Opportunity and Competitiveness for the Region:
Portland State University Strategic Plan 2011-2014

Introduction

When World War II ended in 1945, the surge of returning veterans triggered demand for greater opportunity for higher education in Portland, Oregon. The result was an institution called Vanport Extension Center, which was established in 1946 in Vanport City, a community hastily erected on the northern border of Portland to house wartime shipyard workers. Today that tiny extension center has become Portland State University (PSU), Oregon’s only public urban research university. With nearly 30,000 students from all 50 states and 93 foreign countries, it is the state’s largest and most diverse higher education institution.

Now located on a 50-acre campus in the heart of Portland, PSU has grown not only in size, but also in reputation. The university is widely perceived as a national model for how student-focused urban research universities can partner with their cities to solve problems and improve the quality of life. It is strongly identified with sustainability education, research and practices. And it has begun increasingly to attract high-achieving high school graduates interested in its “high-caliber teaching, urban setting, diverse student body and post-graduate opportunities.” National ranking organizations are taking note. In 2011, PSU became the second public university in Oregon to be selected by The Princeton Review as one of the nation’s “Best 376 Colleges,” a listing of what the Review calls “the crème of the crop institutions for undergraduates in America.”

Recognition of this sort suggests Portland State is making progress toward achieving its vision to become “an internationally recognized urban university known for excellence in student learning, innovative research, and community engagement that contributes to the economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and quality of life in the Portland region and beyond.” Newly adopted legislation which converts the state’s public university system from a state agency to a free-standing public university system should accelerate the process by allowing PSU to manage operations more efficiently, control costs, and invest tuition to meet university needs rather than having it be diverted to meet other state purposes.

Unfortunately, the single greatest impediment to achievement of PSU’s long-term goals – a severe lack of funding – is not resolved by this structural change. State funding for Portland State has declined dramatically in real dollars over the past two decades and now accounts for only approximately 13 percent of total annual operating revenue, compared to 48 percent twenty years ago. Students and their families have begun to shoulder an increasingly large percentage of the cost of education. Even so, PSU

2 University of Oregon is the only other Oregon public university to make the Best 376 list.
4 http://www.leg.state.or.us/11orlaws/sess0600.dir/0637.pdf.
finds itself with a growing funding gap that constrains its ability to meet its goals of preparing students for the jobs of the 21st century, recruiting and retaining excellent faculty and staff, upgrading infrastructure and developing collaborative initiatives to promote economic development and enhance the livability of the Portland metropolitan region.

“Opportunity and Competitiveness for the Region: Portland State University Strategic Plan 2011-2014” reaffirms PSU’s current strategic vision and establishes strategic goals and objectives for the next three years to advance that vision. Included are strategies for securing the resources that will be necessary to accomplish the substantive aspects of the plan.

Mission

The mission of Portland State University is to enhance the intellectual, social, cultural and economic qualities of urban life by providing access throughout the life span to a quality liberal education for undergraduates and an appropriate array of professional and graduate programs especially relevant to metropolitan areas. The university conducts research and community service that support a high quality educational environment and reflect issues important to the region. It actively promotes the development of a network of educational institutions to serve the community.

The Vision

PSU’s vision is to become a leading public urban university “known for excellence in student learning, innovative research, and community engagement that contributes to the economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and quality of life in the Portland region and beyond.” In a June 2011 letter to PSU faculty and staff, President Wiewel reaffirmed this vision, saying the university must aspire not only to provide an excellent education for students but to “serve as a model for the urban university in the 21st century – a place where campus and community are inextricably linked, and where we can find solutions to the seemingly intractable challenges that face societies locally and globally.”

In order to operationalize the vision, university leaders in 2008 established strategic priorities – or guiding themes – for the university that are consistent with the overarching strategic directions of the State Board of Higher Education. These priorities include: 1) provide civic leadership (through strategic partnerships and innovative research), 2) improve student success, 3) achieve global excellence, 4) enhance educational opportunity and 5) expand resources and improve effectiveness. Specific goals, Objectives and outcomes related to these priorities were also established, as outlined in University Planning 2009-2010. The goals and objectives were updated during leadership planning retreats in Spring 2010 and 2011. The goals and objectives identified during the Spring 2011 retreat are reflected in this plan.

Environmental Assessment

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5 http://www.pdx.edu/mission.html
6 Wim Wiewel, e-mail to all campus mailing list. June 20, 2011.
7 Board strategic directions include: 1) Increasing the education attainment of Oregonians; 2) high quality student learning; 3) conducting innovative research that contributes to Oregon, and 4) contributing to the civic and economic well being of Oregon communities.
The social, cultural and economic benefits of high educational attainment have been well documented. The better educated a population, the lower the unemployment, crime, welfare and incarceration rates and the higher the health status and sense of well-being. Highly educated individuals vote more often, give to the arts more frequently and become more engaged in the life of their community. Educational attainment also has been shown to financially benefit both individuals and the larger community. Studies show that a full-time worker with a four-year college degree will earn 60 percent more over his working life than will a high school graduate. And estimates by Oregon economist Joe Cortright suggest that the local economy stands to gain $1.6 billion annually for every one-percent increase in the number of two-and four-year degrees earned by individuals under 25.

As American higher education moves into the second decade of the 21st century, however, it finds itself facing unprecedented challenges. With large numbers of Americans unemployed, tax revenues down and the federal debt soaring, Congress has made tens of billions of dollars to education programs, including more than $30 billion in student financial aid alone. Faced with their own unemployment and revenue challenges, governors and legislatures are responding similarly, with some $5 billion in cuts to colleges and universities nationwide approved or under consideration. And the economic equalizer of the past two decades – increases in tuition – may have lost its elasticity. Annual tuition increases of as much as 30 percent, coupled with student loan debt which exceeds that of credit card debt, have led to student protests on campuses around the country.

In the face of this, articles in The Atlantic, The New York Times, The Washington Post and other publications are now challenging whether higher education provides the long-touted financial returns on investment for individuals – or society. Parents frustrated with the high costs of a higher education, particularly at more selective universities, are quoted in those publications as saying they are not convinced the return is worth the investment. A Pew Research Center poll conducted in spring 2011 suggests students disagree, however. A majority of college graduates surveyed said college was valuable for them personally, leading to $20,000 more in annual income. The majority also reported they had matured, grown intellectually, and were better prepared for a job or career because of their college experience.

The Pacific Northwest

The Pacific Northwest is dominated by public universities with a small number of top-tier private colleges, and a host of lesser-known private colleges and universities. There are also two first-class medical schools and academic health science centers, University of Washington School of Medicine and Oregon Health & Science University, and an extensive public community college system. Within this

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13 http://pewsocialtrends.org/2011/05/15/is-college-worth-it/.
crowded field, Portland State occupies a unique niche as the only large, comprehensive, public, urban, research university. The type of practical higher education experience, with associated research and service components, offered by such urban-serving schools is becoming increasingly attractive to students and to potential partners, as the population of the United States and the world continue to become more urbanized, and as more of the nation’s and world’s problems lend themselves to urban solutions.

The Pacific Northwest is also known for its economic and cultural dependence on natural resources and its residents’ affinity for their local environment, both urban and rural. Thus research and teaching agendas throughout the region tend to emphasize ecological, social science, resource management, health care, and economic transformation issues. Portland State’s emerging research profile has strong overlap with this set of opportunities.

Oregon

In June 2011, the Oregon Legislature adopted legislation (SB 253) calling for substantial improvement in the educational attainment of Oregonians over the next 14 years. If that legislation is implemented as designed, by 2025 some 40 percent of adult Oregonians would have a bachelor’s degree or higher, an additional 40 percent would have an associate’s degree or post-secondary certificate and the remaining 20 percent would have a high school diploma or the equivalent.

The need to establish such a policy is clear. Despite rapid globalization and increased competition for jobs that require more than a high school education, only 30 percent of Oregonians have a bachelor’s degree or higher and 9 percent an associate’s degree. Ten percent of Oregonians do not have even a high school diploma. The rapid increase in the number of Latinos in the state’s elementary and secondary schools provides an additional challenge. Latinos, who historically have had the lowest educational attainment of any racial/ethnic group in Oregon, made up 14 percent of students in the 12th grade in Oregon public schools in 2008-2009, double the proportion in 1998-1999. By 2019-20, 22 percent of 12th graders in the state is expected to be Latino.

While the need for the “40-40-20” plan is clear, how it will be paid for is not. The same month the Legislature set the new goal, it reduced funding for Oregon’s seven public universities by 17.7 percent, a continuation of a decades-long erosion in public funding which has left Oregon ranked 47th in the nation for higher education funding per student. The inconsistencies in the two actions led some longtime supporters of higher education to vote against SB 253, arguing that if the state was serious about improving the educational status of Oregonians it should significantly increase – not decrease – funding for higher education.

This type of disconnect between expectations and funding is not new for Oregon higher education. Oregon General Fund revenues are notoriously volatile and over-subscribed. Ballot measures such as the property tax limitation (Measure 5) in 1990 and numerous public safety measures have tied up significant

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14 Although the University of Washington is located in Seattle, it considers itself to be a globally focused institution, with relatively few programs that link it directly with the city of Seattle.

portions of state tax revenues. As a result, many traditional recipients of state funding have gone wanting – especially higher education.

When faced with limited state resources during the 1990s, Oregon’s public universities responded by reducing access for students. Realizing that approach had contributed to falling state educational attainment levels, the universities reversed course in the 2000s. In 2010-2011, the seven universities collectively enrolled 96,960 students, an increase of almost 20,000 in just a three-year period. The burden of paying for these educational services did not fall predominately on the state, however. Students and their families absorbed two-thirds of the cost, while the state covered only one-third – exactly the inverse of how higher education was paid for in Oregon 20 years earlier.

Ensuring quality higher education services are available to Oregonians at a cost they can afford will require both structural and funding changes. The structural change is already underway, thanks to legislative approval of SB 242, the bill that provides the universities with significant autonomy and flexibility to manage their finances and operations. Further structural change, as well as a more systematic approach to investments across the educational continuum from pre-K through college, is expected as part of an initiative Governor John Kitzhaber has said he will submit to the Legislature in February 2012.

Portland

With a strong public transportation system, a commitment to sustainability and easy access to green spaces, Portland is widely considered one of the nation’s most livable and progressive cities. A reputation for high quality restaurants, bookstores and art galleries, a lively music scene, friendly and civically involved citizens and a short drive to beaches and mountains round out the picture of Portland as an attractive destination for young people and eco-friendly businesses.

As with the Pacific Northwest generally, the Portland area offers numerous public and private education opportunities from Pre-K through the post-graduate level. Elementary and secondary schools are spread throughout the city, providing easy neighborhood access. Community colleges are also readily accessible in the central city and suburbs. PSU, a handful of private and propriety schools and OHSU complete the educational offerings.

Despite its positive attributes, Portland faces a number of challenges. A report released in December 2010 found that Portland lags behind comparable cities such as Seattle, Denver and Minneapolis in wages, per capita income, investment income and private sector job creation. Poverty and racial disparities are also of concern in the Portland region. More than 17 percent of the children living in the most populous metropolitan county live in poverty. According to a study by PSU’s School of Social Work, people of color in the county are even more likely than their white counterparts to experience poverty as well as unemployment, low birth-weight, juvenile detention and foster care.

K-12 education statistics – and funding - in Portland also are problematic. Only 53 percent of high school students complete their degree in four years.\(^\text{18}\) Graduation rates for students of color are particularly stark, with only 31 percent of Hispanic students and 44.5 percent of African American students in the city completing their degrees on time.\(^\text{19}\) Continued reduction in state funding – Portland Public Schools’ share of state funding has decreased by approximately 6 percent over the past two biennia – decreases the odds that these statistics will improve any time soon.

Portland State benefits from the city’s progressive reputation, attracting students interested in sustainability, a vibrant, urban setting and the opportunity to interact with business, nonprofit and civic organizations while still in college. As such, it is appropriate that PSU seeks not only to provide those students with a high-quality education that prepares them to compete in the global marketplace, but also to work collaboratively with the city and the region to develop innovative solutions to the social, economic and educational challenges area citizens encounter.

**Portland State University**

The funding and structural challenges that face all of Oregon’s public universities are particularly acute for PSU. Located on the south end of downtown Portland, PSU is the newest of the state’s three major universities, with 65 years of history compared to 143 years and 135 years, respectively, for Oregon State University and the University of Oregon.

During its early years, Portland State faced an uphill battle just to survive in the face of opposition from critics who didn’t believe Oregon needed another public university. Today, PSU has nearly 30,000 students, making it the largest university in the state and one of the 100 largest higher education institutions in the United States. Although 66 percent live in the Portland metropolitan area and another 14 percent are from other parts of Oregon, students come to the university from every state and from 93 foreign countries. Students represent a wide range of ages, economic backgrounds and ethnicities, making PSU Oregon’s most diverse university.

Historically a teaching university, PSU’s level of sponsored research has climbed sharply in recent years, up from $40 million in FY 2006 to more than $63 million in 2011. Its role as regional economic engine is also expanding. The university employs 5,000 faculty, staff and student workers and pays out nearly $240 million in payroll annually.\(^\text{20}\) In FY 2010, PSU purchased $216 million in goods and services from business and organizations, generated more than $518 million in additional spending and had an estimated $1.4 billion economic impact on the region.

Portland State’s most widely recognized role is as an anchor institution in the Portland Metropolitan area – an engaged university that combines rigor in the classroom with field-based experiences such as internships and classroom projects with community partners. In 2010, more than 10,000 students were engaged in at least 20 hours of community-based learning. In total, PSU students provided more than 1.54 million service hours to businesses, nonprofits and government organizations that year – an overall


\(^{19}\) [http://www.portlandpulse.org/node/70](http://www.portlandpulse.org/node/70).

\(^{20}\) Portland State University, “$1.4 billion and growing: The Economic Impact of Oregon’s Urban Research University.” January 2011.
value of $29 million to the community and an opportunity for the students to apply classroom theory to real life situations. This type of practical experience allows the growing number of Portland State graduates – last year’s class of 5,620 was the largest in state history – to enter the workforce better prepared. It also serves as one avenue for PSU to participate in solving urban problems.

Despite its impressive growth – and, in some cases, because of it – PSU faces numerous challenges. With funds for operations severely limited, the number of faculty and staff has not kept pace with increases in student enrollment, leaving both employee groups stretched thin. Faculty and staff also have gone several years without significant salary increases. A long-term staffing and compensation plan will be essential to ensure the university has the talent in place to achieve its long-range goals.

Information technology systems also need upgrading and investments must be made in research infrastructure, human resource data management, staff training and other management and communications systems. Although student retention rates have improved recently, new processes and procedures are needed to ensure students receive the support they need to succeed.

The physical plant is inadequate. With 85 percent of the university’s buildings more than 25 years old, many of the facilities are in dire need of renovation and modernization. In all, the campus has a total $272 million of backlogged deferred maintenance and only $3.2 million in state funds to spend for this purpose over the upcoming biennium.

In addition, the campus has significant expansion needs. According to the 2010 University District Framework Plan, PSU has an immediate need for approximately 430,000 additional net assignable square feet to address current classroom, lab, and housing and office space shortages. With area population growth estimates suggesting PSU’s enrollment will increase to between 36,000 and 50,000 over the next 20 years, the plan will have to find an additional 4.2 million gross square feet of space to meet housing, enrollment and research needs.

Access to adequate funding is the single biggest limiting factor for PSU in addressing these challenges. With state funding covering only approximately 13 percent of the total budget, the university has been forced to raise tuition and look to creative partnership arrangements and philanthropy to help fund its operations. PSU will need to increase the amount of funds it receives from these sources, as well as looking to new resources, if it is to meet its goals moving forward.

Details of the Strategic Plan 2011-2014

The strategic priorities and goals outlined in this strategic plan are based on a three-year timeframe. The overarching goal for PSU during that time period is to make substantial progress toward becoming the model university of the 21st century that President Wiewel outlined in his June 2011 letter – a university that exemplifies educational excellence and student success, a place where campus and community are inextricably linked, and an environment that fosters development of innovative solutions to the difficult challenges that face societies locally and globally. To that end, the plan sets specific goals for student retention and graduation, diversity training and internationalization, and research growth and

development. It also outlines specific strategies to enhance faculty and staff support and engagement, raise the university’s profile among the general public and policymakers and build a university-wide culture of philanthropy.

Objectives outlined in the plan are for the 2011-2012 academic year, except as otherwise indicated. The Objectives will be updated annually. New goals may also be added – or existing ones altered – as deemed appropriate.

The majority of the Objectives for 2011-2012 will be implemented by current staff utilizing current resources. Where significant new resources are needed to implement an objective/action, the plan will so indicate.

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**Priority/Theme 1: Provide Civic Leadership Through Partnerships:** Lead as civic partner, deepen our engagement as a critical community asset, demonstrate leadership in regional innovation and serve as an anchor institution in the Metro area.

Portland State is best known as a university deeply involved in issues of concern to the city and region in which it is located. As the “Saviors of our Cities” survey reported in 2009, PSU is among a select group of universities that “have demonstrated…long-standing cooperative efforts with community leaders to rehabilitate the cities around them, to influence community revitalization and cultural renewal, and to encourage economic expansion of the local economy, urban development and community service.” For PSU, this involvement is not merely about service; rather it is “the integrating principle for the institution’s teaching and scholarship activities” as well as its community service.

The 2011-2014 Strategic Plan challenges PSU to build on its already strong reputation as an engaged university by assuming a leadership role in bringing stakeholders together to prioritize needs, conduct research and develop innovative solutions to local and regional problems. Once developed, those solutions could be exported nationally and internationally.

Specific strategic goals and objectives in this area include:

**Goal 1.1:** Assume a leadership role in partnering with business, governments and community organizations to identify, develop and implement innovative solutions to societal challenges, with a focus on those of particular concern to the urban area.

PSU’s motto, “Let Knowledge Serve the City,” reflects the university’s commitment to an exchange of knowledge and resources with local, regional, national and global partners that foster actions, programs, scholarship and research that are globally relevant and regionally focused. In practice that has resulted in hundreds of initiatives in which the university has worked collaboratively with businesses, nonprofits and local and regional governments to research and develop sustainable transportation alternatives, identify approaches that can help ensure students

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23 http://www.pdx.edu/oaa/frequently-asked-questions.
graduate high school and come to college ready to learn, and assess and develop ways to address public health needs, racial disparities and other issues facing the metropolitan area. This goal calls for the university to assume an even greater leadership role in bringing partners together to find innovative solutions to problems of this nature.

Objectives

1.1.1 Enhance effectiveness of university partnerships by inventorying existing partnerships; clarifying relationship between Center for Academic Excellence and Partnerships and Office of Strategic Partnerships; and establishing process and criteria for selecting or initiating future university-wide strategic partnerships

1.1.2 Build-out strategic partnership frameworks, including action plans in four key areas:
   • Regional Economic Development (industry clusters, entrepreneurship, innovation) (see also Goal 1.2 below)
   • Urban Sustainability (built environment and ecosystem services)
   • Urban Sustainability (education and social services)
   • Health and Life Sciences (OHSU and health care providers)

1.1.3 Form university-wide interdisciplinary task forces for each strategic partnership and establish communication and evaluation processes to publicize and measure the success of the partnerships

**Goal 1.2:** Given continued high unemployment and other economic challenges in the Portland metropolitan area, place particular emphasis on working with regional stakeholders to develop and implement strategic initiatives that will promote regional economic development.

In supporting development of an urban renewal district centered around Portland State, Portland Mayor Sam Adams described the university as “a leading engine of economic growth, prosperity and opportunity.” The city’s major business organization, the Portland Business Alliance, similarly acknowledged the university’s role as a workforce developer and economic engine in its 2011 Action Plan, saying it will “support the growth of PSU…in a manner that leads to increased innovation, business spin-offs and job growth due to research and development activities.” This goal calls for the university to increase its activities in this area and assume a leadership role in helping spur innovation and economic growth.

Objectives

1.2.1 Expand collaboration with PDC, TriMet, Greater Portland, Inc. and other organizations involved in regional economic development policy

1.2.2 Develop and implement strategic research partnerships with PGE, Intel, CH2M-HILL and other businesses/industries identified as target growth industries, or economic

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development clusters, by PDC. These include clean-tech/sustainable industries, active wear, software and advanced manufacturing

1.2.3 Secure approval by city and county government of an Urban Renewal District centered around PSU

1.2.4 Work with stakeholders to improve policies and procedures for engaging minority, women and emerging small businesses

**GOAL 1.3:** Enhance PSU’s collaborations with OHSU, community hospitals and health and bioscience businesses/organizations to foster economic development, improve efficiencies and improve health status in the metropolitan area and throughout Oregon

In Fall 2010, PSU entered into a Strategic Alliance with Oregon Health & Science University that is bringing researchers, teaching faculty and administrators of the two institutions together to look for ways to develop innovative research, improve educational offerings for Oregonians and make the best use of limited resources. Two key initiatives include development of a collaborative School of Public Health and completion of a Life Sciences Building in Portland’s South Waterfront area that will co-locate researchers, educators and students from both institutions. PSU is also working with OHSU, other health care organizations and the bioscience industry on commercialization efforts in health and science fields. This goal focuses on continuing to grow partnerships in this important area.

**Objectives**

1.3.1 Continue to implement OHSU-PSU Strategic Alliance with particular near-term focus on establishment of a collaborative School of Public Health and completion of the Life Sciences Building *(requires additional resources)*

1.3.2 Leverage bioscience capacity at the PSU Business Accelerator and other such facilities

1.3.3 Continue coordination of OHSU and PSU administrative processes and procedures

1.3.4 Increase joint recruiting of strategic faculty members

1.3.5 Assemble funding to support research collaborations involving OHSU and PSU faculty

1.3.6 Explore joint degree programs across the two universities

**Priority/Theme 2: Improve Student Success:** Ensure a student experience that results in higher graduation rates, retention, satisfaction, and engagement.

As Portland State has grown and expanded over the years, so has its reputation among students. When asked why they had selected PSU, high school valedictorians who enrolled as freshmen in Fall 2010 said they came for PSU’s “high caliber teaching, urban setting, diverse student body and postgraduate
opportunities.”

Students interviewed for The Princeton Review’s “Best 376 Colleges: 2012 Edition” described PSU as offering “a great learning environment in the heart of the city” and as being a university that is “training students to be good community members.” They also praised their professors as “well-educated (and) well-versed in current issues and research,” “easily accessible” and “prepared and passionate about the classes they teach, with a wealth of experiences to bring to the classroom.”

Despite these encouraging statements, PSU still has work to do to ensure students are successful and will persist through college to graduation. Retention rates of transfer students are strong (at 80 percent for juniors and 76.3 percent for sophomores), an important statistic given that transfers make up two-thirds of undergraduates who matriculate to PSU each year. Retention of first-time, full-time freshmen lags behind, however, barely topping 70 percent (70.3) in Fall Term 2010. Moving forward, PSU will focus on improving retention and the overall student experience through development of a strategic enrollment management system as well as special efforts targeted at particular cohorts, including the growing population of Latinos and students who have stopped-out or are at risk of doing so with only a term or two left to complete their degrees.

**Goal 2.1:** Develop and implement a five-year strategic enrollment management plan that supports the academic and fiscal goals of the university

While overall student enrollment at PSU has steadily increased over the past decade, careful and strategic enrollment planning has not been utilized by the university. To improve retention and graduation rates, and meet the goals of the state's new 40-40-20 plan, Portland State must become more intentional about the number and characteristics of the students it enrolls and the strategies it employs to ensure those students can be successful. To achieve this goal, PSU will:

**Objectives**

2.1.1 Develop a five-year Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan that supports the academic and fiscal goals of the university

2.1.2 Create a new Department of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs with a division of Enrollment Management that includes the current offices of Admissions, Records, Registration, Financial Aid, Scholarships, and Enrollment Management Communication Technology

2.1.3 Hire a new Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management

2.1.4 Establish an Enrollment Management cabinet to inform and oversee the SEM plan

**GOAL 2.2:** Increase nonresident enrollment to 2,200 for international students and 4,325 for domestic non-resident students by 2013

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26 [http://www.pdx.edu/insidepdx/top-students-valedictorians](http://www.pdx.edu/insidepdx/top-students-valedictorians)


28 Based on Fall Term 2010 statistics.
In order to improve diversity, enhance internationalization of the campus and respond to other strategic enrollment needs, PSU has worked over the past several years to recruit more international and domestic non-resident students to the university. These efforts have realized some success, increasing the population of international students from 1,698 in 2008-2009 to 1,859 in 2010-2011, and the number of domestic non-resident students from 3,575 in 2008-2009 to 3,791 in 2010-2011. Additional focus needs to be brought to this area, however, to meet diversity, internationalization and strategic enrollment management targets. Although specific targets/initiatives may be adjusted once the 5-year enrollment plan is in place, PSU will take initial steps to:

Objectives

2.2.1 Significantly enhance targeted international and out-of-state recruitment initiatives *(requires additional resources)*

2.2.2 Increase strategic communication with prospective non-resident students via new Customer Relations Management System

2.2.3 Target remission awards and other enrollment incentives to non-resident students

2.2.4 Establish additional 2+2 educational agreements with overseas partners in China

2.2.5 Establish new co-admission and transfer agreements with out-of-state community college partners

2.2.6 Pilot use of international agents

**GOAL 2.3: Increase retention rate for first-time, full-time freshmen to 75 percent by 2013**

Improving the first-time, full-time freshmen retention rate is a very high priority for PSU. During the past three years, a portfolio of student success initiatives, including recommendations by the First Steps to Student Success Committee, have been strategically implemented to improve this metric. Several of these efforts, such as mandatory new student orientation and enhanced academic advising have yielded positive results. To further increase the numbers of first-time, full-time freshmen returning for sophomore year, PSU will continue to implement the recommendations of the First Steps to Student Success and Retention Committee approved by the Provost. Specific actions include:

Objectives

2.3.1 Complete implementation of math placement testing and tighten enforcement of pre-requisite requirements

2.3.2 Reduce DWF rate by redesigning two high-enrollment and high-failure courses *(requires additional resources)*
2.3.3 Implement prescriptive degree maps and degree-map milestone tracking

2.3.4 Implement Phase II of advising initiative (*requires additional resources*)

2.3.5 Implement enhanced peer mentoring and academic coaching activities throughout campus

2.3.6 Implement student financial literacy programs and intervention initiatives for student experiencing financial difficulties

**Goal 2.4:** Expand and improve assessment activities in line with best practices to improve student learning and meet accreditation expectations

Continuous improvement of student learning requires on-going assessment to ensure quality. Assessment also allows the university to demonstrate the added value of our educational products to students and external stakeholders at a time of increasing emphasis on accountability. PSU has led in assessment, but in recent budget cycles, has lost ground in terms of FTE dedicated to assessment activities. This trend must be reversed to enhance student learning and to ensure proper reporting of findings to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, the institution-wide accrediting agency for PSU, and other interested parties.

**Objectives**

2.4.1 Hire 1.0 FTE Assessment Associate into CAE (*requires additional resources*)

2.4.2 OIRP, IAC and writing faculty consultants to develop and pilot a product to assess junior and senior writing samples

2.4.3 Ensure each department has defined unit-level outcomes and increase the number of departments collecting program level assessment data on at least one learning outcome

2.4.4 Establish a process and goals for assessing graduate programs

2.4.5 Institutional Assessment Council to implement CWLO communication plan (*requires additional resources*)

**Goal 2.5:** Increase campus engagement and satisfaction for students

Educational research has shown that on-campus engagement and satisfaction are important contributors to student success, retention and graduation. To increase on-campus engagement and satisfaction for students, PSU will improve strategic communication and partnerships with students. Specific actions include:

**Objectives**

2.5.1 Increase communication to students via new CRM, social media and My First Quarter website
2.5.2 Expand living and learning communities within on-campus housing and explore feasibility of increasing the amount of on campus housing. *(requires additional resources)*

2.5.3 Conduct a feasibility study for a new or upgraded student union

2.5.4 Expand student activities and co-curricular opportunities

2.5.5 Enhance peer-to-peer mentoring activities to maximize impact on student success

2.5.6 Systematically provide academic progress data to units to encourage data-driven curricular planning and early and appropriate student success interventions *(requires resources)*

2.5.7 Conduct study of graduate student advising *(requires additional resources)*

**Goal 2.6: Produce graduates who can succeed and be leaders in a global community**

Students attending college today will face an increasingly competitive global economy upon graduation. With more and more work accomplished with the aid of computers or outsourced to cheaper labor markets, the economic advantage will be to those who can analyze and solve problems, recognize patterns and similarities and communicate and interact with others from all over the world. For PSU students to compete in this environment, they will need to be proficient in at least one language other than their own and be exposed to other cultures, both domestically and internationally. They will also need to be knowledgeable about world events and have an appreciation for how those events affect local issues, and vice versa.

**Objectives**

2.6.1 Expand opportunities for culture and language learning across the curriculum

2.6.2 Prepare all students as globally responsible citizens by providing opportunities for global and intercultural engagement

2.6.3 Enhance university IT systems to allow expanded and more rapid communication between PSU students and communities and students worldwide *(requires additional resources)*

**Priority/Theme 3: Achieve Global Excellence:** Distinguish the institution nationally and internationally through the accomplishments of its faculty, the reputation of its academic and research programs and the preparation of its students for a diverse and global economy.

As the only comprehensive public research university in Oregon’s most populous metropolitan area, Portland State has a responsibility to prepare its students to compete in an increasingly global economy
and to generate evidence-based, transformational ideas for improving the conditions of cities and the people who live in them. To achieve that goal, the university must partner closely with the metropolitan region to codify, improve and export best practices where they exist and to find innovative solutions to problems that remain intractable – such as continued disparities in health, economic and educational status among various populations, or the escalating rise of carbon emissions. Ultimately, PSU’s goal is to link its research so inextricably with the Portland region that both entities are branded as top sources of knowledge for improving the efficiency, economic competitiveness, quality of life and sustainability of the urban experience locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. That leadership role also extends to creating an on-campus environment that is welcoming, inclusive and increasingly diverse.

**Goal 3.1:** Expand innovative research and graduate education by leveraging connections between local application and global relevance

PSU has engaged faculty and students who are responsive to community needs. At the same time, Portland Metropolitan area and Pacific Northwest citizens and leaders are eager for innovative solutions to ongoing problems. Working in this collaborative environment, university faculty have become adept at developing new ideas about how urban systems function and interact with the natural environment that sustains them. The resulting novel approaches to managing economic, social, and ecological systems can be applied globally with appropriate modifications necessary to accommodate local conditions. Similarly, fundamental scientific discoveries in PSU laboratories influence the advancement of science and technology worldwide.

**Objectives**

3.1.1 Inventory existing examples of links between metropolitan Portland-based applications and global relevance to further define these connections and identify what works

3.1.2 Provide the infrastructure and research administration support necessary for all research-active faculty to find research opportunities, submit proposals, and manage research projects efficiently and effectively *(requires additional resources)*

3.1.3 Identify and invest in new faculty lines, laboratories, and other facilities in research areas that build on current strengths, represent areas where PSU enjoys a strategic advantage and are in disciplines where future opportunities are likely *(requires additional resources)*

3.1.4 Increase opportunities for undergraduate students to become involved in research *(requires additional resources)*

3.1.5 Continue to clarify roles and responsibilities of Research and Strategic Partnerships (RSP) in relationship to the rest of the university

**Goal 3.2:** Establish PSU as a recognized regional resource for globally relevant research, practice, and education in sustainability
PSU established one of the first doctoral programs in Environmental Science in 1969 and continues to be a regional leader in this field. PSU has also participated in the more recent appearance of sustainability as a conceptual melding of environmental, social and economic priorities. Creating an educational, research, and practical focus on this hybrid field requires a broader institutional commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration. Portland has a unique, participatory culture that allows for thorough examination and adoption of sustainable practices. But it also has lagging economic indicators. Finding solutions that protect environmental and social values while expanding economic opportunity is one of society’s greatest challenges. The Miller Foundation award provides an impetus for further advancement of sustainability in Portland. By practicing as well as studying sustainability with simultaneous critical self-assessment PSU can become recognized as a global leader in this emerging field.

Objectives

3.2.1 Enhance PSU’s reputation as a leader in sustainability by inventorying and publicizing current examples of globally relevant research, practice, and education in sustainability

3.2.2 Develop a strategic plan that clarifies roles and relationships of ISS, OAA, FADM and RSP and supports and encourages sustainable policies and practices for campus operations

3.2.3 Support development and enhancement of teaching sustainability across the curriculum

3.2.4 Increase the regional and national visibility of PSU’s role in sustainability research by participating in development of the Oregon Sustainability Center

Goal 3.3: Establish an environment at PSU that is welcoming, inclusive and diverse

In announcing the hiring of the university’s first Chief Diversity Officer in Summer 2010, President Wim Wiewel remarked that the position had been created “because as a society and as an institution, we all still have much to learn about how we practice and live diversity.” That sentiment drives efforts at PSU to improve the cultural competency of faculty, staff and students and ensure that the learning and working environment at the university is welcoming, inclusive and diverse.

Objectives

3.3.1 Complete and implement Diversity Action Plan (requires additional resources)

3.3.2 Implement Year Two objectives of “Strategy for Comprehensive Internationalization 2010-2015” (requires additional resources)
3.3.3 Increase opportunities and incentives for faculty and staff to become involved in teaching, community-engagement and research in other countries and with under-represented communities in the US (requires additional resources)

3.3.4 Increase opportunities for faculty, staff and students from other countries to spend time at PSU (requires additional resources)

3.3.5 Develop and implement mandatory multicultural training for faculty and staff (requires additional resources)

3.3.6 Implement Year Two objectives of Exito initiative

**Goal 3.4: Recruit and retain cross-culturally sophisticated faculty, staff and students**

While PSU is the most diverse public university in Oregon, many populations are still under-represented among faculty, staff and students. This is a problem not just of recruitment, but also of retention.

**Objectives**

3.4.1 Develop a plan for strategic recruitment locally, nationally and internationally designed to increase diversity among faculty, staff and students (requires additional resources)

3.4.2 Develop and market a distinctive global identity for Portland State University built on the university’s international assets, its unique urban location and its global aspirations (requires additional resources)

3.4.3 Include respect for diversity as an essential element in job descriptions and annual evaluations for all employees and leadership in promoting diversity within their unit and university-wide for all managers

**Priority/Theme 4: Enhance Educational Opportunity:** Ease the transition and create more effective pathways for students to move from K-12 to higher education.

With only 30 percent of Oregonians 25 and older having earned a bachelor’s degree or higher and 10 percent failing to complete high school, Oregon is an example of a state where greater focus is needed on educational attainment. PSU’s goal is to be a leader in that effort, not only by working to improve retention and graduation rates for its students, but also by collaborating with its K-12 partners and other stakeholders to ensure middle and high school students aspire to a college education and come to college prepared to learn. A multifaceted approach has been developed to address both of those challenges.

**Goal 4.1:** Work with community partners to create a seamless, efficient and effective educational system from cradle to career
For students to be successful in postsecondary education, they must develop both the expectation of pursuing an advanced education and the motivation to do so. They also need to be “college ready” – meaning that they have successfully completed the appropriate preparatory course work for the challenges of post-secondary education. PSU can play a significant role in this process in the following ways: collaboration with partners in the K-12 system and other community groups through its teacher education programs; conducting research that evaluates and establishes best practices; participating in setting appropriate educational goals; and helping assess progress toward those goals.

**Objectives**

4.1.1 Enhance PSU leadership role in creating Cradle to Career initiatives

4.1.2 Work with faculty and community partners to identify strategic areas for research and community engagement throughout the education continuum

4.1.3 Pursue expansion of PSU’s enrollment and recruitment strategies to strengthen and increase access for students from underrepresented and historically marginalized populations *(requires additional resources)*

4.1.4 Implement a S.T.E.M. initiative in partnership with local school districts to enhance instruction targeted to college and career readiness *(requires additional resources)*

4.1.5 Establish a PSU leadership role in creating a seamless, efficient and effective system of educator preparation and professional development

**Goal 4.2:** Expand and improve Portland State’s online instruction and support to enhance teaching, learning and access

Many PSU students face a number of barriers to higher education because of their multiple commitments to employment, family and community. PSU students continue to demonstrate demand for hybrid and fully online instruction as a way to balance their competing commitments with a desire for a college degree. Meeting this need will allow PSU to be responsive to student and faculty needs, while also limiting the impact on its physical space.

**Objectives**

4.2.1 Establish policy advisory structure for new Center of Online Learning

4.2.2 Establish and communicate incentive structure for faculty participation in online learning *(requires additional resources)*

4.2.3 Establish course/program migration plan and communicate to the campus community

4.2.4 Identify location for long-term home for Center of Online Learning
4.2.5 Establish Center policies related to course evaluation, quality assurance, and compliance requirements (ADA, U.S. Department of Education out-of-state approval process, copyright)

4.2.6 Establish and communicate online and hybrid instruction targets and expand offerings in both areas (requires additional resources)

**Goal 4.3:** Address financial challenges to maintain and expand access

A disproportionately large number of students at Portland State are financially challenged and rely on financial aid—both in the form of grants and loans—as well as full or part time work to fund their education. As tuition is increased to compensate for reductions in state support, potential students are impacted, as is PSU’s mission of providing access to higher education to residents of the metropolitan region. To fulfill this important access component of the Portland State’s mission as a public institution, the university must address the financial challenges that may prevent participation in higher education.

4.3.1 Develop and implement tuition policies that consider the impact on participation

4.3.2 Consistent with the tuition policy, create tuition remission policies and allocate the resources necessary to promote full participation for students in the metropolitan region (requires additional resources)

4.3.3 Expand scholarships with a particular focus on supporting students with financial need (requires additional resources)

**PRIORITY/THEME 5: EXPAND RESOURCES AND IMPROVE EFFECTIVENESS:** Expand resources in each of the funding streams (state, private, business partnerships, research, and tuition), manage resources effectively, engage employees, and match investments to strategic priorities.

Despite a growing reputation and the high demand for its services, PSU finds itself at a crucial crossroads. To carry out its missions of education, research and service, it must have sufficient funding to rebuild and grow. However, it cannot depend solely on the state for those funds. State funding now accounts for only approximately 13 percent of PSU’s total annual operating revenue, compared to 48 percent 20 years ago. Students and their families are picking up the greatest share of the cost. Even so, the university finds itself with a growing funding gap that cripples its ability to prepare students for the jobs of the 21st century, recruit and retain excellent faculty and staff, upgrade infrastructure and develop collaborative initiatives to promote economic development and enhance the livability of the Portland Metropolitan region.

PSU will continue to work with the state, as well as the region, to increase public investment in the university. But it also will need to become more efficient and strategic in how it uses existing resources as well as increasing the amount of revenues that come from private donations, research and collaborative partnerships.

**Goal 5.1:** Refine and begin to implement a new, strategic budget model for the university
PSU budget allocation system is much the same today as it was 20 years ago when the university was largely state-funded. This system – which neither recognizes the giant shift in resources from state funds to tuition, nor provides incentives to increase revenues as is required of a more market-driven institution – has proven inadequate. Recognizing this, President Wiewel last year established a Financial Futures Task Force to evaluate the university’s historic budget allocation model and make recommendations for how to provide incentives for productivity and accomplishment and better align future budgets with mission goals and objectives. The committee’s report,29 which was issued in June, recommends establishment of a model that ties funding more closely to enrollment than does the current budgeting system. The report will be refined over the 2011-12 academic year and will be phased in over a one-to-three-year period.

**Objectives**

5.1.1 Implement the Financial Futures Task Force recommendations, including establishment of a committee to refine the budget model and develop a process for phasing it in

5.1.2 Empower the Deans as effective entrepreneurs within the new financial model

5.1.3 Involve faculty senate and appropriate union representatives in discussions of implications of the new financial model

5.1.4 Evaluate academic unit size and faculty mix in context of student success, organization and administrative effectiveness, institutional research mission and fiscal sustainability

5.1.5 Make academic and research strategies explicit for each college within the new financial model

**Goal 5.2: Foster curricular and administrative efficiency and effectiveness**

As PSU is challenged to serve more students, help them complete their degrees more rapidly and do both of these in an environment of decreasing state funding per student, the university must pay particular attention to academic and business operations. An effective curriculum promotes student learning and progress toward degree completion and is one where courses are available to students when they need to take them. At the same time, curricular efficiency requires the wise use of both faculty and classroom resources to achieve student success at an acceptable cost.

**Objectives**

5.2.1 Develop strategies for increasing the number of large lecture classes, where appropriate, and decrease the number of low enrollment courses (per minimum enrollment policy)

5.2.2 Increase departmentally controlled and general pool classroom availability by moving low enrollment classes to non-primetime slots

5.2.3 Expand hybrid and online offerings *(requires additional resources)*

Goal 5.3: Position the institution to maximize potential benefits of SB 242

The legislation (SB 242), which converts OUS from a state agency to a freestanding public university system, goes into effect on January 1, 2012. By providing the system and its seven member universities more control over purchasing, bonding, personnel, tuition, legal services and other operations, this new law is expected to allow the universities to operate in a more efficient and cost-effective fashion. Implementing the new law, however, will require OUS and the individual universities to move quickly to establish and implement new policies and procedures for broad areas of operations in order to take full advantage of potential efficiencies and cost savings.

Objectives

5.3.1 Working collaboratively with OUS, review, refine and rewrite policies and procedures necessary to implement SB 242

5.3.2 Implement operational efficiencies enabled by SB 242 on earliest possible time frame and develop system to monitor and assess outcomes

5.3.3 Explore potential for institutional board

Goal 5.4: Expand and upgrade campus facilities to meet current and future demands in the most cost-effective and sustainable manner possible

Campus maintenance of physical assets is severely under-funded. This results in quality issues, costly failures, and excessive charge-back to campus projects. A long-term plan with more predictable resources would help us address these issues. Consideration should be given to whether it would be more productive and cost-effective to shift focus from building new projects to upgrading and renovating existing buildings.

Objectives

5.4.1 Establish Capital and Facilities Planning Team

5.4.2 Initiate/complete existing major capital projects including Life Sciences Collaborative Building, College Station Housing, Oregon Sustainability Center, and City Tower

5.4.3 Prioritize and complete deferred maintenance funded by state

5.4.4 Develop 5-year, 10-year strategic capital plans and strategic facilities management and deferred maintenance plans

Goal 5.5: Secure philanthropic support for strategic university priorities, including improved student success, global excellence and enhanced educational opportunity
University Advancement’s strategic plan is aligned with the five themes that guide PSU. Working closely with different divisions and departments, our staff helps develop position and case statements to support global excellence, student access and success. Revenues from private support for scholarships, campus life and programs help attract the best students to PSU; provide access for all, including first generation and underserved students; impact student retention; and improve the quality of the student experience. Working with OIA, RSP, Student Affairs, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and the academic units, University Advancement will focus on alumni engagement to increase support for these priorities.

Objectives

5.5.1 Engage alumni in recruitment and advocacy and to optimize support

5.5.2 Collaborate with RSP to increase strategic partnerships and secure private grants to support research

5.5.3 Work with the campus community to identify barriers to success that can be mitigated by private gift support

5.5.4 Work with colleges/units to identify collaborative strategies to secure philanthropic support for global excellence

Goal 5.6: Prepare for a major comprehensive campaign and identify campaign priorities

As PSU contemplates embarking on a transformational fundraising campaign, there are many components to be addressed for preparedness. Before the “quiet” phase of the campaign, campus and University Advancement leadership will focus on analyzing the rationale for a campaign, the timeliness of a campaign in view of governance changes and economic developments, and whether there is adequate institutional capacity and engagement to be successful. A critical step is to set campaign priorities to best meet the needs of the institution in the present and in the future. To start with, University Advancement will facilitate a collaborative process that will result in the identification of campus priorities for external private support. Once identified, these priorities will be vetted through conversations and surveys with a multiplicity of constituents and then articulated in a campaign case for support. Ultimately, if conceived and implemented effectively, the campaign will the baseline for annual philanthropic support long after the goal is reached.

Objectives

5.6.1 Analyze feasibility study results to address deficiencies, decide when to embark on campaign and create a campaign plan

5.6.2 Conduct wealth screening

5.6.3 Work with units across campus to identify campaign priorities
5.6.4 Develop campaign materials and communication plan

5.6.5 Ensure that there are adequate resources and campus-wide engagement for success, such as space and staff *(requires additional resources)*

**Goal 5.7:** Raise visibility of and support for PSU among the general public and policymakers at the local, state and national levels

Support from the general public, potential donors, current and prospective students and their families, alumni, the business community and policymakers at the local, state and federal level is essential if PSU is to be successful in obtaining the resources it needs to carry out its mission on behalf of Oregonians. To achieve that support, PSU must do a better job of educating and engaging stakeholders and policymakers at all levels. University Communications and Marketing will partner with Research and Strategic Partnerships, Advancement, Finance and Administration, Government Relations and the colleges to hone PSU’s messages, increase its visibility, educate and engage stakeholders and build support for its strategic goals and objectives.

**Objectives**

5.7.1 Develop and launch a strategically focused, multimedia communications and marketing campaign to promote PSU at local, state and federal levels *(requires additional resources)*

5.7.2 Build and activate grassroots outreach network for PSU, working collaboratively with University Advancement, the Alumni Association, PSU Foundation, The Oregon Idea, etc.

5.7.3 Develop and implement a plan to increase involvement of administrators, faculty, staff and advocates on strategically important policy and funding issues that affect the region, state and nation

5.7.4 Work with local government officials and business and civic leaders to build support for PSU’s expansion plans, including establishment of an URA around PSU

5.7.5 Develop and implement a plan to increase federal agency contacts and relationships in areas relevant to PSU’s focus areas

5.7.6 Build on current leadership in associations (USU, APLU, AASCU, PNWER, etc.) to develop and implement plan to engage PSU and strengthen our visibility and credibility nationally

**Goal 5.8:** Increase faculty and staff support and engagement to foster organizational success

The case for employee engagement as a catalyst for organizational success is compelling. Studies show that engaged employees are more satisfied in their work and, in turn, contribute more to the organization. They work harder, smarter, more passionately and more creatively. They learn and adapt. They are more connected to stakeholder needs. They go the extra mile and they stick
around. As a result, the organizations for which they work are more successful in meeting their goals and carrying out their missions than their comparator organizations.

Objectives

5.8.1 Create an institution-wide committee to assess and develop a plan to enhance employee engagement at PSU

5.8.2 Develop a five-year plan for faculty and staff compensation, professional development, recognition and staffing ratios (requires additional resources)

5.8.3 Develop and implement leadership development and management and supervisory training (requires additional resources)