

UW-Milwaukee

Chancellor's Strategic Opportunities Work Group

January 31, 2017

FOUNDATION AND PROCESS

Given unprecedented fiscal challenges, enrollment declines and shifts in the role and view of higher education, it is clear that previous actions and tactics will not be the formula for UWM's future success. It is time to look forward and adapt ourselves, and, in doing so, continue to better define how UWM will achieve our mission, structure and overall direction.

The Chancellor's Strategic Opportunities Work Group (CSOWG) is developing a focused articulation of strategic opportunities, building on [UWM's established Mission, Vision, Guiding Values](#) and [strategic directions](#) of:

- Student success
- Research excellence
- Community engagement
- Culture and climate, and
- Brand, visibility and image

The goal of this work is to identify more succinctly areas in which UWM excels and what we aspire to be known for in thematic areas that will most likely engender additional funding and enhance our reputation as a premier academic institution.

Throughout this process, we will maintain our status as a complete university grounded in liberal arts and well-rounded, innovative education. Every school, college, and division has an important role, but we will be stronger with a focus on our strategic directions and resilient foundation.

The call for this focused direction has come directly from the Board of Regents, UW System, governance groups, community, and many at UWM. This articulation will guide current and future investments, and will also facilitate greater campus, community and legislative support, resulting in a stronger resource base and greater financial sustainability.

This process builds upon existing campus planning: our [UW-Milwaukee Strategic Plan 2020](#) document, academic and campus planning including the [Campus Budget Task Force](#), [the Chancellor's Campus Organization & Effectiveness Team \(CCOET\)](#), [the Strategic Position Control process](#), the Student Success Work Group and others.

The faculty members on the CSOWG will develop the academic portion of the articulation and bring it to the larger group and the Academic Planning and Budget Committee. Likewise, the student success and community engagement portions will be developed and shared by CSOWG members with expertise in these respective areas. We will seek campus input on a draft articulation document via our website, an open campus forum, and by asking every CSOWG member to solicit feedback from the groups that they respectively represent (e.g. each governance group, the Research Excellence team, all schools and colleges, major functional and administrative divisions, etc.). We will complete the process by February 2017, and thereafter utilize the document with the Board of Regents, UW System, legislators and others.

QUESTION POSED

In the context of developing a long-term, sustainable UWM that upholds R1, student success, community engagement, climate and culture, and brand, visibility and image:

- *What are the areas in which we excel and should be best known for which will enable additional funding and enhance our reputation?*

UWM'S STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES AND ASPIRATIONS AS A PREMIER URBAN PUBLIC RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

Through collaborative discussions and with feedback obtained from the campus community, UWM has developed the following strategic opportunities, aspirations and key pathways in response to the question posed.

- 1) Be an outstanding learning environment that prepares all undergraduate and graduate students to solve critical issues of the 21st century.**
 - Provide quality educational experiences within and beyond the classroom;
 - Celebrate and support our diverse student body; and
 - Instill innovative thinking, an entrepreneurial mindset, cultural fluency, and leadership skills.
- 2) Be an exceptional research university known for:**
 - Excellence in research and creative arts;
 - Inter-disciplinary collaboration, including those in health, STEM and water fields; and
 - Research partnerships that contribute to and benefit from UWM's urban community.
- 3) Be a leader in community engagement to improve the quality of life in our region, Wisconsin and the world, accomplished through:**
 - Undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff who are entrepreneurial and engage in the community;
 - Research that influences and enriches; and
 - Alumni who power the economy.

UWM's KEY PATHWAYS TO STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES AND ASPIRATIONS

1) Key Pathways for an Outstanding Learning Environment

- Hire, develop, and retain a faculty and staff dedicated to teaching, mentoring, and serving our diverse student body.
- Grow a robust foundation to offer more need-based scholarships to support students' success.
- Strengthen the educational pipeline between UWM, high schools, technical schools, and UW Colleges to support student transition, learning, and career success.
- Foster a student-centered classroom environment that supports students to achieve their highest goals.
- Identify and modify systems, policies, and practices that function as structural barriers to enhance students' success.
- Construct a comprehensive academic support network that prepares each student to succeed in all aspects of the university.
- Integrate career exploration and development into the curricular and co-curricular experience with a focus on leveraging our urban campus setting and partnerships with business and the non-profit sector.
- Support graduate students' diverse career paths (academic and non-academic) with seamless incorporation of career guidance, professional development, and leadership opportunities into graduate programs.
- Enhance opportunities for undergraduate and graduate research and creative activities that connect students to faculty mentors and promote skill development and innovative thinking.
- Build leadership development opportunities into curricular and co-curricular experiences that utilize our urban setting to promote student capacity to initiate positive change in their community.
- Provide opportunities for students from a wide range of backgrounds to engage in dialogue and mentorship experiences to advance their cultural competencies.
- Cultivate students' entrepreneurial spirit through activities that spark ingenuity and creative problem-solving by fostering relationships among students and the Milwaukee and regional business community.
- Expand versatile educational opportunities to meet workforce development needs with a focus on flex, online, graduate, and professional education.

2) Key Pathways for being an Exceptional Research University

- Develop campus-wide research priorities to guide decisions for supporting programs and investing in new initiatives.
- Adopt a cluster hire strategy for some hires that is based upon multi-disciplinary, problem-based teams, and that is built on existing research strengths.
 - Initially target health, water and STEM but expand to other topical areas.
- Implement workload policies that accommodate varying levels of a faculty member's research and creative activity.
- Support a research culture that values a wide breadth and diverse modes of research and creative activity.
- Phase in critical baseline investments over the next 2-3 years:
 - Bring TA salaries to competitive levels;

- Modest funding increase to restore some journal subscriptions; and
- Expand undergraduate research involvement to 5% of student body.
- Evaluate the structure of graduate programs to maximize research outcomes.
 - Consider new research-based interdisciplinary graduate programs.
- Develop a more meaningful university system for tracking and assessing research and creative activities, and to guide investments.

3) Key Pathways for being a Community Engagement Leader

- Strong, effective, and coordinated (e.g., potentially centralized) programs to:
 - Increase faculty and staff participation in service learning
 - Align undergraduate and graduate internships/co-ops with regional opportunities
 - Increase faculty and staff engagement, internally and externally
 - Develop seamless connections with for-profit and not-for-profit organizations through:
 - Internships/co-ops
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Career services
 - Executive education
 - Guest speakers
 - Sponsored research
 - Philanthropic support
- Increase alumni programming that advances the community engagement mission
- Communication and marketing initiatives that inform the public of the powerful impact UWM's research, teaching and community service have on our communities and state.