ADVANCING OUR INTELLECTUAL FOOTPRINT
FIRST STEPS: LEHIGH UNIVERSITY’S STRATEGIC THINKING PROCESS

STRATEGIC THINKING for Lehigh University
2008
# Welcome from President Alice Gast

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## Student life and learning focus –

- Unifying the campus

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- For students only to comment

## Research and graduate education focus –

- For grad students only to comment

## Student life and learning focus –

- Lehigh in ten years

## Research and graduate education focus –

- Lehigh in ten years

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- Lehigh in ten years

## Across the three focus areas

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## Summary
The Lehigh Community Has Embarked on Creating a Strategy for the Future

Enhancing and Transforming Lehigh’s Intellectual Footprint

Welcome from President Gast

The great Lehigh University campus community has the opportunity to apply our best thinking to how Lehigh will contribute the next generation of problem solvers and the next generation of new ideas to the world’s challenges. With the help of our faculty and staff, this will be an important transformation following Lehigh’s founding vision and our heritage of important changes.

Lehigh University has made several important transformations in its recent history while remaining true to its founding vision. The transformation from an all-male to a co-educational institution in 1971 was a significant change without which Lehigh would not have thrived. In 1986 Lehigh University doubled its size with the purchase of the 800-acre Mountaintop Campus. In 1988, Lehigh undertook another bold expansion of its physical footprint by moving the football stadium to the Murray H. Goodman Campus and building a business college and arts center on the Asa Packer Campus. This expansion of our physical footprint transformed the university in ways that continue to amplify as our business college continues to excel and our arts program has become a centerpiece of Lehigh educational and community life.

Now is the time for Lehigh to embark on another bold transformation, this time enhancing our intellectual footprint. We have an opportunity to change Lehigh University for the coming decades by aggressively taking on an ambitious plan to transform our programs and our campus community. We have an opportunity to amplify the things that make us distinctive.

To contribute to these grand challenges we must turn to our core purpose: to contribute to society by creating and disseminating knowledge through our graduates and new knowledge. This is Lehigh’s “intellectual footprint,” our graduates and the knowledge we create. We strive to define how, in the coming decade, we will enhance our contribution and broader impact to society; not only domestically, but globally. We must determine how we will have the best faculty and staff to inspire and prepare students to tackle big problems. We must determine how we will have the best faculty and staff to produce the new ideas from research and graduate programs to provide the world with solutions to big problems.

A transformation of this importance requires an inclusive process engaging everyone in our campus community. There are several ways you can be involved depending on the amount of time you are able to contribute.

Those who participate in this strategic thinking process will interact with colleagues from across the university, better understand university operations and networks, and learn energizing and efficient approaches to setting goals for the whole university. I hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to help shape the trajectories of the university for decades to come.

Alice P. Gast
Framing the Process

Beginning in spring 2008, we began to build the framework for our strategic thinking process in order to integrate the university’s ‘separate’ goals into overarching institutional goals, assigning priorities and identifying proposed actions. In order to accomplish this, we needed to engage the campus community and the Board of Trustees. A Steering Committee was created to direct and support Working Groups comprising faculty and staff from throughout the university. The groups developed documents outlining our collective thoughts on goals in three areas central to Lehigh’s future:

- Enhancing our distinctive student life and learning experience
- Increasing research and graduate programs to respond to vital challenges
- Investing in faculty and staff to be at the forefront of distinguished universities

The Working Group reports provide a framework for priority setting, budget projections, and fund raising.

We reached out to the university community to get input and seek convergence on our collective ideas for strategic goals and priorities. This process was designed to be highly inclusive through small and large meetings, and in-person and online discussions and dialogue. We then created executive summary reports for presentation to the Board of Trustees at the joint Board/Leadership Retreat in July.

The Lehigh community’s active participation in this process was key to its success. Faculty, staff, and students all contributed to our best thinking about Lehigh’s future toward setting our institutional goals and priorities.

How you can participate

The draft of Lehigh’s 10-year strategic plan was unveiled by President Gast in December. We again look to engaged faculty and staff to share their thoughts about the plan. Looking ahead, we will be forming implementation groups and working with administrators to set budgetary and fund raising plans.

Introduction and Background

Lehigh University’s Core Purpose
To contribute to society by creation and dissemination of knowledge through our graduates and new knowledge.

Lehigh University’s Core Values
Integrity and honesty, equitable community, academic freedom, intellectual curiosity, collaboration, commitment to excellence, leadership.

Creating a Strategy for the Future

In a very compressed time frame, Lehigh University engaged in a strategic thinking process in which we integrated our strategic plans and goals into institutional goals—in President Gast’s words, to enhance our intellectual footprint by developing a strategic framework. We engaged in an inclusive and campus-driven process for the strategic thinking work, with a focus on getting the best ideas out and having full and probing discussions around the following three goals:

- Investing in faculty and staff to be at the forefront of distinguished universities
- Enhancing our distinctive student life and learning experience
- Increasing research and graduate programs to respond to vital challenges

As we continue to engage a large and interested group of Lehigh faculty and staff in discussion, we will move forward with recommendations and implementation over the next 5 to 10 years.
Desired Outcomes

- Identifying the best ideas for the transformation and enhancement of Lehigh’s intellectual footprint
- Articulating bold institutional goals and setting institutional priorities
- Distinctiveness in what we do at Lehigh
- Engagement and cultivation of strategic thinkers across campus
- Developing the institutional identity, communication and partnership needed to achieve university goals
- Setting the agenda for future fund raising priorities

Long-Range Thinking and Lehigh’s Initiatives

As we continue our collective thinking about the long range intellectual trajectory we will want to capture the momentum, energy and direction of new and existing initiatives. Our long-range goals are consistent with and reflective of our college, department and cross-cutting goals and our strategic thinking process poses an opportunity to integrate those initiatives into our institutional goals.

The activity on campus and the many great plans from departments, colleges and interdisciplinary groups is extremely exciting and invigorating. Many of these initiatives and programs will form the basis for what we do in the coming decades. This strategic thinking process is an opportunity to come to a broader table and share these and other ideas for the future.

See Figure 1. page 84

Work Plan

This work plan shows the work of the Strategic Thinking Process against a timeline of other Lehigh major initiatives and processes.

See Figure 2. page 84

STRATEGIC THINKING STEERING GROUP

- Chair: Prof. Ed Shapiro, School Psychology
- Prof. Jim Dearden, Economics
- Greg Reihman, Director of Faculty Development, Co-Director, Lehigh Lab, Adjunct Professor of Philosophy
- Assoc. Prof. Colin Saldanha, Biological Sciences
- Kathleen Hutnik, Director of Graduate Student Life
- Assoc. Prof. Daniel Lopresti, Computer Science and Engineering
- Sue Cady, Director for Administrative Services, LTS
- Denise Blew, Treasurer
- Joseph Kender Jr., Vice President, Advancement

Project Manager: Mary Jo McNulty, Senior Human Resources Assistant, assisted by David Caruso, President’s Office

Resources: Provost, Vice Provost Student Affairs, and Vice Provost Research

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STRATEGIC THINKING WORKING GROUPS

Graduate education & research
- Colin J. Saldanha – Co-Chair, Biological Sciences
- Kathleen Hutnik – Co-Chair, Director Graduate Student Life
- Lynne Cassimeris – Biological Sciences
- George DuPaul – Chairperson, Education & Human Services, College of Education
- John Savage – History
- Christine Roysdon – Director for Library Collection/Systems, LTS Client Services
- Derick Brown – Civil & Environmental Engineering
- Matthew Mattern – Development
- Martin Harmer – Center for Advanced Materials and Nanotechnology
- K. Sivakumar (Siva) – Marketing

Enhancing our distinctive student life and learning experience
- Greg Reihman – Co-Chair, Director of Faculty Development, Philosophy
- Jim Dearden – Co-Chair, Economics
- Anne Anderson – Finance
- Chris Bell – Assistant Director of Residential Services
- Allison Gulati – Assistant Dean for Student Leadership, Development
- Diane Hyland – Chairperson Psychology
- John McKnight – Assistant Director of Multicultural Affairs
- Vassie Ware – Biological Sciences
- Rick Weisman – Civil and Environmental Engineering

Investing in faculty and staff to be at the forefront of distinguished universities
- Dan Lopresti – Co-Chair, Computer Science
- Sue Cady – Co-Chair, Director for Administrative Services, LTS
- Caroline Clifford – University Events Development
- Arpana Inman – College of Education, Counseling Psychology
- Mark Ironside – Business Services
- Jerry Lennon – Civil/Environmental Engineering
- Jim Maskulka – CBE / Marketing
- Debra Rubart – Academic Outreach Office
- Neal Simon – Biology
- Pat Mann – University Relations
- Stephanie Watts – English
RESOURCES

Frequently asked questions

Why do we call it strategic thinking?
Lehigh’s strategic thinking is about challenging ourselves as a university and setting our common vision, goals, and priorities for the coming decade. We have an opportunity to build from our individual, departmental, and college goals into institutional goals. This requires us to have a collective conversation and to encourage input from all members of our campus community.

How is this different from strategic planning?
Our strategic thinking will provide the foundation for strategic planning and strategic action. As a university community, we need to think about and talk about our shared goals and aspirations for making Lehigh the best it can be. Now is the time for us to use our collective thinking to set a path for our future. This thinking will generate goals as well as steps to lead toward those goals. We presented these institutional goals to the Board of Trustees at a July retreat. We will move directly into planning and implementation in the fall of 2008 to develop strategic action plans, strategic behaviors, and metrics to measure our achievements. The work we do now will set the direction for future budget and fund raising priorities for Lehigh in the near future.

How far into the future should we be thinking?
We cannot predict the future nor can we foresee all of the changes we will need to adapt to. We can, however, ask ourselves where we want Lehigh to be in five years and ten years. Our best thinking should create a path to lead us to action plans and implementation.

We seek the input of the campus community. Our planning and actions will be much stronger with greater participation from the campus.

How can I get involved?
The initial input process is over, and the Working Group reports have been posted. We will continue to take an “open source” approach; the more members of the campus community we hear from, the better our results will be. When we begin the implementation phase, we will again welcome your thoughts and encourage you to share your ideas with the community.

What is the product of this thinking?
In addition to a report from each of the three Working Groups, there is also a synthesis report from the Steering Committee. These documents are the end product of our months of discussion. They provide goals, priorities within the goals, desired time frames to achieve these goals, and description of impacts of achieving these goals and beneficiaries of their achievement. In short, they form a road map for our implementation groups to use.

Now is the time to be engaged and involved in setting the direction for Lehigh University. The work we do now will directly impact future budgeting and fund raising priorities.
Campaign Method in Brief

What's the starting point for a campaign? Learn more from the Center for Applied Research (CFAR).

See Figure 3. page 85-87

Ideas from Faculty Dinners 2008

President Gast and her husband have greatly enjoyed the opportunity to get to know the faculty at a series of dinners over the past year. University faculty members have been randomly selected for the dinners so that no two faculty from the same department are at dinner at the same time. Discussions have been interesting and lively. The dinner guests were asked to say where they would like to see Lehigh within ten years. Here is a collection of the responses, categorized by subject area:

Our faculty and staff

- Don’t lose traditions of great undergraduate teaching
- Continue to connect with students in ways others cannot; prepare them for the world they will exist in, teaching them important life skills inside and outside the classroom
- Be a place where people like to work and are happy; happy professors make the best teachers and researchers
- Hire research-excellent faculty, known in their fields
- Investment in undergraduate teaching
- Real faculty input in decision making
- 360-degree review for administration
- Governance processes that are more consultative and collaborative and less hierarchical
- Evaluate what works for who and why
- Key to faculty—good mid-level superstars
- Attract better young faculty
- Our most valuable resource is time
- Retain value of undergrad teaching
- Stronger sense of faculty community
- More time to think creatively
- More professors who become national thought leaders in their fields
Our curriculum

- Grow in disciplines that support health and medicine, increase hospital collaborations
- Make Lehigh a place where graduate students come because of their passion and because they want to study (not just to get a degree)
- Improve our graduate program, develop critical mass while still addressing needs of undergraduates
- High-quality undergraduate education
- Lead in liberal arts education
- Move outside disciplinary boxes; challenge departmental barriers
- Achieve elite status in graduate education
- Establish a law school, perhaps not full service but focusing on areas of relevance to Lehigh: intellectual property, education law, etc.
- Excellence in education
- Customizable Ph.D. offerings
- Name the IBE program
- Offer Ph.D. in business beyond economics
- Truly great arts and sciences program—the heart of the university
- Balance with electronic teaching
- Emphasize study of languages and literature
- Examine the role of technology in teaching
- Environmental topics integrated into all curriculum
- Have a medical school that is closely aligned with a hospital or hospitals
- Leader in bioengineering (biometrics, COT imaging)

Our students

- Make Lehigh’s intellectual climate one that attracts students who want to learn and be challenged
- Diversify student population
- Produce students who will promote themselves better and be proud of their Lehigh degree
• Increase graduate student population
• Imbue our students with the value of evidence-based work
• Integrate grad students on campus
• More undergraduates with intellectual curiosity
• Help our students become free and informed citizens
• Graduate fellowships: Attract the best grad students
• Raise graduate students to the same level of importance as undergraduates
• Student body mix combining creative engineers, less vocation-fixated business students, and a more diverse group of educationally curious CAS students

Research
• Make our research programs stronger
• Be famous for research; in turn, this will attract the best graduate students
• Fully develop our own research identity; benefit from niche areas and our strengths
• Emphasize fundamentals and basic research
• Become more well known nationally and internationally for research
• Achieve elite status in research
• Excellence in research
• Find a research niche that puts us ahead of the competition
• Grow research—the quality of undergraduate education grows with the quality of graduate education
• Prominent research initiative
• Improvement in research resources and support
• Enhanced leave of absence for research
• Recognition as a world-class research institution while continuing our emphasis on teaching undergraduates
• Build a highly respected research family (students, collaborators, etc.)
• Endowment sufficient to support basic research
• Balance between research and teaching

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Campus

• Provide alternatives to Greek life for social and intellectual community, spaces like the Humanities Center and South Mountain College

• Better connections across parts of campus, including Mountaintop

• Enhance engagement with South Bethlehem

• Value the fraternities, but bring them along to the current century

• Be a place for lively and open respectful debate with people having opinions different from our own

• Grad student dorm on the lower campus

• A conference center shared with the South Side

Sports

• Win a national wrestling championship!

Our identity

• Do not try to be someone else; work out our unique identities

• Value the arts and other disciplines; help students to live and breathe art culture and language

• Keep the balance, our niche in teaching student experiences and research; keep “feel,” don’t try to be another place; maintain character

• Have seamless collaborations

• “Lehigh” means “strong” in Mandarin; maintain our own character, use resources efficiently

• Don’t model on other places; keep our “feel”

• Not just another Ivy—have a great campus and faculty balance with engineering and arts and sciences and business

• Move up 5 to 10 positions in the rankings

• Be competitive with the same pool of institutions at the graduate level that we now compete with at the undergraduate level

• We don’t know how good we are—build bridges across campus

• No walls between the four colleges
• Gain the reputation to turn away top students, attract top faculty, and become a destination for international scholars on sabbatical

• Recognized nationally and internationally for truly accomplishing the goals stated in our (revised and updated) mission statement

• Become a more diversified national school (vs. a regional school)

• A medium-sized school with our distinguished competitive advantages in selected subjects

• Serve a niche rather than be a university that tries to cater to all

**Engaging the world around us**

• Contribute internationally and for societal good; be a place that embraces diversity

• Leadership in environmental initiative and issues

• Excited about Lehigh’s global programs—want to include international experiences for graduate students; global opportunities for all

• Enhance our international strategy

• Increase study abroad—up to two semesters, use peer pressure if not required

• Globalize: Require an international experience, bring international students and scholars in and send our students abroad

• Provide more international internships

• Full integration into the nation and world service

• Lehigh as the center of global universities; students sharing virtually and in person

• High-performance computing; TeraGrid

• Establish a world-leading geo and energy lab

• Save the world! (maybe within 20 years)

• Take advantage of the casino, make it a positive for Lehigh

• Internationalization

• Leader in green energy development: green buildings, green transportation (hybrid buses), research into renewable energy
Lehigh University Timeline

At the March 2008 campus-wide events, attendees were asked the following question: “Think back to when you first came to Lehigh. What one trait/aspect did you like about the university that you want to see unchanged?” The responses were posted on a Lehigh timeline spanning the years 1956 to the present.

See Figure 4, page 88-91

OUR PROGRESS

Updated December 23, 2008

The Strategic Thinking Working Groups gathered input from the campus community beginning in March 08. From small informal conversations to large group meetings, the participation by the campus community was both gratifying and illuminating:

- Meetings with 190 faculty members across the four colleges
- Meetings with the department chairs, dean of students, and associate dean of students
- Meeting with Library Technology Services directors
- Well over 50 small group meetings with various staff members
- The two interactive campus-wide events in March were a resounding success, attracting a total of 220 attendees representing a broad cross-section of faculty and staff
- The questions on the campus-wide blog (launched on March 11) generated many additional comments

The Working Groups distilled the information into reports. The first drafts of these documents were shared with senior leadership and the council of deans on April 22. The final Working Group reports were presented to President Gast on May 22, along with the synthesis report written by the Steering Committee to provide a cross-group perspective. (See Appendices A through E for the full reports and a message from President Gast and Steering Committee Chair Ed Shapiro.)

The Working Group reports provided the foundation of the 10-year Strategic Plan. We thank those who have already shared their thoughts with us, and we invite everyone to take the time to read the draft of the strategic plan and provide feedback to us. The plan will be shared with the Board of Trustees in February 2009.
General Timeline of Strategic Thinking Process

February 2008

- Kickoff meeting: forming the Strategic Thinking Initiative Steering Committee and Working Groups, and naming the co-leads
- Ongoing dialogue between the Working Groups and the broader campus community begins
- Council for Equity and Community elections
- Board of Trustees meeting: “Student Life and Learning”
- Discussion in standing college faculty, department, stem, and staff meetings throughout campus begins

March 2008

- Council for Equity and Community membership formed, work begins
- Collaborative virtual community (blog) launches
- University faculty meeting: discussion, updates
- Campus-wide community events: open dialogue with faculty and staff – March 25, 6-9 p.m., and March 27, 9 a.m. to noon
- Discussion in standing college faculty, department, stem, and staff meetings throughout campus continues
- Working Group meetings ongoing
- Steering Committee meetings ongoing

April 2008

- Results of campus-wide events compiled, integrated
- Working drafts of documents outlining institutional goals and priorities made available for review and comment
- Discussion in standing college faculty, department, stem, and staff meetings throughout campus continues
- Working Group meetings ongoing
- Steering Committee meetings ongoing
May 2008

- Working drafts of documents outlining institutional goals and priorities honed into final drafts
- Joint development of Strategic Thinking Steering Committee synthesis report (summary of the three Working Group reports) for campus community
- Board of Trustees meeting: “Enrolling Strategically”
- President’s report to campus community and alumni at Reunion
- Final Working Group meetings
- Final Steering Committee meetings

June 2008

- Executive summary reports prepared for presentation to the Board of Trustees

July 2008

- Joint Board of Trustees/Senior Leadership retreat

August 2008

- Strategic planning and implementation group (SPIG) launched
BLOG QUESTIONS & RESPONSES

Dialogue among the members of the campus community was a critical piece of the strategic thinking process. Blogs were used as a means of facilitating this dialogue. What follows is the sum total of all blog postings, from staff, faculty, and students, throughout the process.

GRADUATE EDUCATION & RESEARCH FOCUS –

Moving scholarship to the next level

What immediate change (one or two) would propel your scholarship to the next level? How can Lehigh help?

7 Comments

1. Rick Vinci on April 2nd, 2008

Internal fellowship funding for a graduate student research assistant that would cover full stipend and tuition costs for 4 years. I’d be very happy to have this as a matching proposition (i.e., to qualify you must have at least one externally-funded student). This would allow me to pursue creative, high risk topics that cannot be quickly funded through conventional federal channels. Furthermore, it would be one step toward leveling the playing field with larger, more highly ranked institutions that have a large number of internal and external graduate fellowships. Some of my colleagues at those institutions have the same number and level of active grants as I do, but can field a group twice the size thanks to the “free” students. This naturally results in greater productivity and greater agility on their part.

2. Perry A. Zirkel on April 2nd, 2008

In addition to more funding for GAs, we (at least our College) does not have chaired professorships specific to research productivity, which for me would move my scholarship to the next level.


Although not a response to this specific prompt, these are general issues I would like to have heard by this working group.

Graduate Program Management Issues:
1. Avoid one-size fits all support programs (fellowship programs, advertising, etc.).

The transience of the CAS Graduate Deans makes it difficult for them to get to know the diversity of the college’s programs. Recent CAS Graduate Deans have lacked leadership initiative, perhaps due to their temporary status; they mainly serve as stewards of the college’s graduate programs.

2. Too few graduate fellowships, in CAS there were only 3 unrestricted

College Fellowships awarded for 2008-09. The University Fellowship Program is very limited in scope and poorly designed. Resources have to be brought into alignment with Lehigh’s aspirations for its graduate programs.

3. Many Lehigh support programs are designed to facilitate solely doctoral programs, e.g. TA salary structure in CAS, University and College Fellowship programs, dissertation awards, etc. [One good rationale for this is that the NRC judges graduate programs on the sole basis of PhD programs.] But there needs to be support for MS programs also, as some CAS departments and interdisciplinary programs only have MS programs and in departments like ours, MS candidates are a significant part of the graduate enterprise.

4. CAS advertising is too centralized (graduate fairs here and afar) for the diversity of its programs resulting in uneven support for CAS graduate Programs. The travel support for prospective applicants is a welcome and effective program.

5. Get the graduate application process online. I hear this is coming.

6. Timing issues: Application deadline and University and College Fellowship nomination deadlines are too closely scheduled. Though improving, processing of applications by the CAS office leaves little or no time to identify fellowship nominees.

Aid offers to be most competitive should be extended to prospective students before the trustees finalize the budget, thus the value of tuition remission and TA salary levels, to which our department ties all graduate assistantship salaries, delays the admission offers or limits the detail of the offers. The offer letters are now very contractual and must include these details. These aspects of the budget must be finalized sooner.

General Research Issues:
7. The lack of permanent leadership in OSRP is problematic; proposal and grant services functions have suffered.
8. The university prides itself on its state-of-the-art laboratories, however there is a general lack of technical support for these instrument intensive laboratories.

4. Federico Halpern on April 7th, 2008

In an increasingly international and multidisciplinary academic environment, it is imperative that Lehigh graduate students:

1. Be able to learn a foreign language while at graduate school. This used to be the norm decades ago. Perhaps this should be voluntary and non-credit.

2. Be able to easily transcend department barriers when taking courses. For example, any strong researcher in High Performance Computing needs to take courses in the mathematics and computer science departments (high level algorithms, parallel programming, etc), regardless of what their research background is (physics, engineering, biology, etc).

3. Travel to professional conferences to present work carried out at Lehigh, learn about the latest research in their fields, network with prospective collaborators and employers, etc. This will require a substantial increase in the availability and visibility of travel support for students.

5. Tom Hammond on April 8th, 2008

I’d like to echo the above comment about travel support for graduate students. In my experience, the best acid test for sizing up a graduate student is to see what happens when they step into a conference: Do they look around and think, I can do this? Do they run in the opposite direction? Do they make contacts and follow up on opportunities? Do they rise to challenges to their thinking? Getting graduate students to conferences with any predictability requires funding.

I would like to add: When appropriate, have doctoral students teach courses. I benefited tremendously from the opportunity to teach during my doctoral program, and the funding opportunity was of course appreciated. Ideally, this arrangement develops the doctor candidate’s teaching skills, strengthens their resume, sharpens their ability to explain and defend their thinking, and possibly exposes the faculty to new ideas about teaching the content (e.g., using new technologies). The practice needs to be balanced against concerns over staffing and quality of education, but when the pieces fall into place properly, it’s a win-win situation.

6. David Small on April 8th, 2008

I think the restricted coupling of research and graduate education in this discussion is another extension of one of Lehigh’s biggest failures. While the pairing makes sense for some, what about others who are active in research at Lehigh, but do not have any benefit of a graduate program? For me, it’s very difficult to conduct research, when you need a system where you can develop undergraduates for research application (which is not even discussed at any level at this institution and does exist elsewhere) and when you do not even have a real lab. Many of us who are active in research are just left out at Lehigh.

7. MJ Bishop on May 6th, 2008

I think the working group has done a wonderful job synthesizing the ideas and concerns of the events I attended. I particularly liked the subsection on “flexibility in conceptualizing and evaluating research.” It’s critically important we recognize and value the wide diversity of research and graduate student contributions across campus.

Along those lines, my one suggestion would be that the report do a better job of reflecting that we have both full-time and part-time graduate students that we must address. Much of what is currently suggested in the report feels like it’s aimed primarily at full-time students…what ideas do we have for helping the part-timers feel more connected and valued as well?
FACULTY & STAFF FOCUS –

Changes in management philosophy and operational structures

The most valuable resource available to any organization is its people. If Lehigh is to move to the forefront of distinguished universities, what changes in management philosophy and operational structures should be made to:

(1) make the university exceptionally attractive as a place to build a career,
(2) distinguish the university as a workplace, and
(3) enable significant advancement in scholarly reputation, educational opportunities (for both graduate and undergraduates), and global reputation?

10 Comments

1. A Dreamer on April 1st, 2008

I feel the university needs to increase the tuition benefit for staff members’ children and include a benefit for non-exempt staff members. $5,000 is not a lot of money in today’s market; each staff member is valued and not classified as essential or non-essential; There would be a state of the art daycare maybe even a charter school on campus; There is a summer enrichment program for older (school-aged) children; Policies are consistent throughout the university—not different from department to department; These things would make Lehigh an even better place to work.

2. Rick Vinci on April 2nd, 2008

Revisit the tuition benefit and tie it to Lehigh’s tuition. By the time my children reach college age the current external tuition benefit will not be meaningful. It may also be attractive to pursue reciprocal agreements with other institutions wherein we would provide a full tuition benefit to children of their faculty and staff in exchange for the same treatment. If I’m not mistaken, Lafayette has such an agreement with a number of schools.

3. Reality on April 2 on April 2nd, 2008

All staff should receive the same tuition benefit for their children. It seems a little ironic that the folks at the bottom of the Lehigh pay scale, most non-exempt, are the ones not given any dependent tuition benefit outside of Lehigh. Our children want an education as much as any other.

Whatever the Board of Trustees decide to allocate for pay rate increases, that percentage should be leveled on an even scale for all faculty and staff.

Also, it would be beneficial to Lehigh and its staff members to award staff for not taking all their sick time. One option would be to deposit the unused salary into a saving plan, even at a % of the pay rate.

It takes all of us to make Lehigh work, and work well.

4. Anonymous on April 5th, 2008

I had a chance to attend one of your strategic thinking sessions on Tuesday, March 25, and to hear, discuss and think about the entire undertaking. My impression is that the focus was on continuing improvement of the university operations; in contrast, my expectation was on positioning of the university to operate on a new level of high performance and recognition.

I am coming from the observation that Lehigh is at the end of her aspirations because the aspirations are too modest in the circle of her competition. The greatest asset available for the university is her faculty but this asset has been underutilized for a variety of convoluted reasons. The step that is essential in the transformation of the university is to let the faculty go after what he or she sees as vital, important and lasting goals. Ironically, the doorstop that inhibits the move toward the goals is a small peg in the form of the absence of professional expense budget. The university has been pretending to meet all faculty needs by providing various programs that capture the faculty needs as perceived, and managed, by academic and administrative managers. Shortcomings in the measures of faculty support at Lehigh are well noted by university ranking programs: the size of faculty support at Lehigh is about $15K below among the peer group of top-50 universities.

Lehigh is presently struggling with her fundraising: the current campaign is more than ten years old, and we are still at a midway point. The reason is that the pool of wells from which Lehigh can pump resources is limited to a very small slice of the resource arena, consisting of the alumni and much smaller cadre of sympathetic benefactors. The only way to enlarge the accessible pool is to make the faculty outputs large and visible to the larger world. Our faculty is small and composed of specialists from disparate fields. Many are quite good and have been patiently courted, carefully selected and have been miraculously attracted to join Lehigh. But they have been confined to a
rigid model of expectations and herded like docile animals by the old and tried rules of engagement. The great waste has been their creativity and wit going untapped. The only effective way to manage the faculty is to let the individual faculty manage themselves under a set of clear guidelines.

I have in mind an expense budget to the tune of $10K per year per faculty for support of faculty research and scholarship. This allocation shall be discipline blind. The amount is large enough to be nontrivial but small enough to be affordable; an endowment to the tune of $80M will be able to underwrite it. The requirement is that the total amount must be expended within the year and must be for support of the advancement of faculty research and scholarship; those who cannot will lose the unexpended amount at the end of the year, and if persistently so, the budget. The budget can be pooled among collaborating faculty members to support large projects, purchase equipment, new curriculum development, hosting of workshops, sponsoring of visitors, etc.; this will encourage collaboration and enable faculty to plan future undertakings. In the long run, each faculty member will become more autonomous and self-propelled. It is in that medium that academics have been known to thrive for generations.

The faculty striving to define her or his academic world will not only make the campus buzzing but also help project his or her influence to distant parts of the world; I grant that at times it will drive the campus into a chaos or another but we have many managers to ameliorate such complications. Out of the frenzy of self-driven initiatives, lasting new ideas will rise to the top to be noticed by our peers. New overtures can be constructed to help with our fund-raising campaign. Effective solutions for continuing improvement needs will also emerge in the form of program streamlining and new initiatives at a higher level of resource management.

We can choose to invest in the faculty to be the best it is intrinsically capable of or invest in a state of the art management of the university. The question is which of these will elevate the university’s reputation and influence. I do not have any difficulty in answering this question. With the faculty at its full functioning potential, the university cannot avoid being at its best in the quality of management.

5. Ruth Tallman on April 9th, 2008

This may sound trivial, but in helping the university continue to be a great place to work, more is needed to make it “community.”

My first suggestion is to no longer outsource the bookstore, One Source and the dining services.

If these people would be Lehigh employees, they would have an added “buy-in” to making Lehigh their home during their working hours. For instance, I feel bad for the One Source employees who clean because they are given minimal (I mean, bare minimum) supplies and equipment to do their jobs. Imagine if the exempt staff, the non-exempt staff and the area’s cleaning and maintenance staff could all be on the same team? Assign individuals to an area for cleaning and maintenance and then those people can team with the people who work in the area to do the best that can be done. Just, for example, snow removal! Instead of complaining that One Source puts way too much salt out, work together to get the right amount (less mess, less waste, the right amount of protection). And if extra equipment is needed, the department can tap their own budget or chip in to acquire the tools the maintenance and cleaning staff need. AND talk about going GREEN! A department would then have full control over waste collection and recyclables collection, controlling the energy use in the building, etc.

The other point to be made about NOT outsourcing services, the employees would/should receive some sort of tuition benefit. More of their children (or the employees themselves) would attend Lehigh or attend some college when they could not before. Many of the staff in these operations are minorities which would increase the diversity of the campus. It would also be a benefit to the community in raising the standard of living for the residents.

In the era of outsourcing and running universities more like a business, I think the university community is lost. Bringing these services back into the university is a win-win situation.

6. Chris Cassidy on April 28th, 2008

There are several ways for this institution to move to the forefront of distinguished universities. First off, the university needs to get its name out there. Right now, Lehigh is a very regional university, taking most of its students from New Jersey. As a student from Texas, the only reason I heard of Lehigh is because an alumni came to my high school to teach. There is a vast market of students in other states besides the tri-state area. Another thing the university should do to improve its standing in general would be to improve the math department. I have never been so disappointed with an academic experience than that I have had with the math department here. Professors that can actually TEACH the subject would be great instead of people who just happen to be good at it. Finally, the economics of Lehigh. I was disgusted with the amount of money that President Gast is giving away. $58 million dollars? Instead of giving away
so much money, take something from other great universities’ playbooks. Harvard, for example, just took a large portion of the money they give away to students and instead used it to lower tuition costs across the board.

7. Dual Careers on May 2nd, 2008

I participated in several sessions of the Strategic Thinking Plan, and in each I heard and voiced myself a desire for Lehigh to consider more thoughtfully dual career hires. Higher Education is a small and rather tight world, with many of us meeting our life partners somewhere along the way in our Higher Ed careers. Although I agree that nepotism is not the way to go, I do think—and heard in each session from others—that Lehigh’s approach to dual career hires remains too rigid for the current market.

I am not advocating for Lehigh to hire haphazardly but, rather, to be more aggressive in recruiting and retaining quality faculty and staff who request dual career hires for their well-qualified and proven life partners. While sometimes the “trailing” member may have not had the chance to demonstrate skills and knowledge, for example someone with a newly-minted Ph. D., we can still probably do a better job of creating professional development opportunities.

8. anonymous on May 5th, 2008

From the preamble:

If the goal is to achieve an increased intellectual footprint that is recognized both nationally and internationally, Lehigh cannot aspire to have a scholarly impact that matches one set of universities while salaries, benefits, and responsibilities are measured relative to a lesser set of schools.

The report conspicuously fails to follow up on this. Nowhere is there a specific recommendation that Lehigh provide competitive salaries.

9. anonymous on May 7th, 2008

We need to go back to basics and revisit the staff we currently have. There is A LOT of dead weight at Lehigh and they somehow get to stay where they are, as ineffective as their leadership is. It’s well known at Lehigh that you don’t get fired, you just get promoted. Why is that? For those of us still on the bottom rungs, it makes us a little less motivated to climb that Lehigh ladder. I’ve been here 10 years and still am amazed at the overwhelming incompetence still in charge of key offices on campus. Human resources has proven time and again that they are very ineffective in helping those of us who have issues (proven, not perceived) with leadership. That does not lend well to employee morale. Talented people are driven away from Lehigh because of this! I personally have told outside people NOT to apply to some jobs on campus because of what I know or have experienced with an office.

If Lehigh wants to continue to move forward and be competitive, address the issues of proven employee incompetence, regardless of their title! Human resources has spent countless hours/weeks/months trying to improve our performance appraisal system, but to what end? It’s just more work for something that no one reads or pays attention to even if they do. It’s really quite a joke.

Want to motivate us? Put people in leadership positions who belong there! Listen to employees when they have serious and corroborated issues. And when I say listen, I mean investigate further! HR needs to prove their worth...and so do a lot of others!

10. Anonymous on May 23rd, 2008

Regarding the new Performance Appraisal System, a committee was formed to look at the whole process - this was not an HR project. I have a friend who worked on the committee and she said they were a very large group who were charged with going out and talking to the campus, to find out what their needs/wants were. They made decisions based on what people told them. One cannot honestly expect to receive raises if we’re not evaluated on our performance. We need to be held accountable!
**FACULTY & STAFF FOCUS –**

Preparing for leadership roles

Lehigh needs to identify and develop strong leaders at all levels. These include staff members who will someday be asked to serve on highly visible university-wide committees or assume significant supervisory roles in their departments, or faculty who will someday be asked to serve as program coordinators, department chairs, or associate deans. How can Lehigh help you prepare for a leadership role? Have you already had such experiences at Lehigh that were worthwhile?

1 Comment

1. Kathleen on April 1st, 2008

   Prepare these leaders by introducing a formal mentoring system and have people identified as future leaders do “internships” in their own or other departments of interest. Provide funds and time for staff members to increase their skill levels (by obtaining a degree in their field or attending seminars). Have frank discussions with staff members to gauge their interest in becoming a leader. Do cross-training in departments so that people can cover for each other if they have an interest in developing their career.

**STUDENT LIFE & LEARNING FOCUS**

In conversations across campus, many individuals have pointed out that Lehigh needs to do more to unify its campus. Some suggestions have included better physical spaces (to create more intellectual and social “crossroads”); a central campus center that would combine student-center type facilities with facilities for conferences, public talks, etc.; a more unified Web presence and communications strategy across the university; better collaborations across colleges and units; university-wide learning communities to focus on areas of strategic importance such as diversity, service-learning, globalization, etc. What are your thoughts and suggestions on this topic?

6 Comments

1. Cameron on April 7th, 2008

   The Problem:

   There are many students on campus but no union. I completely agree that a well thought out public space would be a worthwhile investment for this university. Three distinct so called unions are underutilized and segregate the campus. The logistics of completing simple tasks is exponentially more difficult as the relevant parties and offices are distributed randomly across campus. Students in the different colleges and living spaces do not have a nexus of student services and activities, a place for groups to hold events, speakers, meetings, and network with other clubs and organizations on campus or just to share some down time. Lehigh’s faculty are some of the most friendly people who are willing to spend time with students outside of the classroom yet there is no place on campus suitable for students and faculty to interact in a social manner in a comfortable setting.

   Some ideas:

   A physical space is vital, and we have the opportunity as Lehigh grows and new buildings are added to redefine the student life experience. I like to use the analogy of the train station. A student union is a center of student life but also a jumping
off point where students know they can go to find out about upcoming programs.

An ideal student union would have a comfortable space for students both undergraduate and graduate to socialize in an informal setting.

It would provide a central location for student related services. Student groups and organizations would have meeting space and programming space.

I also believe a well planned student center would provide an alternative to the Hill or off-campus parties.

Many students, faculty, and staff speak about the Lehigh bubble, a well placed student center would make Lehigh University events, speakers etc. more accessible giving Lehigh greater recognition for the hard work that we all do.

2. Constantin on April 9th, 2008

On a day to day basis, I get the feeling that Lehigh is caring less and less for the students it houses and more for the name it is trying to upkeep. There are two topics in this question and I hope to address both succinctly.

On the student learning question, there could be much improvement:
Class Equipment and Functionality - For a private school that takes in quite a load of money, there is poor funding for the classrooms.
An example of this is the whole building of Christmas-Saucon. There are two bathrooms in the whole building, which is incredibly inconvenient. There is a bathroom at the top floor, and in the basement. Another problem with the same building is the poor classroom structure. Classrooms are usually tightly packed with horrible desks that are uncomfortable for sitting in or writing on. Lastly, the whole building doesn’t have wireless, which strikes me as awkward since Lehigh “praises” its wireless fidelity.

Packed classrooms with poor visibility and acoustics for the professor are all over Lehigh’s campus.

Respecting Students’ Learning - This topic mainly comes from a specific example of one of my classes, which ironically was in Christmas-Saucon, halfway through class someone starts drilling. Excuse me, but I pay quite a bit to go to this school, and I do not want to hear someone drill loudly right outside my classroom. I couldn’t hear the professor over the drilling. The fact that this was occurring seemed very unprofessional and it still makes me angry thinking about the fact that it happened.

Student Life:
I have a lot to say about this, mainly because your support for Student Life is lacking.

I am going to start with the Dining halls and availability of food ON CAMPUS. There are lots of places on campus that offer food, but they’re not on our meal plan. We pay quite a bit for a meal plan on this campus, and we don’t get our money’s worth. Last year, at least Pandini’s was open somewhat late, so one could either get sloppy food from the Hawk’s Nest or sloppy careless pizza from Pandini’s. This year, Pandini’s closes early every night, not to mention its hours have been cut drastically. This leaves students with one location, the Hawk’s Nest. The Hawk’s Nest is basically slow Lehigh workers who take their time to service the whole campus after 8pm. This is a little ridiculous, I am sorry, this is quite ridiculous.

Lehigh’s been cracking down strongly on drinking on the Hill. That’s great, I have no problem with that, you want to keep your reputation high. However, now you have quite a bit of college students who have nothing to do on a Friday and Saturday night, except sneak around and drink even more because now it’s “dangerous” to drink. There is alternatives, I’ll give you that, but they suck. Kenner theatre? That’s a joke, limited uncomfortable seating, with movies played through a VCR, at least invest in an hd dvd projector, you wouldn’t even feel the cost in your tremendous revenue income. Lambert events, understaffed, unadvertised and usually pretty boring. Now, I am listing a lot of events that generally suck, and that’s not fair because sometimes you guys do well. Gym Class Heroes concert was great, Lehigh Lafayette, Greek Week, wonderful times, great alternatives to do something other than drinking. However, these alternatives are on specific dates, and the time in between them offers nothing. So either let the kids drink themselves retarded or offer an INTERESTING alternative. By that, I mean an alternative you, YOURSELF, would actually go to and not one that you say you would go to but you know it’s going to be boring.

Lastly, Lehigh’s support for clubs. I thought this was my campus, the campus I live on, the campus that entertains me and keeps me active. Yet I find myself always being put behind people that pay more to use the campus. I like dancing, there’s two dance studios on this campus. One is always in use by dance team (which is fine) and when it’s not it’s in use by some non Lehigh club. The other dance studio is in Zoellner where, THERE IS A NORMALITY TO PUSH AWAY LEHIGH STUDENTS AND ACCEPT PEOPLE WHO PAY MONEY. The dance studio here is usually in use by some high school, or random non Lehigh affiliated group, or if it is an affiliated Lehigh group, it’s a bunch of
people reading in a circle. Great use of a dance studio Lehigh, way to go!

I’ve had these thoughts for a while, and hopefully you won’t blow them off but actually think about ways to reach out the Lehigh students, and show us that we’re more to you than $47,000 a year. Thank you

3. ARS on May 2nd, 2008

Lately I have been hearing more and more about how Lehigh needs a “real” student union. This would be a wonderful place where everyone could interact with each other and hang out and do stuff. Sounds great. Except for the fact that we already have three under-utilized spaces on campus, a startling lack of locations that take our meal plan, crumbling stairs, slow-as-molasses computers, dorm showers reminiscent of a high-security prison, and academic buildings with two Men’s rooms per floor and one Ladies’ room in the whole place, down in the basement.

Don’t get me wrong; I absolutely adore Lehigh, and I cannot imagine going to school anywhere else. But I think everyone is getting caught up in the glamorous idea of this new student union. There are so many improvements that could be made on this campus in lieu of building a whole new space. What about taking advantage of the spaces we already have? Events across campus are unadvertised and, as a result, unattended. Do we even have movies in Kenner Theatre anymore? I never hear about them. And I constantly walk by Lamberton and notice some sort of event going on—a game night, a comedian, whatever—that I had absolutely no idea was happening.

This is my suggestion: USE WHAT WE HAVE.

Instead of making something new, improve upon what we already have here. Use the money that would be put toward this new student center to improve the quality of the projection system in Kenner, to upgrade the computers in the lobby of Linderman, to invest in a faster deep-fryer at the Hawk’s Nest. We, as students, don’t want much. We just want to see that our thousands of dollars of tuition money is going towards something other than trying to get the “most diverse” student body in the country. We just want to see that you care about us.

4. Sara on May 2nd, 2008

The problem with Lehigh’s campus is that it does not meet the needs of the students. We have 3 student spaces, however they are not useful for student programming.

Ulrich Student Center is poorly laid out and there’s never anything really going on there. You go to Ulrich you get your mail and an ice cream from subversions and then you leave, not to mention that you’ll probably skip subversions because they only take dining dollars. The Kenner theater could be a great space but it needs to be upgraded and maintained, the eating there is terrible and the screen is ripped, also because Kenner is in the middle of the building it makes the entire Ulrich student center awkward for students to use because it forms these 4 long and skinny spaces that are dark and not appropriate for student interaction, when you walk into the building you can’t actually see who is there. Then the upstairs has the so called “club offices” which is great for the 3 clubs that have offices, only UP, student senate and community service have student run offices, what about every other club and activity on campus, that’s going on. Then they added those awkward conference spaces, that have a bunch of mismatched furniture and odd selections of floor lamps the tables might be two different tables of different heights.

Then there is Lamberton. Let’s start with the Hawks Nest, the food is terrible, greasy and unhealthy yet often it is the only place to get food on campus yet hold on a minute they also don’t accept meal plans or meal equivalences, so since you spent all your dining dollars on ice cream in Ulrich you now can’t get food on campus late at night, cause let’s face it college students don’t tend to carry a lot of cash. They attempted to make it into a student space but no one wants to sit in that dark and dingy dining area of the Hawks Nest, seriously get a lamp. Then there is the great room, which makes great programming space except for the awkwardly placed conference rooms and offices in the corner. Then there is the upstairs area above the Hawks Nest, it was a great idea to have pool table and such up there but if you can’t use them because the space is so cramped that your backed against the wall makes that area useless.

Then there is the UC, there are 3 dining areas, Upper UC, Cort and the Asa Packer room.

There are also a few offices and some random programming spaces. The UC has one purpose, you eat and you leave, unless you need to need to specifically speak to someone in one of the offices or you’re going to the Multicultural center, women’s center or rainbow room. That tends to be the same people, as those spaces are pushed into corners neatly out of the way of anyone who might feel uncomfortable by them. And the Asa Packer dining room, that is not a student dining hall, it’s a professors dining hall, don’t go around telling prospective students that President Gast eats in the dining halls unless she is eating in Upper UC, Cort or Rathbone with the students.

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Then while I’m touching on our student spaces there is Linderman Library which serves the purpose of a student center better than any of our so called student centers—to the point where people study in Ulrich and Lamberton and go to hang out in Linderman.

What we need is one student space, we need to combine Ulrich the UC and Lamberton into one space that serves the students as a whole. Don’t continue to make these useless places scattered across the campus we need one central location for the students. Maybe a renovation of Williams Hall or the UC that would allow it to function as a student space and then the offices and such that don’t belong in a Student center could be moved to the old student centers. One central location would provide unity to the campus. It would make it possible to find out what is going on around the campus. A place for student programming that we can afford, unlike Zoellner which costs ridiculous prices for students that want to use those spaces. We need a big open space filled with couches and chairs that student can move around to sit with group of their friends in that hour that they have awkwardly placed in-between classes. It needs to be a hub of social activity where students will want to be.

The campus needs not only the student space but a way for students to find out what’s going on around campus. We need both a physical calendar, maybe announcements inside of that new student center 20 min before something happens and an easily usable and accessible calendar of campus events. We need one that is maintained by a work study position and is easy for clubs to add their events to so it is possible to find out everything that’s happening on campus in one easy location.

Then there is the fact that the Lehigh dining services overcharges us for unhealthy greasy, over priced and cold food. The temperature of the food in the dining hall is always too cold, there are not enough options that aren’t heavy and greasy and fried. And there are only 2 places on campus that actually accept our meal plans and everything else is dining dollars or meal equivalences that cover half the price of a meal. ($4.25 and meals are usually more like 7 or 8 bucks on campus.)

Then there are the bathrooms, in the academic buildings particularly the really old ones there are men’s bathrooms everywhere and then there is one women’s room. The women’s room will either be an old classroom that they put a bunch of couches from the 50s in or they used to be a closet so you can barely turn around and your knees hit the stall doors. And giving out free tampons in the bathroom does not make up for the fact that during calc if I need to use the bathroom I need to go to the other side of Chandler Ulman in the basement.

And the stationary desks in the classrooms. How are we expected to write on those desks the only places that have decent desks are Packard 416 and 466, Neville and Rauch, everywhere else the desks are so small that your standard letter sized piece of paper is bigger than the desk, then our exams are on legal sized paper so it’s even worse. And even though I’m a righty I know my friends who are leftys are not going to post so I will remind you that there are almost no lefty desks in the classrooms and when there are there are only a handful and they are in terrible locations, not to mention many classrooms don’t have lefty desks.

5. Lucy on May 6th, 2008

Something that needs to be taken into consideration in planning for space needs are studio spaces with 24 hour access for students on or near campus. Some work through the night, musicians, painters, sculptors, writers, etc need a safe private space to work as well as a communal place to share ideas 24/7.

6. Anonymous on May 14th, 2008

Infrastructure, especially inside buildings, as pointed out above, is important, and noticeably sub-par. I’d also like to note that even if all the desks were replaced in many classrooms, we’d still have terribly overcrowded rooms. Those classrooms have so many desks that if used, the people would overwhelm the AC (if there is any) and there is hardly room to move. I wonder if there are safety requirements that might be violated in such circumstances?

Lehigh, being on a mountain, is also full of stairs outside that are often in poor condition. Perhaps this is because of a lack of poor water (run-off) management? There are lots of places on campus where you need boots because of standing or rushing water.

Finally, looking at the “Engaging every student” proposal, I seriously wonder what interesting courses will get cut if new core competencies get added to required course loads.
FACULTY & STAFF FOCUS –
For Students to Comment Only

When you made your decision to attend Lehigh, you had an impression of the kinds of interactions you would have with Lehigh faculty and staff. Have your expectations been met? Exceeded? In what ways (if any) have your interactions with faculty and staff fallen short of your expectations?

16 Comments

1. Alex F. on March 24th, 2008
   Most of my expectations have been met or exceeded. Almost everyone I’ve met here has been helpful and kind beyond what could reasonably be expected. I can think of only two professors who have fallen short of my expectations, and only one of those was unredeemable: he was mean to his students and difficult to learn from. All in all not a bad record.

2. A.A. on March 24th, 2008
   A majority of the faculty are extremely enthusiastic about teaching and about their fields. However, I had expected with a smaller University that the faculty in my department would be more active in helping me with my post-undergraduate plans. It seems as though most of them could care less what I end up doing after I graduate.

3. CL on March 24th, 2008
   As a smaller school, I expected that professors that I had for class would know my name. To some extent, this expectation has been met. It is sad, however, that some professors even in my own department do not know my name and do not recognize me when I see them outside of class. I think advising is a major problem at this school, as was suggested by the above comment. Most professors, at least in my department, seem to not care about my post-graduate status, only giving me the advice that I need to decide soon what I’d like to do. I feel the professors are much more active in recruiting freshman to the department and although this is good, I don’t believe this is the right way to go. Advising needs to be much more helpful and I think the professors need to take a much more active role in this process, especially after the Freshman year.

4. K. A. on March 24th, 2008
   I feel that Lehigh’s emphasis on faculty research sometimes leaves faculty with little time to dedicate to teaching and undergraduate advising.

5. Emily on March 24th, 2008
   I have taken classes in primarily the Biology, Art, and English departments.
   Biology, aside from a few lab teachers or T.A.’s that do seem interested in getting to know you, it has been a very impersonal experience though perhaps when I get to smaller electives it will be different (I’m a sophomore). And I do see the dilemma professors face of getting to know their students when it comes to a 200 student class. Also, I wish students could participate in classes more. In these large lectures (Bio Core I, II, and III) there is very little discussion but that is what can make a boring class fascinating.
   My English teachers and my Art teachers have been amazing. They are all so motivated and passionate about what they do and it really comes through in their lectures. They value every student’s individuality and consistently encourage students to see them outside of class if they ever need clarification or even to “just talk”. I love it.

6. Divya Nayar on March 24th, 2008
   As a whole, anticipation of my interactions with faculty and staff at Lehigh have been met, while some have exceeded my wildest expectations. The faculty with whom I have been fortunate enough to interact in the College of Business & Economics have open-door policies and are usually available for student consultation. Advising for undeclared students like myself often requires a little more planning, but the end result is the same “useful and practical advice.”
   Interacting with Lehigh staff as a whole has also been a very good experience for me. From my familiarity with them, I see on an everyday-basis individuals who enjoy working with students to make changes and offer guidance, particularly in the Office of the First-Year Experience and the Dean of Students Office as a whole.
   I believe that the majority of students at Lehigh take advantage of the open-door policies set forth by Lehigh’s faculty and staff, and this reality reinforces the notion given to prospective students that the higher-ups at this institution are in fact cognizant of and concerned with undergraduates’ perspectives on life and learning at Lehigh.
7. Anon on March 24th, 2008

I’m in my 5th year as a Lehigh student (using the extra year to pick up a MS) and in these past years I’ve observed a disturbing trend in the new professors hired by the Engineering College. In the classes that they are chosen to teach they seem to completely lack the broad-base sort of knowledge that are the topics of the course. You can tell what topics they have read from the book and made an attempt to learn. On these topics they try to re-factor the information so that it is more accessible (exactly what they should be doing), but what they end up delivering to the class is more confusing than the presentation in the book and sometimes flat out wrong/self contradicting. So I asked myself why would Lehigh being making a habit of hiring professors that are such terrible educators. With this question heavy in my heart I went to the few professors that have earned my everlasting respect (all have been teaching here longer then I’ve been alive, from a time when hiring practices of Lehigh were obviously based on teaching ability/benefit to STUDENTS) and asked what’s changed in the last ~20 years. They clued me in to the current (and very broken) system of college rankings. Apparently when you read that college x is 6th in the country in say Engineering, that number is based mostly if not entirely on the number of outside research dollars that dept brought in last year. So the hiring practices hire not professors that can be of any use or benefit to the students, but rather professors that have a high potential to bring in a lot of research dollars. Now I’m now business major but it seems like screwing over your customers (the students) for some abstract rating is not a sound business strategy.

The other disturbing trend that I’ve noticed and has again been confirmed by professors that I know/respect is that a rising number of dollars are being redirected from Engineering to liberal arts/business. The internal dollars available to the Engineering school for research and supporting grad students is close to all but drying up, repurposed for the business school. This is apparently because the higher ups at Lehigh want to get AWAY from the image of Lehigh as an engineering school. They would rather Lehigh be known as a private liberal arts school in order to attract more students. This just doesn’t make any sense to me on a number of levels. Lehigh already turns away an absurd percentage of applicants, would you want even MORE applicants. I feel like the liberal arts school is an overpopulated field, there are tens of thousands of them it seems. Most importantly why does Lehigh want to shed its hard earned position in the rather small pool of schools known as engineering schools, and become just another private liberal arts school specializing in nothing, losing everything that makes Lehigh special in the process.

I don’t know how on topic this all is, but it seemed as good of a place as any for my thoughts.

8. Matt Varrelman on March 24th, 2008

For the most part, my expectations of Lehigh’s professors have been met. The majority of my current and past professors treated students with respect, were open to students’ ideas, and were fair and flexible graders. Both of my English professors exceeded expectations. They were very friendly and understood students’ needs and wants. However, a select few did not meet expectations. One civil engineering professor was very disappointing, whose name I will not mention. Interactions between students and this professor were rarely positive. He was often rude and unkind to students. As a result, every student I communicated with despised him. Although my expectations have been met, I wish I could get to know my professors on a personal level. I rarely get the chance to speak with them one-on-one. If more opportunities were made available to get to know professors, besides standard office hours, I would probably feel happier with my professors.


My expectations were definitely met, if not exceeded. When looking at college as a whole I was expecting professors to be very self-centered and not care too much about students, especially if large lectures. At Lehigh that’s not the case at all. Nearly every teacher I’ve had was very passionate about their class, and was extremely helpful during office hours or via e-mail. The staff around campus is very friendly and courteous. I’ve never once felt disconnected from the Faculty and Staff at Lehigh.


My expectations have been far exceeded. Given the program’s reputation as highly competitive and rigorous, I anticipated limited student-faculty and student-student interactions. In my four years here, I have been pleasantly surprised by the accessibility of faculty and helpfulness of my peers. There is definitely a sense of working collectively toward a common goal.


I am a freshman business student and I have been pleased thus far with the quality of interaction with my professors. They respond to emails and requests to meet promptly and eagerly.

24 / Strategy for the Future
One quip I do have however is that the University and its different Departments and Colleges need to be very strict with their hiring. If I’m shelling out $46,000 a year to learn, I want the person providing that service to be top-notch. I know for a fact that the Business college is expanding greatly and hiring is occurring all the time. The TA that I have for my Economics class is so awful that I really can’t see how they were hired if someone would have sat down for a brief interview with them. NO ONE in my class can understand her poorly broken English AT ALL, so I can’t see how someone would have understood her in an interview.


As a student who took most of my classes in the Mechanical Engineering Department I in fact was rather disappointed, despite a small school, most of my teachers never took the time to learn my name, and if they did they would forget it soon after the course was over. In contrast my courses at other Universities and courses outside my ME degree resulted in teachers not only knowing my name but knowing about me as a person, and remembering my name after the course was over.

Additionally while teachers say to come visit during office hours, it’s often awkward - you don’t always feel welcome in going to see them at office hours. Another positive aspect has been the fact that most professors are good about responding to emails. Another negative is sometimes the teaching method. PowerPoint or overheads are not a method of teaching engineering problems. I have had professors who have had mistakes on theirs for years and just do not fix; not to mention why go to class when all the notes are posted online and are followed strictly. Also difficult in some classes is the fact that a TA grades the HW and the professor never looks at it. Mistakes that occur or problems the class are having are unknown to the professor. I also agree with the poster above about the less funding in the engineering school, hearing some old classes as compared to now is surprising and depressing to hear.


In my five years here, I would say I have generally been pleased with the faculty and staff. Most have been good teachers, friendly and accessible, and have been a very positive aspect of my time at Lehigh. However, many of the problems listed by other posters I can completely agree with. I have had the misfortune of taking required classes with the aforementioned Civil Engineering professor, brilliant as he is, a teacher he is not. I would also agree that sometimes I get the impression that some professors are too caught up in their research or outside committees to put effort into teaching, as much as research is good for the rankings, if the professors can’t teach, word of mouth will spread and the school will suffer. Not to mention the students.

This also brings me to a major point, and that is that many professors just aren’t very good teachers. There are some professors that really should just be doing research, but get forced to teach something. There are excellent professors that get tossed out because they lack in the research area. It’s OK for a professor to do just teaching or just research if they are really good at only one of those. Not all professors should have to research and teach. Other professors have fallen victims to Powerpoint, blandly reading slides they already posted online or hand out in class. Many have lost the art of lecturing, or for the younger ones, never attained it in the first place. This makes classes boring, and often hard to follow.

Another problematic area is professors that get stuck teaching courses, often introductory level, that they don’t know a whole lot about or don’t care about. For example, instead of having professors from each department teach that department’s drafting class, a subject they may not have practiced in decades, why not hire a professional draftsman or two to teach the drafting classes across several departments. One such professor could handle three departments’ drafting classes each semester, taking the burden off of professors who couldn’t care less about drafting, and giving the students the opportunity to learn from someone who is just as specialized in this field as the other professors are in their respective specialties. Similar examples exist throughout every college and department.

So again, overall positive, but there’s some flaws that need attention.

14. Mario on March 27th, 2008

I believe that my expectations have been exceeded in some ways and not met in others.

As a member of South Mountain College and a 1st year at Lehigh. I have been exposed to very large intro to “x” classes and very small seminar style classes. I feel that on the most part, teacher interactions have been phenomenal. Some professors really understand me, and that could just be because I meet with them quite often. Other professors, though saying that they have office hours, may not be there, or are during times where I have class.

With that said, I do recognize that I do put alot of the communication/logistics duties of a “professor/student” interaction on my shoulders- I arrange
meetings, ask questions, etc. As CL mentioned earlier, I feel that professors do need to take a more active role overall to make freshman more interactive with their education outside of class (aka office hours). Every college deals with their education differently, and I think that Lehigh needs to make that difference more apparent.

15. D.S. on March 29th, 2008

I had high expectations of Lehigh faculty as a first-year student. As soon as I had a question, I was encouraged to attend professor’s flexible office hours. In my two years here, all of my professors have made great efforts to accommodate my questions and interests, especially in the smaller departments. Note that I have been lucky to take mostly small classes, although my economics professor was equally helpful. I have to say that some professors are intimidating and seem inaccessible, but it just takes a little effort on the student’s part to seek the professor out. I would recommend that all professors stress their openness to students’ questions and discussion. I have only encountered one professor who discouraged me from engaging in conversation with her. She seemed to feel conversation with inexperienced students was a waste of her time and reminded students to stick to their questions about the specific text. I found my efforts to make connections between outside material unwelcome and stopped going to her office hours. My interactions with staff have been equally helpful. Any resistance I have encountered seems to come from more the bureaucratic process than from staff members themselves.

16. anonymous on May 2nd, 2008

From reading these comments, it seems to me that one of the biggest problems with the Lehigh faculty is the idea that research outside of class is more important than what happens in class. And I agree. I have had a handful of professors in my two years here that had absolutely no business teaching. The specific professors I am thinking about were extremely difficult to understand, didn’t seem to grasp the fundamentals of the class they were teaching, were virtually inaccessible outside of class, and a couple of them treated students with a general disrespect that was, to be honest, completely insulting. My peers and I felt like these professors had been hired without any sort of trial lecture, and it was the students who suffered in the end. While you may think students just like complaining about their professors, I feel that it would be beneficial for Lehigh to institute some sort of massive feedback program to allow real and honest evaluations of professors. As it is, no one takes the end-of-semester surveys seriously, but if there was a way for us to (anonymously or not) let the university know about poor teaching, I feel like students would step up to the plate and benefit from it in the end.

RESEARCH & GRADUATE EDUCATION FOCUS –
For Grad Students to Comment Only

It’s 2018. You have returned to Lehigh and to your department for a visit. You are astounded and say, “Conditions for graduate students are better in every way.” What is the difference?

11 Comments

1. Jillian on March 24th, 2008

The choices for electives have vastly improved!!

2. Andrey Pak on March 24th, 2008

1. The number of the electives has certainly increased and the days offered are not limited to 3 days of the week anymore. I remember back in 2008 one could not take all the electives you wanted to take - because most of them would fall on wednesday or tuesday, thus limiting you with your choice.

   And there is a greater number of courses offered in the summer semester, not only some of the online courses, but a great number of the electives as well.

2. The graduate students’ social life opportunities are so much richer now than what they used to be in 2007. I remember back then everything was for undergrads, grad students had to invent the social and academic clubs themselves.

3. The number of faculty assisted projects where a student can apply his knowledge and skills has increased (now it is not limited to SBDS and a few others)

4. The number of on-campus recruiters for grad students have increased drastically and not only in Engineering - but in Business as well!


Courses are offered on-line, there are more cross-discipline student and faculty interactions (both in class and socially), and Mountain Top
Campus has more than one dining option (and coffee available during all course blocks!)


1. Every department on campus pays the full student health insurance premium for each of its full-time TAs, RAs, and fellowship students.

2. The University continues to subsidize the technology fee for all TAs and RAs.

3. The quality of TA training is improved University-wide. This improvement came about because the Office of Graduate Student Life worked with the Deans of each College to force each department to talk with other departments about best practices for TA training and to regularly evaluate its effectiveness at training TAs. These evaluations are both quantitative and qualitative.

4. Graduate Student Appreciation Week is now a week-long event at the end of each regular semester - in November (during the week before the Lehigh-Lafayette game) and in April (in the place it occupied back in 2008).

5. Abbey on March 24th, 2008

For the College of Education:

1) There are working teachers taking classes and sharing their stories with the current teacher candidates!

2) Lehigh has created even tighter bonds with the community to enrich education opportunities for both underprivileged youth in Bethlehem and for teacher candidates.

3) Diversity is addressed in every class, not just the diversity class.

4) Teacher candidates start going out into classrooms at the very beginning of the program instead of waiting until half way through the program to have any significant time in the public schools.

5) The COE still has the same brilliant, hard working, and committed professors!


The university no longer sends out unnecessary mass email and instead takes advantage of their numerous other avenues to share information such as the website, group lists, or the school paper.


On-campus housing similar to Trembly is available for grad students as well; they are not forced to live all the way in Saucon Village or to go to the terrible off-campus housing closer to campus.

8. JS on March 26th, 2008

Advising will begin when applying for the program to lay out how Lehigh may meet your goals for continued education. A full plan will be developed when applying for the first semesters classes in as much detail as possible. More effort will be made to display which classes are generally offered in the spring vs. fall semester.

9. Anonymous on April 14th, 2008

Weekend transportation and bike trail from Saucon Village (grad housing) to campus is available.

10. Michael on May 22nd, 2008

First of all, the variety of courses offered has increased. When I attended there were no advanced heat transfer or thermodynamics classes offered by the mechanical engineering department that were beyond the core courses.

Conference opportunities and awareness for graduate students has also improved. When I attended here, I often heard of my fellow graduate students going to different conferences on their research topics, but I never received much information from the mechanical engineering department about them.

One frustrating aspect that I encountered while at Lehigh too was the fact that there was no graduate student space. A place open late where graduate students could meet and collaborate to discuss research and courses would have improved and encouraged more collaborative efforts. I’m glad that Lehigh has provided a space where graduate students feel comfortable and motivated to get work. It’s refreshing to work in a place other than at home or in the office during after hours. Also it is convenient that Lehigh put high powered computers in there for those students that need to run numerical simulations. The computers in the libraries were just dreadful and often frustrated me.

11. ashutosh on November 22nd, 2008

* Many more PhD students and Post Doctoral Students.

* Lehigh hosts major conferences in many fields.

* PhD students working on cross disciplinary fields.
Imagine you’ve been away from Lehigh for 10 years to work/study/research in another part of the country. Upon your return to Lehigh, you find much has been done to enhance student life and learning. Faculty and staff are interacting with students quite differently and, as a result, students are learning more effectively.

Describe what students, faculty, and staff are doing now (where “now” is 2018), both in and out of the classroom. In what ways are these practices, programs, pedagogies, etc. beneficial to student life and learning?

10 Comments

1. Elaine P. Kudella on March 13th, 2008

   Students: The classes I am enrolled in (thumbprint or retina scan) I can take in the comfort of my living room whenever I want (similar to TiVo); I just need to submit my homework by deadlines.

   If I am a slow learner who does best at night, this accommodates me at my pace and time. The flexibility makes for more successes.

   Faculty: I can prepare for my classes well in advance via video (TiVo). Each class segment is released for viewing for a specific timeframe, including homework/tests.

   Staff: I work from home, inputting the data into the specific databases for students and faculty.

2. Stacey on March 14th, 2008

   Students: I use technology to enhance my learning and comprehension, to work more efficiently, to access resources, and to communicate with others. Rather than feeling isolated, though, I feel more connected in this futuristic learning environment. My professors and classmates are not disembodied voices or text — I know them, they know me, and personal relationships are highly valued at Lehigh. My ability to span geographic and cultural boundaries is nearly unlimited, and I interact meaningfully with students and staff at Lehigh and around the globe. My college years are a transformative experience.

   And there is still a turkey trot

3. Christina Stegura on March 15th, 2008

   Classroom size is smaller so that students can become a lot closer with the other peers in their classroom as well as the teachers. Classes will be set up so that at least once a week they videoconference with other classrooms around the world that are covering the same issues. In this way the students are introduced to different classroom styles and many more individuals. I do think the classroom environment is still very important and thus having only online classes would defeat the benefits of having a classroom setting.

   Blackboard would be totally reformatted and much more user friendly so that it was part of a student login page. The calendars for each course would actually be used and could easily be integrated so that a student can have all of the course calendars together on one.

   Professors would be much more involved in student life now that they have smaller classes and less students to tend to. They would join in on club groups that corresponded to their passions and interests.

   Most students will be living in interest housing of some kind because they have made close connections through their majors and extracurriculars that have extended to their living arrangements. Greek life would not be as important for night life activities.

   Everyone would be traveling abroad at some point or another during their college journey and this would tie in very well with their classes. It would be integrated into syllabi to draw from students study abroad experiences. Along with that classes would be set up at Lehigh to prepare students for their host countries and classes would also help them express their experiences once they are back.


   My blog (www.willbrehm.com) contains many posts on my Lehigh vision. Check it out. Basically, I think Lehigh needs to be more forward thinking—not years behind the curve. Here’s a list of what Lehigh needs to do:

   1) Change the application process to attract more diversity—in the broadest sense.
   2) Build a unified student center
   3) Eliminate the Greek System. Students, especially freshmen, will engage the University in more positive ways through clubs, organizations, and events (that don’t revolve around drinking).
   4) Stop making committees to solve problems.
Solve problems by completely supporting specific ideas with funds and personnel.
5) Use more of the endowment to reduce the cost to attend Lehigh. If costs continue to increase, only the elite few will be able to attend Lehigh.

5. Chris Knight on March 17th, 2008
Imagine you make the same post 4 times in a row ...

I think it was Peter Drucker who said that by 2020 (or some date in the not-too-distant future) the university as we now know it will no longer exist. I interpret this statement to mean not that places like Lehigh will no longer have the physical presence they have now, but that they will be almost unrecognizable because they will be doing something different from what they do now/did then (the statement was probably made in the late 80s or 90s sometime). But the interesting and important question is this: what will that difference look like? Thinking ahead 10 years, I suspect Lehigh will be in the process of a fundamental transformation, as will all colleges and universities. And I think that these changes will be driven not so much by strategic planning for the university to maintain some “competitive edge” within higher education as they will by the exigencies of human civilization. We face serious problems in the world, and as the problems become bigger and more complex, the university will be less a place that prepares students to solve problems, and more a place where problems are actually solved. Sheer necessity will dictate this transformation. The institutions will represent resources that are too great not to be actively and directly involved in solving the inextricably integrated problems of: a sustainable environment, world poverty, and human conflict (no longer easily identified as either “war” or “crime”). In a very real sense, these are all one problem, and every academic field that exists today will be needed in finding solutions.

Working toward these solutions will necessitate these changes:
1. Testing and the progression through the educational process will be different. Students will no longer pass tests and exams that are placed in the way of their progress in obtaining a degree. Instead, each student will be given larger roles in solving problems as they demonstrate their capability and readiness to do so.
2. Therefore, the entire educational project will move in the direction of undergraduate research in a way that it does not yet exist. “Academic success” will be determined by a student’s ability to compete and contribute to solving the problems.

3. This transformation will dictate a revision of the roles of teachers and students—and the relationship between the two. There will not be teachers and students as traditionally understood. Rather, by necessity we will have teacher-students and student-teachers in the sense of Paulo Freire. Hierarchies of power within the institution will be revolutionized, and educational will be praxis.

4. Technology will aid in the process, but it will be different from the way we conceive it now. Such is the history of technology. This is the part that I feel least likely to speculate about. I have some thoughts, but they’re scary. I do suspect I can say one thing that might be true: We will be surprised.

The communication between students and faculty will be much more interactive. All classes will include hands on interactive learning. Students will learn to approach all subjects from a problem-based perspective. They will identify the key issues deconstruct them into workable parts, form hypotheses about their organization and test those hypotheses. Students will routinely access databases on the web for published literature relevant to their course work. They will challenge sacred dogma with fresh insight pulled from these readings and they will know the history of the topic they are investigating from their own research.

Students will write frequently in all subjects, striving to publish their work in local and national, peer reviewed publications and conference proceedings. They will attend local and national meetings to discuss their work with experts in the field, increasing their perspectives and raising our national profile.

They will participate in internships in their freshmen and sophomore years that allow them to decide if the rigors of their chosen discipline are what they desire with enough time to make educated choices about their future.

As each student’s individual perspective is valued there will be less cheating - why steal someone else’s idea! Students will have a high sense of ethics and respect for their fellow man that translates into community outreach, equity, diversity and global citizenship.

Why will all this have happened? Because of the faculty! The faculty will be aware of advances in their fields as they happen through continuous exposure to scientific literature, techniques and challenges. They will attend two to three actual or virtual conferences a year at home and aboard.

The university will continue to host world-renowned scientists for seminars, workshops and conferences. Scientists and artists will compete to join us on site and in collaboration because of our unique, university wide approach to interdisciplinary research.

Our teaching will be second to none because
the faculty will be provided with state of the art technology, technical assistance and teaching labs. But more importantly faculty will be kept abreast of invocative teaching methods by attending workshops, conferences and seminars at Lehigh and elsewhere. Faculty will be encouraged to disseminate their own innovative approaches through publications and presentations at local and national meetings. Finally our faculty will be experts in dealing with students in equitable ways that include diversity in economic, social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds to bring out their best in the classroom. Faculty will be keenly aware of the distinctions between their own histories and that of their students in a way that allows them to celebrate and incorporate the differences into their work. They will include all students in their academic endeavors. Students and faculty will see each other as resources during the student’s stay at Lehigh and as they move on to their futures.

8. Anonymous on March 26th, 2008

In ten years, maybe Lehigh will have finally consolidated into ONE STUDENT CENTER that is CENTRALLY LOCATED. Or at least have built a sidewalk connecting the buildings it wants to think make up a student center. I’ve been saying this for years, but they should just add on to the UC, putting in that new wing all the student center services that exist in Ulrich, and completely turn Grace Hall over to Athletics. It already smells like a gym anyway, and besides Athletics needs the extra space.

Lehigh will have fixed its mass transit system, and will have regularly running, quick, and efficient bus service with frequent stops and multiple routes crossing all three campuses. Lehigh will also have added sidewalks to all roads, including the Hill, for those who choose to walk.

Lehigh will have all software available on all computers, and computers that can actually run the software at something other than a snail’s pace.

And maybe, just maybe, Lehigh will have snow days.

9. Jason Slipp on March 27th, 2008

In its current state, Lehigh is NOT preparing its students for the world in which they will arrive in after graduation. In the midst of energy uncertainty and ecological degradation, serious changes need to occur on campus and in the curriculum so that students better understand the world the live in. Lehigh should begin to concentrate on more sustainable practices on campus as well as teach sustainability in every aspect of the curriculum. Furthermore, the University should focus more on the local region rather than global programs and initiatives. In the near future our food, power, and other requirements for life will come from local sources, not far-away global sources. Lehigh is already far behind in regards to sustainability and will continue to fall behind if it does not concentrate more on lessening the carbon footprint of the university and making the campus healthier and more sustainable.

10. anonymous on May 5th, 2008

This working group has failed to live up to its charge, which was to consider student life and learning. It has only considered undergraduate student life and learning. This is symptomatic of one of Lehigh’s major problems, that graduate students are not considered on a par with undergraduates.

RESEARCH & GRADUATE EDUCATION FOCUS

Imagine you’ve been away from Lehigh for 10 years to work/study/research in another part of the country. Upon your return to Lehigh, what sort of evidence would you use to support the statement, “The scholarship (quality and quantity) and graduate programs at Lehigh University have greatly improved over the past 10 years.”

The answer should not be a “strategy” but rather is meant to be a tangible specific outcome of any implementation of the recommendations we will make in our final report.

5 Comments

1. Dave Moore on March 13th, 2008

I am in the chemistry department, and so these brief responses are focused in that area, although I think they could be broadly applied, at least within the sciences.

1) We have nationwide recognition at academic institutions as having a high-quality Ph.D. research program.

2) We have a stable population of 20 research-active faculty in the department, all supported by one or more grants from external funding agencies.

3) We have 80-100 top-quality graduate students in the department, recruited competitively from high-ranking domestic and international
undergraduate institutions. Most or all of these students are supported by faculty research grants, after their first year as a department supported teaching assistant.

4) We are able to compete for top-tier faculty candidates, both as junior and senior hires.

5) We have modern, state-of-the-art buildings and infrastructure, well supported by highly-qualified technical staff in several capacities.

2. Dave Moore on March 13th, 2008

Apologies for the double posting.

I just wanted to clarify that the 5 points that I expressed in my previous post do not refer to the current state of affairs, but rather to the desired future state of the chemistry department, after the hypothetical 10-year waiting period specified in the original question.

3. James Gilchrist on March 22nd, 2008

I cannot think of any better way to enhance ALL THREE initiatives than to enhance the graduate program at Lehigh. We should aim to have an overall graduate population that matches the undergraduate population in number and in quality within 10 years.

Initially growing the graduate program by providing internal support (tuition and stipends) for 25%-50% of all graduate students through TAs and other support that would match a faculty-driven initiative in each program interested in participating to grow by another 25%-50% would enhance overall research, add support for classes/teaching, strengthen the international community, draw and retain the best faculty, and enhance overall reputation (and ranking) of Lehigh.

Resources would be distributed at the department level, since programs work in obtaining and supporting students in different ways. Some of this support could be aimed at growing certain areas like collaborative research and university-wide initiatives, while -most- would be added to the baseline.


The evidence I would use to demonstrate improved scholarship would likely come in the form of publications, on-going federal grants, and coursework reflecting an increased focus on diversity and multicultural issues. I have definitely seen an increased consideration of these issues over my four years of graduate study as reflected in faculty- and student-lead groups interested in addressing issues of recruitment, retention, and course work; however I feel more progress is to be made. In ten years, I would be happy to learn that my program has recruited and retained a more diverse student body and has contributed to the research on culturally-considerate practice.

5. Perry A. Zirkel on April 2nd, 2008

Two items that are missing and that would be helpful in the future are 1) more fruitful means of inter-departmental programs (which get a lot of lip service now, but joint appointments often work to the detriment of the individual faculty member, and the relatively few successes have been largely a matter of serendipity), and 2) at least one professional school (such as a law school with a specialized niche and lots of joint programs) to make us a “real” university.

FACULTY & STAFF FOCUS

Imagine you’ve been away from Lehigh for 10 years to work/study/research in another part of the country. Upon your return to Lehigh, you notice marked improvements in how the university functions, its national status, and the extent of its “intellectual footprint.” You understand some of these improvements are attributable to changes the university made in policies and practices for faculty and staff recruitment, development, and retention. What were these changes?

14 Comments


I’d like to see a “Lehigh Facebook” in which every faculty and staff member has a page including photograph which gives details regarding job duties, areas of expertise, research focus, interests, etc.

This would be accessible to all members of the Lehigh community and help to put a face on those we communicate with by email or telephone. It could aid students in getting to know faculty before selecting courses.

2. Julie Oltman on March 13th, 2008

I’d like to see enhancements made to the current Child Care Center. The present staff is
wonderful and the children are well cared after, but a larger space and better resourced program would be well utilized.

Currently, there is not enough space to meet demand - there is a waiting list! The Center resides in a cluster of small rooms in the Graduate Student Housing complex on Goodman Campus. And, there are not enough resources to allow the center to remain open during “non-traditional” hours making it difficult for those parents who work non-traditional schedules at Lehigh.

A modern building with plenty of indoor & outdoor space, combined with a better resourced program, would be a tremendous recruitment tool to attract the best faculty and staff who happen to also have young children.

This would certainly cement Lehigh’s reputation as an institution that values the ability to effectively balance work and home.

3. Tim Foley on March 14th, 2008

A “Lehigh Facebook” concept is a great idea. There is already a University Lehigh presence in Facebook which you can join as a fan by searching on Lehigh if you have a Facebook account and joining. This has 1059 fans. I just joined. The Lehigh network on Facebook has over 10,000 people. Of course in Facebook itself you get a lot of annoying ads such as “meet hot local women,” “Verizon wireless,” “need weight loss,” etc. etc. etc., so the ability to control or eliminate them would be useful but of course this is how Facebook provides the service.

4. Kathleen Dugan on March 14th, 2008

I agree with Julie’s comments concerning the daycare. The staff is fantastic but the facility could be improved. It would be ideal if it could be somewhere in or near the lower campus. It really isn’t convenient. The children could benefit from interaction with the Lehigh students also. That aspect is very limited because of the location. Parents could spend more time during the day with their children also if it was closer to their office. On the same lines, perhaps Lehigh could develop more summer programs for faculty/staff school-aged children. The community college does a good job of this.

If Lehigh had a similar program, I feel it would help faculty/staff with the stress of finding suitable care/enrichment for their children. I have an education background and would love to assist with this endeavor if it ever came to be. We could also use this as a tool for recruitment (both for faculty/staff and future students).

5. Tina Hertel on March 14th, 2008

Facebook is a good idea for using a tool that would allow us to build a network. The challenge with this, however, is that Facebook started out as a network tool for college students, then expanded it to high school students, and now everyone. They do have networks for workplaces, however, what wasn’t fully considered was the fact that colleges and schools have at least two groups that would be interested in networking… the students themselves and the people who work there. So when you join the Lehigh network, you are joining what was originally intended to be a network for the college students. That being said, there are ways this can be done. As Tim mentioned, there is a Lehigh University Page (pages are meant to allow companies or organizations to set up a Facebook presence… companies were formally ‘removed’ from Facebook) and there are also groups (groups are somewhat specialized or have similar interests). The Lehigh University Page is managed by University Communications and is probably geared more towards students, especially incoming students. And there are several hundred groups affiliated with Lehigh. We could certainly create a group that is geared towards Faculty and Staff. We could do the same with a page. You can become a fan of a Facebook page (so you can become a fan of the Lehigh University Page or the Lehigh University Libraries Page) or you join groups. Each is a little different in how they work and what they can do and offer.

Also, keep in mind Facebook is meant as a voluntary social network. It would be great if we had a place where we could have pictures and profiles of everyone on campus, but to require everyone to become part of a ‘social’ network does somewhat go against the concept of social networking. There are also professional networks, such as LinkedIn that might also be a viable option.

Another thing you can do within Facebook to separate your Lehigh friends from your Lehigh coworkers from students you know at Lehigh is to create friends lists where you can put your friends in categories.

So, having some kind of online network is a great idea. Find the best tool and ways to utilize that tool in a way that we can the campus to participate may be more of a challenge.

6. Pat Mann on March 18th, 2008

To ensure continuity of leadership and institutional knowledge, a formal succession plan should be developed and maintained. Our knowledge lies from within and we should make every attempt to capture
it when positions open up within our leadership team and elsewhere throughout the organization. A defined career path development plan and mentoring program would be critical components of the succession planning process.

Typically, through a succession planning process, retention is high because employees appreciate the time, attention, and development that are invested in them. They become more vested in the institution, because they see that the institution is vested in them. Succession planning has been an essential tool at many of the top organizations in the world, and there is no reason Lehigh should not benefit from this type of sound planning as well. This process could be a successful recruitment and retention tool for the university, and it could bring about positive cultural changes to our campus community.

7. Glenn Piper on March 18th, 2008

I would like to see the day that Lehigh adopts one unified calendar and scheduling system. As it is right now, everyone chooses a system of their liking, none of which share easily with one another.

Most of the administrative staff uses Oracle Calendar, but it is limited to those departments who want to pay for an Oracle license to access. Portal Calendar has somewhat leveled the playing field, but its capabilities for group scheduling are very cumbersome and somewhat limiting. Many users have given up on either of the Lehigh provided systems, and now simply maintain their personal calendar on web-based applications like Google Calendar, which are free, have nice features, but still not the best tools for group scheduling and relies on users having a Google account external to the University.

A recent example of the time and money lost by lack of a unified calendaring system was a meeting I was a part of which needed to be rescheduled 7 times over the course of about a month due to people and resource availability. Each time the meeting needed to be rescheduled, the organizer sent out an email asking everyone when they were available, then tallying up the times people were available on paper to find the “best time” to get together, then sending out another email with the new date/time.

A unified scheduling system where people actually keep their schedule online and up-to-date would allow meetings to be quickly and easily rescheduled by overlaying schedules and finding an available date, time, and resources. This system would ideally be able to sync to PDA and other standard calendaring systems used outside of Lehigh for interoperability. Additionally, it would allow overlays of University academic and social calendars so one could look one place to see what’s going on on campus.

8. Sherri Yerk-Zwickl on March 18th, 2008

In my career at Lehigh I have benefited enormously from the many different positions I have held and the people/areas that I have come to know as a result of those responsibilities. While I did not plan intentionally to move around to gain this experience, the payback to me and the University has been tremendous.

I’d like to see a program where promising employees can hold positions with the expectation that they will move from area to area in a planned manner. This would allow a broader understanding of how the entire university works and eliminate (or at least reduce!) the “silo effect” where there is little understanding or appreciation of how what one person does in one area affects other people.


I’m both amused and heartened to find that my idea of improving the communication of the University’s structure and resources is already being discussed. While Facebook has a compelling service and is already in significant use by students, it might be good to have something of our own that we can design to not just communicate about individuals, but to reveal more about the University’s structure, departments and resources — something Lehigh-wide that not only highlights individual colleges and departments but also shows the relationships between them, and how they all contribute to a complete picture.

I guess what I’m envisioning is a more comprehensive and information-rich experience of what Lehigh’s website is intended to be. It may be that currently, our efforts at communicating what Lehigh is and what it contains are somewhat fragmented, and that what I’m really hoping for is more Lehigh-wide structure (or infrastructure) for pulling it all together. Some kind of interactive org-chart that’s compelling to look at because it shows all of the parts of the University and their functions without having to pull them out of keyword searches or scrolling menus. I think all of those facebook-style profiles would become more valuable within a structure like that.

And accessible, subscribable calendars for all of those department activities would also be of amazing value. I’m sooo all-for unified calendaring, I shouldn’t get even started. . .

Even further though, a structure for describing the University is one thing, but it’s really up to
dedicating resources campus-wide to fleshing the structure out and providing the informational meat — it’s a good deal of work that shouldn’t simply be dumped on top of existing responsibilities if one wants it to be done well — it has to be integrated into the fabric of our organizational effort. I think Lehigh’s got a lot of potential in the area, and just needs the right boosts to make it more effective.


The University of Pennsylvania will pay either the school’s tuition or 40% of Penn’s undergraduate tuition per academic year, whichever is less.

That simple line in Penn’s benefits policy covers inflation and helps their staff with planning. Our $5000 tuition grant benefit declines in value every single year. It meant something in 1990, but we’re clearly behind the times given either the CPI or benchmarked against an Ivy. Most LVAICs offer full tuition remission among 25 schools.

I’ve had to counsel some great talent to be wary of this item before making a commitment to LU. Some of the endowment earnings should be reinvested into human capital, whether inside LU directly or via the workforce that LU faculty & staff will provide to the community.


In a small group held for strategic thinking, the tuition benefit was discussed. It may be an important thing to have re-evaluated LVAIC interaction as well as the ability for faculty and staff to take on-line LVAIC courses, as well as being able to send your dependents to area LVAIC schools. Education is an important benefit, and, although we do have a fantastic offering of short courses on site, these should only serve to augment any formal education that is already in place.

Lehigh exists because of its strong commitment to education, and it is important to make this a place that not only promotes forward thinking in others, but invests in our own faculty and staff, and their families. Also considering that cost is always a factor, there should be some middle ground that would be beneficial to both the institution and the employees. The current educational benefits do indeed need to be looked at and some adjustments made.

In ten years, I would like to be able to work at Lehigh and say that their commitment to education does not only cover the students, but extend to the entire network of those in the Lehigh family— faculty, students and staff— and that they have put their money where their mouth is.

12. Marcia McKay on March 24th, 2008

Although, right now, I don’t have a unique idea - I’d like to note my comments on some of the posted suggestions.

Having an interactive organizational chart on our intranet could be a great professional reference tool. A pop-up window with a short summary and a link to a page noting all included departments and team players could be a useful resource. Right now we have departmental information on individual web pages and an organization chart on our website. But an interactive organizational chart could combine departmental function with grouping and hierarchy information.

Regarding the tuition assistance grant, I haven’t asked anyone in HR the reasoning behind this benefit only being offered to exempt staff; I imagine that the cost factor is what makes it limited. But, considering my salary/grade as a non-exempt staff member (who has a B.S. degree and values the opportunity for a higher education) it would be a much appreciated/helpful aid to my freshman son’s tuition at Moravian (as it would be to my 9th grade son in four years). LVAIC dependent tuition remission or a tuition grant for non-exempt staff would be my ‘perfect world’.

Also, a formal succession plan and rotational training (similar to the private sector’s management rotational programs) are interesting thoughts as would be a “Lehigh University universal calendar.”


I would like to see computers better integrated into the class room. As it stands now, a small minority of students bring their laptops to class and utilize them in their leaning process. At Villanova as part of their curriculum, all incoming Freshman students are leased state-of-the art laptop computer on a two year refresh cycle. During the spring at the end of your sophomore year this computer is returned and during the summer the student will receive a new state-of-the art machine. This allows for all students to have the same platform and greater utilization of computers in class room. I think Lehigh should adopt this policy. PC Magazine and The Princeton Review recently named Villanova University #1 of the Top 10 Wired Colleges and Universities due in part to this program.


The tuition benefit mentioned above only applies to exempt staff and faculty. Nonexempt staff do not receive ANY benefit outside of Lehigh for our dependents. I would venture to guess that most nonexempt staff would be thrilled with $5,000 towards tuition at another school.

My recommendation is that the benefit be looked at and made even across the board.
ACROSS THE THREE FOCUS AREAS

Imagine you’ve been away from Lehigh for 10 years to work/study/research in another part of the country. Upon your return to Lehigh, you notice many exciting, effective changes (as described in the previous posts).

What changes do you see that intersect all three focus areas?

3 Comments

1. Gayle Nemeth on March 14th, 2008

We must remember what the city of Bethlehem and former Lehigh President, Greg Farrington, were accomplishing by tying the Southside and Lehigh campus together. Now we are faced with the casino and expanding areas surrounding the former Steel sites and how that will affect Lehigh University and the Southside communities. Northampton Community College is already focusing their courses to highlight the changes coming to our area. Lehigh University can also use these changes as a positive perspective to research programs, student life resources, and campus-wide support issues that will definitely arise because of the new changes coming.

2. Kim Seymour on March 24th, 2008

In addition to an increased focus on diversity and multicultural issues as posted previously, it would be interesting for faculty to invite the perspectives of others (non-Lehigh) in the field on successes and challenges they have faced across the three focus groups. Hosting lectures at other universities and inviting speakers to Lehigh would provide a point of comparison students typically have to attend conferences to get.

3. Kelly M. Holland on March 26th, 2008

In this morning’s session of Learning the Institution, President Gast prompted the group to respond to the following question: “In ten years, what would you hope to see preserved at Lehigh? What would you like to change?” The group, comprised mainly of staff members, responded with the ideas below.

Many thanks to Lori Claudio and the Human Resources Department for providing such an outstanding program in Learning the Institution, and thank you to the staff for providing these great ideas.

In Ten Years I hope to see …

- the historical buildings haven’t changed even though the world has grown so modern.
- a stronger financial aid benefit for international students, to encourage diversity and global student base.
- more interaction between the staff and faculty.
- to see Lehigh taking part in planning and developing methods to take advantage of its position as a learning institution among growth & development in Bethlehem (re: casino, entertainment, museums).
- would like to see Lehigh with a larger emphasis on a work/life balance. I feel that more women would be able to work at Lehigh if there was a discount on daycare prices or if opportunities for a flexible schedule or telecommuting were better accepted. We would be able to attract and retain candidates to Lehigh.
- That Lehigh would have more female students and faculty members than males.
- Lehigh’s status as a “party school” will have been eliminated.
- Staff will not feel so overworked.
- to see a developed camaraderie between faculty and staff on campus.
- to see a true Global Lehigh - full of collaborative works and new opportunities.
- more connection/unity between Mountaintop campus and Asa Packer campus.
- Lehigh playing a very strong role in inspiring / promoting a desire for high education in younger students (Junior High, Elementary, etc.); showing kids the options they have for education, especially in poor families.
- continue to promote diversity, with respect to culture and gender across campus.
- environmentally friendly transportation system: no more large buses, smaller vehicles and larger # available.
- campus population diversified - more ethnic cultures represented.
- diversity within the student body, both nationally and internationally, as well as within the faculty.
- regarding Lehigh’s role as an integrated component of the Bethlehem community and more specifically Southside Bethlehem, I would like to see how Lehigh’s efforts in strategic thinking and processes have affected that role. Some specific concerns might include life with casinos and cultural changes in the community.
- improved collaboration and interdepartmental relationships that will allow faculty and staff to provide the best “Lehigh Experience” for its students.
- preservation of the (old) original buildings.
- more diversity among students.
- I am so happy to see Lehigh continuing MOOV In Day! Also glad that the band continues to march and play all around campus on the Friday before Lehigh / Lafayette.
- The 20 student maximum per class has greatly enhanced the students learning experience.
- Better relationship between international students and the “typical” Lehigh student. There appears to be very limited interaction between the two.
- more diversity within the student body, faculty and staff. Also, more opportunities for growth and leadership for employees here.
- more diversity within students, better understanding for different cultures.
- I would like to see the administrative departments work together as teams rather than in an “us and them” environment.
- 50% Female and 50% Male
- more aid and financing opportunities for students.

- What has resulted because of the faculty expansion and the growth in research and graduate studies over the decade?
- Based on the accomplishments in the past 10 years, what are the Strategic Areas of Focus in the plan for 2029?

1 Comment

1. Rita Jones on January 15th, 2009

I am appreciative to the many committee members and individuals who have worked so hard to create this draft and for the willingness of them to continue to read comments and posts. My reflections are based upon overall observations of the draft, rather than focused on the above questions.

I am concerned that two major elements remain absent in this draft: inclusive excellence and staff. Looking into 2019, I see Lehigh with a Chief Diversity Officer, but this current draft does very little to move issues of inclusion to the center and instead relegates it to footnotes. If we are to make Lehigh a space that is home to all, we need to begin with diversity as a core element of the present and future. If we are to make Lehigh competitive in globalization and health care, we need to encourage faculty members, staff members, and students to strengthen our community through inclusion. Further, if we are to reach the goals established for section 4, the Bethlehem Renaissance, we need to make space for those faculty, staff, and students who are already engaged in South Bethlehem’s community to share their experiences and expertise.

Although one of the major four sections is “Attracting and Retaining Excellent Faculty and Staff,” I see nothing that demonstrates the plan is committed to retaining, let alone recruiting, excellent staff. I agree that without strong faculty members who are not overworked, the University ceases to exist, but the development of student learning will likewise cease to exist if the absence of concerns about staff and co-curricular learning remains. Unless this document assumes that faculty will be the ones who will participate in students’ learning outside the classroom—in residence halls, at performance venues, at noon-time discussions—the document includes a significant hole. Lehigh’s residential campus and connections among faculty and staff have prepared it to become a benchmark for student learning, but if Lehigh does not account for development and retention of excellent staff,
Lehigh will encounter difficulties reaching that benchmark goal. We must foster the growth and development of faculty and staff to create the student-empowered model this document seeks. I am not advocating for equality, but I am advocating for an awareness that each member of the Lehigh community needs to feel and be appreciated for what she/he does and encouraged to develop further as a person and as a professional. The kinds of goals necessary for retaining excellent faculty are not the same as those for retaining excellent staff, yet sometimes those goals do intersect. We might want to be more cognizant of and transparent about these areas.

**STRATEGIC PLAN 2009 — QUESTION #1**

1. Please comment on how accurately the bullets in the Strategic Areas of Focus reflect our current strengths, desirable areas of expertise and prospective areas of impact.

9 Comments

1. Rick S. Blum, Robert W. Wieseman Chair in Electrical Engineering, Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering on December 19th, 2008

   We have built a very strong group in Signal Processing, Communication & Networking, Information Theory and Information Technology at Lehigh and this is not represented in the plan. You might call this Information Science or Sensor Networking (to show the combination of both sensor processing and communications). I think the Sensor Networking title is best. It seems you may feel this is covered under: Energy, Environment and Infrastructure but this is really not at all clear from this title or from the use of the word systems in the text below this title. The word systems is so vague as to be meaningless. I would like to see the words “Sensor Networking” appear with some possible references to “Signal Processing and Communication.” It seems the exact wording that appears is all a function of the exact team who were involved with writing this document. As one of the very few professors who hold research oriented chairs but who are not department chairs or administration, I would think I have lot to contribute to the topic of what should be a focus area. In fact, I was on the Dean’s council on this very topic and there was a broad general agreement that “Sensor Networking” should be an area of focus for the university. I don’t understand how this was left out of the document. You may feel this falls under the heading “infrastructure” but I think this is something very different. The Dean’s council was made up of the top faculty in Engineering and Science and you really should accept their input. We had years of meetings and this was debated heavily and “Sensor Networking” was promoted as a top initiative to invest in. It really should be represented in this plan. Feel free to talk to the Dean of Engineering or to look at the reports that went to the Dean of Engineering and to the Dean of the College of Arts and Science. We have an excellent group in ECE, ISE and CSE in the areas I mentioned (Sensor Networking) and the topics I mention are very important to the future of the world and should be mentioned as a Strategic Area of Focus. Let me use my own research program as one example. My group has invented new technology that led both ONR and the Missile Defense Agency to initiate separate research programs based on this new technology. These programs will fund many groups, including us. In addition to these two grants, I have also recently been awarded new grants from NSF and ARO, with another grant from AFOSR soon to be awarded. Clearly we are doing excellent work that is being recognized but others and we have opened up new fields of study. We are editing special journal issues on these topics, giving plenary talks and tutorials, organizing special sessions, just as you might expect when one makes a big impact. The Missile Defense Agency wants to put the technology into real systems that are of great importance to the safety of our country. Other faculty both in and outside my department are also making impacts in the important area of sensor networking. Clearly this is a well developed area at Lehigh that we should continue to build. Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

2. Tamas Terlaky on December 19th, 2008

   The description of the health area is missing the “Health Care System” component. With some colleagues we are developing an Appendix to the Health White Paper developed by the committee chaired by Linda Lowe-Krentz. The appendix is revolting around the key themes:
   - Health Care Operations;
   - Health Care Policy
   - Health Care Treatment Systems

   A short motivation follows:

   The provision of high-quality health care in the United States and globally will challenge financial, technical, and human resources in unprecedented ways over the next three decades. The cost to the U.S. economy is expected to double by 2015,
approaching 20% of GDP (Borger et al., 2008).

** First two sentences of “Envisioning the Health Care Initiative at Lehigh”

The financial, technical and human resource challenges pointed out by the white paper result /primarily/ from the size, complexity, and “high-tech” nature of the health care system. This complexity is evident at any scale of the health care system—globally, nationally, regionally, or within a single hospital or clinic—and in every aspect—health care delivery, disease diagnosis, goods and services distribution, drug and device development, and so on. For the health care system to function efficiently and effectively, researchers, planners, and practitioners must take a systems approach, thinking about the system’s multiple disciplines, functions, and modes as a whole rather than as individual components.

Industries and fields with similar levels of complexity such as communications, automobile manufacturing, financial services, transportation and logistics and the military have all benefited enormously from systems engineering research over the last decade or two. More recently, interest in, and funding for research in health care systems has exploded. For example, at the most recent INFORMS (Institute for Operations Research and Management Science) conference, 62 independent sessions were devoted to systems research in health care. “Improving health care with whole systems thinking and simulation” is the cover title of the December 2008 issue of “Industrial Engineer” magazine, the popular press publication of the Institute of Industrial Engineers.

This appendix is intended to add a systems perspective to the perspectives on the Health Care Initiative already represented in the main document. Systems research and analysis will play a key role in the future evolution of health. Further, Lehigh University is in a good position to contribute significantly to this effort. By incorporating a systems approach to health care, the HCl will include a broad range of disciplines from all four colleges, encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, and avoid reinforcing functional “silos” within the university. In addition to the many departments and centers at Lehigh that study and teach the individual components of health care systems (biology, chemistry, economics, etc.), many groups at Lehigh routinely deal with the design, analysis, and management of large-scale and/or complex systems themselves. These include departments, such as Industrial and Systems Engineering, Economics, Finance, Management, Mathematics, Civil Engineering, Computer Science, and others, and Centers, such as the Center for Value Chain Research, the Enterprise Systems Center, the Energy Research Center, ATLSS, the Martindale Center, the Center for Social Research, and others.

3. Tamas Terlaky on December 19th, 2008

An earlier version of the Strategic Plan included a strategic area:

** Capital Markets and Global Competitiveness. Such an area with a good focus should be re-installed with the following title and statement:

** Title: Entrepreneurship and Global Competitiveness

** Statement of Importance:
Throughout history entrepreneurship has been and remain central to development. Credit and capital markets are critical to the success and prosperity of our world economy. The added value generated by innovative entrepreneurship enable the support of arts, education, health care and generate tax revenues for governments. Strong corporate governance, leadership, well understood and managed capital markets, optimally organized business processes are critical to excel in the rapidly changing and ever intensifying worldwide competition. Scientific breakthroughs are needed to meet the need to manage capital markets, develop logistic and supply chain systems, to develop novel products of the cyber age and to develop sustainable public policy in the global multi-cultural global world.

4. Steven H. Weintraub, Professor of Mathematics on December 22nd, 2008

I am profoundly disturbed that the strategic plan does not mention one of the principal foci of faculty intellectual activity: Basic research. On page 2, there is a bullet: Transforming theory into practice for the good of society. This theme is repeated throughout the document. But nowhere is there a commitment to the development of theory itself.

I would favor adding a bullet on page 2: Research and other creative activity that increases the range of human knowledge and experience. I would also favor reconsideration of the draft with this new bullet in mind.

The names and work of mathematicians are unfortunately not well known to the public, so let me choose an example from another field: Given this strategic plan, would we have wanted to hire Einstein, and would he have felt at home here? Einstein’s work was entirely theoretical, undertaken without regard for any potential practical consequences. (And, by the way, his work was purely in physics, i.e., not interdisciplinary, and for the most part he worked alone, i.e., not collaboratively.)

I am not arguing about which directions should or should not be emphasized. I am arguing that pure research be recognized as
a fundamental aspect of faculty activity and as an essential aspect of the role of a university in general, and Lehigh in particular.

5. Beth Dolan on December 22nd, 2008

In general I’m concerned about the lack of focus on the Humanities in the strategic plan. As we focus on current problems and the “new”—a valuable undertaking—I feel strongly that we need to also build our understanding of history—an area that almost all humanities disciplines (not just History) value highly.

Specifically, as the director of the new Health, Medicine, and Society minor in the CAS, I think that the Health area in the strategic plan needs to include a greater focus on humanities and social science approaches to health. For example, the last sentence of the introductory paragraph states that science and engineering approaches to health are needed. I think we will miss valuable research and pedagogical opportunities if we do not consider building our social science and humanities strengths as well. Here are some specific points:

1. Public Health is listed as a current strength. As far as I know, this simply isn’t true. We don’t have a person with a Ph.D. or an MPH on the faculty of the college, nor do we have an epidemiologist. Surely these two positions would be core for conducting serious research in public health (or developing a program focus). The HMS faculty have included these hires (along with a bioethicist, a medical historian, a medical anthropologist, etc) on the list of necessary faculty resources for expanding into a major in our 5 year plan. However, I do believe that as a university without a medical school or any other health profession school, we have a great opportunity to define ourselves with a focus on public health – in collaboration with the local hospitals, the emerging health bureau, and other community groups focused on health. We have the right environment to build our strengths in Public Health, but we do not yet have them. Public Health should be deleted from the strength category, but I hope it remains an area that Lehigh will build.

2. In the final bullet of areas to grow in the health focus, all the social science and humanities fields are crammed into the bullet with health economics. We might reconceptualize the contributions of the social sciences and humanities in the following way:

   A. A Population Approach to Understanding Disease: epidemiology, public health, global health, sociology, etc.

   B. Understanding the Social Context of Illness: sociology, political science/health policy, health economics, religion studies, women’s studies, anthropology, social psychology, history of medicine, bioethics, etc.

   C. Understanding the Individual Experience of Illness: literature, narrative ethics, bioethics, religion studies, modern languages, history of medicine, etc.

   We might focus this more comprehensive approach by hiring in thematic areas in A,B, and C—for example, we might hire a medical anthropologist, a bioethicist, and a historian of medicine who all focus on infectious disease, or chronic disease, or aging, or some other area in which we already have strength.

Finally, in this section, I find the opening statistic about the NIH funding from 1998-2003 to be unconvincing rhetorically. Why not have a statistic from 2003-2008 (this point was made by a smart finance professor in a strategic plan meeting I attended last week).


I am disappointed that the strategic plan lacks any specific ideas, goals, or measurements of success for professional staff at Lehigh. The word staff seems to only be thrown into the phrase “faculty and staff” merely for convenience when talking about the entire Lehigh community, as the strategy lays out clear goals, ideas, guidelines, and success measurements only for faculty. After investing time in the workshops and discussions specifically based on faculty and staff development, I feel disregarded by this plan.

As a professional staff member of this university community in the library, I am charged with investigating innovative ways to support the academic and research endeavors of the students and faculty. I am proud when our team succeeds in the ways that we have thus far, but just like the draft talks about recruiting excellent faculty because “Lehigh “competes above its weight class””, so, too, do we as professional staff compete at this level. We, also, seek grant funding, though with significantly less university support, and we seek to be as innovative as possible to provide the best resources for academics and research. So I am quite dismayed that this draft has left out how Lehigh’s strategy includes the professional staff who are vital to Lehigh’s success.

To be honest, I wonder if I wasted my time participating in the workshops and activities organized at the beginning of this process. I hope that my doubts will be proven incorrect in future communication and action by this strategic plan.

7. Julia Maserjian on December 24th, 2008

Many University staff, exempt and non-exempt, contribute far beyond what is recognized in this
draft. We are an integral part of the University, however, this document does not speak to our contribution or how the University intends to seek and retain innovative staff. Very disheartening.

Library and Technology Staff partner with students and faculty in and out of the classroom on a daily basis. We engage not only with the campus community in teaching, mentoring and keeping vital services up and running, but we are actively involved in the Bethlehem community in historical preservation, interpretation, and do our part in fostering good town/gown relationships with our neighbors.

“There must be a culture of innovation, discovery, creativity, partnership, and of hard work and we must champion those individuals who exemplify the best of those traits.” Perhaps the next draft will demonstrate how staff play a very active role in this culture.

8. Timothy Gardner on January 6th, 2009

The strategic plan exemplifies the need for a Chief Diversity Officer on campus. It lacks the infusion of multi-cultural competence as a core element and while the document speaks of “equitable community” there are no specific guidelines to how we will become an equitable community. The idea that we take Equitable Community as a core value that “drives our decisions about our priorities” is not only inaccurate but outright deception. If this drove our decisions and priorities, it would be infused into this strategic plan in executable and concrete ways. Additionally, we would have multiculturalism infused into our core academic requirements and infused into our curriculum. Also, if we are working on equitable community then we wouldn’t be hearing about cuts to our working class outsourced employees; instead we would be hearing about our upper management (250k salaries, including the president’s salary) making a statement about equity by taking a pay cut to be sure that our in-house and outsourced employees are included in our community during tough economic times. Finally, it is US-centric and egotistic to believe that you are the “envy of the world.” If you are the envy of the world, then why does Lehigh work to send its students abroad to what this implies as lesser universities and lesser countries? It is frustrating to see such a statement in the strategic plan and it points to Lehigh’s need for a Chief Diversity Officer at the VP level and for the need to infuse equity and multicultural understanding throughout campus.

A “Renaissance of South Bethlehem” of which we are going to lead? Was the community involved in what is the start of this 20 year plan? If we are to help/lead this then there will need to be full time paid positions that will work with the community. By full

time I mean employees such as community liaisons whose only job this is and not a faculty, staff or committee doing overload to their job(s).

What do you mean by “institutionalize the student life goals through a standing body of the faculty”? Would this be the goals put out by Student Affairs? What made the decision to not include staff on this “standing body” dealing with student life?

I agree with Tim and Julia. Where is the recognition, impact awareness and increase of staff (exempt, non-exempt, outsourced) in this document? Without us you have no Police, Dean of Students, Community Service Office, Office of Multicultural Affairs, LGBTQ Services, Women’s Center, Admissions, Health Center, Counseling Center, Residence Life, Greek Life Coordinators, Administrative Coordinators, Librarians, maintenance workers, food service, cleaning service, grounds keepers, or landscapers to name a few. Indeed, without us, you do not have a functioning university.


I agree with both Timothy and Julia. While staff is mentioned in passing in the document, actual engagement or recognition of staff is only mentioned in support of faculty. In reality, professional staff often take a leadership position in championing new programs, innovative approaches to learning, new technology initiatives, cross-disciplinary research and learning, and so on. Many of us are deeply involved in programs that are community based or result in a university/campus affecting them to a very few. Indeed, without us, you do not have a functioning university.

I was also disappointed to see that the first people to be impacted by cuts will be the working class employees, many of whom will be hit hardest. This smacks of elitism and certainly will not help in any sense of community building.
STRATEGIC PLAN 2009 —
QUESTION #2

2. What competitive or external factors might influence implementation of the Strategic Plan?

1 Comment

1. Timothy Gardner on January 6th, 2009
The firing/cutting back of outsourced workers might effect this because they are the ones who clean, feed and sculpt campus for its first and lasting impressions.
The economy may affect us.
Schools who integrate multiculturalism and equity throughout campus may draw students away from Lehigh.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2009 —
QUESTION #3

3. As you read the Draft Strategic Plan, please imagine that it is 2019 and the plan has had a substantial impact on Lehigh and please answer the following questions:

• How do faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students interact inside and outside of the classroom in 2019?

• How have South Bethlehem and the University changed and how do they interrelate because of the efforts begun in 2009?

• What has resulted because of the faculty expansion and the growth in research and graduate studies over the decade?

• Based on the accomplishments in the past 10 years, what are the Strategic Areas of Focus in the plan for 2029?

3 Comments so far

1. Timothy Gardner on January 6th, 2009

Question 1
Considering this doesn’t mention staff and the document itself is lacking the role of staff, one can only hope that there will be more interaction with staff and that it will make it into the next strategic plan.

Question 2
We will have full time paid employees working with the community “renaissance.” The Community Service office will have expanded in employees.

Question 3
More faculty and STAFF who are not overworked. I note staff because we are not included in the current strategic plan, however an overworked STAFF does not attract “high achievers to join the team” either. In fact, it aids in staff being jaded and leaving campus.
The document is vague on what our “grand challenges” are and what research strength area(s) we will be increasing faculty in. I would like to see an increase in faculty and research that build our Social Science programs and make them stronger. Additionally, I would like to see the securing of multiple full time faculty in our Women’s Studies, Latin American Studies, and Africana Studies.
To see the development of new Social Science disciplines and a Queer Studies program would be nice as well.
Recognizing that Student Affairs professionals do research and support for that.
An increase of graduate and teaching assistantships on campus. A system for graduate assistantships where credits and funding are more universal.
If we are increasing staffing and working on equity, the Equity and Advocacy Unit (OMA, WC, LGBTQ) in Student Affairs will have expanded staff and funding.

Question 4
We will see a Chief Diversity Officer on campus and be infusing equity and multiculturalism throughout campus.

2. Dork Sahagian on January 11th, 2009

Looking around in 2019, we see some wonderful improvements in Lehigh’s intellectual climate, operational structure, and residential focus.
We now see that during each semester, all faculty are on campus conducting world-class research. Some go into the field, taking students for special course credit and thesis development, while others focus on more abstract scholarly
pursuits within the campus community. We look back at our less enlightened past before 2010 when some faculty maintained “home offices” for their research and other activities and spent minimal time each week on campus, thus separating themselves from their students and each other. Top scholars from around the world are now flocking to Lehigh to engage in the myriad workshops, short courses, conferences and other activities offered throughout the year. Lehigh has become a favored destination for sabbaticals. The visiting scholars live on campus in the new apartments built for that purpose. “Rent” is paid in part by new grants obtained through their collaborations with Lehigh faculty. Lehigh has become a global leader in key focus areas of environment, public health, and global planning and development, in addition to its traditional strengths in technology, business, education, and the arts, and this is attracting more and higher caliber scholars from around the world.

It is July, and the campus is full of activity. All of our graduate students and more than half of our undergrads are resident on campus, working with our faculty, who are all present in their offices and labs. The focus to activity is not merely a continuation of the academic schedule, but rather is centered on special projects, events, and learning venues that have been developed since 2010 to expand the college experience to include critical thinking skills, interpersonal interactions, professional development, and unique experiences not normally covered during the academic year. Also on campus will be high school students enjoying Lehigh’s special summer programs in various key topical areas such as technology, business, environment, and the arts. They are living in the few dorms that are vacated by the fraction of Lehigh students doing internships in other cities or summer fieldwork. The rest of the dorms are full of Lehigh students on campus for summer programs. There are special program days devoted to student siblings to interest the most talented of these in Lehigh.

The applicant pool inundating the admissions office has grown considerably since the relatively dull days before 2010. Lehigh’s reputation for quality education within a premier research environment has finally spread to impinge upon the Ivy league. Foreign undergraduate applications have increased dramatically in the last 5 years. The fact that only faculty teach classes has enhanced Lehigh’s stature relative to its former peer institutions. Further, the days of 100 students in intro classes is long gone. No more than 20 students are in any class. Student surveys conducted between 2014-2019 show that they are particularly attracted to the fact that they have the opportunity to work with faculty every day on their projects, emerging interests, and funded research projects. Because the faculty are never teaching more than one class at a time, they have time to focus on interacting with the students. At the same time, because there are twice as many faculty as there were in 2009, but the same number of undergraduates, the faculty also have opportunities to interact with each other. This has made Lehigh a top destination for aspiring faculty applicants, and faculty searches commonly start with winnowing down the 200 qualified young applicants before focusing on the few who will most likely emerge as global leaders in their fields.

There is constant interaction between Lehigh and the city at all levels. At the basic educational level, school children flock to Lehigh with their teachers for special programs during the summer, weekends, and between semesters. At the community level, local residents attend numerous free lectures, concerts, and other events at Zoellner and throughout campus. Community groups work with Lehigh faculty and students to develop community events, riverfront parks and revitalized community now that the casino has established a solid tax base, providing the city with enough funds to develop both sides of the river into an interconnected social, cultural and economic mecca for the surrounding region. Meanwhile, at the highest intellectual level, the new Lehigh Community Scholars Network has grown to incorporate the expertise of local/regional businessmen, professionals, retirees and others who are contributing to a vibrant community with Lehigh at its nexus. The Community Scholars interact with Lehigh students, collaborate with faculty, teach special courses, participate in the now famous annual LCSN conference, and mentor students to provide internships, guide theses, and provide new insights for projects.

The Lehigh campus is now leading the way in efficient operations in a “green campus.” As the older buildings are reconstructed or replaced, the campus has morphed into an example for the nation. This trend accelerated after the remarkable success of the STEPS building back in 2010. The cost savings across campus in energy (which has become a major concern in the last 5 years) has enabled reconstruction and enhancement of building and systems efficiency, thus snowballing to make funds also available for energy and environment educational programs for Lehigh students as well as the community. Each of the dorms and greek houses compete to enhance their own efficiency in energy, recycling, and transportation, vying for prizes that may include the best football and concert tickets, bookstore coupons, and paid way to a national energy and environment conference/workshop/event. Building
from the initial concept inherent in the “Green House” and South Mountain College, thematic dorms have grown in popularity. We now have “Drama House,” “Music House,” “Literature House,” “Corporate House,” and many others. Students ride “yellow bikes” throughout town and campus, ride the new and efficient electric jitney shuttle service, and the new culture of “climbing the campus for health” has led to greater student fitness, appreciation of the outdoor campus environment, and a dramatic reduction in cars, parking issues, and pollution on campus. All students have now learned in various classes to relate how their own majors and interests relate to their environment, and are poised to take advantage of emerging business opportunities as we transition from fossil fuel consumption and waste production, to sustainable energy production, and cradle to cradle accounting for material goods and services.

As we look around the campus today, we see many of the same strengths and advantages as existed back in 2009, but we now see many new and enhanced opportunities for students, faculty, and the broader community. We are thrilled that we are at a university that has the flexibility, agility, and vision to stay at the forefront of research, education, and global leadership, constantly evolving to not only respond to opportunities, but to proactively define the directions of research and education to serve a rapidly changing society.

3. Alex Wiseman on January 17th, 2009

CIE LU Strategic Plan Input

A week ago the faculty, staff, and some student representatives from the Comparative and International Education program in the College of Education met to discuss the strategic plan and make a list of our own recommendations. What follows is a list of our comments on the draft document itself, followed by our responses to the questions emailed to campus earlier.

COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT DOCUMENT:

“Each of the strategic focus areas is missing a statement of GOALS. These goals should be for raising Lehigh’s profile both domestically and globally. The goals should be big enough to be meaningful goals, but should be empirically measurable so that we can track our progress. The goals should focus both on how Lehigh should transform and grow as well as how Lehigh should/could send graduates, faculty, and students into the community/world to create positive change and development. The aim should be continuous improvement beyond a timeline, and instead focus on milestones rather than deadlines.

Strategic Area #1:

* Global E3 program from the Institute of International Education (IIE) would be a good fit.

Strategic Area #2:

* Mention Tina Richardson’s efforts to provide link between LU and the University of Liberia to provide post-conflict mental health education and teacher training.

Strategic Area #3:

* Education builds business capacity abroad (e.g., World Bank education and development policy programs).
  * Needs mention of the Iacobca Institute and the Global Village.

Strategic Area #4:

* The Comparative and International Education (CIE) program in the COE has piloted and is currently using a Global Lehigh Classroom: hybrid distance local for all of its courses. This model is unique in that it brings international and on-campus students together in one interactive cohort.
  * LU needs an international education center (including internationalization of higher education) that is both scholarly and student life oriented.
  * Lehigh Mission Statement needs more of a global/international emphasis. Perhaps adopt a Global Mission Statement and add to LU existing one.
  * UN/Lehigh evaluation reveals that it needs an academic connection to survive/thrive and CIE provides that connection.
  * Mention CIE’s coordination of a COE-specific effort for organizing an annual International Education Week seminar in collaboration with the Global Union and Global Citizenship.
  * While international comparative education as a concept is mentioned, neither the Comparative and International Education program nor the Office of International Programs in the College of Education is mentioned.
  * Focal points for international visibility are: the European Education journal, International Perspectives on Education and Society volume series both housed in the COE and co-edited by CIE faculty.
* Need to mention increasing international student enrollment and study abroad as a goal, and make this measurable by mentioned % increase by certain dates.

Summary and Closing

* Mention Comparative & International Education (CIE) program in College of Education
* Mention Office of International Programs (OIP) in College of Education
* The Comparative & International Education (CIE) program in the College of Education is an interdisciplinary program, too. We have just developed a cross-college masters and certificate program that involves collaboration between the COE, CAS, and CBA, and will go up for university faculty approval this semester.

The faculty and students of the Comparative and International Education program are excited that Strategic Area #4 of the Overall Strategic Plan aligns so well with our programs goals and objectives. As mentioned, the CIE program lends itself to being an active participant in meeting goals and objectives set forth under Strategic Area #4, as it is interdisciplinary and reaches across the Lehigh campus and across the world in helping to raise the visibility of this important issue.

As the President’s Office and the Board of Directors at Lehigh move forward to implement the objectives laid out in this Strategic Plan, the CIE program stands ready to assist in any way possible to fine-tune specific goals and objectives related to Globalizing Lehigh in any way. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input on this important campus wide endeavor.

CIE RESPONSES TO INPUT QUESTIONS:

1. Please comment on how accurately the bullets in the Strategic Areas of Focus reflect our current strengths, desirable areas of expertise and prospective areas of impact.

We think that the strategic areas of focus break down into two main categories: 1) traditional strengths and 2) emerging strengths. Currently the Globalization focus is an emerging strength, but we feel that it is the strategic focus area that has the most potential for benefiting and impacting the whole Lehigh community both on and off campus. Globalization cuts across all of the other strategic focus areas, it cuts across all of the colleges at Lehigh, and it is one of the most sought after specialties in the 21st century academic, economic, political, and social marketplace.

2. What competitive or external factors might influence implementation of the Strategic Plan?

Those universities that learn how to globalize their faculty, students, and curriculum are guaranteed the leadership positions in the next decade. It is not enough to be domestic experts; that is important, but superficial at best. The importance of understanding how context influences each activity, thought, and interaction will become the new moniker for academic and university success as the 21st century progresses.

The Strategic Plan (whatever final form it takes) will depend on the support that comes from alumni, the community where Lehigh “lives”—(be that South Bethlehem or a hub in Malaysia or South Africa), and the ability of Lehigh to integrate what happens on campus with what happens in the real world. We also cannot forget the importance of relationship-building with individual students, alums, parents, and others. We also need to think of relationship-building across cultures and organizations. What we do now will determine the extent of Lehigh’s reach 10, 25, or 50 years in the future. The way that Lehigh is perceived is going to matter more for the implementation of the Strategic Plan than we can predict. Even a great plan will fail without support and confidence from our community and the individuals that comprise it.

3.1. How do faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students interact inside and outside of the classroom in 2019?

We believe that interaction is a mix of face-to-face, virtual, and asynchronous communication. As we mentioned in our comments above, the CIE program already has created a “hybrid” class model that blends on campus students with international/online students in a synchronous learning environment that we call the Global Lehigh Classroom. This enables us to create a community that is not bounded by space and, quite frankly, goes beyond time restrictions as well. Students already use technology to text or otherwise electronically communicate with their peers outside of class. We believe that the technology that will be popular in 2019 should be the way that faculty and students interact at least part of the time. Face-to-face communication and interaction is indeed important, but it is not necessary to always be in the same room to have a face-to-face interaction. Skype, for example, makes it possible to conduct virtual face-to-face meetings with individuals located around the world. We believe this is the future for Lehigh and that it is the key to Lehigh becoming a truly global institution.

3.2. How have South Bethlehem and the University changed and how do they interrelate because of the efforts begun in 2009?

In 2019, South Bethlehem is a vibrant college community where local residents and university students interact not just in place of commerce, but are engaging each other in projects that develop and benefit the community itself as well as beyond. By 2019, it is our hope that South Bethlehem’s
FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY BLOG

Everyone is feeling the strain of the current economic turmoil, and that most certainly includes higher education and Lehigh. It is imperative that we remain focused on our mission of teaching, research, and service during these challenging times, even as we work to reduce expenses.

Do you have a cost-saving idea for the university? Please share it with us.

Thank you!

4 Comments

1. Stacey on April 7th, 2009

I think the University should consider closing its doors between Christmas & New Years as an additional University holiday. It would save the University in utility and upkeep costs for this time when generally activity is low and there are no classes in session.

Is there also a way we could set up a fund for Scholarships that faculty/staff could contribute to through payroll deduction -- much like we are able to for the United Way?

2. Going paperless on April 7th, 2009

I suggest that travel expense reimbursement forms and the process for approving and filing them be converted to an electronic system. This would replace the triplicate paper forms now required. John Chambers (CEO of Cisco) gave a talk after they did this themselves (ten years ago) and he reported an immediate and significant savings in both time and material. And we would save many trees!

3. Brian on August 5th, 2009

Turn off the lights in the buildings after they close at night. If a faculty or administrator is working late after the building has been closed they can keep their office lights on. Entire buildings do not need to be lit 24/7 year-round.

If necessary, put motion sensors in the buildings that are only active after the buildings are locked. That way, the lights can act normally and stay on during the day, even if there is no motion, but after a certain time at night, the motion sensors take control of the lights and turn them on or off as necessary.

45 / Strategy for the Future
4. Paul Stracke on August 20th, 2009

Do not resort to “taxation” in the form of excessive parking fines to balance your deficits. I incurred a $50 fine a few weeks ago for parking on campus during the day; professors weren’t even here in great numbers, so I took no one’s spot! The fine was 1/6 of my weekly pay, and took food directly out of my mouth since I am on a tight budget. Does transportation services want to project this cold and heartless image? I noticed they have a large flat screen computer monitor in their Johnson Hall office; is this what my food money paid for?

Also, cut down on elaborate faculty trips abroad for conferences; why should they attend fancy academic meetings in such places as Switzerland, Malaysia, and Singapore?

would go to one College “parent” for help only to be encouraged to go to the other “parent” College instead. I don’t know if this is being addressed or not or if this is a perception but not a reality. Certainly Lehigh’s interdisciplinary programs get a lot of “press” and are popular with students. I don’t know the mechanism administratively that would address this problem but I hope that someone is still thinking about it.

STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION

With Lehigh’s new long-range Strategic Plan, the university has charted a trajectory that will enable us to better fulfill our mission of teaching research and service, that will build upon our foundational strength in turning theory into practice, and that will cause us to become recognized as a premier residential research university of international distinction.

The success of this venture hinges upon the collective commitment of all members of the Lehigh community and open communication. That process can begin by sharing your opinions, insights, and experiences.

If you have ideas for implementation, please share them with us.

1 Comment

1. Susan A. Cady on September 29th, 2009

I recall that during the Strategic Thinking process, there was a strong perception among faculty involved with interdisciplinary programs that they were on their own too much in terms of on-going funding. Particularly in the case of programs that spanned Colleges, they felt that neither College “owned” the responsibility for funding and growing that program. The idea seemed to be that they...
Appendices

FINAL STRATEGIC THINKING REPORTS

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Appendix A

To: Lehigh Faculty, Staff, and Students
From: Alice Gast and Edward Shapiro
Subject: Strategic Thinking Initiative--Next Phase
Date: May 22, 2008

Over the past 10 weeks or so, our campus community has been actively engaged in the Strategic Thinking process. We are very pleased to report that contributions to the process have come from every part of the university community, through multiple methods and on multiple occasions. Personally and also on behalf of the Working Group members and the Steering Committee, we offer our sincerest thanks for taking the time to have your voices heard and to offer your ideas for Lehigh over the next 10 years. The task of assembling the input was a daunting one, and the Steering Committee is confident that the reports have indeed captured the true sense of what they heard.

The Working Groups have completed their final reports and they have been posted to the Transforming Lehigh website. In addition, the Steering Committee drafted a synthesis document that offers a broad, cross-group perspective on the input they received from the campus. This synthesis report is also posted. All documents will be sent to the President today.

We would like to thank you again for your ideas, comments, and hard work. This fall we will begin an implementation phase where we will once again call upon faculty and staff for help. We are certain, based on your extraordinary participation and engagement in the Strategic Thinking process, that you will continue to enthusiastically support the planning and implementation process next year.

Thank you.
Appendix B

FINAL REPORT OF THE FACULTY & STAFF WORKING GROUP

May 12, 2008

Charge: Investing in faculty and staff to place Lehigh at the forefront of distinguished universities.

Executive Summary

By taking decisive action on five key goals over a 10-year timeframe, Lehigh can advance its academic reputation to the top tier of medium-sized doctoral-extensive research universities that combine world-class scholarship and graduate education with the best in undergraduate learning opportunities. These goals are grouped into five strategic themes:

1. Cultivating Innovation: Empowering faculty and staff to create a culture of innovation and maximize their contributions to Lehigh’s success.

2. Nurturing Leadership: Developing effective leadership at all levels within the university to implement Lehigh’s long-term vision.

3. Strengthening Research: Investing strategically in Lehigh’s research and graduate enterprise to raise its scholarly output and advance its academic reputation while providing new educational opportunities for undergraduates.

4. Building Community: Building an enhanced sense of community so that faculty, staff, and students identify more readily with a Lehigh that is greater than the sum of its parts.

5. Encouraging Balance: Enhancing the work / life balance and benefits for faculty and staff to make Lehigh a premier academic employer locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.

Introduction

Historically, Lehigh has excelled in selected areas, adapting and evolving in response to a continually changing world. Nevertheless, it is necessary at times to step back and study all aspects of the University, to re-examine the whole to identify areas that have lagged or that otherwise require attention so that Lehigh can assume a position at the forefront of distinguished universities. The current Strategic Thinking Initiative exemplifies this self-examination process, and as a result, the work over these past two months has focused on identifying opportunities to move Lehigh forward.

In collecting input for this report, the Working Group participated in more than 50 meetings with hundreds of faculty and staff colleagues, ranging from impromptu small group lunches involving just a few individuals to sitting in on regularly scheduled department and college meetings of nearly 100. The two campus-wide sessions and the community blog provided valuable insight as well. Throughout these discussions, a number of common themes emerged. Our Working
Group was particularly impressed by the eagerness of faculty and staff to offer their time and their outstanding suggestions to the initiative – we deeply appreciate their active involvement in the process. From these many interactions, we have identified five strategic goals as well as a single broad overarching goal, as detailed below. Each of the points discussed were echoed by a sizable constituency among the faculty and staff – many were voiced with near unanimity.

In moving Lehigh forward, it was noted in a number of the discussions that appropriate benchmark institutions and performance metrics must be employed to measure progress. If the goal is to achieve an increased intellectual footprint that is recognized both nationally and internationally, Lehigh cannot aspire to have a scholarly impact that matches one set of universities while salaries, benefits, and responsibilities are measured relative to a lesser set of schools. Hence, throughout the report potential metrics and benchmark institutions are suggested.

**OVERARCHING GOAL:**
Empower faculty and staff to create a culture of innovation defined by a shared vision, common purpose, and commitment to social responsibility that advances Lehigh’s mission, stature, and reputation.

The faculty and staff represent Lehigh University’s most valuable asset. Ensuring the best use of personnel and maximizing the opportunity for professional and personal success by all employees is the cornerstone for achieving and maintaining institutional distinction. The proposed systemic changes in personnel policies, operational structures, management practices, and resource allocation models represent strategies that are designed to enable global competitiveness and leadership in educational and research activities. These strategies, coupled with the investments required for effective implementation, will establish the University as a model workplace among doctoral-extensive institutions that is defined by a culture of innovation, a shared vision and sense of purpose, and a commitment to social responsibility.

**Explanation and Rationale**
Lehigh has changed dramatically over the past twenty years and is now a very different institution. Programs, student demographics, student quality, the shape of graduate education, goals and ambitions of faculty, scholarly and external funding expectations, scope and extent of infrastructure requirements, and demands and responsibilities of staff, have shifted profoundly. Harnessing the momentum and potential for innovation that has accompanied these changes is critical if Lehigh is to realize its ambition for intellectual distinction among leading national and international universities. Optimizing productivity and performance by faculty and staff is central to advancing Lehigh as a university in the truest sense of the term. The Strategic Thinking process, however, revealed a pervasive theme and belief – that institutional practices and current functional models significantly constrain the ability of faculty and staff to advance the University’s mission, stature, and reputation.

Enabling high productivity, innovation, and professional development defines the most successful and admired organizations. Based on community input, strategic initiatives designed to maximize productivity and innovation from employees, cultivate leadership, galvanize research and scholarship, build community, and foster work/life balance are essential to exploit fully the capacity of faculty and staff both to bring institutional distinction to Lehigh and to
position the University to address an increasingly competitive higher education landscape. The latter includes, but is not limited to, growth in the number of high profile, branded international universities, the emergence of quasi-virtual, lower cost providers, public pressure on tuition costs, the end of expansion in the number of U.S. 18-year-olds applying to college, recruiting battles for top-flight faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates from across the globe, significantly greater competition for external grants and awards, and an expanding list of organizations pursuing the same philanthropic sources.

**KEY OUTCOMES:**

*Measuring Our Success*

Implementation of the proposed strategic investments in faculty and staff will yield productivity gains and an improved reputation that enable the following outcomes:

- A global identity and broad acceptance as a peer of the most highly regarded, medium-sized doctoral-extensive universities, including Dartmouth, Rice, Washington University (St. Louis), Carnegie Mellon, Vanderbilt, and Tufts.

- Doubling of scholarly output across all disciplines.

- Doubling of externally funded research (as measured in FY’08 dollars).

- Faculty who are routinely recognized and sought after as thought leaders on major issues by governments, major foundations, global non-profits, and industry.

- Four or five new Centers of Scholarly Excellence that compete routinely for 7-8 figure grants and attract major gifts and/or endowments.

- A workplace and reputation that consistently attracts a global, highly diversified, highly credentialed applicant pool for faculty and staff positions.

- National and international visibility that geographically broadens, diversifies, and improves the undergraduate and graduate student applicant pools.

- Leadership in building programs, consortia, partnerships, alliances, and other innovative approaches to address “big problems.”

- Reputation for significant contributions to improving the human condition through scholarship, entrepreneurship, and personal commitment.
STRATEGIC GOAL #1:
Cultivating Innovation

Capitalizing on the collective strengths of our faculty and staff, allowing them to maximize their contributions to Lehigh’s success.

Explanation and Rationale

Leading organizations are widely recognized for enabling innovation through empowerment of their employees; this represents a core operating philosophy in these highly successful and admired environments. At the same time, unit operations are framed by clearly defined goals and accountability. These practices enhance productivity, encourage innovation, engender a sense of ownership for one’s job, and build organizational loyalty. More broadly, trust, respect, and community develop and become defining features of the organization.

The Working Group heard repeatedly that these values have been significantly eroded, if not lost at Lehigh. The most common and prominent themes were that the University is inflexible in management practices, too hierarchical, unable to respond efficiently to opportunity due to overly centralized decision making, and that it had generally failed to adapt policies and practices to enhance job performance in alignment with institutional goals and the emerging higher education environment. Employees feel stifled in their ability to be creative, advance their professional development, and fully contribute to the University and its goals.

At the heart of this perspective was an unequivocal message: the need to redefine effort allocation models and operational structures to enable best use of personnel in order to maximize productivity and innovation. The strategies proposed below are essential for removing the systemic, structural, and individual barriers that have hindered the establishment of an innovative, high performing institution defined by progressive practices and an environment that maximizes contributions from its employees. In this context, this report often refers to “40/40/20,” which is the current practice where each faculty member is expected to allocate 40% of his/her effort to teaching, 40% to research and scholarship, and 20% to service, which includes committee work.

Strategies for Achieving Success: Addressing Systemic Barriers

• Redesign the 40/40/20 model to a collective unit responsibility (typically an academic department) over a 3 year period; relax the current rigid and constraining model of effort allocation as an annual responsibility for each individual faculty member.

• In the new model, recognize field and disciplinary differences to ensure national competitiveness through appropriate external benchmarks.

• Add a fourth elective category for faculty and staff performance evaluation, e.g., community or societal impact, entrepreneurial activity, development of important intellectual property.

• Increase the number of FTE tenure-track faculty substantially (for instance, by 20%) to bolster research and establish a student/faculty ratio that is competitive with other top-ranked medium-sized universities.

- Add staffing to support faculty hires and other new initiatives, in some cases using shared hiring models, e.g., cross-department, functional areas, cross-program.

- Lengthen the tenure clock to support flexibility, opportunities for professional development, and demonstration of a faculty member’s contributions.

Key Outcomes (Systemic): Measuring Our Success
A systemic move away from the 40/40/20 allocation model for individual faculty effort, coupled with growth in the size of the faculty and staff hires, represents a transformative shift that will enable best use of personnel and enhanced return on investments in faculty and staff. These shifts would substantially improve scholarly output and increase extramural support for research, with attendant positive effects on scholarly reputation and national rankings. Appropriate external benchmarking that recognizes field and disciplinary differences will enhance the capacity to recruit and retain top faculty. Changing the reward and advancement model to incorporate entrepreneurial activities and efforts that produce societal impact will promote innovation, increase technology transfer, broaden the potential base for external funding and revenue, and advance social responsibility as an institutional value. Lehigh will become a more dynamic educational environment, one that is recognized for leadership in broadening models of faculty and staff function to meet the changing responsibilities of the modern university.

Strategies for Achieving Success: Addressing Structural Barriers
- Align authority/responsibility/resources/accountability in local units (e.g., departments).

- Develop a new bottom-up budget model that prioritizes rational, nationally competitive base budgets centered on departments and programs. This requires a major shift away from a provost/dean-centric model to a department/program-centric model.

- Empower department chairs and unit managers as true leadership positions.

- Streamline decision making to enable timely pursuit of external and internal opportunities. Note: this will follow from local empowerment and new budget model.

- Develop University goals to encourage cross-college and cross-disciplinary cooperation and implement necessary structural changes to foster their success.

- Allow flex time and telecommuting to the fullest extent possible.

Key Outcomes (Structural): Measuring Our Success
Empowering departments and programs as a core operational philosophy will result in improved resource utilization and efficiency, continuity and progress during leadership transitions, and increased trust between local units and the senior administration. Likewise, budget models that provide nationally competitive base allocations for departments and programs will improve long-term planning for the advancement of disciplines and interdisciplinary programs, enable altruism and cooperation between units, create the capacity
to provide rapid support for new cooperative endeavors, and allow staffing issues associated with interdisciplinary efforts to be addressed efficiently.

Flexible and progressive workplace policies will advance recruiting and retention, improve work-life balance, enhance professional development opportunities, and increase staff engagement in the intellectual life of the university. Finally, ending unit competition for base resources and enabling a focus instead on institutional goals will foster the development of a shared vision and identity as ONE LEHIGH (see Strategic Goal #4: Building Community).

**Strategies for Achieving Success: Addressing Barriers Impacting Individuals**

- Evaluate merit based on contribution to unit goals within a flexible effort allocation model decided by the department chair or unit manager.

- Structure department chair and unit manager positions so they are attractive to the very best people. For example, investigate whether it would be more desirable to appoint chairs for a single 5 year term as opposed to two 3 year terms. Instituting a vice chair position should also be considered.

**Key Outcomes (Individual): Measuring Our Success**

Structuring the department chair and unit manager positions to attract the most talented individuals will have multiple positive benefits. Some of the more obvious effects will include improved mentoring, enhanced development and advancement opportunities, and greater trust between local units and the senior administration.

A shift to a unit-based merit system would validate the “best use of personnel” model and reward contributions toward shared goals. It would allow reward for activities that advance the greater good, but are not necessarily valued currently. Overall productivity would be enhanced by shifting to assessment based on cooperative unit output rather than simply individual effort.

The empowerment of chairs and unit managers represents a critical aspect of this transition. A collateral benefit is that it would provide additional time for deans to focus on larger, integrative goals rather than on the individual performance of each faculty member.

**STRATEGIC GOAL #2:**

**Nurturing Leadership**

*Develop future leadership in both the academic and administrative arenas to ensure inspired and sustained direction for Lehigh now and the years ahead.*

**Explanation and Rationale**

Success at all levels within Lehigh’s organizational structure largely rests with developing a cadre of effective frontline management and leadership. The University’s next generation of leaders must have the capacity, inclination, and managerial inquisitiveness to see things in a broader context; striking a balance between managing within the organization and anticipating how the external environment will affect the institution. This commitment to identifying and nurturing the intrinsic qualities of leadership, which may lie dormant in many people, will ensure that Lehigh is able to sustain forward progress on important initiatives without loss of momentum even if current leaders depart the organization unexpectedly.
Career development programs for all staff are essential to maintaining and increasing Lehigh’s competitiveness both in hiring new staff and in retaining talented existing staff. It is imperative that Lehigh cultivate its staff throughout their careers, providing an attractive environment from which these employees can continue to grow professionally by achieving distinction for themselves and the university. Candidates for new positions raise this issue repeatedly, seeking not only employment appropriate to their current skills but a place to grow and advance in their careers as well. Finally, given the projected number of faculty and staff retirements in the next ten years, this represents an important strategic goal as Lehigh moves into a fundamentally different environment.

Strategies for Achieving Success

- *Institute leadership transition strategies for academic and administrative arenas, including formal succession plans.*

Identify a leadership transition model and formal plan that ensures continuity. Such a model should include incentives and training at the faculty departmental chair level as well as in staff and administrative positions. The model should include a defined career path development plan and mentoring program for identified potential leaders. The succession plan should be regularly reviewed and maintained by the university.

- *Enhance faculty chair role.*

The faculty chair role must be redefined and empowered in order to make this an attractive and meaningful leadership position. Once the department chair is empowered, consideration should be given to establishing the position of a departmental vice-chair as a way to ensure the appropriate transition and to further underscore that the position of academic chair is an attractive and critical position of leadership at the fundamental unit of academic operation within the University.

- *Provide for faculty and staff development at all levels and make this a criterion for choosing, educating, and evaluating future leaders.*

An important component of good leadership is sharing responsibility with faculty and staff members themselves for professional development. At the institutional and unit level, funding and incentives for such development, as well as career counseling, needs to be provided uniformly across the institution.

- *Adopt 360 degree performance assessment and other tools toward achieving this goal.*

Stress leadership core competencies and performance outcomes with other already articulated competencies and integrate with promotion and compensation models. One of these leadership core competencies should include actively cultivating leadership potential and overall faculty and staff development within one’s unit.
Key Outcomes: Measuring Our Success

Efforts toward this goal will create a learning and development culture among faculty and staff that motivates individuals to be at the top of their field and enhances Lehigh’s reputation through their leadership and scholarly contributions in local, state, national, and international organizations. It will result in better retention of key employees with demonstrated leadership potential, and increased motivation among faculty to serve as departmental chairs and to make significant contributions to departmental planning and programs in that role. Swift and successful recruitment of quality staff for vacancies in a much more competitive academic labor market will be another benefit. An increased percentage of internal hires into leadership positions can be expected. Ultimately, the most significant impact will be to provide continuity in the progress toward Lehigh’s strategic goals.

STRATEGIC GOAL #3:
Strengthening Research

Stoke the Lehigh research engine by making the investments required to attract and retain exceptional faculty, staff, and students engaged in the mission of scholarship.

Explanation and Rationale

High quality faculty scholarship and graduate education are the distinctive hallmarks of an intellectual footprint at both a national and international level. To achieve these standards, it is critical to develop and enhance doctoral programs, attract funding, and stimulate research via institutes and centers. Recruitment and retention of faculty from top-tier institutions is key. Matriculating outstanding graduate students is a vital component in attracting top-tier faculty. Having exceptional faculty engaged in cutting-edge research provides significant benefits to the educational development of undergraduate students, and broadens the appeal of Lehigh as an undergraduate institution. This synergistic cycle needs to be fueled at all points.

In addition, Lehigh needs to invest in its current faculty and students who are advancing research that goes beyond the boundaries of traditional disciplines. This requires a reallocation of resources and significant changes in the infrastructure to increase Lehigh’s national and international presence in these areas.

To accomplish these goals, the Working Group heard repeated calls for strategies that create shifts at the structural, systemic, and individual levels. In particular, the university community believes that research needs to be championed by an individual at the highest level in the University, someone without competing priorities. This would provide an incontrovertible public statement concerning the fundamental role that research plays in the University’s mission.

Another point that was frequently raised is the benefit in adopting a single unifying structure for graduate studies and research within the University. At the heart of this is the basic need to attract high quality graduate students to Lehigh in an environment that is becoming increasingly competitive. As noted previously, graduate students are a central component in the scholarship cycle, and providing university-level vision and advocacy for many of the common issues affecting graduate students across all departments and colleges will help Lehigh build capacity and significantly advance the outside reputation of the University.
Strategies for Achieving Success

• **Raise Vice Provost for Research to the level of Vice President, a statement that research is valued at the highest levels.**

Instituting a Vice President for Research, to report to the President, would provide an advocate for research at the highest level in the University administration.

• **Establish a Graduate School.**

This allows for an integrated, purposeful, and collaborative system that can address the comprehensive needs at the graduate level, transcending disciplines and departments to bring the colleges together in a shared enterprise. The Working Group heard widespread support for this idea from many constituents.

• **Increase the number of highly qualified Ph.D. students who matriculate by improving financial support for graduate students as a sustainable planning process.**

This can include guaranteed funding for graduate students in order to be competitive with Lehigh's aspirational peers (funding levels and durations may vary by discipline), a discount on graduate tuition, a risk fund for faculty with pending grants who have a track record of achieving grants to support graduate assistantships, stronger recruiting efforts to enhance applicant pools, and guaranteed funding for international students who are unable to get U.S. government funding.

Lehigh should also work to improve significantly the quality of web-based material (much traffic on department web sites is attributable to prospective graduate students), and support cohort models to create a better sense of a community of scholars.

• **Improve the environment for research through sabbatical policies, hiring of additional support staff, and investments in enabling infrastructure.**

Research is broadly defined to include not only traditionally funded research-based grants, but also scholarship, including that which highlights the intersection of professional schools with best practices and local engagement. To move in this direction, Lehigh can provide better start-up support in terms of reduced teaching loads and increased summer support for new faculty to help enhance their research productivity. This would also be an incentive allowing us to attract highly sought-after faculty to Lehigh and increase their retention once they are here. Moving to a more flexible model than the current 40/40/20 effort allocation would likewise raise scholarly productivity by allowing best use of personnel when demands associated with research require additional effort.

Likewise, Lehigh can permit more-frequent and/or longer sabbaticals in disciplines where scholarship is a function of faculty time and not outside funding, to recognize and reward efforts to maintain currency in field, to master new skills, and to acquire new knowledge needed to support the intellectual enterprise. Sabbaticals should not be considered “time off,” and skipping or delaying a sabbatical should be actively discouraged rather than regarded as a sacrifice made in support of Lehigh. Increased funding for conference travel should be provided so that faculty and staff feel supported in their ventures and activities.
Lehigh can centralize certain functions and activities in support of research, especially in the case of interdisciplinary efforts. The University should provide physical infrastructure support, support for research assistants, funding for postdocs and technicians, shared facilities and equipment, and an expanded support staff to help with necessary but time-consuming tasks (e.g., statistical data analyses, grant writing), so that these costs need not be born by individual researchers.

Other steps Lehigh can take to enhance its international prominence including hosting national organizations and conferences at Lehigh, and bringing in visiting professors for short-term appointments who are bone fide “stars.”

Key Outcomes: Measuring Our Success

Key outcomes of engaging in this endeavor will result in Lehigh becoming incontrovertibly a true doctoral-extensive university, known both for its undergraduate teaching and its graduate education. As such, Lehigh will have high quality, prolific faculty and scholars who enhance the university’s national and international presence through their wide dissemination of cutting-edge research at conferences, in top-ranked journals, via definitive book publications, and through the work of its research centers and institutes. Active scholars create an intellectually stimulating academic environment that builds on exceptional graduate students and attracts a high-achieving pool of undergraduate students.

STRATEGIC GOAL #4:

Building Community

Increase the sense of institutional identity among all constituencies to foster diversity, engagement in the local community, and the transition to a global university.

Explanation and Rationale

The ONE LEHIGH philosophy

The university is a noble proposition. Disparate disciplines, programs, peoples and passions combine to create a community greater in its aggregate than any part could be alone. The greatest theoretical, practical, artistic and ethical questions facing humanity are explored at universities. But it is the education of our young and the continuing education of all that is not only a university’s watchword and privilege but its mandate of conscience.

The challenge of any great university is to maintain the vitality and large sense of purpose that informed the earliest and noblest traditions, while simultaneously looking forward with zeal and preparedness to a bright future. While excellence in the classroom has always been of utmost importance at a university, education does not end there, but permeates every part of the community. At great schools learners become artists, scholars, professionals and researchers, but also become informed citizens with keen moral imaginations and deep social knowledge of our nation and the world.

Lehigh aspires to greatness. We are thinking ahead, challenging our assumptions and struggling with big questions of what it means to be an educational community. We want to help every student, faculty member and staff person on this campus believe in the transformative
power of our educational mission. We want to help every member of this campus be invested and involved in the plans and dreams of our institution. We are a rich, vital community of difference, but we are all Lehigh.

Need for community and diversity – local to global

Faculty and staff who participated in Strategic Thinking, from all parts of the university and in speaking to all three Working Groups, voiced near unanimity on the need for a greater sense of community at Lehigh. In its fullest definition, community should extend beyond faculty, staff, and students on campus to include the surrounding area, other constituencies like alumni, business partners, and Lehigh’s global operations. Equally important is the need to increase the presence and acceptance of diversity within Lehigh so that a sense of community is indeed meaningful.

Alienation of the staff and balkanization of the faculty

Staff members in particular often feel left out of the teaching, learning, and research processes central to Lehigh’s mission. They feel that they can make contributions in these areas and want to do so, or at least feel part of these core activities. Staff also often mentioned the fact that benefits are so different between exempt and non-exempt staff, and between staff and faculty, whether it be vacation, tuition benefits, sabbaticals, or family leave.

Another way in which the need for a greater sense of community is expressed is what some characterize as the “balkanization” of the faculty and even many students, e.g., a greater identification with the department or college than with Lehigh University itself. Hence faculty may respond to the question of where they work more readily with “In the College of Business” (or some other unit) than with “Lehigh University.”

Time as a pre-requisite

These strategies require that faculty and staff have sufficient time to participate. Again, faculty and staff who participated in Strategic Thinking, at all levels and in all parts of the University, remarked repeatedly on the tremendous workload they experience. They felt that unless additional staff could share the workload or it is reduced by eliminating some activities or programs, Lehigh will not have a truly effective faculty or staff cohort and consequently will not be able to achieve its goals.

Strategies for Achieving Success

• **Support and strengthen new and on-going initiatives to increase diversity.**

Here the term “diversity” is used broadly (ethnic, racial, gender, geographic, economic, intellectual, etc.) and includes activities such as those of the UDLC (University Diversity Leadership Committee) and the CEC (Council on Equity and Community). Provide permanent university support for Lehigh’s Sloan Program for Faculty Career Flexibility as needed to build on its initial successes.

• **Develop “Learning about Lehigh” programs for faculty and staff.**

Provide faculty, staff, and students with time, opportunity, and physical space to learn about
the innovative teaching programs, research, and scholarship being produced on Lehigh’s campus. Staff have few opportunities to make contributions to what is the core of the University mission. Both learning and contributing are highly motivating to staff whose primary focus is to support these efforts, albeit sometimes at many levels removed. This will assist them in becoming a part of the intellectual community at Lehigh. Even finding out about intellectual opportunities is challenging with Lehigh’s present calendaring and announcement utilities.

**Found Pilots:** Finance and Administration’s once-a-semester half day seminar/lunch that also facilitates staff getting to know each other and their respective responsibilities as well. CBE/LTS class project (improving LTS roll down computer program) and other use of campus itself for internships and class projects.

*Offer opportunities for social interaction between faculty, staff, and students.*

Strengthen existing, and create new, social opportunities that draw faculty, staff, students, and others (community, alumni, strategic partners) together. These opportunities could and should capitalize on multiple commonalities: athletics/fitness, arts, community service, speakers, and celebrations. Opportunities particularly for faculty, staff, and graduate students need to be extended creatively beyond the semester and on the Mountaintop and Goodman campuses, whether it be through food services, athletic facilities, or seminars to improve skills. Intentionally expand existing, and develop new, mechanisms for faculty and staff to get to know each other. These mechanisms might include Spotlight articles, expanded “Learning the Institution” sessions, a Lehigh “FaceBook” utility, etc.

**Found Pilot:** first year student summer reading program (intellectual activity involving entire campus).

*Create events and physical spaces that regularly bring together a large cross-section of faculty, staff, and students.*

A major contributor to a sense of community are occasions where disparate groups that are spread across campus are brought together for a common purpose. This can range from the purely social, to scenarios where intellectual discourse is the norm. These events should be conceived and executed in a way that creates a resonance around the campus and beyond that is felt for weeks, months, even years. An excellent example of such an activity is the university-wide Research Symposium held in honor of President Gast’s inauguration in Spring 2007.

To have an impact on Lehigh’s sense of community, such events must be much more commonplace, and they must be designed to draw in a large percentage of the campus during an academic year. The physical space employed is an important consideration – it must be attractive, convenient, and appropriate to the activity. Lehigh alumni would also benefit from modern meeting facilities to support their many activities when they return to campus.

Lehigh is somewhat constrained in this regard, and while it may be possible to make use of existing spaces in creative ways, the construction of a Campus Center and Conference
Facility would open a realm of new possibilities not currently available at Lehigh. A centrally located space that brings together people at all times of the day would introduce more opportunities for the informal interactions that define life “at the edges” at a vibrant university. We believe that recent student meetings about building a new Student Center are compatible, not contradictory, with this idea.

Found Pilot: Linderman Library’s recent renovation.

• Establish fair and equitable benefits across employment categories.

Perceptions of unfair distinctions between faculty and staff at various levels are detrimental to a sense of community. Lehigh should offer an outstanding benefits package to all faculty and staff – the equal of Lehigh’s aspirational peers – and bring benefits offered to non-exempt staff up to the level of faculty and exempt staff.

• Embrace big challenges together.

Bring faculty, staff, and students together by embracing programs that will have a positive impact on the campus, the local area, and society in general. There are multiple options (e.g., improving the local schools and community, sustaining the environment, university-wide intellectual themes). Opportunities clearly exist to harness core areas of research, education, experiential learning, community outreach, and professional ethics. There is already a “sense of community” around the issue of making the campus more environmentally “green” that can be exploited positively, through transportation initiatives, energy initiatives, recycling initiatives, behavior modification, etc.

• Provide wireless networking everywhere to overcome geographic boundaries that separate us.

Completing wireless expansion both inside and outside all campus buildings will contribute positively to the sense of community and the work lives of those who traverse the three campuses often. Integrating staff on the Mountaintop and Goodman campuses is a continuing challenge – ubiquitous wireless networking would at least allow people from those locations the convenient option to work anywhere on campus with their laptop computers.

Key Outcomes: Measuring Our Success

Establishing metrics for success in building a stronger sense of institutional identity and community is always going to be somewhat elusive. We can measure the increases in diversity and observe how Lehigh becomes better positioned for the 21st century with its more diverse student body and work force. The payoff for ONE LEHIGH will be that Lehigh is recognized not only as a first-rate engineering school, but as a distinguished research university, and its peer reputation scores rise. Another expected outcome is much greater collaboration and effectiveness that comes with shared goals and values. Finally, a cohesive institutional identity and sense of community will make Lehigh University more of a place where people want to work and to study. It is hard to imagine enlarging Lehigh’s intellectual footprint without at the same time strengthening its sense of community.
STRATEGIC GOAL #5:
Encouraging Balance

Enhance Lehigh’s recruitment and retention of faculty and staff by advancing a healthy work / life balance and offering competitive salaries and benefits.

Explanation and Rationale

Lehigh University recognizes the importance of family by providing employees with basic benefits and some flexibility for addressing personal needs and family responsibilities. However, according to the many individuals who had opinions on this subject, several benefits and work/ life balance factors should be improved in order to attract and retain the quality faculty and staff that Lehigh needs to remain competitive and progress to the next level. Lehigh will then attract a more talented and diverse workforce and inspire existing staff to build their careers at the University while also increasing productivity.

Strategies for Achieving Success

• Increase the acceptability and variety of flextime alternatives.

The traditional workday has been around for a hundred years or more, but 21st century family and personal lifestyles require much greater flexibility. Telecommuting, job-sharing, 10/11 month positions, and flextime all offer elements of flexibility needed and valued by current and future faculty and staff. Appropriate training for sensitive and optimal decision-making by management regarding flex schedules will be required.

• Reposition Lehigh’s Child Care Center as a child care/early education facility worthy of national recognition.

While numerous faculty and staff praised the talented staff and the high quality of care at the Lehigh Child Care Center, they have also noted real limitations of the Center that need to be overcome. Specifically the need is for longer hours, greater capacity (waiting lists are long), and programs for school-age children during the summer. Limited hours and limited space are significant barriers to solving these problems and impact the careers of faculty and staff. This is one of three top faculty quality of life issues nationally and in Lehigh’s own Sloan Program. Pre-tenured faculty have been vocal about their concerns in this area.

These needs would be addressed, and significant new benefits could accrue, if changes and enhancements were made so that the Child Care Center reflects the University’s overall educational mission. This could be achieved by re-positioning the facility as a modern learning center, as well as by increasing its ties to academic departments. The intriguing possibility was raised of expanding the current center into a Lehigh Charter School that would be known regionally – and perhaps nationally – for its innovation and excellence. There are several possible models to follow, including The University of Chicago Charter School.

• Re-establish a competitive tuition benefit.

At one point in Lehigh’s history, its tuition benefit was competitive with other top-tier institutions, but this is no longer the case. The $5,000 cash grant has not been adjusted
since its implementation more than a decade ago and Lehigh's tuition has steadily increased. Lehigh should revisit the tuition benefit and match or exceed what is currently offered to employees and their dependents at Lehigh's aspirational institutions. The deficit in benefits is further compounded by the fact that admission selectivity at Lehigh is at an all-time high reducing the odds of admission for dependents and their need to attend school elsewhere.

Consider participating in a tuition exchange program and provide coverage for online courses. Tuition benefits for dependents and for employees need to be periodically evaluated to keep up with the increasing use of technology, such as on-line courses and virtual classrooms, currently not eligible for coverage under the benefits plan.

*Offer formal retirement phase-out options to manage the impact of a large upcoming group of retirees*

Retiring faculty and staff are an excellent resource with many skills that provide continuity and fill in gaps with expertise in an economical manner until other faculty and staff can be trained or hired. A retirement phase-out program has tremendous benefits for both the institution and the individual. As new people join the university, there is also a need to reduce the period during which they must wait to receive a university contribution to their pension. The current two year wait for pension vesting for those under 35 is too long and sends the wrong message to potential employees.

*Moderate workloads.*

Work/life balance disappears and personal stress levels are elevated by constantly increasing workloads as new programs and projects are implemented on top of many other very important projects. Many faculty and staff reported that this has gone well beyond expected busy times and deadlines to become a 24/7 concentration on work. New initiatives and projects should not be added without either an increased workforce or the elimination or redistribution of other projects.

*Expand health and wellness programs.*

Lehigh should expand its commitment to promoting the health and well being of employees, a strategy that improves their lives, promotes productivity, and reduces both absenteeism and health care expenditures. Regular physical activity in particular offers innumerable benefits; both faculty and staff frequently encouraged the expansion and improvement of the fitness facilities, equipment, and hours, especially during summer and other student breaks. Innovative programs offered elsewhere like “wellness dollars” might be offered. The University of Delaware is one institution where this type of program is successful. Also expand healthy dining options throughout campus on a consistent basis, not just in one location and only when classes are in session.

**Key Outcomes: Measuring Our Success**

The proposed investments aimed at improving employee health and lowering stress will pay off for Lehigh in reduced medical premiums and greater productivity, an impact that should be measurable. The key criterion of job satisfaction will also rise. Phase-out programs to moderate the impact of the large number of upcoming retirements will allow Lehigh to build effectively on the expertise of
its current faculty and staff. Repositioning the Child Care Center as an early educational facility will provide Lehigh with national recognition. Likewise, re-establishing a competitive tuition benefit presents another opportunity to make a strong statement concerning the value Lehigh places on education, broadly defined. The combined results of these changes will make Lehigh an “employer of choice,” increasing our ability to hire and retain highly-qualified faculty and staff who are offered numerous attractive opportunities for employment.

**INTERESTING “OUTLIERS”**

The ideas below were suggested by smaller numbers of individuals, as opposed to the preceding themes which were voiced repeatedly across the campus. Still, they present interesting “outliers” that deserve consideration as Lehigh contemplates its options for strategic initiatives over the next 10 years.

- **Establish a significant Lehigh presence abroad.**

  Lehigh, despite its academic reputation and ranking, is unique among its peers and aspirational cohort as having no physical presence abroad beyond various undergraduate programmatic efforts.

  As technology continues to shrink the world and the promise of technology diffuses through emerging markets (the bottom of the pyramid), it expands educational and research opportunities. Lehigh needs to aggressively pursue a strategy of joint ventures/alliances/virtual presence with the goal of establishing programmatic and research initiatives with universities in key emerging markets. Dubai, UAE and Doha, Qatar in the Middle East have been the location of choice for a myriad of U.S. and foreign universities. Delhi, Hyderabad and Bangalore have emerged as the locations of choice in India for U.S. and foreign universities. Nanjing University, Tsinghua University, Peking University to name a few in China and the University of Sao Paulo in Brazil. In summary, Lehigh should have a fully integrated alliance with at least one elite academic institution in leading countries with emerging economies.

- **Expand Lehigh’s intellectual footprint through consortial structures.**

  As partnerships and alliances are far more crucial to success in business today, universities are also pursuing the resource implication and competitive advantages participation in consortial structures offer.

  The most fundamental change that has occurred among successful global firms is the self-recognition that one firm cannot possess all knowledge or perform every task at a world-class level. This has resulted in global firms outsourcing certain business activities and or forming alliances with firms that possess superior knowledge that is essential for continuing success and maintaining competitive advantage.

  Analogously, many of the leading universities in the U.S. and increasingly throughout the world have established a portfolio of alliances with world-class firms, other world class universities and/or service-providing institutions that enhance and/or facilitate the offering of world class educational programs. This trend will continue and perhaps even accelerate among universities as they compete to maintain their global rankings.
• **Re-evaluate traditional structures and redefine the university.**

Lehigh, like most universities, is organized into traditional academic departments, which exist within separate colleges. While this structure has served society for the past hundred years, our Working Group was told, on numerous occasions, that Lehigh’s “silo” mentality is detrimental to the institution and a significant hurdle to a number of important activities, including interdisciplinary programs and cross-disciplinary research and scholarship. There is no doubt that universities will look different 20 years from now; Lehigh could lead the way to a radically different organizational structure – one which breaks away from the traditional college- and department-based models, and centers on a more flexible mechanism for bringing together students and faculty over topics of interest.

• **Create a Lehigh School of International Understanding and Advancement.**

A staff member offered the following intriguing suggestion, noting that when one considers the academic reputations of the most elite universities, their graduate and professional schools come to mind. These are often designated as Schools of Medicine, Theology, Law, Business, Government, Education, Engineering, etc. Lehigh has some comparable programs, although not always labeled in this way.

His suggestion is that Lehigh use its current strengths as a foundation to create a new Lehigh School of International Understanding and Advancement. “Understanding” is used as a collective term for reconciliation, unity, and even peace. It is meant to convey that this school addresses the preparatory work that must be done before a true improvement in the lives and living conditions of many throughout the world can occur. “Advancement” represents the activity of improving the international condition. Here would find applications for Lehigh expertise in science, technology, business, education (at all levels) and more. Some on-the-ground / in-the-country work would be an essential component of preparing leaders.

The staff member goes on to note that this new School would logically complement or contribute to the success of other current campus initiatives, including both Global Lehigh and the President’s initiatives to focus Lehigh’s capabilities on areas of global importance (e.g., the Center for Global Islamic Studies and effective provisioning of Health Care). Microfinance as a means of empowering the poor to increase their standard of living is another potential area of focus. Establishing such a School would likely lead to an expansion of Lehigh’s intellectual footprint, while also positively differentiating Lehigh from other elite universities.
Appendix C

FINAL REPORT OF THE GRADUATE EDUCATION & RESEARCH WORKING GROUP

The creation of knowledge and its dissemination are key responsibilities of those who seek to educate. The University, in supporting such endeavors, accepts this responsibility as central to its Vision. Correspondingly, support of an environment that fosters the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge constitutes a central tenet of the University’s Mission.

Process

Members of the Research and Graduate Programs working group were successful in gathering input from a diverse set of stakeholders on strategies that will improve scholarship and graduate programs over the next ten years. These stakeholders included, but were not limited to: individuals of demonstrated scholarly vigor; departments with exemplary mentorship and support of scholarship; representatives of cross-disciplinary research-based initiatives; experts in the areas of entrepreneurship and technology transfer; targeted pre-tenure faculty from RCEAS, CBE, COE, and CAS; Center Directors; Chairpersons; representatives of Distance Education and Library and Technology Services; the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs; Development; Departmental Coordinators; the Graduate Student Senate; an international graduate student support group; and targeted participants based upon peer recommendations. Additionally, members of the working group attended College-wide meetings for RCEAS, CBE, COE, and CAS, and the two campus-wide events to garner input.

We are gratified at the level of involvement of Lehigh faculty and staff in the strategic thinking process as it relates to research and graduate programs, their passion for achieving excellence, and the depth of their ideas. This report should be considered a first step in the transformation of Lehigh envisaged by President Gast. Collectively, the faculty and staff have the will and the vision to affect an upward trajectory for Lehigh – the University must now provide the structure and resources to make that happen.

The following overarching themes and approaches were identified as conceptual and aspirational targets that would greatly enhance the substance, impact, and visibility of scholarship and graduate work conducted at Lehigh University. Notably, they unequivocally support the thesis that, for Lehigh’s overall reputation to further improve from its already strong position, scholarship and graduate education must be brought up to par with, further integrate with, and broaden the visibility of Lehigh University’s already well-established undergraduate reputation.
OVERARCHING GOAL:
Enhance the identity and reputation of Lehigh University as a scholarship-driven institution with excellent research and professional graduate opportunities.

Strategy 1. Support an enhanced, cohesive, and visible presence for scholarship and graduate programs at Lehigh.

Investing in scholarship and graduate programs directly improves all aspects of the University. This includes its reputation as a community of engaged scholars comprised of faculty and students; both graduate and undergraduate. *Our group wants to underscore that we see raising the profile of Lehigh’s graduate and research reputation as an enhancement of the institution as a whole and by no means a detraction from our undergraduate mission.* Two fundamental sub-goals emerged from the various constituencies:

A. *Support for faculty scholarship via an enhanced and unified administrative structure.*

1. Establish and empower the position of Vice President for Research.

Support for the scholarly enterprise at an institution such as Lehigh demands the broadest of understanding. Specifically, the diversity of approaches to scholarship includes the Fine Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Physical and Natural Sciences. Additionally, Lehigh boasts a well-grounded identity in Engineering and the Applied Sciences, Business, and Education. Perhaps not surprisingly, while individual faculty in all of these areas have succeeded in establishing international reputations as scholars, support at Lehigh for this diversity of scholarship has not been adequate or consistent. In addition, the opportunities for interdisciplinary academic initiatives have been severely hampered by a fragmented administrative structure in which the flow of resources is organized historically through separate colleges and departments. This fragmentation has promoted an unhealthy culture of competitiveness and institutional begging which, in turn, has directly impeded scholarship in general and interdisciplinary research in particular.

The Lehigh community expressed a strong desire to resolve these issues by establishing a new office of the *Vice President for Research*; in place of the current position of Vice Provost for Research. This position (unlike the current position) would be empowered with sufficient resources to support the infrastructural needs (refer to section Strategy 3.C), and with sufficient authority (by reporting directly to the President) to be a highly visible and effective representative of Lehigh’s research constituency as a whole. It is envisioned that the new VPR would also work closely with Development and other sectors (State and Federal Government Relations) in seeking additional resources for strategic responses to vital challenges.

2. Establish and empower a Dean of Graduate Studies, to represent the needs of the four graduate colleges.

First, this position must be given a strong voice when representing the needs and concerns of faculty and staff to the senior leadership and the Board of Trustees. This person would be aware of the common needs of the four colleges, but also be sensitive to the distinct differences as well. Second, this office would streamline the effort and possibly reduce the expenses required.

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for recruitment and admissions. In addition, a unified graduate voice could centralize and so enhance the process of communication to the national and international community about Lehigh’s significant research successes. Third, this office would allow for consistent collection of data across all graduate programs that could assist in identifying strengths and weaknesses, and also assist in creating a strategic plan for achieving excellence. For example, there is concern about the investment in programs that increase revenue but not reputation. What is the appropriate balance of these programs with doctoral programs? A coherent and complete picture of all the colleges would result in careful planning for the future with optimization of resource allocation.

B. Support for graduate student scholarship and life via recognition of the vital role played by graduate students in the operation and reputation of the University.

In order for Lehigh to increase in national rankings, we must raise the quality and reputation of our graduate programs to match that of our undergraduate programs. To do this, Lehigh must invest in the creation of a unified and visible identity for graduate education. Though they make up about one third of the student population, graduate students at Lehigh have overwhelmingly expressed the sense that they are overlooked and left out of the dynamic life of our campus, and have little sense that they are part of a larger Lehigh community. The faculty, too, has consistently expressed concern that a range of related issues, from admissions to research support to graduate student life, have not received sufficient backing from the administration. Feedback from our Strategic Thinking discussions shows that faculty, staff and students all strongly favor creating a unified sense of identity for our graduate students in order both to support their success as well as to boost Lehigh’s reputation and image beyond simply being a quality undergraduate institution. Though not all of our faculty teach and mentor graduate students, there is a strong sense that these programs represent vital nodes of research activity, and that strengthening graduate education as a whole will ultimately bolster Lehigh’s research productivity across the board and the quality of education at all levels.

To compete more effectively for the best incoming students, to support teaching, mentoring and research, and to guide our graduate students in the process of fellowship and grant seeking, academic and professional job placement, and teaching and life issues, Lehigh needs a more unified approach. The campus community strongly supports the establishment of a graduate dean who can be a strong and effective voice for the needs of graduate students both as scholars and citizens of the University.

Graduate Student Life was also much discussed. The need for graduate housing in addition to Saucon Village was highlighted in numerous meetings. We need to create an attractive and affordable space near the main campus for convenience and access to classrooms, grocery stores, and labs, and to ease the transportation problems associated with the current location on the far side of Goodman Campus. In addition, graduate housing on the main campus signals both internally and externally that graduate students are a vital and integral part of our educational mission.

In addition, a graduate student center would create a sense of belonging and help with integration of students from different departments, ethnicities, and countries, whether full or part-time, masters or doctoral students. A center would provide students with opportunities to create a sense of community for themselves and to become more meaningfully involved in
the life of the university. It would also provide a central hub of information and a common space for casual interactions for the cross-pollination of ideas. Moreover, a center could help bridge the divide between domestic and international students. We have heard repeatedly from international students that integrating with American students is difficult, and that having a center as the location for activities geared toward graduate students will encourage that integration. (This issue of segregation is highlighted in the recent report, *Getting to Global Lehigh*, which contains a section entitled, “Improving the Environment for International Graduate Students,” pp. 26-28.) The creation of a graduate center would significantly contribute to a positive Graduate School experience.

Inadequate support packages for graduate students were regularly discussed as well. We need to increase our stipends and fellowships in order to compete with our peer and aspirational institutions. There was consensus that our University fellowship program needs revamping: the acceptance rate for offers is remarkably low, resulting in an overall weaker student body. Several people directly involved with the process argued that our support packages are not competitive, that our timing is often too late, and that we don’t have the fellowships and assistantships to compete for students who have offers from richer institutions. Moreover, we support our teaching assistants for only nine months instead of twelve: thus, many of our students are forced to find summer employment that takes them away from their research for the summer. Year-round support would ultimately reduce time to degree.

Lehigh’s graduate students become ambassadors of Lehigh’s achievements in research and teaching to the broader academic community around the nation and beyond. They are often core teachers and mentors for our undergraduate students. They are also the most diverse group on campus and we must do more to guarantee that the best and brightest graduate students are attracted to a Lehigh education.

**Found Pilots:**

Stanford University’s Graduate Student Living Communities.

The Graduate Student Centers of University of Pennsylvania, Yale, Cornell and Virginia Tech, among others.

**Strategy 2. Achieve excellence in scholarship with discipline-appropriate benchmarks and an unwavering accountability for quality.**

Achieving increased academic reputation for research and graduate studies will be enhanced by allowing flexibility in the following domains: (a) flexibility in the measurement of effectiveness of research and graduate studies to support excellence in diverse areas as well as interdisciplinary programs; (b) flexibility in faculty effort allocation to maximize effectiveness and efficiency; (c) flexibility in administrative structures and processes to enable synergies across departments and colleges; and (d) flexibility and accountability in time management.

  **A. Flexibility in conceptualizing and evaluating research.**

For Lehigh to continue its upward trajectory, it is important to recognize that excellence has different dimensions across disciplines. For example, resource requirements for achieving excellence are different from discipline to discipline. Whereas in one discipline the standard...
currency is grant money, in others it is time. Likewise, the role of graduate students in faculty research varies from discipline to discipline – in some disciplines they routinely contribute whereas in others they may draw attention away from faculty research.

At Lehigh we must be nuanced in how we define what research is from discipline to discipline, what resources are needed, as well as the criteria for excellence. We should be flexible enough to provide not only global support to all areas of scholarship but also to invest selectively in areas that will enhance our national visibility. The research leadership must be cognizant of differences across disciplines and the language we use at Lehigh should reflect these differences. Also, we must find ways of supporting high quality research in disciplines that are traditionally not funded from outside agencies.

**B. Competitive advantage in work allocation.**

It is important to recognize that as a “research” university, Lehigh’s reputation is tied to our research and graduate education. While the campus community is proud of its undergraduate education, it is widely recognized that our overall reputation suffers because research and graduate education are not on par with our undergraduate education. Research and education are highly interrelated, and as an institutional portfolio, Lehigh should excel across the board. This has implications in how work is allocated. Individual faculty members’ effort allocation should be based on their competitive advantage and how the institution benefits from individual backgrounds. Some faculty may be capable of and/or willing to contribute to all dimensions equally; for others, it may be desirable to focus their time and effort in one domain. Therefore, individual units (e.g., departments) should be encouraged to develop a work allocation plan for its faculty that is consistent with Lehigh’s goals. That is, we must move away from “one size fits all” model to one that effectively utilizes individual competitive advantages. In practice, this will require variable teaching loads and research expectations, and variations from the “40-40-20” formula in faculty evaluations across faculty as well as across career stages.

**C. Flexibility in Administrative Structures and Processes.**

There should be more flexibility in administrative structures and processes. Flexibility in administrative structures and processes should move toward the following areas. Departments should be allowed to make work allocation and resource allocation decisions as long as their activities are consistent with enhancing Lehigh’s academic reputation. The outlook that must be fostered is one of procedures and structures facilitating research and graduate studies rather than seen as control systems. This means expectations and criteria may be developed at higher levels but implementation must be left to the lowest possible point in the administrative chain with periodic post-facto review for correcting errors.

**D. Flexibility and Accountability in Time Management.**

Faculty, along with their Department Chairs and Program Directors, are the best judges of how to use their time efficiently in order to maximize the quality and quantity of their research. In fact, for many faculty in the Humanities and Social Sciences especially, time is the principal resource needed to complete a high-quality research agenda. The bureaucratic rigidities of our current administrative structure often stand in the way of the most efficient means of
accomplishing work. Flexibility in assigning teaching duties and service requirements can therefore greatly enhance both output and professional satisfaction at minimal cost. Of course, such variable distribution of effort allocation must absolutely complement and support the needs of students and departments first. But if a department chair feels that departmental needs are being met and that particular faculty merit a request for flexibility (e.g., research leaves; course release or redistributing teaching and service duties over several semesters), then this may be justified. However, such flexibility must come with accountability. Rather than rewarding inactivity, greater flexibility should therefore be both a pre-condition and reward for increased productivity. These ideas were reinforced by the consistent comments from respondents that merit pay increases and other incentives were not sufficient to reward those who worked hardest at their research and brought favorable external visibility to Lehigh.

**Found Pilots:**

Colby College (Large departments are overstaffed by one person)

RPI (see note from Provost in RGP portal group files)

**Strategy 3. Compete effectively with peer institutions in the support of research and scholarship.**

While the US News and World Best Universities Report places Lehigh University in the low 30s, the University and Colleges R&D Expenditures Report by the National Science Foundation (2006) ranks us at 191. The Lehigh community is ready to challenge itself to double its scholarly productivity, extramural funding, and research expenditures. Enhanced research and scholarship at Lehigh will require increased expenditures to build resources and infrastructure. However, these suggested increases rest upon a pressing need to initially increase the absolute size and therefore the proportion of research-active and productive faculty at Lehigh. Although the size of the actual increase is beyond the charge of our working group, it is noteworthy that our peer institutions boast a total number of faculty who are engaged in scholarship that exceeds our current faculty size by approximately 20 percent. Even to reach parity with our peer institutions (e.g., Brandeis, Vanderbilt, Tufts, Dartmouth), increased financial support and infrastructure will be especially necessary in the following areas: (a) targeted and direct investment in graduate study, (b) infrastructural needs including state-of-the-art technology, library resources and personnel to support faculty and student research activities; and (c) personnel and resources to assist faculty in obtaining external grants, contracts, and ancillary support for scholarship. Toward these ends, there are at least three relevant sub-goals:

**A. Double the endowment to directly support graduate studies.**

There is general consensus that graduate studies and graduate research are under-supported presently, thereby hampering the efforts to recruit and support the best and brightest graduate students. An endowed fund would allow programs to actively recruit excellent students, provide competitive assistantships and fellowships throughout a graduate student’s time at Lehigh, support individual student research at a high level, provide support for travel to scientific and professional conferences, and recognize the research and scholarship achievements of outstanding students.
B. **Double investment in infrastructural needs, such as state-of-the-art technology, technical and library support, and facilities.**

As one participant summarized, faculty and graduate student researchers are “like skilled surgeons” – they need to be surrounded by a host of other highly skilled professionals, including applications experts, hardware experts and lab technicians. Graduate students and faculty widely reported a lack of such professionals, which translates into significant loss of valuable research investigation time to “trouble shooting” infrastructural “glitches” such as computer malfunctions, logistic problems, etc.

Funding for library resources must also be increased to ensure that access to electronic journals in emerging fields is swiftly available for researchers. Faculty and graduate students widely reported journal access as an issue in their respective disciplines.

The process of planning for new programs requires rethinking – at present, programs are established, and then there is a scramble for support resources. Faculty widely reported being thrust into the position of having to bridge the difference between the intellectual vision of new programs and the resources required to achieve them. Early involvement of LTS, ORSP, and other support areas is essential to follow through so that new costs are built in accurately to the projected costs of starting a new program. Sufficient weight should be given to the needs identified by faculty and support staff: research materials such as e-journals, databases and software; support staff for computing labs, program coordination, etc.; classroom and meeting spaces appropriately configured for technology; high performance computing and networking.

C. **Double investment in research and staff.**

The primary recommendation emanating from the Lehigh community regarding research infrastructure is to establish an office for a Vice President for Research (see Strategy 1.A.1). It is important that this office be amply staffed and resourced. This office would provide support to faculty and graduate students to pursue external funding (e.g., assistance in preparing proposals). Office staff would include at least one “expert” assigned to work with faculty in each of the four colleges. Further, this office would provide ample seed money to foster promising scholarship efforts that are consistent with the primary goals of the university. Finally, this office would oversee and facilitate all aspects of the research and scholarship enterprise including patent development and research center and institute activity. This would require a substantial increase in staff and resources for the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

**“OUTLIERS”**

Establish a pharmacy school.
Establish a veterinary medicine school.
Establish a specialized Law School (Found Pilot: Drexel University).
Establish a clinic for psychotherapy—for service and research purposes.
Affiliate with a research hospital.
Provide $10,000/yr per faculty member for research and creative endeavors.
Departments with graduate programs should be given two, 5 year fellowships.
Establish a Lehigh High Performance Computer Center
Create a Lehigh School of International Understanding and Advancement.
SUMMARY:

The faculty and staff have the will and the vision to affect an upward trajectory for Lehigh – the University must now provide the structure and resources to make that happen.

Strategy 1. WE ARE ONLY AS STRONG AS OUR WEAKEST LINK. Support an enhanced, cohesive, and visible presence for scholarship and graduate programs at Lehigh.

A. Support for faculty scholarship via an enhanced and unified administrative structure.
   i. Establish and empower the position of Vice President for Research.
   ii. Establish and empower a Dean of Graduate Studies, to represent the needs of the four graduate colleges.

B. Support for graduate student scholarship and life via recognition of the vital role played by graduate students in the operation and reputation of the University.

Strategy 2. ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL. Achieve excellence in scholarship with discipline-appropriate benchmarks and an unwavering accountability for quality.

A. Flexibility in conceptualizing and evaluating research.

B. Competitive Advantage in Work Allocation.

C. Flexibility in Administrative Structures and Processes.

D. Flexibility and Accountability in Time Management.

Strategy 3. YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR. Compete effectively with peer institutions in the support of research and scholarship.

A. Double the endowment to directly support graduate studies.

B. Double investment in infrastructural needs, such as state-of-the-art technology, technical and library support, and facilities.

C. Double investment in research and staff.

Submitted by The Working Group on Increasing Research and Graduate Programs.

Derick Brown, Lynne Cassimeris, George DuPaul, Martin Harmer, Kathleen Hutnik, Matt Mattern, Christine Roysdon, Colin Saldanha, John Savage, and K. Sivakumar; with valuable input from Joanne Anderson, David Caruso, Barry Dornfeld and Mary Jo McNulty.
Appendix D

FINAL REPORT OF THE STUDENT LIFE & LEARNING WORKING GROUP

Engaging Every Student
A Proposal to Enhance Undergraduate Student Life and Learning at Lehigh

Note: The discussion of this group took on a primary emphasis on undergraduate student life and learning. Discussions of graduate student life and learning were embedded within the Research and Graduate Education Working Group report. The goals and strategies discussed here pertain to undergraduate student life and learning.

Preamble
In conversations across campus over the past three months, the Student Life and Learning Strategic Thinking Working Group has heard many success stories about undergraduate education at Lehigh. There is a reason our campus has these stories to tell: Lehigh faculty, staff and students have worked hard to create a wide array of vibrant programs that engage students, advance knowledge, and provide service to the local community and beyond.

However, we have also heard a common call for specific changes that will improve undergraduate life and learning on our campus. In this document, we present our synthesis of the main ideas we have heard from faculty, students, and staff. To do so, we first articulate a vision of undergraduate life and learning at Lehigh and then set out a series of goals and strategies we should take if we wish to transform the intellectual and social experience of Lehigh students, faculty, and staff.

A Vision of Undergraduate Life and Learning: A Lehigh education is distinguished by its integration of student life, learning, and community involvement. Learning at Lehigh takes place in classrooms, residences, labs, studios, libraries, performance venues, athletic arenas, clubs, internships, social centers, and extended communities near and far. Through engaged forms of learning in these many environments, Lehigh students develop intellectual interests, acquire foundational knowledge, learn strategies of inquiry and cross-disciplinary integration, develop personal systems of value, strengthen communication skills, build capacities for leadership and service, and acquire a set of intellectual values that promote an ongoing commitment to discovery, leadership, and service.

Overarching Goal
To help Lehigh move toward its vision of student life and learning, we recommend that the university set it sights on the following goal.
“ENGAGING EVERY STUDENT”

Involve all Lehigh faculty and staff in the goal of engaging every Lehigh undergraduate in a full university experience.

We recommend a well-funded, integrated campaign that organizes financial, structural, and programmatic efforts to enhance student life and learning at Lehigh. This campaign should focus initially on the following areas identified by the Strategic Thinking processes, but will ultimately focus on gaps identified through ongoing assessment practices. (While the recommendations made below focus on undergraduate education, it is our hope that they be understood as complementary to recommendations to enhance graduate student life and learning made by the Increasing Research and Graduate Programs Strategic Thinking Working Group.)

Four Subgoals

To start moving toward the goal of “Engaging Every Student,” we recommend that the following four subgoals receive immediate attention:

A. Adopt a shared set of university-wide Undergraduate Core Competencies so we know what we’re working toward.

B. Adjust practices and develop programs that promote student achievement of core competencies.

C. Ensure that all campus venues—including classrooms, residences, and spaces at the intersection of academic and extracurricular life—promote student development and engagement.

D. Emphasize a university-level student identity that connects undergraduates to Lehigh’s full range of learning opportunities.

We present each of these four subgoals in detail.

A. Adopt a shared set of university-wide Undergraduate Core Competencies so we know what we’re working toward.

Rationale: Different groups (e.g., academic departments, dean of students, career services, athletics and arts) emphasize different goals. To offer our students a clear vision of the purposes of their Lehigh experiences, the university needs to coordinate the core competencies it aims to develop in its students. These competencies must become central to the language we use to plan our efforts related to undergraduate education.

The core competencies we envision will chart a course for student success in multiple domains, including:

1. Intellectual Development. Across the campus, we all have a part to play in students’ academic development and we should be working together to help our students develop intellectual interests, gain foundational knowledge, acquire cognitive skills, adopt strategies of inquiry and disciplinary integration, develop communication skills, and adopt those intellectual values that promote an ongoing commitment to the discovery and the application of knowledge.
2. Individual Identity Development. Every person at Lehigh plays a role in creating the conditions in which students explore and come to understand their personal values, beliefs, and sense of self. Our actions in classrooms, residences, offices, athletic fields, stages, and all other campus spaces should be purposively directed toward helping students in this endeavor.

3. Interpersonal Development, Community and Global Engagement. A core part of our mission lies in helping students learn how to identify, understand and implement the skills they need to build relationships in life; to interact and collaborate with others who are different from them; to develop the ability to understand who they are in relationship to others; to learn when and how to lead others; to engage with society at the campus, community, and global levels; and to acquire the ability to evaluate the type and quality of their interactions with others.

How we contribute to these different competencies will be different depending on our positions at the university. While not all of us will contribute to student development in all of these areas, we should each know how our work makes a difference to our students’ development, and we should know how our colleagues are contributing so we can help when appropriate. Moreover, by widely distributing information about our university, college and department level competencies in a uniform, unified way, our students will receive a consistent message about the goals of their learning. Once this information is widely available and widely understood, advisors, faculty and staff will be able to more easily align their efforts and communicate with one another and with students. Such a unified expression of purpose will also be useful to guide admissions and student recruitment.

B. Adjust practices and develop programs that promote student achievement of Core Competencies.

Rationale: Lehigh faculty and staff are doing much excellent work in teaching our students, in upper level disciplinary courses, in the many opportunities for experiential learning, and also in co- and extra-curricular programming. However, we need to engage our students earlier and we need to engage more of our students (i.e., not only those in specialized programs or those who are doing advanced work in the disciplines). Moreover, we need to shift our thinking about teaching, about service, and about community. To accomplish these ends, we encourage new approaches in a wide variety of areas across campus:

1. Admissions and Recruitment. Ensure that our admissions and recruitment practices are aimed at bringing in a diverse body of students who are well suited for the unique learning opportunities at Lehigh.

2. Advising. Revamp the current pre-major advising system (following recommendations made in the 2008 Middle States Report).

3. Engage Early. Offer smaller classes at the introductory level to create more personalized instruction for first- and second- year students and, where larger lecture course remains a necessity, help faculty redesign such courses in ways that more fully engage students.
4. Connect. Connect coursework and student opportunities to key campus initiatives, such as Global Lehigh, Arts Lehigh, Council for Equity and Community, Global Citizenship, Leadership Lehigh, Serve, etc.; encourage integration into courses thematic discussion of key university goals (globalization, diversity, equity, community, etc), development of skills needed for research and work in the digital age, and focus on topics of importance to the ever-changing Lehigh student body.

5. Experiential Learning and Research. Continue support for our distinctive programs such as IPD, IBE, CSB and South Mountain College; create more opportunities for students to have experiential learning opportunities (e.g., internships, apprenticeships, research assistantships, opportunities for service learning, leadership and affiliated living) on campus and off; better publicize existing opportunities; make work study opportunities more uniformly meaningful; and create more opportunities for student engagement in genuine research in courses that engage them with finding solutions to current social, technical, scientific, ethical problems.

6. Teaching Academy. Charge the faculty development program to launch a Teaching Academy, the primary purpose of which would be to coordinate the many faculty development efforts across campus by supporting small groups of faculty and staff that focus on specific student developmental competencies described above. Examples of topics of focus might include “Designing Courses that Develop Research Skills,” “Teaching Service Learning Courses that Engage the Community,” “Teaching Diverse Students in Diverse Settings,” “Cultivating Interpersonal Development Skills in First Year Students,” etc.

7. Peer Mentoring. Create more opportunities and support existing programs in which students serve as peer academic mentors, in coordination with faculty and staff, in order to help bridge the academic/social and faculty/staff/student gulfs. Engage graduate students in these efforts.

8. Universal Design for Learning. Help faculty members eliminate barriers to accessibility and adapt instruction techniques that accommodate diverse learning styles.

C. Ensure that all campus venues—including classrooms, residences, and spaces at the intersection of academic and extracurricular life—promote student development and engagement.

Rationale: There is considerable excitement across campus about the possibility of improving our physical infrastructure in ways that will directly contribute to the university’s mission of developing the core competencies listed above. There is also deep frustration about aspects of existing facilities that impede progress toward our goals. Every physical location on campus has the potential to help students learn and so we must always build or improve our physical facilities in ways that take advantage of this potential.

Recommended strategic subgoals in this area include:

1. Campus Center. A centralized campus center is paramount to transforming student life and learning and creating a “crossroads” where diverse faculty, staff, and students interact and engage with one another on academic, social, and personal levels. This
facility must provide significant spaces for Lehigh’s community of learners to meet, dialogue, host events, socialize with others and build a stronger sense of community with one another. This facility must be state-of-the-art in terms of its technology and use of space, and we must be innovative and bold in carving our spaces within this facility that promote learning, social interaction, and a place for information and idea exchange. Not only will this “crossroads” benefit students tremendously, but it will also provide spaces where Lehigh departments and disciplines can comfortably and affordably host professional conferences, speakers, and important meetings (i.e. trustee meetings, Alumni Association meetings, and prospective student events).

2. Residences. Build attractive upper-class residences that will encourage students to stay on campus and remain engaged with the university. Ensure that there are enough of these residences to accommodate students who wish to remain on campus. Design housing that encourages student engagement and development.

3. Existing Spaces. Overhaul existing classrooms, meeting spaces, labs, and residences so that physical and technological facilities promote, and do not impede, student learning. While we have many excellent living and learning spaces, we must to redesign or design the buildings to better match their purposes. We must ensure that all of our buildings have sound basic infrastructure. Moreover, we must plan for public areas that foster community and we must follow universal design recommendations across our campus to eliminate barriers to access. In short, we must stop eliminating the most exciting and innovative design features of the buildings we construct. We must manage our buildings, notably Zoellner and Stabler, so that they are more easily available for primary mission: to serve our students.

4. Resource Availability. Ensure that campus and online resources are available to students, faculty, and staff when these resources are needed (e.g., online resources need to be available from off campus and during the times they are needed; campus buildings need to be open, staffed and made secure when the students need to use them etc.)

5. Transportation System. Overhaul the transportation system so everyone at Lehigh can more easily move around campus and between campuses. Effective transportation is particularly important given our hillside geography and our physically divided campus. For example, we should create flexible bus routes that allow students to more readily get to classes, faculty offices, labs, student athletic competitions, and performances.

D. Emphasize a university-level student identity that connects undergraduates to Lehigh’s full range of learning opportunities.

Rationale: Many undergraduates too quickly acquire a college-specific, group-specific, or major-specific identity. This approach tends to limit students’ perceived range of intellectual possibility. We can integrate undergraduate life and learning by orchestrating our efforts toward helping our students develop a shared set of Core Competencies. But for this approach to succeed, we must cultivate a stronger university-level identity so that students, faculty, and staff see themselves as part of Lehigh, working together toward university-level goals and purposes.
1. Admissions. Students should be recruited by and admitted to Lehigh, rather than a specific college. Furthermore, we should ensure that our recruitment and admission practices ensure that Lehigh classes are filled with diverse group of intellectually talented students.

2. Shared Curricular Experiences. Extend the shared element of the first-year experience beyond the orientation and follow-up seminars, to include credit-bearing courses that focus on the core competencies listed above (following recommendations made in the 2008 Middle States Report). The university should require 16 core competency credits, with students taking four credits each year. The objectives of these courses, whether newly created or existing, will be to develop the core competencies.

3. Life and Learning Courses. Offer course credit for appropriate programs that operate at the interface of life and learning (e.g., on leadership, social justice).

4. Unified Virtual Presence and Improved Communications. Overhaul our virtual presence and communications strategies so that our web presence is more unified, so that we share a common calendar and methods of making announcements. Use these physical and virtual spaces to promote broader involvement in campus issues, creating opportunities for faculty, students and staff to work and learn together, across boundaries, as part of a connected intellectual community.

CONCLUSION

In sum, to improve the quality of the Lehigh education, the University needs to adopt a shared set of university-wide Undergraduate Core Competencies so we know what we’re working toward; adjust practices and develop programs that ensure student achievement of core competencies; ensure that all campus venues promote student development and engagement; and emphasize a university-level student identity that connects undergraduates to Lehigh’s full range of learning opportunities. The campaign described here is necessary if we are to attract and engage the highest caliber of students, students who want top notch facilities, significant interaction with faculty and staff, flexible cross-disciplinary programs, and innovative learning opportunities.

Furthermore, to support the goal of “engaging every student,” the University must align faculty and staff support, recognition and reward to insure the achievement of undergraduate core competencies. The university must offer greater flexibility so faculty and staff who want to contribute in these areas can structure their work in ways that rewards their efforts, as well as to increase faculty flexibility in work allocation (away from strict 40-40-20) to allow faculty to contribute in ways that match their strengths and interests. We must redefine excellence in service, teaching and research to encourage, acknowledge, and reward contributions to student life and learning. With these definitions in place, expectations and incentives for faculty must be designed so that each faculty member works toward engaging students and ensuring that they can achieve core competences. The president, provost, vice-provosts, deans, and chairs must emphatically and repeatedly vocalize the view that commitment to teaching and student life is an essential, valued part of faculty and staff work at Lehigh. Moreover, they must back up
that view explicitly in private conversations, in annual reviews, and in promotion decisions. We should include a section on faculty Personal Activity Reports (PAR) in all colleges and on all staff Performance Appraisals (PA) where individuals can list contributions to specific university goals, including innovative approaches to teaching, contribution to Undergraduate Core Competencies, interaction with students, participation in existing faculty development programming, staff development programming, and/or the new Teaching Academy. Lastly, as the university sets its priorities in the coming years, new initiatives must include a consideration of impact on undergraduate education; for example, new resources devoted to increasing research and graduate studies should be leveraged to benefit undergraduates as well by involving more undergraduates in research and involving more graduate students in the undergraduate educational mission.

Appendix E

SYNTHESIS REPORT OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

Strategic Thinking Steering Committee Synthesis

I. The Overarching Challenge: People, Not “Things”

Over the past two months, the Strategic Thinking Steering Committee and its working groups engaged every aspect of the University community in conversation about the future of Lehigh University. The outcomes of the conversations, as reflected in the working group reports, have substantial cross-report similarities. We heard consistently that change at this time is not about a major transformational “thing” (like moving Goodman Campus, purchasing Mountaintop, building Zoellner Arts Center). It is about transforming the way our people are viewed, managed, and supported. Great institutions recognize that reputation rests upon their people and the interactions among them. While some “things” were mentioned (the most frequent was the need for a campus center), these were always secondary to and in service of the need for opportunities for all faculty and staff and students to be in situations that capitalize on their strengths and maximize their skills. Taken together, these changes in perspective and practice will be bold and transformative. The thinking we heard was about “people and culture,” and how significant shifts in our campus culture can reshape the University’s identity.

The overarching challenge is to transform the institutional identity. Our University is well known for its excellent undergraduate programs. Its historic reputation is strong and the institution continues to be recognized as a place where undergraduates will receive a top-notch education. Our undergraduate alumni are loyal, skilled, and contribute in outstanding ways to the world they join upon completion of their Lehigh degrees. Our challenge is to build on this already strong foundation by enhancing the reputation of Lehigh University as a global leader in research and graduate education.

We want Lehigh to be viewed as a leader in learning, a leader in innovation, and a leader in creativity. This may mean moving beyond the historically acceptable level of risk for the institution -- the time is right for Lehigh to make this kind of bold move.
The Strategic Thinking Steering Committee and the campus community are well aware of many important institutional initiatives now underway, including Global Lehigh, improvements in diversity, and efforts to integrate Lehigh with the South Side Bethlehem community. Each of these initiatives is an accepted part of the direction that Lehigh will take over the next five to ten years, so the discussion we heard centered on things that were not redundant to these initiatives. We all viewed this as a clear endorsement of these initiatives.

II. Prerequisites to Transformation: Increasing Faculty and Staff Size

To implement any of the recommended ideas in the working group reports, there is a need to prioritize; certain things must be in place first for others to follow.

- Given that the primary objective is enhancing Lehigh’s intellectual footprint, it must be recognized that such enhancements will require ramping up research and strengthening graduate programs, not building new undergraduate programs;
- Raising the level of research and graduate programs will take more faculty and staff resources, as well as a different composition of faculty and staff;
- Raising the level of research and graduate programs should not be done at the expense of already strong existing undergraduate programs and should always synergize with and foster undergraduate programs;
- It will be critical that we retain and reward faculty who bring the institution to its highest level, and that we attract additional faculty of this stature and ambition;
- Empowering all employees to maximize their potential contribution to the collective goal is crucial. This will require creativity and flexibility in the use of time while maintaining accountability to meet institutional goals and values.

We heard many good ideas, ideas that, despite their wide range, have synergy and order. The most important is the need to increase the size of faculty and staff to meet the aspirational goals of the University. To have reached the level of success we have, given our size and existing people resources, is a true testament to the loyalty, care, motivation, and commitment that the faculty and staff bring to the institution. However, you cannot change the culture to one of capitalizing on strengths without increasing the number of faculty and staff. You cannot increase research and graduate education without the additional infrastructural supports that allow these areas to flourish. You cannot enhance the integration of student life and learning unless there is a substantial investment in faculty and staff.

We also heard across groups that capitalizing on the strengths of all faculty and staff must go hand in hand with strengthening the opportunities to achieve the kind of work/life balance required for the highest levels of effectiveness. Lehigh has already begun important initiatives in this direction, and the continuation, enhancement, and development of such efforts must be an important part of the future of Lehigh’s culture. Likewise, Lehigh needs to establish a better way of building leadership support at all levels of faculty and staff. This includes broadening and embracing distributed forms of leadership. Taken together, this reallocation and strengthening of the University’s human resources will be necessary to effect the kind of transformational change needed to raise Lehigh to the forefront of distinguished universities.
III. Key Outcomes Across Working Group Reports

A. Capitalizing on Our Collective Strengths

In the remainder of this synthesis, we have pulled together the primary common elements across the three working groups. There were clear commonalities, representing the key outcomes for which Lehigh must strive if we are to heighten our national and global reputation. However, each of the reports must be read in its entirety, as the contextual detail of these reports will inevitably be lost in any summary.

As much as the working groups focused on strategic goals, discussions often moved to tactics and processes for achieving these goals. It is important that the specifics of these tactical discussions be provided, although we recognize that they are simply recommended ways for accomplishing the goals that our campus community mentioned.

To accomplish transformational change that will enhance Lehigh’s national and global reputation, Lehigh needs to become:

- A workplace with a reputation that consistently attracts and retains highly credentialed and diversified faculty and staff
- An institution whose faculty are routinely recognized and sought after as leaders on major issues by government, foundations, global nonprofits, and industry
- An innovator to address “big problems,” including taking leadership in building programs, consortia, partnerships, and alliances
- An institution with a reputation for making significant contributions to improving the human condition through scholarship, entrepreneurship, and personal commitment
- A place where all student learning, graduate and undergraduate, is fully integrated across classroom, local, regional, national, and global communities

B. Enhancing Scholarship/Research and Graduate Education

Investments should foster research and graduate study in a wide variety of ways, including administrative recognition of the more elevated role of scholarship and research. A consistent theme was that the University needs to attend to graduate programs to match the attention given to undergraduate programs. The translation of this idea was the call for a Vice President for Research, a Dean for Graduate Studies, and the institution of a Graduate School.

Although the Steering Committee does not necessarily view these as the only mechanisms to achieve this objective, the commonality is the recognition of graduate programs and research at the highest level of institutional advocacy and support.

The environment nationally and globally in research and graduate education is competitive. Along with administrative and structural changes within the University, it will take additional resources in research infrastructure to increase our competitiveness. The University needs to make these additional investments and take appropriate risks so that there can be both short- and long-term return on that investment.
Another important strategy was to increase opportunities for faculty scholarship. This translates into different support mechanisms in different disciplines. In some areas, it is more time (sabbaticals, flexible teaching arrangements); in others it is dollar support for travel, opportunities to build bridge support for research-active faculty who are between grants, or improved fellowship opportunities for graduate students.

A common theme was the need to capitalize on the strengths of faculty and staff in order to advance professional and personal development, and fully contribute to the University meeting its goals. At the heart of this perspective was an unequivocal message: the need to redefine effort allocation models and operational structures to enable best use of personnel in order to maximize productivity and innovation. All of the reports recognized that barriers exist at systemic, structural, and individual levels to reaching the capacity to achieve such a collective outcome. The changes called for will significantly impact both research and teaching.

C. Enriching Our Sense of Community

We heard consistently the call for Lehigh to enhance the connections among its internal and external communities. Certainly, Global Lehigh, the South Side Bethlehem Initiative, and the Council for Equity and Community are indicators that Lehigh has begun important initiatives toward building these connections. However, while each of these initiatives will move us in the direction of enriching our community, none will build community alone.

The translation of this idea appeared often in terms of bringing together the components of the learning process at Lehigh. What occurs in classrooms needs to be brought to the real-life settings of the people living in the South Side of Bethlehem, to the day-to-day living experiences of a residential campus, and to the worldwide environments that our students and faculty impact. As an institution whose student body is approximately one-third graduate students, we must address the needs of all students. A direct consequence will be establishing a sense of “one community” at Lehigh.

Likewise, a focus at the undergraduate level on the development of core competencies that bring about both a personal identity and a Lehigh identity for our undergraduate population was viewed as an essential component of fostering a sense of community. Encouraging all faculty and staff to contribute to facilitating these core elements of human development in our undergraduates was emphasized by the Student Life and Learning working group, which focused their efforts predominantly on the undergraduate aspects of our campus.

Another commonality was the importance of central meeting places that can serve as a crossroads for faculty, staff, and student interactions. Although this often was characterized as a change in physical space, a key point was the need for fully including all students in a residential style campus. Graduate students are not given a place to live, gather, or interact on the main campus, and the links between graduate and undergraduate students are not systematically integrated at the institutional level. It is these kinds of connections that build a sense of the Lehigh community, and promote a culture shift that would sustain Lehigh into the future.
IV. A Path Forward

It was clear that Lehigh needs to be making new, innovative, and key investments in its future. We all recognize that resources are finite and that it would be impossible to adopt all the great ideas that were generated throughout the process. Certainly, there is a need for prioritization and strategic decision making; we have tried to indicate in this document which of these investments will pay dividends in building Lehigh's reputation and promoting loyalty among faculty, staff, and students.

The focus on raising the profile of our research and graduate programs points to the need to place investments in people. Nanotechnology, the Environmental Initiative, and entrepreneurship are some places where we have already begun. We need to look at our strengths across the institution, to identify the “found pilots” that illustrate the desired future, and expand on these strengths to move the entire institutional reputation forward. We need to invest in people. It is their big ideas that will enhance Lehigh's intellectual footprint.

Our committee believes that there is a need for substantial and significant action very soon. The willingness of faculty and staff to expend time, effort, and energy to contribute to shaping the future of Lehigh was remarkable. There is truly an anticipatory energy across the University. Without action, the natural skepticism about planning efforts will quickly return. Changes that can be implemented very soon and that are not just symbolic will fully galvanize the campus and link word with deed.

SUMMARY

When Lehigh University began its strategic thinking process in the spring of 2008, the goal in the coming decade was ambitious: to be a premier residential research university, internationally recognized for research excellence and a distinctive student experience. At the core of this goal was our ambition to transform Lehigh University by advancing our intellectual footprint.

Thanks to extraordinary participation from every part of the campus community, the strategic thinking process concluded with our goal firmly in sight. It produced a far-reaching strategic plan, one that provides opportunities for all faculty, staff, and students to capitalize on their strengths and maximize their skills. The plan is thus about people and culture, and enhancing our roles and work to amplify our mission of teaching, research, and service. Indeed, we will transform our campus culture as we reshape our university’s identity.
Figure 1.

Lehigh University Strategic Thinking Process in Relation to Broader Initiatives

- Investing in faculty and staff to be at the forefront of distinguished universities
- Teaching initiatives
- Research initiatives
- Infrastructure
- Governance
- Equity and Community
- Global
- Outreach
- New pedagogy
- Grand challenges
- Enhancing our distinctive student life and learning experience
- Enrolling strategically
- Increasing research and graduate programs to respond to vital challenges

Figure 2.

Lehigh University Strategic Thinking Process: Plan of Work on a Page

- Steering Committee
  - CFAR to attend one meeting each month and support Steering Committee through coaching
  - Joint development of strategic thinking summary report for Board Retreat
- Strategic Thinking Groups
  - CFAR to attend one meeting each month and support Strategic Thinking Groups through coaching
  - Ongoing dialogue between the Strategic Thinking Groups and the broader community
- Broader University Community
  - Council for Equity and Community work
  - Community-wide events
  - Open dialogue with staff and faculty
- Middle States Accreditation Process
  - Faculty Meetings
  - Campus visit
- Board of Trustees: Executive Committee
  - Board of Trustees "Student Life and Learning"
  - Board of Trustees: "Enrolling Strategically"
  - Board of Trustees: "Erasing Strategically"
- President’s reports to campus community and alumni association

2007-2008
January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August
Briefing Notes:
Campaign Method in Brief—“Disciplined Flexibility”

What’s the Starting Point for a Campaign?

A campaign is a method for implementing strategy—at the level of “practice” or new ways of working. Sometimes that strategy is well articulated and well developed—and a campaign starts at the point of creating pull and resource for the new practice.

Sometimes the strategy is less well developed and may even take the form of a leader’s deep intuition and conviction about a new direction or change initiative. The new direction is not yet clear enough to simply “implement”—and rightly so, since it’s too soon to know in much detail what is really needed. In that case, a campaign clarifies the new direction even as it implements it. In the process, the new direction emerges and draws strength.

A Campaign has Three Phases

A campaign moves forward in three phases, as illustrated below. “Disciplined flexibility” is the key to the approach—as campaign leaders develop the antenna, capacity and infrastructure to take advantage of opportunities that emerge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase One—Direction and Momentum</th>
<th>Phase Two—Sweeping People In</th>
<th>Phase Three—Consolidating the Gains</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Understand the Stakes</td>
<td>7 Identify Beachheads</td>
<td>11 Refresh Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Locate “Found Pilots”</td>
<td>8 Build Capacity and Infrastructure</td>
<td>12 Create a New Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Understand the New Practice</td>
<td>9 Connect and Amplify Momentum</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Create a Strategic Theme</td>
<td>10 Evaluate Results</td>
<td>13 Institutionalize the Practice</td>
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<td>5 Locate the Levers</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Create an Early Coalition</td>
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</table>
Not as Linear as it Looks

The campaign approach is nowhere as linear as the diagram would suggest. Phases and steps are often iterative, as you learn more about what’s needed and where the opportunities lie. There are many ways to reach an outcome. Even so, it’s useful to keep a set of “phases” and “steps” in mind.

Phase One—Direction and Momentum

The first phase of a campaign focuses on understanding the desired new practice, locating the pockets of innovation that can be shaped to carry it forward, and beginning to recruit the people you will need. Because the first phase concentrates on building momentum before going more broadly public, we sometimes call it the “quiet phase.”

[Diagram of “The Quiet Phase”]

- 1. Understand the Stakes
- 2. Locate “Found Pilots”
- 3. Understand the New Practice
- 4. Create a Strategic Theme
- 5. Locate the Levers
- 6. Create an Early Coalition

Who will you need at this early, “quiet” phase— as you start taking actions before going public?
Phase Two—Sweeping People In

The second phase is a broader, more public effort to connect and amplify sources of energy and momentum and to sweep people into the campaign.

Phase Three—Consolidating the Gains

The third phase consolidates the gains and moves the campaign into the mainstream.

The Result? Change that Sticks

The result of a successful campaign is new behaviors on the ground, not just vision and ideas. A campaign looks ahead to spread and scale. It focuses on results.
### Strategic Thinking Initiative Campus-Wide Event Timeline

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1957</strong> – First computer obtained</td>
<td><strong>1964</strong> – Centennial School founded</td>
<td><strong>1968-1969</strong> – Theater Committee presents report recommending construction of a $3.5 million center for the performing arts</td>
<td><strong>1971-72</strong> – Undergraduate tuition increased $200 to $2,650 with September 1972 semester</td>
<td><strong>1977</strong> – Football team wins NCAA I-AA National Championship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal attention by faculty and staff</td>
<td>Civilized conduct within the Greek system</td>
<td>Small research university</td>
<td>Keep the intimacy of the campus. It’s still possible to at least have a nodding acquaintance with most people.</td>
<td>White tablecloth dining in Axa Packer with waitress service, menu, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal/family atmosphere</td>
<td></td>
<td>Influence of the faculty in institutional decision making</td>
<td>University faculty meetings that meant something – a sense of community</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>The special relationship between faculty and students</td>
<td>The quality of engineering education</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The campus had a rural spirit (looks more like a city now)</td>
<td>Growing research</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>I first walked on the Lehigh Campus in 1970. As oldest of 8 and first to go to college from steelworking family – I felt overwhelmed with luck to be here. I resolved to never fall this opportunity. This feeling of great fortune to be here should always be maintained.</td>
<td>Beautiful campus that has only gotten more so</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Influence of the faculty in institutional decision making</td>
<td>Campus physical environment is nice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>President Lewis visited my freshman dorm for pizza and a chat</td>
<td>I started at Lehigh in 1980. Like the family-oriented atmosphere, I would give better salary increases to support staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Joint Faculty/Staff Awards Dinner</td>
<td>Strong emphasis on good teaching</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bring back faculty/staff/student Forum</td>
<td>High intellectual level of the student body</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A quieter, less hectic, more contemplative ambiance</td>
<td>Lehigh offers the opportunity for professional and personal growth through scholarly experiences that challenge and ignite hope</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1983 – English professor, Peter Beidler, named National Professor of the Year</td>
<td>1984 was the year of a new development in the Physics Department and there was truly a spirit of innovation and creativity</td>
<td>1986 – Lehigh acquires 742 acres – Mountaintop Campus</td>
<td>Staff/faculty interaction with students</td>
<td>1992 – Lehigh acquires its millionth volume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985 – Fairchild-Martindale Library opens</td>
<td>Friendly colleagues in department and across university</td>
<td>1986 – Lehigh awarded NS Engineering Research Center in ATLSS</td>
<td>Lehigh graduates are known for their practicality. I would like to see that emphasis on practical problem solving remain, even as the university becomes more teaching oriented.</td>
<td>1993 – Welch Fitness Center opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I started at Lehigh, there was a true sense of community – a family atmosphere. That seems to have become lost a little and we need to get that back.</td>
<td>People were known as people, not just employees</td>
<td>The collegiality of the Economics Department</td>
<td>Lehigh pride and alumni loyalty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small enough to care about people, but large enough to have powerful influence – a combination I would never like to see us lose</td>
<td>Feeling of family</td>
<td>4-00 exams</td>
<td>Outstanding faculty and students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to work across colleges on student learning issues, shared research interests, and service to the whole university</td>
<td>Lehigh</td>
<td>1986 – Linking rich past to richer future!</td>
<td>Camaraderie of faculty and staff and detail of beautiful landscaping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Students Office did tremendous outreach to students in all pockets. Was great, still is great.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1987 – The freedom to drink with my students without fear of reprisal. RESPONSIBLY!</td>
<td>Change lots – please!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It wasn’t a job – it was an adventure</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cosmos Club!</td>
<td>The intellect and knowledge of staff and faculty; the wonderful use of technology on campus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seemed like there was more of a sense of community and more respect between groups</td>
<td></td>
<td>There was time to get all your work done and take part in projects</td>
<td>Undergraduate teaching and research are important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty were not only told they were the most important asset of the university; they were treated this way!</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sense of unity; interpersonal interaction with respect for others</td>
<td>Friendly, family atmosphere</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of community</td>
<td></td>
<td>Close interactions between undergraduates and faculty</td>
<td>Feeling like I can help to make things better/feeling like my contribution is valued</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sense that faculty (even one) could make a difference</td>
<td>Beautiful campus and nice surrounding area including houses on Brodhead Avenue, Packer Avenue, and Brughal Middle School</td>
<td>Spirit of family, cooperation, and collegiality</td>
<td>Less institutional control over student organizations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spirit of family, cooperation, and collegiality</td>
<td>Very supportive to new faculty</td>
<td>The thing I liked about Lehigh was the ability to move between departments and collaborate among them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual attention to students</td>
<td>Outstanding staff and commitment to excellence</td>
<td>Outstanding staff and commitment to excellence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Strategic Thinking Initiative Campus-Wide Event Timeline

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1996</strong></td>
<td>Project IMPACT is implemented on campus</td>
<td>2002 – Optical Technology Center is launched with $3.5 million in federal funding</td>
<td>Research collaborations facilitated throughout campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1997</strong></td>
<td>University dedicates the $33 million Zoeller Arts Center</td>
<td>Sense of solidarity/long history</td>
<td>Flexible schedules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1998</strong></td>
<td>Cosmos Club existed – informal camaraderie and sharing research ideas</td>
<td>Sense of family and community</td>
<td>Desire of the dean and the senior administration to improve the research reputation of the business school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1999</strong></td>
<td>Flexibility – low barriers between departments</td>
<td>Flexibility – being able to be flexible with hours</td>
<td>The personal assistance that I received from the administrative staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2000</strong></td>
<td>I would like to maintain some of the undergrad traditions</td>
<td>Staff/faculty interaction with students</td>
<td>Keep collegiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2001</strong></td>
<td>2000 – I came because of the fantastic Student Affairs staff who was able to provide great mentoring, outstanding professional development, and expertise in my field</td>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>Feel like I was joining a family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2002</strong></td>
<td>Sense of community – staff from departments/areas open to helping one another</td>
<td>Staff development</td>
<td>The sense of community at Lehigh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2003</strong></td>
<td>1999 – High-quality undergraduates</td>
<td>Flexibility of working environment</td>
<td>Superior quality of faculty and their commitment to teaching and research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2004</strong></td>
<td>Forward-looking Environmental Science programs</td>
<td>Collegiality of business school and other colleges</td>
<td>Increased emphasis on faculty scholarship! Higher expectations! Less dead wood!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2005</strong></td>
<td>Strong engineering tradition and collaboration with Earth Sciences</td>
<td>The beauty of the campus – buildings and grounds</td>
<td>Commitment to becoming a top liberal arts institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2006</strong></td>
<td>Intellectual climate</td>
<td>Plenty of parking on Mountaintop</td>
<td>Moovi Inside! I had been at Lehigh for 2 weeks and helped at Moovi.In. Lehigh made such a positive impression on the parents, students, and me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2007</strong></td>
<td>Natural setting – beauty of campus</td>
<td>Wonderful staff in COE</td>
<td>Collaborative programming across departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2008</strong></td>
<td>Learning the Institution sessions by HR</td>
<td>Exciting, highly motivated students</td>
<td>Flexible work schedules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2009</strong></td>
<td>I LOVE LEHIGH!</td>
<td>Amount of vacation time</td>
<td>Lots of vacation time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The chance to work in one of the world’s best microscopy facilities
- Family-friendly atmosphere
- I felt encouraged to explore new ideas, discuss/impliment new initiatives, and share my learning from previous institutions here at Lehigh
- I was happy to ask “tough questions” and get what I felt were real answers
- In addition to a beautiful campus and office suite, the thing that most impressed me was the teamwork, intelligence, and friendliness of our workgroup that extended (applied) to all that I’ve met on campus.
- Professional development opportunities
- Promoting valued employees to keep them at Lehigh
- There was visual progress on the Lehigh campus, i.e., building more global progress
- Educational environment; opportunity for personal intellectual growth
- Sense of community among the people who worked here

April 8, 2008
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001-2005</td>
<td>Beautiful campus</td>
<td>Was an excellent introduction to how the university works and who is responsible for each aspect to make it work.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary concern for undergrad education</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Humanities Center</td>
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<td>Professional development opportunities for staff</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Exceptional academic programs, working with top faculty talent – intimate, family feeling between faculty and staff</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Good research environment for young researchers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The opportunity to see and experience the amazing lectures: visitors that come to Lehigh</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The vacation policy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Collaborative programming across departments</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Great work environment</td>
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<td>Employee benefits</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Learning the Institution Program</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning the Institution Program was an excellent introduction to how the university works and who is responsible for each aspect to make it work.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Encouragement in job growth with support given to succeed</td>
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<td>First-year student connection</td>
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<td>Great feeling at “Being Lehigh”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Staff recognition programs – tradition of excellence, spot bonus, university awards</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Love that staff contributions are recognized</td>
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<td>Gryphon Society</td>
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<td>Life/work balance</td>
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<td>Learn to come together as a whole university</td>
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<td></td>
<td>College willingness to hear new ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The warm welcome</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Spirit of collegiality in Student Affairs/Dean of Students particularly (professional, ethical, student-centered, collaborative focus on professional development)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Support of staff and supervisor to develop new programs</td>
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<td>A strong beginning commitment to diversity throughout the campus</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less division, more interaction</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How welcome everyone was when I began and how impressed I was with the camaraderie of the department</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being part of one of the top universities in the country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Investment in campus infrastructure</td>
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</table>

*Figure 4 cont.*