

STUDENTS FIRST: INNOVATE ESU
East Stroudsburg University's Strategic Plan 2014-2017
June, 2014

INTRODUCTION

East Stroudsburg University's Strategic Plan, **Students First: Innovate ESU**, is designed as a three-year rolling plan, knowing that we will continue to evolve as an institution. The plan to put students first through innovation is grounded in student success, innovative faculty, innovation and entrepreneurship, and building community, both internally, and externally. It will be a living document that changes as its implementation evolves, progress is measured, and updates are made. For this reason, each revision of the plan will be identified by its draft number and the date it has been revised.

This particular iteration is Draft 4 and is issued in June, 2014. It results from a process that has involved everyone on the campus who has chosen to participate in its development, which:

- Began in the spring of 2013 with a Planning Steering Committee appointed by President Marcia Welsh;
- Evolved into appointed Task Forces—the student-faculty or administrator co-chairs of which became members of the Planning Steering Committee—each of which considered one of four themes: Student-Centered, Teaching and Learning, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and Community Engagement;
- Involved community discussion, a poster session and comments, and surveys that informed the task forces' development of definitions for their topics and strategies for the achievement of each of these four themes transformed into goals;
- Resulted in a first draft of the plan that was reviewed by the Planning Steering Committee in December, 2013; and
- Was revised to draft 2 for sixteen roundtable discussions, open to the entire ESU community, which were facilitated by Ann Duffield, an external planning consultant, and attended by President Welsh on January 7, 8, 9, 29, 30, and 31, 2014.
- Was revised to draft 3, and now draft 4, after a number of internally-facilitated roundtable discussions, again open to the entire ESU community.

Follow-up campus discussions, open to anyone on campus, have continued to help inform the revisions of the plan. Like a pebble dropped in a pond, the process rippled out across the ESU community and swept all the discussions and ideas back in to produce the current document. The following activities are already underway to continue the process of improving the plan:

- One additional task force has been formed to consider strategies to more effectively engage staff in the goals and outcomes of the strategic plan.

- The Academic Plan Steering Committee has been informed and began working in April 2014.
- The Strategic Plan Budget Task Force has been formed and is ready to start developing financial guidelines and budgets as part of the implementation process.
- Two different discussion groups have been formed to flesh out new strategies for “Research and Scholarship” and “Graduate Students” under Goals 1 and 3.
- Implementation teams will be appointed for each of the goals in the plan.
- One working group that still needs to be appointed to coordinate with the implementation teams will work to identify ways to measure the results of each implementation plan.

Draft 4 of ***Students First: Innovate ESU*** will be circulated to the ESU community for feedback between mid-June and the beginning of October, 2014. This feedback plus the recommendations of both the task force on “Engaged and Service-Oriented Staff” and the discussion group working on “Research and Scholarship” and “Graduate Students” under Goals 1 and 3, will be incorporated into Draft 5 by the middle of September, 2014. The Implementation Plans and information concerning their timelines will be shared with the community for discussion and feedback as each team develops a roll-out plan with benchmarks for community engagement, on- and off-campus.

Every member of ESU’s community as well as the external partners involved in the planning effort will continue to be included in roundtables that will continue to evolve this fine University’s exciting and visionary future. It will be all about allowing our campus to focus on innovation, entrepreneurship, and continuous improvement, and the creation of a campus culture that “values, invests, believes, and respects.”

Again, welcome to ***Students First: Innovate ESU***, the strategic plan of East Stroudsburg University.

ESU’S MISSION

East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania will provide:

- Challenging and contemporary undergraduate and graduate curricula that engage and equip undergraduate, graduate, and adult students to critically appraise and apply knowledge in their lives and chosen fields of study.
- A scholarly community that promotes diversity and views learning as the university's primary focus.
- Varied opportunities for student and faculty research, creative endeavors, and involvement in public service.
- Leadership and service in the educational, cultural and economic development of the region.

ESU'S VISION

ESU will be an innovative and entrepreneurial university—educationally, socially, organizationally, and culturally—with an emphasis on quality and collaboration in everything we provide. As a scholarly community, its faculty, students, staff, administrators, and affiliates will be encouraged to be innovative and to explore opportunities that will constantly energize and improve its mission as a learning community of the 21st Century. As a “university without walls,” its sense of community will extend well beyond campus boundaries to embrace ESU’s surrounding communities and region to become a model that other organizations will want to emulate.

ESU'S VALUES

The ESU community is committed to the principles of intellectual integrity, freedom of expression, the fair and equal treatment of all, good citizenship, environmental stewardship, and accountability for our actions and the resources entrusted to us.

ESU'S COMMUNITY PRINCIPLES

In pursuit of its mission and vision, East Stroudsburg University seeks to adhere to the following principles in both the development of its strategic plan and its ongoing decision-making processes. Used in conjunction with the values outlined above, ESU is committed to:

1. Providing quality, affordable academic programs as well as opportunities for lifelong learning, always focusing on student success.
2. Sustaining an intellectually challenging environment that identifies and enhances its students’ and the university community members’ talents.
3. Creating opportunities for innovation that focus on high impact teaching and learning both inside, and outside, of the classroom.
4. Identifying, recruiting, and retaining students representing a multicultural world who by background, motivation, and commitment can benefit from higher education.
5. Attracting and retaining a diverse, recognized, and credentialed faculty committed to excellence in teaching and continuing scholarship.
6. Attracting and retaining exemplary faculty, staff members, and administrators who accept responsibility and accountability for the personal, professional, educational, and social values espoused by the University.
7. Providing leadership, expertise, and service to its local, regional, and global societies.
8. Encouraging opportunities for the university community to develop positive, healthy, and holistic lifestyles.
9. Serving as a source of cultural and intellectual programs of importance to students and residents of the region.
10. Building and maintaining partnerships to enhance opportunities for students, alumni, and the university community.

ESU'S GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

Using the “Environmental Scan: Population and Labor Projections 2010-2020” (Appendix 1) as a guide, East Stroudsburg University’s plan includes goals and strategies that recognize the demographic and workforce changes that are predicted for the first three years of our planning process. Our primary goal during this period will be to develop a respectful, responsible, accountable, risk-taking, resilient and fun campus culture that is prepared to tackle those challenges and opportunities within its control and to take on those challenges and opportunities that arise without notice.

Our primary focus, and thus our first goal, will be to put students first. But we believe that the best ways for us to develop a culture of what we call “our university without walls” is through our second two goals—A Strong Sense of Community and A Reputation for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. By raising our standards, accountability, and respect for one another’s work and by reaching out beyond our campus boundaries to create partnerships that will have an impact on the lives of the people in our region, we believe that our day-to-day work—our scholarship, research, teaching, service, and professionalism—will substantially increase in quality, thereby accelerating our ability to attain all of our other goals as a learning community.

We understand that this will be an ongoing journey for us. Every member of our university will need to play a role in removing the walls and barriers that have at times kept us from achieving our aspirations and seizing our opportunities. We believe, however, that each new draft of **Students First: Innovate ESU** will keep us reviewing, renewing, and moving toward the goals and values we endorse as important to the future of East Stroudsburg University.

GOAL 1: STUDENT SUCCESS AT ESU: ACHIEVING HIGHER SATISFACTION, RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES

This goal seeks to provide rich educational experiences for students that meet their intellectual, social, financial, and civic development needs so that they graduate and continue to be avid ESU alumni, accomplished professionals, and exceptional citizens. Specifically, our objectives are to provide integrated formal and informal opportunities for our students to:

- Develop an understanding of their own talents, possess the skills and knowledge to compete professionally, and gain the resilience and drive to succeed in their working and personal lives;
- Demonstrate the self-confidence and ability to articulate their ideas verbally and in writing, express and defend their opinions, ask penetrating questions, and engage in robust intellectual debate;

- Appreciate the value of and seek opportunities for continuous learning throughout their lives;
- Be active and knowledgeable citizens who seek opportunities to contribute positively to the lives of others.

Strategies for Student Success

1.1 An Intentionally Designed and Integrated Undergraduate Student Experience

- 1.1.1** Integrate and implement a holistic first year transition plan for all new students that: reinforces core institutional values; connects students to academic majors, research and cross-disciplinary discourse; provides intensive advising and mentoring and student support; and advances social integration, students' sense of belonging and active engagement through existing and new programs delivered by faculty, staff, and peer facilitators.
- 1.1.2** Integrate and implement a holistic plan for all transfer students that facilitates a seamless transfer experience, ensuring that students are not disadvantaged in advising, credit transfer, or their collegiate experience as they move to ESU.
- 1.1.3** Design an innovative undergraduate General Education Program, creating General Education requirements that are a progressive foundation for learning by engaging students in active and interactive learning technologies, cross cultural and cross disciplinary literacy, and increasing levels of self-directed learning. The General Education Program must be adjusted to accommodate transfer students to ensure any requirements are intentional, and not repetitive, as academic experiences.
- 1.1.4** Develop academic and academic support programs that link ALL students to progressive skill development within the chosen discipline(s) and increased expectations for student engagement that support ESU's espoused values (intellectual integrity, freedom of expression, the fair and equal treatment of all, good citizenship, environmental stewardship, and accountability for our actions and the resources entrusted to us).
- 1.1.5** Identify and adopt non-academic requirements for graduation that complement classroom instruction; amplify student learning through leadership, service, cultural, and experiential opportunities; and encourage innovation, entrepreneurial thinking, civic engagement, global citizenship and concern for social justice.
- 1.1.6** Explore how ESU can become a classroom without walls, where faculty can engage students learning outside the traditional classroom experiences.

- 1.1.7 Explore how athletics support systems for student athletes can be modeled throughout the university, and particularly how the coaches work together and separately to engender a set of high standards and discipline in the individual students and teams they coach.

1.2 Career Development

- 1.2.1 Expand, link, and integrate career development throughout students' experiences at the University, starting with the First Year Experience course and continuing throughout the student's academic career.
- 1.2.2 Assure integration and successful program progression for distinctive student populations, e.g. commuters, veterans, transfer students, adult students, international students, graduate students, and emerging special populations.

1.3 Cross-Disciplinary and Cross-Unit Collaboration and Communication

- 1.3.1 Create "think tanks" that develop cross-disciplinary literacy, and research projects, for both faculty and students.
- 1.3.2 Promote, facilitate and support the development of cross- and interdisciplinary academic programs.
- 1.3.3 Supplement lectures with more diverse ways of learning, i.e. interactive and differentiated instruction that both engages the students and increases student learning outcomes.

1.4 Successful Graduate Students

- 1.4.1 The graduate student experience, with support structures and practices, will be similar to 1.1. above focusing on the needs of graduate students, but emphatically will be developed appropriate to the learning outcomes of departments, with a focus on employment, professional experiences, and/or doctoral study. *A WORKING GROUP IS DEVELOPING STRATEGIES*

GOAL 2: A STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY: UNDERSTANDING AND LIVING ESU'S MISSION AND VALUES AND BUILDING A COMMITMENT TO OUR COMMUNITY AND REGION

This goal seeks to build "our university without walls," defined by a sense of community respect, involvement, and excitement so that all members of ESU feel part of a vibrant on-campus environment and an engaged external community. Specific objectives are to:

- Build a strong campus community that is a positive space for learners, and collaborative and respectful for all.

- Develop a comprehensive community and university relations program that explores the opportunities of the past, present and future to create a welcoming and engaging environment with an eye toward innovation and prosperity; and
- Engage local and regional employers and citizens as partners in learning and thriving.

Strategies for a Strong Sense of Community

2.1 An ESU Community with High Expectations

- 2.1.1** Convene regular campus-wide discussions to explore who we are as a community (updates on student admissions and faculty, administrator, and staff data), introductions of new community members, their location, roles, and responsibilities, discussion of issues and challenges in higher education and at ESU, planning priorities, and other important information that will enable the campus to perform optimally.
- 2.1.2** Develop a concrete set of written standards and expectations for students, faculty, administrators, and staff that adhere to and, therefore, promote ESU's mission and values.
- 2.1.3** Develop a campus-wide Code of Conduct that includes students, faculty, administrators, and staff, based on ESU's set of standards and expectations regarding civility, accountability and integrity.
- 2.1.4** Review the employee evaluation process and consider best-practice evaluation methods to develop a culture of oversight that consists of articulated expectations, and honest evaluation of performance to ensure continuous improvement. The goal is to instill an expectation of accountability and quality in all we do.

2.2 Internal Communications and Social Opportunities

- 2.2.1** Develop a strategy to improve professional communication, and thus collaboration, between all internal and external university constituents.
- 2.2.2** Develop a mechanism to encourage appropriate respect for oral, written, and social media communication, regardless of the purpose.
- 2.2.3** Hold unit-sponsored "Open Invitation Receptions"—perhaps theme-based—on a regular basis for students, staff, faculty, and administration to get together informally in order to break down silos and initiate conversations across the campus.

- 2.2.4** Engage the internal and external community in explorations of the “gems” that the University has to offer, thereby providing an education about what ESU does best.
- 2.2.5** Evaluate ways to bring the campus together as one, encouraging inter-office and inter-disciplinary collaboration.

2.3 A University without Walls

- 2.3.1** Develop a strategic comprehensive marketing plan focused on the unique characteristics of ESU and the strength of ESU’s location in the Pocono Region.
- 2.3.2** With an external regional focus, identify the current and desirable links between ESU and its surrounding community and region, which will promote external organizations and people with an eye toward overcoming ESU’s negative publicity.
- 2.3.3** Create a welcoming environment that focuses on how every academic and administrative unit can improve service to our constituents.
- 2.3.4** Create a strong alliance between the university and regional community by being a catalyst for innovation and prosperity (see below, Goal 3: Innovation and Entrepreneurship).
- 2.3.5** Explore current and potential future community-university opportunities and Internship and Workforce partnerships through the Innovation Center and throughout the University.
- 2.3.6** Strengthen connections between the university and the community by having clearly identified on-campus points of contact for the different constituents who wish to partner with the institution. Develop a directory of campus expertise and collaborations already in progress.

GOAL 3: A REPUTATION FOR INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: CREATING A CURIOUS, INVENTIVE, AND RISK-TAKING CULTURE

This goal seeks to ensure that ESU has a campus community that:

- Accepts risk-taking and engages in innovative and entrepreneurial activities that create an exciting learning environment;
- Invests its time in collaborating with the community and the region;

- Shares with the region the responsibility of developing an economy that competes globally and is also sustainable; and
- Prepares our students to become leaders, entrepreneurs, and innovators.

Strategies for Developing a Reputation for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

3.1 Embed multidisciplinary “applied” entrepreneurial experiences into the curriculum and programs which create an innovative campus and community environment that fosters “idea” generation and new ventures.

- 3.1.1** Establish multi-disciplinary entrepreneurship classes that are accessible to all students. Create diverse teams and networks that innovate and implement idea generation and new ventures.
- 3.1.2** Utilize the opportunities provided through the Business Accelerator and Entrepreneurial Leadership Center to expand “applied” entrepreneurial experiences.
- 3.1.3** Encourage Social Entrepreneurship by offering students the opportunity to work in teams to create unique, real-world, revenue generating products and services that address social concerns.

3.2 Establish incentive and recognition procedures that motivate and reward faculty and staff engaged in entrepreneurship and acknowledge the academic value of research and activities in the entrepreneurial field.

- 3.2.1** Develop policies that encourage faculty and staff entrepreneurial endeavors to include:
 - 3.2.1.1** Create the infrastructure for a Peer to Peer Review system that recognizes outstanding work in the areas of entrepreneurship, innovation and risk taking.
 - 3.2.1.2** Encourage research and scholarly activities in innovation and entrepreneurship.
 - 3.2.1.3** Incorporate Social Entrepreneurship incentives for mentoring and developing ideas that promote innovation and address social change.

3.3 Encourage sustainable public and private involvement in the university's entrepreneurial and innovative activities.

- 3.3.1** Establish entrepreneurial mentorship groups and activities that engage regional and international entrepreneurs.
- 3.3.2** Establish Alumni Entrepreneurial Networks.
- 3.3.3** Identify and Implement funding opportunities that support innovative ideas and research.
- 3.3.4** Incorporate Intellectual Property and commercialization models that reward and encourage product development and research and development

GOAL 4: INNOVATIVE FACULTY: DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP AND RETHINKING THE PREPARATION OF SUCCESSFUL GRADUATES

This goal seeks to invest in ESU's faculty in ways that will enable them to redesign the academic experience. Specifically, our objectives as an institution are to:

- Design programs and opportunities in the overall curriculum that foster faculty-student collaboration across disciplines;
- Provide innovative learning experiences that enable students to develop their talents and confidence, thereby increasing their success and retention through graduation;
- Convene faculty in regular conversations across disciplines to discuss their research, scholarship, and teaching;
- Use technology to enrich scholarship, research, and teaching and to reach a diverse audience of learners with ESU offerings that are attractive to constituencies beyond the East Stroudsburg campus.
- Provide opportunities for students to continue their education beyond the baccalaureate, with appropriate opportunities for graduate and professional school.

Strategies for Innovative Faculty

4.1 Curricular and Pedagogical Partners in Student Success

- 4.1.1** Create a faculty-enrollment management project team to develop a first semester curriculum that can be offered to the student teams (see 1.1 above under Goal 1) by their faculty-staff coaches.
- 4.1.2** Create formal opportunities for students to be involved actively in their own learning, engaging them to take responsibility and be accountable for their own learning (flip classrooms, active/cooperative learning, peer group learning and tutoring, etc.). Support faculty design of their own teaching environments based

on the learning outcomes they hope to achieve with their students, e.g. course size, “classroom” design, course duration and time, required learning tools, etc.

4.1.3 Deploy technology to engage students through virtual learning and to accelerate and deepen their preparation as leaders for the mid-21st century.

4.1.4 Research high student learning-impact approaches to flexible scheduling that optimize the relationship between content and content delivery.

4.2 Mentoring and Professional Development

4.2.1 Provide opportunities on- and off-campus for every faculty member to engage in professional development programs.

4.2.2 Starting with the question: “What does it mean to be a faculty member at ESU?”, build an early career development program that enables new faculty to achieve their goals in balance with ESU’s mission to students and the community.

4.2.3 Create faculty teams who research and exhibit “best practice” models through peer-to-peer modeling (in-class, online, community, etc.) and invite experts from other campuses to demonstrate their practices.

4.2.4 Create opportunities and places for faculty to develop professionally, and share with each other what they learn, throughout their careers.

4.2.5 Showcase ESU’s education—video-stream—for both professional development and recruiting purposes.

4.3 Scholarship and Research *THIS SECTION NEEDS A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP STRATEGIES*

4.4 Local and Regional Partnerships

4.4.1 Establish strong partnerships with local and regional organizations, employers, service providers, nonprofits, alumni and other individuals/practitioners to increase experiential learning opportunities for ESU students.

4.4.2 Seek opportunities to include external constituencies, including alumni, in on-campus activities, courses, and programs to improve the university-community relationships and to become a resource for the community.

4.5 State-Of-The-Art Technology

- 4.5.1** Examine the technology infrastructure to determine how best to improve, maintain, and update our resources to support the needs of a 21st Century learning environment.
- 4.5.2** Develop an inventory of faculty instructional, research and scholarship and workforce technological needs, and a plan to meet those needs.
- 4.5.3** Develop a plan to provide on and off-campus training for faculty, staff and administrators to sustain competency in technology as it changes.

IMPLEMENTATION PLANS AND TIMELINES: TACTICS

IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS WILL BE ORGANIZED TO DEVELOP AND RECOMMEND A PLAN FOR EACH GOAL AND STRATEGY IN THIS PLAN. EACH TEAM WILL WORK WITH BOTH THE FINANCIAL FORECASTING TASK FORCE AND THE MEASUREMENTS TASK FORCE DESCRIBED BELOW.

QUANTITATIVE MEASUREMENTS AND OTHER EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

This section will include the qualitative and quantitative methods the ESU community will use to benchmark and measure our effectiveness and progress toward meeting the goals of this plan. *A TASK FORCE WILL BE APPOINTED TO DEVELOP THIS SECTION OF THE PLAN, BASED ON INPUT FROM EACH IMPLEMENTATION UNIT.*

FINANCIAL FORECAST FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIES

A TASK FORCE HAS BEEN APPOINTED TO WORK WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION UNITS AND TEAMS TO DEVELOP A BUDGET FOR THE PLAN.

APPENDICES AS OF DRAFT 4

APPENDIX 1: PROJECTIONS UNTIL 2020 (available on the strategic plan website)