

A New Vision for Teaching and Learning At UWSP: *A Framework for Developing a Strategic Plan for Teaching and Learning Engagement – 2012-2013*

Our Charge

On August 7, 2012, Interim Provost Greg Summers charged Karyn Biasca, David Hastings, and Steve Wright with the task of designing a comprehensive framework for “conceiving a new vision for teaching and learning at UWSP.” Provost Summers directed this group to offer recommendations based on the following inquiries:

- What it means for UWSP to be a “teaching institution”
- What role a future center for teaching and learning might play on campus
- The role that our shared teaching values might play in our approach to hiring, retention, tenure, and promotion

This report is the collective response to this charge from Provost Summers from discussions held by Professors Biasca, Hastings, and Wright during the month of August 2012. The following set of recommendations will serve as a framework for developing a strategic plan for teaching and learning engagement at UWSP.

Foundational Precepts

In considering a structure for developing a strategic plan, it is essential to list the following principles or “foundational precepts”:

Provost Summers’ Charge Specifics

- It will be important to honor our traditions of teaching and learning excellence while at the same time develop an ambitious set of aspirations, goals, and desired accomplishments.

Existing Mission Statement and Strategic Plan Specifics

- The UW-System Mission states that “Each university shall: Offer an environment that emphasizes teaching excellence and meets the educational and personal needs of students through effective teaching, academic advising, counseling, and through university-sponsored cultural, recreational, and extracurricular programs.”
- Teaching and Learning is at the core of The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point’s Mission Statement.
- The first theme in the current UWSP Strategic Plan is “We shall advance learning”.

Preliminary Plan Discussion Points

- A teaching institution is one that applies scholarship and scholarly thinking to the classroom.
- Currently, teaching effectiveness is measured through peer evaluations and responses to *The Student Evaluation of Course Instruction* as stated in the *UWSP Teaching, Scholarship, and Service Document*.

Foundational Precepts (continued)

- At UWSP, excellence in the classroom is expected and required therefore we must offer faculty, at all levels, the resources to succeed.
- New faculty usually have little or no training in the classroom.
- Teaching and learning methods and themes can be applied universally, regardless of the teaching discipline.
- Interconnectedness is more important in today's teaching.

Fundamental Questions

What does it mean to be a teaching institution?

What does success look like in teaching and learning?

How do we measure effective teaching? What evidence is needed?

How can we make student learning visible?

How do we engage all participants from the UWSP Teaching Community in the process of reflection of and inquiry into one's teaching?

How can a scholarly approach to teaching and learning become a part of the UWSP *Teaching, Scholarship, and Service Plan*?

How can we connect faculty research practice to teaching in the classroom?

A Recommendation for a Framework for Developing a Strategic Plan

Who will be involved in developing this plan?

- ◆ A group referred to as *The Strategic Plan for Teaching and Learning Engagement Steering Committee* with the following participants:
 - Michael Demchik – Professor of Forestry (CNR)
 - Maureen Giblin – Director – Tutoring Learning Center
 - David Hastings – Professor of Music (COFAC)
 - Angie Kellogg – Director – Student Academic Advising Center
 - David Ozsvath – Professor of Geology (COLS)
 - Pam Terrell – Assistant Professor of Communicative Disorders (CPS)
 - Steve Wright – Professor of Chemistry (COLS)
- ◆ Consultants not serving on the Steering Committee:
 - Karyn Biasca – Professor of Paper Science and Engineering (CNR)
 - Paula DeHart – Professor of Education (CPS), Assessment Coordinator
 - James Sage – Interim Associate VC for Teaching, Learning, and Academic Programs
- ◆ Task Forces organized around the general topics of
 - Defining good teaching
 - Measuring teaching
 - Supporting teaching
 - Rewarding teaching
- ◆ Members of the UWSP Teaching and Learning Community

When will this work happen and when will the Strategic Plan be finished?

- ◆ The Steering Committee will meet every two weeks.
- ◆ Task Forces from the Steering Committee will meet as needed.
- ◆ Consultants will be called upon for input when needed.
- ◆ The Strategic Plan will be finished by May 3rd of 2013.

How will this work be accomplished?

- ◆ “Ten Keys to Successful Strategic Planning for Nonprofit and Foundation Leaders” by Richard A. Mittenthal will serve as a guideline for our process.
http://www.tccgrp.com/pdfs/per_brief_tenkeys.pdf
- ◆ While other Strategic Plan models specifically for Teaching and Learning will be reviewed, “The University of Regina Strategic Plan for Teaching and Learning” will be used as a model for this work:
- ◆ http://www.uregina.ca/home/strategic/theplan/documents/Strat_Plan_Teaching.pdf
- ◆ In addition to work during and away from Steering Committee and Task Force meetings, the UWSP teaching and learning community will be involved in this process through surveys, focus groups, and departmental visits modeled after the process recently used by the UWSP Assessment Subcommittee.

What will be accomplished?

- ◆ As charged by Provost Summers, a Strategic Plan for Teaching and Learning Engagement at UWSP.
- ◆ The Preliminary Planning Group added “Engagement” to the plan title to emphasize that while teaching and learning do take place at UWSP, it is the engagement piece of this work that needs to be strategically planned.