

Agenda Item No. V. B. 1.

Washburn University Board of Regents

SUBJECT: Strategic Plan and Core Values

BACKGROUND:

In spring of 2015 and 2016, we presented the Vision 2022 Strategic Plan. We reviewed the plan last fall and determined that we were able to accomplish many of the initiatives and goals that we set out in that plan more quickly than we initially expected. It is time to refresh the plan and re-evaluate our goals for the University going forward.

At the Executive Staff retreat, we brainstormed about University level goals for the next 3-5 years. A draft strategic plan was developed for input from campus constituents. Each member of the Executive Staff held sessions for their areas to discuss the draft and provide feedback, including several sessions with the deans and faculty senate. Numerous meetings were held where faculty and staff gave their thoughts on progressive versions of the plan and suggested edits.

When gathering feedback about the strategic plan, the theme of “inclusion” kept appearing. Dr. Mazachek asked a small group of folks to create a proposal to add a core value of *Inclusion* to the University’s set of six core values. Core Values represent the framework for our organizational culture and define what underlies our work, how we interact with each other, and what is fundamentally most important. Core Values change infrequently and represent what is the “heart” of our organization.

Washburn’s commitment to *Inclusion* has remained steadfast throughout the more than 150 years of providing educational excellence at Washburn University. While there has been, and will continue to be, persistent evolution to our society and communities, and corresponding continual progress in how we support and live out *Inclusion* at Washburn, the dedication of students, faculty, and staff to creating an environment of *Inclusion* is undeniable through all of these years. Given this sustained dedication, it seems evident that “*Inclusion*” should be memorialized and held forth as one of Washburn’s deeply rooted Core Values. We gathered feedback about this proposal and the support was overwhelmingly positive from various departments and units.

DESCRIPTION:

The new strategic plan outlines five over-arching goals for the University. Each of those five goals has several broad initiatives that serve as guiding priorities for departments and units across campus. Each area is responsible for tailoring projects and taking actions that fit within the listed initiatives that move the University forward. Individual units may have their own plans that fit underneath this framework, while other units may simply use this framework as a guiding document when evaluating work or projects that arise on a daily basis.

Careful consideration was given at each step of the process to keeping in mind the most important goal, which is learner success. All actions taken should ultimately lead to helping students become their best self.

There are two proposed additions to the Core Values statement as well, which are noted by asterisks in the attached document. The first addition is Inclusion as a Core Value and the second addition is a preamble sentence to the entire set of Core Values.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None

RECOMMENDATION:

President Farley recommends the Board approve the new strategic plan and changes to the Core Values statement.

Date

Jerry B. Farley, President

**Washburn University's
Strategic Plan for
Learner Success**

1) Academic Excellence and Innovation – Recognized as a student-centered teaching-focused institution with faculty and staff committed to creating exceptional undergraduate and graduate learning experiences with an enduring dedication to student success and the development of graduates with the education, knowledge and skills to excel as citizens and in their careers in our ever-evolving world.

- a. Offer quality degree programs and courses supporting and valuing continual improvement and innovation in content, learning pedagogies, and course delivery modes to meet the needs of students and the workplace.
- b. Enhance academic student success by creating a graduation-focused academic environment with the resources and opportunities to support students in their unique paths, evidenced by improving graduation rates, credit hour completion rates, and time to degree for students.
- c. Create various educational pathways and distance learning opportunities for students enabling the attainment of desired skills, certifications and degree completion for all students.
- d. Ensure a thriving culture of instruction that recognizes and promotes excellence in teaching and supports the development of innovative and relevant teaching methods.
- e. Foster opportunities and support for faculty to engage in scholarship recognizing its importance for excellence in the classroom and valuing the many forms of scholarship including pedagogy, teaching and learning.

2) Student Engagement – Embrace the importance of student involvement in activities beyond the classroom and a student's connection to others as vital to a student's success at Washburn. Remain student-centered by providing integrated, inclusive experiences that enrich the learning environment.

- a. Produce a vibrant campus experience, virtually and in-person, that extends the boundaries of the classroom so that everything is part of the learning experience.
- b. Continue to support student learning and leadership development by providing opportunities for engagement in a broad set of high-impact experiences on and off campus, inside and outside of classroom.
- c. Encourage civil discourse by exploring diverse views and experiences, in the context of rigorous thought, highlighting cultural experiences, and learning about various perspectives.

- d. Adopt an approach to holistic student physical and mental wellness so they have safe, healthy futures as engaged, productive alumni and citizens.
- e. Build school spirit and pride by encouraging attendance at athletic events, and fostering student-athletes' participation in non-athletic campus experiences.

3) Engaging Work Environment – Become a sought-after place to work because we give competitive compensation and benefits and offer a collegial culture that attracts, trains, and retains the best employees, while providing opportunities for professional development and a desirable quality of life.

- a. Enhance processes and practices to hire and retain excellent faculty and staff members who are integrated into the campus community and are committed to our mission.
- b. Implement intentional efforts to attract and retain diverse faculty and staff members.
- c. Offer opportunities and programs for faculty and staff job training and professional development.
- d. Expand communication, campus engagement, and participation between the University and Tech campuses.
- e. Provide a work environment that supports overall health and well-being.
- f. Support and model rigor of thought and respect in all interactions with students and fellow employees.

4) Valuable Community Partner – Provide opportunities for local and global experiences that demonstrate and communicate the value of Washburn education to Topeka so the community seeks our graduates and recognizes we are an integral part of Topeka's economy and culture.

- a. Collaborate with businesses/non-profits to develop and enhance degree programs and partnerships that support economic growth and increase the number of educated citizens in Topeka.
- b. Expand community-engaged learning experiences, courses, and partnerships to enhance our students' education and benefit the community partner.
- c. Encourage employees to be leaders in the community, supporting efforts that positively impact students and enhance the University's reputation in the community- regionally, nationally, and internationally.
- d. Support and enrich Topeka's quality of life and quality of place by offering diverse events, programs, and spaces for the local population.
- e. Continue and enhance student outreach in Topeka and abroad.

5) Fiscal and Operational Excellence – Be responsible stewards of all resources – people, financial, environmental, and physical – by developing and streamlining processes and practices to more nimbly meet the evolving needs of faculty, staff and students while using resources efficiently, innovatively, and effectively.

- a. Exercise care for, and protection of, our financial strength by being fiscally responsible with public, private, and student dollars while thoughtful of affordability and access.
- b. Continuously evaluate student recruitment and retention strategies to be supportive of student success and growth in enrollment.
- c. Maintain stable public support and obtain additional funding for capital improvements at all campuses.
- d. Utilize established processes to promote available private funds and to identify desirable projects for giving opportunities.
- e. Ensure comprehensive support services for all students, particularly at-risk students, are easily accessible and contribute to an environment that encourages individual growth and success.
- f. Continue a responsible maintenance schedule for buildings, grounds, and technology that supports accessibility, landscaping, art, sustainability, and infrastructure.
- g. Enhance resources to provide a physical and digital learning environment that is accessible and meets the changing needs of the 21st century learner on all campuses.

Core Values (as adopted by the Board of Regents October 31, 2013)

****In keeping with the University's founding heritage, we commit ourselves to the following core values:**

- Integrity: acting in an honest, fair, and ethical manner, creating a culture of trust evident in all University activities and decision-making.
- Excellence: serving our scholarly community by delivering consistently high-quality programs, teaching, service, and scholarship.
- ***Inclusion: cultivating an inclusive learning, living, and working community, committing to the success of all people, and supporting all individuals.**
- Accountability: ensuring academic, programmatic, and fiscal integrity and value through prudent management of resources entrusted to the University.
- Respect: embracing diversity and treating others collegially with civility, openness, and professionalism in all interactions, activities, and decision-making.
- Collaboration: working toward common goals with others in the University and the community while valuing teamwork, participation, and diversity of ideas and perspectives.
- Innovation: encouraging, considering, and supporting development of ideas by fostering individual ingenuity and creativity and creating an environment with opportunities for growth and change.

****proposed for addition to Core Values**