



Student Life Strategic Plan

Adopted December 11, 2013

Introduction

In January 2012, the Pacific Lutheran University Board of Regents adopted the third university long-range plan, *PLU 2020: Affirming Our Commitments, Shaping Our Future*. On June 1, 2012, Thomas W. Krise became the 13th President of PLU. One of Dr. Krise's top priorities was the launching of strategic planning at PLU, to advance the vision and aspirations of *PLU 2020* into realities through specific plans with targeted goals.

The Student Life Strategic Plan (SLSP) is written in support of the aspirations of *PLU 2020* and to complement the university's strategic planning process. As the university continues to articulate the university strategic plan, the SLSP will need to be updated. The goals outlined below will need increased specificity as the university builds consensus around university goals and key performance indicators. Both the SLSP and the university strategic plan are works in progress and are designed to assist in advancing university priorities in targeted and measurable ways.

Vision Statements

PLU: As a university of the first rank, Pacific Lutheran University seeks to maximize the achievement of its mission and become an internationally renowned model of the New American University, integrating a distinctive liberal arts college with one of the Pacific Northwest's premier centers for professional education.

Student Life: As a Student Affairs division of the first rank, we are innovative professionals who engage students in effective programs and services that encourage lives of meaning and purpose which transform communities and the world.

Mission Statements

PLU: Educating students for lives of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership and care - for other people, for their communities and for the earth.

Student Life: To engage and support all PLU students in a transformative educational experience.

Division Tag Line

"Living the Learning"

Student Life Division Commitments to Excellence

1. We are committed to ***educating students*** in a collaborative co-curricular learning community that engages students through personal connections and nurtures them to develop their full potential.

Collaboration: We know that student success is the result of the work of many people. We are committed to collaboration with: students, faculty and staff colleagues; parents and family members; employers; and others who are a part of each student's network of supporters. We are committed to creating positive relationships with the many supporters of the university including alumni, neighbors, friends, donors, Regents, and members of the ELCA.

Co-Curricular Education: We know that student success is solidified when students have multiple opportunities to learn and live the university's educational priorities. We are committed to providing a wide range of co-curricular programs, in differing learning styles, so that students are immersed in an educational environment throughout their university experience. These opportunities bring the PLU mission statement to life and provide opportunities for students to develop competencies in the Integrative Learning Objectives (ILOs). Through these co-curricular programs, we are committed to developing caring and compassionate students, who translate their interests and knowledge in ways that positively impact the community for the benefit of all. We intentionally develop opportunities to live the learning, whether it is on a sports team, in student leadership roles, in the community, in a work setting, in a club or other type of experience. We know that the ability to work well with others is paramount to student success in life. We are committed to providing opportunities where teamwork and conflict resolution skills can be learned and enhanced. We are committed to staying relevant to current students and using innovation and creativity in presenting these programs and opportunities in ways that are attractive to them and engaging. We are committed to excellence in all aspects of our work, providing programs and services that are efficient and effective.

Learning Community: We know that student success is best achieved when students are connected to a welcoming, safe and nurturing learning community. We are committed to creating a campus community that is safe and just, where the individual is welcomed and valued and campus standards are upheld. Further, we are committed to providing excellence in our living environments that are comfortable "homes" for students and that are conducive to learning. These include study spaces and places where they can engage with peers and faculty to continue learning from each other outside of the classroom. Student success includes learning from peers through casual interactions or around specific interests, such as with clubs and organization, or spiritual growth. We are committed to creating these comfortable informal gathering spaces that provide students casual, welcoming environments to establish and deepen relationships with peers and mentors.

Connection to Persons: We know that student success is deepened when students connect with people and engage with the many diverse communities in which a student lives. We are committed to embracing the diversity of students of PLU and to encouraging students to engage with and learn from each other whether from the same hometown or from a different country. We are committed to deepening students' connections to PLU and to living as good neighbors in their communities.

Mentoring: We know that student success is strengthened when students have relationships with members of the community who are willing to offer support and share their collegiate years together. We are committed to being available to students and providing safe, open offices and

spaces where students can seek a listening ear, where professionals are ready to nurture and assist, as well as challenge and empower the student to move forward and progress through whatever situations or issues have arisen in their life. We are committed to being mentors and role models for students and to working in partnership with campus colleagues to support student well-being.

Celebration: We know that student success is multiplied when it is recognized, honored and celebrated. Students who are acknowledged and applauded for their successes are encouraged to continue their accomplishments, both large and small. We are committed to celebrating student triumphs publicly and privately, individually and as groups, and inspiring other students to attain their own successes. We believe in our students' capabilities and salute their victories.

2. We are committed to ***empowering students*** to take responsibility for their person and their life in such ways that resonate with their vocational aspirations and that contribute to the greater good of all beings and the physical environment, both locally and globally.

Personal Well-Being: We know that student success is sustained by the attention students give to their own personal health, well-being and safety. We are committed to providing excellent services that both educate and care for students as they balance nutrition, sleep, exercise and personal safety, as well as, emotional and physical challenges in the demanding days of collegiate study. We are committed to providing quality spaces for health and wellness activities and for recreation where students can advance their self-care skills. These life balance skills will serve the student well into their lives and careers post graduation. We are committed to attending to the whole person in our interactions and in the design and implementation of our work.

Identity & Vocational Development: We know that students thrive when they are able to solidify their identity, explore new areas of interest and discern their vocational inclinations. These activities assist them in charting paths that combine their interests, values and priorities into meaningful and purposeful lives. We provide opportunities for understanding the Lutheran concept of vocational callings in the world. We assist with identifying and developing career paths by providing opportunities to sharpen their skills and apply their knowledge in pursuit of employment, graduate programs and service experiences post graduation.

Social Justice: We know that student success ultimately supports the well-being of our larger society as the future generation of leaders. We are committed personally, as well as professionally, to encouraging our students to engage in lifelong learning and work that will create a fair and just world for all. We encourage our students to consider the greater good of society and to challenge impediments to progress. We are committed to nurture students as leaders with both local and global perspectives who care for and serve the greater good of all beings that inhabit their communities, as well as the physical environs in which they live. We strive to assist students in learning that their actions have consequences and to understand the impact of their choices locally and globally. We are committed to work with others in ways that promote a diverse, just and sustainable world for the betterment of all.

3. We are committed to the ***highest levels of integrity, professionalism and stewardship of resources in our work*** including professionals, facilities, services and programs.

Integrity & Professionalism: We know that student success is best supported by student affairs professionals who are well trained, broadly experienced and who are continually engaged in advanced professional development. We are committed to hiring and retaining the best staff possible and to the provision of ongoing professional learning opportunities. We are committed to knowing the best practices of our fields and adapting those to our work at PLU. We are committed

to contributing to the advancement of the profession by the creation of knowledge in our fields based on research and study, through conference presentations and journal publications, serving on professional boards, university associations and accreditation efforts, and attending professional conferences. We are committed to honesty and truthfulness in our work and consistency in our actions demonstrating our values.

Quality Resources: We know that a broad range of quality resources devoted to assisting students and their learning strategies optimizes student success. We are committed to partnering with campus colleagues to both provide and steward those excellent resources and inform students of their availability so that students are aware of the choices they can make to assist themselves. These resources of people, facilities and programs need substantial financial support. We are committed to working, in partnership with other colleagues, to attain the financial resources needed to support excellence in our work.

4. We are committed to ***continual evaluation and improvement*** of our work through ongoing assessment.

Assessment: We know that student success is strengthened when programs and services are effective and efficient. We are committed to ongoing assessment and evaluation in all aspects of our work. We are committed to continually asking students for their feedback and to using their feedback to increase our effectiveness. We are committed to outside evaluation and continual improvement.

Context for 2013-2020 Student Life Priorities

National Context:

- Altering landscape of national higher education: Changes in student demographics, financial models, legal issues, and educational delivery systems.
- On-going cost/recession issues: Challenges with availability of financial assistance for students, fiscal caution by parents, and articulating the value of a private residential college education.
- Increased accountability for higher education: Heightened expectations for outcomes-based data demonstrating the value of a college education, and return on investment.
- Changing business model for colleges/universities: Increased marketing to attract students, services, and financial support for the university.

PLU Context:

- Leadership: President Thomas W. Krise began his tenure as the 13th President of PLU in June 2012. Donna Gibbs was appointed to the new position of Vice President for Marketing and Communication and joined the senior leadership team in September of 2013. Nancy Albers-Miller was appointed Dean of the School of Business in the summer of 2013. A new Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students will begin June 1, 2014. Searches are underway for a new Dean of the School of Nursing and an Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Continuing Education. Additional new leaders will assume roles as deans and chairs in the months and years ahead.
- Partnerships: Student Life is recognized and valued as a partner with all areas of the university in the advancement of the PLU educational experience.
- Facilities: Improvements continue across campus with renovated and expanded facilities and university policies.
- Local/global: There is increased university attention and investment of resources into the local community: 208 Garfield, Garfield Station, Habitat for Humanity build project, "Puget Sound Gateway," housing, and local school districts.
- Entrepreneurial: There is increased interest to expand programs and endeavors beyond the traditional work of the university.
- Efficiency: The Process Improvement Team: Six Sigma at PLU launched and over 45 staff and faculty have been trained and are working on increasing the efficiency of the university, as well as saving time and money where possible for redistribution.
- Distributive Fundraising: The work of fundraising is envisioned more broadly across the university with a desire for increased participation by a broad group of campus leaders.
- "The Box": The PLU Board of Regents passed a resolution in May 2013 to commit the university to make significant improvements in faculty and staff compensation, facilities and university reserves by the year 2020.
- PLU 2020: The long-range plan of the university was completed and work has begun on strategic planning and important priorities for the university in the decade ahead, e.g. Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM), Diversity Justice and Sustainability (DJS) Ad Hoc Committee, the Budget Working Group and the Master Plan Revision Committee.

University Strategic Priorities 2013-2020



The Division of Student Life will contribute to all five of the University Strategic Priorities as the university develops the goals, strategies and key performance indicators for each priority. As the university plan evolves, the Student Life leadership team will collaborate with other university leaders on setting goals for the university Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and designing and implementing strategies. In the 2012-2015 Student Life Strategic Plan, the division is focused on the University Strategic Priorities emphasizing its core work: Enhance Student Achievement and Success, and Increase Leadership Capacity and Community Engagement.

Student Life Strategic Priorities 2012-2015



#2 - Enhance Student Achievement and Success

1. **Advance the education, career, and vocation planning initiatives.** Expand the collaborative efforts of the multiple offices and centers involved in the work of assisting students with identifying and attaining their educational goals and developing their vocational and career paths.

Goal by May 31, 2020:

- Increase PLU student utilization of the services available for educational planning, vocational discernment, career exploration and initial employment, graduate school or volunteer work.

2. **Strengthen co-curricular programs.** Strengthen intersections between academic and co-curricular programs, enhance programs links with mission and Integrative Learning Objectives (ILOs), promote active engagement, and strengthen life balance and wellness.

Goals by May 31, 2020:

- Increase the number of students who utilize co-curricular experiences to advance the development and attainment of their educational goals.

- Increase the array of co-curricular educational experiences that complement and advance the mission of the university, the ILOs and student development as global citizens working toward a diverse, just and sustainable world.

3. **Expand co-curricular resources.** Expand the financial base of co-curricular programs and continue to invest in co-curricular facilities, with particular emphasis on the residence halls as comfortable, safe, and effective living/learning opportunities and recreation/wellness/athletic facilities that effectively meet student needs.

Goals by May 31, 2020:

- Increase the percentage of students who live in the residence halls.
- Enhance the residence halls as comfortable, enjoyable and engaging living/learning environments.
- Improve the Anderson University Center and recreation, wellness and athletic facilities to positively impact student utilization and effectiveness of services and programs.

4. **Improve the services and programs that support the persistence and retention of students through graduation.** Strengthen student resources across campus and enhance effectiveness, efficiency and accessibility.

Goal by May 31, 2020:

- Ensure that student resources across campus are accessible, effective, efficient and well utilized.

5. **Advance the university as a diverse, just, sustainable, and safe learning community.** Increase the explicit emphasis and importance of the intersections of diversity, social justice, sustainability and safety as priorities of the learning community at PLU.

Goal by May 31, 2020:

- Articulate the PLU emphasis and understanding of DJS and embed it in the co-curricular life of campus.

6. **Improve and refine the alignment of division and department assessments with the university's mission, goals, themes and Integrative Learning Objectives.** Advance the effectiveness of division programs and services in advancing student attainment of the university's mission and ILOs.

Goal by May 31, 2020:

- Increase students' ability to articulate the contributions of co-curricular educational experiences and services to their overall PLU educational experience.

7. **Enhance student communication plans to increase the effective marketing of services and programs, and the value-added of co-curricular opportunities.** Assure that services and programs are effectively communicated and promoted to students as important components of their PLU education.

Goal by May 31, 2020:

- Increase the number of students who are well informed of the co-curricular educational opportunities and who actively seek to participate.



#3 - Increase Leadership Capacity and Community Engagement

1. **Advance the university as a diverse, just, sustainable and safe learning community.** Increase the explicit emphasis and importance of the intersections of diversity, social justice, sustainability and safety as priorities of the learning community at PLU.

Goal by May 31, 2020:

- Enhance the array of co-curricular educational programs that advance student understanding and engagement in supporting PLU as a safe, DJS learning community.

2. **Enhance the residential living/learning communities' intersections with curricular emphases and ILOs.** Increase the collaborative work with faculty and campus partners in integrating academic priorities into the living environments on campus.

Goal by May 31, 2020:

- Expand the intentional connections of the living/learning communities to the academic programs of the university.

3. **Expand the professional development opportunities within the Student Life Division.** Nurture and enrich the professional lives of Student Life staff through multiple offerings for professional growth, both on and off campus.

Goal by May 31, 2020:

- Promote and provide opportunities for staff to achieve and sustain themselves as innovative, first rank professionals.

Additional Strategic Priorities with University Initiatives

Student Life Priorities 2013-2014



#1 - Advance Academic Excellence

1. Complete the 2014 NWCCU accreditation report and host a successful site visit.



#4 - Accelerate Strategic Enrollment Management and Marketing

1. Adopt an institutional strategic enrollment management (SEM) plan and propose specific enrollment and net tuition goals to the Board of Regents in 2014.



#5 - Improve Financial and Physical Resources

1. Advance the initiatives set forth in the May 2013 Board of Regents resolution on compensation and maintenance by increasing university financial resources through the development of academic programs that generate new net revenue, and through the development of non-tuition sources, including auxiliaries, community partnerships and gift income, for annual support and growing the endowment.
2. Initiate the 18-month process that will lead to an updated campus master plan.
3. Secure funding for renovation of Stuen and Ordal Halls, and begin construction in Stuen Hall.
4. Complete several Six Sigma projects and train additional Green Belts.
5. Launch the Budget Working Group to explore and recommend possible alternative university budget structures.

Conclusion

The members of the Student Life Division are deeply committed to and engaged in meaningful and productive work that continues to advance the vision, mission and ILOs of the university in the lives of students. With the year 2020 as the marker, the members are eager to achieve the aspirations outlined in ***PLU 2020*** and the University Strategic Priorities, and to work collaboratively to make those aspirations a reality.