

Strategic Thinking Process Institutional Goal Integration

Fall 2007 Update Alice P. Gast

In January 2007, I posed the question: *How do we keep our sights on longer-term ambitions and ensure that our decisions, including refocusing the campaign and the budgeting process, support those long-range goals?* Subsequently, I launched an 18- to 24-month strategic thinking process in order to integrate the university's "separate" goals into overarching institutional goals. Over the summer the senior leadership, working in teams, integrated the institutional goals and priorities, refined sub-goals for each and proposed actions. The next step in the process is to engage the campus community and the Board of Trustees, and develop a specific implementation plan for each one of the goals. We will finish this process with a Board retreat in July 2008. The end result will be an integrated set of strategic goals and implementation plans for Lehigh.

Following are the ten goals with a *short synopsis* for each and the immediate next step.

Long Range Goals

Long Range Planning for Faculty and Staff to Meet Lehigh's Mission and Goals - *To create a process to, on an ongoing basis, assess and identify the optimal work force (faculty and staff) needed (numbers, expertise and deployment) in order to remain vigilant to the university's mission and goals and simultaneously be responsive to the evolving pedagogical and research needs of the university to remain at the forefront of higher education.*

The faculty portion of this goal was discussed during the October 2007 Board of Trustees Meeting. Working with faculty and staff leadership a faculty/staff working group will be assembled to address the topic.

Student Life and Learning - *To create and sustain an environment that celebrates the "whole student" through the full integration and interdependence of living and learning and which is supported by members of the university community who are committed to contribute and participate on a daily basis.*

Working with the Faculty Steering Committee, Student Affairs area and interested faculty, staff and students, a group will be charged to explore best practices from other institutions, set priorities, and recommend creative approaches to improving the student life and learning environment. This goal will be the focus of the February 2008 Board of Trustees Meeting.

Increase Research and Graduate Programs - *To elevate the global impact, recognition, and productivity of Lehigh's Research and Graduate Programs, through achieving distinction in concentrated intellectual areas while simultaneously achieving a balance and integration of research and education. The outcome is to ultimately increase Lehigh's visibility and reputation to a higher level of international recognition in research, scholarship and creative work as well as to be a leader in education and cutting-edge research resulting in significant contributions to society-at-large.*

The Vice Provost for Research will lead a university-wide Research Council to propel this goal and work with faculty, staff, students, and administrators.

Current and Long Range Goals

Enroll Strategically - *To create a responsive system for budgeting, planning, and evaluation which includes an ongoing assessment of goal achievement and monitoring of external factors (e.g., demographics, socio economics, diversity) resulting in the ultimate goal of establishing a sustainable enrollment management process which will ensure fiscal viability and high quality and diverse students (graduate and undergraduate; domestic and international).*

The Enrollment Management Team is leading the planning process with expected outcomes of leveraging the financial resources, increased retention, broadened metrics for all cohorts of students, become a “destination” campus, improved enrollment of women, especially in science and engineering, increased number of graduate students, and improvements in campus climate. This goal will be the focus of the May 2008 Board of Trustees Meeting.

University Governance - *To develop and sustain an effective shared governance structure reliant upon clearly articulated shared principles and values that substantively engages all constituencies (faculty, staff, students, and Board members) with the end result being a structure that ensures all members of the university community have the format to communicate clearly and participate collaboratively in achieving the university’s mission and goals.*

An oversight group will be charged to work with each constituency to improve our governance structures.

Diversity/Inclusion - *To create and maintain an inclusive community which values, affirms, and advances the diverse backgrounds, interests, experiences, and aspirations of all its members. Achieving diversity requires working toward building a community that is more reflective of our society. Fostering a campus culture that embraces diversity will advance the intellectual and social vitality of the Lehigh community, and confirm the symbiotic relationship between diversity and academic excellence.*

The University Diversity Leadership Committee (UDLC) has provided a thoughtful and comprehensive synthesis of the Campus Climate findings and recommendations in its final report submitted to the president and provost in early August. Coming out of the recommendations including in the UDLC final report, the president is creating a Council of Equity and Community (CEC), a permanent, standing university body comprising faculty, staff and students. The Council will replace the UDLC and will implement and sustain goals and initiatives, moving Lehigh University toward realizing its vision for equity and community. The CEC will form working groups to implement and meet the goals and actions included in the UDLC final report and will develop new goals as appropriate. They will report to the president and senior leaders on a regular basis.

Global Initiatives - *To design a long-term approach that has multiple areas of focus in order to transform fully the life and learning at the university. The guiding principle is to ensure that internationalization, in all its dimensions, pervades the university’s intellectual, cultural, and social life and becomes a signature of Lehigh University, evident to faculty, staff, and both undergraduate and graduate students—whether potential or enrolled—from the day they set foot on campus.*

The Global Lehigh Advisory Committee (GLAC) submitted its report in May 2007. The report has been shared and discussed with the campus community. In October, the committee summarized those discussions for the president and the provost. The Board of Trustees Global Affairs Subcommittee and the Lehigh Global Council have also been engaged in the review and discussion of the report. Based on the feedback from the GLAC, the president and provost will develop an action plan to be shared with the campus community this November.

Outreach/Alumni/External Relations - *To increase and build upon existing outreach and partnership efforts in order to enhance the recognition and visibility of Lehigh across a broad range of constituents including: alumni, students, faculty and staff, trustees, advisory boards, corporations and foundations, hospitals, government (federal, state, local, and international), neighborhood groups, local merchants, economic development organizations, prospective students and parents, other universities and institutions, the media, and the general public.*

The Offices of Admissions, Communications, Advancement, Government Relations, the Lehigh University Alumni Association, Corporate and Foundation Relations, Economic Development and Community Affairs, and the Office of Research will work collaboratively with faculty, students and staff, to develop a clear list of goals and priorities to enhance our work in these areas and position Lehigh as a leading institution.

Supporting Goals

Physical Infrastructure - *To create a flexible, responsive, and integrated approach for the development of priorities and planning, systematic evaluation, resource allocation and budget process that will support the university future priorities (academic and non-academic) relating to physical infrastructure.*

The Senior Leadership will work to address this goal, in an integrated approach with all the goals listed above.

IT infrastructure - *To position Lehigh University as a recognized national leader with respect to IT infrastructure which supports and enhances research, instruction, administration and campus life.*

The Vice Provost for Library Technology Services will take the lead to bring the appropriate group of people together to propel this goal and work with faculty, staff, students and administrators.