

## **ABSTRACT: 2018 ELAM Institutional Action Project**

**Project Title:** The Foundation for a New Department of Dermatology at Vanderbilt

**Name and Institution:** Mary-Margaret Chren MD, Vanderbilt University Medical Center

**Collaborator and Mentor:** John S. Penn PhD

**Topic Category:** Administration

**Background, Significance of project:** Until 2018 Dermatology at Vanderbilt was a division of the Department of Medicine, and had achieved vibrant clinical, educational, and research accomplishments. It is now a new Department with a new chair (MMC), with considerable autonomy to establish its own administrative and financial structure, to grow, and to use a substantial investment from the medical center to develop its research domain. To achieve its promise, the Department must articulate its vision for the future, which we will develop in a formal strategic-planning process later in 2018. The process will be enhanced if it is based on the past story of Vanderbilt Dermatology, its current strengths, and its ideal future role in the academic medical center.

**Purpose/Objectives:** The overarching goal is to develop a strategic vision for Vanderbilt Dermatology. Objectives within this Institutional Action Project are (1) to learn Vanderbilt institutional leaders' assessment of Dermatology's challenges and successes to date, and its optimal role in an academic medical center; and (2) to learn current faculty's personal professional goals, aspirations for the Department, and challenges they see to achievement of these goals.

**Methods/Approach/Evaluation Strategy:** I used qualitative research methods. Ten institutional leaders and seventeen Dermatology faculty were interviewed using a structured interview process. Key points in the history and identified themes that characterize the ideal future of Dermatology at Vanderbilt and achievement of faculty goals were synthesized to provide a foundation for a strategic plan. In particular, the foundation names strengths and weaknesses, existing gaps to guide strategic faculty recruitment, and areas in which cultural change may be optimal to ensure that the Department thrives in the future.

**Outcomes/Results:** The primary outcome will be the active involvement of institutional leaders and faculty in our formal strategic-planning process in summer 2018.

**Discussion/Conclusion with Statement of Impact/Potential Impact:** This project is significant for institutional and departmental reasons. Careful attention to the Department's history and people (which this project proposes) matches the medical center's overt commitment to the academic culture, and will leverage its capital investment in the Department's success. This project will also permit the new Chair to know the faculty in the Department in an in-depth way, providing a strong foundation for collaborative Departmental success.