

*Pacific Lutheran University  
Board of Regents  
May 2-3, 2014*

**Strategic Enrollment Management Advisory Committee (SEMAC)  
Report and Recommendations  
Institutional Enrollment Goals by 2020**

Established by the Faculty Assembly in December 2012, the Strategic Enrollment Management Advisory Committee (SEMAC) is a university standing committee with the responsibility to lead the development and the ongoing reevaluation of a strategic enrollment management (SEM) plan and advise the administration on matters related to the implementation of the SEM plan. The goal is to help the institution achieve and maintain the optimum recruitment, retention, and graduation rates of students, where “optimum” is defined within the academic context of the university.

Separately in May 2013, the Board of Regents adopted a resolution (“The Box”) establishing goals for employee compensation, maintenance of university facilities and the expansion of unrestricted reserves. The principal sources of revenue for university operations are the academic program, auxiliary services and income from endowment, and it has been made clear in previous reports and presentations to the Board that a substantial amount of additional net revenue above the level the university would normally expect to receive from existing sources will be required to achieve the goals set forth in the Board of Regents resolution.

The academic program will play the largest role in providing the additional revenue necessary to achieve the goals set forth in the Board of Regents resolution, and SEMAC’s work during the 2013-14 academic year has been carried out with the revenue related goals of that resolution firmly in mind. SEMAC has studied the most relevant aspects of enrollment issues at PLU and has established key enrollment indicators and specific goals for those indicators. These goals have been informed by thorough market analysis, recent enrollment trends experienced by the university, and current enrollment strategies already being implemented on campus. While it is understood that strategies to achieve these goals may change over time due to changes in the higher education marketplace, the overall enrollment plan going forward targets significant enrollment growth by 2020.

SEMAC has also begun its analysis of various strategies that might be implemented in pursuit of those goals, and has collected important feedback on both goals and strategies through two campus forums. Some of SEMAC’s internal working documents and the feedback from the forums are available for the Board to review at <https://www.plu.edu/regents/meetings/home.php>.

SEMAC has given particular attention to important subpopulations of students including continuing students, first-year students, transfer students and international students. Important consideration has been given to the demographic characteristics of the student population, the academic profile of the student body, and the enrollment demand and capacity at the university and program level.

## **Recommendations**

The Strategic Enrollment Management Advisory Committee has three recommendations which it now asks the Board to receive. They are:

- 1) The adoption of the key enrollment indicators and their corresponding goals for the year 2020 as described in the accompanying tables. Academic school and division enrollment goals will be further developed and refined by those units in close collaboration with the Office of the Provost and the Office of Admission and Enrollment Services.
- 2) Enrollment growth of 10%, to a target of approximately 3,800 students by the fall of 2020, to be pursued through increased new student enrollment and improved retention at the undergraduate level. SEMAC further proposes that the 10% total enrollment growth be realized primarily at the graduate level (contributing a 7% increase to total enrollment) but with important contributions at the undergraduate level as well (contributing a 3% increase to total enrollment).

This proposed 10% total enrollment growth will be measured by a combination of overall headcount and student credit hour production. SEMAC recognizes that headcount and credit hour growth will be distributed among all academic divisions and schools at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, but this enrollment growth will vary considerably by academic unit.

The professional school disciplines lend themselves to focused enrollment marketing efforts more easily than most of the liberal arts disciplines. Capacity exists in most of our professional school programs, and specific enrollment and program initiatives, whether at the graduate or undergraduate level, are already underway in the professional schools. We therefore expect to pursue specific enrollment growth targets and strategies for Business, Education and Kinesiology, Arts and Communication, and Nursing.

Targeted enrollment growth for programs in the College of Arts and Sciences is difficult to quantify given the number of prospective students who are undecided in the college selection process or who change majors in their college years. Indeed, we intentionally encourage our students to explore their interests and seek their calling.

Nonetheless, several academic units in the College of Arts and Sciences are pursuing innovative new programs or revisions to their current programs to meet the new demands and expectations in their fields, and these programs lend themselves to targeted enrollment strategies. Moreover, the academic units in the College of Arts and Sciences provide the majority of courses required in the general education curriculum. As a result, the College of Arts and Sciences will fully participate in the increased credit hour production due to overall enrollment growth at the university.

- 3) Regular interim reports to the Board on the progress being made toward fulfilling these goals, any reassessments of those goals, and reports on how the SEM planning and ongoing evaluation fit within the university's overall strategic planning process.

### **Estimated Enrollment Target of ~3,800 Total Students by Fall 2020**

SEMAC recommends the following targets to reach a total of more than 3,800 students enrolled at PLU by the fall of 2020.

	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
Total Enrollment	3,470	3,529	3,581	3,641	3,702	3,760	3,827
Total Undergraduates	3,035	3,031	3,039	3,055	3,082	3,103	3,139
Total Graduates	320	380	420	460	490	520	550
Other (*non matrices, international non-degree programs )	112	115	119	122	126	130	134

These overall targets are informed by three principal areas of enrollment planning going forward:

- Significant growth at the graduate level: An additional 230 students, or 72% above the current graduate enrollment of 320;
- More modest growth at the undergraduate level: An additional 104 students, or 3.4% above the current undergraduate enrollment 3035;
- Improved retention of undergraduates.

The overall increase in enrollment from 3,470 to 3,827 represents a 10.3% increase.

### **Graduate Student Enrollment**

**Fall 2012 - Fall 2014** – In the past two years, two new graduate programs (the Master of Science in Finance and the Doctor of Nursing Practice) have been approved by the Faculty Assembly and the Board of Regents. The Master of Science in Finance was adopted in the January 2012 and enrolled its first class of 15 students in the fall of 2012. A second cohort of 18 was enrolled in the fall of 2013 and a third cohort of similar size is expected for the fall of 2014. The Doctor of Nursing Practice was approved by the Board of Regents at the February 2014 meeting and will enroll its first cohort of students in the fall of 2014 pending final approval by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. We expect this approval to come by mid-May 2014.

The Master of Science in Marketing Research has been approved by vote of the Faculty Assembly at their April 2014 meeting. This new graduate program is being presented to the Board of Regents for final approval during the May 2014 meeting. Pending Board approval, the

Master of Science in Marketing Research will enroll its first class of approximately 20 students in fall of 2015.

**New Graduate Programs Toward 2020** - Given adequate resources for start-up funds, the Academic Division will continue to identify and create new programs at the graduate level in order to pursue overall enrollment growth in 2020. New graduate programs would be expected to be:

- Consistent with the mission of the university;
- Of high academic quality akin to existing academic programs;
- Aligned with a strong market demand and a potential to generate significant additional net revenue to the university.

### **Undergraduate Student Enrollment**

SEMAC engaged a broad cross section of community members in discussions regarding the optimal number and composition of undergraduate students to be enrolled at PLU in 2020. Faculty, administrators, and staff participated in two community forums designed to provide the community an opportunity to respond to proposed enrollment goals. SEMAC will also be hosting an open forum in early May for PLU students to discuss and respond to the proposed enrollment goals. Community response to these goals can be found at <https://www.plu.edu/regents/meetings/home.php>

### **Undergraduate Student Enrollment Targets and Key Enrollment Indicators**

SEMAC proposes the following Key Enrollment Indicators (KEIs) and goals for undergraduate enrollment by 2020 as shown in the tables below. These KEIs specifically identify goals for both new freshmen and transfer populations. The KEIs are grouped into the following areas:

- Quantity
- Academic Quality and Retention
- Diversity

### **Total Undergraduate Enrollment (Quantity)**

After researching a variety of demographic and market trends impacting PLU, SEMAC proposes an undergraduate enrollment target of 3,139, a 3.4% increase by the year 2020. This enrollment target reflects future demographic challenges in the Pacific Northwest and the current competitive marketplace for undergraduate admission.

**Demographic Projections** - The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) collects population and demographic data regarding the current and estimated number of high school graduates in the United States. While WICHE's most recent data projects the number of high school graduates in the State of Washington will increase by a total of 3% by the year 2020, the number of white non-Hispanic high school graduates in the state is projected to decrease by 5% during that same time period. Data for the western region of the United States reflects the same trend projected in the State of Washington. While overall projection of high school graduates in the western region of the U.S. shows a 3% increase by the year 2020, the number of white non-Hispanic high school graduates is projected to decrease by 2% during that same time period.

These demographic trends will impact PLU’s enrollment over the next seven years.

**Competition from Public Institutions** – Over the past three years, PLU has seen greater competition from the public higher education sector given issues of perceived affordability and actual increases in the number of seats (both freshmen and transfers) provided by public institutions in the state of Washington.

As a result of these two primary competitive market forces, the projected growth in undergraduates is much more modest than the target for graduate enrollment. SEMAC recommends a 3.4% total enrollment growth target at the undergraduate level by the year 2020.

	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
Total Fall Undergraduates	3,035	3,031	3,039	3,055	3,082	3,106	3,139
New Fall Freshmen	675	675	675	685	690	695	700
New Fall Transfers	240	240	240	240	240	240	240

SEMAC proposes the following Key Enrollment Indicators at the undergraduate level to support optimized total enrollment at the university. Additional market research and institutional comparisons may be referenced at <https://www.plu.edu/regents/meetings/home.php>.

### Academic Quality, Retention, and Graduate Rates

Freshmen Academic Quality and Retention	Fall 2013	Fall 2020
Freshmen GPA	3.66	3.70+
Freshmen AIS 5 <small>(Academic Index Score 5 is highest score)</small>	120	150
Freshmen AIS 1 <small>(Academic Index Score 1 is lowest score)</small>	29%	Less than 25% of Freshmen class
Freshmen Fall-to-Fall Retention	82%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 85% by 2017</li> <li>• 90% by 2020</li> <li>• AIS 1 within 5% of total</li> </ul>

<b>Transfer Academic Quality and Retention</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2020</b>
Transfer GPA	3.26	3.4
Transfer AIS 5 (Academic Index Score 5 is highest score)	41	50
Transfer AIS 1 (Academic Index Score 1 is lowest score)	44	Less than 20% of Transfer class
Transfer Fall-to-Fall Retention	70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 78% by 2017</li> <li>• 80% by 2020</li> </ul>

<b>Student of Color Retention</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2020</b>
Freshmen	80%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• within 5% of retention rate for all freshmen</li> </ul>
Transfers	74%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• within 5% of retention rate for all freshmen</li> </ul>

<b>Graduation Rates</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>2020</b>
4 year graduation rate	52%	65%
6 year graduation rate	65%	75%

### **Diversity of Undergraduate Student Body**

	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Fall 2020</b>
Students of Color	23%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PLU enrollment will reflect ethnic diversity of region which currently stands at 29% people of color</li> </ul>
International Students	159	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 200 by 2017</li> <li>• 250 by 2020</li> </ul>
Veterans and Military Affiliated	217	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 300 by 2017</li> <li>• 350 (or 10%) by 2020</li> </ul>
Residence Hall Occupancy	83%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 95% of optimized capacity</li> </ul>

Members of the 2013-2014 Strategic Enrollment Management Advisory Committee include:

- Steven Starkovich, Co-Chair, Provost
- Karl Stumo, Co-Chair, Vice President Admission and Enrollment Services
- Kevin Berg, Office of the Registrar
- Hal DeLaRosby, Academic Advising
- Geoffrey Foy, Provost's Office
- Donna Gibbs, Marketing and Communications
- David Gunovich, Office of Admission
- Lisa Henderson, Provost's Office
- Eva Johnson, Student Life
- Jan Lewis, Provost's Office
- Patsy Maloney, Nursing
- Kris Plaehn, President's Office
- Mark Reiman, Economics
- Bob Riley, Finance and Operations
- Kathy Russell, Social Work
- Kay Soltis, Financial Aid
- Adam Sripranaratanakul, Finance and Operations
- Aaron Steelquist, ASPLU
- Dave Veazey, University Assessment, Accreditation and Research
- Jill Whitman, Geosciences, Vice Chair of the Faculty