at a regional campus and relocate to Oxford as soon as possible
- Students seeking to earn as many credits as they can at a public institution before earning their bachelor's degree at another college or university (Xavier, Wilmington, Phoenix)

With limited resources, it is difficult to meet all of the academic needs of all of these students in a high quality manner. Add to this the fact that a more ambitious agenda for regional campuses – including launching new bachelor's degree programs, opening the VOA Center and expanding the online learning initiative – will require new resources, and the need for a well-considered academic plan becomes clear.

By partnering effectively with other institutions, focusing on the needs of students, listening to the community, and collaborating more effectively with Oxford, Miami's regional campuses can meet the diverse needs of students in a fiscally responsible manner. These principles should guide the academic master plan.

Suggestions to consider regarding the academic master plan include:

- Improve relocation to Oxford.
 - Utilize cohort approach as described in Recommendation 4.
 - Identify relocation candidates at the time of admission and assign an Oxford advisor in addition to the regional campuses advisor.
 - Recruit from denied Oxford students, especially those from underrepresented groups.
 - Collaborate with Oxford on scheduling so that commuting students are more likely to succeed.

- Ensure that associate's degree programs are meeting local workforce needs.
 - Consider new degree programs in areas such as environmental science, criminal justice, and early childhood education (pre-K).
 - Leverage the success of the Greentree Academy to determine new associate's degree needs in the health sciences field.

- Continue to expand professional master's degree programs to regional locations. The MBA and Master's in Educational Leadership at the VOA Center are good models. Consider more graduate education programs at regional campuses. Consider the Master's in Social Work and other practitioner-oriented graduate degrees.

Teacher Education

Careful thought should be given to expanding teacher education programs on regional campuses. Nationally, teacher education programs are common on regional campuses, and community colleges in states with teacher shortages have been granted authority to offer teaching degrees. In addition to providing school districts with new teachers from a high quality program, having a cohort of College of Education faculty on regional campuses provides a needed community asset. These faculty can become a trusted resource for school district personnel in areas such as professional development and placement of student teachers. They are also a local resource for current research and overall expertise in emerging practices. Such a presence would deepen the community leadership aspect of Miami's regional campuses.

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