

# **UW Support Services Plan**

## **Introduction**

A vision for the future of the university that inspires faculty, staff, and students to work together toward shared goals is the result of careful planning and strong leadership. The 1998-99 academic year at the University of Wyoming was dedicated to the development of an academic plan to serve the institution for the years 1999-2004. The purpose of the plan is to guide decisions concerning the number, scope, and focus of academic programs; the activities of academic personnel and staff; and the allocation of resources and institutional energy.

A process that involved academic departments, colleges, Academic Affairs, the president, the trustees, and internal and external constituents from across the state in the creation of academic plans became the foundation for what has emerged as the UW-Academic Plan. Not all of the ideas that surfaced in department plans during that process have been incorporated into the Academic Plan, but departments and colleges have been encouraged to pursue those ideas which have merit and are consistent with the Plan.

The UW Academic Plan does not constitute a complete strategic plan. Rather, its focus is the academic core of the institution and, therefore, represents the hub around which additional plans will be developed to provide overall direction for the collaboration and cooperation of academic, administrative, and student support units.

The purpose of this document is to provide a framework within which the planning process will proceed for the University Libraries and the Divisions of Student Affairs, Administration and Finance, Information Technology, and Intercollegiate Athletics, as well as other units not included in the UW Academic Plan. The planning process will occur during the 1999-2000 academic year.

## **The Planning Context**

The follow-up phase to the academic planning process will initially focus on the 167 action items in the UW Academic Plan. Support units will consider each of the action items to determine if there is a

role, either direct or indirect, they may play to support implementation of these items. Support units may also recommend supplementary action items in response to opportunities to enrich the Academic Plan.

The second step for support units will be a self-study. The breadth of support services goes far beyond what has been identified in the 167 action items of the UW Academic Plan. To focus on these items alone would ignore both opportunities and challenges not identified in the Academic Plan. Therefore, support units will prepare self-studies that examine, among other things: what function(s) are provided and the services or product delivered to fulfill the function(s); the institutional need for each service or product; the quality, cost, and efficiency of delivery; and whether or not alternative delivery systems are available and should be considered. An open invitation will be issued to the campus community to help identify issues and opportunities to be considered in the self-studies.

To assist support units with the preparation of their plans, the following documents, in addition to the Academic Plan, provide an appropriate context in which support plans can be considered. These include:

- President Dubois' installation address
- President Dubois' fall 1998 convocation address
- President Dubois' white paper on the Academic Plan of January 19, 1999
- The University Academic Plan list of action items
- The University of Wyoming mission statement
- The Division of Student Affairs mission statement
- The Division of Administration and Finance mission statement
- Information and Technology mission statement
- The University Libraries' mission statement
- Intercollegiate Athletics mission statement
- Selected supplementary documents

## **Environmental Factors to Guide the Planning Process**

The introduction to the UW Academic Plan contains 10 significant factors that will impact the university's policy and programmatic efforts during the next five years. These topics, in some cases slightly modified for adaptation to support unit-planning activities, are included here as factors to be considered for UW support services.

**1. UW's unique role as the only four-year, state-supported higher education institution.**

Expectations for a broad array of educational programs to serve the needs of the state will, in all likelihood, continue along with pressure to deliver many of those programs across the state. Therefore, the data-based demonstration of need for such programs will be essential.

**2. Understanding that scholarship, quality teaching, student learning, and the transmission and creation of knowledge in the classroom and laboratory is fundamental to the higher education experience.**

In addition, the student's total experience in a comprehensive learning environment is an essential factor in a quality education. The creation of such an environment is a shared obligation of faculty, administration, staff, and students.

**3. Funding constraints.** UW will continue to fulfill its educational role in a context of funding constraints. Traditional sources of income are declining as a percentage of the budget; thus, a larger percentage of the university's budget will come from self-generated revenue. Therefore, the support planning process must avoid expectations for infusions of additional funding and, instead, emphasize new efficiencies and effectiveness that better utilize limited resources. However, true excellence will be pursued and supported as hallmarks of distinction for UW. Such unique efforts leading to distinction and excellence are encouraged. In addition, the rate of transfer of funds from Section II enterprises to support Section I functions will be explored.

**4. Changing student demographics and characteristics.** National trends suggest continuing changes in student populations that include increasing numbers of women and ethnic minorities; an increase in part-time students; more students engaged in part-time employment; and increasing

numbers seeking mid-career changes, job retraining, and re-education, particularly for site-bound students. Changes in the student cohort demands vigilance if the university is to fulfill its educational mission for these students in an effective manner.

- 5. Enrollment and access.** Recent declines in the university's student enrollment are exacerbated by the expectation that there will be an 18 percent decline in Wyoming high school graduates over the next decade. Every effort must be made to maintain and increase student enrollment through recruitment, retention, distance education, and other innovative initiatives.
- 6. Partnerships.** It will be increasingly important to maintain existing partnerships and to develop new ones to better serve Wyoming's students and citizens. In particular, it will be important to develop further linkages and cooperation between UW departments and colleges; with K-12 schools; and with the community colleges for more refined articulation of degree requirements, for academic preparation and recruitment, and for collaboration in workforce preparation for the demands of an improved state economy.
- 7. Accountability, rewards, and priorities.** Institutions of higher education throughout the nation face persisting demands for greater accountability, outcomes assessment, and process evaluation. Although assessment programs are in place at UW, the standard of accountability and evaluation is not consistent across all units. If the pursuit of excellence is to be managed with precision, attention to systematic assessment throughout the university is imperative.
- 8. Attention to a national and international context.** Although the principle focus of the University of Wyoming will always be on Wyoming and its people, the informational, economic, and cultural needs of the state can only be met by a university that has a regional, national, and international perspective. It is important to weave this perspective throughout the fabric of the institution.
- 9. Wyoming economic development.** The U.S. Census Bureau has estimated that in the age groups from 25 to 35 there has been a 20 to 28 percent decline in Wyoming's population between 1990 and 1996. The decline is rooted primarily in a lack of good paying jobs, which is, in turn, the

result of a stagnant economy. Inasmuch as the university is considered a major catalyst for economic change in Wyoming, traditional faculty and administrative roles must be redefined to address UW's partnership with Wyoming's economic development.

**10. Commitment to progress.** Given this mix of demands, constraints, and opportunities, the UW community must commit itself to creating and managing change that is dedicated to institutional excellence. This commitment to progress must be institutional in scope, bold, and proactive. It must also share a common vision for the future.

### **Planning Values and Principles**

In addition to the 10 essential factors that will guide the self-studies and the plan contents, there are fundamental planning values and principles that will define the process. These include:

- 1. Effective university planning and decision making requires collaboration among all the university stakeholders, including administrative officials, faculty, staff, students, and external constituents.** Planning should be an open, iterative, and responsive process grounded in mutual recognition of and shared respect for the statutory duties of the trustees and the delegated responsibilities of the president; the vice presidents; deans; and the faculty, staff, and student senates.
- 2. The university's first mission is to provide an excellent baccalaureate education.** The university's unwavering attention to high quality undergraduate teaching and learning targets not only the classroom and laboratory but also the creation of an entire campus culture that facilitates the teaching/learning process both in and outside of the classroom.
- 3. There is value in the university's research function. The university exists both to transmit and to expand the horizons of knowledge.** Support services that sustain and facilitate research, as well as teaching and learning, are essential to the university maintaining its stature as a Carnegie Research II institution.

4. **The work of the faculty needs judicious support.** The main foci of faculty work should be teaching and research. Support structures for the faculty should provide the facilities, equipment, and technology required to function with excellence. In addition, co-curricular programming should be coordinated with and complement classroom and instructional activities.
5. **The primary mission of students as learners needs judicious support.** The main foci of students should be the acquisition, application, and expansion of knowledge. Support structures should be designed to deliver students to the classroom ready to learn.
6. **A major strength of the institution lies in the diversity it is able to develop and maintain.** An important indicator of quality in any institution of higher education is a campus community that reflects the diversity of the larger society. Students, faculty and staff alike benefit from the enriched breadth and depth of interactions that occur in a diverse context. Research evidence also indicates that the quality of the educational experience is strongly enhanced by a richly diverse environment. Typically, a productive level of diversity does not just happen, it is the result of intentionally planned and executed programs at all levels within the institution.
7. **All support programs have benefits and costs. Every program or activity represents a resource allocation decision.** There are four key questions in assessing existing and envisioned programs. First, how does the program contribute to the university's academic mission? Second, are there surmountable obstacles that prevent programs from delivering benefits to their full potential? Third, is there duplication of effort? Fourth, does a new program or initiative have a higher priority than existing ones?
8. **The successful university is more than a collection of discrete programs.** Interactions, functional ties, and personnel links among programs are key components to collaboration and cooperation. Cultivating such an environment requires attitudes and actions that reflect a commitment to institutional values and goals as opposed to just the welfare of the employee's unit.
9. **High quality service goes beyond knowledge and experience in one's area of expertise.** An

uncompromising commitment to friendly and thoughtful delivery of service is essential to a total quality experience for those who receive our services. All services should be delivered in a manner that personalizes the teaching/learning environment.

### **Charge for UW Support Services Plan**

The purpose of this support services planning process is to participate in charting a course that will guide future actions and decisions for the development of the University of Wyoming in support of its fundamental mission. The UW Support Services Plan will be developed through a series of interactions between university constituencies, external consultants, and the participants in this planning process, namely, the University Libraries and the Divisions of Administration and Finance, Information Technology, Student Affairs, and Intercollegiate Athletics.

Plans developed by each unit will be reviewed and evaluated at the division level and by the Coordinating Committee for the Review of the Support Services Planning. These plans will include a self-study component and will also be made available to the general university community via a web site that will be established for that purpose. Comments from the campus community will also be incorporated into the draft plans that emerge from this initial step.

Unit self-studies will include, but are not limited to:

- Description of the unit
- Addressing those elements of the UW Academic Plan that obligate and encumber unit resources
- Description of those who are served
- Functions performed and how they support the university and division mission statements
- Description of the need for the service
- Description of unfunded externally mandated services and requirements
- Assessment of quality of the services including the use of professional standards for service delivery if such standards are available

- Service delivery alternatives (e.g., outsourcing)
- Comparator data from selected institutions to provide a benchmark perspective of resource allocation and service delivery
- Recommendations for innovative structural and functional changes that increase the effectiveness of support for the UW mission (e.g., realignment of reporting lines, combining of offices, elimination or enhancement of function, etc.)

The vice presidents and directors will incorporate the unit self-studies and plans in developing division support service plans. These will be compiled into an UW Support Services Plan document. The document will include a separate section and action items for every division and a final section that describes collaboration and cooperation of all divisions with the UW Academic Plan and with each other. Drafts of the Support Services Plan will be shared with the campus community prior to finalizing the overall plan for presentation to the president and the Board of Trustees.

## **UW Support Services Planning Process**

### **Timeline**

**1999**

- 8/15 Units and divisions begin support services planning efforts.
- 9/1 Invitation to the campus community to identify ideas, issues, and functions to be addressed. (ongoing)
- 9/1 Self-studies initiated
- 11/1 Self-studies due to responsible vice presidents/directors.
- 12/17 Draft of division reports delivered to President for review.

**2000**

- 1/ 31 Revised division reports made available to the CCRSSP and on the web for campus review.
- 2/28 Steering Committee begins development of Draft #1 of the Support Services Plan pursuant to recommendations and input from CCRSSP, external review teams, and the campus community.
- 3/24 Draft #1 of the Support Services Plan delivered to President for review.
- 4/3 Steering Committee begins development of Draft #2.
- 4/24 Draft #2 of the Support Services Plan made available to the CCRSSP and on the web for campus review
- 5/ 8 Steering Committee begins development of Draft #3
- 5/ 22 Draft #3 of the Support Services Plan made available to the CCRSSP and on the web for campus review.
- 5/25 Review of Draft #3 of the Support Services Plan by President and Executive Council.
- 6/9 Final recommendations incorporated into the Support Services Plan.
- 6/15 Review of final draft of the Support Services Plan by the President and Executive Council
- 7/ 3 Support Services Plan made available to the Trustees for approval at their July meeting.

**University of Wyoming**  
**Coordinating Committee for the Review of the Support Services Planning (CCRSSP)**  
 (appointed by President Dubois)

**Chair**  
 Myron Allen  
**Academic Affairs**

<b>Deans' Council</b> Steve Horn	<b>Office of Research</b> Roger Wilmot	<b>Development</b> Molly Williams
<b>Information Technology</b> Diana Blake	<b>Athletics</b> Barbara Burke	<b>Administration and Finance</b> Gordon Ellis
<b>Student/Student Senate</b> Josh Sauer ( <i>Residence Hall Assoc.</i> ) Avery McConnel ( <i>ASUW</i> )	<b>University Libraries</b> Bill Stewart	<b>Student Affairs</b> Andrew Turner
<b>Graduate Student / Women &amp; Minorities</b> Frances Price	<b>Faculty/Faculty Senate</b> Bruce Richardson Curt Cramer Ron Delaney	<b>Staff/Staff Senate</b> Jim Kaltenbach Kim Kellogg Sharon Brown

**Consultants to the CCRSSP:**  
 Robert Aylward    Keith Cottam  
 Dan Baccari      Jim Hurst  
 Lee Moon        Ben Blalock



