

2014-15/2018-19 Unit Strategic Plan Review

Unit: Educational Equity

Reviewers: Weaver, Foley, Long, Hameister, Moran, Dooris, Warcholak

Date: 10/31/14

Provost's Guidelines, June 2013	Provost Nick Jones "pillar"	President Eric Barron "major topic"
1. Executive Summary/Highlights		
<p>This is a strong plan with a clear vision and goals. It is well-written and articulated in terms of describing what Educational Equity is (and isn't) all about. It is also well-organized in that it follows the structure given in the guidelines. There's an emphasis in the plan on how important collaboration is to Educational Equity, which makes sense given the unit's mission.</p> <p>This already good plan could be strengthened a bit by adding more specificity to some of the strategies and including more metrics.</p>		
2. An articulated vision of the unit's future over the next five to ten years.		Excellence
<p>On p. 9, the vision is given as follows:</p> <p><i>With a new sense of urgency, our strategic planning will focus on our ongoing and long-term goal of institutional transformation for diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence, including ensuring affordability, access, and success of underrepresented/underserved groups.</i></p> <p><i>Given factors such as</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>projections of the national demographic landscape through 20401</i> • <i>White House commitments to increased graduation rates (including for low income students), access, and affordability</i> • <i>the increasing diversity in the population of students served by Penn State (see Figure 1)</i> • <i>increasing costs of attendance</i> • <i>low, and in some cases declining percentages of multicultural and underrepresented faculty (see Figure 2) and staff (see Figure 3)</i> • <i>projected decreases in the diversity within University leadership, and</i> • <i>employer and workforce expectations for diverse employees and for diversity and inclusion skills from all of our graduates</i> <p><i>it is critical for Penn State to consider diversity and inclusion broadly. Penn State's success is increasingly aligned with the success of the Educational Equity mission. Success of this mission is an area where Penn State can make a significant societal impact.</i></p>		
3. A discussion of specific strategies to achieve the vision.		
<p>Pages 13 through 16 describe Educational Equity's strategic directions (each strategy is followed by several actions). The strategies are focused on implementing the university's diversity strategic plan, providing support to the President's Commissions for Equity, creating partnerships with other</p>		

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units, creating additional student access programs, increasing support for underrepresented/underserved students, and more. Interestingly, a "What We Should Avoid Doing" section follows that helps to clarify Educational Equity's mission.		
The strategies are comprehensive, but in some cases it can be difficult to determine how a few of them tie into Educational Equity's larger goals.		
4. For academic units: A discussion of plans, progress, and initiatives in learning outcomes assessment.	Transforming Education	Student Engagement; Student Career Success & Economic Development
Though Educational Equity is not an academic college, on p. 17 there is a description of its programs that have identified specific objectives in relation to learning outcomes by which success is gauged, such as Upward Bound Matt and Talent Search.		
5. Strategic performance indicators structured around unit level goals.		
Strategic performance indicators are described on pages 17 and 18. They more represent focus areas than specific indicators with targets. They are well-organized into external and internal indicators with good benchmarks and contextual discussion.		
6. Diversity planning	Valuing and Exploring Our Cultures	Diversity and Demographics; Accessibility
Educational Equity's diversity plan is introduced on pp. 25 through 27 (though specific strategies are described in section 2 with the rest of the strategies). The plan provides a strong discussion of Educational Equity's past, current, and future diversity efforts complete with benchmarks and the results of an outside assessment. There is specific discussion of the Diversity Framework and Educational Equity's efforts to implement it and build upon it with each planning cycle.		
7. Core Council follow-up.		
Pages 27 and 28 described Educational Equity's responses to each Core Council recommendation (Appendix 8 describes the original recommendations).		
8. Information on practices that promote integrity and ethical behavior.		
Pages 29 and 30 describe Educational Equity's ethics and integrity plan. Much of it is integrated into the diversity planning efforts, which is unsurprising. This is a relatively strong section, though it could benefit from the inclusion of specific measures and targets.		
9. Discussion of how the unit is contributing toward Penn State's goals for sustainability.	Stewarding Our Resources	
Page 31 describes Educational Equity's sustainability plan in general detail. Educational Equity used the Diversity Framework as a model to develop the		

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given strategies. Some of the strategies could benefit from being made more specific, and the whole section would be made stronger by the inclusion of metrics. The plan does allude to a forthcoming sustainability plan, so it is assumed that it will be more specific than what is presented here.

10. Correlation of strategic initiatives to budget planning and adjustments.

Pages 32 and 33 describe several budget request/adjustments relative to given strategies such as expanding the Lenfest program and hiring a data analyst.

Promoting Our Health

Building Our Digital Future

Technology

Additional Observations

The plan offers a number of useful appendices including an organizational chart, descriptions of the different offices in the unit, a list of recent collaborations with other units, and more. This helps to establish the context for the plan. Overall, this is a sensible, well-structured, useful plan.