

Agenda for Excellence

A Strategic Plan for the University of Pennsylvania

To the University Community

This draft strategic plan, *Agenda For Excellence*, proposes a series of critical priorities for the University for the five years from now through 2000. As part of our planning effort, during the past year we have engaged faculty across the campus in a variety of discussions about issues facing the University. In addition, we have conducted extensive planning sessions with the deans of the schools and the senior administrative officers of the University.

We furnished an early draft version of the plan to the Academic Planning and Budget Committee this fall. They have spent the semester reviewing and discussing the work in detail. The constructive criticism provided by the Committee has enabled us to recast and refine the document. We and the Committee now publish the plan as our joint product for comment by the University community.

We have chosen to present this plan in outline form as a set of specific goals and strategies. The plan includes several goals that contain specific numerical targets. These target numbers are meant to serve as guideposts that will help the University determine whether it is moving in the right direction at the right speed. As further specific implementation actions are elaborated, additional benchmarks to help us monitor the progress of those activities will be identified.

The University of Pennsylvania gains strength from the special character of its component parts and the synergies among those parts. This spring, we will be asking the deans to lead their faculties in developing or reviewing their schools' strategic plans to ensure that the University's goals, as articulated in this document, provide a foundation for school-level programs and initiatives.

We invite you to share your comments and reactions to the document with the Academic Planning and Budget Committee so that they can help us bring the plan to final form. Please submit your comments by December 8, to the Academic Planning and Budget Committee, 110 College Hall/6303, or send your remarks via e-mail to plan@pobox.upenn.edu.

Judith Rodin
President

Stanley Chodorow
Provost

Agenda for Excellence

A Strategic Plan for the University of Pennsylvania

Introduction

The University of Pennsylvania's roots reach deeply into the history of American higher education. Founded as the Charity School of Philadelphia in 1740 and chartered as the first non-sectarian college in 1755, the College of Philadelphia was guided, as the University is today, by its founder Benjamin Franklin's admonition to "learn everything that is useful and everything that is ornamental." As such, it developed the first liberal arts curriculum in the nation, offering both a scientific and a classical education. Early on, it established a close relationship between the liberal arts and the professions, with faculty teaching courses in medicine and law, and subsequently developing professional schools in these areas. In 1791 Penn became America's first university, introducing multidisciplinary education well before the term was invented. Throughout its history, Penn has been remarkable in the degree to which theory and practice have been married in its teaching and research.

Over the past 255 years, Penn has renewed itself periodically as it has adapted to the changing nature of higher education, the changing demands of society, and the expanding knowledge base of the modern era. By directing scarce resources to targeted areas of opportunity, Penn has been able to build and support excellence in a number of selected fields and programs, assuring its place among the truly distinguished modern universities. For Penn to ensure its stature as one of a small number of genuinely outstanding universities in the 21st century, the University must establish and project a clear institutional identity, and it must strategically deploy its considerable yet limited resources to achieve excellence in every academic program it chooses to offer. In doing so, Penn will need to guard against a leveling effect that could diminish the stature of its best schools and departments; instead it must either bring those programs that do not yet meet its high standards up to acceptable levels of excellence or reconsider their role or existence.

Because it is vital that Penn clearly define its mission and strategic goals, this strategic plan, *Agenda for Excellence*, has been crafted. The plan is ambitious—as any plan for Penn should be. Although it will be implemented at a time when the rate of growth of traditional resources is in question, the plan will require the University and its schools to secure additional funds from such traditional sources as government research grants and private fundraising. In addition, to achieve its goals, the plan will require the University and the schools to secure new funds from less traditional sources, such as corporate research programs and administrative re-engineering. Reallocation of existing resources within schools and across schools also may be needed to realize the goals of the plan.

Agenda for Excellence is the latest chapter in strategic planning at Penn, and a number of this plan's initiatives are well informed by earlier plans. Looking ahead, the successful implementation of this new plan will depend on the development of complementary school plans and a range of initiatives such as the 21st Century Project for the Undergraduate Experience, the unification of academic and budgetary planning, and the institution of school reviews. The result will be increasing fulfillment of the mission of the University of Pennsylvania.

Mission of the University

The University of Pennsylvania's roots are in Philadelphia, the birthplace of American democracy. But Penn's reach spans the globe.

Faithful to the vision of the University's founder, Benjamin Franklin, Penn's faculty generate knowledge that is unconstrained by traditional disciplinary boundaries and spans the continuum from fundamental to applied. Through this new knowledge, the University enhances its teaching of both theory and practice, as well as the linkages between them.

Penn excels in instruction and research in the arts and sciences and in a wide range of professional disciplines. Penn produces future leaders through excellent programs at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels.

Penn inspires, demands, and thrives on excellence, and will measure itself against the best in every field of endeavor in which it participates.

Penn is proudly entrepreneurial, dynamically forging new connections and inspiring learning through problem-solving, discovery-oriented approaches.

Penn research and teaching encourage lifelong learning relevant to a changing, global society.

Penn is a major urban university that is committed to strength and vitality in each of its communities. In this connection, Penn will:

- Encourage, sustain, and reward its faculty; nurture, inspire, and challenge its students; and support and value its staff;
- Strengthen and appreciate the diversity of its communities;
- Support free expression, reasoned discourse, and diversity in ideas;
- Pursue positive connections to the city, state, and region and a mission of service to its neighbors in West Philadelphia;
- Develop and support its connections to alumni and friends; and
- Foster the growth of humane values.

Executive Summary of Strategic Goals

1. The University will solidify and advance its position as one of the premier research and teaching universities in the nation and in the world.
 - Penn's exceptional undergraduate programs will position it, among a select group of research universities, as a school of choice for the ablest undergraduates in the nation and in the world. To enhance its ability to fulfill its mission, the University will be considered among the top ten in undergraduate education.
 - Penn's academic departments and programs will be considered among the top ten in the United States or will develop and implement strategies for moving toward the top tier. Penn's doctoral and professional programs will be the programs of choice for the ablest graduate and professional students in the nation and in the world.
2. The University will aggressively seek greater research opportunities. Recognizing that vigorous research and the unimpeded pursuit of knowledge are at the heart of the University's mission, Penn will strive to attract an increasing share of the available research dollars, and will aggressively seek out new sources of support for research.
3. The University will manage its human, financial, and physical resources effectively and efficiently to achieve its strategic goals.
 - Penn will create a more responsive and effective planning, budgeting, and outcomes evaluation process to ensure that its resources support its academic mission.
 - Penn will broaden its administrative restructuring initiative to encompass all major administrative activities and processes, both in the central administration and in the schools.
4. The University will support strategic investments in master's programs and other programs of continuing education in the arts and sciences and in the professions, when they are consistent with Penn's academic mission and capacities and the needs of society.
5. The University will plan, direct, and integrate its government and community relations to enhance its missions of teaching, research, and service. The University also will clarify and strengthen the links between its academic programs and the public service performed by its faculty, students, administrators, and staff.
6. The University will vigorously pursue efforts to increase significantly Penn's role as an international institution of higher education and research.
7. The University will creatively deploy new technologies, recognizing that technology is revolutionizing the ways in which knowledge is acquired, created, and disseminated.
8. The University will effectively communicate to its various constituencies the ways in which it contributes to the advancement of society.
9. The University will identify and secure the funds required to support its strategic goals.

Strategic Goals and Initiatives

STRATEGIC GOAL 1

The University will solidify and advance its position as one of the premier research and teaching universities in the nation and in the world.

Subgoal 1(a)

Penn's exceptional undergraduate programs will position it among a select group of research universities as a school of choice for the ablest undergraduates in the nation and in the world. To enhance its ability to fulfill its mission, the University will be considered among the top ten in undergraduate education.

Strategic Initiatives

To achieve subgoal 1(a) the University, working with the schools, will take the following steps, among others.

- *Implement the 21st Century Project for the Undergraduate Experience.*

Promote curricular reform and innovation through the Provost, working with the Council of Undergraduate Deans.

Conduct regular curriculum reviews.

Expand cross-school and cross-disciplinary programs.

Conserve resources by eliminating duplication of course offerings across and within schools.

Expand undergraduate research and service-learning opportunities.

Establish an undergraduate research resource center.

Seek external support for expanded undergraduate research.

Develop a collegiate model to provide a setting for the new undergraduate experience, and launch four pilot programs in September 1996.

Take steps to improve advising.

Expand the role of faculty as mentors and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the professional advising staff.

Improve the technology used to provide information on the many academic options at Penn.

Enhance departmental communication with students through advanced electronic technology.

Assure excellence in undergraduate teaching.

Establish a teaching resource center that offers opportunities for all faculty to improve their teaching.

Create additional incentives for excellent undergraduate teaching.

Develop and promote the use of technology in teaching.

Improve student services.

Restructure student services to better support the models developed in the 21st Century Project.

Continue the reorganization of the office and function of the Vice Provost for University Life.

- *Identify and secure financial resources to support the initiatives of the 21st Century Project.*

- *Launch an initiative to raise funds for the University's financial aid endowment.*

- *Enhance activities that improve Penn's attractiveness to undergraduates.*

Continue to promote Penn aggressively as an institution that educates the best students and produces future leaders.

Update and reinvigorate all admissions materials.

Strengthen efforts to recruit and enroll underrepresented minority students and programs aimed at their retention.

Develop new and up-to-date recreational athletic facilities.

Identify and secure funds for construction of new recreational athletic facilities.

Develop facilities to provide sufficient, equitable, and attractive athletic space.

Develop a plan for intercollegiate athletics that continues to stress the recruitment of scholar-athletes.

Enhance student career placement services to provide excellent support for all students in a competitive job-market.

- *Establish a rigorous, normative protocol for external review and assessment of the undergraduate program every five to seven years.*

Subgoal 1(b)

Penn's academic departments and programs will be considered among the top ten in the United States or will develop and implement strategies for moving toward the top tier. Penn's doctoral and professional programs will be the programs of choice for the ablest graduate and professional students in the nation and in the world.

Strategic Initiatives

To achieve subgoal 1(b) the University, working with the schools, will take the following steps, among others.

- *Have each school develop or update its own strategic plan by June 1996, to ensure that it includes the steps necessary to attain or maintain superior academic status by the year 2000. As part of this plan, each school should articulate steps to:*

Conduct regular departmental reviews to assess progress in achieving the school's strategic goals.

Reenergize or restructure those departments that are vital to the core mission of the school or the University, that are below the school's standard of excellence, and that have failed to show substantial improvement. Phase out those departments that are neither central to the mission of the school or University, nor markedly ascending in quality.

Support and encourage efforts among the schools to reward faculty based on criteria for excellence such as teaching achievements, publications, citations, and grants received.

Continue working to attract and retain underrepresented minority and women faculty.

- *Establish a rigorous, normative protocol for external review and assessment of each school and inter-school program every five to seven years.*

- *Infuse the Research Foundation with new capital by raising money to support areas of research where Penn has clear competitive advantages or where the return on seed money is likely to be high.*

- *Directed by the Provost's Council of Deans, make strategic investments in current and developing cross-disciplinary fields where Penn has or could have nationally recognized strengths.*

- *Ensure that Penn's doctoral and professional programs will be the programs of choice. Take steps to:*

Pursue increased funding for graduate education and training.

Encourage innovative and efficient teaching and research groupings of faculty.

Seek development of new areas of collaboration in graduate training across the University.

Strengthen efforts to attract and retain underrepresented minority and women graduate and professional students.

Provide greater opportunities for student interaction across graduate and professional school boundaries, and enrich campus life for graduate and professional students.

Conserve resources by eliminating duplication of course offerings across and within schools.

- *Establish a review process for graduate and professional programs that emphasizes measures such as admission selectivity and ability to place graduates. Set program size accordingly.*

STRATEGIC GOAL 2

The University will aggressively seek greater research opportunities. Recognizing that vigorous research and the unimpeded pursuit of knowledge are at the heart of the University's mission, Penn will strive to attract an increasing share of the available research dollars, and will aggressively seek out new sources of support for research.

Strategic Initiatives

To achieve this goal, the University, working with the schools, will take the following steps, among others.

- *Encourage faculty to seek increased funding support.*

Develop incentives for faculty to seek external support for research.

Provide mentoring for junior faculty to help them succeed as productive researchers.

Develop strategies to increase grant support for graduate students.

- *Encourage faculty, particularly in disciplines without significant federal support, to seek research support from non-governmental sources such as corporations, foundations, and alumni.*

- *Improve and increase research facilities in recognition of the critical role facilities play in securing incremental research funding, faculty recruitment, and the education of students.*

- *Enhance the Library's ability to deliver electronic-based information and data to support research in all areas of the University.*

- *Recognizing that the integration of theory and practice is one of Penn's hallmarks, update Penn's policies governing ownership and management of intellectual property and participation in external commercial activities, and improve Penn's ability to attract increased corporate support for technology transfer.*

- *Streamline Penn's pre- and post-award processes to increase efficiency and to facilitate the pursuit and receipt of external funds.*

- *Target, at the University level, an annualized growth rate of two percent in sponsored research over the next five years.*

STRATEGIC GOAL 3

The University will manage its human, financial, and physical resources effectively and efficiently to achieve its strategic goals.

Subgoal 3(a)

Penn will create a more responsive and effective planning, budgeting and outcomes evaluation process to ensure that its resources support its academic mission.

Strategic Initiatives

To achieve subgoal 3(a), the University, working with the schools, will take the following steps, among others.

- *Develop an integrated process of planning and budgeting.*
 - Complete the integration of the operating budget and the capital planning process.
 - Support school-based efforts to better integrate academic planning and budgeting.
 - Formulate University-wide financial policy, annual budgets, and operating plans for academic and administrative units.
- *Enhance institutional research to support the planning and budgeting process.*
- *Coordinate school and program evaluations and link the process with long-term resource planning.*
- *Seek to improve Penn's system of responsibility center management in order to achieve the most effective allocation of financial resources.*

Subgoal 3(b)

Penn will broaden its administrative restructuring initiative to encompass all major administrative activities and processes, both in the central administration and in the schools.

Strategic Initiatives

To achieve subgoal 3(b), the University, working with the schools, will take the following steps, among others.

- *Improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of service across the institution and establish appropriate measures to evaluate those services delivered on a regular basis.*

Reduce the cost of central and school administration by \$50 million over the next five years and reinvest these savings in support of University and school-based strategic priorities.

Standardize Penn's disparate procurement systems to achieve economies-of-scale and maximize savings on goods and services purchased annually.

Generate \$10 million at the central level in new revenues through entrepreneurial business ventures and better management of existing auxiliary enterprises.

- *Restructure Penn's Human Resources policies and programs.*

Provide administrative employees with greater opportunities to improve their skills, grow professionally, and enhance their careers within the University.

Strengthen the system of human resource development and performance review.

Work with all units of the University to ensure the maintenance of a humane and fair workplace environment for all employees.

Streamline, improve, and reduce the costs of Penn's benefit system while maintaining total compensation at levels consistent with those of peer institutions.

- *Restructure computing and telecommunications at Penn into a state-of-the-art system to improve the University's ability to generate, use, and share data.*
- *Implement a University-wide Public Safety Master Plan to reduce crime and enhance the security of people and property on campus and in adjacent neighborhoods.*
- *Upgrade the University's internal controls and compliance mechanisms to better manage business risks and increase accountability at all levels.*
- *Systematically implement measures to reduce the costs of building new facilities and maintaining existing ones, while improving the quality and timeliness of maintenance and house-keeping services on campus.*

STRATEGIC GOAL 4

The University will support strategic investments in master's programs and other programs of continuing education in the arts and sciences and in the professions, when they are consistent with Penn's academic mission and capacities and the needs of society.

Strategic Initiatives

To achieve this goal, the University, working with the schools, will take the following steps, among others.

- *Encourage the creation and continuation of selected non-core master's and continuing education programs whose financial returns provide support for other strategic investments.*
- *Identify fields in which Penn has comparative advantages relative to the market, and target development of new or expanded continuing education programs to meet the needs in these fields.*

Build upon the existing core to create programs, as exemplified by the Wharton Executive Education program, that permit executives and professionals to keep up with academic research and to apply the results of that research to their business or professional problems.

Support the efforts of the schools to develop continuing, life-long professional learning experiences for their graduates and others, particularly in areas where continuing education has been mandated by professional certification bodies.

Building on the model of the Dental School, establish computer-based connections with alumni that will permit life-long learning at sites remote from the University.

- *Establish a rigorous, normative, market-based protocol for review and assessment of each of these master's and continuing education programs every five to seven years.*

STRATEGIC GOAL 5

The University will plan, direct, and integrate its government and community relations to enhance its missions of teaching, research, and service. The University also will clarify and strengthen the links between its academic programs and the public service performed by its faculty, students, administrators, and staff.

Strategic Initiatives

To achieve this goal, the University, working with the schools, will take the following steps, among others.

- *Strengthen relationships with the executive branch, Congress, and federal research agencies and work aggressively with them to influence program development and policies that support the scholarly and teaching activities of private research universities.*
- *Continue to build and maintain effective relationships with the governor and state legislators.*

- *Build partnerships with corporations, educational institutions, medical institutions, and others that have financially invested in Philadelphia, to share resources and services that strengthen the community.*

- *Consistent with the University's basic missions of teaching and research, work with the community to promote economic development and increase the quality of life in West Philadelphia.*

Continue efforts to increase University purchases from local businesses.

Promote business partnerships, public safety, and transportation initiatives.

Continue efforts to improve local elementary and secondary schools.

Encourage the development of service-learning programs at the University, in furtherance of Penn's long-standing commitment to the integration of theory and practice.

Encourage innovative opportunities for voluntary participation by Penn students, faculty, administrators, and staff in appropriate public service activities.

STRATEGIC GOAL 6

The University will vigorously pursue efforts to increase significantly Penn's role as an international institution of higher education and research.

Strategic Initiatives

To achieve this goal, the University, working with the schools, will take the following steps, among others.

- *Stimulate and encourage international research and scholarly collaborations by Penn faculty and their counterparts outside the United States.*
- *Promote the development of a strong international dimension within each of Penn's schools.*

Plan programs to attract more international scholars.

Recruit those outstanding students from abroad who are likely to assume leadership roles in the academy, business, and government when they return to their home countries.

- *As part of the 21st Century Project for the Undergraduate Experience, coordinate and enhance the development of a student experience at Penn that is global in its dimensions.*

Encourage the schools in their continued development of an internationally enriched curriculum. Include a global perspective in a wide variety of courses and enhance foreign language competency and study abroad programs.

Foster greater interaction with local "international" communities and cultures.

- *Strengthen Penn's international alumni relations.*

STRATEGIC GOAL 7

The University will creatively deploy new technologies, recognizing that technology is revolutionizing the ways in which knowledge is acquired, created, and disseminated.

Strategic Initiatives

To achieve this goal, the University, working with the schools, will take the following steps, among others.

- Make the implementation of new teaching technologies a University priority.
- Ensure that there is sufficient support for training faculty, students, administrators, and staff in the use of new technologies.
- Encourage efforts by the Vice Provost and Director of Libraries to acquire and use appropriate new technologies in the University's libraries for effective and cost beneficial delivery of information and databases.
- Secure resources to establish a technology seed fund that would support new ventures by the schools in technological innovation.
- Encourage efforts by the Executive Vice President to form appropriate new technology-based corporate partnerships in order to develop and exploit new academic/commercial uses of technology.
- Implement, through acquisition or development, state-of-the-art information systems that will improve the flow of information and electronic communication across the University.
- Take advantage of new technologies that will improve Penn's academic, administrative, and capital planning processes.

STRATEGIC GOAL 8

The University will effectively communicate to its various constituencies the ways in which it contributes to the advancement of society.

Strategic Initiatives

To achieve this goal, the University, working with the schools, will take the following steps, among others.

- Develop a program to enhance Penn's communications efforts and to coordinate University and school-based communications operations.
- Find effective ways to present and explain to Penn's various constituencies the contribution of the schools and their faculties.

Reinforce Penn's stature as a leading independent research university whose historic and current curricular, research, and service agendas combine theory and practice.

Ensure that Penn, with its twelve schools, continues to be recognized locally, nationally, and worldwide as a distinctive member of the Ivy League.

- Regularly review Penn's public relations activities to ensure that they emphasize the distinctiveness of Penn and the achievements of its faculty, students, and alumni.
- Ensure that alumni, as our largest group of advocates, are kept well-informed of their role in helping the University achieve its strategic goals.

STRATEGIC GOAL 9

The University will identify and secure the funds required to support its strategic goals.

Strategic Initiatives

To achieve this goal, the University, working with the schools, will take the following steps, among others.

- Have each school prepare its own development plan by June 1996, in conjunction with the President, Provost, and Vice President for Development. The plan will support the goals articulated in both the school's and the University's strategic plans.
- Develop and implement plans to identify and secure funds for the 21st Century Project. These plans will include both school-based and University-wide initiatives, including programmatic support, undergraduate financial aid, and facilities such as the Perelman Quadrangle, collegiate houses, and athletics, among others.
- Identify other University initiatives in the strategic plan that require external development support.
- Identify and engage alumni and trustees to assure that the fundraising goals are met.
- Involve international alumni in the development process.
- Maintain a top-five ranking in gift receipts among peer institutions by launching a new University/schools fundraising drive for initiatives targeted in Agenda for Excellence.

Deadline for comment: December 8, 1995

Send comments to:
Academic Planning and Budget Committee
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