



Listening Sessions Report

Strategic Plan 2014-2018 Development

By

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In spring 2013 OIE worked on preparation and design of the Strategic Plan 2014-2018 Development. In May 22, 2013 OIE held the Strategic Plan 2014-2013 Development kick-off campus-wide meeting. Participants created a practical vision of the institution's desired future, identified and analyzed obstacles and root causes that prevented realization of the practical vision, and created draft strategic themes.

In order to seek stakeholders input and feedback on the draft strategic themes, OIE planned a series of listening sessions during summer 2013. In fall 2013, OIE held # listening sessions with internal and external stakeholders groups. In addition, OIE administered a Qualtrics survey to collect further stakeholders' feedback.

OIE received useful ideas from its stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff and community members. The information in this report reflects stakeholders' responses during the listening sessions and to the Qualtrics survey. This report will inform the first draft of the strategic directions for the Strategic Plan 2014-2018.

OVERARCHING THEMES

Overall, participants provided excellent feedback, suggestions and ideas for the Strategic Plan 2014-2018 and the draft strategic directions. Stakeholders shared common and diverse opinions on both the benefits and concerns of the proposed draft strategic directions. Among the many different opinions, however, stakeholders agreed in the following themes:

- Student diverse population, location, academic programs, and faculty/staff relationships with students are unique to UW-Parkside.
- UW-Parkside should focus on strengthening signature programs and create on-demand programs, improving UW-Parkside's image through marketing and advertising, increasing enrollment, improving support for students.
- Cost, location, academic programs, and faculty/staff distinguish UW-Parkside from the competition.
- Strategic directions should focus in enrollment, student success, financial stability and branding. Clear pathways to a Degree, New Programs, and Academic planning should be part of broader academic strategic direction.
- Academic Excellence should be added to the draft strategic directions for Strategic Plan 2014-2018.

THEMES AROUND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT UW-PARKSIDE?

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

- **Student Population*** – highly diverse based on age, race, income level, first generation status, working students, urban students, and commute students.
- **Location** – geographically located among Racine and Kenosha, and between Milwaukee and Chicago. Location brings both rural and urban students, provides metro area opportunities for students, attracts a high percentage of local students, and provides education to working class and non-traditional students. UWP is the only school in the system that does is not named after the city where is located. UWP is the only 4-year public college in the southeast Wisconsin area.
- **Academics** – provides a wide range of academic programs, but main programs are Business, Pre-med and Criminal Justice. Computer Science has a 100% placement rate. There are some under promoted programs due to the lack of focus like theatre and health sciences.
- **Faculty/staff** – given the low teacher/student ratio, there is easy access to faculty/staff. This allows for close meaningful contact between faculty and students. Faculty brings credentials and reputation, and classes are taught by faculty rather than teaching assistants.
- **Infrastructure**** – campus physical layout (connected buildings) and great outdoors (hiking and biking trails).
- **Attributes** – provides affordable education at a lower tuition rate. It's the only Division II University in the state. UWP has the potential to capitalize in the youth of the university (45 years), increase community access to the arts in the Rita Tallent Picken Regional Center, increase community engagement and co-curricular activities/opportunities. UWP is not well-known and faces financial constraints.
- **Co-curricular Activities** – students are exposed to high impact practices, research, practical experience and internships. Students have opportunities for involvement through student organizations.

WHAT DO YOU THINK UW-PARKSIDE SHOULD BE DOING MORE OR LESS OF?

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

- **Academic Programs** – add on demand undergraduate and graduate programs and delete low performance programs. Increase class offerings, high impact practices, and delivery methods: online classes, weekend classes, and hybrid classes. Develop up-to-date four year plans for all majors. Provide support/resources for program/course development. Create flexible and online degrees. Add applied sciences (STEM and Health) programs. Increase emphasis on the courses needed for graduation. Update program review process to be more purposeful. Provide more interdisciplinary programs.
- **Marketing and Public Relations** - Increase relationship with alumni, prospect students, high schools, and community organizations. Market leading academic programs. Implement promotion strategies. Unify marketing among different colleges and units. Highlight student and alumni success stories. Improve and maintain school branding. Promote diversity and urban focus.

- **Enrollment** - Increase local and out-of-state target recruitment. Recruit international students and top students. Increase adult enrollment. Increase campus residents. Increase funding for recruitment and retention.
- **Student Support** – Increase support for commuter, non-traditional/adult, international and freshmen students. Increase study abroad support. Provide learning assistance to underprepared students. Increase conference and training opportunities for students. Provide affordable and healthy dining options. Increase cell towers on campus, number of parking lots, and leisure spaces.
- **Operational Effectiveness** – Decrease amount of meetings and committees. Pursue fewer initiatives. Plan less and implement more. Bring fewer consultants to campus. Decrease bureaucracy and faculty governance.
- **Faculty/Staff** – Increase quality of instructors. Increase professional development opportunities. Decrease employee turnover. Decrease number of adjuncts, lecturers, directors and coordinators.
- **Student Readiness** - Increase integration with Gateway (and other 2 yr. colleges).
- **Career Readiness** – Increase career development and employment after graduation services.
- **Communication** - Increase transparent and collaborative decision-making between campus units. Increase coordinated efforts towards common vision.
- **Fundraising** – increase targeted fundraising activities (outside donations/alumni giving). Increase grants.
- **Student Metrics** - Decrease DFW rates, increase retention, increase enrollment and decrease classes with low enrollments.
- **Research** – Increase support for faculty/staff research.

WHAT DISTINGUISHES UW-PARKSIDE FROM THE COMPETITION?

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

- **Cost** – Tuition is affordable. Lower than competitors in the area.
- **Programs** – Institute of Professional Educator Development, Theatre, Pre-Med, accredited business programs, liberal arts education, and Division II athletics.
- **Location** – geographically located among Racine and Kenosha, and between Milwaukee and Chicago.
- **Faculty/staff** – Student/Faculty ratio allows for personalized advising and mentoring.
- **Transfer Students** – high transfer enrollment from technical colleges.
- **Community Focused** – Community Based Learning courses, and community engagement.
- **Student Population** – highly diverse based on age, race, income level, first generation status, working students, urban students, and commute students.
- **Infrastructure** – campus physical layout and great outdoors.
- **Research** – undergraduate research opportunities.

WHAT IS YOUR REACTION TO THE CURRENT SET OF DRAFT STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS?

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

- **Enrollment** – Most participants felt that enrollment was an essential strategic direction for sustainability of UW-Parkside. Stakeholders felt that enrollment rates should be increased and maintained by expanding recruitment to out-of-state, national and global territories, and by targeting non-traditional/adult and Hispanics students. Some felt that UWP needs to address internal issues such as, enhance/review academic programs, provide more graduate programs, increase and improve retention, increase enrollment of athlete students; and improve UWP's image by marketing the high-quality and affordable education the school provides, and by telling the story of successful graduates. Furthermore, initiatives to aid this strategic direction included: developing relationships with high schools and middle schools and with their students through volunteer mentoring, or volunteer speaking. Stakeholders were concerned that the university will lower its academic standards to increase enrollment and of the effectiveness of the Enrollment Management leadership.
- **Student Focused** – A number of participants were supportive while others raised questions and concerns about this theme. Supporters placed great value in supporting students succeed during and after their studies. Supporters felt strong about improving customer service to prospect and enrolled students in Admissions, Registrar, Cashier's and Advising & Career Offices. Also they suggested that academic advisors would be trained on the departments and academic programs offered at UW-Parkside. In academics, stakeholders felt that academic skills classes should be kept and improved and academic programs should be prioritized. Also, UW-Parkside should increase financial aid and scholarships to assisting low income student. Stakeholders raised concerns that students were not well prepared to succeed in their job. They called for support to students with resume and cover letter creation, job search and job interviews. Stakeholders felt the school needs to increase Retention, Graduation and Job Placement rates. Non-supporters felt that UWP is already student focused and students are successful. They suggested Student Success should be the theme and not Student Focused.
- **Financial Stability** – Stakeholders felt that financial stability was an essential strategic direction. Participants felt that our budget should be increased through community businesses and alumni giving. Also they suggested that enrollment and program prioritization should be used as financial strategies. Stakeholders suggested that program prioritization will allow strategic investments in winning programs and in marketing those programs which in turn would increase enrollments. They suggested funds to be strategically used in developing/strengthening signature programs.
- **Brand** – Stakeholders felt that UW-Parkside should strongly focus on marketing and advertising the school. They felt that public perception needs to be improved, especially in Wisconsin and Illinois. Participants suggested that image can be improved by advertising unique programs, teaching excellence, student success, graduate success, and cultural innovation. Some stakeholders felt that if we concentrate on effectively educating students, the brand will take care of itself.
- **Clear Pathways to a Degree** – Stakeholders felt that students do need additional support on figuring out their educational plans to graduate. They suggested that 4-Year flexible plans, academic advisors, more class offerings, clear transfer credit policies, funding of prioritized majors, and reworking of developmental English and math should aid the school to achieve clear pathways to a degree. Stakeholders did not support this theme to be a strategic direction. They suggested it was part of Academic Planning.
- **New Programs** – Stakeholders supported prioritization and signature programs more than new programs. Some called for the elimination of underperforming programs. Some supported the creation of creative and innovative programs, engineering program, master programs, and professional certifications (CPA, PMI,

and CPM) focused programs. Stakeholders did not support this theme to be a strategic direction. They suggested it was part of a broader academic strategic goal.

- **Academic Planning** – Stakeholders felt that academic planning has not been done effectively and courses and programs should be reviewed. They suggested programs and courses should be offered based on student and regional demand. They suggested freshman seminar classes in the departments should be part of the academic plan, and academic advisors should be competent. Stakeholders did not support this theme to be a strategic direction.
- **Community Engagement** – Stakeholders felt UW-Parkside is already successful in community engagement, and further investments would be better used in academics. Participants suggested UW-Parkside to improve engagement of the community with the school. Some stakeholders felt that there is still room for improvement and community engagement was necessary. They suggested UW-Parkside improve their engagement not only with the Kenosha community but also with Racine’s. Stakeholders did not support this theme to be a strategic direction.
- **Technology** – Participants felt that technology should be improved in classrooms and labs. UWP should work on implementing state of the art technology in classes. Wireless service on campus and in the campus residency should also be improved. Stakeholders felt that technology should be improved, but they did not support this theme to be a strategic direction.
- **Employer of Choice** – Stakeholders felt that morale was low given salary stagnation, benefit cuts, and lack of appreciation and value of employees. They were concerned that current salaries hinder recruitment of high quality faculty and staff. However, stakeholders did not feel this should be a strategic direction.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD CHANGE (ADD/DELETE)? IS THERE ANYTHING WE MISSED?

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

- **Academic Mission** – Stakeholders felt that the schools should focus on the core academic mission, and academic quality in teaching, research, and service should be the main goal. Stakeholders felt Academic Excellence should be added to the draft strategic directions.
- **Clear Pathways to a Degree and New programs** – Delete clear pathways to a degree and new programs from draft strategic directions.
- **Employer of Choice** - Delete employer of choice from draft strategic directions.
- **Partnerships** – Add partnerships with high schools and graduate schools to draft strategic directions.
- **Campus Community** – Change community engagement to campus community engagement. Focus on serving the campus community.
- **Brand** – Delete brand from draft strategic directions and focus on academics.
- **Diversity** – Add a diversity management program.
- **Campus Culture** – Add campus culture to draft strategic directions.
- **Environmental Sustainability** - UW-Parkside should employ a goal towards environmental awareness and sustainability to appeal to the current generation and to serve as a model for the realistic possibility that others can do this as well.

WHAT POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES DO YOU THINK UW-PARKSIDE SHOULD PURSUE?

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

- **Partnerships** - Improve partnerships with high schools/middle schools, and international schools. Partner with area non-profits in more long-term and impactful ways. Bring the community and businesses to our campus.
- **Student Services and Opportunities** - Increase internship and scholarship opportunities. Increase varsity sports, add Linguistic skills classes. Provide affordable food. Change to division III athletics so we gain more recognition in Wisconsin. Add a football team.
- **Undergrad/Grad Programs** - Strengthen the Computer Science program, pre-med program and start own nursing program. Add graduate programs. Offer more online and hybrid courses. Offer affordable online instruction. Offer MBA online. Add online degrees.
- **Technology** – Keep up with technology changes.
- **Funding/Grants** – Increase grants. Add youth summer camps & conferences.
- **Research Opportunities** – Add a water development research center for Milwaukee area.
- **Sustainability** – increase sustainability initiatives and use of the outdoor labs.