Penn State shield logo with black text and blue shield

**Unit Strategic Plan: Penn State Beaver**

2014/2015 through 2018/2019

A more detailed version of this plan can be found at:

<http://www.br.psu.edu/Information/News/Archive/37648.htm>

**2014-19**

**Plan Update -   
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Penn State Beaver Strategic Plan

# Introduction

Penn State Beaver has been and continues to be challenged by the decline in area high school graduates, the high cost of tuition resulting from the decline in state funding, and the increased level of local competition in the service area from many higher education institutions. Under this new strategic plan, the campus is positioned to sustain enrollment, enhance community support and workforce development, and grow faculty, staff, and a number of programs that will further strengthen its value to the l community, region, and the Penn State system.

Specifically, efforts outlined in this strategic plan build enrollment and institutional capacity over the next five years. Strategies have also been identified to enhance staffing and operational funding levels to ensure the campus environment will continue to attract and retain qualified students in an ever more competitive environment in higher education. While the 2+2 program will continue to enroll the largest number of students, the plan stipulates for the addition of several more baccalaureate degrees that will be key to workforce development. Academic programming has been and will continue to be delivered regionally as partnerships have been developed with western campuses, and particularly, between Penn State Beaver and Penn State Shenango.

The plan builds on Penn State Beaver’s strengths, which include the Penn State brand name, its small campus environment which results in students receiving personalized attention in and out of the classroom, an attractive physical setting, a dedicated and talented faculty and staff, and the availability of Penn State degrees locally. Marketing will continue to emphasize the concept of a world class education in a small campus setting.

In short, the campus vision statement reads: *Penn State Beaver will fulfill its unique 21st Century land-grant responsibilities by providing student access to one of the nation’s premier universities through the integration of teaching, research, and service in a small, student-centered learning environment.*

## Penn State Beaver, The Next Ten Years

From both an academic program perspective, and more importantly, a budget perspective, much will depend on whether or not Royal Dutch Shell constructs the anticipated natural gas cracking facility in Beaver County. If that happens as expected, it will almost certainly drive a manufacturing renaissance in the county and region, which will result in an increase in population. These developments should spin-off many new businesses and economic revitalization efforts growing higher enrollments and related opportunities at the campus. Given this, it is anticipated the campus enrollment can reach or even exceed 1000 students within the next five to ten years.

With the advent of new industry, several new baccalaureate degree programs are being considered which include project and supply chain management, biology, and possibly energy engineering, among others. Continuing education initiatives are geared to provide credit and non-credit training aligned with local workforce needs. Several of these new academic initiatives will require increased use of technology as well as expanded intercampus collaborations and partnerships, including those with the World Campus.

From a facilities perspective, the possible addition of both a new academic building and additional residence hall space will be necessary if the campus enrollment grows significantly. The Michael Baker Science and Engineering Building renovation will be completed in one year and additional renovations will be necessary in the not too distant future as many campus buildings were constructed in the 1960’s. A new residence hall should be built and configured in suite style units. This amenity should help student recruiting and retention.

Having noted that, Penn State Beaver will continue to support a talented faculty who excel in the classroom and are scholars in their field. Academic rigor will continue to be both supported and celebrated in the face of pressures to “water down” courses to increase student retention. Instead, intrusive practices supporting student academic and personal success will be a cornerstone of the campus culture engaging students. Providing a Penn State quality experience in a small setting will continue to be the primary value the campus brings to the region, supporting both students and area businesses.

## Vision

Penn State Beaver will fulfill its unique 21st Century land-grant responsibilities by providing student access to one of the nation’s premier universities through the integration of teaching, research, and service in a small, student-centered learning environment.

## Mission Statement

Penn State Beaver, as a campus of The Pennsylvania State University system, shall serve students in the region who want to remain local while pursuing a limited number of highly-desirable baccalaureate degrees, and students who want to start locally but complete their pursuit of a wide array of baccalaureate degrees elsewhere within the University. In addition, the campus shall serve students from throughout the United States and abroad who wish to start and/or finish their academic career at Penn State in a small campus environment. The campus will deliver academic and out-of-class programs that foster intercultural understanding, diversity, and the free expression of practices and beliefs. The Beaver campus shall provide a rigorous learning environment with highly-engaged students supported through small classes, individual attention, and the opportunity to participate in undergraduate research, public service, and co-curricular activities and programs. Campus faculty members shall serve their profession and society through research, scholarship, and creative activities that promote the creation of knowledge, enhanced quality of life, outreach, and economic development, supporting a well-educated workforce positioned to assume leadership roles in the workplace and society.

Nine goals were established by the campus community to realize this vision. These goals, along with several key strategies and action items under each, are listed below. Several of the strategic indicators that will be used to measure each strategy/goal are also summarized. In addition, each goal is aligned with one or several of President Barron’s six imperatives (CAPITALIZED) and Provost Jones’ strategic plan themes and supporting strategies (*italicized*). Our mission statement reflects the President’s imperative on Excellence.

### Goal 1:

Strengthen and support a retention-focused campus culture that fosters academic success through curricular and co-curricular student engagement. (**STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and STUDENT CAREER SUCCESS; ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY; *transforming education***)

* Establish a first year experience for students focused on college success skills
* Increase student support through enhanced academic advising
* Explore bridge programs to support student transition and success
* Develop career core competencies/outcomes for students

Action items for the above strategies encompass providing academic support in areas of basic skills (reading, writing, financial literacy), engage in intrusive advising models, benchmark opportunities for a summer academic bridge program, create a menu of core career workshops and implement/expand the use of career assessment and readiness tools, job shadowing, and internships, and expand student roles and responsibilities to develop career competencies.

Strategic indicators include first-year and third-year retention rates, six-year graduation rate within Penn State system, aggregate GPA tracking for students enrolled in FYS, at-risk student data report, yearly retention rate for underrepresented students (Also tied to Goal 6.), student satisfaction rates, formal academic experience and out-of-class experience.

### Goal 2:

Create and implement integrated recruitment and marketing campaigns to increase visibility and advance recruitment among a diverse population, utilizing a variety of approaches. **(STUDENT ENGAGEMENT; DIVERSITY AND DEMOGRAPHICS; ACCESS AND AFFORDIBILITY; *exploring and promoting* *our cultures*)**

* Expand recruitment and develop a more comprehensive recruitment plan
* Develop partnerships, programs, and resources to prepare students for success
* Develop a multifaceted marketing plan to tell Penn State Beaver’s story
* Use athletics as a vehicle to build overall enrollment

Action items for the above strategies include assessing out-of-state recruitment and identify new areas to target, streamline/enhance communication plans to prospects, applicants, and offered students, offer renewable scholarships, host transfer and regional workshops, conduct young prospects program, utilize social media along with traditional public advertisements (print, billboards, online venues) to enhance visibility in areas of student success and athletics and create an athletic recruitment and retention position.

Strategic indicator used to measure this goal are enrollment (headcount and FTE), number of baccalaureate and advanced standing applicants, offers, and paid accepts and yield rates, number of OOS/INT students admitted per targeted areas per year, number of varsity athletes, number of adult students, number of HS Dual Enrollment students who apply and become full-time students at PSU, dollars spent marketing in service area and PSU Pittsburgh, and yield rates on various scholarship programs for new admits.

### Goal 3:

Enhance the quality and scope of academic programming by supporting faculty development and by fostering student/faculty collaboration to meet the highest academic standards. (**EXCELLENCE; STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and STUDENT CAREER SUCCESS; *transforming education; academic infrastructure and support; leveraging our digital access*)**

* Refine and develop credit academic programming to prepare students for regional, national, and international opportunities
* Develop/broaden programming/training to support community and workforce needs
* Foster faculty development in areas of teaching and research to enhance the academic reputation of the campus
* Enhance faculty/student collaborations inside and outside of the classroom
* Seek opportunities for enhancing collaborations with the World Campus

Action items for the above strategies are as follows: add/share new baccalaureate degrees, independently or as regional collaborations with other campuses and Colleges, expand minors, maintain/enhance faculty appointments to support current/future 4-year degree programs and 2+2 programming, complete articulation agreement with local community college, broaden portfolio of professional development offerings, design on-site contracted corporate learning programs for workforce, support/fund programs to support faculty teaching and research/scholarship, ensure basic e-learning technology tools training for faculty, increase exposure of faculty expertise in community, balance course offerings delivered face-to-face, online and via interactive video conferencing, develop formal mentoring program, increase faculty/student undergraduate research collaborations, host one international travel experience per year, explore living/learning communities, identify faculty to support course delivery for World Campus, and upgrade classrooms by adding technology podiums.

Strategic indicators include student enrollment in baccalaureate degree programs, CE gross revenue generated in public credit and non-credit programming, ratio of full time to part time faculty, number of faculty and students engaged in undergraduate research, number of faculty and students engaged in study abroad programs and discipline-based trips, and number of courses delivered via technology.

### Goal 4:

Improve facilities and operations to meet the current and anticipated needs of the campus. (**STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and STUDENT CAREER SUCCESS; TECHNOLOGY AND CIRRICULUM DELIVERY; *transforming education; academic infrastructure and support; leveraging our digital access*)**

* Develop campus facilities focused on planned, priority-driven enhancement and growth
* Maintain, improve or replace building infrastructure and facility systems
* Develop academic environments that support learning and research
* Improve/expand on-campus residential life options
* Maintain/improve recreational and activities facilities
* Maintain/improve aesthetics/cosmetics of campus
* Create a culture of safety and security on campus

Action items for this area include maintaining updated physical facilities planning lists, develop plan and secure funding for replacement of various systems (electrical, HVAC), conduct IT/communications assessment, complete the renovation of the Michael Baker Science and Engineering Building, develop plans for residence hall renovations and/or new residential living options on campus, complete the Sports Deck feasibility and construction, complete Integrated Safety Plan certification and conduct safety training and develop a concept plan for Learning Commons in the Library.

Strategic indicators identified include number of projects completed and dollars spent on facilities projects, completed planning initiatives, number of projects completed and dollars spent on technology upgrades and support, number of campus-based training activities (and participants) related to compliance, safety, and others.

### Goal 5:

As part of the Beaver-Shenango partnership, explore and implement shared or regional academic and operational collaborations. (**EXCELLENCE; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and STUDENT CAREER SUCCESS; TECHNOLOGY AND CURRICULUM DELIVERY*; academic infrastructure and support;* *leveraging our digital access*)**

* Assess current collaborations and identify new opportunities for sharing programs
* Identify credit and non-credit programming for CE to deliver in BR/SV service areas
* Assess current operational collaborations and identify future additional staff sharing
* Share marketing and recruitment opportunities across both service areas

Action items for the above strategies include establishing a set to tools for assessing effectiveness of current shared program (IST and Nursing), identifying future opportunities for course and program sharing (2PTA, 2OTA, Psychology, HDFS), identify community/business locations to offer on-site credit/non-credit programming, broaden current portfolio of professional development offerings for the workforce, conduct annual assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of current staff sharing arrangements (Director of Enrollment Management, Police Chief, Web Master, Counselor), explore future staff sharing arrangements, and collaborate on various student recruitment initiatives (shared marketing efforts, cross promote programs and services, and develop a one-stop web site for transfer students that promote programs from both campuses).

Strategic indicators considered are number of annual collaborations/efforts as shared courses, faculty, and staff support/operations, number of joint recruitment initiatives/collaborations, first-year and transfer applications/offers/paids from Lawrence County to Beaver, Shenango and any other PSU campus, and web analytics on targeted transfer web pages.

### Goal 6:

Cultivate a diverse and inclusive environment to enhance cultural competence and promote equality, dignity, and respect for all. (**DIVERSITY AND DEMOGRAPHICS; STUDENT ENGAGEMENT; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and STUDENT CAREER SUCCESS; ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY; *exploring and promoting our cultures*)**

* Expand diversity programs and events
* Expand support for international students
* Increase campus and external community collaboration and communication
* Integrate content focusing on diverse groups on campus and in the curriculum
* Make student retention a top campus priority

Action items focus on expanding courses focused on diversity, cultural, social, and global issues, continuing faculty/staff diversity development and training, continuing to present films, speakers, and education events linked to courses/programming that support activities/ initiatives, expand international and out-of-state student support services, facilitate connections with Global Pittsburgh and other relevant community organizations, provide residential student cooking options and Bistro menu opportunities to facilitate international student needs/interests, explore a Center of Regional Employment, Diversity and Equity, increase diversity among faculty/staff positions, examine Campus Climate and Diversity Committee membership, roles, and functions to ensure broader campus representation, provide opportunities and support for diversity-related student organizations, and utilize community service projects and structured service-learning opportunities outside the classroom to expose students to social issues and community needs.

Strategic indicators identified are percentage of underrepresented students, percentage of multi-cultural faculty, number of courses with diversity content/criteria, number of events, programs, and/or trainings with content related to cultural competency/equity issues, yearly retention rate for underrepresented students, student satisfaction survey results (global diversity question and study abroad question and campus-based climate questions).

### Goal 7:

Increase campus visibility and support through alumni connections, continued fundraising, and community centered programs*.* ***(STUDENT ENGAGEMENT; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and STUDENT CAREER SUCCESS; TECHNOLOGY;* stewarding *our resources; enhancing our health and well-being; outreach and engagement****)*

* Engage and celebrate alumni connections to the campus
* Offer multiple opportunities to attract the community to the campus
* Continue/expand programming for local schools, educations, and students
* Continue/enhance established fundraising efforts
* Provide opportunities for businesses to benefit from campus expertise/resources
* Provide additional opportunities for campus community social interactions

Action items for the above strategies are develop a young alumni event on campus, use social media to connect with campus alums, establish the Penn State Beaver Athletic Hall of Fame, establish a new position dedicate to alumni relations and event planning, host public service meetings with groups like Beaver County Chamber of Commerce and state/local governmental agencies, evaluate the viability of the Brodhead Cultural Center (outdoor summer programming), strengthen STEM partnerships with area schools, build upon inter-school academic competitions hosted at the campus, establish ties with local businesses for purposes of financial or in-kind support, internships and capstone course projects, and/or life-long learning/training, and recognize employee service time awards at appropriate campus events.

Strategic indicators include gift income (endowed and non-endowed), number of annual gifts and total dollar amount, number and value of donor funded annual awards and endowed scholarships, number of campus events and activities marketed to alumni and community, number of events focused on STEM-related topics.

### Goal 8:

Develop programs and implement mandates to ascertain that: ethical and compliance requirements are met; employees are effectively trained and mentored; and our existing areas of competence are built upon and shared. **(EXCELLENCE, *business processes***)

* Establish mandated training needs, ethical standards, and compliance requirements for every campus position
* Establish resources/processes/personnel necessary to host events/activities involving minors on campus
* Provide employee training, orientation, professional development and mentoring
* Create databases to track employee certifications/training requirements

Action items are as follows: establish step-by-step process detailing hiring, training, and compliance requirements for campus full time and part time employees, ensure that all required campus-based educational programming is provided on an annual basis, determine need to hire full time staff focused on compliance/HR mandates, identify best practices related to safety, security, reporting and meeting policy requirements, and assign each new employee an experienced mentor to assist in learning how to navigate university/campus policies, procedures and office/personnel as needed.

Metrics are mandated training completed (% of employees), JRW Updates (number and percentage of employees), and number of compliance and ethics training sessions and number of participants in attendance.

### Goal 9:

Integrate wellness, sustainability, and the responsible and restorative use of resources to add value to the campus and community while promoting these values in teaching, research and partnerships. (***STUDENT ENGAGEMENT;* stewarding *our resources; enhancing our health and well-being; outreach and engagement)***

* Develop campus Green Team Along with reporting and facilitating practices
* Develop campus programs, processes, and partnerships related to sustainability and renewable resources
* Facilitate and provide health and wellness programming for students, faculty and staff
* Expand usage of sustainable practices in new projects

Action items for the above strategies include re-activating the campus Green Team, engage faculty to develop relevant class projects and co-curricular programming around sustainability topics, recognize sustainability leadership in annual review process for faculty and staff, actively promote OHR empower programs (nutrition, smoking cessation, stress), continue to offer the wellness fair and other health development programs throughout the year, identify wellness-centered activities (e.g., yoga/personal trainer) for campus , ensure one hydration station in every building, develop option for creating a campus composting program, install recycling receptacles across campus, eliminate paper-based forms/processes by adapting to web-based applications, develop sustainability partnerships in the community, and incorporate new sustainable technologies and explore opportunities for improved campus systems (lighting, HVAC, electrical).

Metrics identified are yearly report on hydration station usage, tons of solid waste recycled annually, annual energy savings, health center and other programming reports, and yearly updates on programs/projects/classes offered per Green Team.

## Current Plan Components Aligned with the Framework to Foster Diversity Plan

Many of the primary elements in this plan focused upon the Framework to Foster Diversity are defined within Goal 1 and Goal 6. However, additional components are embedded within several other areas. Throughout the last strategic planning cycle, one of the most significant accomplishments was that of recruiting underrepresented students and efforts to support student success. As the result of data developed through the Enrollment Management Group (EMG) and efforts formulated during the last plan, the campus has observed changes in student demographics, available services, support, and overall dialog. One of the primary drivers for this change was the following item:

*Define, collect, examine and act upon leading indicators regarding at-risk populations to enhance recruitment and retention of students of color, female students, adult learners, first generation students, and low-income students (Penn State Beaver Strategic Plan, 2009-13).*

Given significant budget, staffing, and resource challenges, targeted retention improvement strategies extracted from organizations such as the National Academic Advising Association now support several basic student success initiatives at Penn State Beaver. Efforts continuously evolve targeting resources, service collaborations, and interventions for at-risk students, which increase the overall quality and scope of campus student support. This has assisted the campus in framing a retention dialog to that of facilitating a student “help-seeking” culture. Hands-on faculty/staff engagement with all students and referral to support personnel is an expectation for employees regardless of position. Many structural changes realized in the last plan have been integrated and are not detailed in this plan as they have been operationalized.

The campus will continue previous initiatives such as at-risk student “consultant” meetings during New Student Orientation, enhanced academic and disabilities support, staff and faculty training and development on relevant diversity topics, and, a “Student Success” curriculum for targeted First Year Seminars. Additionally, a host of intrusive advising, support, outreach and engagement practices will be continued. Core strategies and goals detailed in the 2013-18 Plan engage challenges and opportunities given assumptions of very limited new resources and significant staffing constraints at the campus.

It is envisioned that the solidification of senior campus leadership will further support and direct future efforts. The diversity mission statement below will continue to communicate campus aspirations:

*Penn State Beaver is committed to providing a welcoming, equal opportunity environment for students, faculty, and staff. The campus will recruit a diverse student body and workforce. The campus will deliver academic and cultural programs that foster intercultural understanding and the free expression of practices and beliefs. The campus will not accept or ignore discriminating or harmful behavior or actions. The Beaver campus community will provide a peaceful, tolerant environment in which all members can live and work*.