

## Strategic Priorities Planning Committee Meeting Minutes

Friday, May 21, 2021

9:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Zoom Video Conference

Attending: Melinda Lowe, Mea Ashley, David Brooking, Brooke Carter, Lyndsay Cumberland, Amanda Dahl, Shawn Dickey, Kendall Dunkelberg, Andrew Garner, Jessica Harpole, Tammie McCoy, Chad Murphy, Nicole Patrick, Anika Perkins, Amanda Clay Powers, Hillary Richardson and Dr. Cherie Labat.

Melinda shared that she and Kimberly met with President Miller, who was very pleased with the broad based university priorities and goals that were presented. She confirmed it is not the responsibility of the committee to oversee the implementation of these objectives. President Miller asked that the feedback that was received be sent to her.

Each group then presented the objectives that have been compiled thus far (see below for a compilation of all goals along with objectives). Melinda stated President Miller is fine with the timeline, the priorities and goals can be sent to IHL with the objectives being fine-tuned in the coming weeks. She did not specify whether the objectives would be internal or publicly available.

Everyone was encouraged to send feedback and comments to each presenter next week. Melinda shared with the group that a candidate on campus applying for a position spoke about her dissertation; she created a program that is strictly for online students, which walks them through training in different areas and getting them connected to the university. She said this proved to show higher retention numbers in the online student group.

The following timeline was proposed:

### **May 24-28**

- Finalize objectives
- Review everything one last time for any edits that need to be made

### **May 28**

- Theme Team facilitators forward final document to Melinda and Kimberly

### **June 1-2**

- Final formatting of entire document
- Email final document to SPPC and President Miller

### **Summer**

- Melinda and Kimberly will provide all necessary documents needed for updating the priorities website
- Campus units work on academic and non-academic assessment plans
- UR to develop marketing plan

### **Fall**

- Report final plan to campus

## **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**

The W is on a mission to create a welcoming, diverse, equitable and inclusive campus climate for all. As the university strives to reach the highest levels of academic excellence, it's also essential that the university foster an environment where all members of the campus community can flourish. Diversity recognizes the value of varied perspectives which helps drive innovative solutions to an ever-changing world.

### **Goal 1: Create an inclusive and equitable campus climate reflective of the growing diversity in our communities, state and nation.**

We will work to create an environment in which all campus community members, including those who are underrepresented, are welcomed and supported, and differing perspectives and contributions are sought out and valued.

- Conduct first university-wide climate survey
- Implement training; develop toolkit for conducting search committees
- Enhance diversity training for faculty, staff and students; implement diversity training in UN101: Introduction to College Life

### **Goal 2: Communicate mission and or vision statement on inclusive values.**

Diversity crosses all aspects of the university community. We will communicate and promote widely to all key stakeholders The W's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion to ensure all know they are welcomed here.

- Create tab off homepage showcasing diversity efforts
- Create diversity video from the president
- Include diversity statement on publications

### **Goal 3: Connect internal and external constituencies to opportunities at the university.**

In understanding the needs of the campus community, we will work to connect communities to one another to create a sense of belonging, trust and credibility for all groups, including internal and external stakeholders of The W family.

- Promote affinity groups on campus
- Educate vendors about bidding opportunities
- Connect students with alumni

#### **Goal 4: Capture, promote and enhance overall curriculum and programming that enhances multicultural awareness and understanding**

We will work to create opportunities for the campus community to gain awareness of cultural differences, to be open to diverse perspectives and to have the ability to interact effectively with people different from themselves.

- African-American literature concentration
- Common Read Initiative (CRI)
- Cross reference themes and education in the classroom and/or programming, where appropriate

#### **Advancement Excellence**

A strength of any institution is the level of engagement with those it serves. At The W, that includes a diversity of constituents: students, faculty, staff, alumni, friends, the community, and elected officials. By cultivating these relationships, we build support critical to the future of The W. One important outcome of valued relationships is the continued generosity of our larger W family, providing resources that allow us to improve quality across all aspects of the institution.

#### **GOAL: CONTINUE A CULTURE OF GIVING**

- Conduct interviews with potential donors and provide them a menu of giving opportunities.
- Continue to increase participation in faculty/staff giving campaign.
- Find more opportunities to educate students about their donors and the importance of philanthropy.

#### **GOAL: FOSTER PRIDE IN THE UNIVERSITY AND ITS PROGRAMS**

- Develop a campus speaker's list for alumni activities.
- Provide more opportunities for donors to support faculty.
- Develop an alumni ambassador recruitment team to host student recruitment events.

#### **GOAL: OFFER MORE PROGRAMMING REPRESENTATIVE OF DIVERSE ALUMNI BASE**

- Provide a virtual option for all alumni/donor events.
- Continue to offer campus programming virtually to alumni/donors.

- Offer more diverse alumni events and more diverse speakers.

GOAL: PROVIDE RESOURCES TO ASSIST STUDENTS FINANCIALLY

- Provide more opportunities for donors to support students.
- Provide donors with departmental needs in order to provide better learning environments.

GOAL: ENHANCE SERVICES TO SHAPE CAREER-READY GRADUATES

- Partner alumni as mentors to offer networking and job shadowing opportunities for students.
- Continue to offer workshops and job fairs with intent to collect data through experiences.
- Provide professional development workshops.

## Community Connections

The W's unique niche is not confined by geographic boundaries. By serving its communities through programs and partnerships, both locally and globally, the university will continue to communicate its value and explore ways to create significant impact through its areas of strength. It should also identify innovative and diverse approaches that enhance health, quality of life, cultural enrichment, and society's overall economic potential.

GOAL: Cultivate collaborations to create healthy and vibrant communities.

One of the strengths of the university is its emphasis on a holistic approach to health and wellness that focuses on all aspects of a person's well-being. The W should capitalize on current academic, community outreach, and other initiatives in order to increase collaborations between campus units and public communities through regional partners and online audiences.

- Continue to offer accessible programming and services to enhance holistic well-being for a diverse variety of community members, including, but not limited to, our campus community
- Make events available through a combination (e.g. streaming, remote, in-person, hybrid, etc.) of delivery methods for communities who may be unable to attend otherwise

GOAL: Contribute to the cultural enrichment of our communities

The W serves as a cultural hub for the campus and broader communities. By utilizing our liberal arts emphasis and creativity of our campus community, we can provide accessible, inclusive, and diverse events and programming to enhance cultural competencies and enrich the lives and perspectives of all within our communities.

- Continue to offer accessible programming and services that promote creative, intellectual, and social opportunities using our liberal arts focus for a diverse variety of campus and community members

- Make events available through a combination (e.g. streaming, remote, in-person, hybrid, etc.) of delivery methods for communities who may be unable to attend otherwise

**GOAL: Provide outreach to underserved and diverse populations of our communities**

We are committed to identifying the underserved and diverse populations of our communities, understanding that they are not limited to just one group or demographic. The university can increase inclusive initiatives to provide better access to campus resources, programming, and outreach efforts to enhance the well-being of our communities.

- Identify at-risk or high-needs groups within our communities and what barriers they encounter or needs they express through departmental or university individuals or groups
- Design all programming to be inclusive and empowering to all within our communities and accommodate those with additional needs (e.g. considering those with barriers to access, be they technological, financial, intellectual, accessibility, etc.)

**GOAL: Forge meaningful and engaged partnerships that provide real-life experiences for students**

By enhancing relevant partnerships with businesses, hospitals, nonprofits, K-12 schools, community colleges, and other agencies, The W will provide real-life experiences. These partnerships create future employment opportunities, develop civic awareness, and enrich the student experience. Developing internships, community, and service-learning activities will create mutually beneficial exchanges, and serve our communities by providing a future workforce to support economic and personal growth.

- Expand on current and seek new opportunities for partnerships through internships, service-learning, and student placement (e.g. clinical rotations, student teaching) for all disciplines to bridge the gap between campus and community partners.
- Follow-up with each stakeholder in the partnership to assess ways for improving and expanding future opportunities for collaboration.

## **Academic Excellence**

Academics are at the heart of a W education. Our dedicated faculty, respected in their fields, champion a commitment to teaching shaped by their research, scholarship, and creative expressions. Partnered with an equally committed staff, they foster a learning environment that is both broad and highly personalized. For the W, academic excellence results in graduates who are equipped for the competitive and diverse global economy.

**GOAL: Provide a comprehensive academic experience**

The W is committed to an academic environment that fosters critical thinking, excellence in written and oral communication, creative expression, and civic engagement. By capitalizing on the university's personalized learning environment our goal is to create and instill in our students an attitude of active engagement and investment in their learning. We also commit to creating opportunities for co-curricular programming through the cultivation of diverse campus communities.

- Create additional synergies between admissions and academics for channeling new information about programs and actively promoting and recruiting for all majors

- Create and sustaining a diverse community of student scholars who challenge themselves academically, personally, and professionally.
- Create opportunities for synergies between academic programs and athletics.

#### GOAL: Prepare students to be life-long learners and contributing members of today's global economy

The W is committed to providing high quality accessible resources and services to support excellence in learning, teaching, and research for our students and faculty. With an emphasis on developing and enhancing student research, creative activity, and faculty mentoring, we hope to create opportunities to produce and share original work with other researchers, future employers, and graduate programs, and to ensure that students are equipped to participate actively in ever-changing social and economic challenges.

- Provide academic units and campus organizations with resources necessary to prepare students to compete in a highly competitive employment market
- Offer active-learning pedagogies and experiential opportunities such as residencies, clinicals, internships, and study abroad;
- Promote and developing relationships with potential employers to highlight program strengths, distinctions, and student achievements

#### GOAL: Provide resources to foster excellence in teaching

The W is committed to enhancing accessibility in all traditional, hybrid, and online learning environments. By creating an equitable learning experience with a foundation of instructional support and innovation for faculty and staff, we will offer a rich educational environment and university experience for our students.

- Leverage the University's Center for Teaching and Learning to support faculty and staff with educational resources and professional development to provide ongoing and innovative strategies that enhance teaching, learning, and foster leadership.
- Enhance accessibility in all learning environments to create an equitable learning experience
- Provide opportunities for students to learn new technologies to compliment classroom learning
- Continue to strive for parity of resources and services for distance students to provide a rich learning environment and university experience.

#### GOAL: Recruit and retain a diverse faculty and staff

The W is committed to enriching the learning experience of our students and the campus culture through an investment in attracting and retaining a diverse group of faculty and staff. We will continue to create a welcoming environment by investing in our rich campus community and additional support, including competitive salaries, that will ensure retention of current and new faculty and staff.

- Implement inclusive recruiting and search committee training to facilitate an increase in diversity among faculty and staff;
- Create a welcoming community to retain and empower all faculty and staff;
- Invest in increasing salaries to become competitive in hiring and retaining a diverse faculty and staff

## Financial Sustainability

A financial model supports the efforts and goals of academics, student services, and the campus as a whole. The W's mission-driven approach involves clear strategic planning and actions that ensure the ongoing financial health of the University.

### GOAL: Develop a strategic budget model

MUW will continue to develop business practices to safeguard and enhance the financial health of the university. Our budget model will maintain a commitment to investing in new resources that ensure a successful student experience.

- Create opportunities for transparency and dialogue between all campus entities in university budget planning and priorities
- Share objectives by department to create a long-range plan for supporting and growing academic programs to more deliberately enrich campus culture

### GOAL: Enhance and maintain campus infrastructure and facilities

As appropriate for an historic public regional university, MUW will develop support for infrastructure and operations, including grants and other development opportunities to improve security, stability, and access, as well as to remain current with effective course delivery methods.

- Attract funding to modernize residence halls and academic buildings
- Invest in creating accessibility in all campus buildings
- Update the Master Plan for the university to address safety, traffic flow, parking, and other outstanding infrastructure needs

### GOAL: Invest in faculty and staff hiring and development

The W is committed to recruiting, hiring, and retaining a diverse and outstanding faculty and staff. To ensure this we will work to pursue funding opportunities to enhance and create equitable salaries that are competitive with peer institutions across the region.

- Review salaries and support for faculty and staff across campus to create and execute a plan to address inequities and salary compression
- Focus on educational opportunities and training to develop an outstanding and innovative campus staff
- Expand opportunities for recruiting a diverse and outstanding faculty and staff

## **DEGREE COMPLETION**

The W recognizes that Degree Completion requires recruitment, retention, and support through graduation and into a career. We aim to provide wholistic support for all students throughout their time at the university.

### **GOAL: recruit a diverse student body to ensure a vital university community**

The W will engage in recruiting a diverse student body for its undergraduate and graduate programs. With a commitment to its mission of providing a liberal arts education and professional programs to prepare students for a wide range of careers, the university will support current majors and programs, while developing new programs targeted to prospective students' interests and goals.

#### Objectives

- Support the direct recruitment of students by academic programs (undergraduate and graduate)
- Support broad-based recruiting across all programs
- Encourage programs/departments to adjust curriculum to meet student interests

### **GOAL: provide equal access to advising, mentoring, and support services to all students**

With a continued emphasis on academic advising and related support services, The W will help students choose academic pathways that match their interests and skills and lead to completion in a reasonable time. The W will support students with services such as peer mentoring, tutoring, and career counseling to meet the needs of the whole student to ensure retention and progress toward a degree. Equivalent support services should be made available to residential, commuting, and distance students.

#### Objectives

- Enhance the promotion of student support services
- Enhance students understanding of the role of navigators
- Use Degree Works to enhance student advising to provide equal access
- Support the offering of services in multiple modalities (in-person and remote)

### **GOAL: assist students to maintain financial, physical, emotional, and mental well-being**

Acknowledging that students' financial, physical, emotional, and mental well-being are directly connected to student success and degree completion, The W will continually review scholarship structures, disbursements, and work-study opportunities to assist students with identified areas of financial need. The W will also support students' financial, physical, emotional and mental well-being through mentoring counseling, advising, and health services.



#### Objectives

- Assess different scholarship opportunities for underserved populations (financial need)
- Provide more on-campus work opportunities
- Provide for the physical/emotional/mental well-being of students through the promotion/awareness of services (Counseling Center, Campus Recreation, Student Health Center, etc.)
- Provide financial literacy education to students
- Create a financial early alert process to help students

#### **GOAL: support students through degree completion and into their careers**

To connect students with desirable outcomes of degree completion, The W will ensure that academic programming provides students with competitive knowledge and skills that translate into leadership in their careers by providing opportunities for internships, preceptorships, conferences, and other professional engagement.

#### Objectives

- Streamline processes and partnerships that will allow for more opportunities for internships/preceptorships/conferences and other professional engagement opportunities
- Promote funding of faculty and staff for professional development that will enhance career readiness of students
- Utilize advisory boards