



On Small and Large Ideas for Our Future

A few weeks ago, Academic Affairs convened deans, department chairs, and program coordinators together with colleagues from Admission and Marketing and Public Relations for a Big Ideas Summit. The purpose was mostly tactical in nature—namely, to generate ideas that individuals, departments/units, and colleges could pursue to increase summer and fall enrollments. The Summit notes are posted to the [Provost's Office website](#) under Events, as is the video recording.

Practical, and doable ideas were generated. Here are some examples:

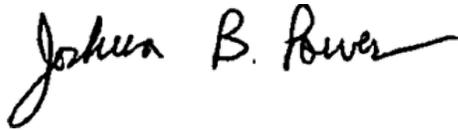
- Short videos that faculty could build sharing how they create community in the classroom or through advising.
- Catchy information video that Academic Development could build that speaks to academic supports for students and normalizes the asking for help as a sign of strength.
- Short video and/or college success toolkit that Enrollment Management could build that normalizes how to navigate college from the lens of a first-generation college student.
- Collect examples of the “hidden curriculum,” including words and labels that may not be intuitive to a new student, and fold it into the toolkit referenced above.
- Faculty “open door” drop-in Zoom hours. Integrate it as an assignment to “drop by.”

- Partner with Admissions to have a presence in an area high school(s).
- Invite Admissions to work with faculty to have a class open house where prospective students can see and experience what a college class is like. If they get to see students in action, even better.
- Work with Admissions to enable faculty or staff who have other community connections (e.g., church, civic organization, etc.) to provide informational materials and/or with a script to do a short presentation about WP.

Also embedded in the conversation, however, were important ideas that were longer term, and ones that require particular kinds of collaboration:

- Diversify our instructional delivery model (i.e., online and alternative term lengths) to take better advantage of new markets such as adult learners who work.
- Assess and amplify the linkages between curriculum and employment outcomes.
- Expansion of interdisciplinary major opportunities, particularly ones that link to societal challenges and problems.
- Integrate meta-major concept for new freshmen to enhance efficiency of time to degree.

We invite you to discuss the above and other ideas with colleagues and to take tactical actions that make sense. Furthermore, we encourage strategic engagement on ones that require cross-department/unit/college discussion/partnering.



Joshua Powers
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Academic News

Building on the success of WP Online, William Paterson **will be expanding the number of fully online programs** this fall to include a variety of undergraduate programs. This effort seeks to better position William Paterson for the large adult learner market and their need for unique accessibility given full-time employment. Kara Rabbitt, associate provost, will be leading this effort in partnership with the colleges, departments, and support units involved.

The Colleges of Arts and Communication and Humanities and Social Sciences will join together as a new college. As noted in last Friday's campus message, the two colleges will be joining together. The mechanism for how this will proceed toward a July 1 integration, and its internal structuring, will be under the guiding leadership of the respective deans and a joint committee from the two colleges. Whereas this is a significant change, it is also one that can be a springboard to new and innovative thinking with respect to the communities we serve. Thanks to all who will be involved in this important effort.

As mentioned in the December campus message, **RTP engagement at the college and department levels** is underway. Draft departmental bylaw revisions for college Chair's Council discussion are to be completed by March 1. Final bylaw revisions are due to the Provost's Office by May 15 from the deans.

The **Middle States Self-Study** is formally submitted. Thanks to the many who helped in its shaping, especially Co-Chairs Sandy Hill and Jonathan Lincoln, who brought it to its final form. The official visit will be March 14-17, 2021.

Thanks to the many who participated in the series of **Academic Affairs-sponsored workshops in December and January**. Materials, and in some cases, video recordings, can be found on the [Provost's Office website](#) under Events.

Facts & Figures

- WP Online Goal Fall 2020: 230 students. Actual: 406 students. Outcome: +77%.
- WP Online Goal Spring 2021 for new enrollments: 185 students. Actual: 235 students. Outcome: +27%.
- Number of new undergraduate WP Online Programs planned for Fall 2021: 8.

Quotables

Angela Duckworth, MacArthur Fellow and founder of [Character Lab](#), has a weekly [Tip of the Week](#), that has much research-informed, practical advice in working with students. Here are just a few:

Try building the confidence of the young people by giving them real problems to solve and creating incentives to work with—not against—each other.

Ask the young people what they think about the purpose of education. Share a story, perhaps, of a lesson you learned as a young person that you can't put on your resume but you hope will be remembered in your eulogy.

Research suggests that healthy interpersonal relationships share three essential elements: The first is *understanding*—seeing the other person for who they are, including their desires, fears, strengths, and weaknesses. The second is *validation*—valuing the other person's perspective, even if it differs from your own. And the third is *caring*—expressing authentic affection, warmth, and concern

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We may be working remotely, but we are accessible to you!

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