

A photograph of the Singapore Management University (SMU) building at sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, pink, and purple. The building is modern with glass facades and is partially obscured by lush green trees. The text 'SMU' is visible on the upper part of the building. The overall scene is well-lit, with the building's interior lights glowing through the glass.

Strategic Planning in the University Context

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What is Strategic Planning?

- Mintzberg's Harvard Business Review article¹ is not truly applicable to the University context
- “Herding Cats”² useful but written by academics for academics
- “Planning is everything, the plan is nothing”
 - Mentioned by Prof. Ling Xue, PKU China
HEPA 2014 Keynote Speaker

¹[The Fall and Rise of Strategic Planning, Mintzberg 1994](#)

²[Herding Cats, Graeme Davies and Geoff Garrett](#)

Who values the “Plan”?

What is a University Context?

- 85 Institutions, established in Western world by 1520, still exist in recognizable forms. 70 are Universities³

- Mentioned by Dr. Wei Qi, UST China
HEPA 2014 Keynote Speaker

- Reasons for exceptional robustness ?

- Social organisations (≠ corporations for profit)
- Multiple long-term stakeholders with vested interests
- Providers of various public-goods

➤ Research Publications (advancing new ideas)

} Captured by QS/THE University Rankings

➤ High impact large scale (multidisciplinary research)

➤ High quality teaching that produces citizens who can think clearly- leaders for business and government

} Ignored by QS/THE University Rankings

➤ Collaboration with industry and government

Will Universities that pursue university rankings remain robust, last 500 years?

³[The Uses of the University, 5th Ed. Clark Kerr \(p115\)](#)

Universities are Different

(from corporations)

- Schizophrenic
 - Private Goods (MBAs/Exec Ed) and Public Goods
 - Academic and Admin leaders
 - Creative tension between Academic Ideals and Values/Pragmatism
- No single biggest asset- instead, an interdependent knowledge ecosystem comprising:
 - Unpredictable portfolio of faculty and research programmes (like venture capitalists, we are unsure which will “pay-off”)
 - Access to data, technology, scientific methods
 - High quality students to stimulate thought and assist with research
 - Culture that values intellectual development, rigorous thinking and impactful research

We perpetuate a precious tradition of inquiry?

Is there “one/the” University context?

The SMU Context

- Small social sciences University
 - 6 Schools (Information Systems, **S**ocial Sciences, **A**ccountancy, **B**usiness, **E**conomics, **L**aw)
 - LSE for the East (?)
 - Vision 2025: Integrated with our city community
 - Proximity to legal profession, arts & civic districts, business & financial centres
 - 330 Faculty | 9000 students | 10-min walk end-to-end
 - Maturing from UG and publications to include market-driven activities (Exec. Ed, Masters, competitively funded large-scale research)



Office of Strategic Planning (OSP)

SMU Vision 2025

- Deeper Engagement Across Student+Alumni Lifecycle
- Regional Impact to Enhance International Relevance
- Richer Portfolio of Distinctive Programs
- Stronger Ensemble of Disciplines
- High-Impact and Larger-Scale Research Programs
- Commitment to Innovative and Transformational Education
- Integrated with the City

How appropriate are corporate strategic planning processes for Universities?

Considerations

- Many stakeholders, diverse/evolving interests, varying time horizons
- Harder to measure: more qualitative, involves more intangible trade-offs
- Others?

OSP's capabilities

**Forward Planning and Resource Allocation
(2-5 years ahead)**

e.g. Strategic Plan 2011-2015; SMU Vision 2025; Seed funding

e.g. Strategic Portfolio of Postgraduate Programmes

e.g. Identifying Snr Faculty Hires (Research Mentors; Teaching Stars)

e.g. Conjoint Study of 'Desired Attributes in University Choices' (with Bain & Co.)

e.g. Targeting 100% Global Exposure

Institutional/ Market Research and Competitive Landscape Scanning


**Strategic Alignment - Special Projects and Performance Management
(1-2 years ahead)**

Screen shot of Conjoint Section of Survey



Imagine you are choosing a university, please indicate which university you will choose if you were presented with below options?

1 / 10

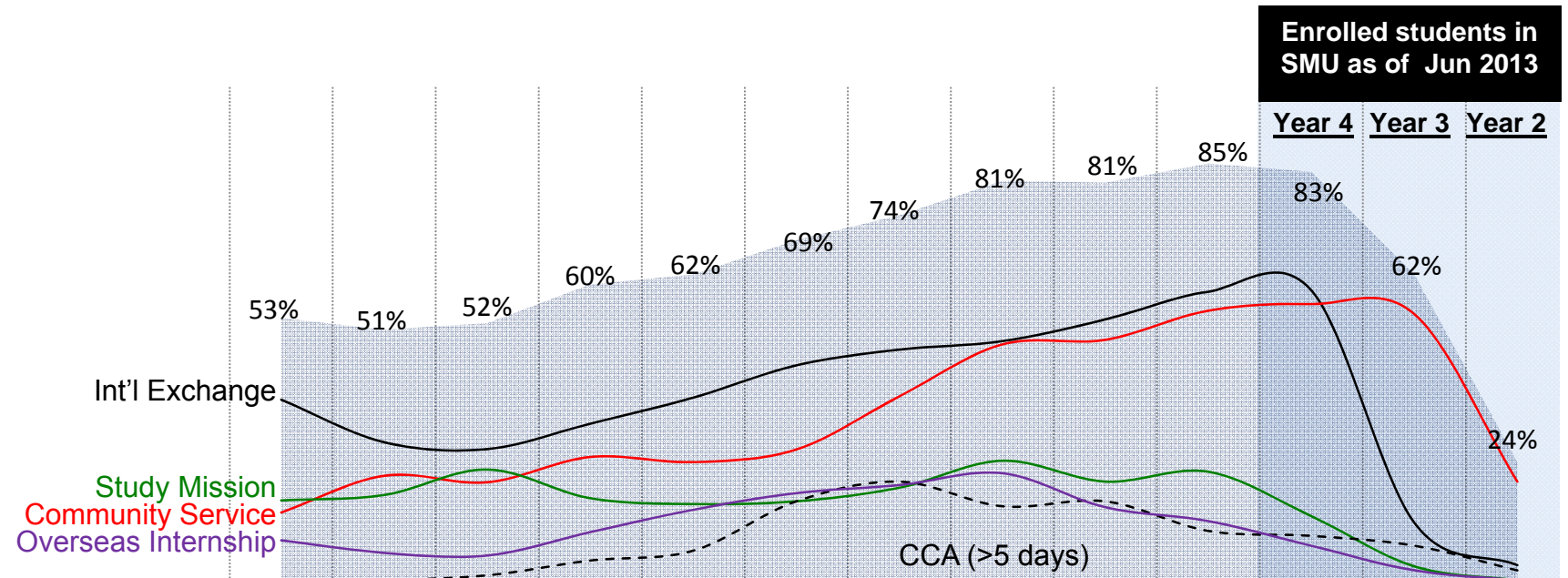
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
University brand		University X	University Y
Discipline rankings in top choice subject	School/Faculty offering your programme is not ranked in its discipline rankings	School/Faculty offering your programme is not ranked in its discipline rankings	School/Faculty offering your programme is highly-ranked in its discipline rankings
Course duration	3 years	4 years	4 years
Expected monthly starting salary after graduation	S\$4,200	S\$3,350	S\$3,900
Type of degrees available	Up to single degree with option for second major	Option for double degree	Single degree
Ability to gain global exposure	Assured of 1 global exposure trip with possibility of more	Limited opportunity for any global exposure trips	Assured of 1 global exposure trip
Range of electives	Moderate range of electives	Wide range of electives	Limited range of electives
Teaching style	Small class sizes with significant interaction	Combination of lectures and tutorials	Combination of lectures and tutorials
Fees per academic year (including 2 semesters), before financial aid/scholarships	Citizen \$11,000	Citizen \$14,000	Citizen \$13,000
	<input type="radio"/> Option 1	<input type="radio"/> Option 2	<input type="radio"/> Option 3

- I will enroll in the university I selected above
- I will not enroll in any of the above universities

Global Exposure Percentage

Percentage of SMU undergraduates on global exposure trips by category

All SMU undergraduates from 2000 – 2012



Admit Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total Cohort Size	284	486	579	800	1,056	1,143	1,285	1,539	1,594	1,705	1,611	1,675	1,897

At least 1 Global Exposure	53%	51%	52%	60%	62%	69%	74%	81%	81%	85%	83%	62%	24%
Int'l Exchange	37%	28%	27%	32%	37%	44%	47%	48%	53%	59%	59%	12%	3%
Community service	14%	21%	20%	25%	24%	27%	37%	48%	49%	55%	56%	54%	20%
Study Mission*	16%	17%	22%	17%	15%	16%	19%	24%	20%	22%	13%	3%	0%
CCA trip	0%	0%	1%	4%	6%	16%	20%	15%	16%	10%	9%	7%	2%
Overseas Internship	8%	6%	5%	10%	14%	18%	19%	22%	15%	12%	7%	2%	0%

* Includes Industry Study Mission

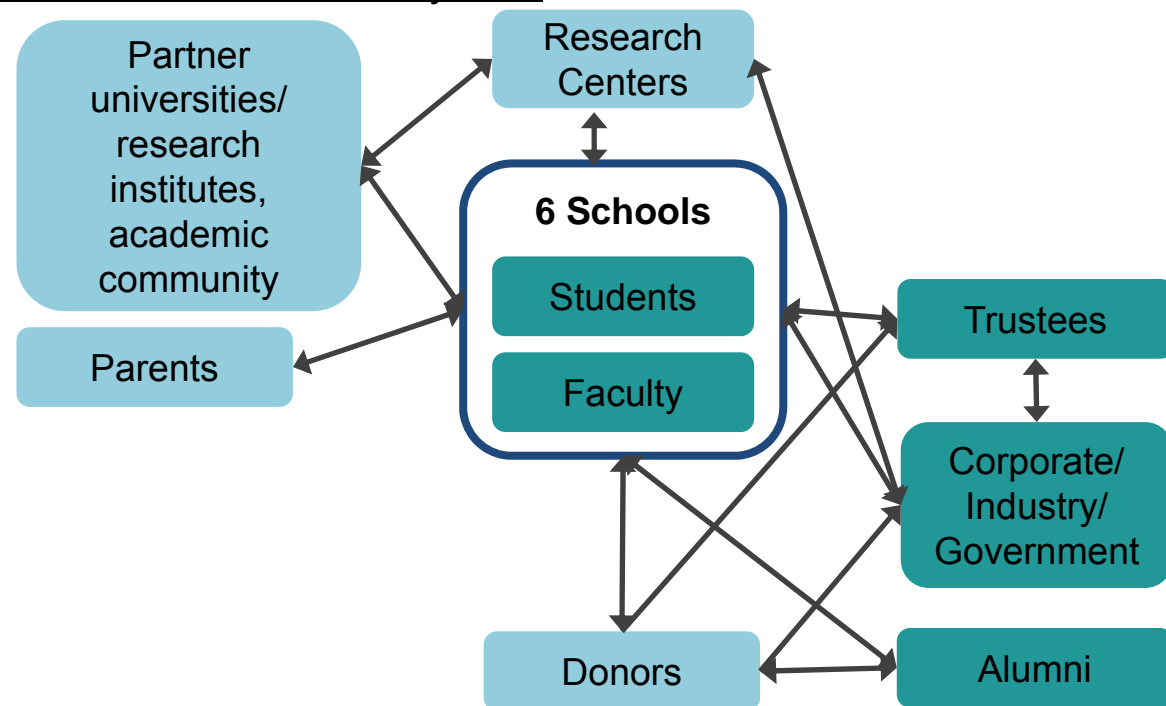
How to customise an approach to address complexity of stakeholder interests?

Guiding principles

1. Map the landscape of stakeholders, and consult extensively, periodically

OSP's approach

SMU Stakeholder Ecosystem



**So, in the end, where does the value of a
Strategic Plan reside?**