

SUNY New Paltz Council Meeting
February 5, 2025

Voting Members Present: Mr. Bettez, Mr. Law, Dr. Venables, Mr. Uchitelle, Mr. Morell (Student Association President), Ms. Noble (remote), Mr. Scott-Childress (non-voting faculty representative), Ms. Padmore-Bacchus (remote; non-voting alumni representative).

Campus Administration Present: President Wheeler; Vice President Wright (also serves as Strategic Planning Tri-Chair).

Guests: Shala Mills, Associate Provost, Strategic Planning Tri-Chair; Dan Silverburg, Consultant, CampusWorks.

Acting Interim Chairman's Report:

- Mr. Bettez called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. He noted that Interim Chair Basch was unavailable today and asked him to lead this meeting.
- Mr. Bettez proposed approving the minutes from the January 21, 2025, meeting. Mr. Uchitelle moved on the motion and Mr. Law seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- Mr. Bettez outlined the meeting's focus and introduced Mr. Silverburg to lead the strategic planning process discussion.

University's Strategic Planning Process – Mission and Vision Statements:

- See attached PowerPoint slides.
- Mr. Silverburg presented an outline of next steps in the strategic planning process implementation. He said today's focus includes confirming Council feedback on the draft mission statement options and helping to develop a vision statement.
- Mr. Silverburg walked through the two proposed mission statements:
 - "SUNY New Paltz provides a transformative education that encourages academic achievement and civic engagement."
 - "SUNY New Paltz advances personal and academic growth, preparing students to meet the challenges of a changing world."
- Mr. Silverburg shared mission statements from other SUNY campuses for contextual comparison.
- Ms. Noble asked whether the Council is voting on mission statements or just providing input. Mr. Silverburg said it's the latter. Ms. Noble said she prefers the second statement that touches on what a college experience is like with preparing students for the future. She dislikes the word "encourages" in the first statement and said it is not a strong enough word to represent the role a SUNY school should be playing in terms of academic achievement.
- Mr. Uchitelle said he likes the first mission statement. He added that the emphasis on civic engagement is important and within the DNA of campus historically. The statement also includes an outward look on student impact. The second statement is inward and while important, he doesn't think it's the campus's mission.

- Mr. Bettez said he likes the second statement and agrees with Ms. Noble on the focus of advancing personal and academic growth, not just “encouraging” it as included in the first statement. While it’s great that civic engagement is part of the experience, he added that students go to college primarily to learn how to learn.
- Mr. Law doesn’t like either mission statement but likes the concept of each. He suggests combining both statements (e.g., “advances” instead of “encourages” academic growth on the first statement).
- Mr. Scott-Childress suggested changing “academic” to “lifelong” in the first statement.
- Mr. Morrell said he likes the first mission statement more than the second. The University is a transformative experience that we’re hoping to provide for both lifelong achievement and civic engagement.
- Mr. Uchitelle said he supports Mr. Scott-Childress’s edit on the first statement. He added that often academic achievement is sought as the end goal, but the focus should be much broader than that.
- Ms. Noble said the word “achievement” is the big difference between the statements. Achievement is the end result in the first statement and part of the pathway in the second.
- Dr. Venables said part of going to college is preparation for the future. The first statement doesn’t include this whereas the second one does.
- Mr. Morrell said that this notion doesn’t need to be emphasized in the mission statement, as most people know that going to college is to help prepare themselves for the road ahead. He added that we want people to know that they will get an experience here that is different from other colleges and universities.
- Mr. Bettez said he supported edits to the “academic achievement” phrase in the first statement. Students need to learn for life beyond academic achievement.
- Mr. Morrell said he liked the edit/change to “lifelong achievement.” The University can provide the tools necessary to achieve a life path.
- In summary, Mr. Silverburg said he heard that the Council would like a mission statement that combines the two drafts. It should focus on the idea of transformative education, change the word “encourage” to something more definitive and eliminate duplication of “education” and “academic.”
- Mr. Law said as opposed to, “preparing for challenges of a changing world,” the mission statement could include “to equip you to accept the challenges of changing world.” He said this is more definitive for contributing to the challenge of a changing world.
- Mr. Silverburg said he loves the inclusion of “lifelong” and that takes into account some of what Mr. Law just offered.
- President Wheeler said he is a big fan of active verbs in place of passive statements. For example, he cited usage of “transform” as a verb and “equips” instead of “encourages” people for lifelong achievement. The statement should be something that is actionable in both components.
- While student audience may change every four years, the president said the mission statement is intended for the University and how we deliver upon that is critical. He added that we should consider questions about how, as an institution, do we ensure transformative education and suspect we would account for lifelong learning and civic education.
- President Wheeler said a campus should be able to align dollar allocations with its mission.

- Mr. Silverburg shifted to a foundational discussion of the University’s draft vision statement.
- Mr. Silverburg said a vision statement should look at long-term goals, be different from current position, future-oriented, ambitious, clear and concise and drive action.
- Mr. Silverburg walked through sample vision statements from universities, non-profits and private industries.
- Mr. Silverburg asked the Council:
 - If we were to look back from 15 years in the future, what ambitious achievements would you like SUNY New Paltz to be known for? What elements should our vision include to inspire and motivate not only our current students and faculty but also attract future generations?
- Mr. Bettez said SUNY is one of the best universities in the Northeast (e.g., value, social mobility and veterans). We’re already good at that but should we be better in the next 15 years? He said we could let people know that part of the vision is to be one of the best universities in the Northeast.
- Mr. Scott-Childress said he would expand that notion to the country.
- President Wheeler said to qualify the statement so that it fits as the “best regional, public university” and is also aspirational.
- Mr. Morrell and Mr. Law engaged in a conversation about including the number of student organizations and academic programs in the statement. Mr. Silverburg said to broaden and think into the future, 15 years out, and that the University engages in academic and non-academic endeavors.
- Mr. Silverburg returned to the future question and asked the Council, “sitting around the table 15 years from now, what can we say are the tangible achievements the University has made?”
- For vision, Mr. Law suggested, “a rewarding academic environment matched with fulfilling extracurricular activities.”
- President Wheeler said competitors show the median income of their graduates. We can be visionary.
- Mr. Uchitelle said the University has students who are making things their own. For example, students can achieve self-realization by joining a club or starting a club. There is a high-level notion that you can customize your life to make it what you want it to be. If translated into a vision, he said we can develop a reputation that our alumni make it their own when on a team.
- To summarize, Mr. Silverburg said he heard that in 15 years for now we want to look back and say we helped ensure that our graduates can enable action and self-actualize. He said this in and of itself is a good chunk of vision.
- Mr. Bettez said some people want to make money and some want to do other things. The vision could say that we “help people succeed in life,” or that we’re the “best public university in the Northeast that helps them succeed in life.” The president asked how you measure this piece.
- Mr. Law said “expansion” could be applied to a lot of things for growth, financial stability and academic advancement. There is the expansion of academic programs, physical space, etc. He said is something the vision should be, expanding where you are today for tomorrow.
- Replaying the concept, Mr. Silverburg said the University’s footprint is more expansive both physically and in its ability to impact in areas like self-realization.

- Ms. Padmore-Bacchus agreed with Mr. Law's focus on "expansion."
- Mr. Morrell shared that the University's website says that within six months after graduation 57% of graduates secure employment and 93% are employed after two years. These could be things to add when talking about achievements.
- Ms. Noble suggested a vision statement with a "renown pathway for a productive society."
- Mr. Scott-Childress liked the concept of "expansion" that Mr. Law and Ms. Padmore-Bacchus described. He said related concepts for a vision statement would be "adaptability" and "agility." Looking back, he said we could see that we created an institution that had the agility to respond to changing circumstances.
- Mr. Silverburg said he will work toward combining mission statements and developing vision based on inputs. Both will be tested by campus stakeholders in about 4-5 weeks. Mr. Silverburg added that he will take that input and finalize with institutional leadership.
- Mr. Scott-Childress said shorter statements are better and the university ones are too long.
- Mr. Uchitelle said to avoid terms of art used in academia.
- Mr. Morrell said to be clear and concise.

Wrap-Up:

- Mr. Bettez said the next meeting is March 12.
- Mr. Bettez made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Law moved on the motion and Mr. Uchitelle seconded.
- Mr. Bettez adjourned the meeting at 3:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard Winters
Deputy Chief of Staff and
Director of Community & Government Relations

CAMPUSWORKS

25 YEARS
of Happy



CAMPUSWORKS

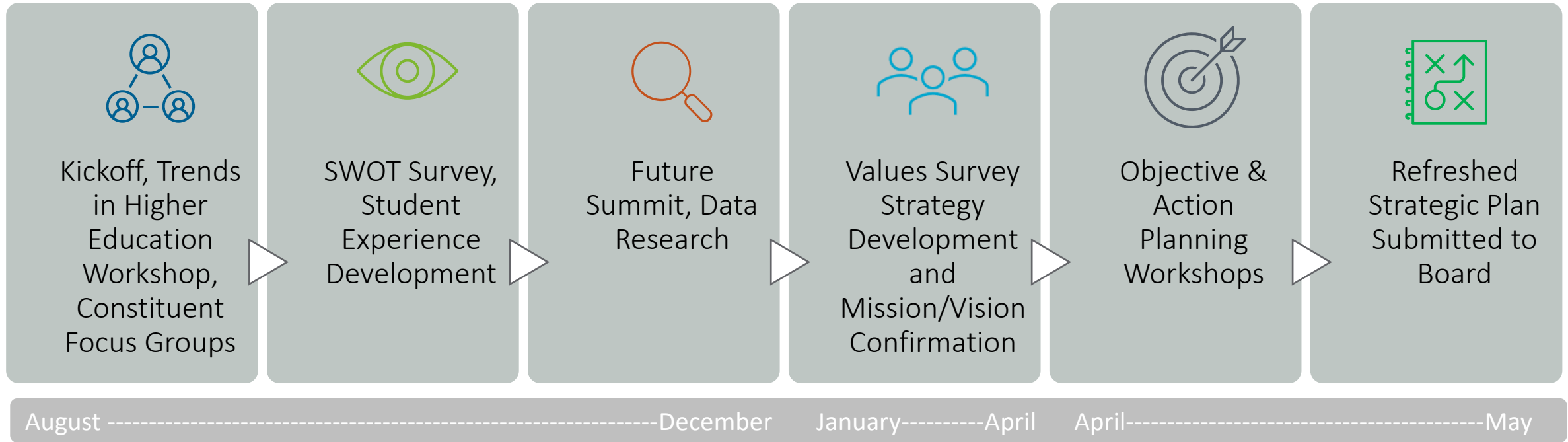
25 YEARS

Vision Workshop

February 5, 2025



Project Timeline



Strategic Plan Implementation



Workshop Objective

Confirm Council opinions on
draft Mission Statement

Develop a Vision for SUNY
New Paltz



The Foundation of Your Success

Mission

Your reason for being...

Vision

Aspirational:
What do you want to
do?

Finalizing Our Draft Mission Statement

Today, we'll focus on refining our mission statement based on previous feedback and discussions. We aim to embody our community's aspirations and strategic objectives through this pivotal element of our identity.

Proposed Mission Statement Options

- ▶ **SUNY New Paltz provides a transformative education that encourages academic achievement and civic engagement.**
 - ▶ Rationale: Emphasizes the transformative academic experiences and societal contributions you all brainstormed in our last meeting, reflecting our strategic goals and community feedback.
- ▶ **SUNY New Paltz advances personal and academic growth, preparing students to meet the challenges of a changing world.**
 - ▶ Rationale: Highlights comprehensive development and readiness for global challenges that was brought forward in our last session, aligning with our commitment to empower students for future success.

SUNY Contextual Comparison

- ▶ The University at Buffalo is a diverse, inclusive scholarly community dedicated to bringing the benefits of research, scholarship, and educational excellence to local and global communities in impactful ways.
- ▶ The University at Albany acts as an engine of opportunity, fueled by a mix of academic excellence, internationally recognized research, and world-class faculty, aimed at empowering our students and community to author their own success.
- ▶ Binghamton University is committed to collaborative transdisciplinary research, inspirational artistic endeavors, and high-impact educational experiences that advance diversity, equity, inclusion, international perspectives, and community engagement.
- ▶ SUNY Oswego actively enhances the intellectual growth, creativity, and well-being of our community, adapting to the diverse and changing needs of our students, staff, and faculty.

Feedback Overview and Context

- ▶ We've gathered considerable feedback supporting these statements, recognizing their action-oriented language and alignment with our strategic vision. Today, we seek your thoughts to ensure these statements truly reflect our community's ethos and aspirations.

What are your thoughts?

Proposed Mission Statement Options

- ▶ **SUNY New Paltz provides a transformative education that encourages academic achievement and civic engagement.**
 - ▶ Rationale: Emphasizes the transformative academic experiences and societal contributions you all brainstormed in our last meeting, reflecting our strategic goals and community feedback.
- ▶ **SUNY New Paltz advances personal and academic growth, preparing students to meet the challenges of a changing world.**
 - ▶ Rationale: Highlights comprehensive development and readiness for global challenges that was brought forward in our last session, aligning with our commitment to empower students for future success.

The Foundation of Your Success

Mission

Your reason for being...

Vision

Aspirational:
What do you want to
do?

A Vision Statement Should...

- Define the long-term goals of the organization
- Be different from the University's current position
- Be future-oriented and ambitious
- Be aspirational, inspirational, and motivational
- Be clear and concise
- Drive action
- Serve as a filter for all other decisions

Sample Vision Statements

- Southwest Airlines

- To become the world's most loved, most flown, and most profitable airline.

- Habitat for Humanity

- A world where everyone has a decent place to live

- Alzheimer's Association

- A world without Alzheimer's

- University of Buffalo

- Building on the existing strong foundation of academic excellence, knowledge and understanding, the University at Buffalo will advance into the nation's Top 25 public research universities, thereby expanding the scope of our reach and strengthening UB's world-wide impact.

- Ohio University

- To deliver the most valuable university education in Ohio, and lead as one of the most valued public universities in the nation.

Let's Discuss

If we were to look back from 15 years in the future, what ambitious achievements would you like SUNY New Paltz to be known for?

What elements should our vision include to inspire and motivate not only our current students and faculty but also attract future generations?

Next Steps





Better Ways. Happier Days.