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**Dear College of Science Colleagues & Students,**

The College of Science (COS) thanks you for volunteering to participate in our Strategic Planning engagement sessions. The purpose of these sessions is for you, as an integral member of the college, to provide input and vision to the College of Science's new strategic plan, **Strategic Plan 2022-2027**, to update our [2015-2020 Strategic Plan](#). Our new plan will provide the college with broad overarching goals and actions that align with our 2021 Diversity Action Plan "[Embedding Equity, Access and Inclusion](#)," and Oregon State University's [Strategic Plan SP4.0](#).

The deliberative phase of our strategic planning process builds capacity through community engagement, visioning, assessment, and action to create measurable progress and improvement to advance inclusive excellence in all aspects of our [mission](#). In recognition of the importance of embedding equity in the functions of our organization and the processes supporting these functions, your insight and ongoing commitment are necessary to develop a strong strategic plan.

Your input will be used in an anonymous manner, without the inclusion of any identifying attributes. We are asking for demographic information to ascertain equity in participation by unit and other social identities. Our [Strategic Planning Committee](#) will look for broad themes and issues that emerge from the collective responses of COS members to inform actions and timelines in our final strategic plan. You can find details of our engagement process on this [website](#).

Each session will be 90-minutes long in which we will either engage you in a SWOT analysis, forecasting trends and issues analysis or a focus group session in which pre-assigned breakout groups will deliberate a set of four **strategic questions**. Our facilitators will moderate all the sessions and take notes of the discussion.

In the remainder of this document, you will find the following materials.

**Conversation Guidelines to be followed at all our sessions.**

**Description of the three types of collaborative engagement sessions.**

Please review these materials, reflect on our conversation guidelines and come prepared to engage with the College of Science community. We appreciate your willingness to engage in this process and we look forward to seeing you at one of our [engagement opportunities](#).

Sincerely,  
Vrushali Bokil  
Associate Dean for Research & Graduate Studies  
College of Science, Oregon State University

# Conversation Guidelines

## College of Science

### [Embedding Equity Access and Inclusion](#)

**Respect** Each of us has the right to hold opinions and beliefs that are our own. Assume good intent from everyone. Let us challenge or criticize ideas and not the person.

**Listen** Practice active listening. Each of us has the right to speak. Allow everyone their chance to speak and participate.

**Appreciate** When a person is speaking, listen deeply, courteously, and with full attention.

**Speak** Share your voice, your experience and your discomfort. Be mindful of how much talking space you occupy. At the same time, be empowered to speak up when someone dominates the conversation.

**Interrogate** Have real conversations and interrogate reality. Be prepared to check your biases, to question yourself and others. Support your statements with evidence and rationale, and expect the same from others.

**Recognize** Each of us possesses many identities. We do not speak to represent our race, our gender or any of our other identities. We speak for our whole unique selves.

**Advocate** Look to see who is present and who is not, and be intentional in seeking out and amplifying voices that are not in the room.

**Transform** When the conversation becomes difficult, breathe. Take care of yourself. Find the source of your anger or discomfort and transform it to constructive action. Practice humility and compassion.

**Protect** Take the ideas, stories and what you've learned with you and share. Leave the names and who said what in our virtual discussion room. Maintain the privacy of our meetings.



# Description of Engagement Sessions

The College of Science Strategic Planning Committee will conduct three types of engagement sessions that are aimed at collecting input from the college community in a variety of ways. Below, you will find a description of these sessions.

## SWOT Analysis Sessions

**Description:** Participants will collaboratively identify Strengths (S), Weaknesses (W), Opportunities (O) and Threats (T) to determine the current status of the College of Science. This is a highly interactive collaborative Carousel design that provides an effective means to gather information about significant topics important to the mission, values and vision of our college. Come prepared with thoughts to generate ideas for improvement in research, infrastructure, innovation, education, learning, science communication and public outreach among others. **Take a look at our focus group strategic question sets in this document to help you in thinking about SWOTs for our college.** In this session, you can expect to walk around the room to provide your individual thoughts on SWOTs, deliberate these in small groups of 3-5 people to come to an agreement on strategic issues and engage with all participants in the session to collectively identify important themes that emerge in discussions.

## Forecasting Trends and Issues

**Description:** Participants will collaboratively answer questions regarding future trends, impacts and issues to enable the development of a vision and strategic objectives for the College of Science. This meeting design enables groups both small (10 or less) and large (more than 10) to anticipate the future events, trends, and issues that could potentially impact or influence the institution over the next five to ten years. It is a highly interactive and interesting and informative design that encourages people to look outward at external realities and create possible future scenarios. Its primary goal is to create a powerful database for strategic planning. In this session, you can expect to work individually, in small groups to deliberate and agree on important themes and engage with all the participants in the session.

## Focus Group Discussions - Strategic Questions

**Descriptions:** Participants will use their experiences, aspirations and expectations to answer **four Strategic Question Sets outlined below** in a small group setting (10 or less participants). A facilitator will moderate the session and one or more note-takers will capture emerging themes in the group conversation. Both in-person and online sessions are available for participation.

**Question Set 1** What do you perceive to be the **mission, values and vision** of the College of Science? For example, how would you describe these to an outsider, or is there a story you could tell that best exemplifies them?

What best practices should we adopt in the next 1-5 years to achieve inclusive excellence<sup>1</sup> in our mission and realize our vision?

**Question Set 2** What are our **signature strengths in research and infrastructure**? What are our **signature accomplishments in undergraduate and graduate student experiential learning and research opportunities**?

What areas of research, innovation, science communication and public policy should we prioritize in the future to raise our visibility and impact? What aspects should we focus on to promote Science and prepare students for the workforce?

For students and educators, are research and discovery integrated in student learning experiences? When you talk about your research or your degree program to a friend, colleague, or another student, do you feel hopeful about your future success or job prospects?

What do people from other universities say about us? What is the College of Science “brand”? What are we known for? What do our competitors say about us?

**Question Set 3** What **transformative ways of teaching and learning** have we invested in? What novel and innovative approaches are we known for? How have these contributed to increased learning, improved access to education and student success?

For students and educators, what teaching and learning experiences within the College of Science have been the most **impactful to student success**? What college services and resources have students used that have helped them achieve academic goals?

How should the college invest in delivering content to **best support student learning and success**? In which educational tools and techniques should we invest in the future to achieve inclusive excellence in our mission?

**Question Set 4:** What **challenges and trends** do you see as potentially affecting or influencing how our college provides its services and conducts its mission? What **key issues** must the College of Science deal with and what **opportunities** should the college pursue?

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<sup>1</sup> [Inclusive excellence](#) is the recognition that an organization’s success is dependent on how well it values, engages and includes the rich diversity of its community members, including its students, faculty, staff, alumni, friends and affiliates.