

White Paper Series

College and University Consolidations, Alliances and/or Mergers: Presidents' Checklist

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Identify the parties to the potential consolidation/merger. President of both institutions agree to discuss and explore.

Develop the rationale for both candidate institutions. What are the reasons for considering consolidation or merger? Make the case in a paragraph. Why?

Identify and list advantages and disadvantages of consolidating or merging for both candidate institutions.

Bring university legal counsels into the discussion at the outset and ask counsel regarding any legal constraints, concerns, etc.

Review the idea of consolidation/merger with Board Chairpersons. Come to an agreement to proceed or not proceed with consideration. If "yes"...

Take the proposition of consolidation/merger to the full boards of each institution for discussion pointing out advantages and disadvantages. Hear from each board member. If the boards agree to proceed...

Retain outside consultants or expertise to assist in preparing the proposal, process and plan for proceeding.

Notify all relevant accreditation bodies of the plans for consolidation/merger and seek their counsel.

Conduct fiscal due diligence: What costs will be incurred in the consolidation or merger? Prepare budget for all costs and revenue. Sources of revenue. What are the fiscal implications of consolidation/merger? Have a clear understanding of costs and savings that will come with the merged institutions. [Identify areas of duplication that can be eliminated, reductions in personnel, etc.]

Identify all significant constituent groups of the candidate institutions. Presidents meet with representatives of constituent groups and present the concept. Listen to concerns and viewpoints. Agree to carefully consider and address concerns. Identify major obstacles. Constituent groups normally consist of the following:

- President's Cabinets or Institutional Officers (VPs, Deans)
- Faculty Senate or Council
- Professional Staff Council
- Alumni Association Officers
- Foundation Officers and Major Donors
- Union Officers (faculty, staff, other)
- Community influentials and interested citizens
- Local government officials, e.g., mayors, members of council, etc.

[Public Universities] Initiate conversations with legislative representatives and solicit their assistance in moving the legislative process. Gain through understanding of legislative process. Which legislative committees must hear and approve of the concept and outcomes. Who will write the legislation seeking legislative approval. Speak to the Attorney General and seek their counsel.

Notify local members of Congress and seek their support and assistance, if needed.

Begin putting in place any necessary agreements with constituent groups such as unions, faculty senates, etc.

Assess implications of consolidation/merger for each department, division, and sector of the candidate institutions. Understand the full implication of the consolidation/merger for each unit of the institutions.

Determine personnel adjustments that will need to be taken in each area of the institutions and plan the process for making those adjustments, e.g., buyouts, early retirements, layoffs, terminations, etc.

Review and plan for any facilities adjustments, relocations, equipment at the candidate institutions.

Develop and present a calendar for each step of the process through the formal approving legislation and signing of the bill approving the consolidation/merger

Develop plan for the First Year as a consolidated/merged institution. This will include budgeting, facilities, personnel and related actions, students, academic program and degree adjustments.

Notify vendors, utility companies, and other companies that service the institution of any changes needed in contracts, etc.

Identify and plan post-merger changes in operations. Create advisory groups to advise the board, president and other areas of responsibility and operations.

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