Strategic Plan
2011-2016
FEBRUARY 2015 UPDATE
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Strategic Plan Update

As the Toppel Career Center embarks upon an internal and external review, with the goal of envisioning the Toppel of Tomorrow, its Strategic Plan has been updated. The February 2015 Strategic Plan Update is meant to serve as a snapshot and “report card” of the progress made toward the advancement of the Five Critical Issues outlined in this document. A great deal occurred during and in the aftermath of The Great Recession and the Center is proud of its many accomplishments and consistent exceeding of expectations. We also realize that since the Strategic Plan’s inception, needs, expectations, and priorities have fluctuated resulting in a change of focus at times. Project/initiative completion updates are noted in RED, while changes to timelines, changes in focus, areas of concern, and other updates are highlighted in YELLOW. Updates to items contained in the Appendices will be made after the completion of the Toppel External Review (May 2015).

About the Plan

This plan provides an Executive Summary of the overall strategic direction of the Toppel Career Center over the next five years. New departmental Mission and Vision statements have been established to reflect a more current role of career services at the University. After much benchmarking and review of the career services literature, five Critical Issues, along with goals and objectives for each, have been identified to steer the strategic direction of the Center. Lastly, several appendices provide important information regarding the internal and external environmental scanning, which is crucial for creating an effective strategic plan. It is important to note that continued assessment is at the core of all the programs and services offered by the Toppel Career Center. Therefore, the Critical Issues and the goals for each will naturally be subjected to the same rigorous assessment to ensure quality and course correction when necessary.

Strategic Plan Compiled by:
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*The steering committee is responsible for providing the overall direction and framework for the strategic plan. Through data collected from benchmarking, literature, and actual experiences, the group identified the five Critical Issues that drives the strategic plan. The entire Toppel Career Center staff participates in the process through brainstorming sessions that generate goals and objectives for each Critical Issue.
About the Toppel Career Center

The Toppel Career Center is the centralized career services center for the University of Miami, serving all students – both undergraduate and graduate – with the exception of MBA, Law, and Medicine. Services are also available to alumni. The Center provides one on one career advising, career-related workshops, programs, and training, over 10 career fairs, and graduate school preparation assistance. The Center establishes and maintains relationships with employers representing a wide variety of industries in order to help them find the talent they seek for internships and full-time opportunities.

The Toppel Career Center currently has 15 full-time professional staff members, two support staff, two graduate assistants, six Toppel Peer Advisors, five Toppel Interns, and close to 40 Toppel Ambassadors. Currently, the approximate career advisor to student ratio is 1:1929 1:1000
Executive Summary

Over the last 10 years, the Toppel Career Center has experienced significant growth in staffing and in the quantity and quality of services offered to students, alumni, and employers. The last several years, however, have presented the Center with many challenges due to the economic downturn, which has resulted in students and alumni relying on career services in greater numbers and seeking a return on their investment. *As tuition rises and the economy slowly bounces back, we have a responsibility and duty to better prepare students so they are able to secure employment and pay down their college debt as soon as possible.* This strategic plan, based on a great deal of benchmarking with peer and aspirational peer institutions, provides a framework for success for the challenges and opportunities we will face in the next five years.

Capitalizing on the fresh and innovative ideas of a dynamic and diverse staff, there is a great deal of potential and growth in the coming years. The Toppel Career Center continues to be a leader in the field of career services as evidenced through awards, leadership roles in various regional and national associations, and a variety of presentations at conferences throughout the country. One area in particular where we have stood out, is in our work with Social Media. Although other career centers have waded into this arena, few have fully engaged and leveraged Social Media in the way our Center has. Currently, our presence on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, Foursquare, Blogger, YouTube, Pinterest, and Instagram is very comprehensive, with plans to continue engaging our constituents through these media.

Although the Toppel Career Center has enjoyed tremendous success with the resources available, this strategic plan will demonstrate that additional staff, expanded facilities, and faculty buy-in are critical to sustain and expand upon our current momentum. In other words, we cannot evolve and meet our constituents’ needs with the current level of resources available to career services. While many of the services and resources we offer are consistent with the field of career services, we realize that we cannot effectively serve our evolving audience without being innovative and different. This will set us apart from career centers across the country and will contribute to the reasons why students choose to come to the University of Miami.

Finally, it is important to point out that unless there is University-wide support and buy-in, the critical issues outlined in this strategic plan will not effectively be achieved. Career services is a critical part of the co-curricular experience and should therefore, be part of students’ growth and learning.

Mission

The mission of the Toppel Career Center is to help students and alumni develop career-related skills by providing high quality resources, services, programming and events that will prepare them for a lifetime of career success.

Vision

Empowering and connecting a world of ‘Canes.
Critical Issues

Five critical issues – or strategic areas of focus – have been identified that are absolutely necessary in order to propel the Toppel Career Center forward. The needs of students, alumni, and employers have changed significantly in the last several years and will continue to do so in the years to come. By addressing these issues, along with the goals and objectives outlined for each, the Center will be in a better position to serve its constituents.

The Five Critical Issues are:

1. Focus on Experiential Education
2. Focus on Innovative Service Delivery
3. Integrate Career Development with Academics
4. Expand Services for Specific Populations
5. Improve and Expand Career Services Infrastructure

FOCUS ON EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

As the job market recovers from the recent economic downturn, it continues to be more competitive than ever. With fewer positions and more applicants, it has become increasingly important for students to obtain as much paraprofessional experience as possible. This includes increased access to internships (both domestic and abroad), job shadowing (or externships), and mentoring. According to the NACE 2010 Student Survey, students with NO internships had an average starting salary of $34,601, compared to $41,580 for those with at least one internship (salaries increase for those with even more internships).

These programs not only provide valuable experience, they also equip students with knowledge to help make better career decisions. In the same NACE survey, of the top 20 qualities/skills employers seek in college graduates, 15 of them are “soft skills,” which are often gained and/or sharpened through experiential education experiences. Of all the areas within the Toppel Career Center, experiential education faces the greatest amount of growth and will require additional staff and resources in order to meet the demand from students and employers.

I. Expand upon and enhance the Toppel Internship Program (TIP) by 2012.
   a. Move away from the zero-credit option and begin to offer one credit, as more employers require academic credit. **COMPLETED SUMMER 2012**
   b. Implement a fee structure for students participating in TIP in order to underwrite the costs associated with maintaining the program (staff, technology). **UNNECESSARY**
   c. Partner with schools and colleges that are underrepresented users of TIP to ensure students take advantage of the program. **ONGOING. Successful partnerships: Schools of Business and Communication, Music Business Program**
II. Implement UShadow pilot program in Spring 2011 with full launch in Fall 2011 Spring 2012. COMPLETED
   a. Provide sophomores and juniors with a real world career exploration opportunity by matching them with high-level executives in organizations representing a variety of industries.
   b. Collaborate with Alumni Relations to secure alumni base to serve as shadow hosts.
   c. Pilot program will focus on South Florida and New York City; eventual expansion to other major metropolitan areas such as Chicago, Washington D.C., and Los Angeles by Spring 2016.

III. Provide comprehensive and coordinated services for students interested in International opportunities.
   a. Work closely with Study Abroad office to help students better link their study abroad experience to their career development. COMPLETED & ONGOING
   b. Implement Virtual International Career Fair to better facilitate the internship and job search process for students interested in working abroad. COMPLETED SPRING 2013
   c. Hire a full-time professional staff member (Assistant Director) to work with students interested in opportunities abroad. NO PROGRESS

IV. Create and implement a Career Mentorship Program by 2013. Evaluating whether this is still a necessary and/or relevant program. Mentorship programs are complex and require a great deal of time and effort to manage effectively. Currently exploring various options with a decision deadline of Spring 2016.
   a. Effectively match students with professionals in order to help educate students on their respective industries, as well as make important professional connections.
   b. Design program with a deliberate, step by step process for students and employers in order to ensure a mutually beneficial experience.
   c. Utilize mentorship program as a pipeline for internship and job placement opportunities.
   d. Hire a full-time professional staff member (Assistant Director) to manage the program, as well as the UShadow program, which are both labor-intensive endeavors.

V. Better assist students find appropriate volunteer opportunities to complement their career aspirations. COMPLETED FALL 2014
   a. Establish a closer partnership with Butler Center for Volunteer Service and Leadership Development in order to bridge volunteerism with career development.
   b. Develop partnership with Office of Civic and Community Engagement to integrate service into career development.
   c. Revamp and expand upon the Alternative Options After Graduation program in order to help students seek post graduation volunteer and/or civil service opportunities.

VI. Create a University-wide Internship Task Force by Fall 2011 2015.
   a. Develop a universal definition for internships at the University of Miami.
   b. Identify the role of the Toppel Career Center and academic departments in regard to these experiences.
   c. Develop streamlined procedures for students seeking internship experiences.
FOCUS ON INNOVATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

Technology and key partnerships will allow us to provide career services that are innovative and different. As our constituents become more technologically savvy, they demand alternative options to program and service delivery beyond the typical in-house offerings. In addition, new partnerships must be forged in order to provide more comprehensive programming and access to a larger number of employers. Furthermore, as many students and alumni are from major metropolitan areas outside of Miami, providing services to them in those areas will further meet their needs in the areas they choose to live. Lastly, in response to employers’ budget constraints, which affect their ability to come to our campus, it is time to bring our services to them.

I. Secure and utilize technology to deliver virtual programs, workshops and interviews to students and alumni by 2012 in current facility and 2013-14 in new facility. COMPLETED BY BOTH DEADLINES
   a. Equip new career center multipurpose room with technology that allows for recording of Toppel and employer programs.
      i. Make programs and workshops available online for students and alumni who are unable to attend live sessions.
   b. Transform Interview Suites into Interview Labs with 360-degree cameras to be used for mock interviews and elevator pitch practice.
   c. Equip Interview Labs, Conference & Seminar Room, and Career Loft with videoconferencing technology to allow for flexible and increased interviewing opportunities between students and employers that may not have been possible otherwise (due to budget and/or geographic constraints).

II. Provide off-site/off-campus program and service delivery by 2012.
   a. Implement Toppel in the City (rebranded to U in the City in 2013) program where staff will provide career services for one week in select cities to students and alumni (career fair, alumni networking event, career advising, employer site visits, etc.) REFOCUS: Based on feedback and available resources, program was simplified to allow for UM alumni to network with employers in a semi-casual environment; COMPLETED 2011
      i. Partner with Alumni Relations and Admissions.
      ii. Partner with employers to help underwrite the program.
   b. Implement a year-round local Employer Site Visit program where students can get a first-hand view of the organization and network with employers. RE-FOCUS: Exploring feasibility (primarily funding) for implementation of “Career Treks;” student field trips to various cities to visit employers and gain industry insight. Spring 2016.

III. Leverage new and/or enhanced partnerships with key organizations/constituents in order to gain greater access to employers and other key partners.
   a. Develop plan to establish and maintain relationships with parents of UM students.
      i. Establish clear expectations regarding students’ career development and outcomes.
      ii. Play a bigger role in Family Weekend (presentations), Open Houses, and Parent Receptions (through Parents Council and independently at New Toppel).
iii. Partner with Parents Council to develop career-focused parent partnerships. **COMPLETED & ONGOING.** Outcomes include close to $1 Million raised toward the building of the new Toppel building and parents as recruiters and/or link to their respective company’s Human Resources department.

b. Implement ACC/SEC schools Virtual Career Fair in order to offer more internship and job opportunities for our students. **COMPLETED SPRING 2012 AND ANNUALLY**

c. Implement Internship Virtual Career Fair with UCAN Consortium (22 private schools across the country). **NO PROGRESS.** Initiative is dependent upon coordination from UCAN group.

**INTEGRATE CAREER DEVELOPMENT WITH ACADEMICS**

*Faculty and academic departments must understand the value added proposition that career services provides to students.* While the Toppel Career Center has made major strides in working with academic departments throughout the years, there continues to be a disconnect between students’ classroom learning and their career development. Partnerships with certain schools and colleges have proven to be successful (Business and Engineering) and can be used as a framework for potential partnerships with others. One of the biggest challenges faced by the Center is a lack of understanding of how its services and resources can directly benefit students from each of the schools and colleges, which can easily be corrected by having access to faculty and academic departments.

I. Reconvene and transform the Toppel Task Force into more of an advisory board. **REFOCUS:** Rather than create another task force, the Spring 2015 Toppel External Review will initially take the place of a Toppel task force. The Center is also exploring the creation of a Faculty Advisory Board which may be a more effective strategy to accomplish the objectives below.

a. Continuously identify and respond to needs of the schools and colleges.

b. Educate members on the many Toppel programs and services, as well as on workforce trends and issues.

II. Develop and implement a for-credit Career Development Course by 2015. **NO PROGRESS.** Possible solutions include developing an online course (or hybrid) and/or pilot course with a specific school or college.

a. Assist students with their career exploration and development, regardless of major, in a structured class setting.

b. Infuse experiential education programs into the course, such as UShadow and/or Mentorship.

c. Offer course for students in their sophomore year; a time of career exploration.

d. **Tie Cognates to Careers.**

III. Expand Career Consultant program to include staff members assigned to a specific school/college or area of interest (based on the School of Business Consultant model). **REFOCUS:** House these Toppel staff members within the respective school or college, with focus being on Freshmen and Sophomores; create stronger tie to academic advising. **BEGIN PILOT 2015-16**

a. Schools/Colleges in greatest need:

   i. Arts & Sciences, including RSMAS (three consultants)
1. STEM majors (except engineering); Liberal Arts majors; Social Sciences majors
   i. Communication
   iii. Nursing & Health Science/Healthcare
   iv. Move current Freshman/Sophomore-focused SBA Consultant to the SBA.

b. Link Toppel Peer Advisor and/or Ambassador Program(s) with Career Consultant program.
   i. Peer Advisor assigned to their respective career consultant.
   ii. Develop and deliver programs specific to assigned school/college.

IV. Explore Career-Related Special Interest Housing. ABANDONED DUE TO LACK OF STUDENT INTEREST
a. Conduct needs assessment to determine popular career themes.

b. Once a track is selected, work with students to develop and deliver content and experiential education experiences.


EXPAND SERVICES FOR SPECIFIC POPULATIONS

The “one size fits all” model is outdated and can no longer be sustained. As the centralized career center for the University, we serve a large cross-section of students who come with different needs and expectations. While Toppel staff has been able to generally meet the needs of students, we have struggled to provide in-depth services to certain populations. Based on our experience and the current trends in career services across the country, the needs of these populations must be met in order to ensure their success in post graduation endeavors. Target populations are: international students, graduate students, pre-professional students, and alumni.

I. Enhance and expand services specific to international students. COMPLETED 2013 AND ONGOING
a. Determine expectations of the University community as to programs, resources, and services.

b. Establish a collaborative relationship and create guidelines with International Student and Scholar Services as to what the roles are of each office.

c. Conduct a needs assessment with international students in an effort to determine their needs, wants and any career-related difficulties.

d. Host educational employer programs on the benefits of sponsoring/hiring international students.

II. Provide comprehensive services specific to graduate students. COMPLETED 2011 AND ONGOING
a. Conduct a needs assessment for graduate students to determine what their top career-related priorities from Toppel.

b. Work more closely with the Graduate School and the Graduate Student Association on a regular basis. Outcomes include significant increase in programming for graduate students, as well as graduate student career advising (outlined in annual reports).

c. Outreach to targeted graduate programs and focus on the non-academic job search (Master’s and PhDs seeking non-academic positions). Outcome: filled in the gaps of career-related services offered by the Graduate School.
   i. Implement career fair/conference specifically for these students.
d. Anticipate and plan for helping students who have gone to graduate school as a way to avoid workforce (based on economy or other factors) and therefore may not have a clear direction.

III. Provide structured and formalized services for pre-professional students. PARTIAL COMPLETION  
a. Establish a Pre-professional Career Advising program within the Toppel Career Center to complement the pre-professional academic advising offered at the University.  
   i. One staff member currently assigned to Pre-Law COMPLETED FALL 2012  
   ii. One staff member currently assigned to Pre-Health COMPLETED FALL 2012  
b. Hire at least one staff member (preferably two), to provide career guidance and to develop programs for this population. NO PROGRESS. While two staff members have been assigned to assist in pre-professional career advising, it is not their primary focus/function and therefore, we come up short in our ability to meet the needs of these students.  
c. Conduct a needs assessment of students in pre-professional tracks to determine their expectations and needs from the career perspective.

IV. Expand upon the services and resources offered to Alumni COMPLETED 2011 AND ONGOING  
a. Continue to work closely with the Alumni Association’s Director of Alumni Engagement to offer complementary career-related services to alumni. Outcomes include ‘Canes Career Club; Alumni Newsletter; Alumni Webinar Series; U in the City (formerly Toppel in the City); Student & Alumni Career Symposium).  
b. Establish clearer tracks of programming for alumni: new professionals, mid-level professionals, and seasoned professionals.  
c. Offer a variety of alumni-focused networking events/opportunities.  
   i. Continue and expand upon success of Tuesdays with Toppel alumni networking happy hours. Rebranded to U in the City in 2013  
   ii. Launch first-ever Student & Alumni Career Symposium focused on panel discussions centered around various career tracks. COMPLETED 2011  
d. Hire a full-time professional (Assistant Director) to work specifically with mid-level to seasoned professionals and serve as a liaison to Alumni Relations. REFOCUS: This is being handled by Director of Alumni Engagement; Explore possibility of adding more staff within the Alumni Association?  
e. Continue developing opportunities to connect current students with alumni (UShadow, Symposium, alumni-hosted webinars).

V. Entrepreneurs COMPLETED 2011 AND ONGOING  
a. Provide continuous training of career advisors on entrepreneurship in order to better assess and refer students to The Launch Pad.  
b. Refer, track, and follow up with students who have been referred to The Launch Pad. Outcomes include significant number of student referrals from Toppel to TLP in counseling notes.  
c. Find ways to consistently infuse entrepreneurship into existing Toppel programs, while finding ways to create new and innovative entrepreneurship programming between the two offices.
IMPROVE AND EXPAND CAREER SERVICES INFRASTRUCTURE

With a career advisor to student ratio of 1:1929 and students sometimes waiting two weeks to make an appointment, the time has come to add much-needed staff and space. The Toppel Career Center has done an extraordinary job at providing high quality services to students from all majors, as well as alumni. In addition, the Center serves the needs of employers representing a wide variety of industries. In order to maintain this momentum and build upon our successes, however, it is imperative that the Center expand in order to meet the changing needs of its constituents. This expansion comes in several forms: increased staffing, transition to a larger facility, state of the art technology, and revenue generation to supplement a decrease in budget allocation.

I. Hire full-time staff (listed in order of importance) in order to carry out the strategic direction outlined in previous sections. See proposed Organizational Chart, Appendix B
   a. **Associate Director of Experiential Education (ADEE).** Oversee and provide direction for this newly created subsection of the Center (to complement Career Development and Employer Relations). **COMPLETED 2013.** Title changed to Career Readiness in Summer 2014 to reflect current trends (position still encompasses experiential education).
   b. **Associate Director of Assessment & Communication.** Oversee the Center’s overall assessment plan and efforts, along with communication and branding. **COMPLETED SUMMER 2014.** Position was added to the Center’s strategy because it was deemed a critical need.
   c. **Internship Coordinator.** Provide much-needed administrative support for Toppel Internship Program and for other experiential education programs as they are delivered. Reports to ADCR. **NO PROGRESS DUE TO LACK OF RESOURCES**
   d. **Assistant Director of Career Exploration Programs.** Manage UShadow and Mentorship programs, as well as assist students in their career decision-making. Reports to ADCR. **NO PROGRESS DUE TO LACK OF RESOURCES**
   e. **Assistant Director of International Opportunities.** Oversee and manage international internship and job opportunities, as well as work directly with students interested in these opportunities. Reports to ADCR and works closely with Study Abroad and International Student & Scholar Services offices. **NO PROGRESS DUE TO LACK OF RESOURCES**
   f. **Assistant Director, Graduate Student Career Programs.** Focus solely on graduate populations and provide appropriate career advising and career-related programming. Reports to Director of Career Development with a “dotted line” to the Graduate School. **COMPLETED 2013.** Position was combined with Alumni position below in Summer 2014 to reflect changing needs/trends.
   g. **Pre-Professional Career Advisors.** Provide specialized student career advising for pre-law, and pre-health students. Positions complement and work closely with pre-professional academic advisors. Report to Director of Career Development. **NO PROGRESS DUE TO LACK OF RESOURCES**
   h. **Assistant Director of Alumni Career Programs.** Position works closely with Alumni Relations and possibly staffs office hours in the alumni center. Reports to Director of Employer Relations with a “dotted line” to Alumni Relations. **Completed 2011** Position was combined with Graduate Student position above in Summer 2014 to reflect changing needs/trends.
   i. **Career Consultants.** Serve the needs of specific schools/colleges (modeled after the School of Business Consultant).
i. Arts & Sciences, including RSMAS (three consultants)
   1. STEM majors (except engineering); Liberal Arts majors; Social Sciences majors
ii. Communication
iii. Nursing & Health Science/Healthcare
iv. Move current Freshman/Sophomore-focused SBA Consultant to the SBA.

II. Streamline the Toppel Peer Advisor program to center around Career Clusters and launch Toppel Student Ambassador Program.
   a. Hire and train Peer Advisors by Career Clusters to provide basic career advising and programming that meets the needs of each school and college. COMPLETED 2011
   b. Assign each Peer Advisor to a professional staff member mentor in an effort to provide coordinated services to assigned Career Cluster. COMPLETED 2012
   c. Recruit Student Ambassadors to assist in promoting/marketing events around campus and to each school and college, as well as to assist staffing of large events. COMPLETED PILOT FALL 2012; LAUNCHED FULL PROGRAM SPRING 2013

III. Expand Toppel Career Center facility to include additional space and state of the art technology. COMPLETED SPRING 2014
   a. Redesign and relocate to Writing Center/English Composition buildings. See preliminary architectural renderings in Appendix C.
   b. Equip all Interview Labs and both conference rooms with lecture-capture and videoconferencing capabilities and 360-degree video-recording technology for mock interviews (with Toppel staff and with employers), as well as The Launch Pad elevator pitch practice sessions.
   c. Equip both conference rooms and multipurpose room with lecture-capture technology in order to provide all workshops and programs via the web for students and alumni.
   d. Combine Computer Lab with Career Library to make career-related research and training more functional.
   e. Larger Multipurpose room to accommodate bigger workshops and events for Toppel and The Launch Pad. Incorporate lecture-capture technology.
   f. Create an Employer Lounge and Business Center to better accommodate employers conducting interviews. Space can be used for other purposes when not in use by employers.
   g. Utilize large courtyard in the front of the building as additional programming space.
   h. New facility can be revenue generating by renting space to both on-campus constituents and off-campus partners.

IV. Identify and Implement new funding sources to supplement allocated budget.
   a. Leverage new facility as a revenue-generating building. COMPLETED SPRING 2014 AND ONGOING
      i. Rent out Interview Labs, Employer Lounge & Business Center, Conference Room, Multipurpose Room, and Career Courtyard during down times and create a fee model for on-campus and off-campus constituents.
iii. Provide naming opportunities for various parts of the facility.

b. Develop and implement a fee structure for the Toppel Internship Program (TIP) to help subsidize the costs associated with effectively managing the program. **DEEMED UNNECESSARY**
   i. Determine most effective way to assess a fee to students participating in the program who receive one academic credit (course fee or partial credit fee).
   ii. Funds generated can pay for administrative costs and/or staffing costs.
Assessment

One of the strengths of the Toppel Career Center is its data collection and assessment plan and procedures. In keeping with our culture of assessment, all of the critical areas and activities outlined in this strategic plan will be continuously evaluated and assessed to determine effectiveness and value. These are the assessment methods currently employed by the Center, along with two new strategies (focus groups and external peer review):

I. Utilization Statistics
   a. Captured for student, alumni and employer use of Toppel services, resources, events, and facilities.
   b. These data help to determine effectiveness of marketing, demand for services and audience trends.
   c. Data is primarily captured through HireACane Career Management System.

II. Program Evaluations
   a. Participants in career advising, workshops, trainings, career fairs, and all other career-related events are provided with opportunities to provide timely and useful feedback.
   b. Evaluations assess student learning.
   c. Evaluations are conducted via StudentVoice online survey tool that allows for simple and effective reporting.

III. Graduating Student Survey
   a. Data collected is primarily focused on students’ post-graduation plans.
   b. Instrument will be used to assess use of and satisfaction with career services.
   c. Survey is conducted in December and May of each year.
   d. Surveys are administered via StudentVoice online survey tool and reported to appropriate staff.
   e. **Begin following NACE’s Guidelines & Protocols for data collection** COMPLETED FALL 2014

IV. Constituent Focus Groups
   a. As part of our strategy, we need to learn more about what our customers want and need.
   b. Focus groups will allow us to gather more in depth information.

V. External Peer Review – **IN PROCESS, COMPLETION BY MAY 2015**
   a. Allows for external, unbiased assessment of career services and resources.
   b. Provide recommendations for improvement and course correction.
   c. Utilize NACE external review services.
APPENDIX A

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Before delving into the critical issues and goals of the strategic plan, it was important to conduct an environmental scan – both internally and externally. Staff members who have been with the Center for a significant period of time provided historical perspectives, while everyone else pieced together the current state of the Toppel Career Center. Next, the steering committee conducted a SWOT Analysis to determine Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Lastly, the group identified a list of stakeholders broken down into two categories: Level 1 and 2 (in order of direct impact).

Toppel History and Present Situation

PAST

- Minimal programming/not comprehensive
- Significant lack of staffing
- Lack of breadth of employers
- Minimal services for alumni
- Limited number of career fair options
- Great deal of turmoil/need to rebuild
- Staff turnover
- Lack of experienced staff
- Insulation/lack of interaction with University departments
- Negative reputation

PRESENT

- Comprehensive programming for students and alumni
- Services and resources go far beyond job placement
- Good number of career assessment options
- Increased amount of services for graduate students
- Increased amount of services for alumni
- Programming centered around alternative options after graduation
- Based on benchmarking, Toppel is ahead of the curve from other career centers
- Innovative
- Quality customer service
- More specialized/focused services: Career Clusters
- More academically relevant (tying services to majors/academic programs)
- Better departmental partnerships (academic and student affairs)
SWOT Analysis
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

STRENGTHS

- Customer Service
- Partnerships with university departments
- Assessment plan and procedures
- Use of technology
  - Breadth of online resources via CaneZone
  - Social Media
  - Toppel website
- Diversity of student body
- Breadth of career fair options
- Diversity of resources/services
- Variety of employers who recruit at UM
- Career Advising
- Toppel Peer Advisor program
- Location of Center
- Centralized career center
- Toppel website
- Geographic location (Miami/South Florida)
- Diverse staff
- UM’s reputation/Top 50 institution
- Toppel Internship Program
- Variety and quantity of outreach programming

WEAKNESSES

- Budget constraints
- Understaffed in relation to population served and in comparison to benchmark institutions
- Resources and staffing for international opportunities
- Lack of mentoring/shadowing programs and opportunities
- Lack of consistent collaboration with academic departments
- Lack of faculty buy-in
- Career services not tied into curriculum
  - Lack of career course for students
- Low program turnout/student participation
  - Due to conflicting class schedule and student extracurricular involvement
- Students’ perception of Toppel serving only business and engineering majors
OPPORTUNITIES

- Move to new building
- The Launch Pad
- Collaboration with academic departments on programs/events
- Collaboration with Student Life on programs/events
- Creation of Employer Advisory Board
- Revamped Toppel Partner Program
- New Graduate School partnership
- UMAA partnerships
- UCAN internship consortium
- Industries specific to Miami (tourism, hospitality, event planning, etc.)
- Professional development of staff members
- ACC programs/collaborations

THREATS

- Location of new building (no longer centralized)
- Economy
- Companies’ reduced recruiting budgets
- Over-programming
- Local career centers (FIU, Barry, Nova, etc.)
- Lack of campus-wide coordinated message of career services
- Faculty who do not believe in core mission of career services
- Budget cuts/constraints
- Decline in employer sponsorships
- Staff turnover due to lack of competitive salaries
- Students’ misperceptions of Toppel resources
Stakeholder Identification

**LEVEL 1 STAKEHOLDERS**
Those who have a vested interest in career services and are directly impacted by programs and services. These tend to be first-level customers.

- Students
- Alumni
- Employers
- Graduate Schools (admissions)
- Senior Administration

**LEVEL 2 STAKEHOLDERS**
Those who partner (or should partner) with the Toppel Career Center on career-related issues or programs,

- Trustees
- Academic advisors
- Faculty
- Academic deans/Associate deans
- Administrative staff in schools/colleges
- UMAA
- Student Affairs departments
- Student Employment Office
- Local business community
- Parents
- Sister career center offices (Ziff, Law)
- Toppel family
- Service vendors

**Core Values**

- Diversity
- Critical Thinking
- Thoughtful and Effective Decision Making
- Innovation
- Technology
APPENDIX B

NEW TOPPEL FACILITY RENDERING
(Ponce de Leon view)
NEW TOPPEL FACILITY RENDERING
(Courtyard View)