



December 17, 2020

Dear UW Strategic Scenario Planning Team,

Thank you for your willingness to serve on this project, which will be critical to move UW into the future, to help guide our leadership as we navigate and make decisions to help UW move through and past significant fiscal challenges and the pandemic, to a sustainable, thriving 21st century land-grant true to its Wyoming roots.

Visioning will be focused upon identifying, prioritizing, building, and strengthening the most important, future-forward assets of the university and ensuring we are attentive to providing an educated workforce to grow and sustain critical professions in the region.

Starting premise: If we were building the University of Wyoming right now, from scratch, how would we build it? Some focus questions we'll use to gather our thoughts, and those of our stakeholders, are:

1. When you think of yourself as a member of the University of Wyoming community, what do you treasure most about your affiliation with the University?
2. When you think about the University, if we had all time and money available to us, what are the one or two programs or services you believe we should create from scratch, build on top of others, or expand? What makes you suggest these one or two programs or services?
3. When you think about possible new or strengthened programs, what about them...Would differentiate UW from other universities? Would excite and attract students and help them succeed after they graduate? Would attract sponsors and funders, from research agencies, foundations, and companies we might partner with?
4. When you think of the new University we are building, what specific programs can you imagine that would help support development of the President's Four Pillars? What would make them exciting for students and faculty alike? What would make them impactful for the future of the state? What would make them competitive for external funding? How would they impact or strengthen other units at the University?
5. When you think of our students at the University, what capabilities, skills, knowledge and abilities to you think are the most critical for them to be ready for the future of work?
6. When you think about the University, you believe that our best hopes for future growth and sustainability will come if we do/invest/change in what one or two things about the University and how we fulfill our mission? What drew you to these suggestions?
7. When you consider the financial realities of our present and short-term future, what one or two programs or services are you willing to honor, then forego? What makes you suggest these one or two programs or services?
8. What external partnerships (with higher education, corporations, NGOs, etc) might we consider to increase our capacity to do what we need to do, and to enhance our impact on Wyoming? Within Wyoming? Nationally and internationally?
9. What one or two values do you ask our University leadership—Board, Executive Team—to consider when making the challenging decisions they need to make in the coming months to both invest and reduce University funds? How do you define these values and why are these most important to you?

It is extremely important to recognize that there are things we are doing now that we would not do if it wasn't for historical evolution. Identify them, honor them, and let them go.

We want to focus the outcome of this planning process on two primary emphasis areas.

1. What would the *student experience* look and feel like, from first contact to alumni status? Please consider:
 - a. Living learning communities, organized around the grand challenges of Wyoming, with an opportunity to build towards an immersive capstone project by senior year, regardless of major
 - b. Opportunities for all students to opt into active programs of civic engagement and experiential learning (outdoor experiences, immersive experiences in Wyoming communities solving community challenges with community partners, club sports and student organizations, faculty-led field courses, internships, international/intercultural experiences, undergraduate research).
 - c. Minor courses of study, available for every major, in skills needed for success in 21st century life, such as entrepreneurship, data science, civic engagement, and so forth.
 - d. Apprenticeships and internships with a consortium of corporate partners, NGOs, and/or other institutions.
 - e. Other measures that will promote student success and provide the tools for lifelong learning and 21st century citizens.
2. What would the *faculty and staff experience* look and feel like? How would we reward and build excellence? Please consider:
 - a. Incentives and rewards for more external support from grants, foundations, corporations, to support scholarship and research etc...what is needed?
 - b. Incentives and rewards for entrepreneurship and innovation.
 - c. Incentives and rewards for excellence in teaching, mentoring, and community engagement.
 - d. Metrics to measure our standing, success, and opportunity in higher education thinking of both a Wyoming perspective and an international scope.

As we move forward in this process, we will use the design thinking – we'll define and understand/build empathy for our "users" (students, employers, the state, funding agencies, etc.) and make suggestions that will build the new UW around that. Key principles of design thinking include: what is the problem or what are the problems we are trying to solve? What do our key stakeholders need and want? What are we willing to try, experiment, and pilot? What will be or did we learn? What works? What wows?

The planning team's Deliverables will be to:

1. Building on information already developed by the administration, decide on further nominations for members that should be included in these efforts on subcommittees, as well as suggesting subcommittee structures.
2. Review our mission and values
3. Help conduct a Strategic Listening Tour (details in the Timeline/Workplan)
4. Build on and further develop and recommend strategic themes based on President Seidel's 4 Pillars (more digital, entrepreneurial, inclusive, and interdisciplinary) and on campus and key stakeholder engagement; other themes that emerge should also be built and developed (examples below)
5. Aggregate themes and develop a strategic plan framework for recommendation to President Seidel and the Board of Trustees
6. Coordinate and provide leadership to working groups to address strategic themes
7. Identify and recommend key strategic goals and objectives
8. Produce a strategic plan for recommendation to President Seidel and the Board of Trustees by April 30, 2021
9. Make recommendations for implementation.

With much appreciation,

Ed Seidel, President
Anne Alexander, Interim Provost