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Strategic Plan

**IMPACT 2015:
Building on the Past,
Leading for the Future**

Strategic Plan:

A comprehensive plan for accomplishment in relation to stated goals and objectives. Ideally, the plan should cover multiple years, include targets for expected accomplishments and propose specific performance measures used to evaluate programs toward those targets.

– The Pew Center on the States

Impact 2015: Building on the Past, Leading for the Future

September 2010

At Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, a committee made up of students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members embarked on a long-range strategic planning process during 2009-2010. The committee named itself SPARC — the Strategic Planning and Resource Council.

The broad goal was to define:

- Who we are as an institution; what makes us distinct not only from the other 13 institutions in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, but from all regional comprehensive universities;
- What we value as an institution, as demonstrated through our daily actions, interactions and operations; and
- What we aspire to be as an institution.

With guidance from Dr. Madeleine Wing Adler, a consultant with Penson Associates Inc. and former president of West Chester University, and feedback from the campus and community, SPARC developed and composed new mission, vision and value statements. The committee, 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 strategic issues to be addressed, accompanied by directions and initiatives, frequently known as goals and action items. These issues are detailed on the following pages.

The strategic planning process is important for everyone connected to this institution, providing the road map that keeps Bloomsburg University a university of choice, providing access, opportunity and excellence at an affordable price for each future generation of students. The plan provides an image of Bloomsburg University three to five years in the future, yet remains flexible and adaptable to change.

IMPACT 2015: BUILDING ON THE PAST, LEADING FOR THE FUTURE began with deep thought and spirited discussion on what lies at the core of Bloomsburg University: our mission, values and vision. Refined with feedback from the campus and the community, the following statements capture the essential qualities that define the university, both today and in the future, centered on preparing students for successful lives in an increasingly complex world. These carefully crafted, key statements serve as the foundation for the creation and implementation of the strategic directions and initiatives that will guide the university.

Bloomsburg University's Mission

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

Bloomsburg University's Values

Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania students, faculty and staff value:

Collaboration	Community	Critical thinking
Diversity	Excellence	Integrity
Knowledge	Opportunity	Respect
Personal and professional growth		

Bloomsburg University's Vision

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 and Directions

Creation of a strategic plan brings together people with different backgrounds, outlooks and points of view for a common goal: to translate ideas and ideals into a plan that guides the future. The mission, values and vision statements provide the framework for action; the plan identifies directions and initiatives that grow from the framework. The strength of the plan lies in its collaborative formulation.

Bloomsburg University's strategic plan is dynamic and ambitious. As a living document, it links words to actions and forms the basis for administrative and budgetary decisions. It establishes areas of responsibility and resource requirements for carrying out initiatives. It asks all stakeholders to take ownership and become an integral part of the plan's success.

The Process

The Strategic Planning and Resource Council (SPARC) undertook an extensive task: create an innovative and viable strategic plan, incorporate feedback from constituents and present a finished document for endorsement by the university president and Council of Trustees within one year, 2009-2010.

The leadership of facilitator Dr. Madeleine Wing Adler and SPARC co-chairs Dr. Lawrence Fritz and Dr. Barbara Wilson, enthusiastic participation of committee members and thoughtful comments during two rounds of on-campus and off-campus community forums kept the plan on course. More than 160 individual community members offered feedback on the mission, values and vision statements, which BU President David Soltz approved and shared with the campus community in March 2010. He accepted the strategic issues, directions and initiatives in July 2010 and presented the complete plan at an Open Forum in September 2010.

SPARC led the strategic planning efforts, but involvement from the entire BU community – faculty, staff, students, alumni, administration, and residents of the greater Bloomsburg community – is the hallmark of a successful strategic plan. Community participation in the creation of Impact 2015: Building on the Past, Leading for the Future bodes well for its continuing success.

Strategic Issue 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.

The search for the “best” college or university takes many forms. College-bound high school students and their parents schedule campus visits and attend open house programs. Magazines and guidebooks publish annual surveys. Prospective students consult friends, relatives and counselors for advice. In the end, serious students narrow the list of possibilities to institutions where they believe they will find academic excellence in the field they wish to pursue, faculty who are dedicated teacher/scholars and opportunities that support and extend classroom learning.

Bloomsburg University has a strong reputation for academic excellence reinforced each year by the large number of graduates who are employed in their fields, outstanding alumni achievements and a strong pool of applicants. To retain this well-earned reputation, the institution will meet the demands associated with an ever-changing society, employment trends and an increasing emphasis on globalization with innovative programs of study, expanded classroom opportunities and an atmosphere of respect for all members of the campus community.

Bloomsburg University advocates study abroad opportunities to help students grow into well-informed citizens. The university will continue to encourage students to pursue scholarly activities in collaboration with faculty and increase the availability of courses through distance education offerings. The university also will provide a general education program that promotes skills, knowledge, cultural awareness and citizenship to help develop each student’s ability to think critically and communicate effectively.

To enhance academic excellence, Bloomsburg University will:

- Create a learning environment for personal and professional success in a diverse and rapidly changing world.
- Provide professional development and scholarship opportunities for all university personnel.
- Integrate diversity in the learning environment.
- Implement and monitor a systematic process of assessment.

Strategic Issue 2: Achieving excellence while ensuring fiscal 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 while being good stewards of existing resources.

Bloomsburg University shares a common challenge with public universities nationwide: a decreasing amount of revenue from taxpayer dollars. At a time when Bloomsburg receives less than one-third of the overall budget from state appropriations, tuition must remain affordable for students, the majority of whom receive some form of financial aid, yet sufficient to deliver high-quality degree programs, student support services and learning experiences. These two factors, along with a steadily increasing enrollment, stretch the institution's budget and resources and make stewardship paramount to university financial success.

Bloomsburg University will renew its commitment to allocating resources according to institutional priorities, including sustainability, and assessing the efficiency of programs, services and operations. Following standard practice, budget officers will continue to inform the campus community regarding the current budget situation and welcome input from faculty, staff and students as part of the budget process. The institution will develop new financial resources through relationships with external stakeholders, partnerships, grants and private sources.

To achieve excellence while ensuring fiscal sustainability, Bloomsburg University will:

- Identify, examine, align and allocate resources to meet institutional priorities.
- Coordinate efforts to identify and develop new resources in accord with university strategic priorities.

Strategic Issue 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.

Ten years ago, job opportunities did not exist for green energy experts, Web content managers or mobile phone application developers. In 2000, Bloomsburg University was not yet offering a major in computer forensics or a career concentration in fraud examination. Today, employment opportunities are abundant in these fields and others not known a decade ago.

The average person may change careers five to seven times in a lifetime, so a current student may eventually work in a field that does not exist today. To prepare Bloomsburg University students for current and emerging careers and professions, all academic degree programs will be built upon the arts and humanities through a 21st century general education program that provides students with the breadth of knowledge, critical thinking skills and quantitative reasoning skills essential for success. Within the constraints of the university's capacity for facilities, programs and services, the institution will anticipate the needs of a changing job market, meet the shifting career interests of incoming students and provide educational opportunities in high-demand fields. The direction for these initiatives will come from a comprehensive enrollment management plan.

The plan will identify enrollment goals and strategies for attracting highly qualified students from traditionally underrepresented, non-traditional and underserved communities. To enhance retention efforts, Bloomsburg University will augment academic services, support services and existing initiatives. Annual reviews will determine student satisfaction and success.

To design an enrollment vision, Bloomsburg University will:

- Assess enrollment trends and projections in terms of capacity, student demographics, target populations and demand.
- Develop a realistic, dynamic, budget-sensitive, comprehensive enrollment management plan that supports student access and success.
- Implement and monitor a comprehensive enrollment plan relative to academic excellence, market demands and financial resources.

Strategic Issue 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.

The definition of “community” has grown in this new century, thanks to the Internet, social media and other emerging technologies. 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.

A university brings vibrancy to a local community. Bloomsburg University attracts restaurants, retail stores and other business enterprises that benefit local residents. Faculty, staff and students augment available services through engagement in volunteer initiatives, service learning, internships, student teaching, community nursing, speech and language clinic, athletics and cultural events, to name a few. If determined to be feasible, the possible relocation of administrative offices and university services to the downtown could create another tie between the university and community.

A campus community promotes understanding and respect, both on- and off-campus, with faculty, staff and students from varied religious beliefs, cultural backgrounds and diverse lifestyles, as well as university-sponsored programs that embrace diversity. Likewise, emphasis on global awareness and environmental issues through the general education curriculum and the university’s day-to-day operations carry influence far beyond the campus’ boundaries.

Recognizing that community opinion is formed by the university’s portrayal in all types of media, Bloomsburg University will strengthen relationships with traditional news media while embracing new concepts and methods of sharing messages. Positive one-on-one interactions with the community, however, will make the longest strides in enhancing town/gown relations.

Alumni, traditionally among the university’s strongest supporters, will be more involved in their alma mater through regional alumni chapters that reinforce their connection to Bloomsburg University. Alumni will be called upon to provide internship, job shadowing, employment and recruitment opportunities for current students and attest to the value of a BU education in their lives.

A community gains its strength from each stakeholder’s life experiences, education and point of view. BU will establish professional development opportunities that enable an exchange of knowledge and experiences on topics including the challenges and value of diversity.

To foster and develop a strong sense of community, Bloomsburg University will:

- Communicate effectively among all stakeholders.
- Promote a diverse community that accepts and supports cultural and social differences.
- Encourage globalism and environmental awareness and responsibility.
- Improve town/gown relations.
- Increase student engagement with the university and community.
- Strengthen connection with alumni.

Next Steps

Without action, it is said, a plan is only as good as the paper on which it is written. Steps, which include annual action plans, monitoring and plan updates, are in place to ensure the directions and initiatives outlined in *Impact 2015: Building on the Past, Leading for the Future* will move forward.

The first step establishes a monitoring committee, known as SPARC 2, which will review progress annually and make recommendations. SPARC chairpersons Dr. Barbara Wilson and Dr. Lawrence Fritz will lead SPARC 2 during its initial year. Updates will be published on the university's website.

With the endorsement of Bloomsburg University's Council of Trustees, *Impact 2015: Building on the Past, Leading for the Future* will guide vital aspects of the university: academic quality, financial stability, enrollment management and community relations. Individuals, groups and, at times, all members of the larger community, including alumni and local residents, are responsible for carrying out specific initiatives. Criteria for successful action plans and budget requests are tied to the plan.

The plan carries Bloomsburg University's legacy of success forward to meet the needs of students, faculty, staff, alumni and the larger community.

Bloomsburg University President David L. Soltz and the university community thanks Dr. Madeleine Adler for her leadership and the following members of SPARC for their dedication to the strategic planning process.

Co-Chairs:

Dr. Lawrence Fritz, Assistant Vice President; Dean, Graduate Studies
Dr. Barbara Wilson, Assistant Professor, Exceptionality Programs

Members:

Ms. Giovanna Adornetto '10, President, Community Government Association, 2008-2010
Dr. M. Christine Alichnie, Chair/Professor, Nursing
Mr. Elbern H. "Ed" Alkire Jr. '95H, Member,
 Bloomsburg University Foundation Board of Directors
Dr. Ira Blake, Interim Provost; Vice President, Academic Affairs
Ms. Brenda Cromley '99M, Executive Assistant to the President
Dr. Jeffrey Davis, Associate Professor, History
Mr. Erik Evans '95M, Vice President, University Advancement
Mr. Thomas Fletcher, Director, Corporate and Continuing Education
Mr. Terrell Garrett '10, Student Representative, Council of Trustees, 2009-2010
Mr. Joseph Hilgar '75, Member, Bloomsburg University Alumni Board
Ms. Lynne Rishel Homiak '83, Treasurer, Bloomsburg University Alumni Board
Dr. Sheila Dove Jones, Interim Director, Office of Planning and Assessment;
 Professor, Exceptionality Programs
Mr. Christopher Keller, Director, Admissions
Mr. Daniel Knorr '07, Mayor, Town of Bloomsburg
Dr. Stephen Kokoska, President, APSCUF; Director, Honors Program;
 Professor, Mathematics, Computer Science and Statistics
Dr. Jeffrey Long '80, Interim Vice President, Student Affairs
Dr. Robert Marande, Dean, College of Science and Technology
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