

Worcester State College
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FY 2004 – 2009

Academic and Student Affairs

- A. Develop a more integrated and interdisciplinary curriculum that includes a global perspective while strengthening and emphasizing the traditional focus on literacy and liberal learning
- B. Increase the effectiveness of the academic support provided by the library and academic advising
- C. Enhance the quality and recognition of the graduate school
- D. Increase the quantity and quality of co-curricular and student activities outside the classroom that engage commuter and residential students in campus life

Assessment, Campus Diversity, and Decision Making

- E. Increase our capacity to effectively assess student learning, academic supports, student affairs, and other key outcomes
- F. Achieve a significant increase in diversity among our students, faculty, and administration
- G. Engage faculty, students, and staff effectively in institutional decision making

Facilities and Grounds

- H. Engage the campus community in a facility master planning process

Fiscal Resources and Public Relations

- I. Strengthen the link of fund raising strategies and stewardship of fiscal resources to the College's mission and strategic priorities
- J. Foster and communicate the sense of pride we have about the College

Worcester State College
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES and GOALS
FY 2004 – FY 2009

Academic and Student Affairs

A. Develop a more integrated and interdisciplinary curriculum that includes a global perspective while strengthening and emphasizing the traditional focus on literacy and liberal learning

Strategic Goals:

1. Include an increased focus on global issues and the global community as curriculum options for students within traditional undergraduate majors
2. Revise general education to provide more connections among disciplines and develop students' awareness of global issues while strengthening the traditional focus on literacy and liberal learning
3. Enhance connections to the diverse community of central Massachusetts through increased opportunities for community service and service learning

Rationale: It is increasingly apparent that the world has been transitioning to a new and more significant level of social, political, economic, and environmental integration. This priority focuses on educating students to function responsibly, effectively, and competitively in this new global environment. The development of a more integrated and interdisciplinary curriculum will be designed to add connections between disciplines while strengthening the College's focus on solid writing and oral skills, foundation knowledge in mathematical and scientific principles, the application of critical thinking, and the understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of knowledge and the arts.

B. Increase the effectiveness of the academic support provided by the library and academic advising

Strategic Goals:

1. Update and enhance library collections to support the curriculum, and provide adequate library staffing
2. Develop a state-of-the-art system of academic advising and tutoring available to all students
3. Develop effective linkages between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs to support students academic success

Rationale: In order to support students' academic success and career preparation highly effective academic services and supports must be available to all students. Academic support and advising services must provide diverse students with the state of the art tools and assistance they need to succeed in college and in their professional lives after graduation. Vital academic supports and services include thorough and well-informed academic advising for both undeclared and declared majors, a library collection and staffing that adequately support the curriculum, and targeted tutoring services at both the departmental and college-wide levels.

C. Enhance the quality and recognition of the graduate school

Strategic Goals:

1. Identify and/or hire additional graduate faculty
2. Provide additional support for graduate student research and scholarship
3. Develop mission for graduate education that clarifies how it is intellectually distinct from undergraduate studies and its role within the College

Rationale: The graduate school of the college fills an important role in providing opportunities for graduate students in a variety of fields to pursue advanced study. This priority stresses the development of a specific identity and mission for the graduate school that will assure the quality of graduate teaching, promote high academic standards for admission and graduation, and support graduate student performance, particularly in research and scholarship.

D. Increase the quantity and quality of co-curricular and student activities outside the classroom to engage commuter and residential students in campus life

Strategic Goals:

1. Develop programs and activities that focus on cultural and global awareness to complement the curricular focus on a global perspective
2. Develop services and activities for an increased residential population and that also engage commuter students in campus life
3. Develop effective linkages between student affairs and academic affairs

Rationale: The experiences available to students outside of the formal curriculum play a critical part in the overall learning environment of the college. This priority focuses on providing a seamless learning environment that enhances and complements the classroom learning experience and supports responsible community living, civility, valuing diversity, leadership skills, ethical behavior, health and wellness, spiritual growth, character development, and making responsible choices for living in a changing society.

Assessment, Campus Diversity, and Decision Making

E. Increase our capacity to effectively assess student learning, academic supports, student affairs, and other key outcomes

Strategic Goals:

1. Ensure that quality data is widely available for decision making
2. Develop and implement a departmentally based, faculty driven student learning outcome assessment process for each academic major
3. Develop and implement assessment strategies for academic supports, student affairs, and other key outcomes

Rationale: The College is increasingly expected to be accountable through assessment of institutional effectiveness in terms of student learning and in other key areas of its mission. The College's ability to assess its effectiveness in a variety of areas and to use the information obtained to make improvements are critical to inform its planning,

decision-making, and resource allocation. The important area of assessment of student learning outcomes must be faculty driven and departmentally based and supported by the availability of quality data systems.

F. Achieve a significant increase in diversity among our students, faculty, and administration

Strategic Goals:

1. Implement specific strategies to develop a campus culture that is welcoming to a range of diverse students and employees
2. Utilize new approaches for recruitment and retention of a range of diverse faculty and administrators
3. Establish a target of 20% of new faculty hires from under-represented groups each year over the next 5 years
4. Implement methods designed to recruit and retain an increasingly diverse student body

Rationale: The importance of increasing the diversity of the campus community is supported by the fact that the citizenry of the Commonwealth, which we serve, is becoming increasingly diverse. Our mission statement says that “through its curricula, the college addresses the intellectual and career needs of the increasingly diverse citizenry of central Massachusetts.” In addition, a more diverse campus community will support the goals related to developing a global perspective established in other priorities. In order to successfully recruit and retain diverse faculty and students, the creation of a campus culture that is welcoming to people of color is essential.

G. Engage faculty, students, and staff effectively in institutional decision making

Strategic Goals:

1. Promote, nurture and sustain a sense of academic community among the faculty, students, and administration
2. Support and encourage faculty, students and staff to contribute appropriately to institutional decision making

Rationale: The central work of the college is accomplished in the interaction between faculty and students both within and outside the classroom. In all aspects of campus life, the best decisions will be made by incorporating the experience and expectations of faculty, students, and staff. The formal governance procedures specify important ways in which this priority can be met. The college should follow the contractual procedures in ways that ensure the broadest and fullest participation of faculty, students and staff in the decision making process.

Facilities and Grounds

H. Engage the campus community in a facility master planning process

Strategic Goals:

1. Create physical facilities and a natural setting that reflect and support the mission, values and vision of the college
2. Develop a facilities master plan that reflects the needs of commuting students and the increased residential population
3. Design and support a sustainable information technology infrastructure

Rationale: In order to thrive in the future the college needs to maintain a high quality physical plant and natural environment that reflect and support its mission. A facility master plan is needed to guide the next phase of this ongoing process. The physical and natural spaces at the college should support and encourage the learning process envisioned in the college's strategic priorities, a vibrant social life, and exciting co-curricular events and student activities. It is also critical that the facility master plan encompass the design of a sustainable, state-of-the-art information technology infrastructure.

Fiscal Resources and Public Relations

I. Strengthen the link of fund raising strategies and stewardship of fiscal resources to the College's mission and strategic priorities

Strategic Goals:

1. Support research and scholarship that connect the College with local and global communities
2. Initiate a capital campaign that supports the College's strategic priorities

Rationale: The enhancement of revenue through fundraising and the careful stewardship of financial resources will be essential for the college to maintain and enhance its ability to fulfill its mission. While funding provided by the state through appropriations is unlikely to grow appreciably over the next five years, funds raised privately and through grants have the potential to support specific initiatives related to the college's mission and strategic priorities. The ongoing development of mutually advantageous community engagement should provide the foundation for a new capital campaign that will increase the endowment in a manner that targets key mission priorities.

J. Foster and communicate the sense of pride we have about the College

Strategic Goals:

1. Focus on internal and external communities, state policy makers, and potential funders
2. Develop and implement communications strategies focused on key messages that capture the unique characteristics of the college and its strategic priorities

Rationale: The college has always provided opportunities for women and men of all races, ages, and ambitions to achieve their dreams. The institution has much to be proud

of and it is critical that this sense of accomplishment and pride be communicated effectively in the future to prospective students and their families, state policy makers, potential funders, and regional and national academic constituencies. The college's communication strategies should focus on its core mission as a public institution of higher education and on its specific strategic priorities.