

2014-15/2018-19 Unit Strategic Plan Review

Unit: Penn State Worthington Scranton

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Provost's Guidelines, June 2013	Provost Nick Jones "pillar"	President Eric Barron "major topic"
1. Executive Summary/Highlights		
<p>This is a strong, well-organized plan that addresses the guidelines fully. It benefits from the inclusion of a planning timeline as well as planning values and assumptions. Readers of the plan might benefit from being able to see more measures and/or benchmarks for the included actions. But both the plan itself and the process followed to develop it appear very thorough.</p>		
2. An articulated vision of the unit's future over the next five to ten years.		Excellence
<p>"Penn State Worthington Scranton creates tomorrow's diverse leaders. We challenge individuals to discover their full potential, commit to success, embrace lifelong learning, and build strong, vibrant communities (p. 3)."</p>		
3. A discussion of specific strategies to achieve the vision.		
<p>The plan is organized around seven goals. Each goal has several objectives, each objective has several strategies, and each strategy has several actions. Most of them are quite detailed and tie back to the vision nicely. The goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve academic excellence. • Increase campus enrollment. • Cultivate student engagement. • Practices that promote integrity and ethical behavior. • Diversity planning. • Sustainability. • Budget planning and adjustments. 		
4. For academic units: A discussion of plans, progress, and initiatives in learning outcomes assessment.	Transforming Education	Student Engagement; Student Career Success & Economic Development
<p>Page 14 describes a "Special Emphasis on Learning Outcomes Assessment" that discusses Worthington Scranton's goals for learning outcomes including better documentation of good teaching; better assessment of teaching performance (beyond SRTes); discovering and implementing new pedagogies; and collecting better data on learning outcomes to satisfy institutional accountability needs. Goals 1 and 3 contain several actions related to these planned efforts, though some of them, such as "determine innovative educational practices" for example, could use more description of how they will be achieved.</p>		
5. Strategic performance indicators structured around unit level goals.		
<p>Some of the actions do include measures, but many do not. Most of them do not have benchmarks for those measures.</p>		

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6. Diversity planning	Valuing and Exploring Our Cultures	Diversity and Demographics; Accessibility
<p>Goal 5 (starting on p. 28) address each challenge presented in the Diversity Framework guidelines. Each challenge has one or more strategies followed by multiple actions. Some of the actions have metrics, but the section could benefit from additional metrics. Also, some of the actions might benefit from being described more specifically. For example, instead of an action reading, "encourage x behavior", it could be helpful to see a description of how that encouragement will be implemented.</p> <p>The appendix of diversity activities is a nice addition to the plan.</p>		
7. Core Council follow-up.		
<p>The Core Council recommendations and response to the recommendations are explicitly integrated throughout the plan, both in the goals and in support materials.</p>		
8. Information on practices that promote integrity and ethical behavior.		
<p>Goal 4 on p. 28 describes WS's practices that promote integrity and ethical behavior. This text indicates that there is a strong focus on developing a community of ethical practice at the campus, but current practices and past accomplishments are described more than future plans. This section is presented in a different manner than the other goals, and it might benefit from being made consistent with the rest of the document, which would include creating a list of specific integrity and ethics actions.</p>		
9. Discussion of how the unit is contributing toward Penn State's goals for sustainability.	Stewarding Our Resources	
<p>Goal 6 (p. 32) focuses on WS's sustainability plan. It is organized using the same effective structure as most of the rest of the goals (objectives, strategies, actions). Many of the strategies are connected to other goals, and some of them reflect an advanced perspective on sustainability that goes beyond operational considerations and integrates sustainability thinking and practices in the curriculum, in the community, in faculty development, and more.</p>		
10. Correlation of strategic initiatives to budget planning and adjustments.		
<p>Goal 7 (p. 34) speaks to budget planning. It directly speaks to the Core Council recommendations including making references to find cost savings by working with other campuses in the region. Page 38 describes some scenario planning.</p>		
Promoting Our Health		
<p>Goals 6 references the promotion of human health through sustainable practices.</p>		
Building Our Digital Future		Technology
Additional Observations		
<p>This is a thoughtful and well-structured plan.</p>		