What a difference a year can make. In the 250 working days since we unveiled our new strategic vision one year ago, we have been working at a feverish pace, convening corporate breakfasts, taking the story to scores of community and alumni groups here and across the nation, and forming implementation teams to attack our six goals and core values with terrific energy and dedication.

The bold vision of UC|21 intends to reshape our university every bit as much as the campus master plan, launched more than 15 years ago, has transformed our physical landscape.
In comparison to our remarkable physical transformation, our strategic plan, these goals ….
… and these core values, may not seem as tangible or visible. It’s not quite the same as walking past a construction site every day, watching it go from mud and mayhem to a finished building that seemingly leaps from the ground.

An academic plan is perhaps a bit more like waiting to find out what happens in Star Wars Episode 3, when we already know how it ends because George Lucas started at Episode 4. With UC|21, we know where we’re headed, just like the fans flocking to see “Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith” know where Anakin Skywalker is headed. Except in our case, where we’re going is definitely not to the dark side.
And like Star Wars Episode 3, our work this year on UC|21’s Phase 1 has involved a cast and crew of hundreds, if not thousands. These are people who have taken the outline that resulted from last year’s massive Town Hall and Input Session process and turned it into action.

We need to take a few moments to acknowledge the many individuals who have supported UC|21 since its inception, very hard, I might add, under very strict and unbending deadlines.

I’d first like the members of our Board of Trustees who are in attendance today, to stand up … for it was with the Board of Trustees and the presidential search committee that the concept for an academic plan first germinated. Board Chairman Phillip Cox and trustees Candace Kendle and Buck Niehoff, thank you for all the time and support you devote to this institution.

[Applause]

Will our UC|21 Strategic Council Co-Chairs Tony Perzigian, senior vice president and provost for Baccalaureate and Graduate Education, and Jane Henney, senior vice president and provost for Health Affairs,
please stand for recognition, and the other members of the Strategic Council?

{applause}

I’d also like the members of the UC|21 Resource Support Committee, plus its 50 in 5 and Performance Based Budgeting Task Forces to rise…

{applause}

Members of the Support and Accountability Committee, your turn.  
{applause}

And all of the members of the Implementation Committee and its six Implementation Proposal Teams…let’s acknowledge all of the work you did to draw up the proposals we will discuss today.

{Applause}

I also want to thank the Faculty Senate Chair John Cuppoletti, and Senate member Ann Welsh for their work on Best Practices. And anyone else here from the Faculty Senate, please rise.
{Applause}

Since every college and division in the university also completed alignment reports, we could probably get everyone on their feet, but just know that we truly thank you one and all.

But I’d be remiss if I didn’t personally thank Peg Allensworth and Marie Sutthoff for the total logistics of today.
In place of the bricks and mortar of construction, our academic plan has strategic engines, actions and solid data to mark our progress.

Our aspiration to define the new urban research university calls on UC to be a true innovator, adopting new ways of pursuing the academic enterprise.

UC|21 is developing our capacity for change and commits us to go about the business of higher education more strategically.

Our vision is driven by a number of strategic engines including:

- administrative actions that link budget and office reorganization to our goals.
- a performance-based budgeting scenario that will be in place by this fall
- All-university implementation proposals for now and in the future
• highlights of their creative and remarkable work shortly.

• College and unit alignment reports that have revealed scores of activities already under way

• Best Practices to be placed in a Web-based matrix

• A profound commitment to assessment and accountability to measure our progress and keep us on task.

• Stretch Goals – more on this in a moment.

• Data Driven Decision Making – which will allow us to form policies and decisions based on real data, including the student evaluations provided to us by NSSE, the National Survey of Student Engagement.

• And last and certainly not least, UC|21, in conjunction with our Faculty Senate, has begun a full review of the university’s governance and committee structures.
Most of you may recall that last year, I took pen to hand on UC|21 and formulated 10 stretch goals, derived from our comprehensive planning process.

Dilbert recently took this one step farther when he talked about “ultra stretch-y” goals.

At the risk of sounding like Dilbert’s boss, I thought I’d run through the goals I recounted last year, with an eye on our progress thus far.
No. 10:

While UC’s mix of students hasn’t changed much yet, the five states with the largest increases to our enrollment last fall were

Tennessee
New York
Pennsylvania
Michigan
And Kentucky

However, this map shows that, for 2004, UC students were enrolled in all 50 states, plus the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.
No. 9

UC will be bringing online six of the most technologically advanced classrooms in September 2005 in our new Recreation Center. In addition, UC is providing online access to students in the privately developed University Park and Stratford Heights apartment-style living complexes.

We’ve increased our wireless capacity from 30% last year to 40% of the campus space this year.

The percentage of our courses online through Blackboard has increased from 37% last academic year to 43% this year. We’re making good progress.
No. 8

Create a 24/7 campus.

In our MainStreet facility, programs and services, we are within six hours of being 24/7 on Friday, Saturday and Sunday…The rest of the week, we remain just 7 hours short.

Our aspiration: around the clock Subway!
No. 7
This photo shows Elwood Jensen, the recipient of the Lasker Award for medical research, also known as the American Nobel and a precursor to the Nobel Prize.

We want more distinctions like this, and this year we have made progress. Our National Academy ranking improved from 113 to 86. Our National faculty awards ranking improve from 81 to 55.
No. 6

UC’s research enterprise topped $300 million for fiscal year 2003 and in 2004 it rose another $20 million for a total of $320 Million.
No. 5

On the national rankings scene, there has been some improvement with U.S. News & World Report rankings. It gets a little complicated when we talk Top 10 programs because not every program is ranked every year. But last year at this time, we had eight programs in the Top 10. This year we have 10.

Pediatrics moved from No. 12 to 4. Criminal Justice was ranked for the first time at 3rd in the nation.

In the meantime, Barron’s Profiles of American Colleges 2005 has changed UC’s ranking from less competitive to competitive.
No. 4

In the past, UC traditionally funded 11 new National Merit Scholarships, bringing the total on campus this year to 50.

For Fiscal Year 2006, we’ve identified funding to increase that number, to 22 per year.

So far, 20 have accepted this offer, and two more are in the wings.
No. 3

Last year, I told you that we wanted a graduation and retention rate that was as good as our football teams’.

We’re not going to turn this around overnight.

The U.S. News and World Report rankings use a four-year average of graduation rates and retention rates. The average graduation rate at UC has improved from 49 percent to 50 percent. The average retention rate has improved from 74 percent to 75 percent.

Each has improved a percentage point, so we’re really going to step up the pace. We don’t have 50 years to get to 75 percent.
No. 2

I know you know this but U.S. News and World Reports’ top 100 schools really are the top 132. We’re now 160.

The AAU’s top 50 is really 62 institutions, kind of like the Big Ten.

Meeting Stretch Goals 10 through 3 will surely more this dial in the not-to-distant future.
And lastly, I said we needed to have the pocketbook to realize our ambitions. We are developing our 50 in 5 plan to grow our revenues by 50 percent in 5 years. We will achieve this by becoming a destination of choice for students. Fall enrollment was up by 541 students over the previous year. Our spring quarter enrollment is up 4 percent over last year.

Our forecast for enrollment this fall is even far more promising: the entering class show us more than 9 percent ahead of last year. Our transfer confirmations are up almost 15 percent.
And now, drilling deeper into our Six Strategic Goals, I’d like to highlight some of our activities this year.

For this point forward, our slides will resemble a slightly modified game of Jeopardy - absent Vanna White. Oh no, she’s on Wheel of Fortune!

Let’s start with “Place Students at the Center” and TL-Squared-C.
Our Transfer and Lifelong Learning Center was created last year to consolidate our functions serving adult learners and the recruitment functions of the Admissions Transfer Center, thanks to a collaborative effort between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs and Services.

Our TL-squared-C is now working to promote UC to these distinct groups of students with the goal that UC will become the “premier transfer university in Ohio,” reaching out to nearby community colleges and leading the state’s adoption of Transfer Assurance Guides through pathways to nearly 38 majors.
Now let’s try UCART….
During my recap on the stretch goals, remember how I mentioned we want to change our mix of students?

Well, our new UC Alumni Recruitment Teams are already at work on this. Our admissions effort now taps on alumni from around Ohio and is expanding across the nation, first to Washington DC and next to Houston, where our alums are eager to help us, recruit in their hometowns, soon from coast to coast.
Next, to the CAT:
A couple of years ago, the elimination of our University College and the College of Evening and Continuing Education was greeted with a lot of consternation.

We discovered that students were not making the steady progress toward success they so richly deserve. In University College, less than 1 in 10 students received an associate’s degree within nine years. Slightly higher than 10% received a baccalaureate degree in 10 years, but seven out of 10 received no degree within 10 years.

We can and will to do better by these students. Last fall, our first class entered our Center for Access and Transition.

At the CAT, we put the emphasis on student success, with lots of attentive advising. Said Joshua Ginn of Delhi, who worked with CAT during his first quarter here: “It was great to have such a caring advisor. I must have met with her four or five times in the quarter and could talk about anything.”

Already in its first year, I think you can say the center’s been a “CAT”egorical success. It has already sent more
than 38 percent of the freshmen who entered UC with learning deficits onto a baccalaureate college within two quarters of entering….a successful transition, by any standard.
Now let’s look at scholarships.
This fiscal year, we have boosted a variety of our scholarship programs by more than $3 million.

This includes our Cincinnati Pride grants, in combination with other aid, for graduates of Cincinnati Public Schools who meet financial and academic criteria. We have 354 currently, up from 181 in fall 2003.

At the same time, we have expanded our Cincinnatus Scholarships, geared to students who rank at the top of their classes and test scores, with a 6 percent increase in the numbers competing, coming from more than 830 high schools in 38 states.
So what’s “We’re All UC”?

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UC | 21
Well, it’s a phrase that comes straight from our academic planning process last year. And this spring, it became the name of our new annual fund-raising campaign where faculty, staff and emeriti give to UC themselves – showing our external donors how committed we are to UC!

With plenty of time remaining, more than 1,300 gifts have been given.

While the dollars are important, participation at any dollar level matters most!
Yes, what a difference a year makes.

But we can’t stand on our laurels. UC|21 is an ambitious statement of UC’s future aspirations. The effort is comprehensive and challenging and must be worked on 24/7/365.

So let’s look together at our plans for this next year, what we call our Forecast 2006.

Let’s start with “Raising the Bar.”
Recall that last year in our Town Hall sessions, I often talked about the Tyranny of the “or”. That we shouldn’t give in to the notion that we must either be “selective” or “open” in admissions. Many voices expressed concern that UC could not serve both commitments and serve them well.

But as a 21st century public university, we absolutely must do both. And we will.

We are committed to excellence, access and the success of our students, particularly their timely and successful achievement of baccalaureate degrees. We are raising the bar, not just on the students but on ourselves.

In order to promote student success, the university will implement Academic Success Criteria, including minimum admissions standards. The new standards will begin with students applying for our fall 2006 class. These minimum standards are based on a careful analysis of student performance as measured by academic progress and retention at UC. The new criteria will apply to students seeking admission to all baccalaureate programs.
This does in no way mean that we are retreating from access.

Our plan includes the creation of an Admissions Review and Appeals Committee. This review will focus on assessing a student’s readiness for study at the baccalaureate level via both cognitive and non-cognitive measures.

Students not quite ready for direct admission to a baccalaureate program will be admitted to CAT or encouraged to begin their studies at one of our outstanding regional campuses.

As you all know, many of our academic programs already have very competitive admissions standards, programs which will remain very competitive.
For our next Forecast, let’s take a look at Scaling Up Our Research Aspirations.
You’ve seen the difference that a campus master plan can make in our physical environment. Our academic plan is already beginning to transform us. Our Medical Center campus is making great strides with the Millennium Plan.

We’ve decided that it’s time to put the rubber to the road on research university wide. We have done a restructuring in the Office of Research to integrate Uptown campus research services and grant opportunities. Now, we need a comprehensive Research Investment Master Plan for UC as a whole.

We need to take six months to look at this carefully and get it right. We need to examine what centers are already in operation, where we have strengths we can build on, and where we might have potential for new efforts.

In short, our research future is so important, that we need an investment plan devoted solely to this agenda.
Now let’s turn to the Academy of Teaching and Learning....
Teaching and learning lie at the very core of student success. As a 21st-century university, we must become learning centered, rather than teaching centered. We want to make UC a national leader in this arena. This, in the end, is what will improve student success, recruitment and retention.

To ensure that we have effective and great teachers, we will establish an Academy of Teaching Fellows & Scholars, pushing the boundaries of our Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning.

The academy will serve multiple constituencies, including full- and part-time faculty. It will work to promote the scholarship of teaching and learning. In addition, it will focus on developing a comprehensive faculty development plan.

One final word on this topic, no let’s make it three – assessment, assessment, assessment. We will be measuring our effectiveness, and will issue an annual report card on teaching and learning at UC, as well as other measures of student learning.
How about the next 100 years of co-op?
You’ve heard of reality TV? Well, UC is the birthplace of reality learning, or in more formal terms, co-op, which started here in 1906 and has spread to more than 900 institutions worldwide.

Just in time for the centennial of Herman Schneider’s innovative break-through in higher education, UC plans to expand co-op by scaling up its experiential learning programs. There is no more fitting place than UC to take the lead in real-world instructional opportunities like internships, capstone experiences, clinical assistantships, and research.
Much of our planning, however, depends on ensuring college access and success for all.
The Cincinnati USA College Access Plan is an emerging coalition to address graduation rates in the Tristate.

We hope to join existing educational, business, foundation and civic forces to work together to provide more and better-coordinated scholarship support for higher education as well as mentoring, tutoring and homework assistance to ensure that students successfully complete high school college-ready and on to success in our college classrooms and beyond. Thanks to a yearlong set of strategy meetings with NKU and XU, we believe the dream of college success can be a reality in Cincinnati USA.
Now I want to address Goal 5, Establish a Sense of Place.
Establish a Sense of Place

With nearly $1.3 Billion in physical investment in just short of 100 acres of our campus, we are quickly establishing a sense of place at UC. Our campus will also be enhanced by new investments in Uptown revitalization, including the recent infusion of $52 million in neighborhood renewal in our adjacent communities.
And now we’ll turn to World of Opportunity.
This amazing map shows you at a glance, just where our students come from -- literally from all around the world.

Predominantly, our students do reside in the United States, but as a modern university, we’re committed do more to create globally competent graduates, as well as to grow our international student enrollment.

It will take real commitment on the part of universities, such as UC, to support internationalization. It is paramount that we maintain our place at the forefront of the world’s academic community and maintain our pre-eminence in innovation, discovery and learning.

Through UC|21, UC brings that commitment to life, with a reorganization and expansion of our international programs. Shortly, we hope to hire a new vice provost for international
affairs. Soon I will travel to China on a trip coordinated by the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber.

The harsh reality is that right now only 3 percent of U.S. baccalaureate students participate in education abroad each year. At UC: it’s a little over 2 percent. We must do better.

Nationally and at UC, in recent years, the growth of international enrollment has slowed. Our peak year was 2001-02 with 2204, and we need to return to and exceed that level.

It will take a lot of work and creativity, but we will truly transform UC into a World of Opportunity.
At the beginning, I stressed the use of assessment and accountability measures.

We will take our vow to be accountable even further, issuing an annual President’s Report Card to the Community.

The first one will be presented at the Board of Trustees meeting on June 28.

Each year, it will provide us with crucial indicators of our progress and success. UC|21 is after all a set of high aspirations, gathered from a wide range of stakeholders, both internal and external. We will meet these expectations only if we painstakingly hold ourselves accountable with openness and candor.
Zimpher:
I’d like to call on some others to help complete this 2006 Forecast.

John Mang will tell us more about Winning With Diversity. John is a trustee of the UC Foundation Board and the general manager of global fabric and home care new business development at P&G. He also leads the UC Recruiting Team at P&G. John….

Zimpher:
Next up is Sandra Degen, acting vice president for Research, who will talk about the Entrepreneurial Launch Pad.

Zimpher:
Karen Gould, Dean of the McMicken College of Arts and Sciences, will talk to us about Reinvesting in the Core.
Zimpher:
On behalf of Mary Stagaman, our assistant vice president for marketing and community relations, we’re calling on Peg Allensworth, communication director in the Division of Administrative and Business Services, to discuss the Center for the City portal.

Zimpher:
Next I want to call on two student athletes, Chris Smith, who received our Jimmy Nippert Award as the top graduating male student-athlete, and Julie Dupont, who is the winner of the Helen Norman Smith Award as the top graduating female student-athlete. Chris, you’re first.

Zimpher:
And now Fritz Russ, senior vice provost, will tell us about Edventure Capital.

Zimpher:
And finally, Dorothy Air, associate senior vice president for entrepreneurial affairs, will tell us about Showcase UC
As you can see, our UC academic plan is a work in progress. We are clearly on the move. Our campus has in recent years made great leaps forward physically….garnering praise from the New York Times as one of the most architecturally dynamic campuses in America. Most recently, in February 2005, *Metropolis* magazine opined that UC's radical makeover is giving our campus a heart and the dynamism that plays to a global audience, not just a local one.

With UC|21, we stand poised to do no less in the academic realm.

Please join me as I imagine for a moment what our community would be like without the University of Cincinnati….

Without the 102,000 alumni who live and work in the region
Without our more than $3.6 billion of economic impact and the more than 51,000 jobs associated with it

Without the 1000 performing arts events each year

Without the more than 100 athletic events each year

Without the 4000 new members of the talent pool we graduate each year.

What a far less vibrant, far less interesting, far less prosperous region this would be … And with far fewer possibilities for the future, I might add.

Forging ahead, the risk lies not in our action … It lies in not acting. In our pursuit of excellence, we will not falter or desist. And we will be as successful in our academic transformation as in our physical renaissance.
Before closing, I want to make sure you’re aware that we will issue a more detailed accounting of the plans we have discussed today in a user-friendly format on the Web before Labor Day. But you can use our existing UC|21 Web site to give us immediate feedback about what you’ve heard today.

Further, our new UC|21: Forecast 2006 brochure, free posters and a UC|21 pin are available at the door.
Some had hoped that at this culminating moment, I would once again follow Dilbert’s lead and offer “ultra-stretchy goals,” to add to last year’s famous Letterman 10.

Quite frankly, we have lots more big ideas in our quiver. But I don’t have to tell you how much more work we have to do on the 10 we have….So, you’ll just have to wait, Dilbert.

At the conclusion of my inaugural address last year, I quoted Winston Churchill, who opined to the faithful during World War II:

“This is not the end; it is not even the beginning of the end. But it is the end of the beginning.”

So what would Winston Churchill say now? “Let’s keep going.”