

Introductory Statement
Developed by the Academic Plan/Faculty Senate Conference Committee
August 2008

William Paterson University has successfully offered programs for students seeking post-secondary educational preparation for over 150 years. During the 1970s, the institution diversified its mission and has since offered a comprehensive undergraduate and graduate curriculum that addresses the employment needs of the region and the desires among students to advance their educational perspectives and career opportunities.

At present, the University offers various high-quality undergraduate and graduate programs supported by an experienced, well-regarded faculty who are dedicated to their scholarly pursuits, their teaching, and the success of their students.

The Academic Plan offers a wide-ranging set of recommendations on various University initiatives, curricular enhancements, and curricular opportunities. We strive for a reputation of consistently solid academic programs whether flagship, unique, or typical of other comprehensive universities. A guiding principle, as resources are always limited, is that new and existing programs will demonstrate that they prepare students for careers and success in the workplace.

In Education, we will continue to build our reputation as the university that effectively addresses the current (and ever-changing) demands of state certification requirements and works closely with the school districts to enhance their educational goals. A large component of this will be at the graduate level but, with the recent re-establishment of Education majors, we have the opportunity to redefine what is unique about our undergraduate Education curriculum. Further, as each of our undergraduate Education students will also select a liberal arts major, the synergies among the disciplines must be well-articulated.

In Business, we will continue to build recognition of the Cotsakos College of Business as AACSB-accredited and demonstrate the uniqueness of our new undergraduate and graduate programs in Professional Sales (with undergraduate concentrations, and the Executive master's degree in Sales Leadership), Certified Financial Planner, and Entrepreneurship. We will demonstrate that we offer not only traditional and recently diversified business programs (e.g., international initiatives, MBA concentrations), but that we are looking at Business Education in new and unique ways and with opportunities strengthened by partnerships with the business community.

In the Arts where our studio facilities and technologies in art, music and communication are for the most part impressive, efforts are underway to consider integrative curricula that provide students with combinations of skills across the disciplines. For example, a student training in Graphics Arts will also experience, in a collaborative manner (as in real life), the worlds of public relations and multimedia presentation. Another student in

musical sound engineering will integrate his or her skills and knowledge with experiences in television or video production.

We will reaffirm that our Science and Health programs have been historically selected as flagship areas for growth and reputation building. Several of our degree programs in the health professions are unavailable at other state universities in the immediate region. As a noted resource for preparation in the sciences and health/human services professions, we also have the unique potential to develop new programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels that address the changing educational requirements of the professions and that meet established expectations for excellence.

The Humanities and Social Sciences will continue to provide strong undergraduate majors that prepare students, in general and specifically, for careers and/or graduate education while, at the same time, strengthening support both of a new General Education curriculum and of Teacher Education. The vigor of our strong liberal arts education should be felt in all profession programs.

Graduate education will be identified as something William Paterson University is recognized for and can be depended upon by the professions. Most of our graduate enrollments have been in Education, but there is significant potential in Business and the health professions. In some cases, we will develop curricular responses to the evolving educational requirements within the professions (e.g., Nursing, Counseling) in order to maintain our presence in professional education. Doctoral education will only be considered in this context as a means of demonstrating our currency with professional standards.

The current review of the General Education program provides an important opportunity to consider synergies among programmatic learning objectives and the essential foundations for major programs in the liberals and the professions.

With General Education renewal, the inevitability and the necessity of external collaborations, and the objective to enhance opportunities for our students to gain professional experiences (research, internship, field experience, clinical experience, study abroad), we have the opportunity to redefine the WPU as the campus which integrates education, practical experiences and engagement in ways that are understandable and compelling to our students. Prioritization would reflect this model moving forward.

The following planning principles will guide the implementation of the Plan.

1. By 2012, all programs will provide students with opportunities for applied experiences through curricular initiatives, research projects, internships, field or clinical work, projects with local organizations, or study abroad. These initiatives will be supported and funded as appropriate.

2. Increased emphasis will be placed on connections between and across disciplines, beginning with a revised general education program and continuing through and among the majors.
3. For graduate programs, priority will be given to programs with demonstrable professional practice areas.
4. The Academic Support areas on campus will undergo a critical review within two years in order to explore alternative structures and to reorganize existing areas as relevant. Additional human and fiscal resources will be allocated for the needs of Sponsored and other under-prepared students, of transfer students, and of the general student population.
5. The Provost's Office, in consultation with the college deans and faculty, will develop expanded criteria for the elimination or suspension of programs/offerings in relation to the University mission, strengths, and goals.
6. The Provost's Office, in consultation with the college deans and faculty, will develop criteria for measuring student and market "demand" for new programs.

Goals:

- By offering new and modified programs, we will increase the reputation of William Paterson University. This will be reflected in our ability to attract and retain students. (This will be measured by an increase of the CSAT to 1095 and a 9% increase in our six year graduation rate.)
- Move WPU from "moderately ("less") selective" to "selective" admissions in such standings as *US News and World Report* and other guides to colleges and universities.
- Increase undergraduate retention rate year 2 to year 3 by at least 2%.
- Encourage the Board of Trustees to establish goals for increasing the percentage of students admitted as regular admits.
- Improve the reputation of WPU among internal constituencies including faculty, staff, and students. (note: measure by repeating Lipman-Hearne questions)