

PENNSTATE



FULFILLING THE PROMISE

The Penn State Strategic Plan

2006-07 through 2008-09



VISION

Penn State will be the nation's finest university in the integration of teaching, research, and service.

OUR MISSION

Penn State is a multicampus public research university that improves the lives of the people of Pennsylvania, the nation, and the world through integrated, high-quality programs in teaching, research, and service.

Our instructional mission includes undergraduate, graduate, professional, and continuing and distance education informed by scholarship and research.

Our research, scholarship, and creative activities promote human and economic development through the expansion of knowledge and its applications in the natural and applied sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, and professions. As Pennsylvania's land-grant university, we also hold a unique responsibility to provide access, outreach, and public service to support the citizens of the Commonwealth and beyond. We engage in collaborative activities with industrial, educational, and agricultural partners here and abroad to generate, disseminate, integrate, and apply knowledge.



Strategic Goals

These goals and strategies build on Penn State's approach to strategic management over the past two decades, and reflect the University's top-down/bottom-up planning philosophy. Shaped by the strategic plans that Penn State's thirty-two budget units submitted in February 2005 and by the senior leadership of the University, including the Board of Trustees, the goals and strategies represent an extension of continuing commitments as well as new program thrusts and cross-college initiatives.



GOAL 1:

Enhance academic excellence through the support of high-quality teaching, research, and service.

STRATEGIES:

- Maintain the University's momentum in building a faculty of eminence through judicious hiring and tenure decisions, faculty development, appropriate rewards, and proactive retention practices.
- Invest operating funds selectively and reallocate resources to areas of existing or emerging research strength across the University, including academic fields with great societal impact.
- Invest capital in new facilities, renovations, and equipment that will support excellence in the University's teaching, research, and service missions.
- Continue or initiate, as appropriate, program reviews for undergraduate and graduate degree programs, especially those not subject to national accreditation reviews.

- Foster productive synergies between teaching and research, and bring more research into the classroom.
- Further enhance opportunities for interdisciplinary and cross-campus collaborations in research and education, including existing consortia in the life sciences; materials; environmental sciences; and children, youth, and families.
- Identify and build upon convergences among dispersed faculty, programs, and capital resources dedicated to health sciences education and research, including stronger collaborations between the College of Medicine at the Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center and other colleges and programs of the University.
- Advance excellence in legal education through the development and enhancement of the dual campuses of the Dickinson School of Law.
- Promote a greater international focus across the University, including development of a school of international affairs.



GOAL 2:

Enrich the educational experience of all Penn State students by becoming a more student-centered University.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop a comprehensive strategic plan for learning outcomes assessment, including first-year seminars, student learning in General Education and academic majors, co-curricular experiences, and the impact of student support services.
- Increase student involvement in purposeful co-curricular experiences, develop a culture of greater student responsibility, build bridges between student life and academic success, and better prepare students for active citizenship.
- Create more opportunities for students to develop leadership and entrepreneurial capabilities necessary for successful careers in an increasingly global environment.
- Secure the position of the Schreyer Honors College as the nation's preeminent honors college through enhanced private support, leading-edge program development, and aggressive recruitment of the nation's top high school students.
- Enhance student experiences through greater applied learning opportunities in international programs, public scholarship, internships, the arts, and undergraduate research.
- Develop and deliver additional online and hybrid courses that blend online and resident instruction, ensure curricular integrity, and provide flexible access to courses while increasing cost efficiency and innovation.
- Expand the availability of online courses through the e-Learning Cooperative and the World Campus for both resident and nonresident instruction at all campuses and encourage all Penn State campuses to utilize and promote these offerings.
- Deploy technology to improve learning, enhance information literacy, and develop students' overall competency in various digital environments.
- Review and streamline curricula and ensure curricular integration, consistency, and coordination.

- Provide high-quality, responsive, and student-centered services (including academic advising, new student orientation, career services, student health, and counseling) that increase retention and support academic and personal success.
- Enhance and extend the impact of the Center for Adult Learner Services to address the unique needs of nontraditional students at all campuses.
- Continue to hold high academic standards for student-athletes and capitalize on the positive complementarity of excellence in academics and athletics.



GOAL 3:

Create a more inclusive, civil, and diverse University learning community.

STRATEGIES:

- Build a more cohesive Penn State community and greater sense of belonging for all students by enhancing the first-year experience, advising and supporting student leaders, engaging students in meaningful student-centered programs and activities, and celebrating students' achievements and contributions.
- Continue to encourage and monitor unit-level implementation of goals established in *A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State*; share the results and best practices across the University and ensure that appropriate avenues for reporting complaints or concerns about discrimination or harassment are widely known.



- Expand recruitment efforts to enroll a more diverse student population, inclusive of economic diversity.
- Continue to close the graduation rate gap between majority and minority students by providing targeted and effective programs for all students with learning support needs.
- Provide greater opportunities for students to engage issues of diversity and multicultural understanding, especially in the U.S. context, within the University's curriculum and co-curricular experiences.
- Aggressively hire, develop, and retain more faculty and staff of color, women, and other representatives of diverse populations.
- Build a more welcoming environment for international students through greater involvement of the wider communities at campuses across the Commonwealth.
- Enhance orientation, professional development, and mentoring of faculty and staff to include greater multicultural awareness and respect for differences.

GOAL 4:

Align missions, programs, and services with available fiscal resources to better serve our students and their communities.

STRATEGIES:

- Ensure the University's commitment to access by aggressively striving to moderate tuition increases at all campuses and developing strategies that address the diversity of student populations.
- Recruit prospective students aggressively from traditional and adult student populations and improve student retention at all campuses.
- Tailor additional programs, schedules, and services to the needs of nontraditional students.
- Ease the transition of students into Penn State programs from high schools, community colleges, and other accredited institutions.
- Exploit the value of Penn State's flexibility and portability by focusing on 2+2 options for degree completion at University Park or other campuses.
- Streamline operations and provide greater consistency in programs across campuses.

- Reevaluate, restructure, and expand the mission and operations of the University's Office of International Programs, including a new vice provost leadership role.
- Assess all underenrolled degree programs for prospective elimination or consolidation.
- Promote greater resource sharing among campuses, including faculty and staff with multicampus responsibilities, and consolidation of programs across regions for delivery from selected campuses.
- Rationalize Continuing Education offerings to focus on credit courses and strategically targeted course sequences and certificate programs.
- Bring budgetary resources into better alignment with sustainable campus enrollments and associated revenues.
- Modify the mission of campuses, as necessary and appropriate, to reflect community and regional enrollment levels, competition from other providers, and area workforce needs.
- Establish priorities for future investments in the College of Medicine at the Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center that will enhance medical education, patient-centered health care, and biomedical discovery, consistent with resource availability.



GOAL 5:

Serve society through teaching, research and creative activity, and service.

STRATEGIES:

- Integrate public and professional engagement more fully into faculty scholarly activities through an emphasis on the faculty reward structure.
- Pursue a "Pennsylvania First" strategy in the management of research and technology transfer programs and expand Penn State's research strengths in support of Pennsylvania economic development.
- Enhance the Statewide Continuing Education and Workforce Development System to address the Commonwealth's workforce education, training, and economic development needs.
- Examine Penn State's outreach capabilities and priorities in key Commonwealth metropolitan areas to promote excellence in service delivery, cost effectiveness, and greater visibility for the University.
- Seek to positively influence the health status of the Commonwealth's population through an aggressive program of prevention intervention utilizing and coordinating the resources of the University's many academic and service units.
- Collaborate with state and local organizations to foster economic development in the I-99 Innovation Corridor, the Philadelphia Navy Yard, and other Keystone Innovation Zones located in proximity to Penn State campuses.
- Increase the number and effectiveness of K–12 educational partnerships throughout the Commonwealth.
- Expand communications with internal and external audiences and increase alumni involvement in the University's student life and academic programs.
- Evaluate outreach programs to ensure a high level of quality and customer satisfaction, visibility and value for the University, cost effectiveness, and return on investment relative to mission.

GOAL 6:

Develop new sources of non-tuition income and reduce costs through improved efficiencies.

STRATEGIES:

- Plan for and launch the leadership gift phase of a comprehensive new development campaign with a major focus on student financial support, including need-based aid, scholarship, and fellowship support.
- Maintain a highly effective infrastructure of support for research and creative activity that enhances faculty success in acquiring funds from extramural sources.
- Effectively capture and commercialize additional intellectual property with market value.
- Identify new revenue sources through licensing and corporate partnerships.
- Positively impact the University's appropriation from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania by effectively harnessing public support through efforts such as the Penn State Grassroots Network.
- Continue to emphasize the importance of financial stability and creditworthiness that will lower the cost of borrowing.
- Aggressively reduce overhead and other costs through both unit-level efforts and central administration strategies of the University Cost Savings Task Force.
- Utilize new technologies to reduce costs while improving the delivery of services.
- Develop, where appropriate, regional clusters of activity and resource sharing among Penn State campuses and outreach units.
- Reduce Penn State's health care cost increases through models that emphasize health, wellness, preventative care, and disease management, along with greater responsibility and incentives for good health practices among the University's insured populations.
- Better integrate student information systems across units to provide enhanced student services at lower average cost.
- Continue to identify e-business initiatives that will leverage investments in technology with maximum value in cost savings, create efficiencies in operations, generate revenue growth, and provide increased customer satisfaction.
- Identify, quantify, and mitigate risks across the University within its systems of policies and procedures, finance, human resources, physical assets, and operations.
- Maintain the financial stability of the Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center through increased patient and research revenues, the identification of new sources of funds and health care partnerships, the continuing search for operating efficiencies, and further enhancements to the quality of services delivered.
- Develop a more fully integrated capital planning process that maximizes the value of capital investments in new and renovated facilities and infrastructure.
- Conduct business in a manner that demonstrates a commitment to environmental stewardship and continues to move the University toward sustainable practices.



Measuring Progress

To measure progress toward goals and answer the question “How well are we doing?” Penn State has for several years tracked and published a set of strategic performance indicators in a companion document to the University-level strategic plan.



In addition, planning units (such as colleges) also have established and annually tracked their own indicators. Many of these are similar, some are unique, but all are tied to Penn State and unit goals, to high quality, and to efficiency in the use of resources.

Penn State’s strategic performance indicators are updated annually. The most recent report may be viewed at www.psu.edu/president/pia/indicators/. The process of deliberation and discussion in developing indicators, whether at the University or planning-unit level, is at least as important as the end product. While details differ, those processes are designed to promote considerable communication. At the University level, indicators have been chosen with the following explicit criteria in mind:

1. Does the measure reflect an important University-wide performance dimension?
2. Are data on this measure likely to lead to improvement?
3. Does the measure reflect Penn State’s stakeholder needs?
4. Do key stakeholders view the measure as credible?
5. Can the measure be communicated to and understood by a wide audience?
6. Is the direction clear—that is, would an increase be desirable or undesirable?
7. Is the cost/benefit relationship sensible in terms of data availability versus value?
8. Can we identify units accountable for providing the data?
9. Will the measure be sustainable over a period of years?

Consistent with the nature of Penn State’s top-down/bottom-up strategic planning approach, each planning unit defines and uses indicators in its own way. Nonetheless, it is important for every unit to incorporate criteria such as those listed above and to provide a structured process that encourages stakeholder input into judgments about strategic performance indicators.



For more information, contact: Office of Planning and Institutional Assessment,
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