Examining Six Major Issues

- Access and Affordability
- Economic Development and Student Career Success
- **Student Engagement/Engaged Scholarship**
- Diversity and Demographics
- Technology and Curriculum Delivery
- Excellence
Student Engagement

**Goal:** Maximize the degree to which students take advantage of the Penn State experience: “Drive the blue and white sports car more than 20 miles an hour.”
Student Engagement/Engaged Scholarship

Definitions:
• Out-of-classroom experiences that promote student success
• Out-of-classroom academic experiences that complement class-based learning
The Evidence

• Engaged students must manage their time; tend to have less time for activities that don’t promote success

• Engaged students have an engaged peer group; reinforces success

• Engaged students have demonstrably higher GPAs

• Engaged students build a resume throughout their tenure

Better grades and better resumes = greater success
Given the Evidence:

Do universities have an obligation to promote engagement?

• Plus there is added value:
  o Promote recruitment, retention and graduation
  o Post-graduation community involvement
  o Higher student satisfaction
  o Many other positive attributes (leadership, communication...)
Engagement Areas: International Experiences

**Value:** Worldview is essential (careers, perspective, culture)

**Status:** 19th in the U.S. for students studying abroad (approx. 2,500 students; 56 countries); Many active partnerships

**Total # Learning Abroad**
Engagement Areas: International Experiences

- **%**
  - 0%
  - 10%
  - 20%
  - 30%
  - 40%
  - 50%
  - 21.3%
  - 23.2%

- **$**
  - $0
  - $200
  - $400
  - $600
  - $800
  - $1,000
  - $1,200
  - $1,400
  - $1,600
  - $1,800
  - $362
  - $495
Engagement Areas: International Experiences

Goal/Need/Issues:

• Lack of financial resources is a significant barrier to greater international engagement; cost is a factor in who can study abroad

• Address the challenge for degree candidates with highly structured course sequences
Engagement Areas: One-on-One Projects with Faculty

Value:
• High correlation with completion of advanced degrees
• Deeper understanding; involvement end-to-end from design to conclusion including presentation

Status:
• 28% students (UP) and 20% students (CC) are doing research/creative activities with faculty; based on survey data
• Average of 1,700 projects a year register for Research Topics
• Highly visible programs – e.g. Lunar Lion, EcoCAR
Engagement Areas: One-on-One Projects with Faculty

Status (cont.)

Central:

• Summer Discovery Grants – 60 at $3,000/year; many colleges add to award levels; create more opportunities
• Exhibition programs and conference travel for presentations
• Faculty can post opportunities centrally
• Low traffic through central office
Engagement Areas: One-on-One Projects with Faculty

Status (cont.)

Colleges and Campuses:

• Highly decentralized efforts in specific fields (Science, Earth and Mineral Sciences, Engineering, Social Sciences)

View:

• Universities with weaker programs are more decentralized
• Indications that there are insufficient opportunities
Engagement Areas: One-on-One Projects with Faculty

Goals/Needs/Issues *(University Faculty Senate report 2012)*

- Increased number of higher paying, more competitive grants
- More faculty and student support
- More dedicated staff
- Higher visibility
- Greater efforts to include students in the arts and humanities
Engagement Areas: Leadership

Value:
• Experiential, multiple perspectives, student career success, communication skills, self-confidence

Status:
• Opportunities are significant – 1,200 clubs and campus organizations; active student government
• Leadership conference at campus, regional and university-wide level (training, team-building, preparation)
• Leadership scholarships and student leadership awards
Engagement Areas: Leadership

Status:

- Presidential Leadership Academy
- Office of Student Activities programs: Leaders Emerging Today, Student Leadership Practices Inventory; LeaderShape, Fall Leadership Program; Global Engagement and Leadership Experience
- Campus programs (experiential, retreats....)
- Leadership minor in Engineering and Agriculture
Engagement Areas: Leadership

Goals/Needs/Issues: Already many great opportunities

• Perhaps expand within Penn State’s administrative areas (e.g. investment arena, administrative fellows)
Engagement Areas: Internships

Value:
• Real world opportunity, networking, high correlation with employment offers

Status:
• 52% of all undergraduates participate in at least one practical work assignment in industry, government or the university
Engagement Areas: Internships

Central guidance:
• Check college first
• List of organizations
• Search strategies
• Some search capabilities

Colleges and Campuses
• Many with specific programs/lists
Engagement Areas: Internships

Goal/Need/Issues:

- Potential development opportunity (?)
- Universities with weaker programs are more decentralized
- Indications that there are insufficient opportunities
Engagement Areas: Service and Service Learning

Value:
• Community involvement, personal satisfaction, experiential, signal to potential employers

Status:
• Highly visible programs: e.g. THON, the largest student-run philanthropy – $114 million raised since 1977
• Numerous service learning and community-based research opportunities across Penn State, even international
• Minor in Civic and Community Engagement
Engagement Areas: Service and Service Learning

Goal/Need/Issues:

• Seems impressive but difficult to assess – lack the knowledge of the level of involvement; breadth of opportunities; reach to the students
Strategies for Promoting Engagement

Faculty Senate report: Provide every student with at least one, if not multiple, engaged scholarship experiences as undergraduates

- Create an inventory of designated courses/experiences
- Develop/invest in participation opportunities
- Invest in a clearly identified central entity
- Find new ways to reward faculty
- Create recognition and assessment mechanisms
Strategies for Promoting Engagement

Strike an Engaged Scholar Medal

- Define categories/expectations for each (e.g. complete 3 of 5 categories: international experiences; one-on-one experiences with faculty; leadership, internships, service)
- Expand opportunity if demand is present
- Need a way to count through a central entity
Goal

• Establish a vision where Penn State becomes a national leader in student engagement and realization of its benefits

• Ensure that these opportunities extend to all campuses and impact a growing number of students (all)
Address the Challenges

• Seek funding for international experiences and one-on-one research/creative experiences with faculty
• Develop engagement as a philanthropic focus
• Increase centralized functions and incentivize opportunities across our colleges and campuses in order to broaden opportunities for more students and leverage local resources
• Promote the visibility of the tremendous amount of activity already occurring at Penn State
• Increase the opportunities for recognition and reward
End Note

• High value – put the blue and white sports car through its paces

• Healthier, happier, better grades, better resume, better career opportunities

• Added value in retention, graduation, critical thinking

• Need to implement best strategies for engagement
Questions?