**PRM Strategies for the University Strategic Plan**

**WCU Mission**

Western Carolina University creates engaged learning opportunities that incorporate teaching, research and service through residential, distance education and international experiences. The university focuses its academic programs, educational outreach, research and creative activities, and cultural activities to improve individual lives and enhance economic and community development in the region, state and nation.

**PRM Mission**

The mission of the Parks and Recreation Management Program is to promote resourcefulness, independent thinking, the ability to cope with change, and service to society -- by preparing leaders in the recreation resource and outdoor education professions. The program strives to maintain an intellectual and caring environment through cooperation and collaboration in active learning. Experiential education is also an important component to encourage application and modification of theories learned.

**Strategic Direction #1 – Fulfill the Educational Needs of our State and Region**

**Goal 1.1** Deliver high-quality academic programs designed to promote regional economic and community development.

INITIATIVE 1.1.1 Undertake a rigorous and inclusive process to prioritize all undergraduate and graduate programs based on universally applied criteria, including *quality*, regional need, demand, *enrollment trends*, *retention* and *graduation* rates, and alignment with the University mission and the following integrated focus areas: creative arts, education, environment, health, innovation and technology, and **recreation** and tourism.

***PRM Strategies***

*- Maintain quality with the 2.5 GPA requirement and essay linking admission*

*of students to the QEP. Continue the use of experiential education with labs.*

*- Increase enrollment, especially females.*

*- Maintain high retention and graduation rates through the QEP, advising,*

*cooperative learning and PRM club activities*.

*- Investigate the feasibility of a graduate program in PRM and Experiential Education*

INITIATIVE 1.1.2: Develop visionary strategic plans for each of the curricular focus areas through inclusive processes to accomplish the following:

6) Advance the **recreation** and tourism industries of Western North Carolina

***PRM Strategies***

*- Continue research for agencies in the region such as the Forest Service, Park*

*Service, Nantahala Outdoor Center and Duke Energy.*

* *Continue service through the PRM internship program.*
* *Serve on advisory boards such as the Jackson County Recreation and Parks Department, the SCC Outdoor Leadership Program, and, the Old Cullowhee River Park Committee and the County Greenway Committee.*
* *Increase the number of PRM professors to enable the advancement of the recreation industry of WNC.*

INITIATIVE 1.17: Increase the total number of WCU graduates by 25 percent by 2020 to meet the regional need for an educated workforce

***PRM Strategy***

*- Increase the number of graduates with the increase in enrollment.*

**GOAL 1.2:** Fully integrate into the general education program and into each major and minor at both undergraduate and graduate levels an emphasis on those core abilities expected of all WCU students: to integrate information from a variety of contexts; to solve complex problems; to communicate effectively and responsibly; to practice civic engagement; and to clarify and act on purpose and values.

INITIATIVE 1.2.1: Hire faculty and staff who understand and will contribute to WCU’s core educational values, its holistic academic mission, its commitment to outreach and engagement, and the achievement of the institution’s strategic priorities.

***PRM Strategy***

*- Hire new PRM faculty with the above traits.*

*- Plan new general education courses.*

INITIATIVE 1.2.2: Develop and implement effective, faculty‐led mentoring programs for students, aided and reinforced by advising and course scheduling in the support units and designed to reinforce the University’s core values.

***PRM Strategy***

*- Advise using the QEP as mentors to students with the essay, the student strategic plan*

*and academic advising plans.*

*- Stay current with ongoing changes to Liberal Studies/General Education*

INITIATIVE 1.2.3: Incorporate writing and research into all levels of the curricula.

***PRM Strategies***

*- Incorporate writing and research into the Interview Portfolio documents completed as*

*course requirements. These include, a program proposal, a program evaluation, a*

*recreation master plan, a business plan, a risk management plan and a research*

*proposal.*

*- Enable students to present at the Undergraduate Research Symposium and the*

*Regional Adventure Education Conference*.

*- Consider re-introducing PRM 360 Recreation Research as a requirement.*

**GOAL 1.3:** Ensure that all programs include *cross‐curricular, experiential, applied, and*

*international/global* awareness opportunities for all students.

INITIATIVE 1.3.2: Incorporate expectations for experiential and applied learning opportunities, including undergraduate research opportunities, in the curricular review process.

***PRM Strategies***

*- Apply experiential and applied learning in classes and through labs.*

*- Encourage* *students to present at the Undergraduate Research Symposium and the*

*Regional Adventure Education Conference*.

INITIATIVE 1.3.3: Ensure that meaningful international/global experience opportunities are available to every student, regardless of major, including options to study with international scholars on WCU’s faculty, to participate in faculty‐led international travel courses, and to study abroad. (See Initiative 2.1.6)

***PRM Strategies***

*- Continue the international exchange program with GMIT in Ireland*

*- Market the international exchange program that we have established with the LaTrobe University in Australia.*

**GOAL 1.4:** Eliminate barriers to student access through coordinated endeavors with Birth‐12 (B‐12) and community college partners.

INITIATIVE 1.4.2: Review, revise where appropriate, and electronically automate all articulation agreements between WCU and community colleges in the WCU service area with the goal of maintaining high academic standards and facilitating curricular transfer; develop a standard review protocol and timeline.

***PRM Strategy***

*- Review and revise the articulation agreement with Southwestern Community College.*

*- Review program evaluations for NC Central, Mars Hill, UNCG and Chapel Hill.*

INITIATIVE 1.4.4: Expand coordinated communications and recruiting efforts among B‐12, community colleges, and WCU regarding the value of education and affordable avenues for all individuals to access and benefit from it.

***PRM Strategy***

*Meet with admissions to educate them about PRM.*

**GOAL 1.5:** Make WCU (the Cullowhee campus and the off‐campus site at Biltmore Park in the Asheville‐Hendersonville area) a destination for short‐term, educationally based programs, activities, and events, including summer school, continuing education, camps, conferences, and personal enrichment opportunities.

INITIATIVE 1.5.2: Expand the number of resident and distance summer school offerings for a wide variety of learners, including WCU students, guest students, senior citizens, B‐12 students, and the general public; expand summer school enrollment by 25 percent by 2020.

***PRM Strategies***

* *Offer Wilderness First Aid for the mini-mester.*
* *Offer the Kayaking course for the mini-mester.*
* *Encourage all Capstone Internships for the summer.*
* *Encourage alternate internships for the summer.*
* *Consider a corporate leadership course through Continuing Education.*

**GOAL 1.6:** Attain a student population that balances the University’s commitment to access, its responsibility for student success, and ensures the sustainability of University funding. (See Initiative 6.3.2)

INITIATIVE 1.6.3: Expand efforts to recruit students in programs associated with the curricular focus areas.

***PRM Strategy***

*Meet with admissions to educate them about PRM.*

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2 – ENRICH THE TOTAL STUDENT EXP**

**Strategic Direction #2 – Enrich the Total Student Experience**

WCU is committed to working toward the best interests of the region and state through deliberately and consciously considering what it means to educate citizens, a pursuit that encompasses both curricular and co-curricular elements that serve to prepare students to participate in and help create a vibrant, intellectually, culturally, and economically thriving region, state, nation, and world.

**GOAL 2.1**: Foster a student‐centered campus culture that emphasizes academic excellence, personal growth, networking opportunities, and global and social awareness.

INITIATIVE 2.1.2: Review, and where necessary modify, all student recruitment and promotional materials to include expectations related to academic rigor and standards.

***PRM Strategy***

*- Check the PRM WEB Page for stressing academic rigor.*

*- Check the PRM Brochures for references to rigor.*

*- Maintain the 2.5 GPA and essay requirement.*

INITIATIVE 2.1.5: Create leadership and experiential opportunities at the local, regional, national, and international levels, ensuring that all students participate in such opportunities and can document how these learning experiences are interconnected with their program of study. (See Initiative 2.2.4)

***PRM Strategy***

*- Impel the students into experiences through the mini-internships, capstones*

*and other internships.*

*- Integrate the experiences into a synthesis through the QEP.*

*- Continue organizing the Western Outdoor Council.*

INITIATIVE 2.1.6: Expand international experiences for all Western Carolina University students through such strategies as increasing study abroad opportunities, developing exchange programs with international universities, recruiting a sizable international student population to WCU, and enhancing global awareness components of existing curricula. (See Initiative 1.3.3)

***PRM Strategy***

*- Continue the international exchange program with GMIT in Ireland*

*- Market the international exchange program that we have established with the*

*LaTrobe University in Australia.*

**GOAL 2.2:** Foster active citizenship among WCU students.

INITIATIVE 2.2.1: Integrate the elements of the Western Carolina University “Community Creed” into institutionally affiliated programs and services.

INITIATIVE 2.2.2: As appropriate, include students as full, voting members on campus decision‐making committees.

***PRM Strategies***

*- Include student representation on the PRM Advisory Board.*

*- Encourage decision making through PRM Club events.*

*- Encourage student participation on the Dean’s advisory councils.*

*- Encourage continued involvement through Base Camp Cullowhee.*

INITIATIVE 2.2.4: Provide every student with an opportunity to participate in student‐led outreach projects that focus on civic engagement. (See Initiative 2.1.5)

***PRM Strategy***

*- Use student committees to plan the conferences and the Old Cullowhee Canoe*

*Slalom.*

*- Involve students with Jackson County Recreation and Parks Department.*

**Strategic Direction # 3 – Enhance Our External Partnerships**

Partnerships with regional businesses and industries, nonprofits, civic organizations, government agencies, communities, and cities are an integral part of WCU’s core mission as a recognized, regionally engaged university. The University’s emphasis on integrated learning experiences, its commitment to engaged scholarship, and its embrace of the institution’s role as both a steward of this unique and special place and a catalyst for economic and community development all demonstrate and reinforce WCU’s commitment to enhancing engagement with external partners.

**GOAL 3.2**: Position the University as a key leader in regional economic and community development efforts.

INITIATIVE 3.2.4: Work with external partners to facilitate economic and community development in Cullowhee and Jackson County, which form the University’s backyard, and participate in the formation of formalized community leadership for Cullowhee that can serve as the voice of the community as it anticipates growth and development. (See Initiative 4.3.2)

***PRM Strategies***

* *Work with CuRvE –the Cullowhee Revitalization Endeavor to make progress in Old*

*Cullowhee.*

* *Continue organizing the Old Cullowhee Canoe Slalom.*
* *Participate on the Jackson County Recreation Advisory Board.*
* *Participate with the Nantahala Gorge Youth Group.*
* *Participate with Regional Camps.*
* *Re-establish links with developments such as Balsam Mountain Preserve.*
* *Organize a contract course with Landmark Learning.*

INITIATIVE 3.2.5: Seek out and implement internal synergies among outreach efforts and potential

partnerships that are focused on economic and community development and consistent with the curricular *focus areas* identified by the 2020 Commission.

***PRM Strategies***

*- Continue membership on the County Greenway Committee.*

*- Continue membership on the Old Cullowhee River Park Committee.*

INITIATIVE 3.2.6: Facilitate collaborative research and development efforts between WCU and external partners.

***PRM Strategies***

* *Work with the National Park Service.*
* *Work with the National Ski Patrol.*
* *Work with the Jackson County Recreation and Parks Department.*
* *Work with Duke Energy.*
* *Work with the National Forest Service.*

**Strategic Direction # 5 – Invest in Our Core Resources**

Western Carolina University will ensure a consistently updated infrastructure in support of its mission and vision. Infrastructure is interpreted broadly to include facilities, technology, fiscal practices, and business processes and procedures.

**GOAL 5.2:** Develop a comprehensive University master plan.

INITIATIVE 5.2.1: Charge a task force consisting of representatives of internal and external constituents and supported by an external consultant to develop a comprehensive campus master plan that takes into account such factors as anticipated enrollment growth, the environment, sustainability, energy efficiency, core infrastructure needs, building priority needs, departmental/unit consolidation, technology infrastructure, campus safety and security, green space, transportation, campus design standards, and the integration of the campus with the surrounding community. The comprehensive plan will include the following components:

· a comprehensive facility condition assessment for existing buildings and infrastructure (utilities, information technology, roads, etc.)

· a campus sustainability plan that aligns with the UNC Sustainability Policy

· an assessment and prioritization of core infrastructure needs in light of emerging technologies

· an assessment and prioritization of new building needs

· a prioritized plan for addressing repair and renovation needs

· incorporation of green space throughout the campus

· a plan to consolidate like parts of individual units/colleges where possible

· a campus parking and transportation plan that facilitates access to education sites and includes

investment in multimodal options such as bike lanes, greenways, etc.

· a process for allocating and budgeting space as a core resource to maximize space utilization

· a plan to ensure the integration of campus development with the community surrounding the

University

**PRM Strategy**

*- Committee membership*