WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN
UPDATE AT YEAR SEVEN
FALL 2019

Overview

William Paterson University has completed its seventh year under the guidance of its Strategic Plan 2012-2022 while continuing to progress toward achievement of the goals of the plan. Committee 2022 was established to conduct an annual review of progress toward established goals and objectives and to produce an annual report to the campus community to highlight progress and identify areas where further action is needed. University leadership reviews the Strategic Plan and assesses results, progress and concerns as a basis for further actions.

In Fall 2018, in concert with these processes, the President and Cabinet developed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and measurements to guide the University as it moves forward, with indicators based on specific goals addressing retention, enrollment, graduation rates, institutional revenues, advancement, social mobility and other aspects of the University. The University established retention, enrollment, four-year graduation rate and job placement as its four main priorities. While the results as of Fall 2019 were disappointing for All Student Headcount, Undergraduate Headcount, Graduate Headcount, Full Time First-Year Retention Rate and Four-Year Graduation rate, success is expected going forward resulting from newly established programs and practices. These programs and practices are in line with the Strategic Plan and the KPIs. During Fall 2019, after months of planning, the University launched an innovative and all-encompassing new first-year experience program for students, including the Will.Power.101 workshop, to provide structured academic and student support services in a program designed to improve retention while guiding students toward timely graduation. As part of the new program, freshmen are being block scheduled into classes, guided by a dedicated facilitator and a single academic advisor for the full year. The University also approved and began implementation of Pledge4Success, which provides grants to low income students to fill the gap between federal and state aid, and tuition and fees.

During Fall 2018, President Helldobler appointed a task force to convene discussions leading to development of a center to offer programming and increased support for underrepresented populations. This process led to the development of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion and Black Cultural Center which opened in the Fall of 2019. This ongoing process will continue as the University further assesses and addresses the needs of Latinx and LGBTQ students.

The University continued to strengthen and develop high quality and timely academic programs that are expected to enhance institutional reputation while contributing to the needs of local, regional and national workplaces. An innovative new BA in disability studies, the first in New Jersey, has been implemented. A new Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEAM) track within the Curriculum and Learning MED is being implemented in Fall 2019. A new MS in Finance and Financial Services and an accelerated 3+2 Sport Medicine BS and Athletic Training MS have been approved by the NJ President's Council Academic Issues Committee. The College of Education has been authorized to begin development of an online Educational Leadership Ed.D.

To increase accessibility, transparency and open communications, the President undertook a campus-wide listening tour by conducting meetings with students, faculty and staff and scheduled an ongoing series of informal events and meetings open to members of the campus community. Also, as a result of the listening tour and in support of the institutional commitment to professional development, the University established two-hour, weekly professional development opportunities for staff throughout the summer, including mandatory diversity training.

Efforts to expand the University's fundraising to support institutional affordability have been highly successful. As of June 2019, the University raised $9.04 million toward the $10 million scholarship campaign goal, including $1.44 million raised in FY19. During FY19, the University raised $2.71 million -- more than in any previous year, reaching 90 percent of its KPI for the year. The University increased the total assets of the University Foundation by nearly 5 percent, exceeding its KPI by raising $29.17 million.

Goal 1: Offer Programs of Highest Quality

Sub-categories/objectives: high quality academic programs; UCC effectiveness; selective expansion of professional and graduate programs; recruit, develop and retain a diverse faculty; use of technology to expand accessibility and availability.

The University Core Curriculum (UCC) Council reviewed and approved 21 courses from 11 disciplines and three colleges. Based on the results of assessments completed in recent years, the UCC council began working with deans and chairs to ensure that UCC student learning outcomes are addressed in individual course syllabi.

As mentioned in the overview, curricular development and redesign continued in 2018-2019. The University has proceeded with WP Online, which will offer a range of online graduate programs in partnership with Academic Partnerships, which has extensive expertise in marketing and supporting such programming. Programs are also in development to provide degree completion opportunities for the large number of adults in our region with earned credits but no degree.

In 2018-2019, there were 14 successful new tenure track hires (our projection was 12 to 18) and 13 one-year-only hires. The reduction from last year reflected a freeze in hiring resulting from budget constraints. In addition, some reassignment of lines from programs losing enrollment to those gaining enrollment showed a strategic attempt to put resources where they are most needed for teaching. Fall 2018 Faculty Line Analysis showed 403 full-time faculty members teaching across five colleges. Despite the large number of new faculty hired, faculty lines fell across the board due to a number of retirements and medical leaves.

Faculty development in 2018-2019 included New Faculty Orientation and a panel discussion for new faculty organized by the Center for Teaching Excellence. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness provided training on the use of Campus Labs to undertake outcome assessment of the University Strategic Plan and strategic priorities of each college.

Digital literacy was supported through the creation of collaborative space in the Media Service area. Faculty were trained and encouraged to use the Blackboard Ally accessibility tool to increase access to course materials for students with varied learning styles. Many classrooms, conference seminar rooms, auditoriums and specialized spaces were redesigned and upgraded.

Goal 2: Achieve Student Success by Increasing Matriculation, Retention and Graduation

Sub categories/objectives: student recruitment strategy that leads to success and professional and personal growth; increase student engagement; increase availability and variety of academic support, advisement and career guidance; enhance student academic and intellectual engagement with faculty, staff and fellow students in the classroom and through co-curricular experiences.

All-Student Headcount, Undergraduate Headcount, Graduate Headcount, Full Time First Year Retention Rate, Four-Year Graduation Rate, and Six-Year Graduation Rate are the primary enrollment-related KPIs. As of Fall 2019, the University enrolled 10,105 students, which was 246 students short of the goal; we enrolled 8,605 undergraduate students, which was 215 students short of the goal; we enrolled 1,500 graduate students which, while 37 students more than in 2018, was short of the goal by 31 students. The retention rate for freshmen was 69.3 percent, short of the goal of 72.5 percent. The four-year graduation rate was lower than the goal, but higher than our internal projections. We achieved a 55.3 percent six-year graduation rate, which exceeded the goal by 2 percent.

The Admissions office was restructured, and an updated recruitment plan is in development. More personalized and focused outreach to accepted students resulted in an improved yield rate from 18 to 22.4 percent. An ad hoc transfer advisory committee was formed in Fall 2018 to develop recommendations to better serve the University's transfer population and increase applications, enrollment, retention and graduation rates. Approval was granted to allow an in-state tuition waiver for out-of-state and international students beginning with the 2020-2021 academic year, with marketing roll out beginning in Fall 2019. Initial conversations have started on dual admissions programs. The University signed a 3+1 agreement for nursing with five community colleges and is in discussions regarding other potential 3+1 programs.

The University exceeded the goal of 550 available scholarships by 4.3 percent with 574 awards. The scholarship endowment grew to $9.4 million, an 8 percent increase over the previous year and 150 percent increase in eight years. We increased the available scholarship dollars from $1.24 to $1.27 million, a 2.5 percent increase over last year.

Efforts to increase student engagement through opportunities for student/faculty research, scholarship and creative expression continued. The month-long 2019 Explorations program, the 20th year of this program, included faculty and students from all colleges, showcasing individual and collaborative research and creative expression. In FY19, we had 12 active research or other project awards that involved students in research.

As mentioned earlier, the work of a President-appointed Multicultural Center Committee resulted in plans for a Center for Diversity and Inclusion and Black Cultural Center which opened in Fall 2019.

The newly launched first-year experience includes all first-year students assigned to classes as part of a cohort with block scheduling providing a cohesive schedule. A major component of the initiative is the required Student Success Workshop which provides personalized direction to help ease the transition to college. In addition to the new program – Will. Power. 101 – tutoring and academic support spaces were established in the residence halls. Residence Life staff partnered with Academic Development staff to address Starfish flags for resident students. Athletics established the Student Athlete Mentor initiative to support retention efforts. The Academic Development unit was moved to Enrollment Management . Academic Advisement is now part of Student Success and freshmen will now be able to maintain a single advisor for their first full academic year.

The Pesce Family Mentoring Institute has grown steadily and the KPI was met as we reached the maximum number of 254 mentor/mentee pairs. Continued expansion of tutoring is provided through use of Tutor.com.

Enhancing the Cheng Library as an academic information center, the library transitioned to a new library services platform and delivery service in collaboration with NJIT, Rowan, Stockton and The College of New Jersey.

Goal 3: Provide students with exceptional opportunities beyond the classroom

Sub-categories/Objectives: strategic partnerships with leading institutions and governmental organizations; small number of focused, high-visibility graduate programs; link students off-campus learning intentionally and directly to their classroom experiences; develop regionally and nationally recognized co-curricular activities linked to academic programs

The Office of Transfer and Special Sessions continued to set up dual enrollment partnerships, securing three high school partners for Fall 2019 and another scheduled to start in 2021.

The University continues to provide important experiential learning opportunities for students. Usage of Trailblazer, the University job and internship portal, continued to grow steadily since its inception five years ago, with 812 internships and 1,931 full-time opportunities posted in 2018-2019. The Office of Campus Activities, Service and Leadership (CASL) ran a voter registration drive and partnered with other campus organizations to support voter registration.

The University has now had four Newman Civic Fellows selected by Campus Compact. This coveted and competitive recognition is awarded annually to only a handful of students in the region. William Paterson is an active leader in the New Jersey Campus Compact and one of only three New Jersey Campus Compact colleges/universities with an approved civic action plan. In FY19, CASL offered 116 civic engagement opportunities, resulting in 11,116 hours of service. More than 1,600 students participated in at least one of the sponsored activities including Pioneer

Service Ventures, MLK Day of Service, 9-11 Day of Service and Alternative Spring Break and winter break academic service trips, fall Civic Engagement Week and spring National Volunteer Week.

2,219 students took a UCC Area 5 course (32 different courses) in 2018-2019. As of Spring 2019, 5,657 students were enrolled in the civic engagement badge program – a 56 percent increase over the prior year – and 490 completed the badge – a 34 percent increase.

Goal 4: Enhancing the sense of community throughout and beyond the University

Sub-categories/objectives: Build a community of engaged students; engage alumni with students and faculty in order to enhance institutional and personal relationships with alumni; update masterplan to ensure campus is welcoming and modernized

The University successfully develops and enhances extra-curricular activities that engage students while supporting the development of skills, leadership capabilities and civic responsibility. Students continue to build leadership skills by pursuing available opportunities. First-year students completing all three modules and one community service component in the Pioneer Leadership Institute increased by 8 percent to 336. Participation in the Leaders in Action Badge program increased by 66 percent to 2,466 in 2019.

Intramural athletic participation increased with the strongest rates since 2015-2016 – 1,079 students participated, including the largest number of freshmen on record. Athletic attendance is strong for most sports and athletics social media followers increased by 19 percent.

Social media increasingly engages the campus community, including students. The University Instagram platform, which has our highest number of followers aged 18 to 24, produced a 15 percent increase in followers, a 23 percent increase in engagement and 374 percent increase in Instagram story views from June 2018 through June 2019. Additional social media platforms are used successfully by Alumni Affairs and other individual University programs and departments to engage students and others.

Efforts to engage alumni have been successful as we have engaged 1,711 alumni in the life of the University by participating in alumni events in FY19, exceeded our goal of 1,700 while building a pipeline of support. As we work to engage the young alumni market, participation has increased. In 2019, an alumni relations team collaborated with the office of admissions to develop an Alumni Admissions Task Force.

Campus improvements have been made as the University works to provide a campus that is welcoming and modernized. The new residence hall, Skyline Hall, opened in Fall 2019 with completion on time and on budget. A new tutoring center opened in the library to provide a more centralized location. The University purchased the building at 1800 Valley Road and renovation work includes conversion to academic and other new and expanded revenue-generating uses. Upgrades to street and sidewalk lighting and additional security cameras have been installed on campus. Many buildings, grounds and field projects were completed in 2019, including re-turfing the football field, and renovating the lobby and bathrooms in Shea.

Goal 5: Establish the University as a model of outstanding and affordable public higher education

Sub-categories/objectives: increase institutional and external resources to support students in need of financial assistance; diversity funding streams; strengthen professional development for all employees; continuous improvement of business processes; make the University fully "green"

Institutional Advancement raised $9.04 million toward our $10 million Scholarship Campaign goal, including $1.44 million during this past fiscal year. The Division continues to focus on increasing the scholarship endowment and the annual scholarship distribution, with $1.27 million available for scholarship funding in 2019. The Division is working to build both a major gift pipeline as well as an annual fund leadership pipeline. In FY19, we raised $2.71 million in new cash and commitments, reaching 90 percent of the overall goal of $3 million despite significant staff vacancies. Advancement increased the total assets of the University Foundation by 5 percent over the previous year, doubling the total assets in eight years.

Efforts continue to diversify funding streams. The School of Continuing and Professional Education (SCPE) strengthened its partnership with Interstudio Viaggi to bring international high school students to campus for six weeks of summer residential programs. Precollege Summer Youth Programs grew to almost 1,000 students from grades 4 to high school in an expanded variety of courses and activities. SCPE was awarded a new New Jersey Labor and Workforce Development GAINS grant to launch two USDOL Apprenticeship Programs for Computer Systems Analysts and Certified Medical Assistants in collaboration with corporate partners. The fifth annual Cybersecurity and Big Data Analytics Symposium drew groups of community college and high school students to campus, building synergies for the new Computer Systems Analyst Apprenticeship program and undergraduate programs.

Working to strengthen professional development, Human Resources established two-hour professional opportunities each week for 12 weeks during the summer for all staff on a wide range of topics. A leaders program was also created for new, aspiring and senior leaders. HR improved administrative services by implementing and automating processes, including implementation of an Applicant Tracking System, which impacts approximately 1,000 transactions during each semester.

The University increased investment income to $1.8 million, after hiring J.P. Morgan to provide investment advice for the operating funds that we have available on a monthly basis. Working with them, we are able to maximize investment earnings and have seen a significant increase in earned income compared to prior years.

The University's commitment to sustainability is exceptionally strong with innovations and improved results each year. Nearly 100 percent of the custodial products used on campus are certified green. In 2019, 39.2 percent of the University's 2,359 tons of waste was recycled. All construction and renovation projects are designed with green building standards in mind.

Sustainability efforts are supported by academic curriculum. For example, students in the Department of Environmental Science conduct climate science research with climate scientist faculty who are recipients of grants from the National Science Foundation and other sources. The University actively collaborates on research and education programs with the nearby Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Throughout 2018-2019, the University successfully progressed toward major goals identified in Strategic Plan 2012-2022 based on a firm campus-wide commitment to our students. With a strong sense of our collective accomplishments, we maintain a clear understanding on where we need to improve as a University and how we need to proceed toward realization of our goals and Key Performance Indicators.

We have developed programs to improve our first-year student retention and meet our enrollment goals. We directly addressed the retention issue with redevelopment of the first-year experience program, including Will. Power. 101, and we are confident that this innovative program will succeed. The launch in Fall 2019 has gone smoothly with active engagement by staff and faculty throughout the University.

Demographic trends, particularly a forecasted decrease in the number of college age students in New Jersey and throughout the Northeast, present challenges to William Paterson University and all colleges and universities in the nation, particularly in our region. We must face these demographic challenges and our own difficulties in retaining students by carefully crafting strategies with a willingness to innovate. We are committed to generating the ideas and programs that will lead to appropriate enrollment levels. Planning for several initiatives is underway. For example, we see potential for increased enrollment for graduate students and we are moving forward with plans for a partnership to accelerate growth and marketing of online graduate programs. The development of the in-state tuition waiver for out-of-state students is expected to provide some enrollment growth. The purchase of the new building at 1800 Valley Road will allow us to accelerate the growth of the School of Continuing and Professional Education and other revenue generating opportunities.

We benefit as an institution that takes a broad look at challenges and collectively works to chart our course forward. In Fall 2019, the President is convening a series of campus summits building on expertise of faculty and staff. These summits will prompt us to rethink systems with new ideas for innovation as we address course scheduling, advisement, transfer experiences and retention.

Our strategic and carefully constructed initiatives will guide us toward achieving our goals and will make us a stronger University as we build upon a firm and stable financial foundation.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2012-2022 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Steve Bolyai, Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance

Miki Cammarata, Vice President for Student Development

Mary Ann Cooper, Alumni Executive Council

Pam Ferguson, Vice President for Institutional Advancement

Stuart Goldstein, Vice President for Marketing and Public Relations and Co-Chair

Jonathan Lincoln, Associate Provost

Ian Marshall, Acting Associate Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Faculty in English

Zach Merring, Student

Balmurli Natrajan, Faculty in Anthropology and Chair, Faculty Senate

William O'Brien, IFPTE

Jennifer Owlett, Faculty in Communication

Joshua B. Powers, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Stephanie Quackenbush, CWA Local President

Denise Robinson-Lewis, Human Resources and Chair, Director's Council

Reg Ross, Vice President for Enrollment Management

Venkat Sharma, Dean of the College of Science and Health and Co-Chair

Cassandra Soto, Student

Sue Tardi, Faculty in Sociology and AFT Local 1796 President