



Pennsylvania Western University
**PATH TO STUDENT SUCCESS:
STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2026**

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MISSION

Through innovation, academic excellence, and empowering environments, Pennsylvania Western University provides accessible education that cultivates career-ready, life-long learners and leaders, who enrich and engage each other, their communities, the region, and beyond.

VISION

Pennsylvania Western University empowers students to achieve meaningful goals through a broad array of nationally accredited undergraduate and graduate programs, career-focused learning, and support systems that foster lifelong success.

VALUES

Learning: We are a community of educators who provide a learning environment where students thrive and achieve their educational, professional, and personal goals.

Growth: We are student ready, guiding our students towards personal, financial, and academic success.

Inclusion: We advocate for all members of our campus communities and provide an equitable, supportive environment that builds a sense of belonging and togetherness.

Collaboration: We engage in innovative partnerships, programs, and opportunities to address the needs of our regional communities and the commonwealth.

Culture: We share a sense of purpose that unites the Pennsylvania Western University community at large and provides opportunities to learn, work and thrive.





INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Plan presented here was created to focus on the priorities of Pennsylvania Western University over the next three years (2023-2026). Many of these concepts were generated through the integration process and align with our institutional priorities of Student Success and Learning; Fiscal and Operational Stability; and Empowering and Investing in our People as a community of educators.

INCLUSION

We advocate for all members of our campus communities and provide a supportive environment that builds a sense of belonging and togetherness.

As a hallmark of our organization, we will define Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in a way that encompasses all our stakeholders and places equity as a key motivator for success. These principles are embedded throughout our strategies and initiatives.

LEARNING

We are a community of educators who provide a learning environment where students thrive and achieve their educational, professional, and personal goals.

Pennsylvania Western University is devoted to helping our students reach their full potential. We will encourage the personal, intellectual, and professional development of our students.

Strategy A1: Support the academic needs of all Pennsylvania Western University students.

Initiative A1.1: Design degree advisement sheets with a recommended 8-semester sequence of courses. Students and advisors will consult the degree advisement sheet.

Initiative A1.2: Develop General Education practices that promote inclusive values and encourage academic exploration.



Initiative A1.3: Connect faculty and staff expertise to deliverable, equitable, and high-quality academic programs.

Initiative A1.4: Partner with industries, agencies, and organizations that enhance our academic and professional preparation via internships, clinical and field experiences, and job shadowing opportunities.

Initiative A1.5: Survey first-year and first-generation student needs as part of a broad analysis of first-year retention.

Initiative A1.6: Collaborate with first-year program faculty and staff to develop and implement first-year-specific student learning outcomes assessment.

Strategy A2: Recruit and retain high-quality faculty. Help them adjust to the institution through mentorship, instructional support, and professional development opportunities that refine and enhance their instructional practice to increase student learning.

Initiative A2.1: Identify mentorship for new faculty that includes diverse departmental and university-wide participation.

Initiative A2.2: Provide instructional coaching to faculty from a center for faculty excellence and professionally trained instructional peer mentors, followed by ongoing workshop training opportunities.

Initiative A2.3: Allocate financial support for professional development, including training, research, and presentation.

Initiative A2.4: Prioritize collaboration with experts in their fields, both academic and/or professional.

Initiative A2.5: Recognize and reward faculty who demonstrate excellence in teaching, research, and/or service.

Initiative A2.6: Invest in contemporary academic facilities and teaching resources, including face-to-face teaching labs and studios to enhance online learning processes.

Strategy A3: Cultivate a widespread culture of assessment.

Initiative A3.1: Assess data collection methods and results practiced historically on each campus. Generate best practices for student learning outcomes assessment and faculty evaluation.

Initiative A3.2: Overhaul the faculty and staff climate surveys to establish a contemporary culture of assessment. Maximize response rates for such surveys. Analyze data and produce detailed survey reports that recommend improvement of assessment and iterative strategies for actionable transformation.

Initiative A3.3: Support all constituents of the university with assessment and provide accurate and continuous information that reflects university-wide communication and decision-making processes.

Strategy A4: Develop a cohesive support system that networks all stakeholders (students and families, faculty, staff, and university administration) to deliver student success.

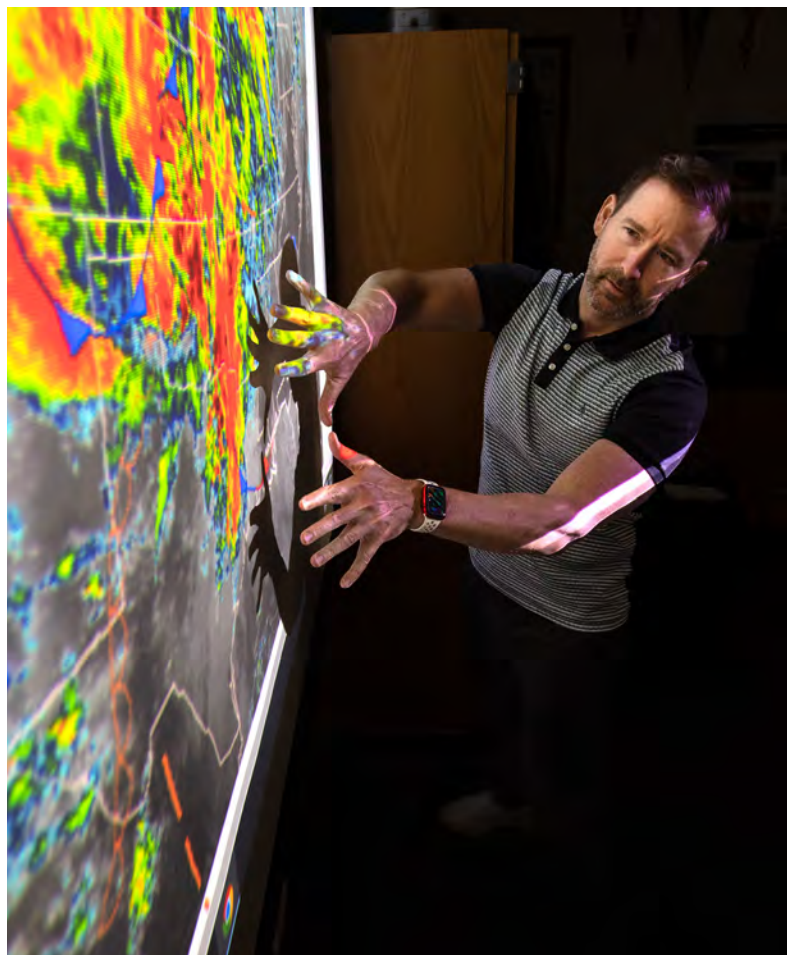
Initiative A4.1: Employ a holistic advising model that will ensure on-time student registration, improve student retention, and maximize graduation rates.

Initiative A4.2: Establish innovative tutoring and supplemental instruction to minimize DFW rates and prepare students for timely graduation.

Initiative A4.3: Develop student mentoring programs that include peer mentoring and faculty and staff mentors for students. Personalize student connections in the pivotal first weeks of each academic semester that join students to academic programs and university life.

Initiative A4.4: Integrate early-alert systems that increase attendance and classroom performance.

Initiative A4.5: Embed career readiness initiatives throughout academic curriculums and increase the number of students attaining professional internships.



GROWTH

We are student ready, guiding our students toward personal, financial, and academic success.

Pennsylvania Western University is invested in the personal and social development of our students. We support our students through their time with our organization, assist them with personal challenges, and prepare them for personal success.

Strategy S1: Create a welcoming, diverse campus culture that respects and celebrates a sense of belonging.

Initiative S1.1: Reduce gap in graduation and retention rates of underrepresented and underserved students by identifying graduation and retention rates of all students to compare statistics to underrepresented and underserved students.

Initiative S1.2: Establish baseline campus culture data by conducting student focus groups to determine how and to what extent the Pennsylvania Western University campus culture respects and celebrates diversity.

Initiative S1.3: Educate students on how to use their voice to make responsible changes through resources, programs, and services related to activism.

Strategy S2: Develop and implement best practices that support the student experience.

Initiative S2.1: Increase awareness of student support services.

Initiative S2.2: Create a culture of student self-advocacy.

Initiative S2.3: Enhance academic support services through new and existing technology.

Initiative S2.4: Increase retention by providing resources and critical deadlines essential to student success.





Strategy S3: Develop a holistic well-being model by providing support, programs, and services for all students.

Initiative S3.1: Conduct student surveys and focus groups to determine campus-specific student wellness needs.

Initiative S3.2: Develop best practice standards for health and wellness by reviewing national data on health and wellness best practices.

Initiative S3.3: Create, maintain, and distribute an easily accessible database of resources available to students.

Initiative S3.4: Identify clear and consistent student wellness support services and procedures that are easily accessible.

Strategy S4: Engage students through co-curricular opportunities.

Initiative S4.1: Increase participation in co-curricular opportunities and focus on social and transitional experiences of our first-year students.

Initiative S4.2: Identify areas of improvement related to the student experience by conducting student organization surveys and focus groups.

Initiative S4.3: Develop and/or revise training programs and communications plans for student leaders/advisors.

Initiative S4.4: Increase retention of our students through inclusive programming and events.

COLLABORATION

We engage in innovative partnerships, programs, and opportunities to address the needs of our regional communities and the commonwealth.

Pennsylvania Western University is focused on understanding our region's unique strengths and needs and aligning the power of Pennsylvania Western University to help transform not only our students, but also our communities. The success of Pennsylvania Western University is symbiotic with the success of western Pennsylvania; we are essential to one another. With this understanding, Pennsylvania Western University will direct our resources and effectively engage our stakeholders through these strategies and initiatives to drive success.

Strategy R1: Align Pennsylvania Western University partnerships, people, and programs to advance existing regional and commonwealth plans for economic, workforce, and community development.

Initiative R1.1: Create a diverse, cross-divisional team, with expertise and the support of leadership, to assess current connections, support, and impact in advancing western Pennsylvania's existing plans for economic, workforce, and community development.

Initiative R1.2: Identify and prioritize the organizations and initiatives advancing existing economic, workforce, and community development plans for university membership, alignment, and/or resources.

Initiative R1.3: Inventory existing Pennsylvania Western University partnerships, programs, and relationships (alumni, trustees, faculty, staff, and students) with these organizations/initiatives. Create mechanism(s) to inform the cross-divisional team of new requests for university support for emerging projects.

Initiative R1.4: Develop resources to advance Pennsylvania Western University's impact in western Pennsylvania's economic, workforce, and community development initiatives.

Strategy R2: Grow innovation, entrepreneurship, and small businesses on our campuses and in our region.

Initiative R2.1: Inventory existing innovation, entrepreneurship, and small-business development programs, certifications, and resources (start-up hubs, etc.) on our campuses, along with Pennsylvania Western University economic partnerships in the region; promote as a collective story our commitment to growing entrepreneurs and small businesses in western Pennsylvania.

Initiative R2.2: Create a structure to connect our cross-divisional efforts to advance innovation, entrepreneurship, and small-business development.

Initiative R2.3: Promote innovation/entrepreneurial competitions, challenges, awards, and resources specifically available to students.



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Strategy R3: Engage western Pennsylvania communities through intentional and mutually beneficial engagement strategies to build the university’s reputation in our region.

Initiative R3.1: Survey and catalog employer and volunteer relationships of alumni, faculty, staff, and students in the region; use data to promote our connections and expand experiential learning opportunities for our students.

Initiative R3.2: Create a communications campaign to identify, recognize, and promote the stories of faculty, staff, students, and alumni who are champions in their communities.

Initiative R3.3: Create a communications campaign to rebuild and promote relationships with school districts and community-based education partners across our geographic footprint; update articulation, matriculation, and partnership agreements and share publicly to emphasize a robust series of “new Pennsylvania Western University partnerships.”

Initiative R3.4: Provide support to local chambers of commerce, employers, and business and government leaders in meeting their needs to advance western Pennsylvania and the university.

Strategy R4: Connect Pennsylvania Western University to western Pennsylvania success stories.

Initiative R4.1: Develop a plan to promote how Pennsylvania Western University uniquely contributes to the workforce and addresses shortages.

Initiative R4.2: Convene a comprehensive working group to identify potential communication priorities including communications, marketing, alumni, and students.

CULTURE

We share a sense of purpose that unites everyone and provides opportunities to learn, work, and thrive.

Pennsylvania Western University is a people-first organization that promotes lifelong learning. Our culture is built on collaboration and a commitment to personal growth. We aim to ensure the wellbeing of our workforce and celebrate their accomplishments.

Strategy E1: Develop and implement a talent development program that invests in professional and leadership growth of faculty and staff and evolves to meet employee career pathways and the strategic organizational mission, values, and vision.

Initiative E1.1: Develop a succession plan that aligns with Pennsylvania Western University's long-term goals and objectives, mitigate risk with turnover, and cultivate existing talent by matching employees with future organizational needs.

Initiative E1.2: Create and provide professional development opportunities for all employees, tailored to their unit, classifications, and professional responsibilities.

Initiative E1.3: Create an inclusive Center for Excellence that provides professional development for all employees and coordinates a repository of trainings/recordings for accessibility.

Initiative E1.4: Develop a strategy to provide professional development on diversity, equity, and inclusion issues.

Strategy E2: Develop and implement a recognition program that includes a framework of formal recognition, informal recognition, and everyday recognition to support an organizational culture of personal and meaningful recognition of all employees.

Initiative E2.1: Develop and implement the framework for university-wide recognition that includes formal, informal, and everyday recognition.

Initiative E2.2: Identify and evaluate employee recognition platforms that will help facilitate peer-to-peer feedback, create online recognition, and provide analytics to help evaluate the impact of recognition on employee engagement.

Initiative E2.3: Promote achievements in key media placements and internal communication outlets.

Strategy E3: Develop and implement a comprehensive wellness program that supports and contributes to a culture of wellness for all employees.

Initiative E3.1: Gather baseline data on employee wellness and work-life balance to drive the development of a wellness toolkit and programming.

Initiative E3.2: Develop a wellness toolkit for supervisors and managers to create a culture of wellness in departments.

Initiative E3.3: Develop and implement a work-life balance and wellness program that offers evidence-based, accessible, and relevant programming for all employees.

Strategy E4: Develop, launch, and foster a culture of collaboration across the three campuses.

Initiative E4.1: Develop an employee internal communications plan that promotes timely and transparent communication to staff and makes information available in an accessible format.

Initiative E4.2: Foster and support a greater employee voice in decision-making and change.

Initiative E4.3: Develop a plan to build a culture of engagement with employees.

Strategy E5: Develop and implement an onboarding program focused on culture, knowledge, resources, and support.

Initiative E5.1: Establish a taskforce to define onboarding strategy and goals.

Initiative E5.2: Develop an online welcome package and online resources for new hires.

Initiative E5.3: Develop an on-boarding toolkit for supervisors and managers to create a culture of wellness in departments.

Initiative E5.4: Develop a communications strategy and educational tools that educate employees about benefits throughout the year.





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