

Provost Report to Faculty Senate

September 2017

WCU Strategic Plan Refresh Update

The UNC system has updated its strategic plan. In alignment with the system plan and in consideration of our own evolving context, WCU is in process of refreshing our 2020 Strategic Plan. A task force began its work this summer. The highlights of the committee's work so far are:

- 1) The elimination of initiatives that have been achieved or are almost complete and now in implementation or the initiative is part of the standard operating procedure;
- 2) Streamlining initiatives with overlapping themes;
- 3) Revising wording of goals and initiatives to reflect current status and/or emphasize specific actions;
- 4) Revising wording of goals and initiatives to reflect UNC Strategic Plan, UNC Metrics, NC Promise, WCU DegreePlus, WCU Areas of Distinction, and WCU Catamount School;
- 5) Scheduling of town hall meetings to engage the community, alumni, faculty and staff at the Cullowhee and Biltmore Park locations throughout the fall;
- 6) A new strategic plan update website is now active and feedback can be submitted through that website, by clicking on "Input Form," for review by the committee: strategicplan.wcu.edu or by attending one of the four town hall meetings scheduled in September and October.
- 7) The timeline is for the committee to secure feedback on the revisions from constituents throughout the fall and submit the completed draft to Dr. Belcher in December 2017 for his review.

This is your opportunity to have input into the refresh and I ask every one of you to take time to complete the survey. We need to hear your voice in this important initiative.

Diversity Initiatives Update (Ricardo)

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion website is updated and reformatted for the Diversity Dialogues. Please see the dialogues at <http://www.wcu.edu/discover/diversity/diversity-dialogues/>. The LGBTQ working group is meeting and working on goals for the 2017-18 academic years. We are in the process of sending invitations to individuals to serve on the Council on Inclusive Excellence. The Council will assist in implementation of recommendations from the Joint Task Force on Racism and assist on furthering campus wide diversity and inclusion initiatives. The National Coalition Building Institute will be launching its initial campus wide workshops beginning in the spring semester 2018.

December Commencement Update

Here we are at the beginning of the semester, and its already time to start thinking about the end of the semester! The decision has been made at the executive level to proceed with splitting into two ceremonies for December.

We will schedule the day similarly to Spring. On **Saturday, December 16, 2017**, we will have ceremonies at **10:00 AM** and **2:00 PM**. The breakdown is below.

Line-Up at 9:00am, Ceremony at 10:00am, Ramsey Center

Graduate, Honors and Undergraduate Students in the Colleges of:

- Arts and Sciences
- Education and Allied Professions
- Fine and Performing Arts

Line-Up at 1:00pm, Ceremony at 2:00pm, Ramsey Center

Graduate, Honors and Undergraduates Students in the Colleges of:

- Business
- Engineering and Technology
- Health and Human Sciences

Also, new this fall will be the full incorporation of the MarchingOrder software product into our ceremony. As you all know, Don Connelly will no longer be reading our graduates' names as they cross the stage. He will be deeply missed in this capacity, and we thank him for his many years of service to the university in this role. However, he's left some large shoes that must be filled! Last year, we successfully piloted MarchingOrder with the addition of on-screen graduate names to our live graduate ceremony stream. The same technology will be used moving forward to read our graduating students' names! The same QR code printed on the student's name card that produced the on-screen name will now also trigger a recording of the student's name as he or she crosses the stage.

We've received many questions regarding this program, and I'd like to take a moment to preemptively answer some of those questions. The names will be recorded by a voiceover professional. Students *will* have the opportunity to record their preferred name pronunciation and provide it to MarchingOrder's voiceover talent well ahead of the ceremony to ensure names are read correctly as students cross the stage. For several of you, the use of this software does tighten some of our deadlines and reduces some of the flexibility we've had in the past. We will no longer be able to make a fully personalized card for students on the day of commencement. Students who apply for graduation past the application deadline risk not having the audio of their name play. Given the production times for our sound files, we will simply not be able to add late students as easily as we have in the past.

I have confidence in this product and know that, with our continued growth, this is the best route to take for WCU. Please let me know if you have questions. I look forward to working with you all to make these our best commencement ceremonies yet!

ABET Accreditation for Computer Science

The B.S. Computer Science program recently earned accreditation by the Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET. ABET accreditation is recognition that a collegiate program has met standards essential to produce graduates ready to enter the critical fields of applied science, computing, engineering, and engineering technology. This is the first time the program sought accreditation, which was awarded with zero deficiencies or recommendations. Fantastic! Other WCU ABET accredited programs include Electrical and Computer Engineering Technology, B.S.; Electrical Engineering, B.S.E.E.; and Engineering Technology, Applied Systems Technology Concentration, B.S.

Recent External Grant Awards

Pat Morse, Social Work.

Title: 2017 BHWET Competition

\$1.9m, 4 year grant from Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)

The Council on Social Work Education-accredited MSW program at WCU, in collaboration with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI), the Center for Native Health, and providers across Southern Appalachia, will recruit and train MSW students to work in team-based integrated care settings to expand the behavioral health workforce serving the EBCI and Medically Underserved Communities (MUCs) in rural, Western North Carolina. The project will increase field placements in MUCs and provide culturally and linguistically responsive evidence-based, interprofessional, prevention and intervention education and training to Masters Level students in Social Work, Substance Abuse Counseling, Nursing and other health professions and to faculty and field instructors who serve the target population.

Pat Gardner, the Rapid Center

Title: Accelerating Economic Growth through Commercialization in Western North Carolina

\$590,000, 5 year grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA)

WCU received a competitive renewal of its EDA University Center (UC) grant. Over the last five years, in partnership with the WCU College of Engineering and Technology, the College of Business, and the Small Business and Technology and Development Center (SBTDC), the WCU UC has serviced over 500 clients, ranging from inventors to small-business start-ups to major manufacturers in the western North Carolina region. The WCU UC facilitates the commercialization of new products or the implementation of new manufacturing processes through a comprehensive suite of engineering and business counseling services including a full suite of industry-class prototyping equipment (such as 3-D plastic and metal printers), experienced design engineers, and industry-seasoned business counselors. The Rapid Center works in partnership with the College of Engineering and the College of Business to develop highly skilled, innovative engineering and business professionals for the region through open-ended, industry-sponsored student and faculty projects.

Biltmore Park pedagogy

In a collaborative effort between the graduate faculty of the Department of Social Work and a project team from the Division of IT, Facilities, Biltmore Park, and the Coulter Faculty Commons, the MSW program was able to expand to serve a larger community of aspiring leaders in service to our region. The creation of four newly renovated spaces (two at Biltmore Park and two in the HHS building) allows for synchronous streaming of courses from one location to another so that more students can be served. Twelve additional fulltime students based in Asheville were able to join the cohort this year and we anticipate an additional 12 part-time students to be added next year. Kudos to all involved in this effort, especially to Jonathan Wade, Senior Educational Technologist at the CFC, and the incredible Social Work faculty who have gone out of their way to give timely feedback, to learn new systems, and to adapt their pedagogy in meaningful ways to advance our mutual goals of serving our students and our community.

Community Economic Engagement and Innovation Update

Dr. Arthur Salido has been working with faculty to find funding to perform an industry analysis of the natural products industry in WNC and has been working primarily with the College of Engineering and Technology to develop a LEAD Outdoor Gear Design conference. Arthur is also engaged in conversation with the Rural Center and Brushy Fork Institute at Berea, Kentucky to develop a leadership institute for rural leaders. In addition, Arthur is:

- Promoting WCU resources like our Millennial Initiative, NC Promise, the new science building, DegreePlus, Homebase, and the Rapid Center;
- Working with economic developers and regional leaders to find ways that WCU can be involved in catalyzing home-grown entrepreneurial activity and new business recruitment;
- Connecting WCU with regional charities, ministries, and service organizations

NC Promise Update

NC Promise was fully funded at \$51 million for the three participating campuses - WCU, UNCP, and ECSU - in the 2017-19 state biennial budget. This funding will ensure that WCU is made financially whole during the implementation of NC Promise. We are grateful to the NC General Assembly for their commitment to fully fund this program.

WCU's external relations staff, with strong support from the Chancellor's office and Administration and Finance, will continue to work with the legislature on issues such as summer funding, inflationary tuition increases, and enrollment growth expectations.

In addition, preliminary awareness campaigns about NC Promise are underway, including a digital marketing campaign and a new website, ncpromise.org. At WCU, these efforts are being led by University Marketing.