

**WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY
STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE
AT YEAR THREE**

NOVEMBER, 2015

The University continues to take consistent steps in fulfilling the goals set forth in the *Strategic Plan 2012-2022*. A review committee, *Committee 2022*, was established to conduct an annual review of the five goals to determine progress that has been made on each goal and to note where progress is lacking. At the end of Year Three, this report comprises the Committee's review of each goal.

Goal 1: Offer Programs of the Highest Quality

William Paterson University continues to support the delivery of the highest quality academic programs through its commitment to full-time faculty. In 2014-2015, the number of full-time faculty rose again, to 404. This is an increase in new faculty lines of 26 since 2010, continuing an upward trend equaling a 6.3% increase. Funding for faculty travel and research support has increased to \$634,000 in FY15, a 54% increase over FY13 (including College and Provost's Office travel funds, Research and Travel Incentive, Student Undergraduate Research, and Career Development). And in recognition of the scholarly and creative work by our faculty, Research and Scholarship Day was expanded to a two-day event that featured close to 100 presentations involving faculty, staff and students. In addition, the 9th Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium in Biology and Chemistry featured an additional 100 presentations.

Across the University, the assessment of University Core Curriculum (UCC) Writing Intensive courses took place in spring and summer. A report on the assessment process has been submitted to the Faculty Senate. A regular schedule for assessment and review of the UCC has been established and implemented.

At the college-level, the Dean's Advisory Board for the Cotsakos College of Business grew this year to 17 members, representing many of the different branches of the business sector. Within the CCOB, significant work was done to redesign the MBA program, with anticipated curricular approval taking place this year. The College of Humanities and Social Sciences also continued to develop its College Advisory Board, and sponsored fall and spring events for advisory board members.

Graduate programs at the doctoral level continue to be strengthened and developed. The second cohort of students graduated from the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program in May 2015, and the University has recruited and enrolled its inaugural class in the new Doctor of Clinical Psychology (PsyD) program.

Within the departments, our academic programs continue to achieve external re-accreditation, as was completed this year in Nursing (Masters and DNP) and Psychology (MA in Clinical Psychology). Attesting to the strength of our academic programs, 13 different national disciplinary accrediting bodies have confirmed program accreditation status on academic programs in all five colleges. And new external accreditation is being sought by the Department of Public Health this year.

External funding for our academic programs was evidenced by the \$270,000 gift to the Center for New Art, helping to purchase and install a new seven-axis KUKA Robot capable of carving in a variety of materials, including foam, wood, and soft metals, allowing for precision sculpting of large-scale forms. Located in the University's Power Arts building, the robot is the first of its kind at a college or university in New Jersey. The anonymous donation will strengthen and distinguish the Center for New Art as a leader in computer-based sculpture design and execution.

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

William Paterson University recognizes the economic hardships faced by many of our students and is committed to keeping tuition as low as possible. This year, the University increased tuition by only 1%, the lowest of any of the state colleges and universities in New Jersey, and marked the fifth consecutive year of very modest increases. At the same time, the Division of Institutional Advancement continues to focus its fundraising efforts on scholarship support, receiving \$1M over four years from the Taub Foundation in scholarship dollars. The University's Foundation also gave the entirety of the net proceeds from the annual Legacy Dinner to the University for scholarships, bringing the total Foundation scholarship support to \$650,000. The scholarship endowment has seen a 70% increase in the last four years. Total institutional support for scholarships, including Foundation scholarships, exceeds \$11.7M.

New student enrollment for Fall 2014 did not meet targets due to changes made in the scholarship matrix. Similarly, the SAT target and high school GPA target were not met. These disappointing results led to a reexamination of the scholarship matrix and changes to that matrix; results for Fall 2015 show that first-year enrollment has rebounded. While new student enrollment targets were not met, enrollment growth is promising, with an increase of new first time full time students of 14.5% from Fall 14 to Fall 15.

Once students are admitted to the University, the Summer Foundations Program allows students to fulfill development needs prior to starting their college career. The program has made significant impact on the number of remedial sections offered during the regular academic year and aids students in staying on-course toward timely graduation. The program is offered at no cost to the students, and to increase student participation, was awarded additional strategic funding this year. Results have been positive: in 2014, 485 students took part in the summer program, continuing a four-year increase. Of those 485 students, 398 (or 82%) completed all of their foundational requirements. The university goal continues to be that all students needing

foundation courses will be able to complete these courses in the summer so that they can start their fall semester with a full academic load.

Several new programs have been implemented for first-year students as part of the Student Success Initiative. Almost half of new first year students were enrolled in linked courses in Fall 14. Linked courses group new students together in at least two classes, providing additional support and engagement with fellow students. Additional peer leaders for First Year Seminar courses were funded through strategic funding to provide student-to-student support for new students.

Students transferring to WPU continue to be provided support through the Transfer Student Experience Office. This past year, a video was produced by Marketing and Public Relations to welcome transfer students and improve transfer student outcomes (<http://www.wpunj.edu/transfer-student-experience/index.dot>). The University also began a chapter of Tau Sigma National Honor Society, acknowledging transfer students' academic excellence, and welcomed its first inductees in 2014-15.

Student success forums were held throughout the year for faculty, students, and staff to engage in discussion around promoting student success. The Student Success Scholarship program completed its first year, awarding scholarships of \$1,000 to students who successfully complete 30 credits each academic year while maintaining a 3.0 GPA. The program is a significant investment in our students; in 2014-15, the University awarded over \$400,000 to eligible students, showing the University's commitment to helping students stay focused on graduation in four years.

Strategic funding was also increased by \$50,000 to support faculty/student research. Involvement in research with a faculty member is linked to enhanced engagement at the University and promotes intellectual development, as evidenced at WPU by the expansion of Research and Scholarship Day and the external awards given our students at student competitions in the state and region. The University documented one such award winner, Adonis Rivie, in a video produced by Marketing and Public Relations and found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FaCZ549EhVE>

The University's four-year graduation rate continues its upward trend, a five-year improvement from 14% to 22.3%, Student debt has decreased by \$2,000, suggesting that the student success initiatives may be aiding students in graduating sooner and lessening their loan burden. DegreeWorks, a new degree audit system, will be fully functional for all undergraduate students in Spring 2016. DegreeWorks will aid students and advisors in tracking their progress toward completion of their academic degrees.

Disappointing results, however, are seen in our one-year retention rate and six-year graduation rate, as both success rates declined. The six-year graduation rate is at 47.7%, down from 50.9% last year, and the first to second year retention rate dropped to 75% from 76.6% the previous

year. While these results are disappointing, the University will continue to build on the successful intervention programs that are generated by the Student Success Team, and additional initiatives are planned for implementation going forward.

Goal 3: Provide Students with Exceptional Opportunities Beyond the Classroom

The University is committed to providing practical experiences for our students, and a recent NSSE survey found that 40% of seniors indicated they had an internship experience prior to graduation. That number may significantly undercount the students involved in student teaching or clinical requirements in programs such as nursing, but shows that many students are benefitting from these important internship experiences. The Career Development Center continues to seek internship experiences for our students, and work is near completion on the development of an internship bank to help students find additional internship experiences.

Area Five of the UCC focuses on community and civic engagement, and the University continues to build coursework and extracurricular experiences around this important initiative. Civic Engagement Day took place in October 2014, and activities associated with the American Democracy Project (under the direction of Professor Christine Kelly and including voter registration using *TurboVote* and Constitution Day) are now an integral part of the life of the University. The Division of Student Development continued activities for student engagement, including the Day of Service on MLK Day in January. A new civic engagement plan, along with new campus leaders Jonathan Lincoln and Donna Minnich-Spuhler, will guide and expand our activities going forward.

Successful Study Abroad experiences continue, including the Cambridge Summer Program with Professor Michael Principe in Political Science, the annual Ishikawa study abroad experience in Japan, the College of Education program in Windesheim in the Netherlands, and a new study abroad experience in India with Music Professor Payton McDonald.

Goal 4: Enhance the Sense of Community Beyond the University

Strategic funding was provided to expand extra- and co-curricular opportunities for students through the Division of Student Development. Funds devoted to “Pioneer Pride” were invested in a variety of pre-homecoming activities that increased student participation, energy/enthusiasm and attendance at featured athletic events. Fan buses to away post-season competitions and giveaways at home athletic competitions promoted attendance and school spirit and provided support for our teams. The added strategic funds also allowed us to increase activity and attendance around club sports, recreational services and residence life community building programming.

Strategic funds around the theme of “enhancing traditions” were devoted to enhancing Homecoming activities and creating our first annual Family Weekend. Enhancements to Homecoming activities included creating a “carnival-like” environment with student- and family-focused informational tables, rides and attractions. We also hosted a new alumni event

for former student leaders. Efforts by both Student Development and Institutional Advancement led to a 71% increase in attendance at Homecoming in 2014 over 2013. Family Weekend attendance was approximately 100 and included a welcome brunch with President Waldron, a sculpture tour, workshops, child-friendly activities and attendance at athletic competitions and Shea events.

Strategic funds devoted to student engagement during evenings and weekends resulted in an increase in weekend programs; more coordinated planning, calendaring and marketing of weekend events; and an overall increase in attendance. Funding also supported health education programs. The programs and activities were well-attended across the board and assessment results indicated student satisfaction and provided us with useful information for future planning. As a result, some programs are being repeated this year and some modified to better meet student need and interest.

Reflecting the community in which William Paterson is a part, in 2014-15 the University officially reached the status of being a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), with a Hispanic student population of over 25%. This recognition of being a HSI allows the university to seek out additional opportunities to serve the students and the community.

The Pesce Family Mentoring Institute had a very successful inauguration in Fall 2014 as 72 students were matched with mentors in its first year. While not all applicants (mentees) were able to be matched with mentors in this first year, participants (mentors and mentees) in the program reported an overall high level of satisfaction with the program. This important initiative links current students with working professionals, including alumni, to provide support, advice, career exploration and key linkages between students and potential careers.

In 2014-15 the University launched the Paterson Metropolitan Region Research Center, a cross-disciplinary effort tying research, scholarship and civic engagement together with a focus on the Paterson region. Sociology Professor Vince Parrillo was named as founding director of the Center.

The University continues to expand its reach to alumni and others through various social media outlets. *TwillyP* has developed a sense of community for on-campus and off-campus students, and our social media presence continues to provide a real-time link to the University and its programs. Alumni social media platforms created over 20,000 opportunities for communication with alums and quadrupled the number of followers for our alumni Instagram site.

Over 1,600 attendees participated in University events co-sponsored by Alumni Relations, including 600 alumni attending for the first time. Successful engagement events, such as tailgating at Homecoming, have increased the attendance of young alumni, a critical link in keeping alumni engaged with, and supportive of, the University.

The University continues to actively work with the current student body in developing a message of philanthropy. In 2012, we kicked off the “Say Thanks” senior class gift program which provides seniors an opportunity to make a gift in honor or memory of someone who made a difference to them while they were students at William Paterson. Students can honor professors, advisors, mentors, parents, siblings, partners, or their scholarship donors. These tributes are presented in the annual commencement program. The Annual Fund office is now seeing a direct correlation between this initiative and the upward trend in class of 2014 and class of 2015 giving.

Goal 5: Establish the University as a Model of Outstanding Affordable Public Higher Education

William Paterson University is committed to the success of its students and its staff. This year, an employee reward and recognition program (*WP P.R.I.D.E*) was implemented through the Office of Human Resources. This program highlights University employees who are innovative and give extraordinary effort in support of the University and its students. The program has been greatly successful and will continue next year.

To aid our students in affording attendance, the University’s scholarship program has been successfully revised to better recruit and support meritorious students. And as mentioned in Goal 2 (above) the University received a gift of \$1M from the Taub Foundation for scholarship support. Net proceeds from the annual Legacy Dinner, \$231,000, were transferred to the institution to support student scholarships. The William Paterson Foundation’s total assets exceed \$23M, a 7.8 percent increase over 2014. New cash and commitments for the year total \$3.56M.

In addition to fundraising efforts, the University has taken additional steps to lower expenses related to business processes. This year, we reduced time spent creating and delivering paper checks by implementing ACH payment processing. Also in process is the implementation of an automated workflow and approval queue functionality for travel expenses, employee reimbursements, and voucher expense (non-purchase order expenses) processing. We also reduced the volume of petty cash transactions in order to make better use of staff time and to improve internal controls.

The University is committed to sustainability and good use of our resources. Last year, the University generated 1,042 tons of garbage and trash. Of that amount, 163 tons were recycled and 99 tons were sent to be composted. For commuters with electric cars, five electric vehicle (EV) charging stations were built in Lot 4. The solar panels throughout the campus have already saved the University over \$1.5M in energy costs, and we have engaged a vendor who identified \$7M in energy savings projects which will further reduce our annual energy costs.

Sustainability is part of our new construction as well. Lighting in the Parking Garage is LEED certified, and University Hall is expected to be LEED Gold certified. The renovation of Hunziker Wing is also designed for LEED Gold certification.

This report was submitted by Committee 2022 on November 30, 2015.

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