

STRATEGIC PLAN, 2007-2017
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON TACOMA

“The University of Washington Tacoma educates diverse learners and transforms communities by expanding the boundaries of knowledge and discovery.”

With this mission, the University of Washington Tacoma was founded in 1990 to serve and provide access to higher education for upper-division place- and time-bound students in the South Puget Sound and to act as a catalyst for revitalizing Tacoma. UW Tacoma has done both.

Now, with the addition of lower-division students and the expectation of significant enrollment growth at all levels of the institution made necessary by educational, demographic and economic challenges facing the region and the state, UW Tacoma must plan where it wishes to go and what it plans to be in the coming years. The reality of rapid change and growth requires a framework and process that can manage these expectations within available resources. The University needs a focus for sustaining a culture of excellence that benefits both the campus and the communities which it serves.

In planning for this future, we will remain loyal to the mission and purpose that have guided our campus since 1990 while also responding to the changing circumstances of the world in which we operate. Our founding purpose was, and will continue to be, a commitment to education as the main pillar of equality of opportunity in American society. Our commitment to students and their success has been central to everything this campus has done from its beginning. At the same time, we recognize that the communities and the larger society around us have not remained static. Sweeping changes, both locally and globally, have altered the higher education landscape and require a nimble response. These changes include new technology, increasing diversity in student characteristics, new forms of global interaction, challenges in energy and the environment, discoveries on how students learn, and a growing awareness of service learning, civic engagement, and extracurricular involvement that enhances learning. Our continuing commitment to student success and to embracing the changing educational environment, enrollment growth and the lower-

division students presents many challenges. Our commitments require careful planning and will not be addressed without difficulty. But these realities also bring significant and lasting rewards. UW Tacoma will emerge from this process a more complete institution and a model for interdisciplinary scholarship within the University of Washington. We will set forth a plan to better serve students by strengthening our learning community and the impact it has on the region and the world.

External Environmental Scan

External economic, political, and demographic factors provide the setting for enrollment growth and the careful planning that must accompany it. Located in a major port city open to the Pacific Rim, UW Tacoma will contend with the increasing global integration of the U.S. economy and its effect on the Northwest. Prospects are bright for a continuously growing regional economy that requires a highly educated workforce. The campus also enjoys and greatly benefits from its place within the University of Washington and enjoys a close relationship with its surrounding communities. Of particular note is the growing public pressure for scientifically literate citizens, as well as a perceived need for graduates employable in the state's high-technology professions related to mathematics and science. In recent years, regional higher education institutions, including UW Tacoma, have been unable to keep pace with these expectations.

Growth in the number of students seeking higher education is expected throughout the country, but Washington sends only 65 percent of its high school graduates to college. This trend, expected to continue in the near future, places the state in the mid-range nationally. In Pierce County, population has risen by over 30 percent since 1990, but its participation rate in post-secondary education, particularly for four-year baccalaureate and graduate degrees, is well below the state median. These percentages must rise to enable the South Sound to be prepared for the increasingly global pressures of an expanding and interactive economy and complex job market. Prospective students in our region will be increasingly diverse. A rapid rise in the need for developmental courses to prepare students for college-level proficiency has also been a state-wide trend for several years.

At the same time, students and their parents are increasingly concerned that college costs are outpacing inflation and, with relative decline in public

funding for higher education across the nation, this raises the concurrent need for institutions to develop other sources of funding from private giving and entrepreneurial partnerships to meet the challenges. In Washington, it is also expected that other areas of the state budget, such as corrections, health care and K-12 education, will compete more actively for a larger share of public revenues. Changing technologies for learning, especially distance education, are frequently cited for their potential cost savings and benefits for student success. However, these technologies are expensive and are not appropriate for all needs.

Internal Issues Affecting Strategic Planning

For the past several years, the campus and its constituents have participated in extensive discussions to identify the issues and opportunities related to enrollment growth and adding lower-division students. These discussions have identified many challenges for UW Tacoma that must be addressed by the strategic planning process. These may be summarized in the following eight general issues:

- Planned Growth – We must create and implement a process that matches available resources with enrollment increases. Such a process can result in significant economies of scale and synergies—such as expanded grants and sponsored research, increased partnerships within the region and beyond, reduced marginal costs and financial flexibility—as well as broaden opportunities for the entire learning community both on- and off-campus and enhance the University’s contribution to the economic prosperity of the region.
- Building Academic Programs and Curricula – While maintaining excellence and continuity in established upper-division and graduate programs, lower-division and general education curricula must also be considered and added in ways that contribute to the academic excellence of all campus programs. New programs at all academic levels must also emerge from measured and considered evaluation of current and future community and student need. Alternate technologies and/or locations for the delivery of academic programming should be considered where appropriate.

- Expanding and Integrating Student Services – Growth in the number of students at all levels, particularly at the undergraduate level, will require a matching increase and diversity in available services. It will also mean recognizing and blending the diverse needs of students who come to UW Tacoma from many different paths, experiences and stages of academic development.
- Connecting with the External Community – The association of UW Tacoma with its surrounding communities, which has been recognized as a hallmark of our institutional success, must be strengthened and expanded through the creation of new initiatives and partnerships that emphasize this connection and the University’s common investment with its neighbors in the future of the region.
- Establishing a Collegial Campus Culture – UW Tacoma must build a stronger culture of cooperation and communication across the campus and beyond. This includes developing and strengthening ties between all groups within the University through a focus on student success, creating common “intellectual space,” and a recognition that every member of the academic community contributes to the learning process.
- Improving Organizational Structure – Throughout the institution, policies, procedures and structures must be aligned with the needs of cooperative and systematic planning. This includes administrative, academic and financial arrangements; liaison with faculty, students and staff through shared governance; and the recruitment, promotion and retention of faculty and staff with policies appropriate to University of Washington standards of excellence.
- Recognizing Physical and Financial Limitations and Opportunities – Master facilities planning must be a priority as the UW Tacoma campus expands within its footprint to meet the requirements of a growing and increasingly complex organization. Alternative sources of capital and operational funding should join state appropriations and tuition to meet the demands of growth.
- Interpreting Its Multi-Campus Role – With enrollment growth and changing status within the University of Washington, UW Tacoma

needs both to establish its distinctive identity and to work to clarify and improve the ways in which it interacts with the Seattle, Bothell and potentially other UW campuses.

Foundational Planning Assumptions

As a result of external and internal analyses, five assumptions will frame the strategic planning process at UW Tacoma. Each is expressed as a commitment that is foundational to the campus and anchors the values, vision and goals that follow in this document:

- Access – A commitment to the principle of equal opportunity for qualified, diverse and historically underrepresented students to pursue public higher education in the South Puget Sound;
- Focus on Student Success – A commitment that the continued excellence of a UW Tacoma education will ultimately rest on how well the university prepares its graduates for successful participation in the increasingly diverse and complex world they will join and help to create.
- Connection to the Surrounding Communities – A commitment to recognize and honor the campus’ roots in the South Puget Sound and the need to nurture the University’s close relationship with the surrounding area and with its regional educational partners;
- Integrated Knowledge – A commitment to the principle that the educated person and engaged citizen in the 21st century achieves wisdom from an understanding of the connections between disciplines and approaches to knowledge;
- Distinction within the University of Washington – A commitment that UW Tacoma is an integral part of a preeminent public university and draws on those common resources and standards of excellence to educate its students in a supportive and interactive regional setting while retaining its distinctive emphasis on interdisciplinary learning as the most fitting preparation for informed participation in the new century.

Foundational Process Assumptions

Four principles will direct the UW Tacoma strategic planning process:

- Continuous University-Wide Strategic Planning – The Strategic Planning Steering Committee will meet regularly throughout the academic year and will report to the Chancellor, who will appoint its members with representation from all university constituencies. The Steering Committee will be responsible for monitoring and assessing the progress of all University planning initiatives and for recommending modifications and changes to the University Strategic Plan. It will also develop a process for identifying and resolving annually specific University-wide issues that are within the scope of the University’s Strategic Plan and that warrant further campus discussion.
- Development and Implementation of Academic Program and Administrative Unit Strategic and Operational Plans – All academic programs and administrative units will develop and implement two- to five-year strategic and operational plans. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee will provide general guidelines and parameters for this planning. The planning processes should include all members of the program or unit, and completed plans should be linked substantively to each of the major goals of the University’s Strategic Plan.
- Linkage with University Budget – The campus-wide budget allocation process will be relational to the University’s Strategic Plan. The University Budget Committee will develop appropriate guidelines and measurements that reflect this relationship in its recommendations;
- Assessment and Outcomes Metrics – Strategic planning at all levels of the University will involve the development of appropriate measurable standards and procedures for assessing results. These results will become the bases of planning and for initiating changes in the University, academic programs and administrative units.

VALUES

Our fundamental purpose is to educate students for life as global citizens. UW Tacoma is a distinctive expression of the University of Washington that provides access to an exceptional education for citizens who choose to live and learn in the South Puget Sound region.

We recognize that an excellent education connects knowledge across disciplines. At UW Tacoma, excellence is founded on integrity, dedication and collaboration. We believe that learning is a vehicle that advances students toward fulfilling lives and meaningful careers.

Our community of learners is strengthened by a diversity of voices. Listening to the UW Tacoma community, we have identified four core values that guide us: **Excellence, Community, Diversity and Innovation**. We share these values and strive to live them.

Excellence

UW Tacoma...

- commits to excellence in teaching, scholarship, research and service;
- offers a curriculum that balances core knowledge and skills with responsiveness to student and community need;
- embraces an interdisciplinary approach to knowledge that instills problem-solving and critical thinking skills for meaningful lives;
- engages minds by connecting knowledge with experience, fostering wisdom;
- infuses global and local awareness into its thinking and actions;
- encourages student-faculty-staff interaction and a reciprocal exchange of knowledge;
- nurtures a community of learners and develops the whole person by offering opportunities to learn and grow both inside and outside the classroom;
- provides an environment where students can succeed.

Community

UW Tacoma...

- celebrates the success of its people;
- fosters an atmosphere in which individuals work together to make their best contributions;
- preserves a culture of connection and collaboration as it grows;
- partners with communities to improve the human condition;
- cultivates mutually supportive relations with educational partners;
- contributes knowledge that serves diverse communities;
- honors the cultural and civic heritage of its community;
- serves as a catalyst for economic, technological and community development.

Diversity

UW Tacoma...

- promotes an environment where diverse perspectives and experiences are expected;
- seeks out and supports individuals who may experience barriers in gaining access to college;
- stimulates a vibrant learning community by presenting lectures, events and performances that inspire new views;
- encourages and rewards intercultural competence;
- aligns its values with its actions in support of justice and fairness;
- attracts and retains a community of people and ideas representing diverse cultures and experiences.

Innovation

UW Tacoma...

- generates new knowledge and embraces varied ways of knowing;
- perpetuates the pioneering spirit of UW Tacoma's beginnings;

- seeks new ways to create opportunity;
- inspires creative ways of seeing and solving problems;
- expands resources and makes thoughtful use of existing ones;
- lives in harmony with the environment and is a wise steward of natural resources;
- grows stronger through the collective wisdom of its community.

VISION

Within the next ten years, UW Tacoma will become a more comprehensive institution that will respond with distinction to the needs of the region, state, nation and the world. UW Tacoma will achieve distinctiveness as an urban campus of the University of Washington through its commitment to three principles:

- **Access to an exceptional university education;**
- **An interdisciplinary approach to knowledge and discovery in the 21st century;**
- **A strong and mutually supportive relationship between the campus and its surrounding communities.**

As the campus grows, UW Tacoma will strengthen its learning culture, research, institutional structures, and academic and co-curricular programs necessary to embody these three commitments and to uphold the standards of excellence, shared governance and academic freedom that are hallmarks of the University of Washington. It will also develop and implement assessment plans that serve as measurable benchmarks for institutional progress.

The core values of the institution—Excellence, Community, Diversity and Innovation—will shape the specific goals and methods UW Tacoma chooses to address these commitments and build its distinction as a campus.

Distinction in Access to Learning will be achieved by:

- providing opportunity for an exceptional higher education to qualified learners;

- encouraging diverse voices in the collective pursuit of knowledge and discovery;
- offering academic, social and financial support services and structures necessary for student success.

Distinctive Interdisciplinary Approaches to Knowledge and Discovery will be achieved by:

- building curriculum and pedagogy which recognizes that living a wise, productive life within our global, complex society is most likely when one understands the integrated nature in which the world works;
- supporting research and inquiry as a path to innovation and shared understanding;
- encouraging a vibrant learning culture that respects all community members' contributions to the discovery, sharing and preservation of knowledge.

Distinctive Bonds of Community will be achieved by:

- building and enhancing engagement with our surrounding communities to promote a sustainable, innovative and productive future for the region;
- defining and practicing collegiality and collaboration within the campus community and mirroring it in our relationship with the larger communities we serve;
- structuring the University effectively to accommodate growth and increased institutional complexity.

We believe that the achievement of these principles is best reflected in the quality and success of the graduates we produce. Our vision and commitment is that these graduates will mirror our University as we live our principles: They will also be connected and engaged with the communities in which they live and serve. Their lives will demonstrate that wisdom and practical success stem from continuing inquiry which respects the participation of all in advancing knowledge and discovery.

GOALS

All University planning for the next decade should incorporate UW Tacoma's four goals and objectives as appropriate for each unit.

I. Grow in an intentional manner consistent with University mission, values and vision.

This will be accomplished through:

1. institution-wide planning to accommodate sustained enrollment growth through and potentially beyond Spring of 2013;
2. regular strategic and operational planning within each academic and administrative unit that includes current and new programming, preparation for growth, and measurable assessment;
3. facilities master planning that provides the capacity to accommodate the physical space needs of a growing campus;
4. acquiring the physical, financial, student support and academic resources necessary to implement and sustain planned growth in relation to surrounding communities.

II. Provide access to educational and professional opportunities for students, faculty, staff and community members.

This will be accomplished through:

1. providing foundational support for holistic student growth, including the undergraduate experience;
2. innovative collaboration with surrounding communities that recognizes that we are a campus in the heart of an urban center;
3. support and funding for intellectual, scholarly and creative growth, research, discovery and excellence;
4. creating globally-centered opportunities for students, faculty, staff and the region;
5. leveraging University of Washington expertise and resources.

III. Prepare students to participate in a diverse and increasingly complex world.

This will be accomplished through:

1. creating and strengthening of existing academic and co-curricular programming incorporating integrated knowledge and skills necessary for student success after graduation;
2. innovative use of technology within the curriculum and in the delivery of programming where appropriate;
3. embodying diversity and equity in all areas of the University and in relation to the surrounding communities;
4. preparing students for responsible civic engagement at many levels—locally, regionally, nationally and globally.

IV. Cultivate a University-wide culture of transparency, collaboration, and cooperation appropriate for a growing and multifaceted campus.

This will be accomplished through:

1. policies and decision-making procedures that enhance collaboration, cooperation and communication across campus units and that support the reality of shared governance;
2. support for enhancing interdisciplinary learning and interaction throughout the University;
3. a common understanding and embodiment of “student-centeredness” that is reflective of the University’s fundamental purpose.

APPENDIX TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN, 2007-2017 UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON TACOMA

Development of the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan, 2007-2017 evolved through an inclusive process that began in the spring of 2006. A SWOT analysis with campus representatives and members of the UW Tacoma Advisory Board's Institutional Planning Subcommittee was conducted in May. The analysis identified a variety of campus strengths and opportunities, including its capacity for growth within the University of Washington and its interdisciplinary programs, as well as weaknesses and threats such as a perceived lack of organizational integration and the need to develop support systems associated with the addition of lower-division students. This exercise was followed in August by a comprehensive day-long retreat involving forty members of the campus community and Advisory Board. The participants discussed proposed assumptions for strategic planning, campus values, and priorities identified in previous planning efforts. Retreat participants also decided to recommend the creation of a representational planning committee that would draft a comprehensive strategic plan for campus consideration.

During the fall of 2006, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee was appointed by Chancellor Spakes after consultation with campus constituencies, and the Steering Committee began working on a draft plan in early December. A Web site was created for regular communication with the campus, and the committee created three subcommittees—Values, Vision and Goals—to draft sections of the strategic plan. In addition to representation from the Steering Committee, members of the subcommittees were drawn from the entire campus community. In the Winter 2007 and Spring 2007 Quarters, the Steering Committee met bi-weekly to consider the work of the subcommittees and to revise and approve language in the drafts. A variety of campus meetings and open forums were held to solicit input on the draft Values Statement, and a campus-wide online survey was conducted for feedback on the values draft. These data were used to inform the values section of the first complete draft document that was distributed in June 2007. The vision and goals sections of the first complete draft, as well as the other parts of the document, reflected the work of the subcommittees and discussion and revisions by the Steering Committee to that date. Provisions were made that the same processes—open and other meetings for input on

all parts of the draft and online surveys on the draft Vision and Goals Statements—would be conducted during the Fall 2007 Quarter and that a final complete draft would be presented to the campus community for affirmation in December 2007.

These steps were followed in the Fall 2007 Quarter. Open meetings and sessions with constituency groups, including the Institutional Planning Subcommittee of the UW Tacoma Advisory Board, were held throughout the quarter and an online survey on the draft Vision Statement was conducted. A second complete draft document, with a significantly revised draft Goals Statement, was circulated in mid-October and was followed by an online survey on the draft Goals Statement. Feedback from all of these sources was incorporated into a third complete draft distributed before Thanksgiving. Following additional input from major constituency groups in late November and early December, the completed plan was submitted for affirmation to the campus and the UW Tacoma Advisory Board on December 10, 2007. Each constituency group was asked to affirm the strategic plan through procedures of its choice early in the Winter 2008 Quarter.

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