ACADEMIC ACTION PLAN

Academic Planning Workgroup (APW) & UWO Institutional
Effectiveness Office

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Summary

The purpose of this action plan is to provide the transition and implementation teams with context for carrying out the work in the Academic Strategic Plan. The Academic Planning workgroup developed strategies and actions that are required for UWO to be successful, those actions are captured below.

Principle 1: Academic Restructuring

Theme: Building an Academy around student-centered career pathways

Problem Statement
The legacy academic structure of UWO has become complex and outdated and no longer adequately serves students.

Current state overview and context
The typical UW Oshkosh student wants to stay close to home and find a career that allows them to remain within the region. Structuring the academy around career pathways that are ingrained in K-12 will ease their transition to higher education. Students want flexibility and easy transitions between programs that will result in careers.

Deliverables
- **Deliverable #1**: Establish nationally recognized career clusters to align UWO with career planning processes used in K-12.
- **Deliverable #2**: Preserve disciplinary integrity within an interdisciplinary framework.

Action Plan
Program Development
- **Action #1:** Design interdisciplinary schools around career pathways to help students and parents understand the connections between programs of study, transferrable skills, and career opportunities.
- **Action #2:** Encourage interdisciplinarity within career pathways while maintaining disciplinary strengths, identities, and relationships.
- **Action #3:** Reconfigure PeopleSoft to reflect the new career pathways model.
- **Action #4:** Determine necessary bylaw changes and tenure and promotion process within the college/school structure.
- **Action #5:** Solidify roles and responsibilities for new administrative positions (i.e. school directors, area program coordinators, school administrative assistants).
- **Action #6:** Reorganizing the budget structure to match the new academic structure.

Resource Allocation & Budget
- PeopleSoft Consultation: TBD

Implementation Timeline
- Academic restructuring will be completed by January of 2025.

Communication & Reporting
- Implementation will be led by a strategy team with multiple sub-teams reporting to them. These teams will meet routinely with designated timelines for each until the work is completed.
- Routine report outs will be given by the strategy team to the broader University community.

Success Measures

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Faculty and Student Retention Rate
- Student Headcount (Undergraduate, Graduate)
- Graduation Rate
- Year-to-Year Student Persistence
- Transfer Student Retention Rate

Monitoring Progress
- Institutional Effectiveness (IE) will be responsible for tracking progress on deliverables.

Visuals & Resources
- Model A (3+6 Schools)
- Model A Budget Summary
- Model B (3+8 Schools)
- Model B Budget Summary
- Rationale for Restructure Models

Principle 2: Student Success and Support

Theme: Advance student engagement and success

Problem Statement

Retention of our first-year freshman has fallen in the last five years, primarily due to academic performance.

Current state overview and context

Student success has been a focus at UWO in recent years. Data suggests that student GPAs and rates of attendance have declined, especially amongst first-year students. Changing majors is made increasingly difficult by complex curricular requirements and artificial barriers.

Deliverables

- **Deliverable #1:** Build a new focus on first-year student academic success through innovative teaching and learning for the UWO student portfolio.
- **Deliverable #2:** Simplify curricular array to maximize flexibility for students.
- **Deliverable #3:** Integrate Academic Affairs into data-driven technology to enhance student success.

Action Plan

Program Development

- **Action #1:** Streamline registration for students (especially first-year students) to set them up for success.
    - BA/BS degree requirements removed (Accomplished)
    - Unpairing Quest 1 courses eliminates barriers for first-year students (In final approval stage).
    - Revise language for Quest to make these courses focused on first-year student experience.
    - Change the academic drop date to later in the term (In approval stage).
    - Make waitlist usage consistent across departments.
    - Perform critical evaluation of new and existing curriculum and the curricular approval process. Students often encounter barriers during registration due to complicated requisites. Increased collaboration and communication across departments and colleges regarding curriculum and course scheduling would reduce these barriers. These efforts would also reduce the need for curricular modifications.
    - Develop and issue a bulletin/catalog that is easy for students to use and follow.
- **Action #2:** Reduce fees and costs that are beyond basic tuition, particularly fees and costs associated with courses, and make these fully transparent to students. In addition, reduce the number of courses requiring special course fees and permissions in order to: reduce the administrative costs of entering courses into software systems and collecting tuition; simplify the enrollment process for students; and reduce the time needed to advise students.

- o Allow enrollment in courses offered from any campus and in any modality without special permission.
  - o Limit use of department holds and department consent that prevent or delay registration.
  - o Implement an across-the-board per credit technology fee.
  - o Allow removal of current sporadically-used online fees and special course fees.
  - o Perform an audit of current courses with special fees and permissions and propose changes.
  - o Examine and potentially revise the approval process for adding course fees.
- **Action #3**: Improve communication between faculty/instructional academic staff and non-instructional academic staff to more effectively connect students to support services.
  - o Identify best strategies for faculty to connect students to support services.
  - o Share information across units to improve documentation of student status and needs.
  - o Share and improve use of information that instructors have about student support needs.
  - o Revise training on Navigate and Canvas to increase the usefulness for faculty and thus encourage more consistent use across the University.
  - o Use input from Quarter 1/FTE courses to increase institutional understanding of students' experiences.
- **Action #4:** Examine pedagogy and best practices for students' academic success (DFW); identify strategies to help students improve their GPA.
  - o Assemble a dedicated team of first-year experience (currently Quest I) instructors who focus on and research best practices related to first-year students.
  - o Ensure performance reviews and/or regular incentives (promotion, etc.) to support continual improvement and excellence in teaching to ensure teaching remains a high priority.
  - o Ensure students for whom college might not be the best fit are given a humane exit strategy.
  - o Recouple interim and the regular semester to give students and faculty greater flexibility without added cost.
  - o Change the drop deadline to closer to the end of the semester.
  - o Re-examine the grading system for introductory courses (Offer a "R" retake option, as an example).
  - o Increase the knowledge and use of Open Educational Resource (OER) to help keep costs down for students.

Resource Allocation & Budget
- Purchase of CourseLeaf for curricular management: $130,000 (Initial) $70,000 (Recurring).
- PeopleSoft Consultation: TBD.

Implementation Timeline
- Implementation can begin immediately but should be complete by January 2025.

Communication & Reporting

- Implementation will be led by a strategy team with multiple sub-teams reporting to them. These teams will meet routinely with designated timelines for each until the work is completed.
- Routine report outs will be given by the strategy team to the broader University community.

Success Measures

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- Increase in student retention (persistence) rate and numbers.
- Average GPA for all students (freshman year).
- Increased in number of credits completed by academic year.
- Increasing enrollment projections.

Monitoring Progress

- Institutional Effectiveness (IE) will be responsible for tracking progress on deliverables.

Principle 3: Research-Enhanced Focus

Theme: Embody the ideals of a research-enhanced university

Problem Statement

UW Oshkosh must offer specific strategies for operationalizing "research enhanced" and offer greater transparency, recognition, and a more succinct, student-facing explanation of what being a "research-enhanced" university means.

Current state overview and context

UW Oshkosh identifies as a research enhanced comprehensive university, yet a single, widely held definition of research-enhanced has not been articulated.

- Need exists for a more succinct, student-facing explanation of "research-enhanced."
- Need exists for creating a process that acknowledges faculty scholarly output.
- Need exists for development and implementation of tracking methodologies for faculty research and creative activity.

Deliverables

- **Deliverable #1**: Define what "Research Enhanced" means at UWO (Completed).
- **Deliverable #2:** Create an institution-wide process for research acknowledgement and accountability.
- **Deliverable #3:** Develop a tracking mechanism and formal acknowledgement for "Research Enhanced" activity.

Action Plan

Program Development

- **Action #1 (Research Enhanced Definition):** The subgroup for Principle 3 has developed a definition of research enhanced.
  - **Rationale for Faculty:** University of Wisconsin Oshkosh's vision identifies as a research-enhanced comprehensive university. To facilitate shared understanding and action, UW Oshkosh has defined a **research-enhanced** comprehensive university as the following. The full text definition is available at this link and an excerpt of the definition is included below:

    "The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is a Carnegie designated D/PU: Doctoral/Professional University and a research-enhanced comprehensive university. Faculty and student research activities— broadly defined and varied by academic discipline—generate, validate, synthesize, and engage with new knowledge. Shared publicly, this knowledge advances human understanding and enriches the intellectual vitality and productivity of the broader community and the classroom, where innovative, research-driven teaching and learning provide the foundation of a high-impact university education. In short,

> *UWO is committed to providing opportunities for enhanced research activities that fuel our passion for teaching, problem-solving, and student advancement, while advancing the cultural richness and economic development of our region."*

- o **Rationale for Student-Facing**: To accompany the full definition, a more succinct, student-facing explanation was developed. It is:

> *"UW Oshkosh is a research-enhanced comprehensive university. What does that mean for you as a UWO student? First, it means that we offer a comprehensive array of majors and minors in schools recently restructured to provide you with multiple pathways into 21st-century life and work. You will have a lot of choices to find your passion and your place, and plenty of help deciding on your best fit. We also offer something special and powerful: faculty who are actively engaged in research and creative activity and passionate about bringing that expertise into the classroom. And if you want to do research with a professor, you'll have many opportunities to do that, too."*

- **Action #2 (Tracking Mechanism):** Adopt an electronic faculty activity profile that records research and creative activity outputs.
  - o **Rationale:** In order to recognize, celebrate, and share faculty scholarly output, there must exist some way to capture data on faculty publications, presentations, performances, and other outcomes.
  - o **Recommendation #1**: Watermark Faculty Success (formerly Digital Measures) is one paid option.
    - Currently used by the College of Business for accreditation purposes
    - Could be scaled for institution-wide use.
    - Straightforward user interface that accommodates wide range of faculty scholarship.
    - Could provide data to support other processes (annual review, P&T, accreditation, etc.).
  - o **Recommendation #2**: Google Scholar profiles and an internal form are a no-cost option.
    - Strongly encourage faculty to create a Google Scholar profile and keep it updated (at least annually) with scholarly outputs.
    - For faculty whose scholarship doesn't fit well within Google Scholar or who don't want a GS profile, create an internal form (for example, through MS Forms) that allows them to record their scholarly outputs.
    - Not as robust as paid options and not easily used to provide data for other processes.
- **Action #3 (Acknowledgement Avenues):** Expand and enhance disciplinary research across the academy by acknowledging faculty and student achievements in research and creative activity.

- o **Rationale:** To strengthen the culture of scholarship at UW Oshkosh, it is important to acknowledge faculty and student achievements in research and creative activity through multiple modalities.
- o **Recommendation #1:** Recognize faculty scholarly achievement at convocation.
  - This would be similar to the teaching awards presented each year.
  - Would need to develop a process for nominations and decisions about recognition.
- o **Recommendation #2**: Leverage university communication channels, including electronic and social media, to recognize scholarly productivity and awards.
  - Create and regularly update webpage for scholarship and creative activity (perhaps uwosh.edu/research).
  - Celebrate faculty scholarly outcomes (books, presentations, exhibitions, articles, etc.) on social media and other channels.
  - Announce Faculty Development Program grantees.
  - Announce sabbatical recipients.
- o **Recommendation #3**: Expand the Celebration of Scholarship to include Wednesday afternoon Faculty Showcase.
  - Faculty would be invited and encouraged to share their scholarship with the university community through podium or poster presentations.
  - Faculty development grantees would be required to present their work.
- o **Recommendation #4**: Expand the number and breadth of research-related endowed professorships.
- o **Recommendation #5:** Create a traveling wall of recognition that features current/recent faculty book covers, articles, exhibits, etc.
  - Similar to what's on Dempsey third floor.
  - Updated on a regular schedule and placed in high-traffic areas (possible: Reeve, new library, Cafe Clow, Einsteins, etc.) as placards on an easel (or similar).
- o **Recommendation #6:** Establish a faculty library in Pollock House that contains faculty publications.
  - Perhaps housed in Faculty Resource Center in Pollock House Library.
  - Allows faculty to browse and read their colleagues' work.
  - Fosters conversation among faculty that may contribute to greater collaboration.
- o **Recommendation #7:** Spread faculty engagement/expertise into the Oshkosh-area community (Evergreen, Paine, etc.).
  - Present demonstrations, readings, and other events that engage non-academic audiences.
  - Combine expertise and entertainment to build town/gown relationships.
  - Allow faculty to share their passion for their scholarship with community audiences.

Resource Allocation & Budget
- Google Scholar is a free resource, as is Microsoft Forms, so the second tracking mechanism option would require minimal time and little to no financial cost to implement. A Faculty Success subscription would cost ~$35,000 annually for the faculty accomplishment and web profile modules, with a one-time $10,000 implementation fee.
- With the exception of endowed professorships, most of the above actions require few financial resources. The primary consideration will be coordination to ensure that information is gathered, and actions are taken in a timely manner.

Implementation Timeline
Implementation can begin immediately but should be complete by January 2025.

Communication & Reporting
- Implementation will be led by a strategy team with multiple sub-teams reporting to them. These teams will meet routinely with designated timelines for each until the work is completed.
- Routine report outs will be given by the strategy team to the broader University community.

Success Measures

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Number of faculty scholarly outputs
- Number of faculty scholarly outputs (including extramural grant proposals) from funded Faculty Development Grant projects.
- Number and dollar amount of extramural submissions and awards.
- Number of students participating in student-faculty collaborative research projects.
- Number of students completing a student-faculty collaborative research project.

Monitoring Progress
- Institutional Effectiveness (IE) will be responsible for tracking progress on deliverables.

Principle 4: Learning Environment & Technology

Theme: Integrate cutting-edge technology into teaching and learning

Problem Statement

Learners, the associated learning environment, and technology are evolving at a record pace. Current UWO technological and support systems are not adequate to meet our current and future educational needs.

Current state overview and context

Instructors and learners need continuous support and training to effectively facilitate the current learning environments available throughout our university. This may include developing and supporting technical skills, understanding learner motivations, and the relative benefits of the technology and associated pedagogy.

There is a lack of standardization in technologies (hardware and software), acquisition, maintenance, training, and support of these technologies. This has created inconsistent learning environments and fiscal inefficiencies, leading to limited teaching and learning experiences and outcomes for diverse learner personas.

- Lack of skills, motivation, and understanding limits adoption and use of applicable technological system and support.
- Lack of role clarity in where\how teaching and learning technology is provisioned – this ambiguity in technological or pedagogical support limits adoption and effective use (e.g., LMS training is it Information Technology or CETL).
- Flexibility is needed to address current and future learners with applicable learning technology systems, defined as:
    - Technology enables flexibility needed to address the learners need.
    - We need to be flexible (financially and willingness) to adopt technology.

Deliverables

Short Term: By End of 2024

- Evaluate and recharter the Faculty Senate's *Information and Learning Technologies Advisory Council (ILTAC)* with defined membership and charter (encompassing all institutional demand but with subgroups focused on/representation from shared governance, academic affairs, student affairs, finance and administrative affairs).

- *ILTAC* will:
    - Survey the status of current technology and teaching and learning software (e.g., inventory, level of IT/instructional support, if it is supported at the institutional level).

    - Assess best practices (e.g., Educause; their effectiveness) and the linked Learning Environment & Technology (LE&T) analysis framework for applicability to leverage it.

- - - o Make recommendations regarding learning environment and technology (including CETL's role and resources) for the four environments (i.e., physical, online, Mixed/Blended, and Extended Reality environments).
    - o Evaluate funding sources (i.e., what level the technology is paid for), with *accountability and support structures.*
      - ▪ Sound systems
      - ▪ Standard lecture
      - ▪ Higher tech rooms
      - ▪ Remote learning room
      - ▪ Smart boards
      - ▪ Software applications

Long-Term: By End of 2025

- Effective mechanisms are operationalized and implemented to evaluate technological systems.

  - o *ILTAC* (and associated subgroups) is assessing and assisting with technological systems with facilities upgrades/renovation projects and construction (e.g., library project) long term.

Action Plan

Review and update charter for ILTAC to recharge and operationalize ILTAC.

Assessment Actions

Overall: Utilize *APW LET Framework V1.1* *to assess the four focal learning environments:*
- o Physical
- o Online
- o Mixed/Blended
- o Extended Reality

Stakeholder Engagement

- Stakeholders and associated subgroup members, depending on the project, will be represented in *ILTAC.* For example:
  - o Information Technology (IT) will review/recommend technologies.
  - o Procurement will source and secure technologies.
  - o Facilities Management and Space Planning will review/allocate spaces.
  - o Faculty/staff technology advisory personnel will represent colleges/schools/areas and convey need.

Environmental Scan/Benchmarking

- Use *APW LET Framework V1.1* to conduct environmental scan and identify applicable effectiveness assessment mechanisms.
- CIO Council will scan learning environment.
- Evaluate and forecast demands based on Persona.

Implementation Actions

Program Development

- Faculty Senate's *Information and Learning Technologies advisory council (ILTAC)* will be evaluated, rechartered, and operationalized.

Resource Allocation & Budget

- *ILTAC* will make recommendations to the Chancellor's Cabinet. Cabinet will review and determine technology need, applicable funding sources, accountability, and support structures.

Implementation Timeline

- **By end of 2024**
  - Faculty Senate will evaluate *ILTAC* with defined membership and charter

- **By end of 2025**
  - Survey the status of current technology and teaching and learning software (e.g., inventory, level of IT/instructional support, if it is supported at the institutional level), assess best practices (e.g., Educause; their effectiveness) and leverage *APW LET Framework V1.1* for applicability.
  - Make recommendations regarding learning environment and technology (including CETL's role and resources) for the four environments (i.e., physical, online, Mixed/Blended, and Extended Reality).
  - Determine funding sources (i.e., how technology is paid for), with accountability and support structures.
- Timeline may depend on the technological system.

Communication & Reporting

- ILTAC representative(s) will participate in shared governance meetings, quarterly at minimum.
- Implementation will be led by a strategy team with multiple sub-teams reporting to them. These teams will meet routinely with designated timelines for each until the work is completed.
- Routine report outs will be given by the strategy team to the broader University community.

Success Measures

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- Adoption, Use and Participation

  - Use *APW LET Framework V1.1* to assess applicable effectiveness assessment mechanisms.

Monitoring Progress

- ILTAC representative(s) will participle in shared governance meetings to determine and refine measurement and monitoring mechanisms.
- Institutional Effectiveness (IE) will be responsible for tracking progress on deliverables.

Visual & Resources

- [APW Learning Environment & Technology (LET) Framework](#)