Engagement 2000

Beyond Aspirations: A Learner - Centered Culture for the State University of New York at Oswego

Goals and Strategies

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC LIFE:

A LEARNER-CENTERED MODEL

GOAL I: We will forge a learner-centered academic culture at Oswego State. This culture will improve academic quality by preparing students to become lifelong learners; by helping them develop skills and abilities of value in the workplace and in our diverse 21st-century world; and by fostering in them a disposition to live in a responsible and reflective manner.

The learner-centered approach to instruction encourages students to be actively involved in the construction of knowledge with real-world applications (via the gathering and synthesizing of information, using the skills of inquiry, critical thinking, problem-solving, and written and oral communication). Students and faculty should collaborate in both the learning process and in the continuous assessment of that process; the classroom environment should be cooperative and supportive. Theodore Marchese (vice president of the AAHE) summarizes the essential ingredients of deep and meaningful learning this way: learner independence and choice; intrinsic motivators and natural curiosity; rich, timely, usable feedback coupled with occasions for reflection; and active involvement in real-world tasks (emphasizing higher-order abilities) done with other people in high-challenge, low-threat environments that provide for practice and reinforcement.

In order to build a learner-centered culture and improve the quality of academic life, we propose to:

I. 1 Encourage the transformation of instruction in and out of class, as well as the array of support services and facilities that sustain instruction, so that a new culture of high academic expectations, engagement in active learning, and integrated curricula will be forged;

I. 2 Pursue a stronger, more diverse student profile;

I. 3 Pursue higher rates of student retention;

I. 4 Attract and retain the best "teacher-scholars"; and

I. 5 Encourage an across-the-board commitment to and use of internal assessment and external accreditation to measure and improve the quality of learning and instruction.

STRATEGIES:

I.1
· Provide incentives for innovations in curriculum and teaching that help establish Oswego State as an institution that is learner-centered, where active learning is the norm.

· Promote a climate that values and celebrates an academic culture and diversity.

· Consider more widespread application of "Gateway" and "Capstone" courses across the entire curriculum.

· Continue to raise and maintain academic standards.

· Pursue the development of a cross functional "Academic Services Center" for student success services as well as spaces conducive to more informal interactions.

· Integrate experiential learning models into major curricula.

· Extend the new paradigm instituted in Hart Hall of faculty mentors in residential environments.

· Foster faculty/student partnerships and reaffirm the importance of service to students in faculty/staff evaluative criteria.

· Make Penfield Library a "hub" of the campus.

· Increase the number of professional development opportunities focused on learner-centered teaching.

· Develop and support more interdisciplinary learning communities.

I. 2

· Set annual goals to increase the mean SAT score of entering freshmen and the mean high school GPS over a five-year period.

· Increase the percentage of underrepresented students to 10%.

· Enroll more students from urban areas, down state, out of state, and international sectors.

· Develop campus-wide, state and national awareness of Oswego as a "Learner-Centered Campus" where active learning will be the defining attribute of our academic culture.
· Encourage and financially support faculty-student collaboration in research and scholarship.

· Develop and promote Centers of Excellence among Oswego's academic programs that provide strategic advantages due to their recognized excellence, demand, increased employment opportunities, and appeal to highly qualified students.

I. 3
· Provide intensive first year advisement/mentoring services.

· Communicate mid-semester academic standing to all first year students in all of their courses.

· Provide a "first year academic experience" for all new students to help establish high academic aspirations and structures supportive of learning
    communities.

· Develop a menu of first year opportunities including leadership training, service learning, honors programs, and college success courses.

· Link freshman academic and residential environments.

· Strengthen connections between social and intellectual life by establishing a variety of active and distinct learning experiences and through a heightened sense of community.

I. 4
· Ensure that a "critical mass" of faculty will continue to pursue innovative teaching and active learning strategies and that their experiences will be available as models for the benefit of their colleagues.

· Fund faculty research and scholarly activity as well as professional travel beyond current levels.

· Place strong emphasis on the shift to a learner-centered paradigm and provide new and redesigned faculty evaluation criteria to reflect this emphasis.

· Re-conceive recognition and faculty evaluation criteria to indicate that a high value will be placed on creative teaching and the scholarship of pedagogy, while continuing to affirm achievements in traditional scholarship and research.

· Increase orientation and mentoring programs for new faculty that focus on learner-centered teaching.

· Ensure that the most positive and professional faculty recruitment efforts are employed in all search processes.

· Examine and begin to correct salary inequities.

I.5

· Create a proactive assessment culture on campus by developing and implementing assessment for first year programs, student performance in first
 year and senior level courses, and students' classroom and out-of-classroom experiences.

· Assess the impact of our general education program upon academic quality, student learning.

· Position Oswego State as a leader among peer institutions in the development of learner/student-centered teaching by supporting current and new initiatives for faculty self-assessment.

· Foster department-level strategic planning and assessment implementation and provide opportunities for departments to share assessment plans, models, methodologies, and results.

·   Provide financial and personnel support where appropriate for academic departments to achieve national accreditation from their respective discipline-specific accrediting bodies.

· Expand the numbers of indicators of academic quality, including academic and post-graduation data.

Goals and Strategies

A FACULTY COMMITTED TO ENRICHING AND EXPANDING THE CLASSROOM

GOAL II : Increased support and recognition for faculty who excel in mentoring and collaborating with students and colleagues; to provide such support and recognition we will strive to:

II. 1 Aid faculty in their undertaking to engage in a dynamic curriculum based on modern teaching technology;

II. 2 Provide opportunities for students and faculty to form partnerships in scholarly and creative activity;

II. 3 Create a campus ethic of mentoring and active learning between faculty and students that exists beyond the boundaries of classrooms, class times,and class formats; and

II. 4 Reinforce the values and expectations of teacher-scholar model.

STRATEGIES

II.1

· Expand the efforts of the Center for Teaching and Innovation to provide individualized consultations with faculty, present discipline-based demonstrations, and make available to faculty one-on-one assistance with projects.

· Improve faculty access to technology and create more small and midsize "smart" classrooms.

· Increase technical support, including just-in-time assistance.

II.2

· Develop incentives and structure operational resources to support student/faculty collaboration in scholarship, research, and creative activities.

· Foster the intellectual interests of students and faculty and create communities of scholars by encouraging and supporting centers for interdisciplinary research.

· Develop a campus-wide model for integrating the sponsorship of student research, independent studies, internships and honors theses into faculty teaching loads.

II.3

· Establish sources of regular support for speakers, field trips, for students attendance at professional meetings, and other co curricular activities.

· Encourage more teaching at non-traditional times and in "other venues" such as, in residence halls, lounges, snack areas, Rice Creek, Fallbrook and other campus facilities.

· Expand the "classroom" to include faculty participation in international education, on-site instruction, urban education, and experienced based education.

II.4

· Reflect professional values and expectations that reinforce commitment to the teacher-scholar model with an increasing emphasis on active learning and the involvement of students in research, scholarship in all faculty personnel matters from the search process

onward. Revise the institutional documentation (the provost's annual memorandum) of the Criteria of Board of Trustees to:

a. Establish expectations for teaching, scholarship, and service-- most heavily weighting teaching.

b. Privilege service activities that involve direct contact with students outside the classroom. Define participation in specific student advisement
programs as service to clarify its status in the overall faculty workload.

c. Establish an institution-wide expectation for annual plans for all faculty.

d. State an expectation for expanded documentation of teaching effectiveness and student-related service

e. State explicitly the value of the scholarship of pedagogy and grant writing in faculty profiles.

· Reconsider the role of the A&S sub- divisional and School committees in the DSI process.

· Establish an incentive program to recognize excellence in teaching.

Goals and Strategies

A Diverse Learning Community that Nurtures Academic Growth, Personal Success, and Social Responsibility

GOAL III: To strengthen the development of a diverse learning community focused on facilitating the academic and personal development of each student,
we will:

III.1   Expand living and learning communities;

III.2   Create activities/opportunities that integrate social and academic aspects of campus life;

III.   Foster an institutional climate that promotes the value of human diversity;

III.4   Promote healthy and responsible lifestyle choices;

III.5   Create awareness of traditions that tie students to the institution;

III.6   Continue to expand and develop first year programs for all students; and

III.7 Foster the development of a sense of social responsibility; and personal success.

STRATEGIES

III.1

· Coordinate the development of current and future learning communities and living/learning communities.

III.2

· Promote the notion of coupling academic and social aspects of university life through the expansion of programmatic partnerships between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

· Establish a method to engage students critically in the development of the integration of the academic and social aspects of their educational experience.

· Determine methods and principles that reward faculty roles in student life and student involvement in academic endeavors.

· Encourage and financially support faculty and students who submit joint proposals for travel to professional conferences.

· Expand travel, study, and mentoring opportunities for students, faculty, and staff.

· Study how campus events are currently programmed and marketed to students, and determine a way of systematizing access to information about upcoming events, daily programs, and contact persons for events on campus.

· Develop and fund collaborative programs between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs which focus on student learning experiences, faculty-student interaction, and a student-learning centered campus culture.

· Promote life-long learning by encouraging academic departments to build programs that set attendance requirements for arts programs, lectures, and other campus activities.

III.3

· Expand and refine the comprehensive plan for recruiting and retaining faculty and staff of color.

· Ensure that all students will be provided sufficient access to computer hardware and opportunity for training in computer applications to achieve defined levels of computer facility.

· Build on the successes generated by the Alumni of Color Reunion (Oct. 1996) with institutional support for future reunions and related activities.

· Establish an "ARTSWEGO Initiative" that will infuse selected performing arts, writing arts, gallery, film, and visiting artists programs with an annual cultural theme tied to efforts already underway in Oswego County.

· Establish and promote a visible confidential reporting process for reviewing and resolving conflict, particularly where bias is perceived to be a contributing factor.

· Establish an institution-wide Diversity Training Team.

III.4

· Expand the possibilities residents have for living environments defined along lines that promote healthy, responsible lifestyles (e.g. substance-free floors or wings).

· Continue to develop social marketing and peer education programs intended to reduce alcohol and drug use by students.

· Design programming and funding strategies to use the existing student center more effectively, providing activities and an environment that would encourage students more often to expect to find recreational/social and intellectual opportunities available on campus.

· Develop planning and programming for a new student center that will encompass the concept of a "living room" of the campus, a space more conductive to students gathering for a variety of activities and diverse interests.

III.5

· Coordinate year round celebrations of Oswego traditions and develop new strategies to enhance members' connection to the college.

· Support and promote departments and programs whose existing activities connect students to (or create "traditions" for) the College.

III.6

· Implement a plan and identify resources for coordinating a comprehensive First Year Experience for all new students.

· Establish a means of recognizing the scholarly achievements of freshmen.

III.7

· Make clear expectations of academic integrity and social responsibility and consider adopting a university-wide statement of community principles/standards.

· Expand team building and leadership activities such as "Project Adventure" and "Challenge Course".

· Promote "leadership" within the context of a learner-centered community.

· Develop new initiatives and opportunities that promote leadership.

· Promote new and expanded opportunities for volunteer service and service learning.

· Establish a means of coordinating Greek life/Greek organizations for the campus.

· Create a "Student Development Transcript" process that identifies certain approved learning experiences in the out of class environment such as leadership, organizational activities, volunteer service, or peer education; additionally, establish an annual student recognition ceremony to highlight the transcripted activities and achievements.

Goals and Strategies

Strengthening Our Use of Technology in Support of Student Learning

GOAL IV: Using technology to support student learning will require a new focus on providing faculty and staff development, support, and training.
Providing accessible and reliable technology will require examination of funding sources and administrative organization. To achieve this goal, we will:

IV.1 Support student learning, ensure significant faculty and staff development opportunities;

IV.2 Make information technology, academic equipment, and other technologies accessible and reliable for all members of the campus community;

IV.3 Enhance and support internal and external communications with more effective use of technology; and

IV.4 Create an organizational structure for supporting and maintaining seamless, efficient access to new and evolving teaching and learning technologies.

STRATEGIES

IV.1

· Improve end user support by enhancing the Technology Support Center (TSC) for more individualized support of future training needs.

· Expand the responsibility of the TSC to include all academic equipment.

· Increase visibility and advertising of Computer-Based Training (CBT) on-line training.

· Extend the functions of the Center for Teaching and Innovation, to include instructional design, technology infusion, and faculty development.

· Develop a comprehensive plan for faculty and staff training to use available technology and culminate in classroom/workplace ready projects.

IV.2

· Identify and develop a reliable, predictable funding stream to support procurement and maintenance of technology equipment.

· Consider a regularized plan for computer replacement, modified to include all faculty and staff, targeted to user needs.

· Establish similar replacement plans for other technology required in classrooms, studios, laboratories, and fitness facilities.

· Develop a plan to move to the application/file server approach for software distribution and file storage to allow for seamless access to applications and files.

· Begin a program to place projector and network connections in each classroom.

· Implement a program to advise/require newly admitted students to purchase or lease computers required by their intended majors, and create and maintain a plan to support and maintain these computers.

· Begin working with vendors, development, and financial aid to create funding support plans for student computer purchase/lease.

· Define levels of connectivity needed in each classroom, using a "level of service" approach.

· Centralize support for general and departmental labs and establish procedures and criteria for creation and maintenance of departmental labs.

· Develop "general access areas" that provide network connections and peripheral support for students with laptops.

IV.3

· Establish minimum hardware requirement for students, faculty, staff, and administrators based on discipline or functional need.

· Create software standards for common applications to support internal communications.

IV.4

· Consolidate responsibility for technology services under a Chief Technology Officer (including Instructional Computing Center, Administrative Computer Center, Telecommunications, Networking, and Learning Resources) which will anticipate and respond to technological advances.

· Establish campus policy on electronic publishing, copyright, and intellectual property issues.

· Continually assess functions of current technology advisory boards and their roles in managing technology, defining responsibility and accountability.

Goals and Strategies

An Inviting Physical Setting

GOAL V: To ensure a sound physical infrastructure, and enhanced sense of community and aesthetically pleasing surroundings that better support the needs of an outstanding regional university with a unique identity, and that help us develop a campus culture and physical environment in which teaching and learning are the central focus, the institution will:

V.1 Modernize, better maintain and improve the appearance and functionality of the physical facilities as part of a comprehensive long range plan;

V.2   Change the campus culture by enhancing a sense of community with more inviting access to buildings, indoor and outdoor gathering places, improved connectivity between instructional and living spaces that supports our academic mission in a vibrant living environment; and

V.3 Create an overall physical environment that is welcoming to visitors and campus community alike, that fosters respect for our local environment, and that inspires a sense of stewardship to maintain these physical assets at their best.

STRATEGIES

V. 1

· Develop a continuing plan and set of standards for upgrading classrooms and laboratories with appropriate technologies and other facilities that enhance the learning environment.

· Continue inclusive planning activities for capital expenditures.

· Implement the September 1999 Capital Plan.

· Benchmark standards and secure resources necessary to improve the quality and functionality of interior spaces: classrooms,
    labs, public spaces, offices, and meeting areas on a regular schedule.

· Structure physical spaces that engage faculty and students in casual social interaction, and formal interaction in an intimate setting.

· Rehabilitate campus landscaping to enhance both the aesthetics and functionality of the outdoor environment through more
    informal gathering places, exterior learning spaces, and building connectivity.

· Enhance appearance of building entrances as welcoming/gathering places.

· Improve public handicap access to campus facilities in compliance with ADA standards.

· Implement a campus parking plan and infrastructure to establish better access for visitors as well as the college community.

· Enhance attractiveness of spaces by establishing zones for trash, recycling, vending, and smoking that better address campus and community needs.

· Explore improving food services and lounges for informal gatherings by introducing a coffee cart/snack bar in every academic building.

V.2

· Improve the type of interior spaces available in all new and renovated buildings; designs will take into account the requirement for accessibility, seamless learning environments, shared instructional spaces, and informal gathering places.

· Develop an interpretive plantings program (utilizing trees, shrubs, flowers, etc.) to enhance the campus' natural and educational environment.

· Consider developing an Outdoor Classroom space.

· Consider developing other "community " sites for outdoor instruction, arts and entertainment, and dining.

· Continue the development of a Lakeside Recreational Trail to take advantage of our natural location.

· Determine the feasibility of utilizing Fallbrook's recreational area and Rice Creek Field Station for significantly expanded winter,
   and additional multi-seasonal educational and recreational use.

·   Enhance athletic facilities to provide improved and extended recreational opportunities for the college community and others in
   CNY.

V.3

· Develop clearly marked entranceways to the college with information kiosks at each entrance.

· Develop clear, uniform, interior and exterior attractive signage for the entire campus.

· Implement more effective means of disseminating information regarding campus events.

Goals and Strategies

INCREASE RESOURCES TO MEET THE CHALLENGE

GOAL VI: To increase the financial resources available to meet our ongoing needs and have sufficient funds available to take advantage of emerging opportunities, we will:

VI.1   Diversify and maximize all traditional and non-traditional revenue sources, through such means as effective enrollment management strategies, increased research and grants productivity, and heightened development efforts to increase both operating and endowment funds;

VI.2   Make funding available for new strategic directions; and

VI.3 Build a budgeting and accounting system that allows for better analysis and decision-making and provides processes that encourage shared governance to set shared priorities;

STRATEGIES:

VI. 1

· Develop an internal marketing plan to reinforce academic quality and pride in the institution for faculty, staff, students and alumni.

· Increase student enrollment to 6,850 AAFTE (+250) by 2004-2005 while continuing to increase admission standards and preserving access. Increases
    must be a function of more robust applicant pools, improved retention rates and the development of new graduate and undergraduate programs in areas of high demand.

· Increase donor support by aggressively mounting development to fund campus priorities such as a major gift program and a planned giving program with immediate emphasis on the September 1999 Capital Plan.

· The development program must spring from a carefully considered plan which includes goals and strategies. This program must be appropriately staffed and evaluated.

· Continue to work with appropriate members of the New York State legislature, the Office of the Governor and System Administration to enhance support for the college.

· Increase net revenues from revenue generating centers such as Continuing Education Programs, Summer Session Programs, research activities, and community and business partnerships.

· Insure that state funding derived through the Budget Allocation Plan (BAP) model is maximized.

· Through a process of benchmarking identify best practices that will help enhance program effectiveness, student/faculty satisfaction, and faculty, staff and administrative productivity.

· Continue to actively explore the development of on-campus apartment style accommodations and other appropriate living options that would be occupied during the academic year by upper division and graduate students and available during the summer for the expansion of summer program activity.

· Develop graduate and undergraduate programs in high demand areas.

· Organize our resources to more aggressively implement an external marketing and public relations campaign, with dedicated annual funding.

· Develop an institution-wide client service training program, offered to all members of the campus community as part of an orientation for all employees.

VI.2

· Continue to build a Strategic Initiatives Fund from existing resources without adversely affecting essential campus programs and services.

· Study overhead charges currently assessed through IFR, ASC and Foundation accounts; consider selectively reducing these charges to create
    incentives for revenue-generating activity.

· Encourage development of institutional, systemic and programmatic grants that further the college's identified strategic initiatives.

VI.3

· Implement a web-based, user-friendly budget inquiry and record system that will allow faculty, staff and program managers to view appropriate
    account data from desktop computers.

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