WORCESTER STATE UNIVERSITY

BEYOND 150 →

LEAD, SUCCEED, ENGAGE

BE A LEADER
BE SUCCESSFUL
BE ENGAGED

WORCESTER STATE UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025

CONTENTS

Message from the President

As we close out this challenging semester, we find ourselves initiating a new strategic plan—encompassing the next five years—in the midst of a global pandemic. It is heartening to look past the disruption of this unsettling time and know that Worcester State is well prepared to thrive in the post-pandemic future.

What gives me this confidence? The plan itself and how it was developed. It builds upon the previous five-year plan, was inclusively and thoughtfully conceived, and establishes quantitative measures for success. In reviewing the 2015-2020 plan, our core values were re-affirmed. Adhering to that plan enabled significant progress in retention and graduation rates, stronger academic programming and faculty investment, and engagement of students both inside and outside the classroom – all of which assured our fiscal health.

While building upon that foundation, this plan incorporates lessons learned during the rapid pivot to all-remote learning last spring and infuses—through every goal and strategy—our commitment to equity, so that all areas of our community can embrace it as their own responsibility.

More than 1,000 different voices were heard from in the plan's development, through surveys, forums, and meetings, and 125 faculty, staff, and students participated regularly in working groups. I am extremely grateful to the Strategic Planning Steering Committee for its persistence and for finalizing this plan on time, even while "going remote" last spring. Steering Committee co-chairs, Dr. Julie Frechette of the Communication Department and Dr. Edgar Moros of the Intensive English Language Institute, provided leadership, with guidance from Dr. Sarah Strout, assistant vice president for assessment and planning, and consultant Linda Campanella. Their considerable effort and expertise were essential ingredients in constructing a blueprint that was adopted by our campus and supported by both the Worcester State University Board of Trustees and the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education.

Our goals are appropriately ambitious, and I believe we will meet them. We will periodically assess our progress via a review committee to ensure that we do. This roadmap takes us past our 150th anniversary, and we will honor our history by continuing to provide a relevant, empowering higher education opportunity for the students who need it most, regardless of the challenges the future may hold.

Barry M. Maloney
President

WORCESTER STATE UNIVERSITY

Worcester State University champions academic excellence in a diverse, student-centered environment that fosters scholarship, creativity, and global awareness. A Worcester State education equips students with knowledge and skills necessary for lives of professional accomplishment, engaged citizenship, and intellectual growth.

CORE VALUES

As a public institution, Worcester State University embraces the belief that widespread access to high-quality educational opportunities is the cornerstone of a democratic society. Members of the Worcester State community share the following core values:

• **Academic Excellence**
We are committed to providing opportunities to excel in a close-knit learning environment characterized by distinguished faculty, excellent teaching, and creative linkages between classroom learning and real-world experiences.

• **Engaged Citizenship**
We are committed to promoting community service, social justice, the democratic process, environmental sustainability, and global awareness to prepare students to be active and informed citizens.

• **Open Exchange of Ideas**
We are committed to inviting and considering the most expansive range of perspectives in teaching and learning, in scholarly and creative work, and in the governance of a complex, diverse institution.

• **Diversity and Inclusiveness**
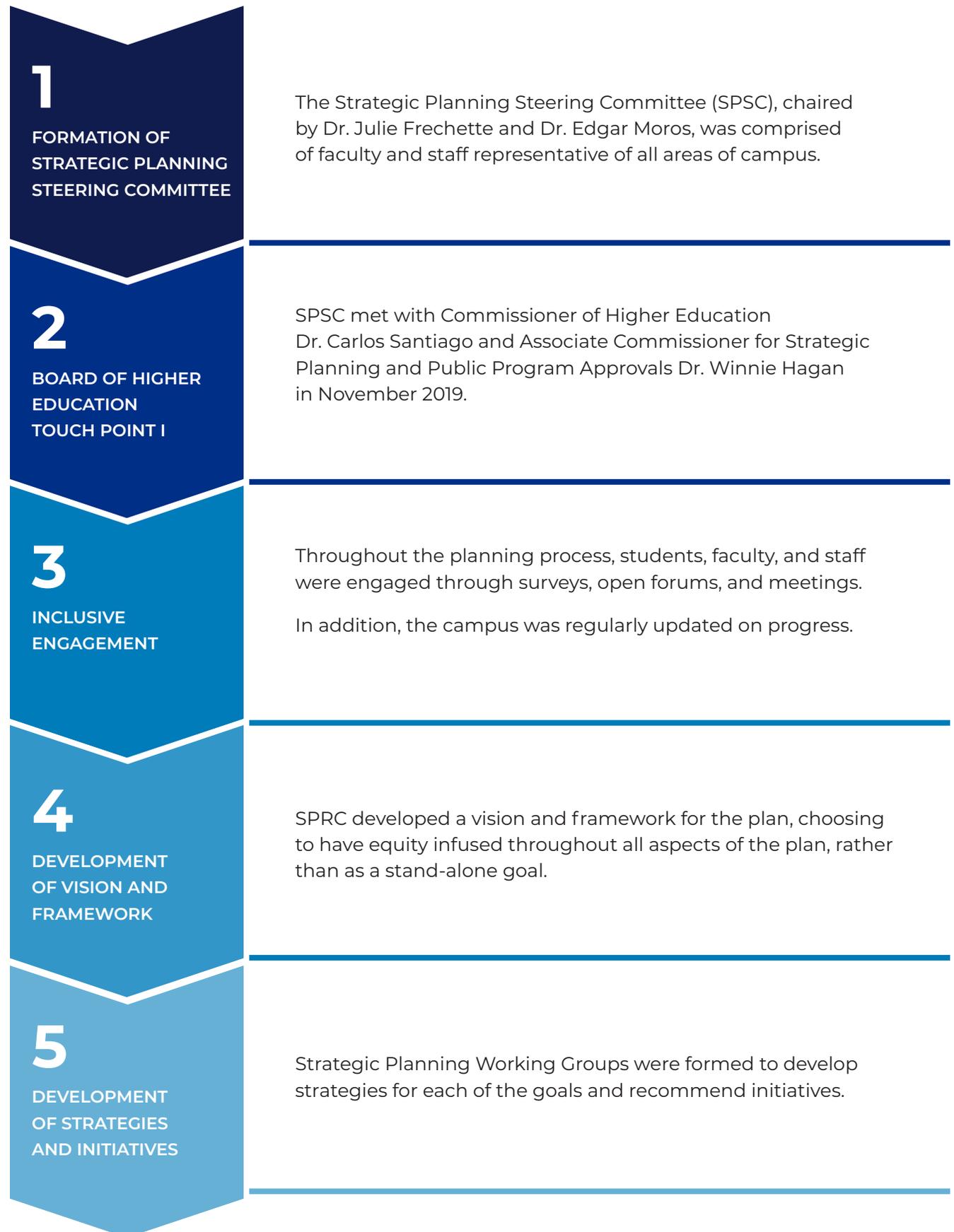We are committed to being an inclusive community in which our diversity enhances learning for all and in which people from all cultures and backgrounds have the opportunity to participate fully and succeed.

• **Civility and Integrity**
We are committed to respecting the dignity of all members of our community and to demonstrating this commitment in our interactions, decisions, and structures.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

1

FORMATION OF STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee (SPSC), chaired by Dr. Julie Frechette and Dr. Edgar Moros, was comprised of faculty and staff representative of all areas of campus.

2

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION TOUCH POINT I

SPSC met with Commissioner of Higher Education Dr. Carlos Santiago and Associate Commissioner for Strategic Planning and Public Program Approvals Dr. Winnie Hagan in November 2019.

3

INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT

Throughout the planning process, students, faculty, and staff were engaged through surveys, open forums, and meetings.

In addition, the campus was regularly updated on progress.

4

DEVELOPMENT OF VISION AND FRAMEWORK

SPRC developed a vision and framework for the plan, choosing to have equity infused throughout all aspects of the plan, rather than as a stand-alone goal.

5

DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

Strategic Planning Working Groups were formed to develop strategies for each of the goals and recommend initiatives.

A draft of the strategic plan was submitted to the Board of Higher Education in June 2020.

6

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION TOUCH POINT II

Metrics for the plan were developed, and later, benchmarks and targets were added.

7

DEVELOPMENT OF METRICS

The plan was examined to ensure that equity was infused in all goals. Highlighted strategies and initiatives relating to equity were compiled.

8

ADDRESSING EQUITY

During the final stages of planning, the COVID-19 pandemic started. The plan was edited to address concerns relating to COVID-19. Highlighted strategies and initiatives were compiled.

9

RESPONDING TO COVID-19

The final draft of the strategic plan was submitted to the Board of Higher Education in September 2020. The plan was approved in October 2020.

10

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION TOUCH POINT III

STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE

Linda Campanella
Planning Consultant
(SOS Consulting Group LLC)

Dr. Sarah Strout
(ex-officio)
Assistant Vice President for
Assessment and Planning

CO-CHAIRS
Dr. Julie Frechette
Professor
Communication

Dr. Edgar Moros
Director, Intensive
English Language Institute

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Dr. Susan Mitroka Batsford
Associate Professor
Chemistry Department

Dr. Thomas Conroy
Associate Professor
Urban Studies Department

Mary Dillon
Clerk IV
Occupational Therapy

Thomas Kelley
Director, Retention

Dr. Linda Larrivee
Dean, School of Education,
Health, and Natural Sciences

Stacey Luster
General Counselor/Assistant
to the President for EEEO

John Meany
Associate Director, Athletics

Michael Mills
Alumni Association
representative

Dr. Stephen Morreale
Professor
Criminal Justice Department

Katey Palumbo
Director
International Programs

Dr. Russ Pottle
Dean, School of Humanities
and Social Sciences

Dr. Emily Soltano
Professor
Psychology Department

Dr. Tanya Trudell
Instructor
Occupational Therapy

David Tuttle
Board of Trustees
representative

Professor Adam Zahler
Professor
Visual & Performing Arts

INCLUSIVE PROCESS

Throughout the strategic planning process, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee ensured that all members of the Worcester State University community were included. In addition to more than 1,000 voices captured through surveys, forums, and meetings, more than 100 faculty, staff, and students participated in working groups to develop strategies and initiatives for each goal (working group membership can be found on pages 34-36). During the process, updates and drafts were shared with the campus community on a regular basis, and feedback was incorporated into the plan.

SURVEYS AND QUALITATIVE DATA

- Academic Kick Off Prompt Cards for Faculty and Staff
- Visioning Questionnaire for Executive Cabinet and Board of Trustees
- Verb Prompt Survey for Faculty and Staff
- Administrative Functional Department Assessment for Executive Cabinet
- Academic Program Evaluations
- Faculty Survey
- Staff Survey
- Undergraduate Student Survey
- Graduate Student Survey
- Alumni Survey

MEETINGS

- Advisory Committee for Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action
- All University Committee
- Alumni Association Advisory Board
- Bias Incidence Response Team
- Board of Trustees
- Cabinet
- Campus Climate Committee
- Chairs Council
- Executive Cabinet
- Foundation Board
- Graduate Program Coordinators
- Leadership Council
- Presidential Student Ambassadors
- Student Government Association

PRESENTATIONS AND FORUMS

- Faculty Presentations
- Staff Presentations
- Faculty Forums
- Staff Forums
- Campus Update I
- Campus Update II
- Working Group Kick-off Event

STRATEGIC PLAN VISION

WORCESTER STATE UNIVERSITY will be a vibrant, student-centered community of learning dedicated to preparing students of all backgrounds to succeed and lead in their professions, in their communities, and wherever they seek to leave their mark on the world.

Worcester State will be recognized as a community of learning whose doors are open to all and whose impact on those who venture through its doors is transformational.

Worcester State will be known as the university where students finish what they start.

Worcester State will be known as a place where students emerge from their experience ready to lead— as individuals whose leadership potential has been identified, nourished, and demonstrated.

Worcester State will deliver on its promise to provide students a full and rich educational experience in any learning environment— whether on-campus and in-person or virtual and remote through distance learning.

Worcester State will be a research hub where scholarly creativity is being channeled in new, exciting, and potentially important directions.

Worcester State will be one of the best-run state universities in New England—efficient and lean, but investing adequately in the people, programs, physical spaces, and technological infrastructure to ensure Worcester State will be able to fulfill its mission and achieve its goals as a leading state university in the region.

Worcester State will be a place where all members of the diverse Worcester State community—faculty, staff, and students— will feel included and valued, and will hold themselves and each other accountable for upholding the University's core values.

Worcester State will be financially stable and well positioned for long-term organizational sustainability as it marks its 150th anniversary in 2024.

Worcester State will have a smaller carbon footprint and be setting an example of responsible environmental stewardship.

STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

The framework, developed by the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, incorporates equity throughout the six main goals of the strategic plan. All aspects of Worcester State University, from academics and student support to resources and infrastructure, have been developed through an equity lens.

EQUITY

GOAL 1

Academic Excellence
and Distinction

GOAL 2

Student Support
and Success

GOAL 3

Marketing
and Enrollment

GOAL 4

Community Engagement
and Public Good

GOAL 5

People and
Culture

GOAL 6

Resources and
Infrastructure

WORCESTER STATE STRATEGIC PLAN

GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND INITIATIVES

The Strategic Planning Working Groups, chaired by Strategic Planning Steering Committee members and comprised of more than 100 faculty, staff, and students, were tasked with developing strategies and recommending initiatives for each goal, infusing equity into each goal.

GOAL 1 Academic Excellence and Distinction

Offer high-quality undergraduate and graduate programs that develop
the intellectual and personal potential of every student, and prepare
the next generation of leaders, innovators, and scholars

STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

STRATEGY 1.1

Promote University-wide innovation in curricular program offerings, and expand options and accessible modalities for course offerings and course completion

- Develop and offer more online and blended courses

- Make Wintersession 100 percent online and expand the term

- Secure necessary external approvals for majors in Art, Political Science, and Theater

- Seek support and pursue approvals to offer an Occupational Therapy doctorate

- Implement the Major-Plus requirement as reflected in the RASE plan

- Develop interdisciplinary concentrations into minors and create a department of interdisciplinary studies

- Create additional 4+ programs

- Develop an accelerated degree completion program for non-traditional students

- Increase the number of degrees that can be attained completely online or during the evening

STRATEGY 1.2

Support and celebrate excellent teaching, and expand opportunities for broadening pedagogical expertise through both internal and external professional development

- Ensure resources allocated to the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) are adequate to support University-wide priorities relating to academic excellence and distinction

- Create an instructional design position in the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

- Establish and promote common expectations and evidence-based best practices for the online course experience

- Encourage everyone teaching online to be "certified" by some vetting process (e.g., Quality Matters)

- Increase access and resources to learn about universal design for course materials

- Create a web page for faculty to share ideas for syllabi, teaching, scholarly work, research ideas, etc.

STRATEGY 1.3

Leverage the University's location to create distinctive academic and leadership opportunities

- Create greater opportunities for summer Intensive English Language Institute programs (including a formalized summer residential program)

- Provide educational opportunities deemed to be of strategic value to the region based on employment trends

- Enhance career exploration, internships, and professional opportunities by connecting students with alumni networks, employers and academic departments

STRATEGY 1.4

Offer a vibrant and rigorous general education curriculum that supports the liberal arts in a 21st-century context

- Provide a comprehensive review and needs assessment of the current Liberal Arts and Science Curriculum (LASC) to determine strengths, weakness, and revisions

- Put in place a process to annually review LASC goals and outcomes as reflected in student learning outcomes, program reviews, digital portfolio work, and graduation rates

- Establish a set of targeted areas related to digital literacy for students to gain proficiency

- Create a 'Leadership Across the Curriculum' general education requirement

- Create and offer an online track for all LASC classes

- Create a 3-credit diversity course requirement

STRATEGY 1.5

Enhance support for scholarly and creative work that is applied, innovative, interdisciplinary, and inclusive of marginalized traditions

- Establish a fully functioning Office of Grants and Sponsored Research

- Expand funding opportunities for research and scholarships across departments and programs

- Strengthen and publicize opportunities for faculty research

STRATEGY 1.6

Create a more vibrant intellectual life on campus and fortify a culture of high academic standards

- Create a university portfolio initiative that documents and enhances student learning gains and unique skills for all students

- Invest resources as necessary to establish the Library as the center of academic pursuits at Worcester State

- Ensure that opportunities for experiential learning are available to all students

- Continue to increase study abroad participation rates by identifying institutional and external funding sources to support faculty-led programs

- Create and facilitate access to a more vibrant intellectual life on campus

GOAL 2 Student Support and Success

Provide all students a transformative, holistic educational experience with a path to timely degree completion and solid preparation for advanced academic studies or career success

STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

STRATEGY 2.1

Increase overall retention and graduation rates and close achievement gaps

- Reimagine and adapt Worcester State's scheduling model for classes to enhance student-friendliness and increase efficiency

- Continue to support current practices such as CLEP testing based on students' assets, sample bilingual/multilingual skills

- Invest in and utilize institutional financial aid intended to encourage student persistence and retention

- Offer optional online placement testing in Spanish to incoming students

- Create a transfer-friendly environment by collaborating with academic departments, to develop a more streamlined process for evaluating international credentials for transfer course equivalencies and designate a transfer specialist in each academic department

STRATEGY 2.2

Promote student leadership development opportunities proactively, inclusively, and equitably

- Enhance leadership skills programming that challenge and encourage students to become empowered, inclusive, and knowledgeable community and global leaders

- Adopt a wide-ranging, inclusive definition of leadership for Worcester State that includes an understanding of equity and the importance of valuing diversity

- Promote student leadership development opportunities

- Encourage the approval of a co-curricular transcript (as outlined in the RASE Plan)

- Identify unmet needs in the area of student leadership development and develop programs to meet those needs

STRATEGY 2.3

Embrace student-centeredness as a guiding principle for faculty and staff, and adopt holistic student support as a University-wide imperative

- Increase awareness and accessibility of resources aligned with the eight domains of student wellness (emotional, social, physical, occupational, financial, intellectual, environmental, and spiritual resources)

- Communicate campus commitment and dedicate resources to addressing student emotional and mental well-being, particularly relating to traumatized and disenfranchised populations

- Expand First-Year Experience services as needed based on RASE Plan recommendations to meet needs of a changing student body

- Increase the number of full-time faculty involved with First-Year Seminar

- Create a centralized location for students to get information regarding all services available on campus (financial aid, registration, health care, etc.)

STRATEGY 2.4

Ensure all students, including non-traditional students and distance learners, have full and equitable access to the academic resources, support services, and technology they need

- Take necessary steps to increase student support services beyond the traditional 9-to-5 workday

- Work toward making all University spaces ADA-compliant, and provide assistive technology and processes that make it easier for all students, employees, and guests to experience our campus

- Expand and enhance the support graduate students receive from the Library and Student Affairs

- Ensure all students have access to the technology and learning tools necessary for academic success

- Recommit to the requirement that all undergraduate students have a laptop that meets University standards and program requirements, and strive to ensure that students have reasonably operative internet access when away from campus

- Develop non-traditional and creative ways to address non-tuition-related financial challenges impeding students' ability to thrive

- Ensure adequate and appropriate resources and supports are available to degree-seeking and degree-completing non-traditional-age adult learners

- Promote institutional compliance with student educational accommodations across learning platforms and modalities

- Implement and assess the success of virtual information sessions for prospective and admitted students

- Create and deploy an online campus tour with video, making sure to highlight areas of campus that would be important for prospective students from under-represented groups

- Measure the success of "Meet a Faculty Member" programs for yield purposes

- Implement virtual financial aid sessions with Q&A for accepted and current students

- Identify and remove barriers impeding full and equitable student access to services and resources, including for non-traditional students

- Find ways to make textbooks, open educational resources, or other content available to students with little or no cost.

STRATEGY 2.5

Adopt a mentoring model of advising and ensure faculty and staff are appropriately trained to deliver effective support to a more diverse student body

- Promote a culture in which advising is a year-round process

- Provide financial support and promote opportunities for informal advising interactions between faculty and students

- Provide support for appropriate levels of advising in high-enrolled majors

- Revisit the graduate coordinator model and ensure support offices throughout campus to provide graduate student-specific services

STRATEGY 2.6

Create a more robust campus life that fully engages all students, and promote a sense of connection and community within WSU's distance-learning environment

- Expand extracurricular and recreational programming to enhance campus life for all students

- Create a working group to address needs of Worcester State's international student population

- Establish more opportunities for graduate students to network with each other and feel a sense of connection to the wider WSU community

- Enhance supports to improve the sense of belonging of transfer and commuter students

- Enhance supports to improve the sense of belonging of first generation students

- Offer additional Transfer Orientation dates to increase greater access to this key program for all incoming transfer students.

- Strengthen and expand the Transfer Success Coach program in collaboration with the Retention Office.

- Develop and implement a mandatory 1-credit New Transfer Seminar

GOAL 3 Marketing and Enrollment

Be attractive and accessible to an increasingly diverse population of students within an increasingly competitive recruitment environment

STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

STRATEGY 3.1

Raise regional and national visibility and garner recognition for academic excellence, value, and impact

- Align traditional advertising with online program advertising to strengthen overall marketing effectiveness

- Implement a comprehensive strategy for attracting and enrolling non-traditional-age students seeking to begin or resume their undergraduate studies or preparing to change career pathways

- Re-platform and enhance content on the website to serve more effectively as a marketing and recruitment tool

- Ensure the website effectively engages diverse audiences by providing personalized marketing content and meeting up-to-date technological demands

- Increase Worcester State's visibility regionally and nationally in fields where faculty play leadership roles by supporting research and travel

- Develop materials that highlight Worcester State's role within higher education

- Create culture of faculty, staff, and students being "branded" at off campus events

STRATEGY 3.2

More effectively differentiate WSU from its peers, drawing particular attention to advantages associated with its location

- Boldly promote the RASE Plan

- Expand and support interdisciplinary teaching

- Identify our "signature programs" setting us apart from other competitors

- Position Worcester State as "Worcester's University"

- Continue to ensure branding consistency in marketing materials

STRATEGY 3.3

Increase the diversity of the faculty and staff to better reflect the WSU student body and applicant pool

- Increase diversity in academic and administrative departments that affect the recruitment, retention, and leadership development of students from under-represented and marginalized groups

- Implement a strategic recruitment and retention strategy for under-represented and marginalized faculty and staff

STRATEGY 3.4

Expand presence in the local secondary education and community college sectors

- Continue to implement and support Early College and dual enrollment programs
- Implement programs that bring greater numbers of prospective and accepted students to campus, targeting underrepresented groups in particular
- Offer seminars to high school students on the application process here at Worcester State
- Create a faculty speaking program at high schools
- Develop program partnerships between Worcester State departments and high school programs
- Develop a young alumni program as liaisons for their high school alma maters

STRATEGY 3.5

Position and promote WSU as a first-choice university for students from traditionally under-represented groups

- Provide comprehensive academic support in first-year experience either by expanding Summer Bridge or creating a 'Fall Cluster' for first-generation students and students from under-represented groups
- Create accelerated blended/online degree completion programs for non-traditional students
- Create a marketing campaign that showcases a robust offering of educational experiences for a racially diverse undergraduate applicant pool
- Ensure marketing and recruitment materials are translated into foreign languages prevalent in Worcester State's local population, and highlight the breadth of opportunity and support at Worcester State for students of diverse backgrounds

STRATEGY 3.6

Invest resources necessary to grow enrollment in graduate and online programs

- Seek additional funding to support increased graduate assistantship opportunities
- Offer a 'Life Work Portfolio' program for non-traditional age adult learners who may wish to petition for credit for learning achieved outside the traditional classroom
- Improve the registration process and advising for graduate students
- Evaluate whether staffing for graduate admissions and recruitment is adequate to support the attainment of enrollment goals
- Develop and implement an aggressive marketing campaign in support of graduate and continuing education enrollment goals, particularly growth of the graduate program
- Invest in online course development by creating an instructional design faculty fellow and by providing a stipend, course-release, or first right-of-refusal to incentivize the creation of courses

GOAL 4 Community Engagement and Public Good

Have an impact beyond campus through leading-edge scholarship and creative activities, civic engagement, and mutually beneficial partnerships with local, regional, and global communities

STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

STRATEGY 4.1

Expand and deepen connections between the community and WSU's academic departments, centers, and institutes

- Expand the utilization of external advisory bodies
- Partner with the community to promote international dialogues and experiences
- Provide opportunities and partnerships that support our higher education equity agenda in the Worcester community

STRATEGY 4.2

Foster ongoing interaction between members of the University community and members of the Worcester community

- Implement a Volunteer Day for employees to contribute to Worcester and local areas in a visible way
- Maintain an open, neighborly campus environment
- Offer annual bus tours of Worcester for all new staff and faculty as well as members of Leadership Council
- Better promote existing community partnerships and outreach activities
- Connect the Worcester State community to affinity groups in the city of Worcester and Greater Central Massachusetts

STRATEGY 4.3

Expand relationships with businesses in Worcester and beyond to expand the pipeline for internships, practica, co-ops, and post-graduate employment options

- Expand connection, engagement, and networking opportunities, as well as ongoing career support, for alumni
- Support efforts to establish Worcester as a vibrant location for students to study and play, faculty and staff to work and live, and graduates to stay and serve
- Intentionally have faculty and staff be present at Five Chambers events
- Provide students opportunities to attend Chamber events

STRATEGY 4.4

Establish WSU as a research and policy hub where faculty, staff, and students actively engage in developing solutions to meet regional challenges

- Establish a 'Community Collaborative' within Academic Affairs to support community-focused academic endeavors that connect faculty and students with the Worcester-area community to address challenges inter-disciplinarily and collaboratively

- Promote faculty and staff publications and accomplishments

- Develop a catalog of faculty and staff expertise

GOAL 5 People and Culture

Nurture an inclusive campus culture that promotes a shared commitment to excellence, innovation, collaboration, and accountability

STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

STRATEGY 5.1

Establish WSU as an even more welcoming and supportive environment for students, faculty and staff from historically under-represented or marginalized groups

- Provide dedicated support structures and services for LGTBTQ+ students
- Expand affinity-based connections across the campus community
- Promote campus-wide cultural fluency, anchored in Worcester State's core values, to foster greater understanding and inclusion of the diverse cultures represented in the Worcester State community

STRATEGY 5.2

Recruit, retain and reward high-quality and diverse faculty and staff committed to educating and supporting a diverse student body

- Implement a more systematic and intentional method of inviting, securing, and hosting visiting international scholars and faculty
- Offer competitive compensation and contemporary employment options for faculty and staff
- Increase professional development and career growth opportunities for staff
- Improve onboarding for new employees
- Create a formal mentoring program for faculty and staff, offering high-quality, discipline-specific training from peers
- Make a financial commitment to hiring more full-time faculty members
- Explore the idea of establishing a "teaching post-doc" program to attract new Ph.D.s (or others with terminal degrees) who aspire to teach
- Develop a policy to reimburse for costs associated with the maintenance of professional credentials

STRATEGY 5.3

Continue to equip and encourage all faculty and staff to address the diverse and evolving needs of a changing student body

- Offer multiple levels of staff and faculty training, from beginner to advanced, on issues relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Create a diversity certificate program for faculty, staff, and students
- Ensure that guidelines relating to accessibility are addressed in instructional modalities that might be delivered via virtual formats
- Provide professional development for faculty on the implementation of inclusive teaching strategies

STRATEGY 5.4

Promote greater unity, communication and sense of institutional pride across campus

- Acquire and deploy communication technology for the purposes of improving awareness of campus activities, improving advising communication, and improving web presence for students and advisors

- Significantly enhance internal communication to promote transparency, information sharing, and cross-divisional collegiality

- Introduce new optional social activities that bring faculty and staff together and strengthen sense of community

- Expand internal, cross-divisional awareness of the key roles, value-adding activities, and accomplishments of departments, offices, centers, and individual contributors across campus

- Coordinate across campus departments to strategically communicate student, faculty, and staff accomplishments

- Create new awards to recognize faculty and staff accomplishments and milestones

STRATEGY 5.5

Foster a culture of assessment and data-based decision making

- Implement a data warehouse

- Develop divisional and departmental strategic plans that integrate with the University Strategic Plan

- Coordinate the annual collection of data centrally through the Assessment and Planning office

- Utilize Colleague for all data entry and storage

- Develop data entry procedures for each office to reduce errors in data

STRATEGY 5.6

Institutionalize policies, practices, and procedures that prepare members of the WSU community to respond nimbly, collaboratively, and effectively to unanticipated crises

- Ensure that each administrative unit has suitable contingency plans in place, and for which appropriate training is regularly delivered, that will permit key business functions to be maintained while the University's regular operations might otherwise be interrupted

- Engage in succession planning for key positions across the organization

- Develop and regularly reassess emergency preparedness plans for buildings and communications

GOAL 6 Resources and Infrastructure

Develop sustainable revenue streams adequate to support the University's academic mission and institutional priorities, and invest in physical infrastructure and technology with a commitment to financial and environmental sustainability

STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

STRATEGY 6.1

Develop new and sustain existing sources of revenue

- Develop more non-credit courses and programs to be taught through the Center for Business and Industry by Worcester State faculty and staff

- Invest in graduate and continuing education marketing and staffing levels appropriately to increase initiatives that generate incremental revenue

- Create a program to provide a stipend or release time for departments to investigate and develop new streams of revenue

- Better communicate the value of public higher education at the state and federal levels to lobby for increased funding for public higher education

- Encourage an entrepreneurial culture in which short-term losses that will create long-term gains are strategically developed

- Utilize campus during off-times for programs that will pay to use our space

- Evaluate conference and events staffing levels so that the Director can generate revenue in lieu of managing events

STRATEGY 6.2

Expand philanthropic support and grow the endowment

- Broaden and increase the base of alumni donors

- Increase unrestricted endowment to 20-25 percent of total endowment value

- Raise funds to increase financial aid and scholarship support available to qualifying students

- Establish a dedicated emergency response fund—beyond the reserves

- Survey current and potential donors as to areas they are interested in and connect with departments related to those areas

- Develop donations to assist students with living expenses that will allow them to graduate on time

- Increase unrestricted endowment dollars by communicating with donors the importance and benefits of unrestricted endowment

STRATEGY 6.3

Ensure technology, facilities, and systems are adequate to support operational needs and strategic goals

- Develop plans for classroom technology, furnishings, and fixtures that maximize flexibility to meet diverse teaching and learning needs in active learning spaces

- Develop a process to decrease redundant technology purchases by requiring new technology to be approved by the Administrative Technology Committee

- Evaluate the organizational structure of information technology services and assess the need for additional resources and/or staffing

- Develop a comprehensive plan to address future development of the May Street building

- Work with the Massachusetts Department of Capital Asset Management to develop a comprehensive plan to address program needs and infrastructure improvements to the Learning Resource Center and the Student Center

- Work with the Massachusetts State College Building Authority to develop a comprehensive plan to address the infrastructure deficiencies of Chandler Village, while continuing to meet student demands for residential housing

- Address accelerated end-of-useful-life and higher deferred maintenance costs due to heavy use of physical assets by both Worcester State and non-Worcester State constituencies
- Include technology upgrades and maintenance in budget

STRATEGY 6.4

Ensure administrative policies and practices promote greater efficiency, entrepreneurial thinking, and equity

- Create a more transparent budgeting process that evaluates existing funding levels and requires administrative and academic departments to develop multi-year budgets
- Move more administrative forms and functions online
- Reevaluate our workplace model and establish a remote work plan with an expectation that as many as a quarter of full-time administrative staff may not need to be physically present every day
- Conduct an equity audit
- Assess current space utilization and re-allocate space in a purposeful manner to meet current and future demands

- Address the bifurcated structure distinguishing the day program from the graduate and continuing education program and consider separating the continuing education functions from the graduate school

STRATEGY 6.5

Develop and implement redundant systems and staffing capacities to protect essential business operations from disruption due to unanticipated events

- Recommit to ensuring redundant systems and staffing capacities to protect essential business operations from disruption due to unanticipated events
- Invest appropriate resources and training to automate business functions across the campus, consistent with contemporary best practices within higher education

STRATEGY 6.6

As a campus community, commit to developing and implementing programs and policies that address the growing challenges of climate change as they affect the campus, the region, and the world

- Revise the Climate Action Plan with definitive steps to achieve carbon footprint reduction
- Join organizations related to climate change efforts in higher education to learn about best practices
- Evaluate net-zero or near-net-zero building for any new building projects
- Plan for replacement fleet vehicles to be fully electric or hybrid vehicles
- Increase the number of buildings that have options to off-set electricity
- Work with the city and state to increase the frequency of buses for Worcester State

STRATEGIC PLAN METRICS

Worcester State University is committed to a culture of assessment and data-based decision making, as highlighted in **Strategy 5.5**. To this end, the Strategic Planning Steering committee has developed metrics to assess the progress and success of the strategic plan. Many of the metrics will assess multiple goals and strategies. The following tables indicate which goals each of the metrics will be used to assess. Data will be collected annually, and adjustments made to the plan accordingly.

METRICS

A vibrant, student-centered community of learning dedicated to preparing students of all backgrounds to succeed and lead	EQUITY	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6
Number of new programs (majors, minors, concentrations, certificates etc.)		✔		✔			✔
Number of programs catering to non-traditional-age learner preferences (evening, online, blended)	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔
Number of master's pathway programs		✔		✔			✔
Number of dual enrollment and early college courses	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Percentage of students graduating with a double major or major+minor		✔		✔			✔
Percentage of students from historically underrepresented groups graduating with a double major or major+minor	✔	✔		✔		✔	✔
Number of professional development opportunities for faculty related to pedagogy		✔				✔	
Amount of money spent for external professional development for faculty related to pedagogy		✔				✔	✔
Funding for the Center for Teaching and Learning		✔				✔	✔
Percentage of courses with experiential learning		✔		✔	✔		
Percentage of students with internships, practica, fieldwork, service learning		✔	✔	✔	✔		
Number of students involved in study away		✔	✔		✔	✔	
Percentage of students from historically underrepresented groups involved in study away	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	

METRICS

A community of learning whose doors are open to all and whose impact on those who venture through its doors is transformational	EQUITY	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6
Undergraduate enrollment: African American	✔		✔	✔		✔	✔
Undergraduate enrollment: Latinx	✔		✔	✔		✔	✔
Graduate enrollment: African American	✔		✔	✔		✔	✔
Graduate enrollment: Latinx	✔		✔	✔		✔	✔
Number of students in Intensive English Languish Institute program	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Percentage of faculty from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups	✔		✔	✔		✔	
Percentage of staff from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups	✔		✔	✔		✔	
Number of course sections relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion	✔	✔		✔		✔	
Number of professional development opportunities relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion	✔		✔			✔	
Number of gender-neutral bathrooms	✔		✔			✔	

METRICS

The university where students finish what they start	EQUITY	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6
Undergraduate first-time, full-time cohort retention			✔	✔		✔	✔
Undergraduate first-time, full-time cohort retention: African American	✔		✔	✔		✔	✔
Undergraduate first-time, full-time cohort retention: Latinx	✔		✔	✔		✔	✔
6-year undergraduate first-time, full-time cohort graduation rate			✔	✔		✔	
6-year undergraduate first-time, full-time cohort graduation rate: African American	✔		✔	✔		✔	
6-year undergraduate first-time, full-time cohort graduation rate: Latinx	✔		✔	✔		✔	
4-year undergraduate transfer graduation rate	✔		✔	✔		✔	
4-year undergraduate transfer graduation rate: African American	✔		✔	✔		✔	
4-year undergraduate transfer graduation rate: Latinx	✔		✔	✔		✔	
Percentage of undergraduate students completing gateway courses in first year		✔	✔			✔	
Percentage of African-American undergraduate students completing gateway courses in first year	✔	✔	✔			✔	
Percentage of Latinx undergraduate students completing gateway courses in first year	✔	✔	✔			✔	
Percentage of students with on-time credit accumulation		✔	✔			✔	
Average percentage of transfer credits accepted	✔	✔	✔			✔	

METRICS

The university where students finish what they start	EQUITY	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6
Number of students granted prior learning experience	✔	✔	✔			✔	
Undergraduate student satisfaction of advising			✔				
Percentage of faculty using Starfish			✔				
Number of Starfish actions (kudos, referrals, flags)			✔				
Number of advising professional development opportunities for faculty and staff			✔				
Number of mental health counselors	✔		✔			✔	✔
Number of hours available for mental health counseling	✔		✔			✔	✔
Number of student support departments offering services outside of business hours	✔		✔			✔	✔
Sense of belonging among students from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups	✔		✔	✔		✔	
Sense of belonging among commuter, transfer, graduate, and non-traditional-aged students	✔		✔	✔		✔	
Number of social events on campus			✔	✔	✔	✔	

METRICS

A place where students emerge from their experience ready to lead	EQUITY	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6
Number of career development/advanced studies workshops for students	✔		✔		✔	✔	
Number of networking opportunities for students	✔		✔		✔	✔	
Percentage of students entering the workforce or advanced studies within one year of graduation	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	
Number of leadership opportunities for students	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	
Number of students from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups involved in leadership roles	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	
Number of Honors Program students who graduate with honors		✔	✔				
Number of Honors Program students from historically underrepresented groups	✔	✔	✔				
Percentage of Honors Program Students completing the Commonwealth Honors project		✔	✔				
Number of events for alumni						✔	✔
Number of alumni involved in community partnerships					✔		

METRICS

A commitment to a full and rich educational experience in any learning environment	EQUITY	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6
Number of faculty with Quality Matters certification		✔	✔			✔	
Number of faculty who have taken at least one Quality Matters course		✔	✔			✔	
Number of students enrolled in courses using Open Education Resources	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	
Number of professional development opportunities for faculty relating to distance education		✔	✔			✔	
Percentage of students with access to reliable internet and devices	✔		✔			✔	✔
Percentage of forms and processes available online	✔		✔			✔	✔
Percent of student support offices with remote options	✔		✔			✔	✔
Percentage of undergraduate blended courses	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔
Percentage of undergraduate online courses	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔
Information Technology Services staff FTE			✔			✔	✔

METRICS

A public institution that takes its public mission seriously	EQUITY	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6
Number of grants with faculty involvement		✔			✔		✔
Number of grants awarded		✔			✔		✔
Amount of grant money received		✔			✔		✔
Number of faculty and student publications, presentations, and posters		✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Number of students participating in the Celebration of Scholarship and Creativity		✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Number of students working with faculty on scholarly and creative pursuits		✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Number of partnerships with local schools, hospitals, businesses, and non-profit organizations				✔	✔		
Number of faculty and staff engaged with community partnerships				✔	✔		
Number of students enrolled in civic engagement courses		✔	✔		✔	✔	
Percentage of students from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups enrolled in civic engagement courses	✔	✔	✔		✔	✔	
Number of events open to the public				✔	✔	✔	
Number of advisory boards that include community members				✔	✔		

METRICS

One of the best-run state universities in New England	EQUITY	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6
Percentage of unmet financial aid: direct costs	✔		✔			✔	
Percentage of students with unmet financial aid: direct costs	✔		✔			✔	
Number of students receiving scholarships	✔		✔			✔	✔
Percentage of students from historically underrepresented groups awarded merit scholarships	✔		✔			✔	✔
Average amount of merit scholarships	✔		✔			✔	✔
Number of graduate assistantships	✔		✔		✔	✔	✔
Number of awards/recognition for employees						✔	
Retention rate of full-time staff						✔	
Retention rate of full-time staff from historically underrepresented groups	✔					✔	
Percentage of full-time staff working remotely						✔	✔
Number of departments with cross-training						✔	✔

METRICS

Financially stable and well positioned for long-term organizational sustainability	EQUITY	GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3	GOAL 4	GOAL 5	GOAL 6
Total undergraduate enrollment			✔	✔			✔
Total graduate enrollment			✔	✔			✔
Number of events that bring potential students to campus				✔	✔		✔
Revenue generated by outside events							✔
Revenue generated by DGCE							✔
Percentage of marketing budget for DGCE programs	✔			✔		✔	✔
Number of non-credit CBI courses taught in-house	✔	✔				✔	✔
Overall endowment							✔
Unrestricted foundation dollars							✔
Percentage of alumni making annual donations							✔
Percentage of employee donations							✔
Carbon footprint							✔
Number of electric vehicles in fleet							✔
Number of LEED certified buildings							✔
Number of buildings with electricity off-setting equipment							✔
Percentage of parking spaces that are ADA-compliant	✔		✔			✔	

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