



# **BUA VISION 2020: CHANGING OUR WORLD**



## **Strategic Plan**

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**BUA Vision 2020: Changing Our World**  
**Baptist University of the Americas Strategic Plan**  
**July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2020**

**Introduction**

The strategic planning process for Baptist University of the Americas (BUA) includes input from a wide variety of constituencies, including staff, students, trustees, alumni, denominational personnel, pastors, and educators in Texas Baptist life. The end result is a bold ten-year plan that purports to establish a clear path for the upcoming decade in the accomplishment of our mission. This plan continues the trajectory first initiated in 1947 when the Mexican Baptist Bible Institute was founded and capitalizes on the vision established in 1999 that led to State certification and accreditation of the institution as a University.

This document starts with presenting the institutional historical background, a statement of our values and guiding principles, and the statement of our mission and goals. The data collected during the strategic planning process provide the basis for an institutional analysis that led to the identification of five strategic focuses for the upcoming decade. These focuses are operationalized into specific strategic initiatives and long-range goals. The document also provides five-year benchmarks that will serve as feedback to the ten-year plan. Those benchmarks will assist us towards either continuing the projected direction or making any necessary changes.

**Background: A Brief History of Baptist University of the Americas**

The University was established in 1947 by the San Antonio Baptist Association as the Mexican Baptist Training School and later named Mexican Baptist Bible Institute.

Under the leadership of Rev. Paul J. Siebenmann, Educational Missionary of the Mexican Baptist Convention, the first classes were conducted in evening sessions during the winter of 1947 at Palm Heights Baptist Church to train Spanish-speaking pastors and Christian workers. Dr. C. G. Carter was elected president in 1949. With support from the San Antonio Baptist Association and in cooperation with the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT), the Institute provided post-secondary educational services in Spanish. In 1962, the BGCT assumed operational responsibility for the Institute through its state missions department.

Dr. H. B. Ramsour, a missionary of the Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board) of the Southern Baptist Convention, was elected president in 1960. In 1963, under Dr. Ramsour's leadership, the Institute acquired a 12-acre site in south San Antonio through a gift from the Woman's Missionary Union of Texas. Dr. Ramsour oversaw the construction of seven buildings on campus made possible through gifts from San Antonio Baptist churches, Mary Hill Davis offerings, and Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Rollins.

Dr. Ramsour was succeeded by Dr. Daniel Rivera as president of the Institute in 1976. Under Dr. Rivera's leadership, the endowment grew to \$1 million and the eighth building on campus, an apartment project, was constructed. Funding was provided by Mr. W. W. Rollins.

In 1981, messengers to the 96th Annual Session of the BGCT approved the merger of the Mexican Baptist Bible Institute with Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Through this merger, the institution maintained its identity, fulfilled its unique purpose as the Hispanic Baptist Theological Seminary, and became a vital force in the training of Hispanic leadership for ministry. From 1982 to 1988, the Seminary offered accredited programs in Divinity, Religious Education, and Church Music through its relationship with Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Affiliation was reestablished with the BGCT and its State Missions Commission in 1989. Rev. Leobardo Estrada became interim president, serving until October 1989. Dr. Josué Grijalva was elected president later that year, serving until retirement in 1993. Dr. Omar Pachecano became the fifth president in 1993, serving until January 1999. During Dr. Pachecano's tenure, the endowment grew to \$2 million and application for accreditation with the Association of Biblical Higher Education was begun. Dr. Charles Lee Williamson then served as interim president through the summer of 1999. Dr. Albert L. Reyes was elected president in July 1999, and the name of the Seminary was changed to Hispanic Baptist Theological School at the request of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

In 2003, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board granted a Certificate of Authority to award a Bachelor's Degree in Biblical/Theological Studies. Later that year, the Commission on Accreditation of the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges, now the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE), approved the School for Initial Accreditation and accepted it as an Accredited Member.

The name of the institution was changed to Baptist University of the Américas in 2003 to better connote its accredited status to Latin Americans and to reflect more clearly its vision for preparing cross-cultural ministry leaders for a variety of vocations both within the church and in the broader community.

In 2006, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board issued a certificate of authority to grant Associate of Arts degrees, and the University began offering an Associate of Arts in Cross-Cultural Studies.

That same year, the University, in cooperation with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, purchased a 78-acre site in south San Antonio for the development of a new campus. Subsequently, BUA launched a \$9 million comprehensive campaign, the largest capital campaign in its history. The Piper Village, a 65-unit student housing project, opened on the new Baugh Family Campus in January 2008.

On May 7, 2007, the Board of Trustees elected René Maciel who led BUA through a significant curricular expansion of the undergraduate program (2008-2014) and through the acquisition and relocation to the current campus (2016).

In 2007, the Association of Biblical Higher Education approved the granting of additional degrees, a Bachelor of Arts in Business Leadership and a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish. In 2009, Baptist University of the Américas received the reaffirmation of its accreditation by the ABHE. The reaffirmation granted our accredited status for 10 years and recognized the excellence with

which Baptist University of the Américas has sought to accomplish her educational and Christian mission.

During the subsequent years (2009-2016), BUA has experienced a mixture of victories and challenges. During these years we have faced severe financial difficulties that led us to slow down our pursuit of regional accreditation status. On the other hand, these years led us to restructure the institution and establish a culture of simplicity in our stewardship and courage in our vision. We have maintained strict fiscal responsibility in our finances. At the same time, we continued to pursue aggressively the expansion of our programs and the establishment of partnerships that provide pathways for our students toward post-graduate degrees and placement in strategic positions in the Kingdom of God. In 2009, the University signed its first articulation agreement with a State University: Texas A&M University-Commerce and in 2010, we established a partnership with Region 20 Education Center for the training of our students toward teaching certification. In 2012, the ABHE approved the implementation of the Bachelor of Arts degree in Music. Finally, in 2014, the ABHE approved the implementation of our fifth baccalaureate degree, a Bachelor of Arts in Human Behavior, a generalist program that combines foundational studies in psychology and sociology, with concentrations in helping profession areas (counseling, pastoral care, social work, and sociological studies). The music and the human behavior degrees have allowed us to open more options for our student constituency in a manner that is true to our mission and our values.

During the past years, Texas Baptists (BGCT) have taken an important and active role in helping us in our financial stability. Through a matching program whereby the BGCT deducted dollar for dollar our fundraising efforts, we eliminated our debt with the BGCT in a period of about three years (2011-2014). In 2014, the BGCT also offered to purchase BUA's historical campus on I-35 South so that we could eliminate the bank loan we had incurred for the construction of Piper Village. These two actions led to the purchase and relocation to the Baugh Building, our new campus at 7838 Barlite Blvd. We started classes on the new campus in August 2016 with a record enrollment and an enthusiastic expectation of great years to come. In October 2016, President René Maciel resigned. The Board of Trustees elected Dr. Moisés Rodríguez as our Acting President as a presidential search is being prepared.

Baptist University of the Américas continues to expand its passionate commitment to education for cross-cultural ministry in a Hispanic context.

## **Institutional Core Values**

Baptist University of the Américas operates from the following core values:

### *1. Christ-Centeredness*

Our mission as a University is deeply rooted in our faith in the person of Jesus Christ. We understand that Christ has called us to make and equip disciples. We identify ourselves as an institution that provides the educational tools for the church to accomplish the great commission.

Being Christ-centered means that we seek to follow Jesus Christ in the design of our curriculum, in the administrative decisions we make, in the stewardship of our resources,

and in the care of every student, staff, and faculty member. We understand that the image of Christ is the ultimate goal of a disciple and we strive to provide an environment in which such a goal is pursued actively and enthusiastically.

Rooted in Christ we seek to serve with humility and grace all the constituents to which we are accountable: our students, the administrative staff, the faculty, the local church and the denomination, and the community at large.

Focused on Christ we strive to challenge ourselves and our learners to a life of continuous growth, committed to the transformation of the world in our journey toward the realization of the kingdom of God. We open our minds to the teaching of the Holy Spirit and open our hearts and our efforts to dealing in love and grace towards all whom we serve. We open our spirit to living in faith and by faith, depending on God's providence and direction to accomplish the mission to which He called us.

## 2. *Baptist Heritage*

Our allegiance to Jesus Christ is made concrete through our denominational identity. We are deeply rooted in our Baptist Heritage.

Baptists are a people who profess a living faith. This faith is rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ who is "the same yesterday, today, and forever." The sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is Jesus Christ whose will is revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

A living faith must experience a growing understanding of truth and must be continually interpreted and related to the needs of each new generation. Throughout their history Baptist bodies have issued statements of faith, which comprise a consensus of their beliefs. Such statements have never been regarded as complete, infallible statements of faith, nor as official creeds carrying mandatory authority.

Baptists emphasize the soul's competency before God, freedom of religion, and the priesthood of the believer. However, this emphasis should not be interpreted to mean that there is an absence of certain definite doctrines that Baptists believe, cherish, and with which they have been and are now closely identified.

Baptists also affirm the autonomy of the local church and its special role as the concrete representative of the Church Universal, established by Jesus Christ as His body in the world until His return. We understand that education is part of the mission of the church together with missions and benevolence. We affirm the principle of collaboration among local churches as an efficient and effective means for local congregations to accomplish their mission.

We affirm the separation of church and state as essential for any society. "The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends... Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort

to the civil power to carry on its work... a free church in a free state is the Christian ideal.” (*Baptist Faith and Message*, 1963).

As an institution affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas we affirm the statements of faith presented by the *Baptist Faith and Message* declaration adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention on May 9, 1963.

3. *Holistic Commitment to Teaching and Learning*

As a University we are committed to provide an environment that facilitates the comprehensive development of our students. We are committed to challenging our faculty and students to a life of continuous learning, creativity, freedom to experiment, and a non-conformist attitude toward the world.

The following instructional principles were developed during a staff and faculty retreat in August 2000 and reaffirmed in subsequent meetings of the faculty and administration.

**Head**—Students will receive the best education and professional development that resources can provide. Students will have a basic knowledge of biblical and theological background and content with a view to apply their knowledge in their profession. Students will explore the knowledge base of disciplines and professional fields appropriate to their preparation as human beings in an ever changing world.

**Heart**—Ministry is the activity of Christians in the world through their professions and vocations. Students will develop affective attributes desirable for their work as ministers. These attributes include a biblical worldview and philosophy of living, a compassionate and caring personality, and an internal value system consistent with Christian living in the twenty-first century.

**Hand**—Students will be able to apply their learning in practical ministry. Students will be able to apply their knowledge and skills in practical ways that effect what they do in present and future ministry.

**Habitat**—Students will develop life-long applications of their basic knowledge of the Bible, which is mediated through a Christian value system, and applied in ministry. Learning will become a self-perpetuating cycle that is fed from continuous learning and application. Students will learn how prior learning can be applied in new situations through a series of living exchange relationships.

4. *Integrity, Responsibility, and Respect*

We value integrity as the trait that presents us pure in our purposes, united in mission, and clear in our actions. Integrity is shown in our unequivocal commitment to “love God with all our mind, with all our might, with all our soul, and with all our strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.”

We value responsibility as the trait that allows us to dedicate our efforts and resources to our mission and to accept no excuse for conduct that does not conform to the highest

standard. Responsibility shows our integrity and commitment to the mission we have received as a University.

We value respect as the trait that leads us to hold in the highest esteem individuals in their cultures and faiths, and allows us to interact with each other with humility and acceptance.

5. *Cross-Cultural Competence*

We value cultural diversity as a gift from the Lord. We celebrate the multiple ethnicities that enrich our environment and our lives. We emphasize the need to understand and accept a diverse world. We affirm the need to incarnate culturally as an intrinsic part of our mission.

6. *Hospitality*

We value openness and welcoming to others as an essential trait of a Christian. Hospitality means the ability to see in every person the image of God. Through hospitality we open our hearts to those who come to us, making ourselves available to listen, to understand, and to include. We open our doors and make our University a home where all are embraced and housed as members of a family. We open our classrooms to accept those to whom the doors to education have been continually shut by prejudice and poverty.

7. *Focus on Community*

Finally, we value community. The community formed by all who are in the immediate reach of the University—students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees—is our responsibility. We aim to promote a peaceful and productive environment in which we communicate effectively and demonstrate unity.

We also focus on the extended community that transcends our institutional walls. We accept the responsibility for the world around us and commit ourselves to changing that world through education and service.

## **Institutional Mission and Goals**

The mission of Baptist University of the Americas, as an institution of higher education, is the formation, from the Hispanic context, of cross-cultural Christian leaders.

The University seeks to fulfill its mission by providing:

1. General education studies courses;
2. Lower division academic offerings;
3. Upper division academic offerings;
4. Flexible and responsive continuing education programs;

5. A Learning Resources Center to assist students, faculty and alumni in research, ministry and personal development;
6. A qualified, competent faculty, staff, and administration;
7. Student and educational support services;
8. Systematic, broad-based research, planning and evaluation processes;
9. Adequate physical, financial and relational resources to accomplish the mission of the institution.

## **The Planning Process**

The following Strategic Plan builds on the work done while implementing the 2006-2011 plan recommended to the Trustees and approved in its original form and in subsequent yearly revisions. Under the leadership of the President of the University and with the assistance of the senior administrative team, the University staff, faculty, administration, students, trustees, and friends we have developed a strategic plan that will lead our efforts in the next ten years.

The input for the strategic initiatives and goals incorporated in this plan came through a series of gatherings where information was shared about the mission, the core values, the strengths, and the needs of the University. The participants in these different gatherings included senior university administrators, faculty, staff, students, trustees, graduates, BGCT senior leadership staff, BGCT Executive Board members, community leaders, Baptist Bible Institute leaders, associational workers, donors, and friends of the University.

In addition to the information obtained through the meetings with our constituents (both internal and external), the strategic planning process included a careful analysis of (a) our institutional assessment data; (b) the institutional self-study conducted for our application to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) for regional accreditation; and (c) the self-study and documentation of accomplishments that led to the reaffirmation of accreditation by the Association for Biblical Higher Education.

The resulting planning document includes the institutional vision for the ten years between 2011-2021, and the identification of strategic initiatives that will be essential in our reaching the vision. We have termed our 10-year plan BUA Vision 2020: Changing Our World. The plan established a five-year benchmark that provided both feedback regarding the first five years and direction for the subsequent five-year period. This document includes the results of the first five years and a revised target for the second-half of the plan.

A strategic plan is a work in progress. It is a blueprint that assists the University staff and trustees focus the energy and resources available to accomplish the mission of the institution. As new resources and new personnel are added, the strategic initiatives and goals need to be revised to reflect these changes. We offer this strategic plan to the Lord well aware that “unless the Lord builds the house, those who labor, labor in vain” (Psalm 127:1).

## **Institutional Analysis**

An essential step in the strategic planning process is an objective analysis of the current situation of the institution. At BUA, we engage consistently in an institutional assessment process. Annually, we conduct the institutional effectiveness analysis through which we establish specific objectives for each administrative and academic unit of the University. The results of this process are used for our continued planning and improvement. In addition to the annual assessment process, the University has also conducted a systematic and in-depth self-study necessary to the ABHE accreditation reaffirmation. The following sections represent the results of our annual assessment and of the self-study for the accreditation reaffirmation processes.

## Academic Program Analysis

### Strengths:

1. Impact on developing Hispanic leadership: Historically BUA has had a significant impact on the training of Hispanic Baptist ministers. The move to granting accredited degrees and to expand majors has only increased that impact. These new programs have positively affected recruitment and enrollment at BUA. A significant number of BUA graduates have continued on to pursue graduate degrees (125 students out of 349 graduates between 2003 and 2016). Also 231 of our graduates from the same period are currently serving in church leadership positions in Texas, the U.S. and in other countries.
2. Curricular reform: The basic principle underlying curriculum development is that every aspect of our institution must tie to the achievement of student learning outcomes relating to BUA's mission. Accordingly, the curricular structure has been organized around the different levels of the student's educational experience:
  - a. General education core competencies;
  - b. AA in Cross-Cultural Studies competencies;
  - c. Specific competencies related to each BA degree.

In addition to level-oriented competencies, the curriculum also addresses two other mission-based parameters:

- It is structured so that every student can attain the AA degree independent of baccalaureate major. This allows students to develop a sense of academic success and help them achieve immediate academic qualification that can help them find higher-paying jobs.
  - It supports the faith-based character of BUA. Each four-year curriculum is complemented by specific Bible and theology courses which nurture a Christian worldview. This Christian-centered perspective fosters the development of principled servant leaders.
3. Consistent Hispanic atmosphere on campus: As a result of focusing on educating Hispanics in a Spanish-language friendly and culturally appropriate atmosphere, the University ethos is clearly Hispanic. Thus, Hispanics from a variety of nations and backgrounds find greater success at BUA than they would virtually anywhere else in the United States. More than 20% of BUA's students come from Latin America, and many of these students—as well as those from the U.S.—need extensive English training before they can enter the collegiate programs. BUA continues to perfect the process of English language acquisition for predominantly Spanish speakers. The University employs faculty and staff who are Hispanic or who have lived and worked in a Hispanic context for significant portions of their lives. Of the eight current full-time faculty members, five are Hispanic and three are Anglo-Americans with significant personal and vocational

experience in cross-cultural settings. Classes are small, averaging fewer than 15 students, so the communal learning process of most Hispanic cultures is affirmed and encouraged.

4. Overall quality of the academic programs and faculty: Baptist University of the Americas has a strong faculty body with excellent credentials for the degrees we offer. A low student - faculty ratio (9:1) allows for significant contact between instructors and students. Students consistently demonstrate a high satisfaction with faculty accessibility and involvement.

#### Weaknesses:

1. The University has embarked on a remarkable and ambitious academic venture that has brought significant changes both in the curriculum and in the overall institutional environment. From a non-degree, church-ministry-focused institution that delivered instruction in Spanish only, BUA has become a diversified institution with multiple degrees and educational programs. We deliver instruction in two languages, with the goal of impacting the Hispanic community through a cross-cultural emphasis and an ethnically inclusive and culturally affirming environment. These changes require adequate resources for smooth implementation. We have a strong and qualified faculty that provides instruction at all levels of the curriculum. To date, we have met instruction needs with well-qualified adjunct faculty, but need to hire additional full-time faculty and staff to provide necessary curriculum support.
2. Despite the excellent curriculum, the small number of majors offered limits the University both in terms of recruitment and retention of students and of a greater effectiveness in accomplishing our mission.
3. BUA's library must increase its holdings in business leadership and Spanish so that students have immediate access to current bibliographical and audio-visual resources. A private foundation grant just recently awarded will help us increase the library holdings for the Business Leadership program. We continue to need additional resources for the Spanish major.
4. We must strengthen information technology to provide the necessary support for the curriculum, administration, and student life areas. A key need in this area is the integration of instruction with student records and enrollment. Currently registration and advisement depends on manually prepared forms and materials that make those processes long and cumbersome. Online instruction also can enhance our delivery system to facilitate distance learning and the implementation of resources for additional qualification of our graduates, especially in the area of teacher's certification programs.
5. BUA credits have limited transferability without regional accreditation. BUA is accredited through the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE), recognized by the Department of Education as a credible, peer-review agency. Accreditation enhanced BUA's program offerings significantly. In 2008 BUA submitted an application for regional accreditation to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. However,

due to the economic recession, the University could not finish the academic year with unequivocal demonstration of financial stability and was forced to withdraw the application. Despite the temporary setback concerning regional accreditation BUA has taken aggressive and significant steps toward facilitating transfer of credit and access to graduate education for our students:

- a. BUA has established articulation agreements with key institutions that share the mission and values of the University (i.e. Baylor University, Dallas Baptist University, Campbell University, and Wayland University) and
  - b. BUA is seeking to establish agreements with other universities in Texas and in the San Antonio area. Currently BUA has articulation agreements with Texas A&M University-Commerce and Texas A&M University-San Antonio. In addition, other State Universities in Texas have accepted transfer of credit for our students and received them into their graduate programs.
6. Limited resources have also impacted the quality and breadth of the services provided to students. Currently we do not provide health services on campus, our cafeteria offers limited number of meals, we do not have an athletic or recreation program for the students, and we offer limited options for general student activities.

### Institutional Management Analysis

#### Strengths:

1. Ability to attract quality staff, faculty and administration.
2. Executive team: BUA has a well-qualified team with a diverse experience in higher education, Baptist organizations and business. President René Maciel has more than 20 years of higher education experience with Hardin-Simmons University, Baylor University, and The George W. Truett Baptist Theological Seminary. The Vice Presidents and Deans bring significant experience in missions, medical education, public relations, publishing, business, and administration of higher education programs.
3. Board of Trustees: BUA's Trustees include church leaders, members of the business community, university professors, and members of the Hispanic community at large. They work closely with the University to ensure implementation of policies and programs that promote mission accomplishment, participate actively in fund-raising, and seek support of BUA with external constituents.
4. Organizational structure: administrative areas focus on academics, enrollment management & student services, finances and general administration, development, and university relations. Each area is staffed by individuals committed to the mission of the University and to their roles in the administrative structure. The Institutional Effectiveness & Quality Enhancement Program provides the processes for continued quality improvement. BUA also counts on the expertise of an external consultant for assistance in our accreditation efforts and in our curricular reform.

Weakness: BUA is a small institution with a small administrative staff. Several administrative areas are served by only one individual and backup is a concern. This problem is usually addressed by cross-training among different areas.

### Fiscal Stability Analysis

Strength: Culture of fiscal responsibility and stewardship: Every BUA department maintains a frugal budget without compromising programs. We utilize volunteers to the greatest extent possible. Our work-study program helps maintain a lean staff and still care for the facilities and the needed institutional services.

### Weaknesses / Challenges:

1. Student population: BUA serves a uniquely underserved and mostly impoverished Hispanic population. Most students receive scholarships or other financial aid. BUA believes strongly that the lack of funding should not impede a student's education.
2. Growth: Two parameters offer challenges and opportunities to BUA: student enrollment has increased from 43 in 1999 to 252 (spring 2017); and the budget has increased from \$900,000 in 2002 to \$4.6 million in 2013.
3. Debt load: Acquisition of property for a new campus and the construction of student housing has resulted in accumulated liabilities of \$9.88 million (as of 06/30/2010). Primary creditors include Frost Bank, Christ is our Salvation (a private foundation), and the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Through our commitment to stewardship and with the assistance of the BGCT and our friends and donors, the debt has already been reduced to under \$8 million.
4. Restricted funding sources: BUA operations (tuition; auxiliary enterprises) generate approximately 43% of operating funds and investments. Baptist entities (Baptist General Convention of Texas, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship) supply 25%. This means that 32% of operating funds must come from other sources such as private donors and foundations. The typical BUA alumnus is a pastor who often must work a non-religious job to provide for his needs; thus, the BUA alumni base is not able to support the University's needs. Virtually all donor support must come from individuals with no prior relation to the school. This source has been adversely impacted by the current economic crisis. Although BUA operated for six consecutive years without a budgetary deficit, the past two years have suffered due to the current economic recession. We have had to limit our expenses and streamline our staff so that we could fulfill all our financial obligations. As a means to address this issue, our fundraising efforts in recent years have focused on providing operational capital for the annual budget along with building capital for a new campus. In the past two years, the University has focused on expanding its donor base, especially in the Hispanic community. This effort has brought in new donors and a renewed commitment by the Hispanic community to support the University.

5. Endowment: BUA lacks a significant endowment upon which to build long-term stability. Endowment funds are approximately \$3.2 million (as of 06/30/2015), of which \$2.46 million are permanently restricted.

## **Summary of 2006-2011 Strategic Plan**

Currently the University is completing the final year of our last strategic planning cycle. The Strategic Plan under which we have been operating identified strategic issues within focus areas related to the different administrative offices of the University: Governance, Advancement, Academic Affairs, Student Development, and Administration & Finance. Thirty four strategic issues were identified in 2006. Those issues were addressed operationally and revised accordingly as the needs underlying each issue had been met.

Overall, the goals established by the current plan have been either accomplished or modified depending on how their underlying needs have been met. A significant factor that impacted their accomplishment was the leadership transition that occurred at the University with the change in the presidency and consequent personnel and structural modifications that change effected. In addition, during this period, the University acquired land and completed construction of student housing (Piper Village) through the launching of a capital campaign. Finally, this internal transition period paralleled the worst economic recession since the Great Depression.

Some of the accomplishments we can celebrate during the four years of the previous plan include:

- A process to evaluate the president has been developed.
- We launched the capital campaign “Crossover Together” that made the construction of Piper Village possible.
- We created the Office of University Relations to coordinate all external communication efforts of the institution.
- We successfully implemented two new B.A. degrees, Business Leadership and Spanish.
- We obtained re-affirmation of our accreditation status by the Association for Biblical Higher Education.
- We implemented a comprehensive recruitment plan. From fall 2005 to fall 2010, the total number of students enrolled increased from 180 to 241.
- We implemented services that provide assistance to students in the area of study skills, academic success, life enrichment, and placement.
- We revised the ESL program to facilitate successful integration of ESL students into the degree programs.

During this period, four things had a major impact on many areas of activity of the University:

- (1) We did not reach the proposed goal for the capital campaign. The University had proposed a goal of \$9 million and reached \$7.8 million;
- (2) In order to complete the construction of Piper Village we had to incur in significant debt;
- (3) The University went through a crisis in the leadership team that led to significant personnel change;
- (4) The financial crisis of the nation impacted our budget projections thus leading to a restructuring of the organizational chart and substantial decrease in personnel at all levels.

Other events also contributed to our rethinking the strategic goals we had proposed. First, due to the financial difficulties we experienced, we were not able to secure regional accreditation through the Southern Association of College and Schools (SACS). Consequently, we decided to focus our immediate efforts on securing articulation agreements with other universities, especially state universities to open up options for our graduates who want to pursue graduate education. Second, our leadership crisis led us to consider seriously our mission and values. This self-reflection helped us focus on strengthening our relationship with our main constituencies, especially the Hispanic population, and the BGCT (both churches and denominational leadership).

The current strategic plan acknowledges the difficulties we faced in the past four years and accepts the challenge required by our mission. We approach this plan with enthusiasm, humility, and hope. We recognize that we are limited in resources, but we believe that the Lord has been the initiator of this great institution and thus we will not limit our vision.

## **BUA Vision 2020: Changing Our World**

Based on the analyses conducted, Baptist University of the Americas proposes a ten-year vision that reflects our values and mission. By 2020 BUA:

- Will have a fully operating Baugh Family Campus.
- Will be graduating the next generations of cross-cultural Christian leaders within the Hispanic context.
- Will expand its curricular offerings to a minimum of eight undergraduate degree programs
- Will reach an enrollment of 750 students.
- Will have a year-to-year retention rate ten percent points higher than that of similar open-admission institutions.
- Will have a 60% six-year graduation rate.
- Will have 1,800 students enrolled in the Baptist Bible Institute across Texas, the U.S., and the world.
- Will have a thriving student body committed to academic excellence and Christian service.
- Will have a faculty, staff, and administrative personnel committed to academic excellence and Christian service.
- Will be a regionally accredited institution.
- Will be an institution fully integrated into the San Antonio community.
- Will be a vital player in world missions as a Baptist University.
- Will be financially stable.

### **Strategic Priorities**

This vision looks a decade in advance but requires careful planning and responsible implementation. As an achievable vision, it needs to generate strategic priorities that can be specified operationally on an annual basis. Also it requires that we establish concrete benchmarks to serve as feedback and help us adjust our course of action appropriately.

To achieve the BUA Vision 2020, the University needs to focus on the following strategic initiatives. Each initiative is defined through operational goals that are subsequently translated into specific benchmarks for the ten-year period.

#### ***Strategic Initiative 1: Develop and Deliver Academic Excellence***

- Solidify current academic programs
  - Conduct systematic curriculum review and revision
  - Hire and develop the faculty team needed for each one of the established programs to deliver an exemplary program
- Add new programs at the undergraduate level
  - Develop and implement new curricular offerings that would enhance the University's mission
  - Hire and develop the faculty team needed for each one of the new programs

- Add new concentrations for current majors consistent with the mission of the university
- Implement college readiness programs to prepare students for academic success at the collegiate level
- Offer English as a Second Language to international and non-English speaking U.S. students to facilitate their academic success at the undergraduate programs
- Establish articulation agreements with universities where BUA graduates can continue their education
- Develop graduate program options for our graduates on BUA campus through partnerships with other Baptist Universities and Seminaries

***Strategic Initiative 2: Develop All Students Holistically.***

- Develop and implement student life initiatives to promote the development of BUA’s learning community
  - Start an athletic program
  - Strengthen student organizations
  - Promote student involvement in mission-based activities (curricular and extra-curricular)
- Increase admission, recruitment and retention rates

***Strategic Initiative 3: Achieve Financial Stability and Complete the Development of the BUA Campus.***

- Strengthen financial base and position the university to grow in a planned way
  - Expand BUA donor base systematically
  - Increase University endowment
  - Diversify revenue streams for University operations
  - Decrease and manage BUA debt systematically and strategically
  - Increase net assets of Baptist University of the Americas
- Develop campus master plan and related projects
  - Develop Phase II of Piper Village construction with complete costing and recommended timelines
  - Develop other phases of Piper Village construction with projected costing and recommended timelines
  - Expand and strengthen the information technology capacity of the University
  - Develop a comprehensive communication plan for the different BUA internal and external constituents

***Strategic Initiative 4: Impact the University’s Local, State and International Communities.***

- Implement BBI centers across Texas, the U.S., and around the world
- Develop programs and service activities to impact the community outside BUA
  - Establish partnerships with community service organizations
  - Develop service learning initiatives to promote community service among students and faculty
  - Develop and implement leadership development and missions programs that would expand the impact of BUA on the internal and external communities

- Offer English as a Second Language and Spanish as a Second Language to promote cross-cultural exchanges among the University, churches, and the community at large

**BUA Strategic Plan: Expected Benchmarks and Timeline**

<b>Strategic Initiative &amp; Goals</b>	<b>5-Year Benchmark 2015-2016</b>	<b>10-Year Benchmark 2020-2021</b>	<b>Accomplishments by 2016</b>
<b>1. Develop and Deliver Academic Excellence</b>			
○ Develop new undergraduate degrees	5 baccalaureate programs by 2015	8 baccalaureate programs by 2020	5 baccalaureate programs offered
○ Develop concentration areas/minors for degree programs	Interdisciplinary minors/concentrations for 75% of programs by 2015	Interdisciplinary minors/concentrations for 90% of programs by 2020	80% of programs offer concentrations; 60% offer interdisciplinary concentrations
○ Hire and develop faculty for each program	A minimum of 2 full-time faculty members per program by 2015	A minimum of 2 full-time faculty members per program by 2020	We have 2 programs with 2 FT faculty members; three programs with 1 FT faculty; 1 program with an administrative faculty as Chair; and one instructional area with 1 FT faculty member
○ Have faculty with terminal degrees	60% of full-time faculty with terminal degrees by 2015	75% of full-time faculty with terminal degrees by 2020	44% of our FT faculty hold terminal degrees in spring 2016
○ Become a regionally accredited university	Submit regional accreditation application by January 2015	Receive 3-year evaluation visit by regional accreditation association by 2020	Submission postponed due to upcoming relocation; new target date: August 2018
○ BUA graduates entering graduate school	20% of graduates accepted by graduate programs by 2015	25% of graduates accepted by graduate programs by 2020	36% of graduates entered graduate programs by 2016

<b>Strategic Initiative &amp; Goals</b>	<b>5-Year Benchmark 2015-2016</b>	<b>10-Year Benchmark 2020-2021</b>	<b>Accomplishments by 2016</b>
<b>2. Develop All Students Holistically</b>			
○ Lead each student to become academically excellent	60% of students with GPA 2.5 or higher	70% of students with GPA 2.5 or higher	69% of BUA students have a GPA of 2.5 or above
○ Encourage every student to become involved in Christian Service in their churches and communities	65% of students directly involved in local church and/or community ministries by 2015	80% of students directly involved in local church and/or community ministries by 2020	85% of students involved in the Christian Service Program
○ Build the BUA enrollment	450 students by fall 2015	750 students by fall 2020	375 students enrolled in fall 2016; new target: 500 students by 2020
○ Increase retention rate	63% one-year retention rate by fall 2015	68% one-year retention rate by fall 2020	63% retention rate, fall 2016
○ Increase graduation rate	45% six-year graduation rate by spring 2016	60% six-year graduation rate by spring 2021	50% six-year graduation rate in 2015
○ Start an athletic program	Two collegiate athletic teams participating in intercollegiate athletic association by 2015	Four sport modalities participating in intercollegiate athletic association by 2020	Two club teams play at a local league (soccer and softball)
○ Strengthen student organizations	100% increase in current number of student organizations formed for multiple purposes and interests by 2015	50% of students involved in student organizations by 2020	No percentages at this point. Current organizations: Student Council, Called Club, Business as Missions Society; Missions Society; Spanish Club
○ Become a vital and major contributor to World Missions	50% of students participate in at least one mission project by 2015	75% of students participate in at least one mission project by 2020	BSM work; Agape Ministry; Spring Break; Summer Missions are ongoing projects

Strategic Initiative & Goals	5-Year Benchmark 2015-2016	10-Year Benchmark 2020-2021	Accomplishments by 2016
<b>3. Achieve Financial Stability and Complete the Development of the BUA Campus</b>			
○ Expand BUA donor base	800 donors by 2015	1,300 donors by 2020	558 active donors in 2015; 2,113 donors in database
○ Raise financial support for BUA from Donors	\$1.5 million from donors by 2015	\$2.2 million from donors by 2020	\$1.9 million from donors by June 30, 2015
○ Build the Endowment of BUA	Add \$750,000 to endowment by 2015	Add 1.5 million more to endowment by 2020	A little over \$1 million added by June 2015
○ Decrease BUA Debt	Reduce bank debt by \$1 million by 2015; reduce CIOS debt by 1 million	Reduce bank debt by \$2.5 million and eliminate BGCT & CIOS debts by 2020	Bank debt paid off; BGCT debt paid off; CIOS debt paid off; current loan for the purchase of new campus.
○ Diversify revenue sources	Secure 5% of annual budget through grants by 2015	Secure 10% of annual budget through grants by 2020	Currently we have 2% of the annual budget funded by foundation grants
○ Design and Develop a Master Plan for the BUA Campus	Master plan for Phase II of new campus completed by 2015	Master plan for Phase III of new campus completed by 2020	Plans changed: moved to new campus in July 2016.
○ Design and construct next phases of the BUA Baugh Family Campus	Phase II built and operational by 2015	Phase III built and operational by 2020	Plans changed: moved to new campus in July 2016.
○ Expand and strengthen the information technology capacity of BUA	Have entire campus served by state-of-the-art information technology	Have entire campus served by state-of-the-art information technology	We are enjoying the benefits of the new campus!
○ Develop a comprehensive communication plan	80% of BUA constituents demonstrate satisfaction with communication efforts	90% of BUA constituents demonstrate satisfaction with communication efforts	Student Opinion Survey rated satisfaction with technology at 3.0 (0-4 scale); 2.26 rating for information dissemination; Organizational Effectiveness Survey: employees rated satisfaction w. communication 2.28-3.1 (0-4 scale)

Strategic Initiative & Goals	5-Year Benchmark 2015-2016	10-Year Benchmark 2020-2021	Accomplishments by 2016
<b>4. Impact the University's Local, State and International Communities</b>			
○ Build the enrollment in Baptist Bible Institutes in Texas, U.S. and internationally	1,000 students enrolled in BBIs by 2015	1,800 students enrolled in BBIs by 2020	We enroll approximately 516 students in BBI courses; revised target: 750 students by 2020
○ Implement Baptist Bible Institutes	80 BBIs by 2015	140 BBIs by 2020	32 BBIs operated in fall 2015; we have the possibility of 12 new centers
○ Develop Community Ministries	Add 2 new partnerships with community service organizations by 2015	Add 2 new partnerships with community service organizations by 2020	Data are being collected for this objective
○ BUA students, faculty, and staff involvement in one or more Community Ministries	50% of BUA students, faculty and staff involved in community ministries by 2015	60% of BUA students, faculty and staff involved in community ministries by 2020	Data are being collected for this objective
○ Increase enrollment in ESL program with a multicultural student body	45 ESL students enrolled by fall 2015	50 ESL students by 2020	37 ESL students enrolled for fall 2016

## **Conclusion**

A common threat to any plan is the challenge to its becoming a concrete reality. This plan comes as the result of a long process that was developed throughout a time of crisis both internally and externally. However, we have decided that we cannot take Baptist University of the Americas to the next level of development without a bold and faith-grounded vision. We have been blessed by constituents that not only share our faith in the Lord and in the future of our institution but also encourage us to dream. We recognize that the accomplishment of this plan depends on our consistent effort and rigorous monitoring of every step we take year after year. We have assumed the commitment towards both courage and stewardship. After five years of consistent work, many of our benchmarks have been achieved and surpassed; some are still a challenge that we are pursuing. As we proceed toward the next five years, we already know that additional challenges have been placed before us: we are in the middle of a presidential transition and are working on our self-study for the ABHE reaffirmation and SACSCOC accreditation. We believe that the Lord will lead us and as we implement the specific steps of this plan we will see the realization of our vision: our world changing.