Proposed Directions and Initiatives for the
four key strategic issues facing Bloomsburg University
as identified by SPARC at April 6, 2010 meeting

Strategic Issue #1: Enhancing academic excellence

Narrative: Enhancing academic excellence is fundamental to achieving the University vision. Academic excellence creates personal and professional success for all learners. It is pivotal in recruiting and retaining talented and diverse students and personnel.

Directions (Goals):

1. Create a learning environment for personal and professional success.

Initiatives (Action Items):
   a. Identify and develop centers of excellence
   b. Develop academic programs that prepare students for personal and professional success
   c. Identify and develop areas of student/faculty scholarly activities
   d. Expand study-abroad opportunities
   e. Support Living and Learning Communities
   f. Expand academic internship opportunities
   g. Increase information and technology competence
   h. Provide a general education program that promotes skills, knowledge and cultural awareness, helping to develop each student’s ability to think critically and communicate clearly
   i. Identify and develop opportunities for interdisciplinary curricula and activities
2. *Provide professional development and scholarship opportunities for all university personnel.*

**Initiatives** *(Action Items):*

a. Provide speakers and workshops

b. Develop experts-in-residence programs

c. Provide increased support for writing grants and contracts

d. Ensure systematic mentoring for faculty and staff

e. Ensure support for teaching and learning enhancement

f. Create endowed professorships and programs

3. *Integrate diversity in the learning environment.*

**Initiatives** *(Action Items):*

a. Incorporate diverse ideas and cultures into the curriculum.

b. Identify and implement best practices to increase interaction among diverse populations.

c. Recruit diverse personnel.

4. *Implement and monitor a systematic process of assessment.*
Strategic Issue #2: *Providing quality in a challenging fiscal environment*

**Narrative:** As a public institution historically dependent on tuition and state appropriations, Bloomsburg University strives to maintain fiscal responsibility and enhance academic excellence. New sources of funding must be identified and developed while being good stewards of existing resources.

**Directions (Goals):**

1. *Define priorities by identifying current and future centers of excellence.*

   **Initiatives (Action Items):**
   a. Assess current and planned programs, initiatives, services and operations
   b. Assess the demand for current and new programs/initiatives

2A. *Optimize current resources.*

   **Initiatives (Action Items):**
   a. Re-examine, re-align and re-allocate resources to meet priorities
   b. Build collaborative relationships (community, business, inter- and intra-campus) through the appropriate institutional channels
   c. Collaborate with their counterparts at other PASSHE universities, to identify new initiatives and optimize resources
   d. The University community will be environmentally conscious: reduce, reuse, recycle
2B. *Identify and develop new resources.*

**Initiatives** (Action Items):

a. Build relationships with external stakeholders in concert with University Advancement

b. Establish university/community partnerships in a coordinated effort

c. Develop corporate sponsorships/internships in a coordinated effort

d. Solicit external grant funding in coordination with the Office of Sponsored Programs

e. Increase private sources of funding in partnership with University Advancement in accord with strategic plan priorities.
Strategic Issue #3:  *Designing an enrollment vision in terms of demand, program mix and capacity.*

**Narrative:** Bloomsburg University must respond to the demands of a rapidly changing job market and shifting demographics. Bloomsburg must develop academic and co-curricular programs that support student retention, graduation and personal and career success. Facilities, services and personnel must align with student needs.

**Directions (Goals):**

1.  *Assess enrollment trends and projections in terms of capacity, student demographics, target populations and demand.*

   **Initiatives** (Action Items):
   
   a.  Re-evaluate current enrollment management committee in terms of composition and reporting structure
   
   b.  Examine data on enrollment profiles of high school students, BU’s first year class, current students, graduate students and non-traditional students

2.  *Develop a realistic, dynamic, budget-sensitive, comprehensive enrollment management plan that supports student success.*

   **Initiatives** (Action Items):
   
   a.  Identify enrollment goals for credit and non-credit program growth
   
   b.  Provide relevant information to support programs and services
   
   c.  Continue to foster academic services and initiatives to build on existing successful retention efforts

3.  *Monitor and implement a comprehensive enrollment plan relative to market demands and financial resources.*
Strategic Issue #4: **Developing and fostering a strong sense of community**

**Narrative:** Building a strong sense of community involves stakeholders from all areas of Bloomsburg University, including groups that have been traditionally underrepresented. A strong sense of community enhances commitment among members, mutual support of stakeholders, higher morale, and diversity of members.

**Directions (Goals):**

1. **Communicate effectively across all groups.**
   
   **Initiatives (Action Items):**
   
   a. Strengthen relationships with student and town news groups: The Voice, BU Now, WBUQ, Press Enterprise, WHLM
   
   b. Continue website update to meet the needs of community, including establishment of an Intranet
   
   c. Establish e-mail “specialty groups” that cross areas of community, i.e. cultural events, activities geared to specific interest groups

2. **Create a community that accepts and supports cultural and social differences.**

   **Initiatives (Action Items):**
   
   a. Reinforce recruitment efforts to ensure an increasing number of students, faculty and staff (each group) come from a wide variety of backgrounds that have not been traditionally represented
   
   b. Provide opportunities for on- and off-campus constituents to collaborate. Host “big name” speakers, such as newsmakers and others known for their work in diversity issues, social issues and current events, and use speeches as forum for discussion
   
   c. Establish transparent budget and structure supporting diversity organizations
3. **Improve town/gown relations.**

**Initiatives** (Action Items):

a. Conduct a feasibility study regarding viability of relocating university programs, offices and services downtown

b. Establish faculty, staff and students as a community resource
   1. Host informal gatherings with community members with “value added,” such as providing free services to the community (BU <-> community)
   2. Host formal meetings to share research, reinforce academic reputation
   3. Address BU reputation in community

a. Establish a Town/BU committee to address common issues/concerns

b. Solicit representatives of organizations with a positive impression of BU to advocate for the university and students

c. Produce a free newspaper/newsletter to share the university’s story and distribute in the town and region

d. Garner information about student “good news” to share with the community through traditional venues, such as press releases and the university magazine, Web and social media

e. Support “The Big Event” (The student community service day).
4. *Increase student engagement with the university and community.*

**Initiatives (Action Items):**

a. Develop an online publications clearinghouse

b. Increase number of freshmen in LLC’s to full capacity

c. Enhance space for informal student use; a viable “hang out” space especially for use on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings, such as a coffeehouse with live music and board games, or a juice bar in the Student Recreation Center

d. Support faculty/student and student/student interaction outside classroom

e. Provide increased outreach to non-traditional and commuter students

5. *Strengthen connection with alumni.*

**Initiatives (Action Items):**

a. Connect students with alumni through internships, job shadowing, employment opportunities, recruitment

b. Promote Alumni careers, activities and accomplishments with electronic and other media

c. Develop and strengthen regional alumni chapters