

Slippery Rock University
Strategic Plan
2005 – 2012
“Reaching for 2025 and Beyond”

Slippery Rock University’s planning process is designed to provide the university community the strategic guidance that assures the work of the university prepares our students for leadership necessary to address fundamental issues facing our world. Our strategic framework is to prepare the coming students to solve difficult problems within our society, seize opportunities to build a better society, and lead others by example to a life of reflective purpose.

Mission. Since Slippery Rock University was founded in 1889, it has engaged in the three fundamental functions that are associated with educational institutions, namely, to pursue truth and advance the boundaries of knowledge, to prepare students for an array of careers, and to foster responsible citizenship. The mission of the University as approved by the Slippery Rock University Council of Trustees is:

The fundamental mission of Slippery Rock University is to provide high quality undergraduate and graduate academic instruction. Complementary missions are to conduct scholarly research, to promote professional performance, and to address the educationally related economic, health, environmental, social, cultural, and recreational needs of the region served by the University. In accomplishing these missions, Slippery Rock University primarily focuses its efforts on the academic areas of the arts and sciences, teacher education, environmental sciences and studies, health and human services, computer and information sciences, and business and communication.

The perspectives of Slippery Rock University are contemporary and futuristic, national and international. The University provides experiences and opportunities for students to demonstrate leadership and to develop confidence and self-reliance; it promotes their intellectual, social and physical development; and it accomplishes this in an open, caring, nurturing, and friendly environment.

The individual and collective excellence for which Slippery Rock University stands will continue to be measured by the quality of its graduates and their successes in serving society.

Vision. The vision embraced by the University community and derived from the University mission is that:

Slippery Rock University will excel as a caring community of lifelong learners connecting with the world.

Core Values. Underlying the existence and operations of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) and Slippery Rock University are core values. The core values that are reported in [Leading the Way](#) (The PASSHE Strategic Plan) are endorsed and supported fully by Slippery Rock University. Thus, Slippery Rock University is dedicated to:

- Stimulating intellectual growth by promoting teaching and learning through creativity and scholarship;

- Developing and energizing the personal commitment of students, faculty and staff for contributive citizenship, global awareness, and social responsibility;
- Promoting diversity as a key element in the intellectual and interpersonal development of members of the University and extended communities;
- Applying the knowledge and experience gathered within the University to enhance the social and economic well-being of the Commonwealth;
- Practicing effective stewardship of public funds, private contributions, and tuition revenues in pursuing the System’s public mission; and
- Advocating for the unique role of public higher education in contributing to the life of the Commonwealth and responding to its needs.

Commitment to Liberal Education. The University has maintained a long-tradition of including a liberal education core in every degree program. Consistent with the University’s belief that the best educational preparation for addressing the future is to have a solid foundation in liberal education, the following goals were affirmed by the faculty for every graduate:

- Goal I: Basic Requirements: The educated person must be able to communicate effectively in oral and written modes. A university education should give attention to encouraging intellectual levels that will equip the individual for an energetic and productive life.
- Goal II: The Arts: Through the creative process, the artist expresses, challenges, and extends societal values. To understand our own and other cultures, one must come to terms with the artist’s effort.
- Goal III: Global Community: The educated person is aware of other people, places and values. He or she has a wide perspective and values cultural diversity. The university must assist in developing insights and skills, which will enable every student to value humanity’s worth, dignity and contributions.
- Goal IV: Human Institutions and Interpersonal Relationships: John Donne’s declaration that “no man is an island...” speaks eloquently to our time. To do our work and operate our society, we depend heavily upon organizations and institutions. The educated person learns to understand those institutions and to work effectively with other persons to achieve shared goals.
- Goal V: Science, Technology and Mathematics: The educated person studies science, technology and mathematics not only to master specific disciplinary content, but also to understand the modes of thought and methods of inquiry of the scientist.
- Goal VI: Challenges of the Modern Age: The essential characteristic of the educated person is the ability to weigh alternatives and make thoughtful choices. The rapidly changing world in which we live demands that we all make enormously difficult decisions, choosing wisely and responsibly in an area of competing persuasions.

Accountability and Assessment. The University is committed to demonstrating effective use of its resources; ensuring that value-added learning takes place, and providing evidence of progress toward our goals and claims. [Assessment](#), building on a culture of data-based decision-making and planning, is an important part of accountability. The primary goal of assessment is the improvement of the institution at every level of administration, teaching, and

learning. The best practices from assessment are not a vehicle to keep score but for getting better.

Strategic Planning Process. The Slippery Rock University Strategic Plan is a guide to the priorities of the University. The plan makes clear the relationship and primacy of work by the University within supporting complementary planning processes. Underpinning the University Strategic Plan each administrative division (i.e., Academic Affairs, Finance and Administration, Student Life, Advancement, and Public Relations) is responsible for more precise and focused planning. In addition, the University has commissioned several precise and focused planning processes to address specific needs of the University. These include targeted University-wide planning groups for: diversity, enrollment management, information technology, instructional technology, sustainability, facilities master planning, and delivery of food services. Recently, another University-wide planning group focused on the first-year college experience, [Foundations of Excellence](#), has contributed significantly to the course of the current University Strategic Plan. These groups bring more than a hundred additional faculty, students, staff, and community stakeholders into the process of guiding the University's work.

Strategic Planning Council Membership:

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Dr. William F. Williams
Dr. Charles Curry
Dr. Constance Foley
Ms. Barbara Ender
Ms. Rita Abent
Ms. Tina Moser
Academic Affairs Representatives
Dr. Bruce Russell
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Mr. Simeon Ananou
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Slippery Rock Foundation
Mr. Regis Schiebel
Student Representatives
Ms. Carol Waters

Higher Education in 2025 and Beyond. The University's strategic thinking and long-term planning is influenced by the significant global trends facing the next generations of educated citizens. Our purpose is to provide as best as possible an in-depth understanding of the issues their generation will be asked to address. By focusing on the educational needs of the future, 2025 and beyond, our hope is that our students will have the skills and the leadership talent to make a difference in the quality of life on our planet throughout their lifetimes.

We have organized our proposed work into two sets of strategies. The first set identifies those global trends which we believe defines the direction we should follow for our students to have the education that fulfills our vision. The second set identifies those trends that the University must address to assure its continued viability as a healthy, dynamic organization capable of serving our vision.

Set One:

Trend One: Changing population dynamics. *As the world population continues to grow, 8,700 people every hour, 145 people every minute, and 2.4 people every second, there are also changes in the distribution of those demographics that will require creative responses. We know that between now and 2025, the population of the developed world is expected to grow 3%, while the population of the developing world is expected to grow 49%. Nine countries—India, Pakistan, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Bangladesh, Uganda, the United States, Ethiopia, and China—will account for one-half of all world population growth through 2050. Between now and 2050, the United States, Germany, Canada, the United Kingdom, Spain and Australia will be the destinations of the most total international immigrants, while China, Mexico, India, Philippines, Indonesia, and Pakistan will be the major exporters of these immigrants.*

Across the globe, people are living longer and the traditional dependence on younger workers to support older retirees will be seriously challenged. At the global level, 2047 will mark the year when the elderly population is expected to exceed the segment of the population that is under 15. There simply will not be enough younger workers for that model to function. The life expectancy in the United States in 1900 was a mere 47 years, and now people in the 21st Century are expected to live to be almost 90. When life expectancy was short, children moved to adult responsibilities without prolonged adolescence. Today, with so many more years of life to juggle, we are prolonging the younger life stages and adding new ones at the older end. Further, the aging population requires different social and economic resources from health and medical services to recreation and geriatric services.

Further, as the population ages, more and more move to urban from rural areas stressing urban infrastructure(utilities, transportation, public services) as well as essential life systems of food production and water quality. In the past year the proportion of people living in cities surpassed those living in rural settings for the first time in history. By

2030 80% of these urban dwellers will live in cities in the developing world. By 2030 the urban populations of both Africa and Asia will double. 998 million people, or over 40% of urban dwellers in the developing world, now live in slums where they lack one or more of such basic services as access to sufficient living space, clean water and improved sanitation facilities.¹

How do we prepare our students to cope with these trends?

Themes:

Geography	Multiculturalism	Exercise/recreation
Geriatrics	Urban/rural sustainability	Health and wellness

Strategies

Slippery Rock University will establish a living and learning environment that provides for development of the total person.

- Enhance student life services as a national model through the integration of “Learning Reconsidered” into the enrichment of the lives of our students.
 - Develop processes and professional development opportunities that position student life professionals in the national and regional light as experts within their fields.
- Strengthen academic advising within academic departments to enable students to progress toward timely completion of their degree, expand their awareness of career options, and develop a life-plan for continuous learning.
 - Implement a course scheduling system that values the educational needs of the students first.
- Develop a comprehensive first year study program that helps students build a solid foundation for their college experiences.
 - Implement strategies from the [Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year Project](#).
- Invest in existing instructional and laboratory facilities that provide effective and flexible learning opportunities.
- Identify and address obstacles that impede student health, growth, and development, especially the effects of violence against others, hate crimes, alcohol and other drug abuse. ([outcomes](#))

Slippery Rock University will be recognized for talented faculty guiding strong undergraduate programs that provide innovative, high quality, relevant, and integrated educational experiences in and out of the classroom.

- Refine and strengthen existing academic degree programs and other learning experiences that contribute to the quality and diversity of an engaged academic community.
 - Achieve accreditation for all eligible programs to demonstrate recognition for preparing students to equal or exceed the professional standards of the best in the nation. ([outcomes](#))

¹ Data quoted in this section are from the Center for Strategic and International Studies, “Revolution One: Population,” gsi.csis.org

- Develop a program review process that meaningfully assures support for programs as well as accountability ([outcomes](#))
 - Provide financial incentives for those programs that demonstrate excellence as defined by the program review process.
 - Provide resources that directly assist programs in addressing needs identified by the program review process.
 - Revitalize or eliminate low performing programs.
- Create an atmosphere for promoting continuous improvement through the assessment process.
 - Perform annual assessment review process through which effective learning is planned and measured by relating degree program goals to actual student performance.
 - Perform program assessment based on student learning outcomes
 - Tie performance funding to assessment plans that utilize findings for program improvement.
 - Improve the reliability of data on career paths of alums, especially in the first year following graduation to better understand needs for program improvements
 - Use meaningful assessments to ensure that learning is measured and achieved.
 - Slippery Rock University will improve effective educational practices as measured by the NSSE five clusters of effective educational practice: (1) Level of academic challenge, (2) Active collaborative research, (3) Student-faculty interaction, (4) Enriching educational experiences, and (5) Supportive campus environment. ([outcomes](#))
 - Slippery Rock University will improve reasoning and communications skills as an outcome of a college education through the use of the Collegiate Learning Assessment.

Slippery Rock University will be a national showcase for the application of best practices, innovative pedagogy and use of cutting-edge technology in support of the faculty, students, and staffs' living, learning, and research activities.

- Ensure that faculty members and students have access to [instructional practices and technology](#) that best supports teaching and learning.
- Expand the use of computer-mediated systems for enhancing classes where appropriate and developing electronic portfolios for students. ([outcomes](#)) ([outcomes](#))
- Direct additional resources toward increasing library acquisitions and services. ([outcomes](#))
- Create advisory boards comprised of stakeholders in the profession who will provide their expertise for improving the quality of graduates prepared for their career. ([outcomes](#))

- Safeguard a core liberal education program for all students that provides the breadth of knowledge, skills, and values expected of an educated person in our society.
- Increase the percentage of students who engage with faculty in research, scholarly activity, experiential and service learning, internships, international study, and leadership development integral to the academic experience.
 - Fund student/faculty research grants to encourage collaborative one-on-one learning.([outcomes](#))
 - Enhance the research and scholarly growth of students by providing them opportunities to present at state, regional, national, and international professional conferences within their disciplines.([outcomes](#))
 - Develop and promote students for national and international scholarship and award opportunities.([outcomes](#))
 - Increase the number of Slippery Rock University undergraduates enrolling in graduate and professional schools.
 - Increase the visibility and quality of the Honors Program as the University's premier curriculum and experiential intellectual challenge for students.([outcomes](#))
 - Utilize the programming of the University's honor societies to promote academic and intellectual growth and recognitions (i.e., Phi Kappa Phi, Golden Key, department and program specific honor societies).
 - Increase the percentage of students completing a formal leadership development program.
 - Computerize student organization registration and co-curricular experience transcript processes to increase student use of the program.([outcomes](#))
 - Develop a student leadership certification process to ensure that all students meet basic competencies in leadership skills and provide advanced certification for those who choose to pursue additional experience.([outcomes](#))
 - Team staff with faculty to create learning opportunities on campus for students that will provide pragmatic opportunities to put skills used in the classroom to use.([outcomes](#))

Trend Two: Our nation's fate depends on maintaining our world

leadership in science and technology. *The greater productivity gains that sustain our economy and improve our standard of living comes from our leadership in science and technology. Yet, that leadership is being seriously challenged. In Japan, 66 percent of undergraduates receive their degrees in science and engineering, and in China 59 percent receive such degrees.*

Furthermore, as the information economy continues to mature, average workers will experience a half-dozen major career changes during the course of their professional lives. In a highly dynamic, knowledge-based economy, constant learning and retraining are not simply desirable; they are necessary to stay relevant. Education systems must adapt to prepare individuals to compete in the global arena.

How do we prepare our students to cope with these trends?

Themes:

Computational skills	Nanotechnology and robotics
Ethics	Information and knowledge management
Innovation and design skills	Advancement of science and math

Strategies

Slippery Rock University will respond to science, life science, and technology needs of the Commonwealth.

- Utilize the Regional Learning Alliance to provide workforce skills and training to adult learners through its unique partnerships with business, industry, and educational providers.([outcomes](#))
- Increase undergraduate and graduate students majoring in high need areas of healthcare.([outcomes](#))([outcomes](#))
- Increase students majoring in science and technology.([outcomes](#))
- Support National Board Certification for area teachers to improve quality of public school instruction by creating the Center for Accomplished Teaching. ([outcomes](#))
- Increase enrollment in the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program.([outcomes](#))

Slippery Rock University will provide support and development to encourage entrepreneurial businesses in the region.

- Develop a structure to increase the transfer of innovation and discoveries from the University to the marketplace.
 - Establish a capital venture fund for promising faculty or student/faculty initiatives.
 - Build a facility for business incubation.([outcomes](#))([outcomes](#))

Trend Three: The need to understand other cultures. *Recent events have driven home how important it is that we learn to see the world from the perspective of others. Our world really is shrinking and countries are becoming more interdependent. New technologies allow almost instantaneous news to circulate the globe. Increasingly, events in small corners of the world create unbalance throughout the world. The gap between the rich and the poor is also widening creating further cultural tensions. A staggering 2.8 billion people live on less than \$2 a day and over 1 billion live on less than \$1 a day. The costs for basic commodities continue to fluctuate, meaning that it is increasingly difficult for the poorest of the poor to meet daily requirements for life. With each passing year it grows more obvious that colleges must prepare Americans to deal more competently with people from other parts of the globe. Cultural isolation and ignorance will inevitably undermine our efforts at world leadership. However, in contrast, the continued march of globalization leaves many worried about their country's future. Concerns over national identity, heritage and culture have arisen with the free movement of peoples, resources and ideas.²*

² Data quoted in this section are from the Center for Strategic and International Studies, "Revolution Five: Economic Integration," gsi.csis.org

The need to understand other cultures begins on our own campus as a laboratory for understanding multiculturalism and appreciating the diversity of our community. How do we prepare our students to cope with these trends?

Themes:

Multiculturalism

Geography

Social and Human Services

Appreciating Diversity and Inclusion

Strategies

The Slippery Rock University community of students, faculty, and staff will become a model for the principles of diversity and inclusion.

- Provide faculty and staff with leadership development activities related to diversity and inclusion so that each is confident with his or her skills in working to build a diverse community.
 - Develop a faculty-assistance program for assuring curriculum-embedded diversity elements are part of every department program and as many courses as possible.
 - Provide a climate of inclusiveness, sensitivity and appreciation for diversity through formal programs of diversity training that annually reaches 10 percent of our employees.([outcomes](#))
- Increase the number of underrepresented populations within the Slippery Rock University community.([outcomes](#): Staff)([outcomes](#): Students)
- Achieve compliance with Title IX expectations.
- Increase participation from the University community through special programs designed to celebrate, educate, and enlighten civility, tolerance, inclusiveness, and social responsibility.
 - Expand the presence of the Frederick Douglass Center as the choice for those students and faculty desiring academic diversity programming.([outcomes](#))
 - Utilize each of the Presidential Commissions as a strategic response to this goal by requiring an annual action plan with outcome reporting. (President’s Commission on Commission for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues; President’s Commission for Racial and Ethnic Diversity; and President’s Commission for Women).
 - Improve the campus climate for inclusion and tolerance of protected classes of people.([outcomes](#))

Trend Four: Increasing challenges to higher education’s commitment to social mobility. *Access to higher education is the principal mechanism for making American’ unwritten social compact work: to provide genuine equality of opportunity. Public funding is always a concern in higher education. Federal financial aid has undergone two major changes: shifting overwhelmingly toward loans, rising from about half to about three-quarters of all federal aid creating a negative effect on those of low and middle income because they fear heavy debt to pay for a college education. State financing of higher education continues to lag behind costs demanding strategies for cost*

containment. Public funding changes are shifting the social compact to more dependence on the individual's ability to pay risking affordability for a large segment of the population's access to higher education.

How do we prepare our students to cope with these trends?

Themes

Shaping the university's student body to be representative of our country.

Providing strategies that assure access from all economic levels of the Commonwealth.

Operating with efficiency that maintains affordable costs to students.

Strategies

Slippery Rock University will provide all stakeholders transparent evidence of how the University delivers on its promise to provide quality education at affordable cost.

- Provide easily accessible information about the University and key performance results ([outcomes](#))
- Participate in the [Voluntary System of Accountability](#) project.

Slippery Rock University will strive to be affordable for eligible students from low- and middle-income families.

- Increase the number of need-based scholarship opportunities for prospective and current students.
- Decrease the total average debt of students at time of graduation.

Slippery Rock University will develop a culture of philanthropy among stakeholders that increases revenue.

- Implement a comprehensive fund-raising program.
 - Increase the percentage of alumni giving participation to 17% of eligible alums. ([outcomes](#))
 - Increase contributions to the annual and campaign funds by an average of 7% annually. ([outcomes](#)) ([outcomes](#))
 - Increase contributions to scholarship funds ([outcomes](#))
 - Conclude "Campaign for Slippery Rock University" by 2010. ([outcomes](#))
- Increase the wealth managed by the Slippery Rock University Foundation to \$50 million while strategically spending resources to meet University goals. ([outcomes](#))

Trend Five: The world is reaching a point of diminishing returns

regarding resource utilization. *Food, water, and energy. These are among the defining elements of survival on our planet. How well we manage these resources as well as the distribution to needed areas will determine our fate. Poor land management and the overuse of fertilizers are causing land degradation, soil erosion and desertification on a massive scale in agricultural areas from the Amazon to the Yangtze. By 2025, an estimated 3.5 billion people, or nearly half of the world's population, will face serious constraints on their capacity to meet water demands. By 2025, OPEC will account for up to 50 percent of the world supply of oil. Skyrocketing demand—primarily in Asia—will drive these trends. The number of cars in China could rise from 12 million in 2004 to 500 million by 2050. In India, the number of cars could increase even faster, from 5 million to*

600 million. Compare these numbers to the 200 million vehicles currently on the road in the United States—a vehicle fleet which consumes about 11 percent of the world’s current daily oil output.³

Aggregate increases in other sources of energy will be overshadowed by the exponential consumption of coal, oil, and natural gas in the decades ahead. Water scarcity and quality will be a prime determinant of expanding current food production. By 2020, India’s demand for water will exceed all sources of supply. The impact of this rise in consumption is startling in terms of potential geopolitical conflict and environmental consequences. Current trends are not sustainable and resource availability and demand will impact political stability throughout the world.

Sustainable design is simply becoming 'good design'. Energy conservation, students raised on environmental awareness, and local purchasing for economic development all play a role in this development.

How do we prepare our students to meet the challenges of these trends?

Themes:

Environmental stewardship
Alternative energy

Sustainable practices and design
Clean water production and distribution

Strategies

Slippery Rock University will create a campus setting through the judicious use of space and facilities that enhances the sense of community, promotes engagement, provides for safety, demonstrates respect for the environment, and promotes learning opportunities.

- Sustain a campus characterized by natural and architectural elegance with facilities and infrastructures that deliver needed services to the University community and demonstrate a pride of craftsmanship and recognition of principles of sustainable development.
- Implement a model strategic plan for sustainability of its natural and energy resources.
 - Implement policies and procedures that support the Sustainability Strategic Plan
 - Develop faculty-assistance programs to assure that curriculum-embedded principles of sustainability are part of the appropriate department programs.
 - Develop strategic directions that decrease BTU/sq. ft. consumption of energy on campus.([outcomes](#))

For further information, Set One Trends are based on Daniel Yankelovich, “Ferment and Change: Higher Education in 2015,” The Chronicle Review, November, 2005, pp. B6-B9. and The Center for Strategic and International Studies, “The Seven Revolutions. Identifying the Most Significant Global Trends Out to 2025” www.7revs.org.

³ Data quoted in this section are from the Center for Strategic and International Studies, “Revolution Two: Resource Management,” gsi.csis.org

Set Two

Trend One: Pennsylvania's college-age population will continue to grow for a few more years and then decline through a period of approximately eight years before rebounding. Beginning in 2009 and continuing through 2014, the number of students graduating from high schools nationally is expected to decrease from 3.18 million to 3.04 million (4.4% decrease). For Pennsylvania, the decline will be steeper-the number decreasing during that same time period is 13,611 (9.3). From 2009-2016, sixteen of the 20 top feeder counties for Slippery Rock University will see a decrease in high school graduates. Overall the decrease is 9.8% (7.6% for eastern counties in Pennsylvania and 15.9% for western counties). Competition will intensify among colleges and universities recruiting fewer high school graduates after 2009.

Strategies

Achieve a marketing position as the institution of first choice among qualified undergraduate and graduate students who can benefit and succeed from the University's academic and co-curricular offerings.

- Execute a marketing program based on research and analysis of the demographics, needs, and primary influences on the marketplace from which the University draws prospective students who would most benefit from the University's programs.
- Develop new academic programs based on the five global themes established in the strategic plan.
- Through marketing efforts, inspire targeted prospective students to seek enrollment at Slippery Rock University. ([outcomes](#)) ([outcomes](#))
- To enroll students with the greatest ability and potential, Slippery Rock University will provide competitive as well as need-based scholarship opportunities. ([outcomes](#))([outcomes](#))([outcomes](#))
- Sustain an enrollment capacity of the University to deliver high quality teaching and exceptional services balanced with the financial requirements of the enterprise.
 - Slippery Rock University will seek a [planned enrollment growth from 2007 to 2011](#) that represents an annual increase in Fall credit hours generated at 1 percent each year. The overall enrollment goal is focused on attaining a student enrollment of approximately 8,675 students at the end of 2011 at the projected 1 percent credit hour growth rate. ([outcomes](#))
 - Slippery Rock University will seek a planned growth of faculty from 2007-2012 that maintains pace with student enrollment growth. ([outcomes](#))
 - To assure enrollment targets and student needs are met, academic deans will manage the master schedule of classes.
- Increase the quality of the incoming cohort while sustaining planned enrollment growth. ([outcomes](#))([outcomes](#))
- Develop programs that promote successful integration to the academic community and retain students to graduation.

- Encourage students to participate in Orientation programs.([outcomes](#))
- Develop retention programs. ([outcomes](#): General) ([outcomes](#): African-Americans & Hispanics)([outcomes](#): Athletes)

Slippery Rock University will communicate a clear and consistent brand that enhances its reputation among stakeholders.

- Develop an integrated marketing plan that assures all media support can be linked to the strategic plan.
- Develop a public relations approach that ensures quality standards and a clear and consistent image for all University marketing.
- Utilize advanced technology in marketing strategies to position the University at the forefront of innovation and creativity.
- Ensure positive and effective relationships with key voluntary support groups (i.e., The Slippery Rock University Council of Trustees, Slippery Rock University Foundation, Slippery Rock University Alumni Association, and other program boards and councils.)

Slippery Rock University will be recognized for select graduate programs serving the needs of citizens for advanced education, while responding to the Commonwealth's needs.

- Evaluate the demand and need for currently offered graduate programs and delivery methods and affirm they satisfy the University vision.
- Attract graduate students who seek an education consistent with our commitment to addressing selected global trends.

Trend Two: The world of the academic is constantly changing and will place a premium on those institutions that are responsive to the needs of quality faculty. For today's academic the world seems like a crush of challenges on time and resources. Everything has changed, is changing, and will continue to change: students, faculty, research, the processes of teaching and learning, and technologies. Most faculty members did not perceive they would be constantly challenged by waves of adapting to rapid change in their classroom let alone face a new breed of student, "the Millennial." Today's student also brings a plethora of social issues to the university classroom that faculty are not prepared to face. As the academic world swirls seemingly out of control, institutions have to be aggressive to support and nurture their most important resource: the faculty.

Strategies

Recruit and retain faculty and staff of high quality and support them with developmental opportunities needed to continue their professional growth throughout their career at Slippery Rock University.

- Develop programs to prepare faculty to compete for national awards and academic recognitions.([outcomes](#))
- Create programs to financially support workload needs related to increased research activities among the faculty.

- Establish standards for faculty recruitment within the colleges and develop supportive methods that help attract the most highly qualified applicants. The University standard will be that a minimum of 90% percent of faculty will hold a terminal degree.
- Expand the library, [technology](#), and research resources available to faculty to provide opportune ways to engage in creative pedagogy, research and scholarly work.
- Expand recognition and reward programs for faculty and staff.
 - Create First Year Advocate annual award program for a deserving faculty and staff member.
 - Expand mentoring and support for department chairs
- Continue to improve the abilities of those in positions of responsibility to exercise wise judgment in appraisal and performance evaluation processes.
 - Establish a Leadership Academy for enhancing the talent of University leaders from the faculty, staff, or administration.
 - Encourage a model leadership development that recognizes personnel at every level as partners in success.
 - Encourage faculty commitment to participate in the strategic directions of the University through the tenure and promotion process.

Trend Three: Competition for state appropriations will increase and private dollars will become more essential. The University is both aided and hampered by its status within the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. Although the University benefits from the collective power of fourteen institutions as a leverage for state appropriations, the added controls and unpredictable funding processes place greater need on the University to make effective use of existing resources and develop alternative sources of funds.

Strategies:

The University will conduct its business affairs at the highest professional standards

- Maintain credit-worthiness ratios within acceptable national benchmark standards. The standard is no material weaknesses in internal controls and an unqualified audit opinion (zero problems). ([outcomes](#))
- Conduct business functions without material audit findings.
- Continue to leverage financial efficiencies within University operations. ([outcomes](#))
 - Reallocate resources from low demand and marginal areas to high demand and high performance areas. The standard is to reallocate at minimum 5 percent of the university budget annually. ([outcomes](#))
 - Recognize cost-savings initiatives. ([outcomes](#)) ([outcomes](#))

The Strategic Plan and University Budgeting. The strategic plan drives the University budget. Annually, budget allocations are based on two primary processes: (1) Project-based funding to meet specific initiatives that support the strategic plan; and (2) funding-by-rounds, where recurring budgets are evaluated to assure

consistency and focus on strategic directions. Regardless of each type, every funding request includes a link to the strategic plan along with an assessment plan designed to measure the outcomes of the allocation. Typically, project-based funding is one-time seeding for initiatives but can be approved for repeated funding based on assessment results. Funding-by-rounds are usually the methods by which recurring budget adjustments are made. The University has set a goal to reallocate resources from low demand and marginal areas to strategic high demand and high performance areas. The standard is to reallocate at minimum 5 percent of the university budget annually through either of the two processes.

Additionally, the university uses two different performance funding processes with academic departments. The first process recognizes departments that have increased credit hour production over the base year. This process is designed to provide additional resources to departments in order to service the growth. The other performance funding process evaluates and funds academic departments based upon their qualitative and quantitative performance outcomes relating to several strategic initiatives. Departmental assessments and five-year program review outcomes are also incorporated into this process.

The budgeting process is driven by basic principles:

- Student comes first. Educating students is always the highest priority.
- Academic programs are a higher priority than nonacademic programs.
- Consultation with faculty, students, and administration on matters of the strategic plan and budget decisions are an inherent integral part of the shared governance of the University.
- Cuts and/or increases are not made “across-the-board.” Doing so violates the purpose of the strategic plan and is a formula for mediocrity.
- The University cannot be all things to all people. The budget reinforces the strategic priorities of the University to preserve the overall quality of the institution.