

Provost Report for Faculty Senate

August 2017

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SACSCOC Update

While our reaffirmation of accreditation with SACSCOC was very successful, WCU's approach to demonstrating effective **achievement of outcomes** was not. We do set goals, evaluate our outcomes and desire continuous improvement of WCU; however, our existing assessment processes does not reflect this. The Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness stands ready to manage, to consult, and to assist, but ultimately compliance depends on the planning and evaluation efforts made within each unit. We must share the responsibility and accountability. Thank you in advance for the hard work you will be involved in this year to make WCU an even better university.

Degree Plus

The process to determine DEGREEPLUS, our Quality Enhancement Plan for WCU's accreditation re-affirmation was a campus wide initiative. Online voting polls, forums, suggestions, and white papers, were produced by faculty, staff, and students. A campus open forum was held to hear the top choices which were recorded and made available on the website for all to see before voting for the final choice.

DEGREEPLUS will help students with the development of professional skills, cultural responsiveness, teamwork, leadership, communication, etc., characteristics that employers look for in employees. DEGREEPLUS is asking our students to get involved, to participate in a variety of campus activities, events, and organizations, and gain the skills they will need to be successful at WCU and beyond. DEGREEPLUS asks that our faculty and staff support students in their endeavors to complete the reflections in each DEGREEPLUS category: leadership, teamwork, professionalism, and cultural responsiveness. That support could include advising, defining related learning outcomes for sponsored events, or developing new activities that fit within the DEGREEPLUS mission and then providing feedback on student reflections.

UNC Strategic Plan and WCU Metrics and Targets

Our thanks to the faculty and staff who were involved in the year long process and spent hours travelling to the Board of Governor's (BOG) meetings and working together to ensure that the voice of WCU was heard as the UNC Strategic Planning process was developing and as the metrics and targets were being set. It certainly was! Much of the input from the WCU faculty and staff team is in the final UNC Strategic Plan.

We were asked as an institution to put forward the metrics that we thought would be in the priority (5), improve (3), and sustain (1) categories. The faculty and staff team approved the following metrics in these categories and after significant data comparison work by Alison Joseph and Johnny Lail (OIPE), the metrics and targets were defined as follows:

Priority:

- Low-income enrollments: By fall 2021, increase Pell enrollments by 14.3%. (stretch goal)
- Low-income completions: By 2021-22, increase the number of low-income graduates by 31.8%. (stretch goal)

- Rural enrollment: By 2021-22, increase enrollments from Tier 1 and Tier 2 counties by 10.9%. (stretch goal)
- Rural completions: By 2021-22, increase the number of graduates from Tier 1 and Tier 2 counties by 12.6%. (stretch goal)
- Critical workforce: By 2021-22, increase critical workforce completions by 25.4%. (stretch goal)

Improve:

- Graduation Rate: Increase five-year graduation rate from any accredited institution to 64.7% for the fall 2017 cohort.
- Achievement gaps: Reduce by half, the existing gap (2015-2016 baseline gap of -4.4) in undergraduate degree efficiency among male students.
- Degree efficiency: By 2021-22, increase your undergraduate degree efficiency to 26.0. This value is the number of undergraduate credentials awarded per 100 FTE undergraduates.

Sustain:

- Research: By 2021-22, increase research awards and income by 15% (to \$6,369,161).

Our next priority step as an institution is to identify the mechanisms and support necessary to achieve our targets. A team of campus faculty and staff and the Enrollment Planning Committee will be the ones to help determine how we will assess our successes.

Areas of Distinction

Included in our discussions with the Board of Governors (BOG) and General Administration, was the development of *WCU Areas of Distinction*. Thank you to all of you who put forward ideas, voted for and supported the three areas that have been put forward for approval by the BOG.

Cultural, Artistic & Environmental Immersion: Connecting learning opportunities across the curriculum to WCU's unique environmental and cultural resources.

Service & Outreach: Learning through field-based service through reciprocal relationships with regional partners in order to prepare students to analyze and solve challenges in communities and in the world.

Experience Based Learning: Providing opportunities for students to earn real-world experience in their field of choice including internships, externships, undergraduate and graduate research, project-based learning, and capstone experiences.

WCU 2020 Vision Strategic Plan update

This year we are embarking on a revision to Western Carolina University's "2020 Vision" Strategic Plan. Over the course of the next six months, you will have opportunities to provide input on WCU's future, including giving feedback on the university's progress toward meeting the goals and initiatives of the original plan, which was developed in 2012.

A committee of your peers (faculty, staff, and administration) representing units across campus, has begun the first phase of the revision to the "2020 Vision" plan and is assessing progress and either retaining, removing, or tweaking elements that constituted the original plan's strategic directives. The committee will also incorporate WCU's areas of distinction, UNC Strategic Directives and Metrics, and other relevant elements over the next few months.

The second phase of the revision is to solicit input from campus and external constituents electronically, through town hall meetings, and via other avenues. A [website has been created](#) to update the campus community on the committee's progress and to capture your input. Please take some time to complete the brief survey that you will find there.

Campus Theme for 2017-18

There is great excitement around the campus theme for this year – celebrating the heritage of our university and community. The theme is selected by a committee of faculty and staff from across campus after community input on ideas and suggestions. The theme chosen is:

Cherokee: Community, Culture and Connections.

The theme provides us an opportunity to articulate better our relationship with the Cherokee. We can build on it, enhance it, and more importantly, educate our students, faculty, and staff about the Cherokee and the importance of this culture in our community.

For those new to our campus, WCU literally sits on Cherokee land, and the Qualla Boundary is roughly 30 minutes from Cullowhee. The theme can be integrated into classes where appropriate in extra and co-curricular activities, and can be used to educate students, faculty, and staff members on the Cherokee culture.

Catamount School

After nine months of great collaboration with Jackson County Schools and WCU faculty and staff, we opened the Catamount School for 6th, 7th, and 8th grades on August 22nd with a great principal, three fabulous teachers, and eight wonderful staff. This has been a herculean feat for a lot of people to get the school up and running. Paws was there to greet the 57 new students and their parents at orientation on August 15th.

Diversity and Inclusion

Four Imperatives

Last year at Opening Assembly I talked about the four imperatives laid forth by Ricardo Nazario-Colon for our campus community. They are: Navigating Community, Total College Experience, LGBTQIA Experience, and Veterans.

Ricardo, in collaboration with faculty and staff across campus have (is):

- Developed the Critical Cultural Competency Certificate Training as part of the WCU Civic Action Plan. Thirty Three (33) faculty and staff attended the training and now serve as a resource to our campus.
- Established and chaired meetings of the LGBTQ Working Employee Resource Group.
- Developed a calendar that will allow anyone who creates an event to request the Diversity Calendar as a resource and the event would show on that calendar.
- Developing a 10-year student and workforce data report to better understand our trends and areas of need.
- Exploring how we can use the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to address Intercultural Competence.

Gender Salary Equity

We are continuing the important work of ensuring that we have Gender Salary Equity across campus. Results of changes that occurred last fiscal year in Academic Affairs are on the [Provost's Website](#).

Taskforce on Racism

Specifically relating to *Navigating Community* and the total college experience, the taskforce on racism chaired by Dr. Kathleen Brennan, has led to the development of eight recommendations.

Those recommendations are available in full on the [faculty senate website](#).

Ricardo Nazario-Colón along with faculty and staff have already moved some of these recommendations forward. They are:

Clarify the university stance on diversity and inclusion and strengthen the integration of this stance into campus culture.

- Every unit should have diversity and inclusion goals that include Training, Hiring, Philanthropy, Research, and more.
- Celebrate our Diversity and Inclusion through awards program, campus wide celebrations, enhanced programming, and marketing

I know that several units are working on diversity and inclusion goals and that Ricardo stands ready to support those units who are developing them.

There are two other recommendations that have also been moved forward:

Compile campus diversity-related information: The [diversity and inclusion website](#) is up. With input from across campus on what is going on in and outside the classroom, the website will effectively and efficiently serve this purpose.

Regularly conduct formal assessments of campus race/ethnicity equity: A campus climate survey was conducted this spring through Student Affairs. Unfortunately, due to the very low response rate the Office of Institutional Planning Effectiveness is having to work, in collaboration with faculty and staff, to aggregate the data to ensure anonymity in the responses, as was promised to participants in the survey request. We will then disseminate the results of the survey.

We are committed to deploying a more robust climate survey and attaining a higher response rate in the coming year through the Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness and the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity.

Student Success

- First time Full time freshmen Retention:
Fall 15- Fall 16 80.2%
Fall 14- Fall 15 80.1%

We will know 2017 data on Census day, the 10th day of classes, September 1.

- *GradesFirst 2.0* used to help our students succeed: nearly 100% of those that advise students are using *GradesFirst*.
 - ✓ Campus Advisors Notes: 4,228
 - ✓ Advising Center Notes: 7,051
 - ✓ Campus Summary Reports: 15,046
- Seven *Finish Line* students completed their degree requirements this past year.

Did you know?

- WHEE Call U: The 2015-16 campaign reached all 2638 new freshmen and transfer students, either with a direct phone call, phone message, or email.
- One Book: Roughly 67% of freshmen used the book in at least one course and had at least one assignment connected to the book. Author, *Dayo Olopade* visited campus in October, 2016. *The Immortal life of Henrietta Lacks* is this year's One Book.
- Conducted ALEKS pilot study in conjunction with the Math Department using the math placement and remediation software ALEKS.
- Mentoring and Persistence to Success (MAPS) office awarded \$35,000.00 Actualizing Innovations Meant to Scale (AIMS) scholarship by UNC General Administration to support summer enrollment.
- Home Base Grand Opening Ceremony, February 2017. Home Base serves the needs of our legally emancipated and homeless students at WCU.
- SCH's increased from 22,031 to 22,768 during summer of 2016.