STANDARD VI: PLANNING, RESOURCES, AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

Introduction

West Chester University uses a variety of assessment strategies to guide our planning and resource allocation processes. We have effectively utilized our planning processes to reorganize university administrative structures, increase efficiency, and adapt academic programs and student support services; we have built the facilities and infrastructure necessary to house these programs and services; and we allocated human and financial resources needed to maintain our focus on our mission to nurture graduates to succeed personally and professionally and contribute to the common good.

In our prior strategic plan, *Building on Excellence* (2013-2018), we identified an opportunity for improvement within the administrative structures of the university, which led us to re-organize the academic colleges. We engaged a process that solicited stakeholder input throughout. This is the kind of continuous improvement process that has bolstered our success. It helped us rethink nearly the entire enterprise: from financial aid, enrollment management, admissions, to HR. We've made dozens of changes in our structures since the last Middle States self-study in order to assure that the university was able to continue to compete in our market and continue to serve the students we admit.

Most recently, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the university initiated a nimble process that enabled an instantaneous response that was fully anchored to all elements of the strategic plan. The university reviewed internal and external data to assess alternate modes of instruction. It balanced the need to meet unprecedented moral, civic, and public health obligations, while considering the physical reorganization of service delivery, and the provision of additional support services to ensure student success. The internal university process involved evaluations by departments, university curricular committees, upper administration (i.e., deans and provosts), along with evolving direction from the governor and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. It was determined that the modality of instruction must be (a) consistent with the university's mission and goals as delineated in the strategic plan, (b) sustainable for an underdetermined amount of time, and (c) beneficial to the student population who will be accessing the alternate modality.

At WCU, a culture of assessment provides a strong foundation to evaluate strategies that (a) best support the university's mission and priorities as delineated in our strategic plan (*Pathways to Student Success*) and (b) respond to a shifting enrollment landscape. To these ends, assessment at WCU guides the allocation of resources to strengthen WCU's efforts to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community, support student success and learning, and maintain its financial strength. Evidence of WCU's ongoing response to assessment information in recent years include the planning and adaptation of facilities and human resources, and the addition of new academic programs, including four new doctoral programs.

Arguably, the biggest dilemma that West Chester University has faced in recent years is managing tremendous enrollment growth (22% growth since 2010), while simultaneously planning for expected decline in the number of high school graduates in the region—the demographic group that traditionally contributes the most to first-year and transfer classes of students at WCU. While enrollment growth often requires the expansion of facilities and additional human resources, student support services, and academic programs, we understand that strategic growth must support the university's mission and anticipate fluctuations in enrollment.

Fall 2010	Total Headcount	Full-Time	Part-Time	Male	Female	White	African American	Native American	Asian	Latino	Non-resident alien
Undergraduate	**12,232**	11,139	1,093	4,967	7,265	10,258	1,136	55	261	435	34
Graduate	**2,258**	795	1,463	647	1,611	1,873	197	8	60	51	60
TOTAL	**14,490**	11,934	2,556	5,614	8,876	12,131	1,333	63	321	486	94

Fall 2019	Total Headcount	Full-Time	Part-Time	Male	Female	White	African American	Native American	Asian	Latino	Non-resident alien
Undergraduate	**14,615**	13,044	1,571	5,952	8,663	10,810	1,609	18	372	915	58
Graduate	**3,054**	1,050	2,004	929	2,125	2,203	436	4	93	144	51
TOTAL	**17,669**	14,094	3,575	6,881	10,788	13,013	2,045	22	465	1,059	109

% change 2010-2019	Total Headcount	Full-Time	Part-Time	Male	Female	White	African American	Native American	Asian	Latino	Non-resident alien
Undergraduate	**19%**	17%	44%	20%	19%	5%	42%	-67%	43%	110%	71%
Graduate	**35%**	32%	37%	44%	32%	18%	121%	-50%	55%	182%	-15%
TOTAL	**22%**	18%	40%	23%	22%	7%	53%	-65%	45%	118%	16%

Assessment for Planning and Improvement *(Criterion 1,2 & 9)*

West Chester University's steadfast commitment to student success and institutional achievement is supported by a continuous effort to adapt to change and make institutional improvements. The WCU Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IE Plan), first developed in 2020, supports implementation of these efforts by guiding the campus community to effectively design and use assessment and planning processes. As addressed in Standards I, IV, and V, the IE Plan outlines how the WCU Mission, strategic plan, assessment of student learning, and administrative assessment processes are implemented.

The strategic planning process at West Chester University helps the university define and communicate our priorities to the campus community and our partners and allows us to track and evaluate progress in achieving key objectives and outcomes. Planning processes adopted in the university's divisions and colleges – the Facilities Division's Campus Master Plan, IS&T's Strategic Plan, the university's Climate Action Plan, and other initiatives – are specifically developed to support and build on the outcomes established in the university's strategic plan.

Our current strategic plan, *Pathways to Student Success* (2019-2022), is the foundation of our planning processes at WCU and reflects the institution's mission and goals. Five priority areas frame the strategic plan and are clearly linked to the university's mission: (1) Learning, (2) Community Engagement, (3) Personal & Professional Development, (4) Diversity & Inclusion, and (5) Sustainability.

The collaborative, university-wide effort to develop *Pathways to Student Success* began with a set of priorities based on assessment results from the preceding strategic plan, *Building on Excellence* (2013-2018). Feedback from stake-holders (faculty, staff, and community partners) was reviewed, and the vision of our institutional leadership, President Fiorentino and members of the President's Cabinet and the Council of Trustees contributed to the effort.

Assessment of the goals and objectives of *Building* directly resulted in reorganizations within the Division of Academic Affairs, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter and discussed in more detail below. Furthermore, Goal 3 in the *Pathways* Learning priority area ("foster life-long learning to encourage students to be informed and active citizens in a local and global context") was added to the plan based on assessment results that identified the need to develop the university's global initiatives.

The leadership structure for *Pathways* was designed to be inclusive and representative, comprising three

chairs, or "tri-chairs," that represented faculty, staff, and administration. The tri-chair teams led the development of goals, outcomes, and initiatives for each priority. The tri-chair leadership structure ensured that each strategic priority workgroup included the voices of all constituents of the WCU employee base. The tri-chairs of all five priority areas comprised the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. This leadership model was so productive and successful, that the MSCHE Self-Study Steering Committee replicated this structure. For each strategic plan priority area of *Pathways*, a committee of faculty and staff stakeholders was convened to develop the goals, outcomes, and initiatives.

During the planning process, the wider university community was invited to comment on and contribute at multiple points. Draft goals, outcomes, and initiatives were shared with the university community via the WCU Strategic Plan website and reviewed by interested students, faculty, and staff.

Initiatives outlined in *Pathways* were reviewed and prioritized on a timeline. At present, the progress towards achieving these initiatives are measured twice a year, and tracked using the university's assessment software system, Nuventive, which allows Steering Committee members and members of President's Cabinet to easily monitor progress and identify areas that need attention.

Assessment of administrative and educational support (AES) units at WCU has occurred at varying levels historically. Each unit uses appropriate methods for evaluating progress, from engaging in external reviews to conducting student surveys and acting on results. As leaders prepared for the MSCHE self-study process, a gap was identified in the administrative oversight of assessment. The position of Associate Provost for Accreditation and Assessment was created at the beginning of the self-study process to provide more effective oversight and to support the regional accreditation process. An inventory of assessment activities across the university was completed, and the need for standardized processes and forms was identified. This process is now laid out in the 2020 WCU Institutional Effectiveness Plan. The AES process allows for the varying capabilities of university units, supporting those units needing assistance and affording flexibility to units with a historically strong assessment culture in place, such as the Division of Student Affairs. All university units complete a standardized annual summary report which enables effective communication of results.

Within Academic Affairs, each college and administrative unit has its own mission and unit-specific strategic goals that guide planning and resource allocation. Similarly, the Division of Student Affairs has a strategic plan and assessment strategy reflecting its mission and values which guides planning and resource allocation. The Division of Student Affairs maintains a robust assessment portfolio focused on student learning, satisfaction, retention and success through co-curricular programs and services. Each unit's mission and strategic plans align with the institutional mission and strategic plan. The Division of Finance and Administration and Division of University Affairs also track goal achievement through the AES process.

Financial Planning and Resources *(Criterion 3, 4, & 7, ROA 11)*

Budgeting Process

West Chester University's budgeting process is further evidence of well-developed improvement and planning processes that are guided by the university mission and strategic plan. The budget at WCU is also a strategic instrument that drives the university's strategic planning process and resource allocation. At WCU, we assess the effectiveness of the budget process at multiple points using a variety of feedback and assessment tools. The budget planning process starts with several "what-if" scenarios to model a multi-year budget.

WCU's planning is often challenged by the uncertainty of state appropriations and tuition rates. As a member of the PA State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), WCU's share of state appropriations and tuition increases are determined by the Board of Governors. Tuition increases are voted upon at the April Meeting. Because of this uncertainty, WCU budget scenarios are developed, in collaboration with institutional research, using a number of different factors: specifically, changes in enrollment, impacts of tuition rate changes, increases in collective bargaining agreements as well as different expenditure assumptions.

The budget planning process has been enhanced using financial management software tools and a collaborative, comprehensive wide-scale stakeholder involvement strategy. Baseline budgets are assessed for validity and discussed with a newly-defined critical needs process. Many of these critical needs help the university achieve specific objectives of the strategic plan.

Stakeholder involvement was achieved with the formation of the Budget Review Committee, established by the president in 2015 to promote transparency, evaluate critical needs requests presented by each divisional vice president, and forward recommendations for the draft budget to the president. The president finalizes the university budget and prepares it to be discussed with and assessed by the Council of Trustees, who ultimately approves the budget.

The university functions independently, but being part of PASSHE enables the university to share resources and benefit from economies of scale. To systematize those benefits, PASSHE is implementing a system-wide redesign framework, which includes a new financial sustainability plan and a series of key metrics for institutions to follow that are within NACUBO standards. With respect to all the key financial sustainability metrics, WCU has proven itself to be the system's flagship institution. In fact, with the least state allocation per student per capita, WCU has shown its overall effectiveness in space utilization with the largest number of students in the system. In addition, the state system conducts an annual financial risk assessment for each of the 14 institutions, on which WCU continues to perform at the highest level in all categories.

An example of how we use the budget process as a strategic tool to support the university's mission is seen in our dedication to growth at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. *Building on Excellence* (the prior strategic plan), established objectives to 1) increase and support academic success with high-quality teaching, research, and scholarly activities, and 2) to establish an inclusive and diverse learning environment with equal access to education. To support these objectives and to accommodate the rise in enrollments in both undergraduate (2.8%) and graduate (28%) programs in the last five years, the university has consistently allocated additional financial resources to cover both permanent tenure-track and temporary adjunct faculty positions. Between fiscal years 2015 and 2020, budgeted faculty resources have increased by 92.4 FTE, representing a five-year growth rate of 11.49%. The largest expansion in faculty resources were in colleges or departments with significant increases in enrollment: the College of Business and Public Affairs received 19 new tenure-track lines, representing a 25% increase in five years. The Department of Social Work received eight new tenure-track lines, representing a 44% increase in five years, largely due to success of the social work program at the Philadelphia campus.

At WCU, our strategy for evaluating the effectiveness of our planning and budget processes includes regular and transparent communication to and solicitation of feedback from the campus community. Senior leadership utilizes a variety of methods designed to connect with a broad and diverse university audience, including digital communications via websites, videos, and email communications, open public forums and presentations that are publicized campus-wide, and printed articles and reports. The President's Office, for example, organizes an annual Fall Welcome Address, publishes a blog, creates monthly "First Friday" videos, and periodically sends email updates to the entire campus community.

While not all of these communications are directly related to financial planning, they reflect the broader principle of transparency and information-sharing that undergirds institutional assessment efforts.

As planning processes advance, key stakeholder groups are informed of progress made on budgeting processes and on proposals for new policies and programs. These stakeholder groups include administration, staff, faculty, and two student representatives (one undergraduate student and one graduate student). Student groups are also consulted and give feedback on student-related budget issues.

The purpose of this inclusive and participatory approach to planning and budgeting is to ensure that the strategic plan and other key planning documents are developed and implemented in ways which reflect the priorities and input of the entire university community of faculty, students, staff, alumni, and community partners. By ensuring diverse and knowledgeable contributions, accurate quantitative and qualitative data are collected, assessments are done which permit efficient allocation of financial and human resources, and the university's mission statement, vision, goals, and objectives are effectively applied in decision-making and operations.

Fiscal, Human, Technical, Physical Resources

Allocation of fiscal and human resources, as well as physical and technical infrastructure at WCU are also determined largely by the strategic plan and ongoing assessment of areas in need of additional support. Examples include our enrollment management approach, expansion into Philadelphia, and support of new programs.

The competitive market has forced WCU to reassess our enrollment management approach. Annual conversations at various levels of senior leadership led to the adoption of a more inclusive and coordinated process to include deans, service units, and the budget office. In 2017, the university contracted with Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) on four specific enrollment management initiatives: (1) developing a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, (2) increasing application demand, (3) growing the pool of prospects, and (4) creating a financial aid leveraging model. This partnership has helped undergraduate admissions enhance the recruitment plan and develop strategies to convert more prospects to applicants. Indeed, we saw a 20% increase in prospects turning to applicants from fall 2018 to fall 2019. Additionally, the university developed its first strategic enrollment plan, which was collaborative and inclusive in engaging faculty and staff across colleges and divisions. Finally, the university is in the third year of utilizing RNL's financial aid leveraging model.

We had data to suggest that the demographics were shifting, but because our mission drives us to support student success, we understood that as a public institution, we had a particular role to fill. Rather than seeing the shifting demographics as an enrollment problem, we sought ways to adapt as an institution so that we would be better prepared for the learners who would need us: adult learners, LatinX learners, learners with increasing financial burdens, learners with mental health challenges, and learners who need incredibly flexible skills for an ever-changing employment world.

In other words, alongside the strategic budgeting process, we had an opportunity to meet our access and diversity mission. The university reallocated some of its existing financial aid scholarship Education and General (E&G) budgets and added significant funding to support the financial aid leveraging model in order to provide greater access to a WCU education.

The university is in the third year of utilizing the model and is projected to spend $5.4 million in scholarships and grants for new and returning students. Through the model, institutional gift aid for

underrepresented minority (URM) students increased from $551,358 in fall 2017 to $1,225,954 in fall 2019, an increase of 122%, as URM enrollment during the same period increased by 6.5%. Overall, the university-funded gift aid expense increased 106% from $2.7 million in 2015 to $5.6 million in 2019. By fiscal year 2023, the university plans to annually invest $8 million in financial aid to continue supporting recruitment and retention efforts and to ensure affordability for WCU students. This is in alignment with the PASSHE System Redesign that is currently underway.

Responding to the increase in demand for adult programming in Center City, Philadelphia, West Chester University's Philadelphia location continues to increase program and course offerings. This location enrolls over 300 students with the undergraduate and graduate social
work programs being the largest. Recently, the university began offering the Bachelor of Science in Management and the Master of Science in Transformative Education at the Philadelphia campus. The Master of Public Administration will launch in fall 2021 and offer in-person and online courses.

The Philadelphia location is a partnership with the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), in which WCU sub-leases space from PASSHE. Staff of both organizations work collectively to ensure faculty and students have the resources and tools needed for success. Annually, WCU invests more than $1.8 million in the Philadelphia location to recruit, enroll, retain, and graduate this diverse student body. In October 2018, WCU acquired additional space in the building, providing a new and more visible location for additional classrooms and faculty offices, and a new student success center, which now provides tutoring, collaborative workspaces, technologies, and library materials.

The Philadelphia location has four full-time staff members: an associate director of student services, an associate director of student support, an assistant director for recruitment, and an administrative assistant position that is shared with PASSHE. Moreover, the university added four graduate assistantship positions at the Philadelphia location. Three of the positions support student learning in the student success center and the fourth supports the financial aid office for Philadelphia students.

In recent years, West Chester University has seen significant growth in new programs. Consistent with the 2013 strategic plan (*Building on Excellence*), much of this growth was focused in the development new doctoral programs in areas of strength at the university: public administration, nursing practice, education, and clinical psychology. In addition, two undergraduate programs were developed, the BS in Biomedical Engineering and BS in Planning as well as an MS in Human Resources. These new programs have impacted space/facilities, faculty hiring/personnel resources, and tuition revenue.

Space allocation for these programs and the financial commitment to support the renovation and new construction was based on the campus master plan, the university budget, and the strategic plan. Wayne Hall (a former dormitory) was renovated for use as faculty office space, laboratory space, and a home for a new Community Mental Health Clinic for the Doctorate of Psychology. The planning and ground-breaking for the Sciences and Engineering Center and the Commons was initiated to house multiple departments and programs including nursing and biomedical engineering.

Strategic assessments were completed to anticipate additional faculty workload related to these new programs, the additional credit hours that would be generated, and the number of new students needing support in the department. These projections helped evaluate faculty and other personnel hiring requests. Together, the new programs anticipate needing an additional 12+ new tenure-track hires and four+ non-tenure track staff and managers over the next three to four years. In addition, the graduate programs require additional graduate assistantships. These programs have projected financial break-even timelines as short as one year and as far out as 10 years, after which they expect to generate additional tuition revenue. All four new doctoral programs are now accredited and as such

have established to the satisfaction of discipline-specific accreditation agencies that: (a) they have resources sufficient to fulfill their objectives, (b) their mission is consistent and well-supported by the university, (c) they have sufficient resources to improve student achievement measures, and (d) they have assessment plans.

WCU has documented financial resources, a funding base, and a plan for financial development adequate to support its educational purposes and to ensure financial stability. The institution demonstrates a record of responsible fiscal management, has a prepared budget for the current year, and undergoes an external financial audit on an annual basis (ROA 11). The annual audited financial statements have resulted in clean, unqualified audit opinions with no management letter comments. Cash balances amounted to $220 million as of June 30, 2019. Net capital assets have increased to $183 million, and overall net position totals $465 million prior to the adoption of Gasb 68 & 75, which are actuarial-calculated liabilities for post-retirement benefits and pension liabilities.

WCU continues to demonstrate a strong financial position and can assess its effectiveness. The result is a university that has adequate fiscal and human resources, including physical and technical infrastructure, to support our operation now and in the future.

Decision Making (Criterion 5)

WCU has well-defined decision-making processes and clear assignment of responsibility and accountability. The administrative structure and reporting relationships are clearly documented in the organizational chart.

The university's curriculum review process gives evidence to how assessment guides our decision-making, resulting in a data-driven process that proceeds through a clear workflow of approvals in the CIM software system. The university procedure for adding new programs is governed by the Curriculum and Academic Policies Council (CAPC), as delineated by university policy . This process is inclusive, with professionals within the academic community voicing interest in developing a program that they, based on their professional expertise, believe is (a) consistent with the university's mission and goals as delineated in the strategic plan, (b) fulfills a need in the community, and (c) benefits the student population at WCU (see figure X below). Program proposals undergo internal evaluation by departments, university curricular committees, and upper administration (i.e., deans and provosts).
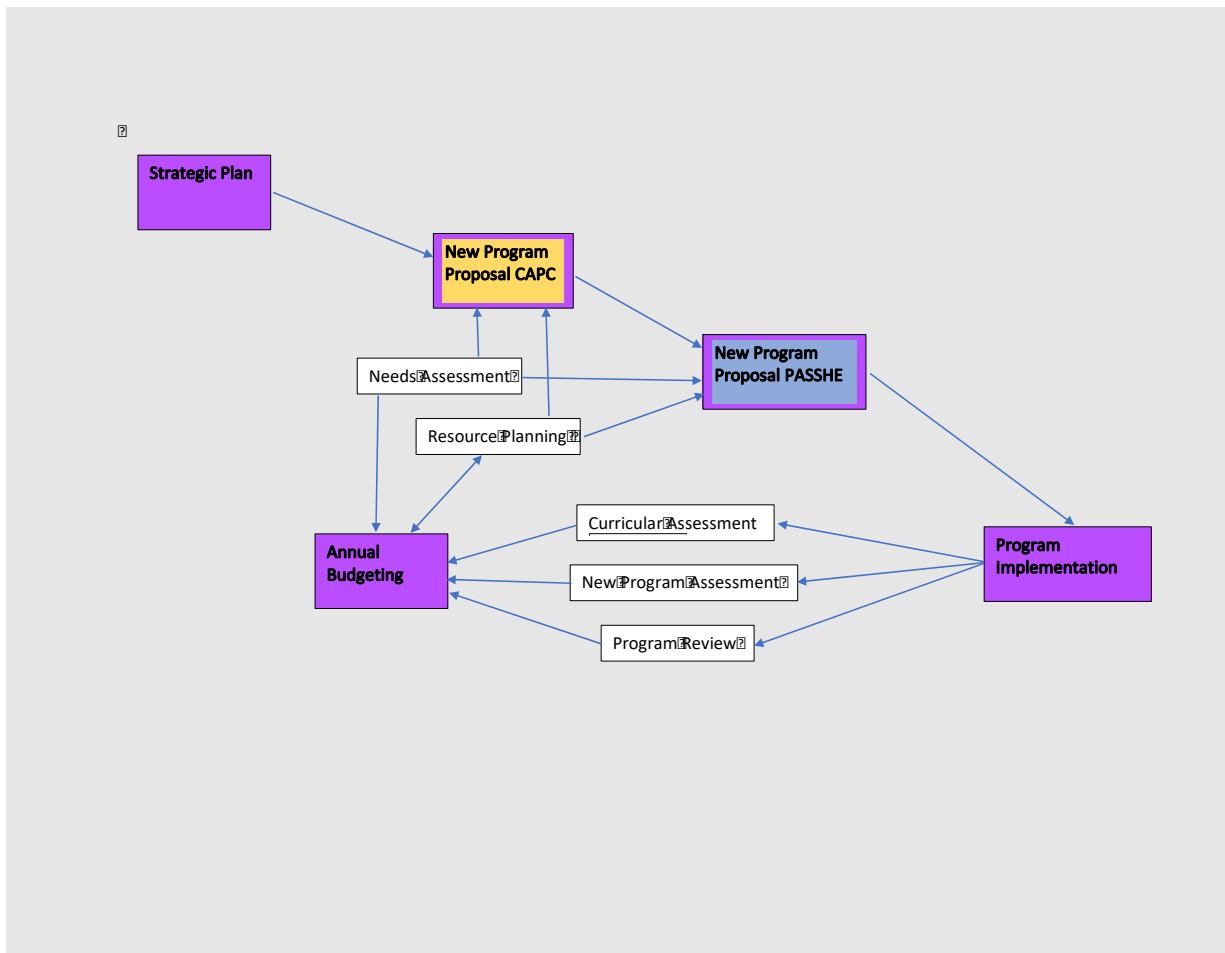
The new program proposal is then submitted to the university Curriculum and Policies Committee (CAPC – see Standard III), for review by relevant sub-committees, e.g., Undergraduate Programs Committee, Graduate Programs and Policy Committee, General Education Committee (https://www.wcupa.edu/viceProvost/capc/documents/CAPCBy-LawsApril2016.pdf p. 9-10). A recommendation for the new program is made by CAPC, and the Provost then determines whether the new program proposal will be submitted to PASSHE for adjudication by the Board of Governors and by the Chancellor's office, which gives the final approval.

The university's curriculum review process for new programs aligns well with the process prescribed by PASSHE (see new program proposals). Both require programs to articulate their alignment with the strategic goals of the state system, the university, and the goals and learning outcomes of the unit in which the program will reside. PASSHE's new program proposal process requires assessment of program demand and sustainability with the support of an external evaluation, e.g., Hanover report, and it also requires a five-year enrollment and financial projection. Resource planning, therefore, is required at early stages of program development, and necessitates evaluation by the Budget Review Committee (see below for details about this process). As per university policy, programs undergo a budgeting process that helps ensure quality (see below).

Upon PASSHE approval, the program is slated for a regular process of review: for non-accredited programs, the PASSHE five-year program review process (BoG Policy 1986-04-A: Program Review policy suspended, can't find update), and the annual WCU process for reporting on results of student learning outcomes assessments. Accredited programs participate in their specific accreditation

requirements. All of these processes help the university assess program effectiveness and needs.

Utilization of Resources *(Criterion 6 and 8)*

To facilitate planning for important areas of growth such as technological resources, facilities, and human resources, WCU has developed comprehensive plans that are closely linked to the university strategic plan and to the university budget. At WCU, we employ multiple methods of assessing the adequacy and efficient utilization of institutional resources.

The Information Services and Technology Division developed a comprehensive technology plan to support the mission of supporting students skilled in scientific reasoning and qualitative and quantitative literacies. Developed within the guidelines of governance and stewardship, the [Information Services and Technology Strategic Plan](#) (IS&T) addresses core areas of continuous improvement and renewed critical thinking, integrating advanced and evolving mobile connectivity to support the university. These include the cyberinfrastructure, advanced digital research and learning, pedagogical strategies, efficient business processes, and high-quality technical training and support for the campus community. Additionally, the plan incorporates assistive technologies to include technology use across the diverse abilities of the WCU students.

Mobile connectivity and the implementation of supporting infrastructure proves the effectiveness of assessment, planning and implementation, especially as it was put to the test during the university's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Within hours of the declaration of the pandemic, it was clear that we needed to sustain students' success beyond the brick and mortar facilities. Data-driven decisions were made based on the technology infrastructure already established and available. This technology base was relied on and pushed to meet unprecedented utilization.

In January 2020, IS&T had already begun to work on several initiatives based on assessment and planning, including a new ticketing management system and a new communications infrastructure. Both of these systems subsequently facilitated the smooth transition to remote work, teaching, and learning modalities. The ticketing system provided a streamlined and more easily accessible method to report and track IT problems, and the new phone system allowed for enhanced interoperability between voice, email, and video. The department developed its [Continuity of Work website](#) to provide a central resource for the campus community. IS&T also immediately responded to the need for remote technology, establishing a Loaner Equipment Program, increasing FAST (Faculty and Staff Training) efforts, and increasing support for technology applications such as Zoom, Kaltura, and other educational software.

Similar to the budget planning process, the university evaluates the effectiveness of these plans at multiple points through a comprehensive review and assessment where it is determined if the goals were met.

Collaborative scope development ensured maximum efficiency of the planned uses of facilities and their fiscal and material sustainability for years to come. Plans for capital expansion, campus master planning, landscape master plan, and maintenance plans demonstrated ongoing assessments and data collection. The shared information and published reports provided data points to be used for long-term decision making. The university's Climate Action Plan (2013) set a carbon neutrality target and specific goals in areas such as buildings and energy, climate-related curriculum and research, and waste and recycling, which demonstrated to both our internal constituents and external communities – local, regional, state, federal and global – that WCU is committed to demonstrating and documenting leadership in the areas of environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

The former strategic plan, *Building on Excellence*, charged the institution to transform itself into a university whose organizational structures are strategically arranged to facilitate excellence in teaching and learning (Academics Objective 2.1; pg. 10). To this end, the university engaged in a self-study to better understand the impact of enrollment growth on our organizational structure. By the 2013-2014 academic year, assessment revealed that significant enrollment growth at WCU gave rise to structural imbalance among the colleges within Academic Affairs, resulting in inefficiencies and significant inequity in resources and workload. Consequently, the university engaged in a reorganization of Academic Affairs to ensure that all university resources, including financial and human, are aligned pedagogically. The primary goal of the realignment was to facilitate excellence in teaching and learning by creating a more evenly distributed structure of administrative support. This, in turn, would even out administrative complexity and balance the student credit production among a reorganized university college structure (Reorganization of the Colleges of West Chester University, Summary). The year-long process of reorganization was transparent, providing open forums and information shared on the provost's website. The process was also built on the principle of shared governance with the Council of Chairs and the faculty union directly involved in creating the draft that was presented to the university president in 2015.

In 2016, academic departments and programs, personnel, and resources were re-distributed to better serve students, increase engagement in professional development opportunities, and contribute to strategic initiatives. The reorganization included renaming many of the colleges and creating the School of Interdisciplinary Studies. In 2018, the School of Music was established to strategically align resources and leadership for the specialized discipline of music. WCU continues the practice of assessing its organizational structure to ensure pedagogical goals for student success are met.

A further review of existing organizational structures was conducted to ensure strategic alignment of personnel and financial resources in all areas of the University's operations. Recognizing the growing enrollment, senior academic affairs administration began to assess the increased demand on student service areas, and in turn, increased the enrollment services staff by 34.4% in the last five years. The largest increases occurred in the following areas:

- Registrar — 13.5 - 21.0 FTE
- Admissions — 18.6 to 23.0 FTE
- Financial Aid — 16.5 - 18.0 FTE
- Enrollment Management and Student Success — 2.0 to 6.0 FTE

Today, the Academic Affairs organizational structure is reviewed regularly and adjusted to accommodate the needs of the university and its constituents as needed.

Self-evaluation of our university structure suggested the need for some reorganization of the Division of Student Affairs. Dr. Zebulun Davenport began as the new Vice President for Student Affairs in August 2016. Upon his arrival, he met with each department and director to conduct a cross-divisional situational/gap analysis. Results indicated that departments need more than one staff member in order to offer consistent services to meet student needs. Based on this information, temporary positions were funded, and permanent positions have been gradually built into the budget over time. Overall, the faculty/staff full-time equivalent has increased over the past five years from 47.5 to 73.9 (Position Budget Management System Report).

Results of the analysis also indicated a need for additional assistant vice presidents, which eventually led to a re-organization of department reporting lines. More operational support was also needed to better coordinate, plan, assess, and market co-curricular programs and services. New positions were created:

Assistant Vice President for Administrative Services and Special Projects, Executive Director of Assessment and Planning, Director of Communications and Marketing, Director of Parent and Family Programs, Coordinator of WCU Pride and Spirit, and Assistant Dean of Students to oversee dining and facilities.

Most recently, six new senior director positions have been created to increase support in departments that did not have manager-level positions. This change has allowed assistant vice presidents to dedicate more time to higher-level initiatives. The senior director position for the Office of Multicultural Affairs was created to meet current and future needs based on enrollment. The senior director of the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life was created to better manage risk and to response to substantial increases in fraternity and sorority memberships. Additionally, an ombuds position has been created to support student success and remove barriers to retention and graduation.

Areas of Strength

In sum, WCU has established systematic methods for planning and continuously assessing the effectiveness of planning and resource allocation in support of the university mission. Perhaps as a direct result of how closely aligned our planning processes, resources, and structures are with one another, WCU is in a strong financial position, the strongest in the PA State System of Higher Education. In terms of facilities and space, we have been rated by *Sitelines* as using space most effectively, compared to peer institutions.

Our strengths include our flexibility and ability to utilize space and money effectively in a changing enrollment landscape so that we can be intentional and proactive rather than primarily reactive. We have also been able to adapt our HR planning in academic and student affairs to meet the demands of enrollment and maximize student success. Our clear emphasis on student success at WCU permeates all planning and encourages investment in and by faculty, staff, students, and management.

Opportunities for Improvement and Innovation

Despite our clear strengths, there are notable opportunities for improvement and innovation that will guide our future work. Most notably, these opportunities are primarily located in our ability to continue to respond effectively to ongoing enrollment growth, to communicate with our constituents and stakeholders clearly and in ways that are widely accessible, and to keep up with technological advancements. At WCU, we continue to adapt to our rapid growth in terms of space and increasing student-to-faculty ratio. Mindful of our stated value of inclusion at WCU, we strive to provide easily accessible documentation about university processes and procedures so that they are made clear to a wider array of our stakeholders. Moreover, as technology improves, we continue to strive to embrace innovation to build world-class facilities and to improve upon our technology.

We have the opportunity to respond and plan for the challenges of climate change. In addition, we see opportunity to grow persistent strategies to close racial and gendered equity gaps in access to the university and to student success.

Finally, one of our biggest planning challenges lies in being the flagship institution in a state system that is struggling. We have the opportunity to be a thought leader as definitions of system-ness emerge in discussions of "system" redesign and we can provide a trail of breadcrumbs as the system struggles on its path to sustainability.