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Air Force Institute of Technology Strategic Plan 2011-2014

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Air Force Institute of Technology

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Air Force Institute of Technology Strategic Plan

2011-2014





The Icarus Memorial

No story captures the brave dream of flight more vividly than the ancient greek legend of Daedalus and his son Icarus. Though Icarus fell, he gained freedom by daring to fly. The Icarus memorial remembers the graduates of the Air Force Institute of Technology who gave their lives in service to our country to keep us strong and free.

From the Commandant



AFIT is a special and unique organization with an important mission. In order to continue to provide high quality education, research and consultation, we must embrace strategic planning as a continuous corporate management process.

Strategic planning sets the stage for all other organizational planning. It details our vision for the future and assesses the Institute's relevant strategic advantage. It sets the priorities for the Institute's modernization and allocation of resources.

The AFIT Strategic Plan focuses efforts in parallel emphasis areas which cascade down from our higher headquarters, Air University and parent MAJCOM, Air Education and Training Command. This strategic plan outlines

a snapshot of AFIT's current environment. The document lays the groundwork to improve our processes in achieving our vision and mission. It communicates the specific priorities, goals, objectives

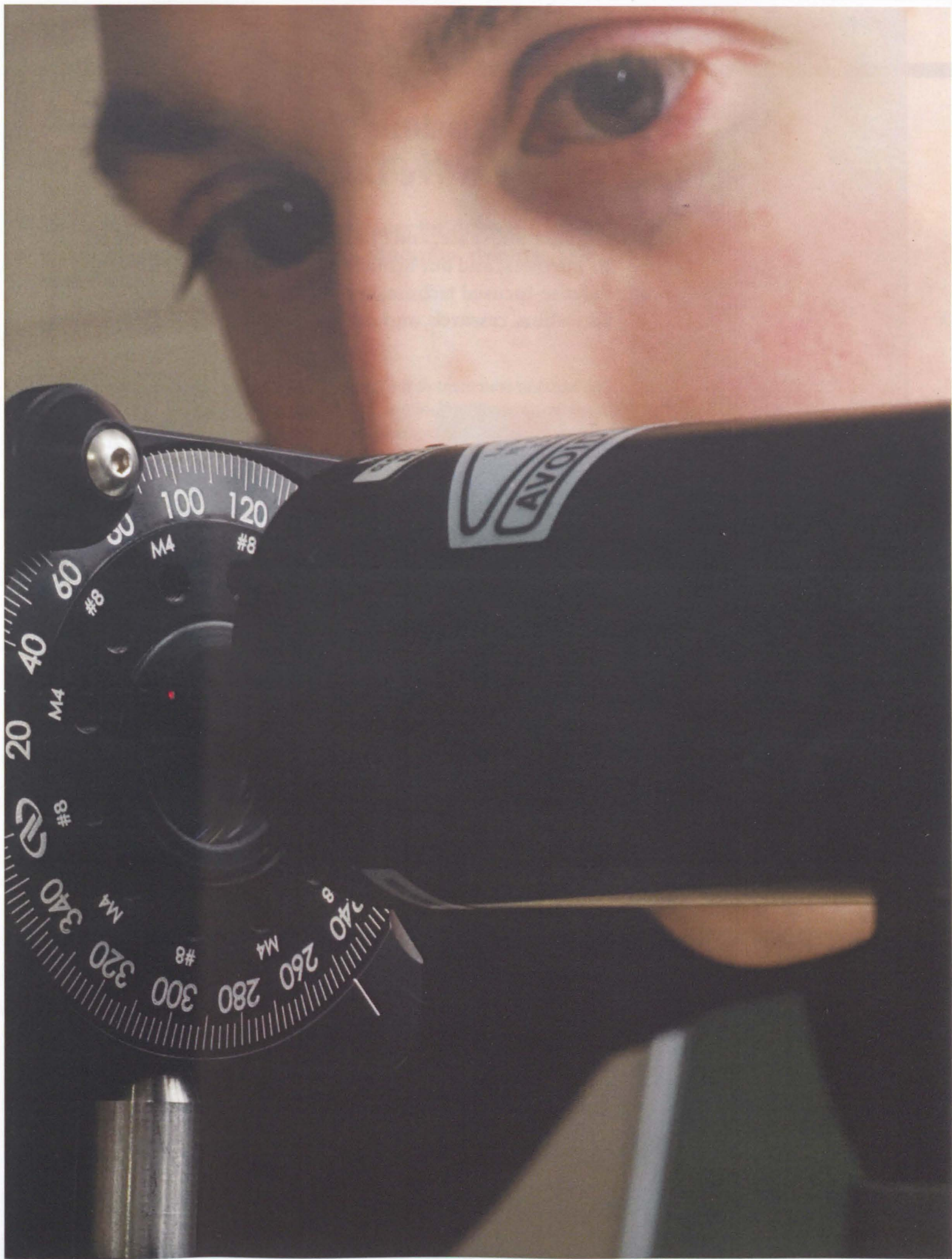


and measures necessary for AFIT to become the recognized leader in defense-focused education, research and consultation.

WALTER D. GIVHAN
Major General, USAF
Commandant

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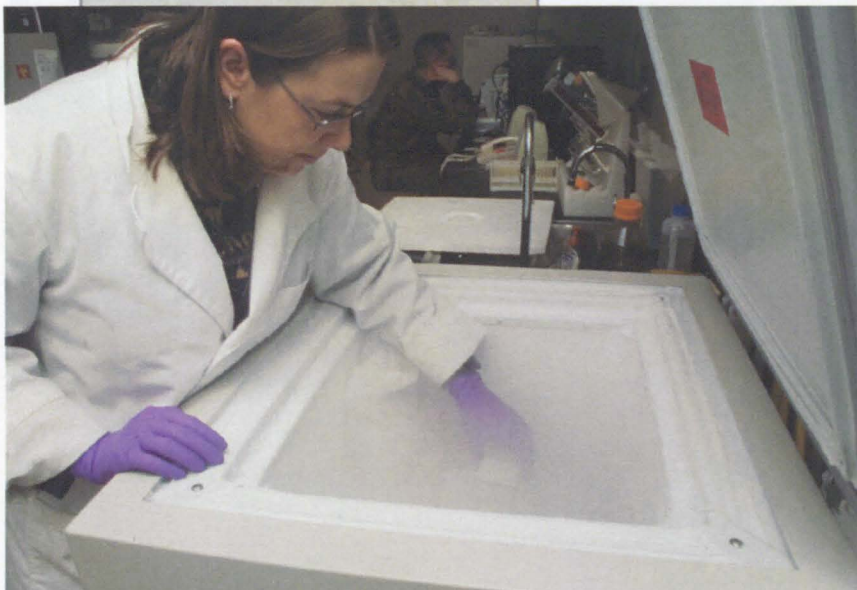


AFIT Mission: What Do We Do?

Advance air, space, and cyberspace power for the Nation, its partners, and our armed forces by providing relevant defense-focused technical graduate and continuing education, research, and consultation.

The Mission Statement of the Air Force Institute of Technology identifies and summarizes our purpose and role in the Air Force mission. We provide the Air Force with its most fundamental of enablers: the educated airmen who form the foundation for the successful application of air, space, and cyber power. AFIT accomplishes its mission through the Graduate School of Engineering and Management, the School of

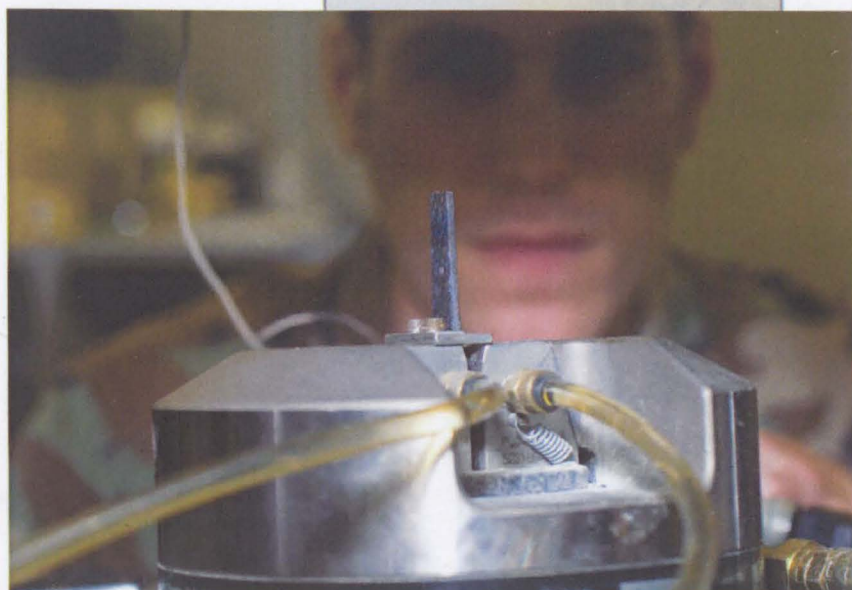
Systems and Logistics, the Civil Engineering School, the Office of Civilian Institution Programs, and the Air Force Center for System Engineering. Our defense-focused education is indispensable to the defense of our nation through research in academia, industry, and other government agencies. By providing mission-ready airmen, AFIT enables the warfighters to focus people and resources on mission execution.



AFIT Vision: Where Do We Want to Be?

Be the internationally recognized leader for defense-focused technical graduate and continuing education, research, and consultation.

The AFIT Vision Statement summarizes the vision of what AFIT senior leaders want the Institute to achieve. Our vision focuses on ensuring the readiness of the Air Force by providing educated airmen to execute the mission through the utilization of their technical graduate and professional continuing education. Through our time-tested responsiveness to emerging challenges, both domestically and internationally, AFIT continues to produce educational programs, conduct technical research and provide defense consultation. AFIT strives to attain higher levels of international achievement in these areas through innovative and technologically advanced education programs and curricula to match future operational needs.



AFIT Objectives: What Do We Deliver to Reach Our Vision?

Produce highly qualified graduates

Graduates are students who have met degree, program, or course requirements. This objective addresses how AFIT (through each of its schools) transfers knowledge to its students. It is primarily focused on student outcomes. This objective answers the question, "Have students mastered the curriculum or particular course that is taken?" This objective also addresses the effectiveness and relevance of the learning experience as assessed by our sponsors, our students, and their next supervisors after graduation.

Deliver professional consulting services

A consultation involves providing subject matter expertise to an external organization at their request, to help them achieve their objectives. Consultations range from answering a technical question from in-theater, to assisting higher headquarters draft new or revised policy, to developing new processes and tools for the requesting organization.



AFIT Goals:

AFIT Performance:
This is how we plan to achieve our
Priorities.

Produce world-class research

Research is the systematic inquiry and development of underlying facts and principles and the communication of findings to a broader audience. AFIT achieves a significant part of its defense-focused mission by producing research that is responsive to the joint operational environment and senior leadership priorities. AFIT meets the highest academic standards including professional peer review of research results.



AFIT Priorities: This Is How We Fulfill Our Vision.

Priorities state the broad direction and goals operationalize that direction. These priorities show how AFIT will get from our mission (what we do) to our vision (where do we want to be).

Given the resource-constrained environment in which it will be operating over the next few years, AFIT has identified the following areas in which to concentrate its efforts. The identification of a limited number of strategic priorities allows the Institute to focus its resources in those key strategic areas most critical to its future successes. Therefore, to be successful in realizing its mission and achieving its vision, AFIT will direct its efforts to each of the following strategies over the next five years:

1. Provide responsive, relevant, defense-focused technical graduate and continuing education, research, and consultation across a diverse student body to meet mission requirements.
2. Support continuous professional development of our staff, faculty and students.
3. Develop and maintain exceptional partnerships across industry, education and military communities through outreach to promote common interests of national defense.
4. Ensure facilities and infrastructure enable the learning environment.
5. Take care of the AFIT Family.



AFIT Goals: This Is How We Meet Our Priorities.

To address each of the strategic priorities, the following goals (strategic initiatives) have been identified. Each goal names the desired activity identified as necessary to address the strategic priorities. Each goal will generate a number of specific objectives and tactics or action steps. These broad initiatives represent the most important work for AFIT over the next five years. The Commandant has established the following seven goals:

1. Improve the quality of the AFIT learning experience for every student to produce leaders with vision and technical competence.
2. Anticipate emerging Department of Defense needs for technical education - grow and adapt to meet them.

3. Recruit, develop, retain and promote recognized and outstanding military and civilian faculty and staff in areas key to the AFIT mission.

4. Broaden and strengthen strategic relationships with key stakeholders.

5. Build and maintain effective, efficient, state-of-the-art support of all kinds (including information technology and physical facility) to enable the AFIT mission.

6. Leverage new opportunities to expand AFIT distributed learning world-wide.

7. Implement policy and organizational changes to improve continuity of leadership, faculty and staff.

Our Roadmap to Success: Executing Our Plan Using the AFIT Strategy Map

AFIT's strategy for successfully translating our vision, priorities, and goals into actionable tasks is captured in a strategy map, which also serves as our heads-up display for strategic execution. The strategy map organizes and aligns AFIT's strategic objectives into four categories/perspectives: 1) Mission Impact, 2) Operational Drivers, 3) Institutional Support, and 4) Develop and Support Our People. Operational Drivers are further divided into the themes of: Curriculum and Programs, Students, and Outreach. Enablers feed our core processes, which in turn produce mission ready capabilities (mission impact). To achieve these goals, AFIT uses the Balanced Scorecard methodology. The Balanced Scorecard is a management schema that enables organizations to operationalize their strategic planning process, by providing a template for reviewing key institute objectives developed by AFIT senior leaders. The map is organized in such a way that different perspectives and mission areas are represented. Objectives are supported by quantitative measurements; therefore, Balanced Scorecard strategy reviews provide an important diagnostic tool for current operations. Senior leader champions share analysis and recommend corrective or complementary actions (i.e., initiatives). Moving into the future, the strategic goals presented in this plan will serve as the Commandant's overarching guidance and the organizing construct for the Institute's Balanced Scorecard objectives and measures as arrayed on the Strategy Map.



AFIT Strategy Map

MISSION IMPACT (Outcomes – Customer Focused Objectives)

What we deliver to others. Because the objectives relating to Education, Research and Consulting have the most immediate and direct impact on our customers' missions, they reside at the top of our strategy map.

OPERATIONAL DRIVERS (Processes – Internal Process Objectives)

Where we combine resources to produce capabilities. The objectives contained in this area are supported by AFIT's core processes that enable attainment of the parent mission objectives.

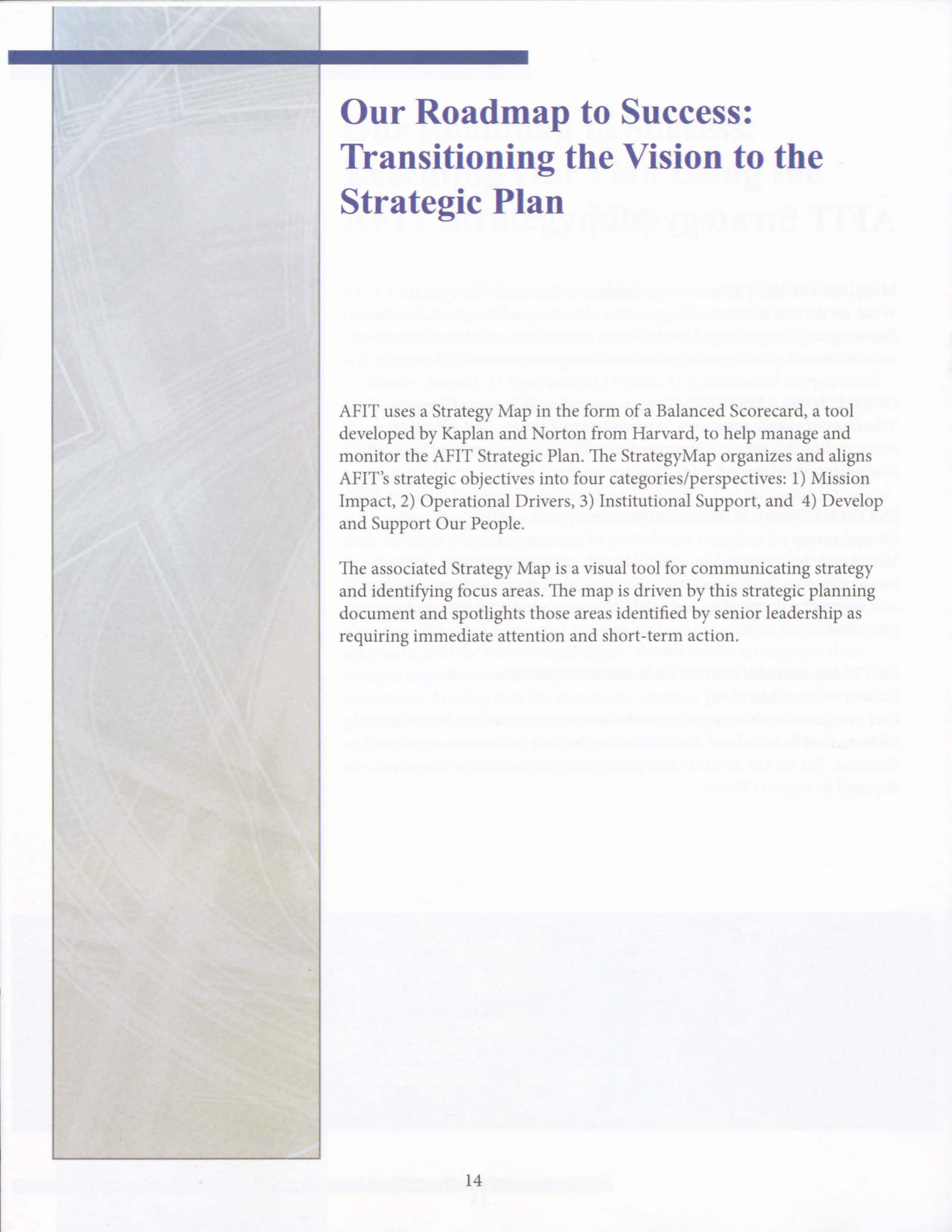
INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT (Internal Support – Workforce and Environment)

We provide learning and business development opportunities through our world-class faculty and staff. We measure our institutional support and success by developing and establishing comprehensive assessment programs.

DEVELOP AND SUPPORT OUR PEOPLE (Workforce – People and Infrastructure Objectives)

Our people and infrastructure enable our core processes to function, and in-turn, enable us to have the mission impact our customers expect and demand. For us, the critical enablers are our people and the resources required to support them.





Our Roadmap to Success: Transitioning the Vision to the Strategic Plan

AFIT uses a Strategy Map in the form of a Balanced Scorecard, a tool developed by Kaplan and Norton from Harvard, to help manage and monitor the AFIT Strategic Plan. The StrategyMap organizes and aligns AFIT's strategic objectives into four categories/perspectives: 1) Mission Impact, 2) Operational Drivers, 3) Institutional Support, and 4) Develop and Support Our People.

The associated Strategy Map is a visual tool for communicating strategy and identifying focus areas. The map is driven by this strategic planning document and spotlights those areas identified by senior leadership as requiring immediate attention and short-term action.

AFIT Strategy Map

Vision: Be the internationally recognized leader for defense-focused technical graduate & continuing education, research & consultation

Mission: Advance air, space, and cyberspace power for the Nation, its partners, and our armed forces by providing relevant defense-focused technical graduate and continuing education, research, and consultation

Mission Impact

Produce highly qualified graduates

Deliver professional consultation services

Produce world-class research

Operational Drivers

Curriculum & Programs

Develop rigorous, relevant and responsive curriculum

Deliver quality educational programs and courses

Students

Provide resident student support

Provide non-resident student support

Manage Civilian Institute program & students

Outreach

Provide an environment which nurtures research

Perform strategic communication

Institutional Support

Develop & deliver technology enhanced learning opportunities & outcomes

Support business development opportunities

Hire & maintain stable high-quality faculty & staff

Develop & establish comprehensive assessment program

Develop and Support Our People

Manage personnel programs

Provide world-class academic facilities

Manage information technology programs

Information protection & security

Strategy Map's Operational Drivers: Where Resources Meet Capabilities

Curriculum and Programs

Develop rigorous, relevant and responsive curriculum

Academic programs and curricula are developed to be relevant and responsive to the needs of the customer via individual school processes and meet the educational objectives and expectations of the students.

Deliver quality educational programs and courses

The delivery of quality education programs/courses is comprised of qualified faculty properly developed presenting the curriculum in an appropriate learning environment using the appropriate educational technology.



Students

Provide quality resident student support

AFIT manages a multi-faceted student support role from initial contact, “care and feeding” while enrolled, and tracking and storing historical educational data (transcripts). We provide accurate, timely responses to all student requests and assist students in the solution to their problems through support processes.

Provide quality non-resident student support

AFIT manages a multi-faceted student support role from initial contact, “care and feeding” while enrolled, and tracking and storing historical educational data (transcripts). We seek to provide accurate, timely responses to all student requests and assists students in the solution to their problems.

Manage Civilian Institution programs and students

AFIT’s Civilian Institution program provides student support and administrative/fiscal oversight for approximately 2,500 active duty and inactive obligated reserve line, legal, chaplain, and medical officers enrolled in long-term educational programs at well over 350 locations around the world. This requires extensive coordination with universities, medical centers, AFROTC detachments, servicing bases, embassies, sponsoring units, and many others.

Strategy Map's Operational Drivers: Where Resources Meet Capabilities

Outreach

Provide an environment which nurtures research

We hire faculty who are experts in relevant areas in order to develop and manage persistent streams of leading-edge research. We support them with a variety of processes to facilitate world class research including: administrative support (office of sponsored programs, travel, security), centers of research excellence (collaboration space, equipment), departmental leadership (mentoring, identification of strategic research areas), establishment of strategic partnerships (coordination processes for MOU), and academic processes (thesis/dissertation approval).

Perform strategic communication

Strategic communication is a plan of activities deliberately focused on understanding, engaging, informing, influencing, and communicating with people through public affairs, public diplomacy, information operations and other efforts. AFIT communicates our value and capabilities to the senior leadership of the MAJCOMs, Air Staff, and COCOMs of our academic programs through strategic communication. Additionally, AFIT continues to be nationally known and respected as a top graduate and continuing education institution outside the Air Force, science, technology and academic communities.



Strategy Map's Institutional Support: Making It Happen

Institutional Support

Develop/deliver technology enhanced learning opportunities/outcomes

Exploit appropriate learning technologies to optimize the educational experience, for onsite, distance, and blended learning environments. This requires a mapping of pedagogical needs to available technologies involving 1) ensuring the school can identify and acquire technologies that enhance learning, 2) ensuring that suitable technologies are employed to meet pedagogical needs, 3) promoting the sharing of technologies and resources across AFIT schools and 4) ensuring faculty and staff are trained to effectively use the technologies acquired.

Support business development opportunities

As AETC resources become increasingly scarce, it is important for AFIT to balance support and resources. One method is to capitalize on external sources of funding through avenues such as research projects, sponsored funded courses, and consultations. Another method is to maintain stability in the faculty-to-student ratio by increasing the throughput of non-Air Force Education Requirements Board, Advanced Academic Degree, Professional Continuing Education, and Distance Learning students. Lastly, AFIT's internal resources must be examined to ensure adequacy to support necessary infrastructure requirements.

Recruit, hire, and retain high-quality faculty & staff

The quality of AFIT's academic and research programs and AFIT's ability to accomplish its mission depend on successfully recruiting and hiring military and civilian faculty and staff with expert qualifications. This practice will enhance AFIT's ability to increase its visibility and reputation as a high quality, research-based, degree-granting and continuing education institute. Retaining our highest quality team players is vital to AFIT's long-term success and the health of the institution.

Develop and establish comprehensive assessment program

Strategic plans are dynamic and help the Institute navigate amidst changing conditions to make progress in achieving its stated strategic vision. To this end, AFIT must 1) evaluate its progress toward achieving its stated goals, 2) examine the currency and focus of its goals, and 3) revise its strategies and goals as needed. This process must be meaningful to departments and support offices and must promote a sense of forward movement, especially in context of student learning and effective teaching.

Strategy Map's Develop and Support for Our People: Enablers to Maximize Resources

Our People

Manage personnel programs

An AFIT assignment enhances career opportunities for faculty and staff. We take care of our people through promotions, awards and decorations, performance management, and professional development. We attract, hire and retain world-class faculty and staff. We ensure our people are ready to deploy and fight when tasked. Our families are vital to our success in meeting AFIT's mission. We maintain the perspective of mission accomplishment while ensuring quality family time. Quality of life is a composite score measuring satisfaction rates of AFIT personnel with where they work and live.

Provide world-class academic facilities

We continually improve our facilities to support the evolving mission of AFIT. To do so, we must find innovative ways to operate and maintain our campus to create an environment that enhances both the educational experiences and research requirements. This includes working with the host base to develop a strategic facilities plan, to build a "Hilltop" campus plan, to maintain Air Force Quality of Life standards, and to meet Distance Learning and secure facilities requirements.

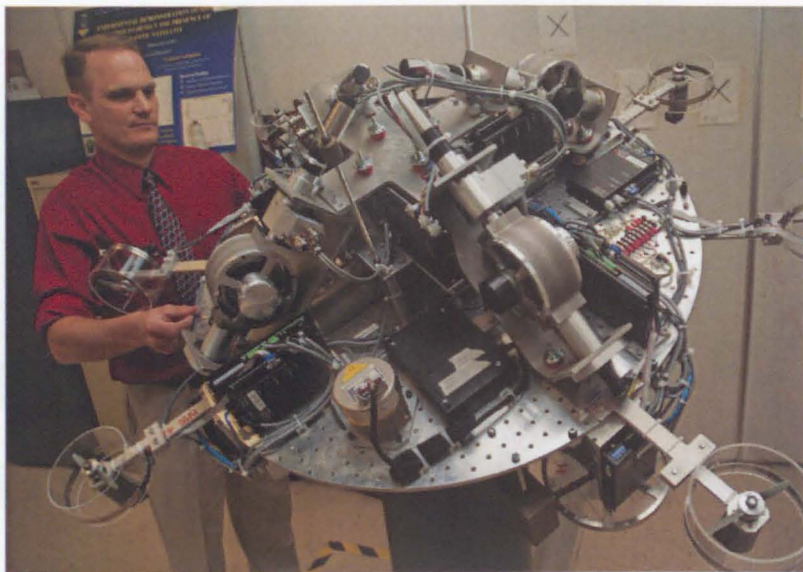


Manage information technology programs

We strive to achieve sustainable levels of flexibility, relevance, reliability and access across all AFIT information technology solutions. Through partnering with faculty and staff, we drive innovation into the classroom and learning environment. We aggressively pursue common/integrated information technology architectures, standardize solutions across the Institute, and find synergies where possible.

Information protection and security

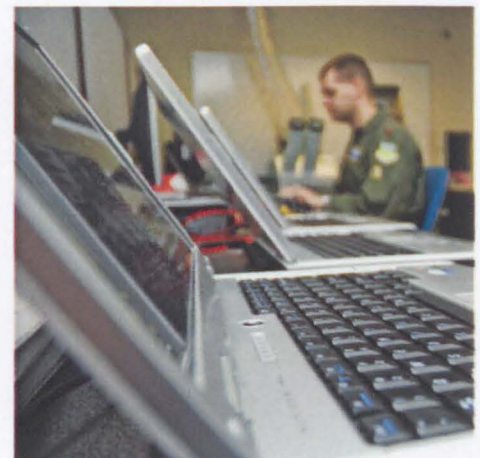
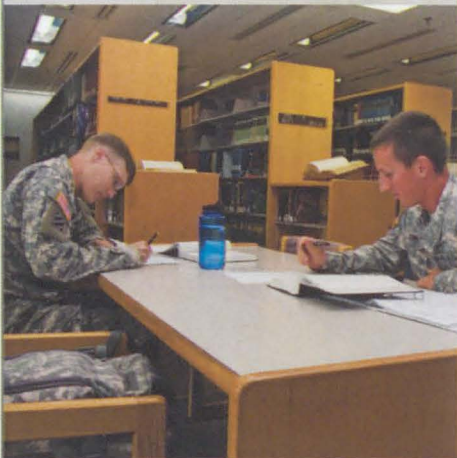
There is a need to provide flexible, comprehensive and forward-looking security service to fully support and promote AFIT's vision and mission capabilities. Enhanced technology and customer focus initiatives will improve efficiency and performance in delivery of support.



Conclusion

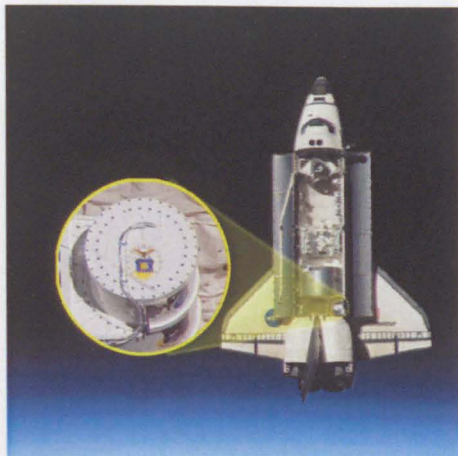
Strategic planning and execution is about translating vision into executable tasks, assuring resources are best aligned to support these required tasks, and simultaneously providing a simple way for leadership to monitor performance. The AFIT Strategic Plan is a comprehensive vision that defines our overall planning process and guarantees continual mission success now and in the future. It begins with the strategic direction provided by the Air Force Vision, Air Force Strategic Plan, Air Force Strategic Planning Guidance, and Air Force Priorities. This direction leads to the development of AFIT's Mission, the Commandant's Vision, and supporting AFIT Priorities. The AFIT vision and associated priorities are then translated into strategy using a process designed to take the command from the commandant's vision to actionable tasks. Since our inception in 1919, AFIT has been, and remains committed to complete mission success, for today, tomorrow and well into the next century.

The 2011 AFIT Strategic Plan provides a focused and deliberate framework for aligning current and future AFIT actions with higher headquarters guidance. By linking the Institute's seven goals, defined in this plan, to specific Air Force, Air Education and Training Command, and Air University priorities, leadership may better evaluate the Institute's efforts to support and accomplish these priorities. Finally, this plan serves as the AFIT Commandant's overarching guidance and organizing construct for the future development of objectives and performance measures through the Balanced Scorecard strategy management process.



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