TRANSFORMING OUR FUTURE

Centennial Plan
2008-2016

Strategic PLANNING

UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN - EAU CLAIRE
Our Vision
By 2016 the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire will be Wisconsin’s premier undergraduate learning community for global leaders, advancing the strongest graduate and professional programs for the needs of our region.

Foundational Goal: Transform Learning

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Foundational Goal: Transform the University

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Aspirational Values
Stewardship, Inclusiveness, Innovation, Continuous Improvement, Leadership
At the center of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire’s seal is the image of the Council Oak, a tree that served for many years as an unofficial gathering place — first for the Native Americans who fished the nearby river, later for the faculty and students who studied under its branches. The oak also is a fitting image for our planning effort, which has drawn together literally hundreds of UW-Eau Claire students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends to talk about the future of the university. What do we want this great institution to be years from now? What will we change? What must we preserve? What is the vision we can all work toward?

A guide for answering these questions begins on Page 5. As important as this plan is, however — and it is a critical tool as we identify our priorities, align our budget and set our benchmark measures for success — it is really just a philosophical framework for a much more comprehensive vision of our future. That vision lives in the imaginations of the faculty, staff and students who helped to create this plan and all those who will make the critical decisions to realize its principles in deliberate action. It is the picture of the future that brings this plan alive and that will engage the energies of our campus community.

And so we start this strategic plan, not with a chart or environmental scan, but with a picture. A picture of possibilities ...
Our Vision

By 2016 the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire will be Wisconsin’s premier undergraduate learning community for global leaders, advancing the strongest graduate and professional programs for the needs of our region.

It is 2016, the centennial anniversary of the founding of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. We have preserved all that is the best of a tremendous heritage:

- A singular focus on our students and their success.
- A sense of collegiality and mutual respect among faculty and staff.
- Opportunities for real-world learning through undergraduate and graduate research, internships, service learning and practica.
- A commitment to a rigorous liberal education that is foundational to professional and career preparation.
- A spirit of optimism and confidence as we thrive among the nation’s premier institutions of learning.

Much has changed in eight short years. We have found creative ways to integrate new graduate and applied doctoral programs with our traditional commitment to undergraduate excellence. Even with greater enrollment, our student-faculty ratio is better than ever. Signs written in a score of different languages help the hundreds of international students on campus feel at home — and inspire students to be more globally connected. Scholarships and innovative partnerships help make it possible for almost three out of four of our students to study internationally or in multicultural settings in the United States. Many choose to study at UW-Eau Claire-Europe, a villa managed by the university, where faculty and students live and learn and become closely involved in the life of the town nearby.

Walk the campus and you’ll meet students of all ages and backgrounds, drawn here by our reputation as Wisconsin’s elite university for liberal learning. Peer into some of the newly remodeled classrooms and you’ll find cross-disciplinary teams of faculty members exploring global issues with small groups of energized learners from around the world. An anthropology class is video conferencing with geology and biology students doing field research in the Amazon basin. In another room, a mixed group of traditional-age and returning-adult students present their research results from a community-based economic development internship. Talk to students about their courses, and they will show you their personal online portfolios — projects, performances, research posters and leadership activities — collective evidence of their mastery of our learning goals.

Enter the new, light-filled Student Union — it just won an award for green building — and you’ll smell lunch, a range of ethnic and healthy local creations that celebrates the increasing diversity of faculty and students, and supports local farmers. Artwork and banners create a vibrant reminder of the creativity of our students and the diversity of our world; posters for student-led events cover the bulletin boards.
Down the hallway, you’ll find faculty and staff celebrating a recent award for our revised baccalaureate program. It’s just been profiled in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* as “a national model of transformative learning for the 21st century.” Across the hall, a group of deans, faculty and students is reviewing feasibility data for a new graduate program that connects to the growing demands of health care in the region. At the University Community Center, a monthly gathering of faculty interested in new pedagogy joins students to share ideas on teaching distance programs. A poster in the hallway announces a luncheon to celebrate recent faculty research and scholarship.

As you leave the Union, beneath a banner proclaiming the start of the Foundation’s centennial campaign, already 80 percent complete, the shuttle bus to UW-Eau Claire North stops to take you to the university’s downtown campus. It’s a vibrant center for adult and continuing education, serving professionals, graduate students and community learners. It is a one-stop shop connecting the community to university faculty and staff. A few steps from the center, the city has just broken ground for the UW-Eau Claire/City of Eau Claire regional performing arts center, a joint project expected to bring millions of dollars in jobs and revenue to the region and solidifying the city’s dominant role as a cultural center and magnet for the arts and creativity.

On the corner, the latest edition of the *Leader-Telegram* features an article headlined “Future State Leaders,” profiling the state’s top 20 individuals under age 40, five of whom are UW-Eau Claire grads: an entrepreneur, concert pianist, international funds manager, philanthropist and nationally known health researcher. Each mentions a favorite faculty or staff member. “UW-Eau Claire challenged me and changed me forever,” one alum says.

When you return to campus across the covered bridge and walk what is still Wisconsin’s most beautiful campus, you understand why student applications are up 15 percent, retention is hovering at 90 percent, we’ve added to our list of Rhodes scholars, and we’ve doubled the number of graduate programs we offer. Applications for faculty and staff positions are higher than ever and hires of people of color have tripled. Employers from Eau Claire to Madison and Seattle to Miami vie for UW-Eau Claire graduates and *U.S. News and World Report* just called UW-Eau Claire “the university for the global best.” We are on our way to achieving our vision as the premier comprehensive university for tomorrow’s global leaders and a regional hub for research and graduate excellence.

As it enters a new century, this is the picture of a campus community working together to serve our students and transform the future.
This strategic plan is designed to outline a philosophical vision for the UW-Eau Claire’s future and a pathway for its implementation. And because virtually all members of the university share control over its operations, this strategic plan cannot mandate specific procedures and actions, especially at the local level — in the colleges, departments and units. Rather, this plan gives voice to an emerging, shared vision for a better university — a stronger, more challenging, more diverse place, better adapted to a rapidly evolving world community.

In implementing this vision, the university is identifying two foundational goals — to transform learning and transform the university — along with seven supporting goals. Every division will contribute to the two foundational goals; each department and unit will find one or more of the seven goals toward which it can contribute.

In addition to the broad university goals, the plan offers sidebar boxes suggesting possible strategies, or actions, that support the goals. These strategies were developed by the Work Groups and provide an informative pathway for implementation. But they are only a starting point; many additional ideas are found in the Work Group reports archived on the strategic planning Web site and included in the Appendix of the digital copy of this report.

Our Foundational Goal: Transform Learning

Our vision is that transformative educational opportunities will be central to the learning experience of all students — graduate and undergraduate — in a deliberate, coherent and supportive way. To make this possible, we set for ourselves a single, focused goal: to radically change learning at UW-Eau Claire. Not merely from old to new, or classic to contemporary, but from accretive to transformative. We are not content to convey knowledge to students who want simply to collect it without also fundamentally expanding their powers of comprehension.

In adopting this vision, every member of the campus community becomes a joint owner of this goal and accepts responsibility for its achievement. To reach it, we also engage our alumni, community members and friends. It is our collective task to create together the premier destination for undergraduate and graduate students in the state of Wisconsin.

Transformative learning will be built on our base of strong academic excellence as expressed through the many innovative programs already in place at UW-Eau Claire: undergraduate research, service learning, student internships, and active collaborations between and among all committed parties. Its foundation will be the five goals of a UW-Eau Claire liberal arts education: knowledge of human culture and the natural
world, creative and critical thinking, effective communication, individual and social responsibility, and respect for diversity among people. It will be powered by faculty and staff committed to excellence in scholarship, research and service.

Transformative learning requires systemic change, adopting an attitude of continuous self-challenge — as an institution, as a faculty and staff, and as individual learners. This change manifests in three ways, which form the first three of our seven strategic goals:

1. **Accelerate global learning**
2. **Promote connected learning**
3. **Foster intentional learning**

## Our Learning Goals

### GOAL 1: Accelerate Global Learning

Our goal is to make available, as an integral feature of every student’s education, a meaningful, boundary-crossing, immersion experience that is international or multicultural in nature.

Global learning is transformative because it opens our perspectives, facing outward in every direction. We use the term “global learning” in two ways, first as learning that encompasses all human experiences and conditions. To compete and thrive in an increasingly diverse and multinational, multicultural working and living environment, UW-Eau Claire graduates must come to feel at home in the world. This kind of global learning requires not only study abroad or in multicultural settings, but also curricula that encompass multicultural perspectives, and the creation of a learning environment that integrates the world in all its diversity into the places where we live and learn. It makes possible international and multicultural learning experiences that are intentional and embedded into both general education and the major.

This vision of global learning fosters a climate and culture in which all members of the campus community feel their dignity and well-being are safeguarded so they have the freedom to take intellectual risks, challenge themselves and thrive. Scholars will take risks as well, expanding their research, scholarship and creative activities beyond the classroom and campus.

“Global” also has a second meaning, as learning that pushes everyone to take a

### Draft Action Strategies:

- Create “immersion experiences” — intensive co-curricular learning and reflection opportunities that are multicultural and/or international in scope for every student.
- Develop financial strategies in support of immersion experiences.
- Internationalize and diversify the curriculum.
- Internationalize and diversify the campus — through signage, food service, co-curricular activities and programming.
- Recruit and retain diverse students, faculty and staff to increase the proportion of multi-cultural and international representation on campus.
- Enhance orientation and professional development programs for faculty and staff that foster equity and diversity.
- Encourage faculty and staff to engage in intercultural and international scholarship.
- Create opportunities for visiting faculty positions for diverse individuals.
- Develop and conduct campus climate surveys every two to three years.
- Identify and explore programmatic themes that link global and intentional learning, such as environmental studies.
wider view — of home, of the campus, of the Chippewa Valley, of the Midwest, of the world. It is a wider view that looks past the boundaries of classrooms, laboratories and libraries; across programs, departments, colleges and campuses; even across the boundary between teacher and student. Yes, we study diverse cultures and perspectives, but when possible we study by immersing ourselves in genuine contexts beyond our comfort boundaries — students and professors alike. Some choose the life-transforming experience of international study and service; some study poverty by living and working in its neighborhoods; some study interactions among rare and delicate organisms by entering a new ecosystem; some study philosophy by leaving for a monastic retreat.

**Our Priorities:**

*Make available an international or multicultural immersion experience for all students, diversify and internationalize the campus and curriculum, and recruit and retain diverse students and faculty.*

**GOAL 2: Promote Connected Learning**

Our goal is to help all students and faculty see their learning inside and outside the classrooms as interconnected, inseparable from other courses, other programs, other citizens of the globe.

Connected learning is transformative because the student is absorbed in concepts beyond the self, grasping larger sets of human connections. As connected teachers and learners, we refuse to accept face value, we demand more than easy answers, and we insist on understanding why as well as how. We integrate curricular and co-curricular activities, scholarship, research and service, and connect our teaching and learning to the life of our communities.

For students, connected learning fully embeds learning experiences from beyond the traditional classroom into a more comprehensive learning experience. Learning is informed by contexts that are unfamiliar, by the acquisition and improvement of new skills, and by the experiences of other learners. Connected learning builds bridges across disciplines and between campus and community. It will require mechanisms and practices that facilitate the sharing of ideas, both formally and informally.

Connected learning provides multiple pathways for students to succeed — regardless of their academic backgrounds, learning style or differing abilities. It emerges from a

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**Draft Action Strategies:**

- Pilot learning communities to support student engagement.
- Create a “front door” to connect the university more directly with our local community to facilitate faculty scholarship and research, and partnerships in support of engaged student learning.
- Continue and enhance experiential-learning opportunities, especially undergraduate research, service learning and internship programs.
- Identify and communicate community engagement initiatives and opportunities both within and outside the university.
- Create a grant fund to support programs with strong community-service elements.
- Create a Center for Adult Learning to better integrate nontraditional students into the life of the university.
- Explore formal use of co-curricular activities in the goals of the baccalaureate.
university-wide commitment to equity that seeks productive learning for all students who are willing and eager to explore.

Connected learning for faculty and staff requires teaching that is energized by ongoing scholarship, research and professional development. Faculty work is especially enriched by research and scholarship connected to the pressing concerns of our communities and our state. Administrative and staff expertise is strengthened when it is informed by the effective practices of colleagues and other institutions.

**Our Priorities:**
Expand experiential learning opportunities, create a “front door” to connect the university and community, and inventory and communicate community engagement activities and resources.

### GOAL 3: Foster Intentional Learning

Our goal is to empower every student to become an intentional learner, eager to accept the highest challenges offered by excellent, intentional educators.

Intentional learning is transformative because it forges an active partnership among the student, teacher, university and community. With the help of the partnership the student creates a learning plan marked by intellectual expansion; rigorous development of academic and professional knowledge; exchanges across disciplinary boundaries; meaningful integration of experiential learning; personal, social and cross-cultural growth; and abundant opportunities for surprise, insight and transformation. We cannot afford to wait for learning simply to happen — it must be a deliberate, planned academic project that unfolds in full view of the partnership. Intentional learning is not an intellectually safe enterprise, but a challenging adventure that rewards both learner and teacher.

**Our Priorities:**
Reinvent general education, create structures and practices to support the development of intentional educators and create a portal for intentional learners.

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**Draft Action Strategies:**
- Create “gateway colloquia” — thematic, interdisciplinary seminars as foundational to the first-year academic experience.
- Reinvent the general education system to be more purposeful, linked to university-wide assessment.
- Revise graduation requirements to provide for intentional learning and timely graduation through greater integration of general education and the major.
- Create a portal for students to create and monitor their learning plan.
- Provide intensive teaching and learning support for faculty and staff.
- Create a coherent and cross-disciplinary entity to support and encourage the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- Integrate assessment of student learning in curriculum and instruction.
Our Foundational Goal: Transform the University

To implement our foundational goal of transforming learning, the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire can draw on a range of resources — human, financial, programmatic and physical. In each of these categories we will set measurable goals to assure that we have the capacity to fulfill our vision. We recommend that as we move forward in aligning our resources, all human, as well as financial, physical and programmatic resources be “in play,” offering opportunities for everyone to develop ways to fulfill our vision.

Resource Goals

Goal 4: Nurture Human Resources

The future of our vision for the university truly lies in the hands of our faculty, staff and students — the human resources who are essential to our success. Engaging, challenging and focusing the talents of our employees will require that we address both the structures within which we do our work and the culture that animates it.

This will require that we evaluate how we currently allocate our human resources, identify ways in which we can create new positions and — more challenging, but essential — reallocate positions in support of our goals. This must, of necessity, be done in conjunction with our assessment of financial and programmatic change.

Draft Action Strategies:

- Develop innovative approaches to creating and reallocating positions.
- Examine and revise operational procedures and practices and streamline the Faculty and Academic Staff Handbook.
- Seek best practices for governance structures.
- Develop orientation and professional development programs that support faculty and staff.
- Explore wellness practices and programs for faculty, staff and students.

Our ability to reach our foundational goal can be amplified when the ways in which we work are efficient and designed to foster the values of collegiality, innovation and continuous improvement. This will require attention to fostering campus leaders, providing faculty and staff with the knowledge and tools to work effectively, and orienting new employees so they can be effective colleagues. Too often, however, our policies, procedures administrative structures and governance practices raise unjustified barriers to serving our students and our region effectively and undermine our commitment to a mutually supportive campus community. We will actively examine our administrative processes — such as our information infrastructure, approval procedures, decision trees and data access — to create the structures that help us do better, while at the same time retaining those policies that serve us well.
UW-Eau Claire is privileged to have a strong tradition of shared governance. As with any institutional structure, however, it must evolve to reflect the needs of the institution. Effective decision-making must be enabled, not constrained, by processes and distinctive roles filled by students, faculty, staff and administration. To this end, we will review our culture of shared governance and benchmark national best practices. We will examine alternative models for the University Senate to support governance that is participatory, consultative and consensus-building.

We will examine and review university-wide operational and personnel policies in line with best practices and encourage units at all levels to explore improved operational procedures and efficiencies.

Our Priorities:

Re-engineer institutional operational processes, develop innovative approaches to creating and reallocating positions and streamline the Faculty and Academic Staff Handbook.

GOAL 5: Amplify Financial Resources

As Larry Goldstein writes, “A budget is the financial representation of the institution’s plans.” Without alignment between budget and plan, neither will be effective. Central to our plan is the commitment to align financial resources with our priority goals. To that end, a Budgeting Process Task Force has been charged with developing recommendations to refine our budgeting process, integrating it with ongoing planning and assessment at appropriate local and institutional levels.

As we determine the mechanisms for linking budgeting and planning, and set the targets for resource re-alignment, our management of financial resources must be done in an environment of transparency and shared information so that decisions can be informed and accountable. But that is not enough. Our dependence on the state for funding the bulk of instruction has fostered a culture of conservatism. Institutional preeminence requires a culture of surpassing boundaries and some risk. We will need to explore new relationships with the state regarding tuition, funding, management flexibility and responsiveness.

Growing resources must increasingly become a priority for the university. In this regard, our values of innovation and continuous improvement will be vital as we look beyond the state-assisted model of the past century to a more entrepreneurial approach, exploring public/private partnerships, research grants, self-sustaining programs and creative ways to engage a broader range of donors.

Our Priorities:

Align budgeting and planning processes, and develop resource growth strategies.
GOAL 6: Focus Programmatic Resources

In the past decade more than 40 new academic programs have been added, while fewer than 10 have been eliminated. Similar expansion has occurred in non-academic units as well. As we set our institutional priorities around transformative learning, we must focus our energies — we cannot be all things to all people. At the same time, we have core programmatic strengths that can be grown and enhanced.

We will collaboratively develop a transparent, fair program review process that will evaluate programs in light of such principles as mission centrality, quality, size of enrollment and cost/revenue. This review will not only establish a baseline for our program array, but will be foundational to a restructuring of the annual and multi-year department and unit review process. Our goal is to link these reviews more closely with ongoing assessment and institutional planning in ways that facilitate opportunities for units to measure progress and to improve quality. We will also explore student-centered course scheduling that encourages departments to offer those courses that are in demand.

We also have an opportunity to be the premier provider of graduate education and focused research in western Wisconsin. To achieve this promise, we will explore opportunities to expand our graduate offerings in ways that are fiscally responsible and align with our vision for transformative learning. This will include graduate programs that meet growing regional needs for ongoing certification and workplace learning. We also will explore potential for offering applied doctorates that build on our existing strengths, meet regional and statewide needs and contribute to our financial health.

We also will explore innovative approaches to programming — distance learning, consortium relationships for low-demand courses and technological solutions for high-enrollment classes, to name just a few.

Our Priorities:
Conduct a comprehensive program review and grow graduate and self-supported programs.

GOAL 7: Steward Physical Resources

While our vision for enhanced facilities is a core component for enhanced learning and service, we acknowledge that we must look beyond state funding if we are to complete our goals by our centennial in 2016. Because of the long cycle time for state funding of facilities development, we also must look to alternative partners.

We will create a comprehensive facilities plan that prioritizes new buildings and renovations, in addition to transportation and environmental amenities. The plan will be infused with our values of innovation and stewardship. The plan also will include ways in which lower-cost cosmetic and artistic improvements can be made to existing facilities.

Even as we outline priorities for the physical plant, we will be mindful of resource innovation. State funding for capital projects will be a priority, but we also will explore...
alternative revenue sources. The UW-Eau Claire Foundation can be a strong partner. In addition, there is extensive interest among civic leaders for shared ventures in such things as the creation of a fine arts center, arena and convention center, for example. We can be a regional leader in this regard.

In addition, we will foster a more entrepreneurial approach to the use of facilities, encouraging ideas for new ways of using outdated lab space, developing multi-use strategies and creatively renovating facilities that can provide alternative learning sites. We also will strive to be alert to unexpected opportunities that arise for facilities that can support our mission and vision.

**Our Priorities:**
*Explore partnerships for new facilities and support innovative use of existing spaces.*

**Making Our Vision Possible: Our Values**

Transformative learning and expanded graduate and research offerings will be our highest priorities; our resources will be aligned in its service. At the same time, we also must pay attention to the culture in which we work and to the values that enrich our vision.

To achieve the goals outlined on the previous pages, we will build on a heritage that includes a commitment to students, experiential learning, excellence, collegiality and meaningful service. To these strengths, we add five aspirational values of stewardship, inclusiveness, innovation, continuous improvement and leadership.

**Stewardship**

Stewardship is a value that encompasses first and foremost our relationship to our students and to their futures. It requires an intentional commitment to direct our resources and energies in ways that will best enable us to fulfill our mission to prepare them to be citizen leaders of the world. Stewardship also supports our responsibility as a public institution to contribute in meaningful ways to the health of our region and state.
In this regard, our commitment to stewardship is reflected in the ways in which we collectively and individually support the faculty and staff who make up our campus community, the ways in which we organize our time and energy, the finances we manage, the programs we implement and the facilities where we work and live.

Responsible stewardship calls on us to find ways to create a work environment that supports the whole individual. This will be an evolving task that will require a review of campus policies, procedures and committees to assure practices that support a climate of collegiality and mutual support, an effective and efficient use of our time and energies, as well as a workplace that facilitates personal health, personal growth, professional development and equity. Stewardship of programs requires that we adopt a program array that in its totality contributes to our university-wide goals and that is sustainable in terms of financial and human resources. As financial stewards we must not only be efficient, but also strategic, focusing what will always be limited financial resources in ways that advance our vision and goals. And as stewards of place, we will positively enhance our environment through our facilities, energy use and green spaces.

**Inclusiveness**

Inclusiveness is a value that strengthens and enriches us and suffuses all activities on campus. Its meaning is broad, encompassing all facets of human diversity. Its impact is comprehensive, as we strive to create an environment of equity in opportunity for all students, employees and visitors, and to enhance our existing reputation for broad intellectual inquiry and collegiality.

In all our endeavors, we value not only legally protected categories of difference, such as race, gender and sexual orientation; but also strive for inclusiveness among persons from different economic and cultural backgrounds, different employment categories within our organizational structure and different types of students.

The concepts of inclusiveness and diversity will permeate our recruitment of students, faculty and staff, as well as the design and implementation of curricular and co-curricular programs. We will create an environment in which prejudicial assumptions and stereotypes about difference have no place. We will encourage the diverse teaching and research activities of our faculty.

A diverse and inclusive campus and curriculum will broaden and deepen our students’ learning. Their experiences at UW-Eau Claire will allow them to enhance the social competencies that they need to develop into productive and ethical participants within a pluralistic world. A diverse and inclusive campus will enrich the professional life of our faculty and staff, and will strengthen our capacity as an institution to meet both the challenges and opportunities of an interdependent world with richer creativity, ideas and knowledge.

**Innovation**

To reach these ambitious goals — radically transforming learning, becoming a national leader in internationalization, helping students from diverse backgrounds succeed — we need to reach beyond the status quo. Within the funding constraints of a public comprehensive university, innovative approaches to staffing, pedagogy, programs, curricula and governance will be imperative.

To encourage a spirit of innovation that inspires faculty and staff, as well as our departments and units, we will identify, support and celebrate those new ideas that support our vision for transformative learning. We will give each other the encouragement and means to explore new solutions, try alternative practices and to fail, as well as succeed, in our efforts.
We expect that the value of innovation will be nurtured through the launch of new pilot initiatives — the gateway colloquia, for example — rather than in full-scale change, as we test our ideas and refine our approaches. Innovation will be supported by exploring ways to fund release time for curricular revision.

Innovation is a value and it also is a challenge. We want to uncover the possible and spark the imagination to find creative solutions to such challenges as staffing flexibility, discretionary funding and the creation of self-sustaining programs. To do so, we will create a “quick wins” program that will identify creative, timely and feasible ideas for implementation. In short, our future will be enlivened by a campus community that is unafraid to take risks and instead asks “What can we make possible?”

**Continuous Improvement**

While a spirit of innovation will be vital to reaching our goals, attention to continually improving our established practice also will be essential. This will involve a culture shift to value and support ongoing assessment in both our academic and non-academic departments and units. Continuous improvement will demand a culture of mutual support, one that looks beyond what benefits the individual or the department or unit to what best serves our university and our students.

Much work has already been done in creating effective assessment mechanisms — from our university-level participation in the annual National Study of Student Engagement to unit-level benchmarking and evaluation. But like student learning, we can be more intentional and deliberate in measuring, evaluating and improving our policies and practices.

Our commitment to continuous improvement begins with the creation of strategic plans for all units, plans that are aligned with the goals of the university plan and that identify explicit, measurable contributions for each unit. Unit planning will be supported by assistance from the office of strategic planning and by enhancing data collection and sharing so that information can be shared in a user-friendly manner. The current annual department and unit reviews and the multi-year review process will be analyzed for effectiveness and coordinated with the university planning cycle so that we will truly have a closed-loop assessment process that helps departments and units change and improve.

Student learning assessment is a critical component of our continuous improvement efforts. Such assessment will be anchored in the revised Goals of the Baccalaureate and inform all aspects of our efforts to transform general education.

**Leadership**

The value of leadership has many dimensions for our university: intentionally fostering the leadership attributes of our students so they are prepared for the opportunities that await them in their futures; nurturing faculty and staff leaders for our campus community; and contributing both individual and institutional leadership in our community and region.

This leadership value permeates our transformative learning goal and the benefits it offers our students. Leadership also is a critical value for the development of our human resource goals, as outlined earlier. And it also must become a defining characteristic of our relationships with our external communities — it is in this regard especially that we have opportunities for change. While many faculty and staff and countless students contribute to the economic, social and artistic fabric of our community, those efforts are too frequently isolated or disconnected, and community members find it difficult to know how to interact with or access university resources.
This is unfortunate, for many civic leaders and organizations are looking to the university to become a stronger partner, especially around regional development efforts. Focus groups of individuals from all sectors of the Eau Claire community were united in their call for UW-Eau Claire to become a leader in improving the quality of life in western Wisconsin.

Such leadership is manifested in many ways — from the intellectual contributions of faculty and student research that benefits civic organizations to the economic impact of new facilities, from the volunteer leadership by all members of the campus to the programmatic offerings that benefit adult and nontraditional learners.

To foster civic leadership we will identify a “front door” for the university — an entity or individual who will help connect the community more effectively with the university, linking needs and resources and communicating both community needs and university resources. This bridge-builder will assist in creating an inventory of community engagement efforts and provide a clearinghouse for community access. Beyond this connector, all members of the university community can contribute to strengthening our community relationships and service for a better community.

**Begin Now**

While administrative leaders and university governance groups will use this Centennial Plan to set annual action priorities and develop measurable success indicators, the University Planning Committee recommends three action steps be implemented immediately to ensure the success of the strategic vision:

- **Align the budgeting process and planning.** The Budgeting Process Task Force will develop recommendations by spring 2008, and the University Planning Committee recommends alignment as soon as possible. The Task Force has been asked to outline a feasible budget process as well as a transition plan to move the university from our existing practice to the new model. We expect that a new budget process will be phased in over several years, informed by the academic strategic plan, noted below.

- **Create an academic strategic plan.** This will necessitate a comprehensive review of programs and unit/division structure as foundational to ongoing planning in support of transformative learning. Building on program review, the academic plan will include institution-wide criteria for department, college and unit initiatives that commit institutional resources (e.g., when and whether departments may seek discipline-specific accreditation, establish or retain comprehensive majors, create special certification programs, and so on). The academic strategic plan will be a critical tool to assist departments and colleges as they begin to implement the new budget model, and also will provide a useful foundation for non-academic units as they develop and align their strategic plans with academic priorities and this institutional plan.

- **Reinvent general education in alignment with the goals of the strategic plan.** This will be foundational to our goal of transformative learning and should begin immediately.
Our Planning Process

Our planning process is shaped by seven principles:

1. Driven by our student-centered mission — our plan is anchored in our commitment to student learning, success and service to our region and state.
2. Inclusive — planning involves the entire campus community, our alumni and friends.
3. Collaborative — the plan is created by the planning participants, not by a small group of administrative leaders.
4. Data-driven — the plan is anchored in a real assessment of our strengths and areas for improvements.
5. Transparent — planning processes and concepts are shared with the campus community.
6. Forward and outward directed — the plan looks ahead to our future and connects with broader communities in the region, nation and world.
7. Action oriented — the plan is not our product, but rather its successful implementation.

The strategic plan was developed during a yearlong effort coordinated with our 10-year accreditation self-study, a process that benefited both. It began with a series of listening sessions convened by Chancellor Levin-Stankevich to solicit ideas for the future of the university.

Hundreds of participants generated ideas, which were then reviewed and prioritized by a group of faculty, staff and students at a half-day retreat. Based on the key ideas they identified, six work groups were formed to develop detailed proposals for each of the themes. They were charged with preparing an environmental scan and developing five to 10-year goals for the university. The six Work Groups:

1. Preparing Global Leaders
2. Transforming Learning
3. Serving the Public Good
4. Enhancing the Campus Community
5. Effectively Managing for our Mission
6. Fostering Equity and Diversity
As part of our planning, Work Groups conducted environmental scans that helped to inform our assessment of the challenges and opportunities we face in the years to come.

Declining State Support
Over the past decade alone, state support for the UW-Eau Claire has declined from 75 percent of our general operations budget to less than 44 percent. We expect that trend to continue. Rising fixed costs — in employee salaries and benefits, energy and facilities — and stagnating funding for operational costs and professional development, have squeezed the university, even as calls for increasing accountability and efficiency have increased from federal, state and regional legislators.

Changing Student Demographics
The nature of higher education also has changed since the days when UW-Eau Claire provided teacher training on a residential campus. The demographics of our students are shifting as increasing numbers of nontraditional and adult students join an increasingly diverse group of young adults in seeking degrees and other professional credentials. According to the National Center for Education Statistics Wisconsin can expect at least 10 percent fewer public high school graduates by 2016. The demand for graduate degree and certificate programs is increasing, as is the need to integrate higher education, training and work opportunities for students of all ages, especially returning working adults.

Demands of the Workplace
The demands of the workplace our students face upon graduation also have changed as multicultural proficiency, a global perspective and technological fluency become foundational expectations for international competitiveness. Focus groups with community members told us that there is a growing need for continuing education and that the community is looking to UW-Eau Claire to provide leadership in addressing community development challenges. To continue our commitment to preparing tomorrow’s leaders for Wisconsin, the nature of the learning we foster must become more global and integrated and its delivery more responsive to multiple ways of learning.

In light of this changing environment, planning for the future we desire, rather than reacting to the realities we face, becomes critical if we are to continue to excel as a leader among regional comprehensive universities and as a partner in our state’s future success.

In the fall of 2007, preliminary drafts of the Work Group proposals were shared with the campus community. Presentations to a wide range of organizations and groups, as well as a series of charrettes designed to solicit comments from faculty, staff, students and alumni, fostered a broad response, which was incorporated into the Groups’ final reports.

The final reports were then given to the University Planning Committee, which created a draft plan. This plan also went through a public vetting process, open to all faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends. Input received was incorporated into the final plan, submitted to shared governance for review and to the chancellor for adoption.
To comment on this draft strategic plan, go to www.uwec.edu/chancellor/stratplan or contact MJ Brukardt at brukarmj@uwec.edu.
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