Academic Bridge Strategic Plan 2023-2025

Washburn University and academics will forge a strong identity highlighting our commitment to:

- **Student Success.** We support student achievement from recruitment through graduation resulting in their successful careers and life-long learning.
- **Academic Excellence.** We are committed to a community of learning that promotes academic excellence and professional success.
- **Community and Global Engagement.** We are dedicated to serving our community and developing mutually beneficial relationships throughout Topeka, Shawnee County, and the region, as well as developing our students as global citizens.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging.** These values are historically rooted in our open access mission. We develop and promote a diverse, inclusive, and equitable community, and foster a sense of belonging.

Five themes emerged through discussions with faculty, administrators, and staff.

I. Student Success

A. Clarify and expand current scholarships and support for undergraduate students and develop funding opportunities for graduate students, adult learners, and part-time students
B. Improve consistency, quality, equity, and availability of advising
C. Expand student academic support programs
D. Expand social support and opportunities for community-building on campus, particularly for under-represented groups
E. Expand degree completion pathways, increasing flexibility and providing alternative academic options for students
F. Expand basic needs support by addressing food insecurity, mental and physical well-being, housing, transportation, emergency financial support, and childcare
G. Utilize student success data for future planning and for identifying inequities that affect student outcomes
H. Continue progress on long-term campus and sites master planning and implementation including building renovations and relocation of academic units to better serve students and academic needs
I. Provide services for students outside of traditional work hours
J. Develop training and incentives for faculty and staff to improve multicultural competency and inclusive teaching

II. Program Innovation and Collaboration

A. Expand interdisciplinary coordinated program support and development

B. Expand alternative programming and delivery modalities

C. Develop stackable degrees and certificates (programs that build into other degree programs)

D. Expand the Washburn Transformational Experience (WTE) program and international programming

E. Address community and employer needs through program development

III. Community Involvement and Engagement

A. Promote and support meaningful student, faculty, and staff engagement with the community

B. Assess current community involvement and engagement and create new opportunities and partnerships based on community needs

C. Integrate community involvement and engagement into organizational structure

D. Publicize community connections

IV. Faculty and Staff Work Environment

A. Implement performance-based salary improvements and improve flexibility of pay structures to promote high-performing employees and organizational improvement

B. Implement annual market analysis of salaries for all employees, including student workers and adjunct faculty, and adjust accordingly

C. Implement annual analysis of benefits, including mental health support, and adjust accordingly

D. Further prioritize and systematize the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and staff

E. Investigate and address faculty/staff (1) workload equity issues particularly around service and remote work and (2) workplace satisfaction

F. Commit to providing childcare support for the Washburn community

G. Expand professional development opportunities for faculty and staff

H. Improve internal customer service

V. Modernizing Organizational Structure

A. Consider alternative organizational structure with stronger collaboration and coordination between academic and support units, such as a provost model

B. Develop a more coordinated approach to graduate programs

C. Create a model to coordinate academic support programs, particularly for students that have not yet decided on a major (in some universities, this is called "University College")

D. Further involve faculty in decision making (shared governance) and improve communication between administration and faculty