Bloomsburg University Strategic Plan  
*Impact 2015: Building on the Past, Leading for the Future*  
Year-End Review June 2012

In late Fall 2009, Bloomsburg University President David L. Soltz assembled a committee of students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members to embark on a long-range strategic planning process. The committee was self-named, SPARC — the Strategic Planning and Resource Council (membership listing is provided at the end of this document).

With guidance from Dr. Madeleine Wing Adler, a consultant with Penson Associates Inc. and former president of West Chester University, and welcomed feedback from the campus and greater community, SPARC began to develop and compose new mission, vision and value statements. The Council, through extensive discussion and consultation with constituents, also identified the challenges and opportunities facing Bloomsburg University during the next three to five years and how to meet them. The end result identified four key strategic issues to be addressed, accompanied by directions (goals) and initiatives (action items).

**Mission, Values, and Vision**

Beginning fall 2009 and continuing through spring 2010, SPARC met on numerous occasions. Using a SWOT analysis and input from campus meetings, forums and community gatherings, the Council formulated new Mission, Value and Vision statements for Bloomsburg University:

**Mission Statement**
Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania is an inclusive comprehensive public university that prepares students for personal and professional success in an increasingly complex global environment.

**Value Statement**
Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania students, faculty and staff value:

- Collaboration
- Community
- Critical thinking
- Diversity
- Excellence
- Integrity
- Knowledge
- Opportunity
- Personal and professional growth
- Respect
**Vision Statement**
Bloomsburg University aspires to:

- Be a premier public comprehensive university, recognized as a center of thinking, learning and academic excellence.
- Anticipate and address the changing needs of the Commonwealth.
- Be a diverse community that produces positive change.
- Provide resources to maximize opportunities for success.
- Be a good steward of our resources and the environment.
- Develop individuals to be contributing citizens.

**Strategic Issues**

With the three defining statements in place to guide further progress, in April of 2010 SPARC discussed the major challenges facing the university over the next five years and identified four key issues. SPARC then brought these issues before the campus and community constituent groups for comment and critical review. Constituency groups included: University Forum, Planning and Budget, the BU Alumni Board, CGA Senate, town meetings and open campus forums. Feedback was collected during the meetings and from written comments submitted to the SPARC webpage. The list of those four key Strategic Issues and Directions were fine-tuned and presented to President Soltz and his executive team for final review and approval.

**Key Strategic Issues**

1) **Enhancing Academic Excellence:** 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.

   a) Create a learning environment for personal and professional success in a diverse and rapidly changing world.

   b) Provide professional development and scholarship opportunities for all university personnel.

   c) Integrate diversity in the learning environment.

   d) Implement and monitor a systematic process of assessment.
2) Achieving Excellence while Ensuring Financial Sustainability: 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; at the same time Bloomsburg should be a good steward of its existing resources.

a) Identify, examine, align and allocate resources to meet institutional priorities.

b) Coordinate efforts to identify and develop new resources in accord with university strategic priorities.

3) Designing an Enrollment Vision in terms of Demand, Program Mix and Capacity: 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.

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

b) Develop a realistic, dynamic, budget-sensitive and comprehensive enrollment management plan that supports student access and success.

c) Implement and monitor a comprehensive enrollment plan relative to academic excellence, market demands and financial resources.

4) Fostering and Developing a Strong Sense of Community: 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, a global perspective and diversity of members.

a) Communicate effectively among all stakeholders.

b) Promote a diverse community that accepts and supports cultural and social differences.

c) Encourage globalism and environmental awareness and responsibility.

d) Improve town/gown relations.

e) Increase student engagement with the university and community.

f) Strengthen connections with alumni.

Action Items

With the Strategic Issues and Directions defined, SPARC next worked on identifying the specific actions that would be required for achieving both broad and specific goals. Each action item was concrete, measurable and prioritized. Furthermore, action items identified the individual or campus group responsible for implementation. SPARC identified 52 specific action items. With input from the campus, the greater Bloomsburg community and the president’s executive team (in all, comments from almost 200 individuals), the final list of Action Items was completed in June 2010.
In July 2010, SPARC presented a new Strategic Plan to Bloomsburg University President David Soltz. The plan, entitled *Impact 2015: Building on the Past, Leading for the Future,* was then presented to and accepted by the Bloomsburg University Council of Trustees. The approved plan was unveiled to the university community at an Open Forum meeting in September 2010, and to a variety of other campus and community groups throughout the early Fall 2010 semester. Brochures detailing the plan were developed and distributed throughout campus. Additionally, the completed plan, including the Action Items, was made available on the Bloomsburg University website.

**Strategic Plan Implementation**

**SPARC-2**

With the Strategic Plan in final form, SPARC met its initial charge. As the next stage focused on plan implementation, SPARC-2 was formed to support and oversee plan implementation. Appointed by President Soltz, SPARC-2 was comprised of many of the same members as SPARC, but with a few individuals rotating out and new members joining (membership listing is provided at the end of this document).

**Year One, 2010-2011**

In order to focus limited university resources and to prioritize the actions, the President, in consultation with his executive team, identified the Top Twelve Priority Action Steps to begin in ‘Year One.’ Each Top Priority Action supports a specific Strategic Issue (1-4), and a strategic goal, as well as lists the name of the university individual or group responsible for its success. The Strategic Plan, *Impact 2015,* and the Top Twelve Priorities were presented to the Bloomsburg University Council of Trustees at the December 2010 meeting and were approved by the Trustees.

**Year Two, 2011-2012**

Work continued on the Top Twelve Priorities.

**Top Twelve Priorities for the Strategic Plan Action Steps:**
(Numbers and letters refer to the strategic issue and goal number, the italicized name at the end of each goal lists the responsible individual.)

**Strategic Issue 1: Enhancing Academic Excellence**

1.1.a. Identify and develop Centers of Excellence and Innovative Programs. *(Dr. Blake)*
1.1.b.v. 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. *(Dr. Lincoln, Dr. Riley, Dr. Chimi)*
1.3.a. Develop a perception of diversity survey to be administered to all members of university community. *(Dr. Wislock)*
1.4.b. Establish an institutional structure to support assessment plan. *(Dr. Dove Jones, Ms. Slusser)*
Strategic Issue 2: Achieving Excellence while Ensuring Fiscal Sustainability

2.1.b. Assess current programs, services, operations to develop a balanced and sustainable budget. (Dr. Blake, Dr. Rugen, Dr. Somerville, Mr. Evans)

Strategic Issue 3: Designing an Enrollment Vision in Terms of Demand, Program Mix and Capacity

3.1.a. Re-evaluate current Enrollment Management Committee in terms of composition, reporting structure and mission. (Dr. Blake)
3.2.a. Identify enrollment goals. (Dr. Blake)
3.2.b. Develop Enrollment Management plan. (Dr. Blake)

Strategic Issue 4: Fostering and Developing a Strong sense of Community

4.2.a. Review and coordinate diversity activities and events. (Dr. Wislock)
4.2.b. Establish transparent budget and structure supporting diversity organizations. (Dr. Wislock)
4.4.a. Establish and preserve a town/gown committee to enhance relationships. (Mr. Hollister)
4.5.a. Increase number of freshmen in LLCs to full capacity. (Dr. Lincoln)

Action Item Progress

In May 2011, SPARC-2 invited each identified ‘responsible person and/or group’ to report on the progress of each Top Twelve Priority Action Steps at the final SPARC-2 meeting of the semester. Their initial reports are summarized in the document, Year-End Review for June 2011.

The same Top Twelve Priority Action Steps continued to be a major focus during the 2011-12 academic year. SPARC-2 again requested reports from the responsible parties. Their ongoing efforts are detailed below; the Top Twelve Priorities for the Strategic Plan Action Steps appear in green.

STRATEGIC ISSUE 1: Enhancing Academic Excellence.

(1.1a) Identify and develop Centers of Excellence and Innovative Programs. (Dr. Blake)

- The new General Education Program, known as MyCORE, successfully completed the multi-tiered curricular process and will be implemented in Fall 2012. The program is a national model, allowing students to meet general education requirements through both curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities.

- Presidential Strategic Planning Grants were submitted and reviewed for the second year. Six projects were funded for a total of $113,725. Grant areas for enhancing academic excellence included university wide energy impact, undergraduate research, college readiness pathways for high school honors students, community research and outreach, and STEM summer programs.

- All four Colleges have made progress in the establishment of Centers of Vision/Excellence.

The College of Business established the Zeigler Institute for Professional Development (ZIPD) to prepare business majors for personal and professional success in the chosen career direction upon graduation. The ZIPD Core Curriculum will be implemented in Fall 2012. The Leadership and Executive Education Program (LEEP), “designed to develop effective leaders equipped to tackle
obstacles and challenges that initially appear insurmountable,” was launched to assist businesses, organization, and agencies.

The College of Education established the McDowell Institute for Teacher Excellence in Positive Behavior Support, which will “prepare teacher candidates to effectively educate all children and youth in our school systems while simultaneously providing a service to families and communities in our region.” To support its vision of teaching excellence and parental and community support, the College of Education is making progress on the formation of an Early Learning Center, a Literacy Center and an Educational Leadership Center.

The College of Liberal Arts, under the leadership of a new dean, has launched the Center for Visual and Performing Arts, which held its inaugural community wide event at the Moose Exchange on February 4, 2012. Underway is the development of a Center for Community Research and Consulting in order to provide “community access to high quality research and consulting expertise,” and an Applied Liberal Arts Initiative to “empower students to pursue their passion with confidence.”

The College of Science and Technology has articulated a vision of excellence in Health Sciences, Applied Analysis, and STEM Professional Development, with integrative opportunities for undergraduate and graduate research coordinated through faculty teaching, scholarship and service. This integrative model will redefine the teaching-learning paradigm and enhance students’ knowledge, skills, and competitiveness for graduate study and career opportunities. The Cardiac Rehabilitation Clinic was opened in January 2012 and will serve as the beginning of a multifaceted center of excellence in Health Sciences.

Submitted by Dr. Ira Blake, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

(1.1.b.v.) 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. (Dr. Lincoln, Dr. Riley, Dr. Chimi)

2012 General Education Update

A General Education Council was elected in the spring of 2011 and began their work the following summer. Guidelines for developing general education course proposals were developed and distributed. Council members led workshops, visited departments and worked with faculty one-on-one to assist in the development of proposals. The Council met weekly for the entire year to provide departments with feedback on proposals in development and to approve proposals as they moved through the curriculum process. The Teaching and Learning Enhancement Office and the Office of Planning and Assessment hosted workshops and also provided online resources, workshops, and individual support in the development of appropriate course assessments.

The BU Curriculum Committee (BUCC) began receiving proposals late in the Fall 2011 semester for final approval and scheduled extra meetings during and after the end of the semester to review, revise and approve the general education courses necessary for the 2012 freshmen to begin earning General Education Points in the new program.
As of June 2012, 95 courses have been approved to carry general education points covering all 10 goals in the new general education program. All courses were revised with a new Master Course Syllabus format that includes student learning outcomes and assessment. Over 30 additional courses are ready for BUCC review early in the fall semester.

The Marketing and Communications Office developed a communications plan for the new general education and a name for the program: MyCore. This name encourages student to take full ownership of the way they achieve the goals for general education. The goal is to have students understand it is their general education, it is their foundation for higher education achievement and it is their track to ultimate professional and personal success.

The Registrar’s Office developed a degree audit system that will track both course credits and general education points so that students can follow their progress towards graduation; they have developed a means within the student information system by which they can transcript student achievement of goals that are not attached to course credits. The English Department developed a complete revision of Composition 1 with outcomes and assessments that can be used as a model for other writing intensive courses. All students will maintain electronic writing portfolios. The Languages and Cultures Department developed, field tested and, with the support of the Office of Planning and Assessment, is administering a test of language competency through which freshmen can be placed in an appropriate language course or may earn their general education points based on previous achievement.

Priorities for next year include development and review of additional new and revised courses that the 2012 freshmen will be taking as second-semester freshmen, sophomores and juniors as well as development, review and approval of the first co-curricular experiences that will earn general education points. Faculty and staff training is another high priority for the coming year. The Teaching and Learning Enhancement Office, Office of Planning and Assessment, Academic Advising Office, Registrar’s Office, and Graduate Dean (responsible for faculty professional development) are in the process of developing a wide range of training opportunities that will be available to faculty and staff throughout the latter half of the summer and into the fall semester. A third priority is a roll-out of the full MyCore communications plan so that students will fully appreciate and own their general education experience for all four years of their academic career.

Submitted by Dr. Jonathan Lincoln, Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Education

(1.3.a.) Develop a perception of diversity survey to be administered to all members of university community. (Dr. Wislock)

During the 2011-2012 academic year, the Bloomsburg University Diversity and Inclusion Climate Survey-Leadership Team accomplished many components of the implementation plan. The following bullets identify accomplishments.

- Reviewed and analyzed current literature and best practices for the development, application and interpretation of university-level climate surveys.
- Collaborated with the Office of Marketing and Communication to develop a feasible and effective communication plan.
- Established a Campus Climate Survey Information Webpage.
- Posted interview with President Soltz on the BU Today website discussing the importance of the Campus Climate Survey and the value of a diverse campus.
- Received approval for two submitted IRB Proposals (Focus Group and Survey).
- Conducted approximately 15 focus groups from September through November.
• Collected and incorporated focus group data into the university-wide climate survey.
• Determined and obtained incentives for survey participants.
• Identified survey questions and field-tested the draft survey with students, staff, faculty, and administration.
• Emailed survey to entire population of undergraduate and graduate students, staff, faculty (full and part-time), and administration during the spring semester. (A total of 9,623 students and a total of 1133 faculty, staff, and administrators received the emailed survey. The overall return rate was 20%).
• Analyzed data which will continue through the summer and fall semesters.
• Wrote beginning of report in late spring and will continue writing the draft report throughout the summer.

To summarize, the Leadership Team developed a mixed-research methodology (qualitative and quantitative methods) to assess the perceptions of and experiences with diversity and inclusion within the Bloomsburg University community. Data analysis and report writing will be intense during the summer semester. The draft report will be shared with various and diverse groups of students, staff, faculty, and administrators during the fall semester to collect feedback and recommendations.

Submitted by Dr. Sheila Dove Jones, Director, Office of Planning and Assessment and Dr. Robert Wislock, Deputy to the President for Equity and Accommodative Services Director

(1.4.b.) Establish an institutional structure to support assessment plan. (Dr. Jones, Ms. Slusser)

A. Support the monitoring process of the Bloomsburg University Strategic Plan
   • Structured TracDat to document curricular revisions, student learning outcomes, program level outcomes, and linked program level outcomes to BU strategic goals.
   • Worked with the General Education Council to determine quality of rubrics linked to specific general education course proposals.
   • Investigated effective documentation system of student learning outcomes for general education courses interfacing SharePoint and TracDat.

B. Provided printed resources for the General Education Council (VALUE Rubrics)

C. Support the implementation and assessment of the new General Education Program and associated student learning outcomes
   • Provided resources for the General Education Council
   • Conducted language placement testing for the Department of Language and Cultures
   • Provided department-level consultation and assessment workshops
   • Started the entry process for then newly approved General Education courses into TracDat

D. Working with PASSHE to develop interface of SharePoint and TracDat

E. Support the improvement of academic and non-academic programs through systematic assessment of established student learning outcomes and program level outcomes, including the 5-year program reviews
   • Provided resources and consultation for departments/units preparing for 5-year reviews
   • Developed and conducted surveys for the Office of International Education, Office of Corporate and Continuing Education, Office of Academic Affairs; Office of Act 101; BU Health Center; and Residence Life
F. Developed a template (purpose, qualifications, student learning outcomes & deliverables) for requesting graduate internships

Submitted by Dr. Sheila Dove Jones, Director, Office of Planning and Assessment

STRATEGIC ISSUE 2: Achieving Excellence while Ensuring Fiscal Sustainability

(2.1.b.) Assess current programs, services, operations to develop a balanced and sustainable budget. (Dr. Blake, Dr. Rugen, Dr. Somerville, Mr. Evans)

The Division of Academic Affairs continues to review programs, student demand, support services and work processes in light of institutional mission and initiatives in order to deliver the best educational opportunities possible to students as all units strive to contain costs, reduce expenses and identify new revenue sources.

All budgets for colleges, departments and units were reviewed and adjusted to operations and staffing as well as to support educational enrichment. Twenty eight (28) tenure track lines were approved to increase the number of regular faculty delivering student learning opportunities. Results of program review are: two (2) programs (Special Education and MIS/CIS) placed in moratorium; one (1) program (Languages and Cultures) reorganized; and two (2) new programs (B.A.S. in Technical Leadership, minor in Interdisciplinary Middle East Studies) approved.

Courses for the General Education program (MyCORE) as well as related policies, procedures and assessment criteria have completed the curricular process. The new General Education program will be launched in Fall 2012. In addition, twenty-one (21) programs for statewide program-to-program articulation with community college programs have been identified for Fall 2012 enrollment.

To improve student retention and success, a placement testing program was initiated for all first year students and transfers. The goals include the reduction of costs in the recruitment of additional students to replace those lost to academic attrition and to increase the number of students who successfully complete a Bloomsburg University education.

In addition, the Division is participating in the national initiatives of Access to Success and Equity Scorecard, which focus on strategies for reducing the admission, retention and completion gaps between key student groups.

Submitted by Dr. Ira Blake, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

1. The Administration and Finance Division has continued to provide information to the University community regarding the budget status.
   • The Budget Office has worked with the Budget Subcommittee to ensure that the budget process has been transparent to all constituents throughout the University.
   • The Assistant Vice President for Finance, Budget and Business Services, working with the other divisions, developed a plan for use of E&G reserves in response to the new Board of Governors Policy on Financial Health. This plan was used as a model by the other PASSHE universities.
   • The Payroll Office has worked with PASSHE develop a position budget management reporting system to aid in work force planning.
2. The Administration and Finance Division has undertaken a variety of efforts to increase efficiency of operations, save dollars, and measure effectiveness.
   • The Procurement and Operations department has become proactive in assisting departments throughout the University to get the best prices for the purchase of goods and services, securing savings of over $400,000.
   • The Procurement and Operations department has implemented electronic signature approvals for purchasing goods, further streamlining the purchasing process.
   • The Procurement and Operations department, in conjunction with Information Technology, is conducting a survey of print devices and copiers with the anticipation of consolidating document management for significant savings.
   • The Human Resources and Payroll department has implemented the software package, PeopleAdmin, to streamline the hiring process.
   • The University Police and Safety department has implemented a parking software package, ipark, to streamline the vehicle registration process.
   • The Bursar’s Office and the Financial Aid department continue to work with Information Technology to implement PeopleSoft to support financial aid and student billing operations.

3. The Administrative& Finance Division has initiated several projects to increase sustainability.
   • The Procurement and Operations department has introduced sustainability into the procurement process; an example of this being the transition from copy paper with 30% recycled material to 50%.
   • The University completed a guaranteed energy savings contract including the completion of a bio-fuel boiler.
   • The University has utilized the services of Penn State engineering consultants to plan for the elimination of the remaining coal boilers.
   • The University will utilize a green roof in the construction of the dining area in the Luzerne Residence Hall.

Submitted by Dr. Richard Rugen, Vice President for Administration and Finance

STRATEGIC ISSUE 3: Designing an Enrollment Vision in Terms of Demand, Program Mix and Capacity

(3.1.a.) Re-evaluate current Enrollment Management Committee in terms of composition, reporting structure and mission. (Dr. Blake)

The university-wide Enrollment Management Committee performed a review of relevant literature and restructured the committee into three (3) vision-aligned subcommittees: Enrollment Forecasting; Marketing, Branding and Recruitment; and Retention and Completion. The full committee drafted statements of direction and purpose for each subcommittee and, with the help of the Offices of Institutional Research, and Planning and Assessment, established historical profiles for use with future goals, benchmarks and multiyear targets.

(3.2.a.) Identify enrollment goals. (Dr. Blake)

Enrollment targets for academic year 2012-13 focuses on managing growth until the newly implemented master planning process is completed. The overall target for first-time, full-time students was maintained at the fall 2011 target of 1600; the transfer target, focusing on those with associate degrees, is an aggressive one of 10% per year; and general targets of increase for graduate as well as
non-traditional students, the latter primarily with educational delivery at off-campus locations and via distance education.

(3.2.b.) Develop Enrollment Management plan. (Dr. Blake)

The Forecasting Subcommittee drafted a report with recommendations and strategies for achieving desired results. The specific goals identified above were shaped by that report. Respectful of the external variables affecting our fiscal health, an attempt was made to hire a consultant as the enrollment manager to oversee, coordinate and integrate the work and planning of the Enrollment Management Committee as a whole as well as that of the specific subcommittees. That attempt failed. This critical position will be revisited during AY2012-13.

Submitted by Dr. Ira Blake, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

STRATEGIC ISSUE 4: Fostering and Developing a Strong Sense of Community

(4.2.a.) Review and coordinate diversity activities and events. (Dr. Wislock)

The Diversity and Inclusion Task Force did submit a Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan which was accepted by the University administration. A key component in this plan was to establish a University Wide Council on Diversity and Inclusion which would set broad goals and report progress on diversity activities and programs. Each university division would develop its own structure to meet these goals and would implement, evaluate, and report the progress within this structure. This accountability would ensure that there was both a review and coordination of university-wide activities and events. President Soltz is reviewing the task force’s recommendation concerning the formation and composition of the University Wide Council to begin this process.

(4.2.b.) Establish transparent budget and structure supporting diversity organizations. (Dr. Wislock)

The Diversity and Inclusion Task Force formulated and recommended the development of a University structure, with the goal of ensuring accountability in diversity initiatives and programming. This goal and action plan from the Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan follows.

Goal 5. Develop and maintain a permanent system of accountability and responsibility involving all campus entities to ensure diversity and inclusion.

1. Establish a reporting and accountability structure to examine inclusivity and diversity practices.
   a. Establish a University-Wide Council on Diversity and Inclusion with the mission of sharing ideas, reporting progress, and setting broad goals.
   b. Each university division develops a structure which meets the goals of this plan: to prioritize, to implement practices, to evaluate progress; to report within the structure established within Impact 2015.

In May 2012, President Soltz formed a subcommittee to make a recommendation on the formation and composition of the University Wide Council on Diversity and Inclusion. Professor Brian Johnson chaired this subcommittee. The University Council that will be formed in summer/fall 2012 will begin to address and make recommendations on accountability and a structure to involve the campus community in diversity initiatives.

Submitted by Dr. Bob Wislock, Deputy to the President for Equity and Accommodative Services Director
(4.4.a.) Establish and preserve a town/gown committee to enhance relationships. (Mr. Hollister)

The Town/Gown Committee, which was re-established in the fall semester of 2010, is in its second year in an advisory role to the university president and the town’s mayor. The committee continued meeting to discuss issues of mutual interest having impact on the university’s relationship with the Town of Bloomsburg, which serves as host community to the institution.

The committee is comprised of five representatives each from the town and university. Members include two local business leaders, two council members, including the mayor, the town chief of police, two students and three university staff members.

As in the previous year, the committee met on several occasions and discussed a wide range of issues including but not limited to:
- student volunteerism, especially related to the area’s severe flooding in September 2011 and its impact on the community and the university
- Flood recognition event to bring Town/Gown volunteers together in September 2012
- Possibility of BU one-card use in downtown businesses
- collaborative efforts to bring T/G together i.e. student orientation picnic on College Hill and one-year flood recognition in conjunction with home opening football game in September 2012
- student behavior, education and enforcement
- use of BU one-card system with local merchants
- updates on university building projects
- off-campus student housing
- university interest in downtown properties
- downtown parking and upcoming garage study

In addition to regular Town/Gown Committee meetings several other regular initiatives are taking place to enhance relationships between the parties. They include:
- regular university representation at Town Council and other appropriate public meetings
- regular university representation at Scott Township Supervisors meetings
- regular university representation at Columbia County Commissioners meetings
- a university representative on Downtown Bloomsburg, Inc. board of directors
- a university representative on Columbia-Montour Chamber of Commerce board of directors
- regular contact with local Pennsylvania Senate and House of Representatives members
- university representation at appropriate local meetings/events

Also, in an “unofficial” capacity many university personnel (faculty, staff and students) sit as members of various boards and committees for local organizations. These on-going efforts will continue to build a stronger bond between the campus and the community. Meetings and discussion topics are being planned for the summer and fall and it is anticipated this initiative will continue into the foreseeable future.

Submitted by Mr. Jim Hollister, Assistant Vice President for External Relations.
4.5.a. Increase number of freshmen in LLCs to full capacity. *(Dr. Lincoln)*

2012 Living and Learning Community Update

Dr. Mark Bauman, Assistant Professor in the M.Ed. Counseling and Student Affairs graduate program took on the duties of coordinating living and learning communities. Two graduate assistant positions within the student affairs track of that program have been funded and assigned to the Living and Learning Community Program. This provides a learning opportunity for our graduate students and provides staff to work with mentors and freshmen in the development and execution of programming as we expand the number of students involved in these programs.

We are developing team-based models for living and learning communities: teams of faculty teaching courses, residence life/student affairs staff, and relevant offices/organizations provide a team of support and appropriate programming. For example, the Global Education Office will partner with faculty, staff, and student organizations such as the Global Awareness Society International student chapter and the International Student Association to support the Global Awareness LLC. A new LLC opportunity is being piloted for the first time for summer freshmen. Fifty summer freshmen are enrolled in two sections of a Natural Disasters course that will use the Susquehanna River and the Bloomsburg region as a natural laboratory to learn about flooding. Our hope is that this experience will encourage more summer freshmen to continue on in a learning community in the fall semester.

Another project aimed at delivering the learning community experience for more freshmen is a new first semester academic seminar for freshmen developed in the College of Liberal Arts. Faculty will propose special topics that will engage freshmen in deeper learning activities; students selecting similar sections will be housed together and residence life will coordinate programming for these students with the faculty teaching these courses. A team of Liberal Arts faculty, the TALE Director, Director of Residence Life and the Vice Provost recently returned from an AAC&U intensive workshop on High Impact Practices in Higher Education. The participants developed a campus action plan to roll out this program on a wide scale. The first pilot program will be available to 100 freshmen this fall semester. It is expected that all undeclared students will be asked to choose one of these experiences in fall 2013 and the College of Liberal Arts expects to open this opportunity to large numbers of its majors for fall 2014.

*Submitted by Dr. Jonathan Lincoln, Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Education*
2011 Presidential Strategic Planning Grants

In order to encourage new innovative ideas stemming from *Impact 2015* and to jump-start the development of university Centers of Excellence and Innovative Programs, President Soltz introduced the first round of Strategic Planning Grants in 2011. A total pool of $100,000 was available to be awarded for competitive proposals from faculty and staff with awardees identified by the end of spring semester 2011. A review committee was formed and met on several occasions to set the guidelines, review criteria, develop the RFP and review all the submissions. Invitations for proposals went out to all faculty and staff in early April and awards were announced by the President in the first week of May, 2011.

Twenty-three proposals were submitted from faculty and staff and totaled $193,000 in requests. Upon review and discussions, the committee made recommendations to the President and he awarded 13 proposals totaling $96,488.

The Presidential Strategic Planning Grants for 2011 are listed below. SPARC-2 requested progress reports on these grants in May of 2012. The submitted progress reports are appended at the end of this document, titled with the corresponding number and project leader.

   Plan will develop a photovoltaic solar power system and interdisciplinary educational demonstration site on the Bloomsburg University campus near Ben Franklin Hall.

   The Center will provide a vital link between the University and the Community through its proposed downtown location. The many artistic performances and exhibits by Bloomsburg students are not coordinated and are scattered across a range of campus venues.

3. **George Kinzel**, Assistant Director, Residence Life: *Start Fresh or Fresh Start*. $5,000.
   The plan will provide a first year residential program leading to learning and success in and out of the classroom. This program will educate students about making good choices, inform them of campus and community resources and motivate them to become active members of the community.

   The proposed institute will promote greater understanding and appreciation of the value of philosophy among members of the broader Bloomsburg community. These funds will be used to support the first phase of the IAPP – a lecture series open to the public to begin in Academic Year 2011-12.

5. **Cynthia Venn**, Assoc. Professor, Geography and Geosciences: *Center for Earth and Environmental Sciences*. $14,000.
   The Center for Earth and Environmental Studies will have two main purposes: (1) to develop a mechanism, via a web portal, to connect the many disparate groups within the College of Science and Technology and broader university and local community groups that are involved in all facets of environmental studies; and (2) to develop a new model of "service-research" that will involve our students in research activities benefiting the local community and improve student recruitment and retention.
6. Heather S. Feldhaus, Chairperson and Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Criminal Justice: Susquehanna Valley Field School. $1,900.
This project brings together faculty and students with community partners to serve the regional community through multi-disciplinary collaborative summer research and creative projects.

7. Timothy R. McConnell, Professor and Chair, Department of Exercise Science: BUtiful Heart Cardiac Rehabilitation and BUBeFit Weight Loss and Maintenance Program. $4,897.
The Program will be a collaborative effort with the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program, Bloomsburg Hospital designed for individuals with an increased risk for the premature onset of cardiovascular complications and those with stable heart disease. The objectives of the BUtiful Heart Program are to reduce cardiorespiratory risk or the likelihood of recurrent events.

8. Philip Tucker, Associate Professor, Exceptionality Programs: Children’s Choice: A Literacy Initiative for our Region. $4,483.
Major book publishers provide limited copies of their newest titles to be distributed to children in K-6 classrooms. Together with Bloomsburg University Alumni, the plan is to distribute approximately 3200 books to area schools.

9. Jennifer A. Johnson, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology: University-wide Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Preparation Program. $3,472.
The purpose of this proposal is to teach BU students about the GRE by holding office hours, conducting study sessions and administering practice GRE exams.

10. Susan R. Dauria, Professor of Anthropology: The Bloomsburg University Summer Educational Anthropology/Archaeology Camp Program. $2,800.
The purpose of the camp project is to involve college students in the preparation, planning and execution of an archaeological and anthropological learning program for middle and high school students. It will also show middle school and high school students how to do archaeological fieldwork, cultural resource management and anthropological analysis.

11. Thomas J. Starmack, Assistant Professor, Educational Studies and Secondary Education: Bloomsburg University Study Council. $15,000.
This project will develop the Bloomsburg University Study Council (BUSC) to create dynamic, interactive learning experiences for regional school district superintendents and other school administrators united with university faculty and community business leaders.

12. Helmut Doll, Professor, Instructional Technology: Crafting the Future of Distance Learning through Mobile Devices. $12,000.
Plan will create an "Instructional Technology - mLearning" track to teach students how to create mobile applications and create mobile learning applications.

13. Mary Katherine Waibel-Duncan, Assistant Professor, Psychology: Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence. $10,951.
The BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence will offer a state-of-the-art online forum for sharing theories, research, resources, and best practice standards for promoting physical and psychological health through literacy and play. In addition, the BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence will showcase the BU Toy Library as a model campus-based community resource for other colleges and universities in the Commonwealth.
2012 Presidential Strategic Planning Grant Recipients

1. **Dr. Nathaniel Greene**, Professor, Physics & Engineering Technology and **John Holtzman**, Assistant Facilities Director for Energy and Environment: $25,000
   Campus-wide energy monitoring and efficiency Initiative.

2. **Tom Fletcher**, Associate Dean of Extended Programs; **Dr. Steve Kokoska**, Director of BU Honors Program and **Dr. Irvin Wright**, Associate Dean of Academic Achievement: $25,000
   The Educational Pathways Initiative.

3. **Dr. John Hranitz**, Professor, Biological and Allied Health Science: $24,680
   Initiation of a Center for Undergraduate Research and Education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics at Bloomsburg University (BU CURE-STEM).

4. **Dr. Heather Feldhaus**, Professor and Chairperson, Sociology, Social Work and Criminal Justice and **Dr. Christopher Podeschi**, Assistant Professor, Sociology, Social Work and Criminal Justice: $23,915
   Center for Community Research and Consulting.

5. **Dr. John Polhill**, Assistant Dean, College of Science & Technology and **Dr. Jennifer Venditti**, Assistant Professor, Biology: $10,000
   Summer Stem Enrichment Program.

6. **Dr. John Huckans**, Assistant Professor, Physics & Engineering Technology: $5,130
   Environmental Impact Assessment of the Bloomsburg WindJET.
SPARC (Strategic Planning and Resource Council) - 2
Membership

Co-Chairs:

- Dr. Lawrence Fritz, Assistant Vice President; Dean of Graduate Studies and Research
- Dr. Claire Lawrence, Associate Professor, English

Members:

- Mr. Michael Coffta, Associate Professor, Business Reference Librarian
- Ms. Brenda Cromley, Executive Assistant to the President
- Dr. Jeff Davis, Professor: History
- Mr. Erik Evans, Vice President of University Advancement
- Ms. Sharon Fisher, Clerk Typist 2, History Department
- Mr. Tom Fletcher, Associate Vice President and Dean of Extended Programs
- Dr. Victoria Geyfman, Assistant Professor Finance & Legal Studies
- Ms. Kathy Heitzman, JD, Associate Athletic Director
- Mr. Jim Hollister, Assistant Vice President, External Relations
- Dr. Sheila Dove Jones, Director of Office of Planning & Assessment
- Mr. Chris Keller, Director of Admissions
- Mr. Daniel Knorr, Bloomsburg Mayor/ BU Alumnus
- Dr. Jonathan Lincoln, Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Education
- Dr. Robert Marande, Dean, College of Science & Technology
- Mr. Eric Ness, Assistant Vice President of Facilities Management
- Dr. Margaret O’Connor, Associate Professor, Business Education and Information & Technology Management
- Dr. Edward Pitingolo, Associate Professor, Accounting
- Dr. Dianna Cherie Roberts, Assistant Professor, Early Childhood & Adolescent Education
- Dr. Michael Ruffini, Associate Professor, Education Studies & Secondary Education
- Dr. Rosalee Rush, Director of Marketing and Communications
- Dr. Michael Shepard, Professor Geography & Geosciences
- Ms. Alison Stone-Briggs, Director of Academic Internships and Community Outreach
- Dr. Eric Stouffer; Assistant Professor; Psychology
- Dr. Mark Tapsak Associate Professor: Chemistry; FORUM chair
- Ms. Claudia Thrush, Assistant Vice President, Finance, Budget & Business Services
- Dr. Michael Tidwell, Dean, College of Business
- Dr. Barbara Wilson, Associate Professor, Exceptionality Programs
- Dr. Irvin Wright, Assistant to Provost for Diversity Initiatives, Director of Act 101/EOP and Chair of Developmental Instruction
2011 Presidential Strategic Planning Grant Recipients
Progress Reports

1. **Ned Greene**, Physics: University Photovoltaic Solar Array and Educational Demonstration Site. $5,000.

   2011 Margin of Excellence
   and
   2011 President’s Strategic Planning Grant

**FINAL REPORT (MARCH 2012)**

Project Title: Bloomsburg University Photovoltaic Solar Array and Educational Demonstration Site

Margin of Excellence Grant: $10,000 (awarded May 31, 2011, expires February 28, 2012)
President’s Fund Grant: $5,000 (awarded May 11, 2011, expires September 30, 2012)

Project Directors:
Jeff Brunskill, Associate Professor, Department of Geography & Geosciences
Nathaniel Greene, Professor, Department of Physics & Engineering Technology

**ORIGINAL PROJECT ABSTRACT**

Funds are requested to develop a photovoltaic solar power system and interdisciplinary educational demonstration site on the Bloomsburg University campus near Ben Franklin Hall. The three primary objectives of the project are to (1) increase the presence of renewable energy technologies on campus and reduce the university’s carbon footprint, (2) increase institutional knowledge of the benefits and limitations of existing renewable energy technologies, and (3) provide students with a tangible opportunity to learn about solar energy production. The proposed project directly addresses action items listed under strategic issues 1, 2 and 4 in the university’s Impact 2015 strategic plan.

Requested funds will be combined with other grants to install a 3-4 kilowatt, grid-tied photovoltaic array on lower campus in 2011 and then to develop an innovative educational support infrastructure including a digital information kiosk and webpage that will be built in 2012.

**PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- **Solar Array Installed**

On January 6, 2012, construction was completed on a 14-panel, 3.15-kW solar array located on the south-facing slope next to Ben Franklin Hall (Fig. 1). Electrical power from the array is fed into the electrical grid via the nearby Ben Franklin mechanical room. Professors Brunskill and Greene conducted the initial feasibility study, and Professional Engineer Emil Mikle of the Bloomsburg University Office of Planning and Construction coordinated the bidding process among vendors. The installation contract was awarded to Mariano Construction, Inc. (MCI) of Bloomsburg for $14,500. The contract was amended to include an additional $490 for solar panel upgrades (1) and $4,520 for a new electrical panel and transformer that will permit a future six-fold expansion of the array size.

To reduce the contracted cost, BU used its Grounds crew to dig trenches, install electrical conduit, and build the stone base surrounding the array. MCI poured the concrete footers, assembled the
array support frame, and installed the solar panels. In addition, MCI completed all electrical wiring, including the inverters, disconnect box, service panel, and transformer.

Figure 1: Newly installed 14-panel solar array, with Ben Franklin Hall and Hartline Science Center in the background (left and right, respectively).

- Website with Real-Time Data
Real-time power and energy data from the solar array are displayed to the public on a new webpage that is accessible from the BU Green Campus Initiative homepage: http://organizations.bloomu.edu/gci/SolarArray.htm

Screenshots of the solar array webpage, taken on March 7, 2012 at 12:35 PM, are shown in Figures 2 and 3. The embedded solar array data come from the inverter manufacturer, Enphase Energy, Inc. of Petaluma, CA. Each of our 14 solar panels communicates to Enphase via its own DC-to-AC microinverter. Webpage visitors can interact with the Enphase software to view each solar panel’s real-time output and retrospective power-versus-time graphs. The data are archived over the lifetime of the system.

1 The original specification of 235 watts per panel was upgraded to 255 watts.

Figure 2: BU webpage displaying real-time power and energy data for our solar array. At the moment shown, with the sunlight attenuated by a thin cloud, the array was producing 2.97 kilowatts of power, or 94% of its maximum output. Figure 3 shows a one-week series of power-versus-time thumbnail graphs for the BU solar array. The accrued environmental benefits of the solar array are also displayed, in terms of carbon dioxide reduction and its equivalent tree growth. (2)
Figure 3: Power graphs and environmental benefits are displayed by the Enphase Energy program embedded within the new BU webpage.

- Dissemination of Solar Array Information
In its first semester of operation, the BU solar array is already being used as an alternative energy case study in the following courses, which serve over 1000 combined students per year:

  2 A “tree” assumes 10 years of grown of a typical urban sapling (http://www.epa.gov/cleanenergy/energy-resources/refs.html)

PHYSICS 105 Energy: Sources and Environmental Effects
GEOG 105: Environmental Issues and Choices
GEOSCI 255: Meteorology

For example, Dr. Saeed Ahmad, who teaches one section of the physics course, has downloaded raw data (in Excel format) from our solar array for student assignments.

Information about BU’s solar project is also starting to reach the wider community. Nathan Conroy, Assistant Director of Alumni Affairs, has prepared a factsheet about the solar array for campus tour guides (Husky Ambassadors). The first alumni tours of the array occurred in conjunction with the College of Science and Technology Career Day on March 2, 2012. Two visiting teachers from the Columbia-Montour Area Vo-Tech School were also briefed on the system, and the array was featured in a presentation to the Berwick Rotary Club.3

- Grant for Energy Education Kiosk
The original project abstract set a goal to include innovative educational support infrastructure including a digital information kiosk. To fund this broader goal, Drs. Brunskill and Greene sought and received $39,900 of outside funding from Constellation Energy (E2 Energy to Educate grant) in November 2011. Bloomsburg University was one of only 14 awardees nationally. The funds will be used in 2012 and 2013 to construct a steel-and-glass structure that houses a touchscreen kiosk. A combination of in-house and commercial energy education software will run on the kiosk. One function will allow users to manipulate the orientation of a solar panel on a two-axis, motor-driven mount.

- Sustainability
The energy generated by the BU solar array is eligible for Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs) and also defrays electrical utility costs. These two benefits amount to approximately $900 per year.4 The solar array investment of $20,000 (see budget) will thus achieve simple payback in 22 years. The system panels and micro inverters are warranted by the manufacturers for 25 years with little or no maintenance. Hence, in the long term, the solar array is expected to pay for itself.

Assuming an average of 12.3 kWh generated per day at $0.10 per kWh and an SREC value of $100 per credit (1000 kW)

SOLAR ARRAY BUDGET

• Expenses
  Solar array hardware and installation (5) $14,500
  Solar panel upgrade (6) $490
  Electrical service panel and transformer (7) $4,520
  Consulting fee (8) $60
  Signage (9) $430
  TOTAL $20,000

• Funding
  2011 Margin of Excellence grant $10,000
  2011 President’s Strategic Planning grant $5,000
  Green Campus Initiative contribution $1,000
  Academic Affairs contribution $4,000
  TOTAL $20,000

5 Contract with Mariano Construction, Inc.
6 SunivaOptimus 235 upgraded to Optimus 255
7 A 150-amp panel and 45-kVA transformer are dedicated to the solar project and can accommodate a six-fold expansion of the solar array, covering most of the south slope next to Ben Franklin Hall.
8 Macslab.com calculation of optimal year-round array tilt angle.
9 This expense is pending sign approval by the BU Space and Facilities Committee
2. Julie Kontos, Interim Dean-Liberal Arts: The Center for Visual and Performing Arts
President’s Strategic Planning Grant 2011 – Final Report
The College of Liberal Arts’ Center for Visual and Performing Arts

1. The plan going into the grant: Create a destination for the arts in downtown Bloomsburg featuring the talents of BU students and faculty from the departments of Art, English, Music, Theatre and Dance. Ultimately, the goal is to secure a permanent location housing both the Center for Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA) and a Visual and Performing Arts Living and Learning Community (LLC).

2. Accomplishments made on the project: The CVPA secures a temporary home in the Moose Exchange Building in downtown Bloomsburg and begins an impressive schedule of performances featuring the amazing talents of BU students. The following events were held at the Exchange during the 2011-2012 academic year:

   November: Dr. Tracey Schmidt-Jaynes, Flute & Prof. Matt Slotkin, Guitar
   February: Literary Readings, A Taste of the Arts, and V-Day 2012
   March: Big Band & Swing Dance (Featuring the BU Jazz Ensemble, Dr. Stephen Clickard, Conductor, Prof. Julie Petry & Student Richard Leone, Dance Instructors)
   April: Personal Adornment Day and Makeup Extravaganza

a. Current Status: The schedule of events for the 2012-2013 academic year is being finalized. Discussions are occurring concerning the formation of the LLC and securing property to house the CVPA and LLC.

3. How the grant money was spent: The total amount of the grant was $14,985.00. As proposed, the bulk of the money was spent on a 3-year lease for the Moose Exchange building, with the balance of the money going toward promotion of the events scheduled at the Moose (i.e., posters and newspaper ads).

4. Highlights of the project: The CVPA’s showcase event in February, “A Taste of the Arts” was a major success. For three hours, BU students presented musical acts, theatre presentations, dance performances, art demonstrations, poetry readings, and scholarly presentations. Hundreds of students, faculty, staff, and townspeople enjoyed an amazing afternoon. Plans are underway to make this an annual event, with special funding being set aside by the University and College of Liberal Arts.

a. Difficulties encountered: We need more money! It is rather impressive that the majority of the events were accomplished with a scarcity of funding. Based on the success of the events, it would be great to be able to have more permanent funding guaranteed for the CVPA. It also would be great to partner more actively with the Development and Advancement Office in order to help secure a permanent location for the CVPA and to make potential donors aware of this fantastic opportunity.

5. Student contributions to the project: Maximal! With the exception of the first performance by two faculty in the Music department, BU students were the talent for all events sponsored by the CVPA!

6. Likelihood for continuation of project and how this will be achieved: In light of the huge success of “The Taste of the Arts”, it is highly likely that this event in particular will become an annual tradition. With the involvement of the Development and Advancement areas, it is hoped that at least by 2015, we will have a permanent location secured, a healthy LLC in place, and revenue streams identified to allow not only the continuation of this project, but its growth.
The mission of “FRESH Start” was to provide a first year residential program designed to allow students to develop skill building tools leading to their success both in and out of the classroom. Participants were provided with opportunities to increase cognitive skills as they navigated the first year challenges while encouraging them to be active community members and global citizens. Student engagement through shared experience is critical to intellectual and personal development, and it connects the work of Academic and Student Affairs to student learning and success. The FRESH Start program educated students about making good choices, informed them of campus and community resources and motivated them to become active members of the community. Our objective was to have these first year students, who were engaged in the series, develop the necessary skill sets to become self-directed learners and persist to graduation.

Recruitment of students to participate in the FRESH Start program began in the Summer of 2011 with email invitations and committee representatives speaking about it during July Orientation Days. We also had a table at the Activities Fair during Welcome Back Weekend and trained Community Assistant Staff in the targeted residence halls of Lycoming and Elwell about the goals & objectives of the series so they could assist with recruitment as well. All skill building workshops were open to the general student body of Bloomsburg University and free of charge. All workshops and events took place on the campus of Bloomsburg University.

The following topics & skill sets were covered in various workshops offered in the Fall semester:

- Academic Engagement & Exploration
- Study Skills
- Test Taking Skills
- Note Taking Skills
- How to Avoid Procrastination
- Exploring Career Options
- Declaring a Major/Minor
- Study Abroad Opportunities
- The Value of a Peer and/or Faculty Staff Mentor
- Resume Writing & Interviewing

Anxiety & Conflict Management
- Coping skills as students deal with various transitions
- Stress Management skills
- Communication skills with others (in person, on line, in writing, non-verbal, etc…)
- Mediation skills
- Identification of University resources available to support them
- Interpersonal Skills & sensitivity towards others
- Relationship building skills

Financial Management
- Budget Management skills
- Balancing employment, academics, social and personal life
- Loans, Scholarships and Credit Card Debt
- Maximizing one’s Dining Dollars experience
- Diversity & Multiculturalism
- Understanding differences amongst others and the value of them in our society
- Campus resources/events to promote acceptance, tolerance and celebration
- Non-discrimination messaging regarding gender, religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, class, etc.
- Cross-socialization of student organizations and common missions

Health & Wellness
- Alcohol & Drug education
- Smoking, Caffeine & Natural Highs
- Sleeping patterns
- Establishing a Balanced Eating diet
- Effective exercising and use of Recreational resources
- Illness prevention and resources
- Sexual Awareness, testing and resources
- Dealing with Burnout

Student Leadership Development
- Leadership skills
- Facilitation skills
- Community service work and collaboration with others
- Teamwork
- Event Planning
- Motivating Self and Others to get involved

Ethics & Civic Engagement
- Use of social media
- Marketing Skills
- Goal setting and De-briefing processes

FRESH Start workshops and events were led by a variety of educational professionals including representative from Student Affairs Divisions, Academic Affairs and local community officials. Attendance at workshops varied from 5 – 200 depending on the topic interest and date/time/location that it was offered. Evaluations of each session were administered at the completion of the session.

Overall Summary of Success

The implementation of the FRESH Start pilot program has had initial success, meeting many of the goals and objectives the committee had established for the series. During the first eight weeks of the fall semester, students were welcomed to the Bloomsburg University campus community through a series of activities and programs orienting them to services, resources and staff who were available to help with both their developmental and academic growth. These programs targeted the transitional challenges for their first year experience. They were provided with a wide variety of opportunities to master valuable skill sets which included effective communication, problem-solving, listening, time management, stress management, leadership, teamwork, money management, relationships, note-taking, studying, test-taking, critical thinking, public speaking, and resume writing. In addition, cultural awareness, community involvement, academic engagement, understanding of social responsibility regarding one’s actions and cross socialization amongst their peers was encouraged and supported through a variety of recreational opportunities. FRESH Start provided a platform for various university departments and services to unite together in common purpose to serve the needs of our incoming students. The collaborative work opened doors for a healthy exchange of resources and support offered to this group. The ability to network with
colleagues to gather information and create workshops and events that could help students learn valuable cognitive skills while participating in enjoyable sessions seemed to offer rich and rewarding experiences. Many of these Student Affairs and Academic connections continue, even after the conclusion of FRESH Start series.

Ways to Improve as We Move Forward

Our pilot for the FRESH Start series began in Fall 2011. The value of offering this type of program to first year students on our campus allowed us a very good opportunity to see both the opportunities this type of series can offer to a segment of our students, but also illustrated some of the challenges associated with collaborative efforts when delivering effective skill building workshops. It was originally designed to target undeclared students, but as recruitment for the program progressed and new students became familiar with the new initiative, more wanted to be involved who were not in the target population. At that time, a decision was made to accept an expanded, more eclectic population. In reflection, that decision, to not stay within the original target population, compromised some of the original focus and goals. In the future we would move back in the direction of our targeted student population (Undeclared students, Returning Summer Students). By doing so, it would allow us to develop a more focused programmatic effort in a smaller community environment. One idea currently under consideration would be to establish a Living Learning Community for Undeclared Students and offer the FRESH Start program to students as a skill series outside of the classroom. Students would reside in the same facility, perhaps share core classes and build stronger connections and guidance while exploring options of different academic majors and put to practice those cognitive skill sets learned.

Advertising for the workshops and events conducted during the 8 weeks were initially done via brochures, handouts, Today page announcements and emails to registered students. If FRESH Start students are housed in one facility, this would allow us to better utilize their living area for updates/communication about events, meetings and workshops. The other component of the series that we would consider revising is defining the balance between what participants would be required to attend and what would be optional. All workshops during this pilot year were optional, primarily because students were living in many areas of campus and there was recognition that class schedules would create some time conflicts. However, with a smaller group of targeted students, perhaps on similar academic tracks, we will consider defining a certain amount of workshops as mandatory for all participants and then allow them to voluntarily attend others as deemed appropriate.

Another suggestion is to identify ways to better connect some faculty with the series who perhaps may even have some of the FRESH Start students in their courses. The personal connection with a known faculty member and a Student Affairs staff person would create a better union for these students. The combination of mentoring or group follow-up meetings to process their living/learning environment with trusted staff offering support networks both in the classroom and in the hall would help to create a seamless learning environment.

As with other Learning Communities, it would be beneficial to bring all FRESH Start students back a few days early to move in and attend activities focused on community building, meeting participating faculty and professional staff and participate in a Quest teambuilding experience. The intent of these activities is to set a defined level of community expectations and create a more comfortable social environment.

At the conclusion of the FRESH Start skill building series, it would be advantageous to sponsor a closing event/banquet to bring all participants & mentors together, recognize accomplishments and reaffirm the goals of the program as they move further into the semester and their first year.
5. **Scott C. Lowe**, Chair Philosophy Department: Institute for Applied and Popular Philosophy

Our SPARC grant was used this year in support of the initial public lecture of the Center for Applied and Popular Philosophy. On April 23, 2012, Prof. Garry Hagberg, James H. Ottoway Jr. Professor of Philosophy and Aesthetics at Bard College, and guitarist for the Atlantic Jazz Trio, gave his talk, “Playing as One: Group Improvisation and Collective Intention”. Earlier in the day, Prof. Hagberg had presented a workshop to BU Music students. From that group he recruited a bassist, rhythm guitarist, and saxophonist, so we had a jazz quartet available to play together and illustrate the group improvisation and collective intention that was the subject of Prof. Hagberg’s talk. Over 100 people attended the talk and exit surveys were collected. Prof. Hagberg’s talk was also supported by $1500 grant from the COLA Special Initiatives fund; $144.80 was used from the SPARC fund to pay for refreshments.

In the coming academic year we hope to sponsor three talks by BU faculty, as well as one by an invited speaker. The cost of advertising and refreshments for the in house talks will be covered exclusively by the SPARC grant. We will again seek additional funding from another source to help support the costs of inviting an outside speaker.

6. **Cynthia Venn**, Assoc. Professor, Geography and Geosciences: Center for Earth and Environmental Sciences.

**Progress Report for Presidential Strategic Planning Grant: Center for Earth and Environmental Studies**

**Project Dates: May 15, 2011-May 14, 2013**

**Project Coordinators: Dr. Cynthia Venn & Dr. Jennifer Whisner, Geography & Geosciences**

**Original Plan:**
1. To develop a web portal to connect various groups on campus and in the larger community to provide an information center about the various facets of environmental studies being performed on campus and in the local and regional area and to facilitate communication among those groups working on environmental projects.
2. To prepare a new generation of environmental scientists through a service-research experience by a) increasing the number of students involved in student research by funding 1 student in summer 2011 and 2 students in summer 2012 and b) attracting and retaining student in the environmental sciences.

**Accomplishments, Current Status, and Highlights:**
The website development is ongoing and we hope to have the prototype up sometime during fall 2012. Dr. Whisner has been spearheading that effort with the help of a part-time student worker, Nicole Burfiend. They have designed the structure and webpages and are developing a structure that will allow information and links to be easily posted. Just before the start of fall 2011, grant money was used to help fund the Geography and Geosciences “Boot Camp,” which included the Quest High Ropes course followed by an orienteering course and then overnight camping at Frances Slocum State Park, and geology field trips the next day through the Wyoming Valley. As
expected, the experience fostered camaraderie among the students and enthusiasm for environmental studies that continued through the academic year. Due to the repeated successful outcomes of “Boot Camp”, we expect it to be a self-sustaining activity for years to come. By the time the funding was awarded in May 2011, it was too late to recruit an additional student to the team of 5 undergraduates already in place and funded by the Susquehanna River Heartland Coalition for Environmental Studies (SRHCES) and by the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry to do research on water quality in the Susquehanna River Drainage Basin. The funding for the one summer student was therefore used to fund two undergraduates to work part-time throughout this academic year in cooperation with the Briar Creek Watershed Alliance, doing biweekly sampling of ten sites in the Briar Creek watershed and subsequent chemical analyses. Although we were able to pay only two students, a third was so interested that he volunteered for the project, demonstrating just the sort of enthusiasm we hoped to promote via this grant. This project is continuing through the summer of 2012, funded by the SRHCES, and the students will present the results at local, regional and national venues. One undergraduate and one recent graduate (full-time and half-time, respectively) are funded by this grant in Summer 2012: the first to study the water chemistry and structural geology of Alexander Caverns near Milroy, PA, in cooperation with the Bald Eagle Grotto, who are very interested in her findings, and the latter to work with the 5 students we have in the lab on summer projects and to synthesize the 3 years of data we have on water quality in the Susquehanna River to deliver to the SRHCES.

Grant Money, Difficulties and Adjustments:
Grant expenditures are appended at the end of this report.*We have had to make some adjustments in the initial projected expenditures in addition to those outlined above. Our successful team-building activities cost less than expected, and we are using the left-over monies to reach out to regional high school students through the TRiO/Upward Bound Program. The remaining half salary ($1500) will be used to fund undergraduates in the summer 2012 and the next academic year both in this effort and in service-research. Any monies left over from the 2012 “Boot Camp” will be used to continue the outreach efforts. For the 2012-2013 academic year, the Presidential Strategic Initiative Grant will help fund interactions between Geography and Geosciences faculty and students and area high school students. During summer 2012, Dr. Whisner, an undergraduate geosciences major, and a new graduate will co-teach an enrichment course for students from nine area high schools who are participants in Bloomsburg University’s residential Upward Bound Summer Academy. Students who choose this course as an elective will be exposed to natural disaster-related geosciences concepts, possible new career paths, and positive female science role models. In addition, Dr. Whisner and a group of geosciences majors will lead a field trip for the entire group on which we will discuss environmental issues specific to this area. Following this model through fall 2012 and spring 2013, Dr. Whisner and Geosciences majors will travel to one of the TRiO/Upward bound school each month to develop connections among the high school students, area watershed groups, and the University.

Sustainability:
The Center for Earth and Environmental Studies (CEES) clearinghouse website should be sustainable, once it is completed. Our student programmer has been working on a user-friendly, non-technical interface for making updates and changes to the website, so we plan on having one of the department student workers be the webmaster. If our plan to build connections between area high school students and local watershed groups is successful, and if we can 1) establish a protocol for sampling and 2) raise funds for sampling and analysis equipment, we would like the high school students to start contributing to their communities through citizen science – periodic, regular
sampling of degraded streams, and publication of those data to the CEES website! We envision future EGGS majors, perhaps associated with department student groups, assisting the high school students with sample collection, analysis, and QA/QC. This activity could partially fulfill the new general education requirement for responsible citizenship as a co-curricular learning experience, and would allow students to earn credit for a professionally interesting and personally fulfilling experience. If this seems promising, and sufficient hours are involved, the department will propose this as a recurring activity for approval and assessment for GEPs. If the time commitment is insufficient, then we will provide activity information and verification signatures so students can catalog this experience on a co-curricular transcript through the SOLVE office. For this plan to be sustainable over the long term, we will need to find a means by which faculty can be compensated for at least some of the many hours invested in this project. We plan to seek outside funding to make this possible.

*Center for Earth and Environmental Sciences

**Award Information**

- Private mount: $14,000.00
- Fund: 1012120001
- WBS: 1012120112
- Start Date: 5/15/2011
- End Date: 5/14/2013
- Extension:
- Project Director: Cindy Venn

**Budget**

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1. What was your plan going into the grant?

The Susquehanna Valley Field School (SVFS) was designed to supplement traditional summer internships and individual research experiences by adding the opportunity for student researchers and tier faculty mentors to meet periodically with other student and faculty researchers as well as members of the regional community to learn about multiple methodologies and their application to regional issues. The Field School serves as a model of regional, multi-institutional higher-education research and service for undergraduate students and faculty. SVFS Goals:

- Generate student involvement in faculty-sponsored research focused on regional needs/issues
- Provide integrating seminars where students:
  § learn how to report on their objectives and findings to an interdisciplinary group
  § gain information and develop new perspectives on the implications of their research or its relationship to other regional issues
  § increase their interest in careers in central PA
- Share university resources to help respond to needs in the Susquehanna Valley region.

2. What accomplishments were made on the project? What is its current status?

This summer the Field School hosted a total of five integrating seminars and co-hosted a research conference with the Geisinger Center for Health Research and Bucknell University. We had eight students working on Field School projects and two additional Bloomsburg University students who attended Field School events in order to learn more about the program. Twelve Bucknell students participated in at least one Field School event.

Our student participants this year were:
- Shannon Bilder and Nick Telepak who designed and implemented an archaeology summer field camp in collaboration with BU’s Quest program and under the direction of Dr. Susan Dauria from the Department of Anthropology.
- Brock Saylor who conducted a campus-wide tree census using GPS technology and i-Tree software to conduct an analysis of the benefits of trees in this setting under the direction of Dr. Jeffrey Brunskill from the Department of Geography and Geosciences.
- Brandon Vinson who worked with multiple community groups to explore the feasibility of establishing a backpack feeding program for youth in our region. He used existing literature to identify peer programs and best practices and then used interviews and participant observation in existing settings within our area to determine appropriate placement for such a program here in our region. Brandon was mentored by Mr. Tim Pelton from the SOVLE office and Dr. Heather Feldhaus from the Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Criminal Justice.
- Eowna Young Harrison, Ryan Jarvis, Andrew MacMillan, and Maddison Meyers worked with the Bloomsburg Taskforce on Racial Equity to design and conduct a study of attitudes toward diversity and goals for the Taskforce among residents of the Bloomsburg community. They
reviewed existing literature on community efforts to increase acceptance of diversity, met with
taskforce members, interviewed community members, conducted and analysis on their findings
under the supervision of Dr. Heather Feldhaus from the Department of Sociology, Social Work,
and Criminal Justice.

Our schedule of summer events was as follows:
• June 11 – Visit Bloomsburg University Archaeology Summer Camp Field Site. Were
provided with an overview of the project, its development, and the opportunity to interact with the
middle school participants as well as other staff. Seven students, two faculty, and one community
partner attended.
• June 24 – Visit the Central Susquehanna Community Foundation in Berwick to hear Brian
Auman of SEDA-COG talk about the Walkable Communities Project. Six students, two faculty,
and one community partner attended.
• July 1 – Travel to Williamsport to work with a Bucknell Team collecting community
survey data for the Williamsport Community Health Survey. Four Bloomsburg students, four
Bucknell students, and three faculty attended.
• July 15 – Travel to Bucknell to present our own work and hear research briefs from
Bucknell teams. Eight Bloomsburg students and three faculty attended as did seven Bucknell
students and three of their faculty.
• July 29 – Seminar at Bloomsburg in the use and applications of GIS and GPS mapping
technology. Four students and one faculty member attended.
• August 9 – Final Research Symposium at the Geisinger Center for Health Research. Nine
Bloomsburg University and twenty-six Bucknell University students presented their work at the
conference. Six Bloomsburg faculty and staff, five Bucknell faculty, and approximately 50
Geisinger staff also attended.

3. How was the grant money spent?

We spent $186.25 on food for the summer events. We spent less than we anticipated because
some of our community partners agreed to cover the costs of hosting some events.

We spent $150 producing posters for the student’s presentations at the Susquehanna Valley
Undergraduate conference.

We did not spend any of the funds allocated for honorariums. All of our speakers ended up being
local and declined the honorarium offer.

We did not spend any travel funds because faculty chose to driver personal vehicles and not bill
the university for those miles as a service to the program and as a convenience. We did complete
proper Field Trip and insurance paperwork when appropriate.

4. What were the highlights of the project and what difficulties did you encounter?

We were very pleased with all of the events this summer, but were particularly excited that the
final research symposium went so well. Our students presented high quality work and received
very good feedback from our own faculty as well as community members, faculty from Bucknell,
and researchers from Geisinger’s Center for Health Research. The conference organizers were so
pleased with the event that Geisinger immediately asked if we would do it again next year and began planning ways to expand it to include more schools and more Geisinger personnel. We also made contacts at the event that have led to further collaboration with Geisinger researchers on projects that promise to provide important opportunities for student and faculty researchers.

We use entrance and exit surveys to assess student experiences with the field school. While a sample of 8 is far too small to perform meaningful statistical analysis, we did find that all students felt that the program helped them become more aware of regional issues, helped them form relationships with other student researchers, made them feel more connected to their community, made them feel more confident working as a professional in their field, and provided them with a better experience than an internship alone would have. All report that they would participate again and would recommend the experience to friends. In terms of areas where we could improve, the students would like more meetings that include community partners but feel that the work load and student stipends associated with the field school are appropriate.

Our greatest challenge, as it has been each year since the program began, is faculty recruitment. Mentoring a student so intensively is a great undertaking and adding responsibilities associated with the Field School adds to a very busy summer. Our inability to offer faculty any kind of stipend or honorarium for their work makes it harder for us to recruit involved participants.

5. How were any students (graduate or undergraduates) put to productive work on the project?

As described above, they completed and presented individual projects and also had the opportunity to learn about research being conducted in other fields.

6. What do you see about the likelihood for continuation and/or long term sustainability of the program? What plans are being made to achieve that end?

This program existed for several years prior to this grant and we anticipate that it will continue. Each year we learn more about the best ways to achieve our goals and refine our methods accordingly.

7. Timothy R. McConnell, Professor and Chair, Department of Exercise Science: BUtiful Heart Cardiac Rehabilitation and BUBeFit Weight Loss and Maintenance Program.

Project Title: BUtiful Heart Cardiac Rehabilitation and BUBeFit Weight Loss and Maintenance Program
Grant Director: Timothy R. McConnell, Ph.D.
Department: Exercise Science
1. What was your plan going into the grant?
   A. The primary objectives of the BUtiful Heart Cardiac Rehabilitation Program are to reduce cardiorespiratory risk or the likelihood of recurrent events by enhancing the volume of exercise and physical activity performed.
   B. The primary objectives of the BUBeFit Weight Loss and Maintenance Program are to reduce obesity and associated comorbidities, ameliorate weight gain or weight re-gain after weight loss and promote weight loss and compliance preceding and following Bariatric surgery by enhancing overall caloric expenditure.

2. What accomplishments were made on the project? What is its current status?
   A. Final approval was obtained through PASSHE Legal.
   B. BU public information was contacted and assisted with advertising.
   C. Program brochures were developed, approved, and were and continue to be distributed to local hospitals and doctors’ offices.
   D. Account was established with the Huskie Research Corporation.
   E. Program enters its 2nd semester (Summer 12) with 6 active participants.

3. How was the grant money spent? (A brief itemized list is okay.)

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   Total Activity: 4,896.00
   Available Balance: -3,825.20

   Funds will soon be allocated for the purchase of a new exercise cycle.

4. What were the highlights of the project and what difficulties did you encounter? The highlights of the program are that it provides an excellent service to BU community members with a specific need. Current participants are very satisfied with the service they receive. In addition, the program provides an excellent hands-on opportunity for our students who work in the program.

5. How were any students (graduate or undergraduates) put to productive work on the project? The program is supervised by Exercise Science graduate students under my auspices. They are involved with initial client health risk screens, development of exercise prescriptions, leading warm-up activities, teaching proper exercise technique, checking vital signs, reporting any
difficulties, and assuring client safety. This is an excellent experience similar to what they will experience in the professional arena.

6. What do you see about the likelihood for continuation and/or long term sustainability of the program? What plans are being made to achieve that end? The Exercise Science department has allocated facilities, equipment, student work study hours, and faculty supervision to this program. The fiscal goal of the program is to cover operational costs. The educational goals are to provide an excellent practical experience for our students. The fee structure is based on a pay per semester basis, prorated for those who start mid-semester. Therefore, the structure is in place and the plan is to continue the program indefinitely.

8. Philip Tucker, Associate Professor, Exceptionality Programs: Children’s Choice: A Literacy Initiative for our Region.
Project Title: Children’s Choice: A Literacy Initiative for our Region
Submitted by: Dr. Philip Tucker, Exceptionality Programs

Noted below is a summary of progress on our grant over the past year:

1. What was your plan going into the grant?
Our plan was to address the University’s Strategic Issue 4: Fostering and developing a strong sense of community. Specifically, we planned to address the following two action items:

1) Improve Town/Gown Initiative: Strengthen a commitment to diversity initiatives in the general public and within town governance: As a sponsor for this initiative, the university will be recognized for their role in contributing thousands of the most current and notable works in children’s literature to regional school classrooms and libraries and helping to address the literacy needs of children from diverse backgrounds. The schools that are participating in this project represent the full range of diversity categories (i.e., Socio-economic, Race/Ethnicity, ESL, Exceptionalities, and Gender). The Bloomsburg University logo will be placed on the inside cover of each book. Teachers and students from participating schools will be reminded of the university’s commitment to literacy each time they read the donated books. Since these books will stay at participating schools, future students will also be exposed to the quality books provided through this endeavor.

2) Strengthen connection with alumni: Promote alumni careers, activities and accomplishments with electronic and other media. The project personnel from participating schools are all Bloomsburg University graduates and alumni who will be adding to their professional development through this endeavor and who will be acknowledged for their accomplishments through press releases, a journal article and a national presentation.

2. What accomplishments were made on the project? What is its current status?

We have accomplished all of our goals for the project:
Beginning in September 2011, we inventoried, labeled, sorted and distributed 3200 books (for children in K-6 settings) published in 2011-12 to six elementary schools located in Hazleton and Lewisburg. Each book was labeled with a sticker that included the Bloomsburg University Carver Hall logo. The books were sorted into bins of approximately 30 books and rotated through the participating schools from September through February of the 2011-12 school year. The children voted on the books that they read and those votes were tallied along with votes from four other regions in the United States and a list of favorites was identified. All of the books that were distributed have been given to the participating schools. Additionally, an extra set of the approximately 700 main titles (along with extra copies) will be offered to the Bloomsburg town library, the university library and local private schools.

The community personnel for the project were all Bloomsburg University alumni: Jane Foderaro, Reading Specialist, Freeland Elementary School, Hazleton, PA; Wendy Yurkanin, Reading Specialist, Heights Terrace Elementary School, Hazleton, PA; Erin Morath, Reading Specialist, Kelly Elementary and Linntown Intermediate Schools, Lewisburg, PA; and Kevin Schadder from McAdoo-Kelayres Elementary School. Their work was noted on the Bloomsburg University website and in an article with the Bloomsburg University Magazine. The voting results from their schools became a part of a monograph published by the International Reading Association in April 2012.

3. How was the grant money spent?

Funding was spent on: 1) Printing: 25000 ballots that were used by the 2500 children participating in the project; 2) Office supplies: tote boxes, book covers and tape for the 3200 books; 3) Travel to and from Hazleton and Lewisburg school districts throughout the project and travel and conference fees for the national presentation and training session. As the closeout date for this grant is October 31, 2012, plans are to use the remaining money for the printing of additional ballots, tote boxes, and book deliveries of a new round of books to be delivered starting in July 2012.

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4. What were the highlights of the project and what difficulties did you encounter?

The project highlights included the large participation by area school children; 2500 children from the regional schools participated in the project and voted on their favorite books. A second highlight was the national presentation of the voting results and publication of the monograph identifying the top books of the year as voted on by our participants and those from four other
regions in the United States. Lastly, the Bloomsburg University logo is now on the cover of 2500 books shelved in regional school libraries and classrooms.

5. How were any students (graduate or undergraduates) put to productive work on the project?

Graduate assistants Dave Chalecki, Jesse Stradnick, and Alyssa Adams participated in the project, helping with inventorying, labeling, sorting, and transporting books. During the flood week (Fall 2011), two graduate students came in and helped with the major sorting of the 3200 books (photos were posted on the BU today page and the Bloomsburg University Magazine). One difficulty was a delay in some school participation due to the flood.

6. What do you see about the likelihood for continuation and/or long term sustainability of the program? What plans are being made to achieve that end?

Given our success over the past year, we have been asked to run the project for another year with some different schools in the region. We will receive approximately 4000 new books (worth $80,000) published in 2012-13 for children in K-6 settings. The books will be provided for free. We will need to commit to presenting the voting results at a national conference in April 2013. As yet we do not have funding or a sponsor to honor our commitment to present on the results. If/when we find a sponsor; we will place their name and logo on the books that will go out to the partner schools. To this end we will seek funding from the university (one grant was denied so far) or seek funding from entities outside of the university who may be interested in supporting the project with approximately a $3000 contribution.

9. Jennifer A. Johnson, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology: University-wide Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Preparation Program.

Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania
Presidential Strategic Planning Grant: Final Report

Project Title: University-wide Graduate Record Examination (GRE) Preparation Program
Project Coordinator: Jennifer A. Johnson, PhD (Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology)
Completed in coordination with Undergraduate Teaching Assistants:
Jessica Smith (Psychology) and Elizabeth Moore (Psychology)

1. What was your plan going into the grant?

The plan for the grant was to provide free and/or low-cost GRE preparation for all students, staff, and alumni of Bloomsburg University, as well as residents of the town of Bloomsburg to help said people achieve their personal, academic, and professional goals (Strategic Goal 1, Action Plan 1b). To achieve this, I planned to use the Presidential Strategic Planning Grant funds to (1) acquire GRE preparation materials for the use of those preparing for the GRE, (2) hire two undergraduate Teaching Assistants for the 2011 – 2012 academic year to offer study groups, office hours, and
practice tests, and (3) attend a GRE Test Preparation Workshop for Campus Educators to learn more about the GRE.

2. What accomplishments were made on the project? What is its current status?

All goals of the project were accomplished. I first purchased GRE preparation materials before the start of the fall 2011 semester. Those materials are available in McCormick 2155 for the entire campus community’s use. I, with the help of my Teaching Assistants, also prepared GRE handouts with tips and practice questions that were made available to anyone who attended the GRE study groups.

The Teaching Assistants held 10 weeks of GRE study group sessions and office hours in the fall and spring semesters. They also held two Saturday practice exams each semester during which students, staff, alumni, and those from the community could take a computerized GRE practice exam for $10. The $10 fee will be used to sustain the University-wide GRE Preparation Program in future years (e.g., to pay Teaching Assistants and purchase new GRE materials).

Overall, the GRE program was well attended with 87 total participants in the fall of 2011 (68 female and 19 male), and 67 total participants in the spring of 2012 (53 female and 14 male). The higher attendance in the fall is likely a result of most undergraduate seniors taking the GRE in the fall of their senior year. Of the 154 students who attended, 138 were undergraduates (from all four colleges), two were graduate students, six were alumni, one was staff, one was a staff member’s spouse, one was a student spouse, and five were town residents. This demonstrates the broad range of people the program served both on- and off-campus.

Also, in the fall of 2011, I attended the GRE Test Preparation Workshop for Campus Educators run by the Educational Testing Service (ETS), where I learned a tremendous amount of helpful information about the GRE that informed my decisions about the direction of the University-wide GRE Preparation Program. I shared the information I learned about the GRE with faculty and staff during three separate TALE seminars during the fall and spring semesters.

3. How was the grant money spent? (A brief itemized list is okay.)

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<th>Purpose</th>
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<td>Teaching Assistant wages</td>
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4. What were the highlights of the project and what difficulties did you encounter?

The University-wide GRE Preparation Program, supported by a Presidential Strategic Plan grant, benefitted many people, both on- and off-campus. One obvious highlight was being afforded the chance to help GRE program participants reach their personal, academic, and professional goals. We collected some pre- and post-test score information from participants and will analyze the results this summer to help determine the effectiveness of the program. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many participants found the program to be extremely helpful, particularly the computerized practice tests and study tips given during study groups.

The undergraduate Teaching Assistants who conducted the study groups and office hours gained invaluable experience helping to create the program, conduct the program, and create a database of
information collected from program participants. Both Teaching Assistants hope to build careers in the field of academia, and being part of this program helped them understand the process of creating an academic co-curricular program.

Personally, I found this project very fulfilling. I met many new students and faculty through the project. At one TALE seminar that I conducted about the GRE program, Michael Coffta (Library Instruction Coordinator) attended. He was interested in the project, and unprompted by me, he created a website about the GRE and the on-campus GRE program (http://guides.library.bloomu.edu/gre). This was an exciting and unexpected outcome of the project.

I encountered only a few technical difficulties when conducting this project. The paperwork required for hiring the Teaching Assistants was misplaced by the Student Employment Office and had to be resent, which delayed the hiring of the Teaching Assistants. Also, trying to set up the computerized practice GRE in a computer lab on campus was at times difficult due to the lack of availability of computer labs on some weekends (e.g., freshmen placement tests) and the requirement of an administration password to run the program. Finally, contacting all students through e-mail was initially difficult, but the details were worked out. Overall, many of these logistical details were worked out by the spring semester, and I learned much from them.

5. How were any students (graduate or undergraduates) put to productive work on the project?

Two undergraduate Teaching Assistants, Jessica Smith and Elizabeth Moore from the Psychology Department, played pivotal roles in the success of the program, as they conducted study groups, office hours, and the GRE practice tests.

6. What do you see about the likelihood for continuation and/or long term sustainability of the program? What plans are being made to achieve that end?

The University-wide GRE Preparation Program will continue in the 2012-2013 academic year with funds raised from the computerized GRE practice test (about $1000). I have chosen two undergraduate Teaching Assistants to continue to provide study groups and office hours. Both of the students were participants in the GRE program this past year, so they should be well prepared to run the program next year. A change we will make next year, based on our experiences this year, will be to offer the entire program for a $20 fee. The $20 fee will give participants the opportunity to first complete a computerized GRE pre-test, followed by 8 weeks of GRE preparation study groups with free handouts, and ending with a computerized GRE post-test. After paying the nominal fee, the participants will be welcome to attend any or all of the provided services. Any student unable to pay the $20 fee for financial reasons will not be denied the program.
10. **Susan R. Dauria**, Professor of Anthropology: The Bloomsburg University Summer Educational Anthropology/Archaeology Camp Program.

   Presidential Strategic Planning Grants

   Project Title: The Bloomsburg University Summer Educational Anthropology/Archaeology Camp Program: Sponsored by Quest, Bloomsburg Middle School, Bloomsburg University, and the Town of Bloomsburg.

   Strategic Issue(s) directly addressed: [refer to IMPACT 2015]

   The strategic Goal #4, for Impact 2015 --“As a member of Bloomsburg University’s campus community, each student and employee is part of the larger community that encompasses the Town of Bloomsburg, the region, the commonwealth and beyond,” was the inspiration for this program.

   Targeted Strategic Action Plan(s) [refer to IMPACT 2015]

   The two aspects of Impact 2015 that the project will encourage are:

   -“Improve town/gown relations.” (Impact 2015. Strategic Goal #4)
   -“Increase student engagement with the university and community.”(Impact 2015. Strategic Goal #4)

1. What was your plan going into the grant?  The plan was to create an educational anthropology/archaeological camp program using land owned by the town of Bloomsburg. The purpose of the project was to involve college students in the preparation, planning, and execution of an archaeological and anthropological learning program for middle and high school students. It was also intended to show middle school and high school students how to do archaeological fieldwork, cultural resource management, and anthropological analysis.

2. What accomplishments were made on the project? What is its current status? The educational camp program was undertaken during the month of June 2011. The project investigated how archaeology can be a learning tool for middle school and high school students. Both the secondary and undergraduate students learned about archaeology and anthropology through hands-on experience. The camp/field-school lasted several weeks and involved the application of archaeological techniques, as well as lab and classroom research. The locations for the camp included an archaeological site along Fishing Creek/ Fort McClure Boulevard in Bloomsburg; the Bloomsburg Middle School and High School; the BU Anthropology Department; and the BU Quest outdoor-education areas. The camp included college students who worked with the children from the Bloomsburg Area School District and were brought to the site each morning Quest vehicles. The camp offered a Quest Summer Experience, which included other outdoor activities.

3. How was the grant money spent? (A brief itemized list is okay.) Approximately $1000.00 dollars was paid to student-interns as financial compensation and $800.00 dollars was used to purchase, equipment (shifting screens, shovels, construction tape, flags, Ziploc bags, markers, and tape-measures).

4. What were the highlights of the project and what difficulties did you encounter? The Press Enterprise published a wonderful article showing the kids digging as well as photos of the artifacts that were recovered. There was also a BU TV YouTube video made – so there was some wonderful publicity. The program went extremely well. There were only three difficulties; one was that not many artifacts were recovered so it was sometimes frustrating for the children. The second difficulty was that Quest had to provide additional liability insurance through Worldwide
Outfitters and Guides Association, to cover the school children so the town would allow excavation on their property. The University students and faculty were covered under regular university insurance (for internships). The third difficulty, was that as a faculty member I had to agree to prepare the appropriate professional documentation with regards to any artifacts and archeological sites identified. Given the nature of this educational program, the appropriate documentation was limited to submittal of an archeological site form to PHMC. This meant that the University would not keep possession of the artifacts recovered from the Streater Recreation Complex. This was agreed to, but doesn’t allow for further artifact analysis which would be a good learning experience for BU students.

5. How were any students (graduate or undergraduates) put to productive work on the project? There were three undergraduate students who worked on the project and two of them have used their experience to get employment.

6. What do you see about the likelihood for continuation and/or long term sustainability of the program? What plans are being made to achieve that end? The program will run again this summer during the month of July and now has BU URCA funding for students, which will provide continued support. I have also had approval from the town of Bloomsburg to continue archaeological excavation on the land along the Susquehanna River and fishing creek. The town has made a prolonged commitment to the project. Quest has also committed to continuing the program and this summer (2012) the camp is overenrolled and has a waiting list.

11. Thomas J. Starmack, Assistant Professor, Educational Studies and Secondary Education: Bloomsburg University Study Council.

   Presidential Strategic Planning Grant End of the Year Report

   BU Study Council: Submitted by Dr. Thomas J. Starmack, Ed. D.

1. What was your plan going into the grant?

   The plan was to create the Bloomsburg University Study Council comprised of regional school districts and businesses for the purpose of ongoing, authentic, job-embedded professional development, networking, and researching of best practices in the areas of leadership, curriculum, instruction, and assessment to enhance student achievement.

2. What accomplishments were made on the project? What is its current status?

   The Proposal called for a steering committee to be developed to meet and outline the first year of the program, solicit participation from regional districts, and then begin with professional development activities. The steering committee was established and met on various occasions. However, with the economic cuts the K-12 districts have faced the past two years; much of the professional development monies have been cut from their budgets. Thus, there was not enough of a financial commitment from the regional K-12 districts to participate in the Study Council.
Conceptually, most all of the 26 regional districts are supportive of the Study Council. The current status of the grant is the steering committee is no longer meeting. The last meeting was held in April 2012 with the recommendation from the committee to reconvene in about a year to attempt to move forward with the project.

3. How was the grant money spent? (A brief itemized list is okay.)

   No monies were spent.

4. What were the highlights of the project and what difficulties did you encounter?

   The highlights were the enthusiasm of the regional superintendents and members of the steering committee about the idea and possibilities. The major and only difficulty was securing commitment from districts due to the budgetary crisis, causing the project to never move forward.

5. How were any students (graduate or undergraduates) put to productive work on the project?

   Graduate students were members of the steering committee and would be involved in the professional development and research activities if the program would move to implementation.

6. What do you see about the likelihood for continuation and/or long term sustainability of the program? What plans are being made to achieve that end?

   The likelihood is not good with the current PA budgetary situation. I am requesting the monies for the project either: A) be held for another year to see where the budgetary situation in PA is or B) returned to the Grant Pool for other participants.

12. Helmut Doll, Professor, Instructional Technology: Crafting the Future of Distance Learning through Mobile Devices.

   “CRAFTING THE FUTURE OF DISTANCE LEARNING THROUGH MOBILE DEVICES”
   Bloomsburg University Presidential Strategic Planning - 2011-2012

1. What was your plan going into the grant?

   With this grant I wanted to start a mobile learning track in the department of Instructional Technology and develop mobile apps for educational needs.

2. What accomplishments were made on the project? What is its current status?

   Last Fall I taught the course ‘Advanced Authoring for Mobile Devices’ with 22 students who wanted to learn how to build apps for mobile devices. The grant allowed me to provide a tablet device to each of them for the semester. They used the tablets to learn about mobile apps and to
continually test their projects. Especially with the new touch interactions that are used on phones and tablets constant testing of the usability is critical. The excitement of the students to work with such cutting edge technology found an expression in the amazing applications they created: An application that allowed drawing by touch, and mobile applications for soccer and wrestling coaches are just a few examples of their work.

The students also started to look at other - existing - applications that will be useful to develop mLearning and we were able to purchase several software applications that we have begun to use and will use in the development of mLearning content. I am currently working with faculty in Exercise Science and in Geography on the development of apps that will be used in their courses. In the spring the hardware and software from the grant allowed the faculty in the department to offer an online workshop in mLearning. Corporations from all over the country enrolled their employees in our workshop, which was a huge success. This grant allowed the Department of Instructional Technology to be on the forefront of mLearning and we will continue our effort this fall by taking our proposal for a new mLearning track in our program before the curriculum committees.

3. How was the grant money spent? (A brief itemized list is okay.)
4. What were the highlights of the project and what difficulties did you encounter?

The work of the students in the mobile authoring class and the success of the mLearning workshop we offered were the most exciting aspects of the project. This shows that our efforts in this area are necessary and well-timed. The software and hardware industry is struggling to keep up with the pace of change in this field. There are not many good software programs available that can be used to create mLearning. One of the most expected releases - Articulate Storyline - was delayed for almost half a year. Our plans to use it earlier in the project had to be changed.

5. How were any students (graduate or undergraduates) put to productive work on the project?

The mLearning track was the main focus of the project. The graduate students in the course created mobile apps. In addition, graduate students are currently working with me on a mobile app for the Department of Instructional Technology.

6. What do you see about the likelihood for continuation and/or long term sustainability of the program? What plans are being made to achieve that end?

The grant allowed us to start our efforts in mLearning, but this is definitely a continuing project. The success of the workshop showed that we can also use this area to generate income for the university from new sources. Listed below are several directions for the future:
a. In the fall semester we will present the mLearning track to the curriculum committees on campus. This will include new courses and improve the job opportunities for our students.
b. Apps for the department and for several other projects are in development and will be continued.  
c. Another possible direction that I am exploring is an interdisciplinary undergraduate minor in mobile technologies: The mobile industry is in need of people with good writing skills, graphics talent, and communication expertise and/or technology background. The addition of knowledge in this rapidly growing field could enhance the job outlook for our students in several other areas.

13. Mary Katherine Waibel-Duncan, Professor, Psychology: Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence. $10,951.

What was your plan going into the grant?  
The proposed BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence promised to offer a state-of-the-art online forum for sharing theories, research, resources, and best practice standards for promoting physical and psychological health through literacy and play. In addition, the BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence promised to offer a forum for showcasing the BU Toy Library as a model campus-based community resource for other colleges and universities in the Commonwealth. Through several action steps and various assessment strategies, the BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence has advanced the University’s Strategic Issue #1: Enhancing Academic Excellence and Strategic Issue #4: Fostering and Developing a Strong Sense of Community.

What accomplishments were made on the project? What is its current status?  

Strategic Issue #1: Enhancing Academic Excellence  
Create a learning environment for personal and professional success  
Students enrolled in several lower-division and upper-division courses in the Departments of Psychology and Special Education have participated in experiential learning activities using the
resources and/or creating permanent resources for the **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence**.

With funding from a Cherokee Pharmaceuticals Community Grant, the BU Toy Library purchased four laptop computers to support an advanced psychology majors’ Adult Computer Literacy project. This project supplements the student’s Psychology Practicum experience with the Area Agency on Aging. The **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence**'s ability to showcase the good work of the BU Toy Library was instrumental in securing funding through the competitive grant process.

**Provide professional development and scholarship opportunities for university personnel**

An interdisciplinary faculty workgroup completed a BU Toy Library literacy initiative entitled “Diversity and Kinship Literacy Play.” This project, funded by a 2011-2012 Margin of Excellence Award, will be posted to the **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence**.

An interdisciplinary workgroup of faculty and community professionals is completing a series of online Play-to-Learn tutorials that focus on the six early literacy skills of letter knowledge, print motivation, print awareness, vocabulary, narration, and phonological awareness. These tutorials are being field tested and will be posted to the **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence** during the summer 2012.

Faculty and student members of the National Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi (Chapter 202) formed a workgroup to complete the Alphabet Literacy Play project which has been posted to the **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence**. This project was funded through one of only fourteen 2011-2012 Literacy Awards granted by Phi Kappa Phi.

An independent faculty project, Vocabulary Literacy Play (funded by a 2012 College of Liberal Arts Faculty Enhancement Award), is in progress and will be posted to the **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence** during the Summer 2012.

An independent faculty project, Print Motivation Literacy Play (funded by the Jones Center for Special Education Excellence), is in progress and will be posted to the **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence** during the Summer 2012.

An independent faculty project, BU Bibliotek (funded by a 2011 TALE Teacher Scholar Award), has been completed and is posted on the **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence**. It’s posting has facilitated the promotion of acceptance and understanding of diverse populations (e.g., individuals who are affected by the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional sequelae of traumatic events) through presentations locally and nationally (e.g., American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children).

Through on-campus presentations at the Health Sciences Symposium (April 2011, 2012), Literacy and Learning conference (May 2011, May 2012), and Jones Center for Special Education Excellence Summer Institute (Summer 2011, 2012) the literacy and play resources of the BU Toy Library and the **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence** are shared with students, faculty, parents, community professionals, and paraprofessionals.

An independent faculty project, Educational Materials to Enhance Tutoring and Teaching Experiences (funded by a 2012 TALE Teacher-Scholar Award), is in progress. Educational Math and Reading kits
will assist students in the Early Childhood and Adolescent Education Department with tutoring, student teaching activities and classroom teaching demonstrations. Descriptions of and the availability of these kits will be posted on the **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence**.

**Integrate diversity in the learning environment**

Class presentations on the resources of the **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence** have been given for the Department of Psychology, the Department of Early Education, and the Department of Speech Pathology. During these presentations, several BU Toy Library initiatives have been highlighted as examples of how literacy and play resources can support and expand undergraduate and graduate students’ interactions with individuals of all developmental ages and abilities.

All of the above-mentioned initiatives focus on cultivating greater sensitivity and responsiveness to individuals who demonstrate various aspects of diversity. All of the initiatives have been integrated into some lower-division and upper-division undergraduate courses in the Department of Psychology (as noted above), presented at local and regional conferences, or profiled in national or international publications. All of the initiatives have resulted in guidebooks, tutorials, or other permanent resources that have been (or will soon be) posted online in order to support and expand interactions among individuals of all developmental ages, abilities, and cultural backgrounds.

**Strategic Issue #4: Fostering and Developing a Strong Sense of Community**

**Communicate effectively among all stakeholders**

Through the vehicle of the **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence**, biannual newsletters are posted online. The BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence also provides a forum for posting a ‘Ways to Help’ webpage and an email address (**butoylibrary@bloomu.edu**) to secure feedback regarding the use and usefulness of the BU Toy Library.

**Improve town-gown relations**

Through the **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence**, **Y.O.O. Rock Columbia County II: Youth Outreach Opportunities for Families, Children, and Youth** is reaching the broadest audience of families, children, and youth and serving as a model for other counties across the state and country. An article on the development of the original **Y.O.O. Rock** guide is in press in *the Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing*. The second edition of **Y.O.O. Rock** guide has been presented at the Undergraduate Research Conference at the Capitol (Harrisburg, PA) where it was well-received by state officials. Duplication of the updated and revised guide has been funded through a Berwick Health and Wellness Fund grant (Central Susquehanna Community Foundation).

**Increase student engagement with the university and community**

Through the **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence**, the BU Toy Library was able to assist two local preschools that were devastated by the September 2011 flood. Head Start of Columbia County and Magic Carpet visited our website and requested to borrow hundreds of literacy and play resources for use in their temporary location at the Wesley United Methodist Church. Through the **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence**, the BU Toy Library coordinated an online fundraising campaign to help refurnish and restore the literacy and play of the affected preschools. The **BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence** had informed faculty, staff, students about the resources available at the BU Toy Library to support their service learning activities and community outreach projects. See the BU Toy Library newsletter for examples of students’ good work.
How was the grant money spent?
This project was awarded $10,950.64. Kindly note that most of the monies ($7244.64) have not yet been spent as our original grant included a timeline of activities from June 1, 2011 through August 31, 2012. To date, the following monies have been spent:

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What were the highlights of the project and what difficulties did you encounter?
The highlights of the project have been listed above in response to Question #2. The only challenge that we encountered was easily resolved. Our MIT graduate assistant secured full-time paid internship through the IIT Department for the Spring 2012 semester. Accordingly, he was unable to receive payment through the Presidential Strategic Planning Grant. With the Provost’s permission (signed letter dated 1/30/12), Mr. Marcus Valeriano will be employed as a full-time co-op intern beginning May 19, 2012. Over the next 4 to 6 weeks, he will complete work on the BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence.

How were any students put to productive work on the project?
Kindly see the response to Question #2.

What is the likelihood for continuation and/or long-term sustainability of the program?
The BU Toy Library Virtual Center of Excellence is a self-sustaining and permanent resource of the University and broader community.

The Path Forward
This report documents the significant progress made during the first two years of plan implementation on the Top 12 Priority Action Items, as well as the excellent work done by faculty and staff on the Presidential Strategic Planning Grants.

As the strategic plan is a living document, the 2012-2013 academic year will continue with measurement and identification of new and/or revised goals and action steps that continue to ensure Bloomsburg University follows its Mission, Value and Vision Statements.