

The Crossroads Strategic Plan
for
Shepherd University
2009 – 2013

Prepared by
The Pathways
Strategic Planning Committee*,
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Mark Stern, Ph.D., Chair
E. Gordon DeMeritt, Ph.D., Assistant to the Chair and Committee
Secretary

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*The members of the Strategic Planning Committee include:

Dr. Francis Achampong, ACE Fellow; **Dr. John Adams**, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs; **Dr. Carl Bell**, Professor of Biology; **Prof. Dow Benedict**, Dean, School of Arts and Humanities; **Dr. Jason Best**, Professor of Astrophysics and President of Faculty Senate; **Mr. Jonathan Calabretta**, Graduate Student Associate, Office of Student Affairs; **Ms. Nancy Cowherd**, Public Services Coordinator, Scarborough Library; **Prof. Sonya Evanisko**, Professor of Art; **Ms. Holly Frye**, Director of Student Community Services and Service Learning; **Dr. Gordon DeMeritt**, Chair, Business Administration and FACS; **Dr. Anna DeVito**, Associate Professor of Recreation and Leisure Studies; **Dr. Marie DeWalt**, Director of Human Resources; **Mr. Randall Friend**, Director of Admissions; **Dr. Virginia Hicks**, Dean, School of Education and Professional Studies; **Dr. Sharon Kipetz**, Vice President for Student Affairs; **Ms. Kelsey Knight**, Shepherd University Undergraduate Student; **Dr. Ann Legreid**, Dean, School of Business and Social Sciences; **Prof. Barbara Kemmerer**, Associate Professor of Nursing Education; **Dr. Burt Ligerding**, Dean, School of Mathematics and Natural Sciences; **Ms. Sara Maene**, Director of Institutional Research; **Mr. Edward Magee**, Vice President for Administration and Finance; **Dr. Diane Melby**, Vice President for Advancement; **Dr. Russell Porter**, Dean, Graduate Studies and Continuing Education; **Dr. Laura Renninger**, Dean, Teaching, Learning, and Instructional Resources; **Ms. Kimberley Scranage**, Vice President for Enrollment Management; **Ms. Tracy Seffers**, Registrar; **Dean John Sheridan**, Dean of Libraries; **Dr. Suzanne Shipley**, President; **Dr. Sylvia Shurbutt**, Professor of English; **Mr. Robert Spiker**, Director of Information Technology; **Dr. Mark Stern**, Vice President Academic Affairs; **Dr. Alan Tinkler**, Assistant Professor of English; **Mr. James Vigil**, Director, Auxiliary Services; **Mr. Karl Wolf**, Athletic Director.

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Section I. The Shepherd University Crossroads Strategic Plan

Overview

During the past two years and two months Shepherd University undertook an extensive strategic planning process. This process, involving faculty, staff, and administrators from across the university, as well as other stakeholders, resulted in the creation of “The Shepherd University Crossroads Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the Shepherd University Vision, 2009 through 2013.” This is a “Crossroads Strategic Plan,” as the university is at a crossroads in its development, and these pathways lead from the crossroads into the future. The strategic planning process, in sequence, resulted in: (a) the creation of a new Shepherd University Mission Statement and a Core Values component to the Mission Statement; (b) the development of a SWOT Analysis; (c) the creation of a Shepherd University Vision Statement; (d) the development of four Pathways for the implementation of the plan—(1) Inspire Student Learning and Development; (2) Optimize Potential of Faculty and Staff; (3) Create a Beautiful and Welcoming Campus; and (4) Stimulate the Cultural and Economic Development of the Region; (e) the development of priorities for each of the four Pathways; and, (f) the creation of twenty university-wide priorities, drawn from each of the Pathway priorities, to guide the funding and overall implementation of the Strategic Plan. Each of the items presented above is touched upon in this introductory section. The second section of this report provides a statement of all of the prioritized goals within each of the four Pathways. The third section provides a full statement of each of the twenty university-wide priorities, including proposed funding, a proposed timeline for implementation, and how successful implementation will be evaluated.

Mission Statement and Statement of Core Values.

Shepherd University is a public liberal arts university, committed to ensuring excellence in the preparation of its students’ professional education. Shepherd is also committed to its role as the major center for cultural and economic development in the eastern West Virginia region. The Shepherd University Mission Statement and Core Values Statement, as well as its Vision Statement reflect these commitments.

Mission Statement

Shepherd University, a West Virginia public liberal arts university, is a diverse community of learners and a gateway to the world of opportunities and ideas. We are the regional center for academic, cultural, and economic opportunity. Our mission of service succeeds because we are dedicated to our core values: learning, engagement, integrity, accessibility, and community.

Core Values

Committed to excellence, Shepherd University embraces the following five core values:

Learning

Shepherd University creates a community of learners who integrate teaching, scholarship, and learning into their lives.

Engagement

Shepherd University fosters environments in which students, faculty, staff, and members of the community engage with each other to form mutually beneficial relationships. We believe that meaningful engagement, with ideas and with people, promotes deep learning and nurtures critical thought.

Integrity

Shepherd University strives for an environment of honesty and fairness in its actions. University officials seek input from students, faculty, and staff and make informed and objective decisions. We expect all members of the community to act in accordance with this value.

Accessibility

Shepherd University provides services to all qualified students. Our staff and faculty are available to students and are committed to respecting and meeting individual needs. University governance and budgeting structures reflect our commitment to transparent processes and public access to information.

Community

Shepherd University comprises a community that includes students, faculty, staff, alumni, and involved citizens. We meet the needs of this community through assessment, development, and implementation of innovative programs and initiatives. We strive to create a safe environment based on mutual respect and acceptance of differences.

Vision Statement

The new Shepherd University Crossroads strategic plan is designed to create a premier liberal arts university. That is the vision of Shepherd University, and that vision will be realized and recognized nationally. Below is the Shepherd University Vision Statement as approved in 2008 by the Shepherd University Board of Governors.

Shepherd: A Premier Liberal Arts University

We will be a nationally respected community of learners where passion, purpose, and experience unite to inspire individuals to shape the world.

Summary of the Shepherd University SWOT Analysis

The Shepherd University SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis was conducted during the spring and fall of 2007 and presented to the Board of Governors in May 2008. The SWOT analysis identified 22 issues in the university's external environment to which it must be prepared to respond: 10 issues that present the university with opportunities and 12 issues that threaten the university. In addition to these 22 issues, the analysis identified 24 issues that are internal to the organization and that are fully within the control of the faculty and administration: 10 of these issues are identified as strengths of the university, and 14 are identified as weaknesses. The

Crossroads Strategic Plan addresses the issues identified by the SWOT analysis, and responds to them as appropriately as possible. Below is a summary of the SWOT analysis. (The complete SWOT Analysis report is in Appendix A of this document.)

The ten issues that present external opportunities to Shepherd University include: (1) being located in a border region of the state and thus able to attract out-of-state students who pay higher tuition and fees than in-state students, yet not taking full advantage of the urban media outlets in the Shepherd greater service region; (2) regional employers reporting that Shepherd graduates are of high quality, yet much needs to be done to increase this quality; (3) group and teamwork skill preparation that is not facilitated often enough within the learning environment; (4) long-term regional population growth that offers student recruitment opportunities that have yet to be fully exploited; (5) distance learning opportunities that abound, but that Shepherd has yet to take advantage of in a strategic manner; (6) increasing graduate education enrollments in the region, while Shepherd has just begun to develop programs in this area of educational opportunities; (7) few regional competitors who offer students a traditional, four-year campus opportunity, and this advantage has not yet been strongly capitalized upon; (8) increasing numbers of non-traditional students who want to go on to college, while Shepherd has not yet moved to effectively deliver classes to them in a manner that best meets their needs; (9) strong local recognition of Shepherd as a quality university, but it has failed to effectively market its brand and to build upon this strength; (10) students who are increasingly going to two-year colleges and then moving on to four-year institutions, yet Shepherd has not made a strong effort to attract and to retain these students.

Twelve significant external threats to the university include: (1) an increasingly poor level of state funding support in a state that is consistently at or near the bottom of per student funding support nationally; (2) the political power base of West Virginia is located outside of the Eastern Panhandle region; (3) a growing in-state and out-of-state competition for college students in the Eastern Panhandle, as this is one of the few areas in West Virginia that has increasing college-age students within its nearby market area; (4) a perception of Shepherd University as a poor institution within a poor state, as well as a “suitcase” university, weaken its attractiveness as an institution of choice; (5) a weak level of college preparation by incoming Shepherd students, and the university has yet to aggressively work with area K-12 schools to strengthen such work; (6) a significantly higher proportion of Shepherd students working many hours in off-campus jobs and having major responsibilities for the care of dependents, as compared to students at peer institutions, and this tends to undermine their ability to concentrate on their studies; (7) a university that is often perceived as a liberal-leaning “ivory tower” in a predominantly conservative region and state; (8) a declining number of high school graduates across most of West Virginia; (9) a high level of housing costs in the Eastern Panhandle in comparison to the low salary level of most Shepherd employees, and this limits the university’s ability to attract the best faculty and staff; (10) a student body that is increasingly engaged in high-risk behaviors, such as alcohol and drug use, that adversely impact their learning; (11) an transportation environment that lacks mass transit access and has on-campus parking facilities that are decried by students as

inadequate; (12) a town-gown relationship that is sometimes marred by ineffective communication.

Ten internal strengths of the university include: (1) faculty and staff who are invested in the success of students; (2) the Shepherd University core values are broadly accepted by the university community; (3) the university having highly respected programs in the arts, including the Contemporary American Theater Festival, has been cited by John Villani as the major reason for Shepherdstown being one of “The 100 Best Arts Towns in America”; (4) the traditional nature of the Shepherd campus which includes both a strong sense of community and student access to faculty; (5) a strong commitment to student volunteerism and service learning; (6) strong support for at-risk student interventions; (7) support as a state university that is increasingly seen as broadly recognized for its strengths; (8) its being recognized as a “Best Buy” among universities; (9) growing commitments to Shepherd by external funding agencies and internal support for such development; (10) innovative curricular and co-curricular programs.

Twelve internal weaknesses of the university include: (1) the absence of a shared vision, perhaps now being addressed by the new Mission and Vision Statements being committed to Shepherd as a “premier liberal arts university”; (2) limited financial resources; (3) institutional rigidity often reflected in resistance to procedural change inflexibility; (4) a culture that does not embrace a commitment to communication; (5) the lack of a systematic curriculum component that fosters student critical thinking abilities; (6) faculty and staff salaries and benefits that remain low, given the regional cost structure; (7) Shepherd University personnel perform at or near their limits due to minimal support systems and staffing; (8) the increase in the number of full-time faculty positions not having kept pace with the increase in student enrollment; (9) faculty lacking consistent mentoring and support structures for their professional development and maturation; (10) staff lacking routine professional development support and job enrichment; (11) a lack of diversity among faculty, staff and students; (12) an inconsistent commitment to the growth and development of the general studies program; (13) limited and often inadequate physical resources in many buildings and in the development of technology in the classroom; (14) an excessive reliance on adjunct faculty.

The Shepherd University Institutional Compact Report, 2007-2012

In response to a state mandate, in the spring and summer of 2008 Shepherd University developed an Institutional Compact Report for 2007-2012 that was submitted to the Higher Education Policy Commission on August 31, 2008 and approved in January of 2009. This Compact required the university to meet goals for fourteen required elements and six elective elements. The required State Compact elements include: (1) student enrollment goals, (2) student retention rates, (3) student graduation rates, (4) degree production goals, (5) degrees in STEM areas goals, (6) licensure pass rates goals, (7) percentage of faculty with terminal degrees goals, (8) assessment of student learning, (9) accreditation issues, (10) alignment with K-12 schools, (11) use of

instructional technology, (12) career placement, (13) institutional financial aid, and (14) programs of distinction.

The elective State Compact elements include: (1) promotion of global awareness, (2) educational service to adults, (3) external funding, (4) learning and accountability, (5) student civic engagement, and (6) research and external funding. The Compact mandates and goals must be met and are incorporated into the university strategic plan. The full Compact Report, with details of the Compact and the goals for each element, is located on the Shepherd University Web page.

The Four Pathways: An Overview

The above efforts in the development of the mission and vision of the university and the analysis of both the internal and external environments of the university (SWOT analysis) were followed by the establishment of ten subcommittees. The subcommittees met during the spring and fall of 2008 and each subcommittee prepared a non-prioritized report identifying a number of initiatives that the subcommittee members recommended for inclusion in the final strategic plan.

The ten subcommittees were formed as follows to represent these constituencies:

- Undergraduate Education and Assessment
- Graduate and Continuing Education
- Student Life
- Computer Services and Technology
- Human Development and Support
- Athletics
- Culture and Heritage
- Master Plan and Physical Plant
- Integrated Strategic Marketing
- Budget and Finance

In response to the new Mission and Goals and Vision statements, the SWOT analysis undertaken within the strategic planning process, the Shepherd University Compact, and the ten subcommittee recommendations, the Strategic Planning Committee created four overarching Pathway subcommittees: (1) Inspire Student Learning and Teaching; (2) Optimize Potential of Faculty and Staff; (3) Create a Beautiful and Welcoming Campus; and, (4) Stimulate the Cultural and Economic Development of the Region. Each Pathway subcommittee developed a set of strategic priorities, and from these priorities the members of the entire Strategic Planning Committee developed a set of twenty university-wide priorities that are at the center of the strategic plan. These twenty university-wide priorities meet the following four criteria:

1. Each is central to the Shepherd University mission and offers an affirmative answer to the question: Does it serve a central tenet?
2. Each furthers the development of the Shepherd University Vision and offers an affirmative answer to the question: Does it make us premier?

3. Each is identified in the SWOT analysis and offers an affirmative response to at least one of the following statements:
 - A strength (i.e., a core competence) that we must exercise;
 - A weakness in need of improvement;
 - An opportunity of which we must take advantage;
 - A threat from which we must be prepared to defend ourselves.
4. Each is consistent with the Shepherd University Compact.

These university-wide priorities reflect Shepherd University's commitment to becoming a nationally respected, premier liberal arts university. Below are summary statements that reflect each of the Pathway commitments.

Pathway #1: Inspire Student Learning and Development

The liberal arts are the building blocks upon which learning takes place at Shepherd University. To best prepare our students for their professional and personal lives, student learning must take place through engagement in the liberal arts both inside and outside of the traditional classroom learning environment. Inside of the classroom, engagement may include capstone projects, seminars, learning communities, group presentations, debates, laboratory experiments and simulations, and a variety of other approaches. Outside of the classroom, student learning engagement activities may include internships or practica, study abroad programs, global experiences, service learning, community service, faculty-student collaborative research efforts, or involvement on student leadership initiatives.

In order to achieve our goal of inspiring student learning and development, we must improve the quality of learning through the integration of items such as technology in teaching, critical thinking, and wellness throughout the curriculum. We must develop a value-added approach to student advising, ensure a high degree of professional preparation for students, and improve Shepherd's diversity and commitment to social justice. Finally, we must enhance continuing education and graduate programs for the lifelong learner and improve academic standards while maintaining an open access policy as a West Virginia public institution.

Pathway #2: Optimize Potential of Faculty and Staff

It is important that Shepherd University creates strategies to attract, develop, and retain a first-rate faculty and staff. There is a variety of initiatives through which this goal can be accomplished.

We must address the current inadequate number of instructional and support staff. Most importantly, we must enhance the number of committed, full-time faculty in order to help bolster academic excellence and achieve an outstanding academic advising program. We must strive to increase to 75% the number of class credit hours taught by faculty of the total credit hours offered by the university. Based on the 2008 benchmarking report, it appears that the number of staff positions at Shepherd

compares better with our peers than the number of faculty positions. However, as enrollment grows and the physical plant expands, it will be important to continue monitoring those numbers to ensure adequate staffing.

We must offer competitive salaries. Salaries should be established at a leadership level among West Virginia institutions, increasing by 5% the level at which we compare to our peers.

Professional development programs must be planned for faculty and staff in support of their work toward fulfilling the university's mission. Specific programs and initiatives should be implemented and maintained including required advisement workshops, peer evaluation processes, established departmental mentoring systems, and recurrent training sessions to help supervisors better manage their departments and employees.

The availability of support systems for faculty and staff must be ensured, including such items as viable office space, first-rate technological tools with accessible on-campus training and support, conference travel opportunities, wellness activities, and competitive benefits for family members. Shepherd must institute a formal travel expense plan to encourage and enable faculty and staff to present their teaching, research, and advising accomplishments at professional conferences. Likewise, this expense plan must sufficiently enable faculty and staff to attend conferences and workshops that help them enhance department curricula and learning goals. These types of support systems foster a more welcoming environment for faculty and staff and help us to retain our workforce.

We must commit to developing a diverse workforce and to promoting a welcoming community reflective of our pluralistic society. Efforts should be made to recruit a diverse faculty and staff and to offer support within the campus community.

We must provide incentives for retirees to teach and maintain a connection to the university through established and continuing education programs. We must encourage them to serve as mentors and in other capacities as identified by the academic leadership. Various ways to engage retirees in a continued life with the campus include audit privileges, wellness discounts, complimentary athletics or performance passes, and access to office space, Shepherd e-mail, and the library.

In order to foster a liberal arts relationship between faculty and students, the development of innovative curricular initiatives, faculty scholarship, and student research will be encouraged. Faculty members should be allowed to bank course overload credits toward release time as an incentive for these initiatives.

Finally, mechanisms for recognizing outstanding employee performance will be implemented. Emeritus status should be established for non-classified employees like that now available for faculty and classified employees. Recognition of employee accomplishments should be included in an annual Founder's Day ceremony.

Pathway #3: Create a Beautiful and Welcoming Campus

As a premier public liberal arts institution, Shepherd must have facilities that meet the appropriate expectations of student, faculty, staff, and community members. The buildings and grounds should give visitors and members of the campus community the impression that they are well maintained and up-to-date. Focal points should be created to indicate the identity of the university. The physical characteristics of the buildings and grounds must enhance the student learning experience. The campus should evolve from an environment where driving is the norm, to one where walking to and from campus buildings is not only the norm, but also a welcome activity. Adequate space must be made available for faculty offices. The facilities must be accessible for all users.

The university environment must be enhanced as the campus is developed. Savings may be realized from efforts to reduce energy consumption and reduce waste. Historic structures are an asset to the community and, where possible, efforts should be made to enhance and maintain these structures.

Adequate resources should be expended to maintain the university's physical assets. Current buildings should be renovated as needed to meet current standards. Additional facilities will require financial resources to fund depreciation expenses, maintenance, and utility costs.

Because the university's long-term debt, approximately \$52 million, is high relative to its bonding capacity, its debt capacity must be considered as it plans for future facilities. The funding for most major projects will most likely be provided by the Higher Education Policy Commission or the federal government. Grants should be sought for the preservation of historic structures.

Pathway #4: Stimulate the Cultural and Economic Development of the Region

As the premier educational resource within the region, Shepherd University will provide cultural and economic development opportunities to the people of the region. Our current programs contribute to the community in terms of quality of performance, quality of production, and quality competitive athletics. Shepherd University is committed to enhancing these programs.

We will be proactive partners providing fresh opportunities by seeking resources and partnerships to support our capacity to continue our contribution to our region and its people. We dedicate our people and our resources to improving the community. Shepherd University will provide an academic structure that stimulates economic development. We must educate students who will become cultural, economic, and civic leaders of their communities.

In order to be recognized as a premier university, Shepherd University must define itself in terms that bespeak of our educational heritage, our commitment to first-rate

teaching and learning, and our commitment to the academic success of our students. Symbols and ceremonies are vital to the creation, maintenance, and promulgation of an organizational culture.

These highly interrelated priorities can be segmented into four categories. These four categories are:

- (1) the development of a definable culture for Shepherd University;
- (2) the enrichment of the cultural life of the region;
- (3) the stimulation of economic opportunity for the region; and
- (4) the enhancement of Shepherd's athletic reputation.

Section II: The Four Pathways and Initial Priorities

Below are the priority reports of each of the Pathway subcommittees. These reports state the priorities of each subcommittee and the individual subcommittee description of how best to meet each goal set forth by the subcommittee. These priorities were preliminary to the establishment of the final university-wide, twenty priorities that are the final key recommendations for implementations of the strategic plan. Section III explicitly states the twenty university-wide priorities that were developed from the reports below.

Pathway #1: Inspire Student Learning and Development

The liberal arts are the building blocks upon which learning takes place at Shepherd University. In order to best prepare our students for their professional and personal lives we need to improve the quality of learning across the curriculum. Each of the Pathway 1 priorities intended to accomplish this goal is described below.

Pathway 1, Priority 1. Improve the quality of learning across the curriculum

To best prepare our students for their professional and personal lives, student learning must take place through engagement in the liberal arts both inside and outside of the traditional classroom environment. Inside of the classroom, engagement opportunities may include capstone projects, seminars, learning communities, group presentations, or debates. Outside of the classroom, engagement opportunities may include internships or practica, study abroad programs, Washington Gateway Program, global experiences, service learning, community service, faculty-student collaborative research efforts, or involvement in student leadership initiatives.

Shepherd must also offer a new vision of the general studies curriculum that aligns with COPLAC and our institutional mission. This curriculum will promote the kind of learning students need to meet emerging challenges in the workplace, in a diverse democracy, and in an interconnected world. In order for this goal to become operational, we must do the following:

1. Change the name of “General Studies” to “Core Curriculum” to bring us more in line with the goals of “Liberal Education and America’s Promise” (LEAP) and lend more clout to program. (2009, no cost)
2. Adopt the learning outcomes of LEAP (“Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World”; Intellectual and Practical Skills”; “Personal and Social Responsibility”; “Integrative Learning”) for the core curriculum and make sure that these permeate the academic atmosphere of the campus (through banners, posters, book marks, etc.) The LEAP goals are deemed as “best practices” according to the American Association of Colleges and Universities. (2009, no cost)
3. Ensure that LEAP goals are included on all syllabi, but especially Core Curriculum courses. Courses should show how the class meets those goals. (2010, no cost)

4. Make funds available as incentives for instructors to develop courses that meet LEAP goals (above) (2010, \$25,000)
5. Design a Core Curriculum that includes the following (2010, no cost):
 - a. Experiential learning opportunities;
 - b. Intensive writing courses;
 - c. A global component -- whether it is a travel practicum, cultural immersion course, study abroad opportunity, or other experience -- that will help provide our students with a great world view;
 - d. A curriculum grouped in a more contemporary manner that solidifies its connection with LEAP goals, rather than being a “one-off” or checklist.
 - e. Greater choice among courses in the Core Curriculum as well as greater integration of the Core Curriculum with the major;
 - f. A diversity course requirement;
 - g. A required culminating or capstone experience;
 - h. A required first-year experience course (i.e., interest group, learning community, first-year seminar course, honors course);
 - i. An integration of technology, critical thinking, and wellness throughout the curriculum;
 - j. A reduction in average class sizes;
 - k. An assessment strategy which incorporates the LEAP goals.

Pathway 1, Priority 2. Inspire student learning and development through the incorporation of technology in teaching

The digital age is part of the lives of all Shepherd students, faculty, and staff. One value of learning in this digital age is global understanding, which requires and is facilitated by the use of technology. The appropriate and effective use of technology informs contemporary society; this is particularly true in education. Technology complements classroom learning, engages students both in and out of the classroom, provides access to transformative ideas, and facilitates learning in ways traditional learning cannot achieve.

Shepherd’s core values of learning and engagement are directly affected by the use of technology. Liberal arts education, if it is to excel, must include technology both to enhance the classroom learning environment and to access information outside of the classroom. Technology engages students by making the world their learning environment, and it empowers students to discover and explore the diverse world of ideas beyond Shepherd, West Virginia, and the United States. Technology can help to make students global citizens fully capable to compete in the world’s marketplace of ideas. In order for this goal to become operational, we must do the following:

1. Convey to faculty the value of technology and its role in preparing students for the digital world.
 - a. Fund a full-time Instructional Technologist through the Center for Teaching and Learning so that faculty training in uses of technology can continue. Our technologist is currently funded through TOC student fees but this will cease in June 2009. (2009, \$45,000 per year plus benefits).

- b. Development of workshops and training programs designed to bring faculty from different disciplines together.
2. Foster curriculum design that encourages the use of technology.
 - a. Encourage dialogue among faculty about teaching and learning with technology within their specific disciplines and across disciplines. (Ongoing at no added cost)
 - b. Encourage the development of interdisciplinary courses that include technology as a major component. (Ongoing at no additional cost)
 - c. Increase usage in classes of technology as evidenced by an increase in technology-based assignments. Technology needed for assignments would be funded by proposals to the TOC. TOC funds proposals yearly.
3. Make technology accessible to students, faculty, and staff.
 - a. Increase the number of classrooms equipped with a common set of technologies. The initial investment would be \$72,000 with \$20,000 per year ongoing thereafter.
 - b. Provide increased availability of technology in the classrooms by increased funding. The costs associated would be covered by shifting the funding of IT staff salaries from the technology fee to the regular operating budget. (Yearly)
 - c. Make technology and resources accessible to students, faculty, and staff. The cost would be funded by requests to the TOC. TOC funds proposals yearly.
 - d. Improve the overall network infrastructure across campus to provide increased access regardless of campus location. The campus will be 100% wireless within three years. The cost for wireless service is \$78,000 per year.

Pathway 1, Priority 3. Develop a value-added approach to student advising

Because we believe Academic Advising to be a developmental process, the mission of the Shepherd University Academic Advising Program is to assist students in the clarification of their educational and professional goals and in the development of educational plans that are compatible with those goals. Academic Advisors will work closely with their students and advisees to improve student learning and to encourage their intellectual growth, their personal fulfillment, and their academic and professional excellence. In order for this goal to become operational, we must do the following:

1. Offer and require advisors to attend at least one advising workshop every semester to help keep faculty members abreast of catalog changes and additions -- especially with respect to the Core Curriculum, graduation, 60-hour rules, and the roles of department chairs and the Admissions and Credits Committee. (2010, no cost)
2. We must expand our use of Banner/RAIL capabilities – such as prerequisites enforcement via computer. (2010, cost unknown)
3. We must insist on accountability for good advising (i.e., annual assessment of individual advisors; include advisement as significant part of the annual report and promotion and tenure portfolio). (2010, no cost)

4. “Intensive Advisement” procedures must be instituted (i.e., flagging academic problems via technology, generating automatic RAIL announcements to advisors when students register). (2010, no cost)
5. We should institute a centralized “Advisement Center” as a part of a Learning Center where students can call for support after-hours or if they are unable to find their faculty advisors. This will also help to take some of the load off of the faculty advisor. (2010, no cost)

Pathway 1, Priority 4. Ensure a high degree of professional preparation for students

It is of the utmost importance that our students have a solid liberal arts education that enables them to enter the workforce with the knowledge, flexibility, empathy, and problem-solving ability needed to navigate and positively impact a complex world. In order for this goal to become operational, we must do the following:

1. Determine specific employment possibilities for each discipline. (One year: \$1,000)
2. Ensure faculty members are knowledgeable of skills, knowledge, and abilities required for specific employment possibilities for student employment. (2010-2012: \$1,000 per year)
3. Ensure syllabi include potential employment possibilities within course objectives. (2010-2012)
4. Ensure syllabi include both cognitive-based course objectives and affective-based course objectives. (2010-2012)
5. Ensure training for faculty and staff on ensuring culture of cognitive-based and affective-based instruction and interactions. (2010-2013)
6. Ensure opportunities for all students to access internships, capstone papers, and/or research projects with faculty. (2010: \$2,000)
7. Ensure opportunities for all students to rotate through employment opportunities in businesses, government, and service organizations. (2010-2011: \$2,000)

Pathway 1, Priority 5. Improve Shepherd's diversity and commitment to social justice

An area that sets Shepherd apart from other institutions is the aspect of student engagement. All students at Shepherd are challenged from their first interaction on campus to become an active part of the community. This is demonstrated by participation in student leadership activities, clubs, organizations, experiential education, community service, and service learning and may culminate in a capstone project or faculty research project. The co-curricular education promotes student learning and development that is purposeful and holistic.

With the curriculum and the co-curricular experience, there needs to be a promotion of educational experiences that enhance understanding of each individual student's identity and the identity of others. Environments need to be created, nurtured, and sustained that value the commonalities and the differences of individuals. An appreciation of diversity needs to move into the active engagement of pluralism where students can explore and appreciate each other's cultures. In order for this goal to become operational, we must do the following:

1. Strengthen social justice and diversity programs and services offered across the curriculum. (Annually)
2. Strengthen social justice and diversity programs and services offered by all Student Affairs departments.
3. Design an area in the renovated Student Center that would adequately integrate services for students of color, and international and GLBT students in a student leadership center. (Begin 2009 – planning, project total \$20,000,000, 2009 hire graduate student for International Students, \$16,000, \$3,000 office start up cost); (2010 hire grad student for GLBT issues \$16,000, \$3,000 start up office cost)
4. Allocate new resources to MSA Office (in new Student Center) to be able to provide services that will retain students. (Begin planning 2009)
5. Develop a Health Educator (Health Promotion) position at Shepherd to promote campus wellness and provide information on social norming. (Fall 2010, pay grade 18 \$35,000, \$7,500 benefits, \$3,000 one-time start-up office cost, \$10,000 annual budget)
6. Hire a Coordinator for Disability Services. (Fall 2009, pay grade 18, \$35,000 salary, \$7,500 benefits, \$3,000 one-time cost for office)
7. Create a health and wellness Student Peer education program. (Fall 2011, hire grad student \$16,000 salary \$3,000 for one-time office expense)
8. Strengthen programming for new and returning students as a method to educate, engage, and involve students. (\$16,000 graduate student to implement Passport engagement program, \$3,000 one-time office expense, \$500 annual budget)
9. Expand career services for students – hire additional person. (Fall 2009, pay grade 18, \$35,000 salary, \$7,500 benefits, \$3,000 one-time office costs, \$5,000 annual budget)
10. Continue Student Affairs department reviews and self-study using Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS). (Annually)

11. Addition to Student Center completed. (Will include Student Leadership Center \$20 million)
12. Addition to Dining Hall completed. (Begin planning 2009, \$8 million)

Pathway 1, Priority 6. Enhance continuing education for the lifelong learning

The continuing education programs will enhance learning in the community to provide lifelong opportunities in both the cognitive and affective domains. An internal framework for this is already in place. In order for this goal to become operational, we must do the following:

1. In addition to Graduate Programs, provide CE along with established courses (not in the same course, but at different times, and/or place); Graduate and Undergraduate. (One-two years out: \$30,000 Webinar/Instruction Technologist – CE funds required, not operational)
2. Provide both Professional Graduate Education for Teacher Re-Certification and Continuing Education Units for additional professions. (One-two years out: \$3,000)
3. Provide workshops and conferences at Shepherd University on Friday/Saturday timeframes to increase utilization of facilities. (One year out: \$3,000 extra hours)
4. Provide national and international webinars and off-site workshops and conferences using current faculty members. (One-two years out: \$3,000 development with #1 above)

Pathway 1, Priority 7. Improve academic standards while maintaining an open access policy as West Virginia institution

The HEPC mandates that Shepherd must be effectively open access, provided that the applicant has scored 17 or greater on the ACT and has a 3.0 high school GPA in our required core courses. The goal would be for growth to be more in terms of quality rather than numbers; thus in the next five years we would not see much growth beyond the 5,000 student population mark. In order for this goal to become operational, we must do the following:

1. Give greater prominence to the Honors Program by:
 - a. Increasing the number of hours/week for the Honors Administrative Assistant. (2010, \$5,600)
 - b. Hiring an Honors-dedicated admissions counselor. (\$30,000 plus benefits)
 - c. Increasing the number of tuition waivers/scholarships for Honors students. (2010, \$40,000 per year)
 - d. Providing a dedicated line of funding for faculty who teach Honors courses (stipends for additional work). (2010, \$8,000 per year)
 - e. Increasing the budget line for Honors travel and transportation. (2010, \$5,000 per year)
 - f. Allowing priority registration for Honors students and other perks. (2010, no cost)

2. Hire a full-time grant writer for Academic Affairs at Shepherd University. The position will be funded and supported by the Shepherd University Research Corporation. (2010, \$70,000 per year plus benefits)
3. Enhance promotion of the CME program. (2010, \$10,000 per year)
4. Highlight the Med-Step, Dent-Step, and Pharm-Step programs. (2010, \$500)
5. Provide higher-ability scholarships such as “Presidential Scholarships.” (2010, \$40,000 per year)
6. Improve skills in critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, and writing. (2010, no cost)
7. Recruit students interested in and prepared for study in STEM fields. (2010, \$15,000 per year)
8. Develop new programs consistent with student, community, and state needs that will attract high ability students. (2011, cost unknown)
9. Develop more faculty-student research initiatives. (2010, no cost)

Pathway #2: Optimize Potential of Faculty and Staff

It is important that Shepherd University creates strategies to attract, develop, and retain a first-rate faculty and staff. There are a variety of initiatives through which this goal can be accomplished.

Pathway 2, Priority 1: Competitive salaries for faculty and staff

We must offer competitive salaries for faculty and staff. Salaries should be established at a leadership level among West Virginia institutions, increasing by 5% the level at which we compare to our peers.

Pathway 2, Priority 2: Professional development opportunities

Professional development programs must be planned for faculty and staff to support their work and to fulfill the university’s mission. Specific programs and initiatives should (within two years) include required advisement workshops, peer evaluation processes, established departmental mentoring systems, and recurrent training sessions to help supervisors better manage their department and employees. The Center for Teaching and Learning will be responsible for faculty training sessions at no additional cost. We estimate that supervisor training sessions will cost approximately \$10,000 per year.

Pathway 2, Priority 3: Full-time faculty ratio

We must address the current inadequate number of instructional and support staff. Most importantly, we must enhance the number of committed, full-time faculty in order to help bolster academic excellence and achieve an outstanding academic advising program. We must strive to increase to 75% the percentage of total instructional credit-hours taught by full-time faculty. We estimate that this will cost \$600,000.00 per year over the next five years.

Pathway 2, Priority 4: Workforce diversity

We must commit to developing a diverse workforce and to promoting a welcoming community reflective of our pluralistic society. Efforts should be made to recruit a diverse faculty and staff and to offer support within the campus community. We estimate \$5,000 to target the advertising of open positions to minority publications.

Pathway 2, Priority 5: Faculty support systems

The availability of competitive support systems for faculty and staff must be ensured, including such items as viable office space, first-rate technological tools with accessible on-campus training and support, conference travel opportunities, wellness activities, and competitive benefits for family members. Shepherd must institute a formal travel expense plan to encourage and enable faculty and staff to present their teaching, research, and advising accomplishments at professional conferences. Likewise, this expense plan must sufficiently enable faculty and staff to attend conferences and workshops that help them enhance department curricula and learning goals. These types of support systems foster a more welcoming environment for faculty and staff and help us to retain our workforce. We estimate a monetary increase of \$20,000 by the year 2012 in order to support and maintain these initiatives.

Pathway 2, Priority 6: Retiree relationships

We must provide incentives for retirees to teach and maintain a connection to the university through established and continuing education programs. We must encourage them to serve as mentors and in other capacities as identified by the academic leadership. Various ways to engage retirees in a continued life with the campus include audit privileges for life, wellness privileges, complimentary athletics or performance passes, and access to office space, Shepherd e-mail, and the library. We would like to have a retiree plan implemented by 2010. The estimated cost per year will depend on the number of retirees per year.

Pathway 2, Priority 7: Curricular innovations

In order to foster a liberal arts relationship between faculty and students, the development of innovative curricular initiatives, faculty scholarship, and student research will be encouraged. Faculty members should be allowed to bank course overload credits toward release time as an incentive for these initiatives. We estimate that this will cost the university \$18,000 per year and would like to implement this incentive in 2010.

Pathway 2, Priority 8: Employee performance rewards

Mechanisms for recognizing outstanding employee performance will be implemented. Emeritus status should be established for non-classified employees like that now available for faculty and classified employees. Recognition of employee accomplishments should be included in an annual Founder's Day ceremony.

Pathway #3: Create a Beautiful and Welcoming Campus

Shepherd University maintains and constructs facilities to support the mission and core values of the university. Facilities are used to create learning experiences and promote the mutually beneficial relationships among students, faculty, and staff. A sense of community is enhanced by the university's use of its spaces.

The SWOT analysis identified growing competition for students in higher education as an external threat. The condition of campus facilities has a direct effect on the university's ability to attract and retain faculty, staff, and students.

Pathway 3, Priority 1: Facilities Operations

1. Outcome: As a premier public liberal arts institution, Shepherd and its facilities must meet the needs and expectations of students, faculty, staff, and community attracted to a dynamic liberal arts environment. Facilities are not only physical resources; they reflect the essence of the university. The buildings and grounds will be well maintained and aesthetically pleasing for visitors and the campus community. Prospective students and faculty form opinions about the competency and morale of an institution from its appearance. Sufficient staff must be hired to maintain the grounds of the university's building and grounds. Over the past 12 years, many buildings have been built and the acreage of maintained grounds has been expanded. In addition, the use of facilities after usual working hours has increased. The staffing for custodians and grounds workers is below national averages. As the university expands its facility utilization rates through increased programming, more support staff will be needed. The university must increase the number of employees in this area.

The university must take advantage of its physical assets. New buildings or additions have been constructed for the physical sciences, the library, the music and art departments, the School of Professional Studies, the Wellness Center, intramurals, residence life, and athletics. To increase resources, programs should be supported that increase the utilization of these facilities. For example, a wellness program involving academic, student life, intramurals, and the nursing program will promote student learning and development. Utility costs for the new Wellness Center must be funded. \$102,000 will be needed on an annual basis for these expenses.

2. Actors: Facilities Management, Master Plan Committee
3. Time: Over the next five years
4. Measure: Increased Facilities Management and Wellness Center survey scores

Additional annual operating costs associated with this initiative are:

Wellness Center Utilities: \$102,000

Three custodians:

Salaries and Fringe Benefits \$65,446

Two grounds workers:

Salaries and Fringe Benefits \$68,861

5. Judge: Executive Staff

Pathway 3, Priority 2: Campus borders definitions

1. Outcome: The campus borders must be defined to create a beautiful and welcoming campus. Focal points will be created to communicate the identity of the university. These focal points should reflect the character of the university and the community within which it resides. Signage should be enhanced to assist visitors as they navigate the campus.
2. Actors: Facilities Management, Master Plan Committee
3. Time: Over the next five years
4. Measure: Completion of associated projects

Additional costs associated with this initiative are:

Campus Signage	
FY 2010	\$100,000
FY 2011	\$100,000
Campus Border Definition	
FY 2012	\$50,000
FY 2013	\$50,000
FY 2014	\$50,000

5. Judge: Executive Staff

Pathway 3, Priority 3: Campus Pedestrianization

1. Outcome: The campus must evolve from an environment where driving is the norm, to one where walking to and from campus buildings is not only the standard, but also a welcome activity. The safety of pedestrians must be a top priority. A pedestrian bridge must be erected across Route 480 to improve safety and traffic flow. The construction of this structure will allow the university to improve the connection between the east and west campuses.
2. Actors: Facilities Management, Master Plan Committee
3. Time: By 2011
4. Measure: Completion of project

Additional Costs associated with this initiative are:

Pedestrian Bridge	
FY 2011	\$1,400,000

5. Judge: Executive Staff

1. Outcome: The opportunities for students to interact with their peers, faculty, and staff will improve if vehicles are not the primary mode for moving about the campus.
2. Actors: Facilities Management
3. Time: Over the next five years
4. Measure: Completion of projects, increased use of bicycles

Additional Costs associated with this initiative are:

Bike racks

FY 2010 \$3,000

FY 2011 \$3,000

FY 2012 \$3,000

FY 2013 \$3,000

FY 2014 \$3,000

5. Judge: Executive Staff

Pathway 3, Priority 4: Adequate staff and faculty office space

1. Outcome: Adequate space must be made available for faculty and staff offices. The facilities must be accessible to all users. As the university increases the number of full-time faculty, space will need to be converted to offices. Inadequate faculty offices should be expanded.
2. Actors: Facilities Management
3. Time: Over the next five years
4. Measure: Completion of projects

Additional Costs associated with this initiative are:

FY 2010 \$80,000

FY 2011 \$50,000

FY 2012 \$50,000

FY 2013 \$50,000

FY 2014 \$50,000

5. Judge: Executive Staff

Pathway 3, Priority 5: Facilities enhancements

1. Outcome: In addition to small offices for faculty and support staff, other significant facilities problems exist. The heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems in White Hall, Snyder Science Hall, and Stutzman Slonaker Hall are inadequate. These systems must be replaced or upgraded.
2. Actors: Facilities Management
3. Time: Over the next five years

4. Measure: Completion of projects

Additional costs associated with this initiative are:

FY 2010 \$700,000

FY 2011 \$700,000

FY 2012 \$700,000

FY 2013 \$700,000

5. Judge: Executive Staff

Pathway 3, Priority 6: Sustainability

1. Outcome: Sustainability of the environment will be a priority as the university campus is developed. Renovations that increase energy efficiency and/or decrease environmental waste must be made a high priority. Savings may be realized from efforts to conserve energy and reduce physical waste. New windows will be considered for buildings with inefficient steel windows. The Facilities Department must partner with the Institute for Environmental Studies and Student Affairs to improve recycling efforts.

2. Actors: Facilities Management

3. Time: Over the next five years

4. Measure: Completion of projects

Additional costs associated with this initiative are:

FY 2010: \$300,000

FY 2011: \$400,000

FY 2012 \$300,000

FY 2013 \$250,000

5. Judge: Executive Staff

Pathway 3, Priority 7: Historic Structures

1. Outcome: The university historic structures are treasures to be valued. They are also an asset to the community and contribute to the character of the campus. A historical documentation study must be completed. Grant funds should be sought for the preservation of these buildings.

2. Actors: Facilities Management, Advancement, History Department

3. Time: Over the next five years

4. Measure: Completion of study, receipt of grants

Additional costs associated with this initiative are:

FY 2010 \$50,000

5. Judge: Executive Staff

Pathway 3, Priority 8: Building renovations

1. Outcome: Adequate classroom furniture must be provided. Additional funding must be allocated to Academic Affairs for classroom furniture and equipment that supports the learning process.
2. Actors: Academic Affairs
3. Time: Over the next five years
4. Measure: Purchase of new furniture

Additional costs associated with this initiative are:

FY 2010 \$20,000

FY 2011 \$20,000

FY 2012 \$20,000

FY 2013 \$20,000

FY 2014 \$20,000

5. Judge: Executive Staff
1. Outcome: At a minimum, all buildings must be maintained to their original standards. Repairs and renovations must be made to provide handicapped access and updated mechanical systems as needed. Alterations and new construction must align with the requirements of the strategic plan. Additional facilities should be built as funding becomes available. Additional facilities will require new financial resources for debt, depreciation expenses, maintenance, staffing, and utilities costs. Annual depreciation expenses and operating costs for a new building are approximately four percent of the structure's cost.
2. Actors: Facilities Management
3. Time: Over the next five years
4. Measure: Completion of projects

Annual Costs associated with this initiative are:

Building renovations: \$1,500,000

5. Judge: Executive staff

Pathway 3, Priority 9: Debt capacity

Approximately \$2.5 million dollars are available annually from student fees to fund building enhancements and renovations. The difference between this amount and the costs listed above is the amount to be funded from new revenues.

Because the university's long-term debt is approximately \$52 million, its debt capacity must be considered. The committee reports have identified debt-financed projects totaling \$46 million. These projects include a new student center, residence hall, and improvements to the dining hall. The annual debt service on these new bonds would be approximately \$3.2 million. In addition, the athletics committee identified

approximately \$15 million for new facilities. Funding of these facilities will depend upon an analysis of the university's debt capacity.

The university has requested funds from the Higher Education Policy Commission for the construction of a Phase 2 of the Center for Contemporary Arts, a new maintenance facility, and a parking facility. Additional funding must be sought from the federal and state governments as well as private donors for these facilities.

Pathway #4: Stimulate the Cultural and Economic Development of the Region

As a premier educational resource, Shepherd University will provide economic and cultural development opportunities for the region. Our programs contribute to the community's quality of life through excellent performances, exhibits, competitive athletics, and educational and recreational activities.

We will seek resources and fresh opportunities to develop innovative partnerships. We are committed to open dialogue and on-going communication with the greater community. Shepherd University will provide an academic structure that stimulates economic and cultural development. We educate students who will become cultural, economic, and civic leaders.

Symbols and ceremonies are vital to the creation, maintenance, and promulgation of our organizational culture. Shepherd University defines itself in terms that reflect our educational heritage. We will celebrate our teaching, learning, and academic successes.

Pathway 4, Priority 1: Culture and Heritage

The most important attribute of a university is a culture that defines the university as an academic center. This culture must be recognized and definable both within the university and outside of the university. An annual event must be established (e.g., a Founder's Day Celebration, a Day of Reflection, or a Metanoia) that acknowledges our premier commitment to teaching and learning. This event must celebrate our successes in pedagogy, it must promote and encourage scholarship among faculty and students, and it must serve to link the university to the wider community in a fashion that continually persuades a wider world that Shepherd University is a premier institution.

The financial cost of this initiative is minimal compared to the returns. Advertising, speaker's fees, celebration expenses, and sundries may amount to \$10,000 annually. The cost in terms of human energy and personal commitment from administrative, staff, and faculty leadership to bend the culture of the university is enormous.

Pathway 4, Priority 2: Cultural Enrichment of the Region

Shepherd University's regional centrality in cultural opportunities is well-established and must serve as the center-point of our strategic development as a premier university. Observers of academia, both lay and professional, are aware of the link between academic primacy and primacy in the arts. We must effectively utilize our strengths in this regard through the following initiatives:

1. Attract talented faculty and students by investing in first-rate academic spaces and performance/exhibition venues. This initiative is more completely developed in the facilities component of the strategic plan.
2. Provide scholarships, stipends and other funds to attract talented students to Shepherd's visual and performing arts programs. This initiative is more completely developed in the student-focused component of the strategic plan.
3. Create endowments that will increase the university's capacity to attract faculty who are recognized nationally and internationally. This initiative is more completely developed in the faculty and staff component of the strategic plan.
4. Build guest lecture and award programs around the university's two to three lead academic programs and use these to attract nationally and internationally renowned speakers to our top academic programs.
5. Broaden awareness of the university as a cultural center in the region through an expanded public relations program.
6. Create partnerships that maximize the resources of the immediate community in support the tourism industry (e.g., work with the C&O park personnel, local bed and breakfasts, the art department, and CATF to create excursion packages).
7. Fund opportunities for Shepherd faculty, students, and alumni to perform/exhibit in national and international venues and develop a public relations program that maximizes the recognition the university receives from these accomplishments.
8. Establish a university press.

Pathway 4, Priority 3: Economic Stimulation of the Region

Economic development activities serve the tripartite purpose of creating a regional economy a) that reflects positively upon the university, b) that offers student development opportunities through co-op, externship, and faculty-led projects, and c) that provides professional development opportunities for faculty. We must develop a leadership role for Shepherd University with regard to economic stimulation through the following initiatives:

1. Fund release time for faculty and co-op opportunities for students to participate in developing the economic life of the region. Several of the following initiatives (e.g., incubator establishment, business mentoring) will require this level of time and commitment.
2. Work with regional economic development partners to assess existing and emerging opportunities for economic development. Utilize gap analysis to assess need for services and support programs to develop priorities and funding strategies. Examples of programs and services that may eventually be developed here include incubators, heritage tourism, and small business development centers.
3. Develop capacity (including services, facilities, and technology) for attracting faculty research funds, targeting especially those that support the current or emerging economic strengths of the region. Identified areas for immediate focus include health care and pharmaceuticals. Other areas to explore include emerging needs associated with the aging population, entrepreneurship, and information systems.
4. Provide faculty support and incentives to engage in curriculum renewal initiatives that will result in better alignment of academic programs with the needs of the

region. This would necessitate funding grants to explore the regional economic community.

5. Create focused opportunities for students and faculty to engage in internships, externships, and sabbaticals in regional, national, and international businesses.
6. Develop regional and statewide recognition of Shepherd University's contributions and resources by encouraging the business department and other academic areas to host workshops, forums, and professional conferences that are broadly marketed.
7. Assess and communicate the impact of Shepherd's traditional academic programs on the regional workforce. Especially communicate the quantitative and qualitative contributions of the education, nursing, social work, and accounting programs.
8. Provide partnerships in accessible graduate and continuing education programs to enhance the economic development of new business initiative within both the business and cultural communities.
9. Provide stimulus for new entrepreneurial and established corporations to relocate to this region with cooperation of government, education, and business.
10. Provide a business-oriented incubator with an identifiable location to increase opportunities for the small business developer, the large corporation, and potential government relocation.
11. Provide stimulus for partnerships in government and business to increase grants and research contracts to the region.
12. Provide opportunities for both international relocation of businesses to the area as well as regional businesses to expand to international locations.
13. Provide expanding cultural and athletic programs that utilize current and future arts-based and humanities-based faculty and staff to improve the quality of life in the area.
14. Provide easy access to the Shepherd University environment with easy parking and shuttle services among the campus locations. Develop the campus for pedestrian traffic. This initiative is more completely developed in the facilities component of the strategic plan.

Pathway 4, Priority 4: Athletic Reputation Enhancement

The athletic program is an integral part of the university's educational mission and provides unique competitive learning experiences, a balance of academics and athletics, and leadership development. The program has a positive economic and cultural impact on the region by providing opportunities for community engagement.

1. Athletics should be fiscally supported in such a manner as reflects its value and relationship to the overall mission of Shepherd University and this support should come from both internal and external sources. Athletics must be fiscally supported with a budget that reflects Shepherd's unique travel needs within the WVIAC due to the university's location in the Eastern Panhandle, to provide for the safety of student-athletes and coaches, and to provide equipment to play a competitive schedule. This will require budget increases of about \$305,751 over a five-year period of time.
2. Athletics should recruit and employ coaches and other athletic administrative staff at competitive salaries to provide student-athletes with the best educational and

athletic experience. Athletics must be able to recruit and retain quality coaches including minority coaches that are paid salaries that are competitive with other institutions based on national salary schedules. And, part-time coaches should become fulltime university employees to serve better the educational needs of our student-athletes. This will require budget increases of about \$804,673 over a five-year period of time.

3. Athletics should recruit and retain student-athletes who meet all university and NCAA academic standards and continue to have a graduation rate and retention rate that is higher than the university as a whole. Athletics must be able to provide its student-athletes with additional financial aid in order to recruit the best possible athletes to compete for the university. This will require budget increases of about \$21,847 per student-athlete to meet the NCAA's Cost of Attendance figure. To be fully funded under NCAA rules would require an additional \$21,847,500 in financial aid awards.
4. Athletics should provide student-athletes and coaches with facilities for competition, practice, and educational purposes that meet national, state, and association requirements, are safe, and reflect Shepherd's leadership role in Division II athletics. Athletics must provide its student-athlete and coaches with facilities for competition, practices, and educational purposes that are competitive and reflect Shepherd's leadership role in Division II. New projects or renovations would include upgrades to the soccer field, tennis courts, baseball field, softball field, and Ram Stadium as well as upgrades to practice fields for soccer, lacrosse, and football at a cost of about \$5,604,000. And, an addition to the Butcher Center is needed to provide more classrooms, offices, labs, locker rooms, and weight and training facilities at a cost of about \$10,060,000.
5. Athletics should continue to comply with all university, WVIAC, NCAA Division II and federal rules (including Title IX), policies, and guidelines. Athletics must continue to show progress in meeting Title IX requirements by providing "access" to athletic programs for students. This can be accomplished by adding additional sports for which need has been shown to exist. Women's lacrosse is being added in 2009-2010 and women's golf and women's swimming will be added when budgets will permit. This will require a budget increase of about \$230,000 over five years.
6. Develop loyal fans, students, and alumni who will attend athletic contests and support the athletic program of the university. This will allow the athletic department to generate funding from outside sources with the assistance of the Office of Advancement and Alumni Affairs staff.

Section III: The Twenty University-Wide Strategic Priorities

PATHWAY 1: TO INSPIRE STUDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Priority 1. Improve the quality of learning across the curriculum.

1. Outcome: Liberal arts are the building blocks upon which learning takes place at Shepherd University. In order to best prepare our students for their professional and personal lives we need to improve the quality of learning across the curriculum and move toward the goals set forth in “Liberal Education and America’s Promise” (LEAP). This includes but is not limited to a new vision of the General Studies curriculum and our institutional mission. This curriculum will promote the kind of learning students need to meet emerging challenges in the workplace, in a diverse democracy, and an interconnected world. We should change the name of “General Studies” to “Core Curriculum,” adopt the learning outcomes of LEAP for the core curriculum and make sure that these permeate the academic atmosphere of the campus. The curriculum should be designed to include such items as experiential learning opportunities, a diversity course requirement, writing across the curriculum, and a required culminating or capstone experience. It should integrate technology, critical thinking, and wellness throughout the curriculum. Finally, it facilitates a four-year graduation plan of study.

2. Actors: General Studies Committee, Deans, and Vice President for Academic Affairs

3. Time: 2010 Design; 2011 Implementation

4. Measure/Cost: Core Curriculum Assessment Plan (to be developed) and Graduation Rates; \$10,000 (Conferences and Resources)

5. Judge: Assessment Task Force and student body (via feedback from Noel-Levitz and NSSE).

Strategic Priority 2. Inspire student learning and development through the incorporation of technology in teaching.

1. Outcome: Technology engages students by making the world their learning environment and empowers student to discover and explore the diverse world. Technology complements classroom learning and engages students both in and out of the classroom. We should continually update and increase the number of classrooms equipped with a common set of contemporary technologies and develop a cadre of student employees to serve as the classroom support staff.

2. Actors: IT Services, Center for Teaching and Learning, Student Employment Office

3. Time: 2010 for initial restructuring (and then continuing)

4. Measure/Cost: \$72,000 with \$20,000 per year ongoing thereafter for equipment; Student Support will entail a restructuring of budget monies

5. Judge: IT Services, Center for Teaching and Learning, Campus Community

Strategic Priority 4. Renovate and expand the Student Center into a Center for Civic Engagement and Student Leadership.

1. Outcome: All students at Shepherd are challenged from their first interaction on campus to become an active member of the campus community. The Center for Civic Engagement will promote educational experiences that enhance the understanding of each individual student's identity and the identity of others. Active engagement of pluralism where students can explore and appreciate each other's culture and diversity will be a key component of the Center. Changing the name of the Student Center to the Center for Civic Engagement will promote an educational experience that enhances the understanding of each individual student's identity and the identity of others. We should also design an area in the renovated Center that would adequately integrate services for students of color, international, and GLBT students. The center would strengthen social justice and diversity programs and services offered across the curriculum, and strengthen social justice and diversity programs and services offered by all Student Affairs departments.

2. Actors: Student Center Staff; Student Affairs; Book Store Staff; Center for Teaching and Learning; Library; Facilities

3. Time: Three years of planning (begin fall 2009 end 2012) and two years building (2015) financial reserves (five years total)

4. Measure/Cost: \$20 million

5. Judge: Campus Community at large

Strategic Priority 8: Ensure a high degree of professional preparation for students.

1. Outcome: It is of the utmost importance that our students have a solid liberal arts and sciences education that enables them to enter the workforce with the knowledge, flexibility, empathy, and problem-solving ability needed to navigate and positively impact a complex world. In order to assist students in a developmental manner that is compatible to our mission we need to enhance services dedicated to career development. This includes but is not limited to working directly with students but also developing training and information that will assist faculty in helping students understand skills, knowledge, and abilities required for specific employment possibilities. Syllabi should include both cognitive-based course objectives and affective-based course objectives; faculty and staff should be trained on ensuring a culture of cognitive-based and affective-based instruction and interactions. We should

enhance opportunities for students to experience employment opportunities in regional business, government, and service organizations. We should determine and explore new technologies to support professional preparation, including an e-portfolio system. Finally, we should enhance the connections between alumni and students regarding professional development and promote experiential learning opportunities across campus.

2. Actors: Student Services, Deans and Chairs, Alumni Office, IT Services

3. Time: 2009 to three years out

4. Measure/Cost: \$55,500 all inclusive for personnel, \$5,000 budget, \$3,000 one-time start up

5. Judge: Student Services, Deans, and Chairs

Strategic Priority 12: Improve Our Commitment to Students with Disabilities.

1. Outcome: Providing access to services that promote student success is essential for all students, and is particularly important to students who meet the requirements for assistance under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). ADA students are a growing population nationwide and are a growing Shepherd University population. Currently we are not equipped to provide the level of service that is need to ensure academic and development success for these students. Faculty and staff should also become better acquainted with issues and strategies to improve student learning. To help support student learning and development for students with disabilities we should hire a coordinator for disability services. This position will provide direct services to students to enhance success at the university and enhance support, training, education, and assistance for faculty and staff regarding ADA issues.

2. Actors: Student Services, Center for Teaching and Learning, Deans, Faculty

3. Time: 2010

4. Measure/Cost: \$55,000 all inclusive for personnel, \$3,000 start up cost

5. Judge: Student Services, Center for Teaching and Learning; Compliance to Federal Regulations; Students assessment - NSSE and Noel-Levitz

PATHWAY 2: TO OPTIMIZE THE POTENTIAL OF FACULTY AND STAFF

Strategic Priority 3. Increase full-time faculty to 75% of Instruction

1. Outcome: We must address the current inadequate number of instructional and support staff. Most importantly, we must enhance the number of committed, full-time

faculty in order to help bolster academic excellence and achieve an outstanding academic advising program. We must strive to increase to 75% the percentage of credit-hours taught by full-time faculty of the total instructional hours taught by faculty. Based on the 2008 benchmarking report, it appears that the number of staff positions at Shepherd compares better with our peers than the number of faculty positions. However, as enrollment grows and the physical plant expands, it will be important to continue monitoring those numbers to ensure adequate staffing.

2. Actors: Executive Staff

3. Time: Over next five years

4. Measure: For faculty, \$250,000 per year would be needed. For staff the funding needed is as yet to be determined.

5. Judge: Vice President for Academic Affairs and Director of Human Resources

Strategic Priority 6: Ensure Competitive Salaries for Faculty and Staff

1. Outcome: We must offer competitive salaries for faculty and staff.

2. Actors: Executive Staff

3. Time: Over next five years

4. Measure: Salaries should be established at a leadership level among West Virginia institutions, increasing by 5% the level at which we compare to our peers (West Virginia peers – classified staff; HEPC peers – faculty; CUPA peers – non-classified staff).

5. Judge: Executive Staff

Strategic Priority 11: Enhance Professional Development Programs for Faculty and Staff

1. Outcome: It is important that Shepherd University create strategies to attract, develop, and retain a first-rate faculty and staff through professional development programs. For faculty, this includes required advisement workshops, peer evaluation processes, established departmental mentoring systems, the ability to bank overload hours toward professional development release time, and a formal travel expense plan to encourage participation in professional activities. For staff, this includes recurrent training sessions to help supervisors better manage their departments and employees, and a formal travel expense plan to encourage participation in professional activities.

2. Actors: Dean of Teaching and Learning, Vice President for Academic Affairs, School Deans, Human Resources, Classified Employees Council, and Executive Staff

3. Time: Has been initiated; ongoing

4. Measure: Some of these programs already are in the budget. A central funding source should be established to supplement professional travel. In order to bank overload hours toward release time, a phased approach is necessary. We estimate that this will cost the university \$7,000 in 2009, \$12,000 in 2010, and \$18,000 in 2011. This covers the costs of adjunct faculty to fill in for full-time faculty taking release time.

5. Judge: Dean of Teaching and Learning, Vice President for Academic Affairs, School Deans, Human Resources staff, Classified Employees Council, and Executive Staff

Strategic Priority 15: Strengthen the Diversity of Faculty and Staff

1. Outcome: We must commit to developing a diverse workforce and to promoting a welcoming community reflective of our pluralistic society. Efforts should be made to recruit a diverse faculty and staff and to offer support for them within the university community.

2. Actors: Executive Staff, Human Resources, Supervisors (including Deans and Department Chairs)

3. Timeline: Has been initiated; ongoing

4. Measure: At 95% of West Virginia peers.

5. Judge: Human Resources

Strategic Priority 20: Enhance Retirees' Connection to the University

1. Outcome: We must provide incentives for retirees to teach and maintain a connection to the university through established and continuing education programs. We must encourage retirees to serve as mentors and in other capacities as identified by the academic leadership. Various ways to engage retirees in a continued life with the campus include audit privileges, wellness discounts, complimentary athletics or performance passes, and access to office space, Shepherd e-mail, and the library.

2. Actors: Deans, Department Chairs, Human Resources, Supervisors

3. Timeline: Retirement plan in place by 2010

4. Measure: \$10,000 per year. Center for Teaching and Learning will survey retirees in 2012 to assess satisfaction.

5. Judge: Center for Teaching and Learning, Human Resources

PATHWAY 3: TO CREATE A BEAUTIFUL AND WELCOMING CAMPUS

Strategic Priority 5: Enhance campus border definition and focal points

1. Outcome: The campus borders must be defined to create a beautiful and welcoming campus. Focal points will be created to communicate the identity of the university. These focal points should reflect the history and character of the university and the community within which it resides. Signage should be enhanced to interpret the university's history and to assist visitors as they navigate the campus.

2. Actors: Facilities Management, Master Plan Committee

3. Time: Over the next five years

4. Measure: completion of associated projects

Additional costs associated with this initiative are:

Campus Signage

FY 2010 \$100,000; FY 2011 \$100,000

Campus Border Definition

FY 2012 \$50,000; FY 2013 \$50,000; FY 2014 \$50,000

5. Judge: Executive Staff

Strategic Priority 7: Enhance buildings and grounds by increasing maintenance staff

1. Outcome: As a premier public liberal arts institution, Shepherd must have facilities that meet the needs and expectations of students, faculty, staff, and community attracted to a dynamic liberal arts environment. Facilities are not only physical resources; they reflect the essence of the university. The buildings and grounds will be well maintained and aesthetically pleasing for visitors and the campus community. Prospective students and faculty form opinions about the competency and morale of an institution from its appearance. Sufficient staff must be hired to maintain the grounds of the university's building and grounds. Over the past 12 years, many buildings have been built and the acreage of maintained grounds has been expanded. In addition, the use of facilities after usual working hours has increased. The staffing for custodians and grounds workers is below national averages. As the university seeks to expand its facility utilization rates through increased programming, more support staff will be needed. The university must increase the number of employees in this area.

The university must take advantage of its physical assets. New buildings or additions have been constructed for the physical sciences, the library, the music and art departments, the School of Professional Studies, the Wellness Center, intramurals, residence life and athletics. To increase resources, programs should be supported that increase the utilization of these facilities. For example, a wellness program involving

academic, student life, intramurals, and the nursing program will promote student learning and development. Utility costs for the new Wellness Center must be funded.

2. Actors: Facilities Management, Master Plan Committee

3. Time: Over the next five years

4. Measure: Increased Facilities Management and Wellness Center survey scores, Additional annual operating costs associated with this initiative are:

Wellness Center Utilities: \$102,000

Three custodians:

Salaries and Fringe Benefits \$65,446

Two grounds workers:

Salaries and Fringe Benefits \$68,861

5. Judge: Executive Staff

Strategic Priority 9: Develop a pedestrian-centric campus

1A. Outcome: The campus must evolve from an environment where driving is the norm, to one where walking to and from campus buildings is not only the standard, but also a welcome activity. The safety of pedestrians must be a top priority. A pedestrian bridge must be erected across Route 480 to improve safety and traffic flow. The construction of this structure will allow the university to improve the connection between the east and west campuses.

2A. Actors: Facilities Management, Master Plan Committee

3A. Time: By 2011

4A. Measure: Completion of project

Additional Costs associated with this initiative are:

Pedestrian Bridge

FY 2011 \$1,400,000

5A. Judge: Executive Staff

1B. Outcome: The opportunities for students to interact with their peers, faculty, and staff will improve if vehicles are not the primary mode for moving about the campus.

2B. Actors: Facilities Management

3B. Time: Over the next five years

4B. Measure: Completion of projects, increased use of bicycles

Additional Costs associated with this initiative are:

Bike racks

FY 2010 \$3,000; FY 2011 \$3,000; FY 2012 \$3,000

FY 2013 \$3,000; FY 2014 \$3,000

5B. Judge: Executive Staff

Strategic Priority 16: Develop and expand faculty office space

1. Outcome: Adequate space must be made available for faculty and staff offices. The facilities must be accessible to all users. As the university increases the number of full-time faculty, space will need to be converted to offices. Inadequate faculty offices should be expanded.

2. Actors: Facilities Management

3. Time: Over the next five years

4. Measure: Completion of projects

Additional Costs associated with this initiative are:

FY 2010 \$80,000; FY 2011 \$50,000; FY 2012 \$50,000;

FY 2013 \$50,000; FY 2014 \$50,000

5. Judge: Executive Staff

Strategic Priority 18: Bring HVAC across all buildings up to standard

1. Outcome: In addition to small faculty and support staff offices, other significant facilities problems exist. The heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems in White Hall, Snyder Science Hall, and Stutzman-Slonaker Hall are inadequate. These systems must be replaced or upgraded.

2. Actors: Facilities Management

3. Timeline: Over the next five years

4. Measure: Completion of projects

Additional costs associated with this initiative are:

FY 2010 \$700,000; FY 2011 \$700,000; FY 2012 \$700,000; FY 2013 \$700,000

5. Judge: Executive Staff

**PATHWAY 4: TO STIMULATE THE CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION**

Strategic Priority 10: Develop Partnerships to Stimulate Economic Development

1. Outcomes: Economic development activities serve the tripartite purpose of creating a regional economy a) that reflects positively upon the university, b) that offers student development opportunities through co-op, externship, and faculty-led projects, and c) that provides professional development opportunities for faculty. We must develop several initiatives to establish a leadership role for Shepherd University with regard to economic stimulation. It is critical to fund release time for faculty and co-op opportunities for students to participate in developing the economic life of the region; to work with regional economic development partners to assess existing and emerging opportunities for economic development; and to develop capacity to attract faculty research funds that support the current and emerging economic strengths of the region. We must create focused opportunities for students and faculty to engage in internships, externships, and sabbaticals in regional, national, and international businesses. We must develop regional and statewide recognition of Shepherd University's contributions and resources by encouraging departments and other academic areas to host workshops, forums, and professional conferences that are broadly marketed. We must provide stimulus for partnerships in government and business to increase grants and research contracts to the region and to provide opportunities for both international relocation of businesses to the area as well as regional businesses to expand to international locations. In order to develop these and other statewide, regional, and national partnerships, we must secure resources to strengthen graduate and continuing education programs in support of the creation of business partnerships that stimulate economic development.

2. Actors: Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean Graduate Studies, and Continuing Education

3. Timeline: July 2009

4. Measure: 10% increase in graduate student enrollment by 2012, 10% increase in graduate student placement in business and doctoral programs by 2012, 10% increase in continuing education participation by 2012, and establish an evaluative tool that measure economic impact of Shepherd University on state and region. Cost: \$110,000

- Enhanced graduate recruitment
- Advertising/marketing graduate studies
- Graduate research assistantships
- Enhanced continuing education marketing
- Enhanced technology usage in continuing education (e.g., webinars)

5. Judge: Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean Graduate Studies, and Continuing Education

Strategic Priority 13: Fund Athletic Programs to the Level of Regional Parity

1. Outcomes: The athletic program is an integral part of the Shepherd University's educational mission which provides unique competitive learning experiences, a balance of academics and athletics, and leadership development. It provides opportunities for community engagement, as well as providing an economic and cultural impact on the region. Athletics should be fiscally supported in such a manner as reflects its value and relationship to the overall mission of Shepherd University and this support should come from both internal and external sources. The athletics budget should reflect Shepherd's unique travel needs within the WVIAC due to the university's location in the Eastern Panhandle. Athletics should recruit and employ coaches and other athletic administrative staff at competitive salaries to provide student-athletes with the best educational and athletic experience. Athletics must be able to provide its student-athletes with additional financial aid in order to recruit the best possible athletes to compete for the university. Athletics should provide student-athletes and coaches with facilities for competition, practice, and educational purposes that meet national, state, and association requirements, are safe, and reflect Shepherd's leadership role in Division II athletics. New projects or renovations would include upgrades to the soccer field, tennis courts, baseball field, softball field, and Ram Stadium, as well as upgrades to practice fields for soccer, lacrosse, and football. And, an addition to the Butcher Center is needed to provide more classrooms, offices, labs, locker rooms, and weight and training facilities.

2. Actors: Athletic Director, Students, Coaches, Financial Aid Director, Alumni Affairs, Advancement, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Donors

3. Timeline: June 2014

4. Measure:

*Attendance revenue –5% increase in budget ROI by 2014

*Graduation rates – 55% cohort graduation rate by 2014

*Performance –

60% annual retention rate for students and coaches by 2014

50% of teams win WVIAC conference championships by 2014

50% of teams participate in post season play by 2014

Chi Alpha Sigma honors society induction rate increased by 5% by 2014

Cost: \$305,000 (\$61,000/yr) for travel; \$805,000 (\$161,000/yr) competitive salaries; \$110,000 (\$22,000/yr) financial aid; \$16,000,000 (\$10,000,000 state appropriations and \$6,000,000 fund raising) for facilities

5. Judge: Athletic Director, NCAA, Institutional Research

Strategic Priority 14: Develop an Integrated Marketing Program

1. Outcomes: We must create an integrated marketing program that informs the internal and external communities about opportunities and results of Shepherd's

programs, services, and initiatives. The integrated program will ensure a consistent message and continuity of the Shepherd brand across the many media outlets and faces of Shepherd University. Three initiatives are of particular importance in this initiative—the hiring of a content writer to support the Shepherd Web site, hiring an application developer to implement a content management and portal system and other media, and contracting with a communication firm to conduct ongoing audits that inform the integrated marketing strategy committee.

2. Actors: Vice President for Advancement, Vice President for Enrollment Management, Director of IT Services

3. Timeline: July 2009, for content writer
March 2010, for application developer
June 2014, for audit contract

4. Measure:

*Analysis of a portfolio of publications and other media reveals consistent messages and visuals being utilized in all communications to the internal and external community.

*Content analysis of the Web site and other media where information presented to internal and external constituencies is complete, error free, and current

*Solicited or unsolicited evaluations of external communications reports
100% satisfaction with presented information

*50% of Web pages are managed in content management system

*70% of internally-oriented resources are contained within a portal

Cost: \$150,000 annually, collectively

5. Judge: Vice President for Advancement, Vice President for Enrollment Management, Director of IT, and Marketing Firm

Strategic Priority 17: Develop Capacity to Attract and Secure Cultural Initiative Funds

1. Outcomes: Shepherd University's regional centrality in cultural opportunities is well-established and it must serve as the center-piece of our strategic development as a premier, liberal arts-centered university. Observers of academia, both lay and professional, are aware of the link between academic primacy and primacy in the arts. We must effectively utilize our strengths in this regard through several initiatives. First is to create funding opportunities for Shepherd faculty, students, and alumni to perform/exhibit in national and international venues. We must develop a public relations program that maximizes the recognition the university receives from these accomplishments. In addition, we must create partnerships that maximize the resources of the immediate community in support of the tourism industry (e.g., work with the C&O park personnel, local bed and breakfasts, the art department, and CATF to create excursion packages). We must also create endowments that will increase the university's capacity to attract faculty who are recognized nationally and

internationally. And, we must build guest lecture and award programs around the university's two to three lead academic programs and use these to attract nationally and internationally renowned speakers to our top academic programs. Collectively, these priorities require that we develop the capacity through the establishment of a staff position to attract and secure funds from external sources.

2. Actors: Vice President for Advancement, Dean Science and Mathematics, Director of SURC, Dean of Graduate Studies & Continuing Education

3. Timeline: Resource in place by July 1 2009
Cost: \$86,000 annually (including benefits)

4. Measure: Hire Director of Corporate, Foundation, and Government Relations to secure grants in excess of \$1 million annually to support pathway initiatives

5. Judge: Vice President for Advancement

Strategic Priority 19: Create Founder's Day to Symbolize our Academic Stance

1. Outcomes: The most important attribute of a university is a culture that defines the university as an academic center. This culture must be recognized and definable both within the university and outside of the university. An annual event must be established (e.g., a Founder's Day Celebration, a Day of Reflection, or a Metanoia) that honors our history and acknowledges our premier commitment to teaching and learning. This event must celebrate our historic success and our current successes in pedagogy, it must promote and encourage scholarship among faculty and students, and it must also serve to link the university to the wider community in a fashion that continually persuades a wider world that Shepherd University is a premier institution.

2. Actors: Committee comprised of Academic Affairs, Alumni Affairs, and Student Affairs committee

3. Timeline: Plan in place by July 1, 2009
Cost: \$5,000 annually

4. Measure: 75% of the faculty body; 75% of the undergraduate degree-seeking students participate in Founder's Day celebration

5. Judge: Founder's Day Committee

APPENDIX A. The Shepherd University SWOT Analysis (Developed Fall 2007)

EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES

O1) Shepherd University enjoys a special location.

Our location affords us two significant strategic opportunities that we are using effectively: The ability to attract students at out-of-state tuition rates¹, and the large number of potential students within a 2-hour driving range of the school which most students identify as their preferred college location². We are not effectively using a third opportunity: Our location affords opportunity for urban education. In addition we do not utilize the urban press and media opportunities that our location affords us.

O2) Shepherd University enjoys a good reputation with area employers.

Our reputation among regional employers³ continues to provide an opportunity because a significant number of the region's professionals are Shepherd graduates. Our reputation for academic excellence and our additional secondary accreditation in five programs⁴ help to sustain the employability of our graduates. However, our students do not score well on critical thinking skills⁵ which may jeopardize our reputation.

O3) Employers expect employees to have teamwork and problem-solving skills.

We are aware of the demand for teamwork skills and decision-making skills in the workplace, but we are not purposefully developing these skills within our students⁶. We tend to rely on student organizations to provide this experience rather than developing curricular approaches to seize this opportunity.⁷

O4) We are aware of the regional population growth trends and demographics.

The growth rate in our region, particularly within the Eastern Panhandle, exceeds the national growth rate⁸. This is true of the population in general and of some minority populations, Latino and Hispanic in particular.

¹ Shepherd University's out-of-state headcount has grown to 43% according to Highlights of Academic Affairs Data, May 10, 2007 (16).

² E-mail correspondence with Sharon Kipetz.

³ In fact, a number of regional employers recruit on campus. Alumni Relations estimates that at least 85% of Shepherd grads live within a one-hundred mile radius of campus.

⁴ The five programs are Music, Business, Social Work, Education, and Nursing.

⁵ According to the Collegiate Learning Assessment Institutional Report 2005-2006, an assessment tool that "provides colleges and universities with information about their students' performance on tasks that require them to think critically, reason analytically, solve realistic problems, and write clearly," Shepherd University seniors are performing "Below" what would be expected (4-6). Another assessment tool, the Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) shows that 82% of our sophomores are "Not Proficient" when it comes to critical thinking. To date, Shepherd University has not established an assessment benchmark. The NSSE report also provides a moment for caution: "Shepherd seniors were *more critical* than students in the three comparison groups in believing that their experiences at Shepherd would contribute to their ability to solve complex, real-world problems" (8).

⁶ Both the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) and the Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) assessments tools raise some concerns. The 2005-2006 Institutional Report (CLA) shows that our seniors score below the expected level. And, while the 2005-2006 report shows that our freshmen score at the expected level, the Fall 2006 numbers show that our students are scoring below the expected level. When looking at the MAPP report which tests students at the sophomore level, 82% of our students are not proficient critical thinkers. At this point, national comparisons are not available, and once we do have national comparisons, we will be able to set assessment goals. Additionally, once we have longitudinal reports from both CLA and MAPP, we'll be in a better position to identify trends at Shepherd.

⁷ According to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) 2005 Data and Comparison Report, "First-year students and seniors both reported being less likely to work with a classmate outside of class to prepare for class assignments than was common for our selected peer group, other baccalaureate/general studies schools or national norm" (4).

Although aware of these demographic (and economic⁹) trends, we are not responding to the population increase and the multicultural presence in our region. Our competition seems to be keenly aware of growth opportunities¹⁰.

O5) There is a growing interest in distance learning.

We are extremely proud of our tradition of face-to-face instruction, and we are hesitant to advance on the cyber-front for fear of jeopardizing that value. This is an opportunity that is being thrust upon us; unless we respond appropriately, we will soon be considered Luddite.¹¹

O6) There is a growing demand for graduate education.

Twenty-seven percent of the American adult population is now a college graduate, and thirty-four percent of working adults are college graduates¹². As a result, the value of a college degree is declining and the demand for graduate study is increasing. While we are developing graduate programs, we do not yet have a culture of graduate study. Our campus still has the feel of an undergraduate institution, it is not inviting to graduate study, and we are doing very little advertising of our graduate programs. We hesitate over the growth and development of graduate programs and will not tolerate, even as an interim growth step, a negative financial condition to exist in any program.

O7) Shepherd University has weak regional competition for the traditional college experience.

We have an opportunity to take advantage of the fact that few schools in our region offer a traditional collegiate experience. We offer a traditional athletic culture, a variety of traditional residence hall environments, the strongest academic library in the region, and other amenities of a traditional campus such as a wellness center and a college-town atmosphere. However, we are not capitalizing on this virtue.

O8) Shepherd University is aware of the demands and expectations of off-campus residents, nontraditional students, and working students.

The university is aware that there is an increased extracurricular demand competing for student attention, (e.g., children and aged parents). This results in reduced study time, less time to integrate with the campus community, and less faculty contact time. Despite the awareness of this opportunity, we do not provide a comfortable nontraditional class schedule (e.g., night, weekend, and online classes) or offer other approaches to support this increasing student group.¹³

⁸ According to “Eastern Panhandle Region Outlook: Forecast: 2006-2010,” “it can be seen that over the 2000 to 2005 period, the Eastern Panhandle has added 24,718 residents, and average annual rate of 3.4 percent. Not only is this growth rate higher than both the state and the nation, with 0.1 and 1.0 percent respectively, but without the Eastern Panhandle’s population gains the state as a whole would have recorded a net population losses during this period” (5). This means, of course, that other state schools will continue to increase their recruiting presence in the Panhandle. (See footnote #7.) During the fall term of 2006, 45% of Shepherd’s students came from two Panhandles counties, Berkeley and Jefferson.

⁹ Chen, G., Donahue, L. M. & Klimoski, R. J. (2004). Training Undergraduates to Work in Organizational Teams. *The Academy of Management Learning and Education* 3(1), 27-39. According to the Bureau of Business and Economic Research’s October 2006 report, “Eastern Panhandle Region Outlook: Forecast: 2006-2010,” the economic outlook for the Eastern Panhandle is also positive: “The outlook for the Eastern Panhandle region calls for continued strong economic growth, with jobs and population gains well in excess of state and national rates. Job growth is expected to bounce back from weak performance in 2006 to average 1.6 percent per year.” That would far exceed job growth rates expected for the state (0.8 percent per year) and the nation (1.3 percent per year) (1).

¹⁰ When looking at local billboards, Mountain State University has at least four prominent boards within ten miles of Shepherd University, one claiming to be “Your Hometown University.” Another billboard is in Spanish. In Maryland, the new University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH) is currently running an advertisement campaign on local cable channels.

¹¹ A regional competitor, Mountain State University, offers more than seventy courses online, visit <http://www.mountainstate.edu/online/courses.asp>. Of course, there is a variety of online course options, including blended courses where students spend some time in the classroom and some time online.

¹² Business Week, August 21st-28th, 2007, page 45.

¹³ According to “Data for the Shepherd University Board of Governors (May 2007) Report,” the adult FTE as percentage of total FTE since 1997 has remained relatively level, currently at 15.28%. Since the student body has grown, however, this means that the current headcount is 946, up from 672 in 1997 (6).

O9) Shepherd University is a recognized brand.

Our presence as the regional center for academic, cultural and economic opportunity has defined our brand¹⁴. In addition, as our athletic teams are becoming known our brand is becoming even more established. Our marketing efforts, however, are not focused; some have defined our marketing materials as schizophrenic.

(10) A significant number of students begin their post-high school education in two-year programs.

More than 40 percent¹⁵ of high school graduates begin their post-high school education in a two-year program or a community college. There is an opportunity to bring those students into Shepherd to complete a four-year degree¹⁶. We do not deal well with literacy and numeracy issues of transfer students.

¹⁴ We are particularly recognized as a brand in our region. Outside of our region, many believe we are a private (Christian) institution.

¹⁵ According to the U.S. Department of Education's report, "Differential Characteristics of 2-Year Postsecondary Institutions," "Two-year institutions, including community colleges and career schools, have become increasingly important in American higher education since the 1940s. In 2003-04, 43% of all undergraduates were enrolled at 2-year institutions (Horn and Nevill 2006)" (5).

¹⁶ Shepherd currently has a 2-plus-2 matriculation agreements with Frederick Community College and Hagerstown Community College in Maryland, and Shepherd is currently negotiating such an agreement with Lord Fairfax College in Virginia.

EXTERNAL THREATS

T1) We are aware that the State of West Virginia does not adequately fund institutions of higher education.

The public universities in West Virginia have become state-assisted rather than state-supported institutions. The state also limits in-state tuition increases.¹⁷

T2) We are aware that West Virginia's political powerbase is focused on other regions of the state.

The state legislature tends to see the Eastern Panhandle as uniquely affluent within the state and without a need for legislative or financial support. With a new president, a fresh network of political support will have to be developed.

T3) We are aware that there is growing competition for students in higher education.

Many substitutes for higher education exist. Programs such as industrial internships, military service programs, distance-learning programs, two-year programs, and for-profit universities all compete for the same demographic that we would like to see attend Shepherd. We seem to react defensively to competition (usually we just talk about it), but we don't act offensively. Our hubris interferes.

T 4) We are aware that false perceptions of Shepherd University exist.

Shepherd University is a West Virginia public university. West Virginia is seen as an impoverished state and that coloration shadows the university. Shepherd is also perceived as a suitcase college—one at which students leave for the weekend. Another perception is that the university is easy to get into, but hard to get out of. Our public relations efforts do not address false perceptions directly and regularly.

T5) We are aware that the academic preparation of incoming students is waning.

The threat imposed by the lack of preparation of incoming high school graduates is serious¹⁸. High school preparation is one reason that freshman retention is low. It also feeds a culture of grade inflation as the faculty attempts to accommodate ill-prepared students¹⁹. Our freshman advising program is weak, and we are not training our faculty to deal with under-prepared students. We are offering and expanding the First-Year Experience (FYEX) and learning communities. The Office of Teaching, Learning, and Instructional Resources is very active²⁰ and aware. We are not developing relationships with our principal high school feeders that will encourage better preparation for our programs.

T6) We are aware that students today require greater curriculum options.

¹⁷ While the Shepherd University endowment is about \$16 million, it does not cover the anemic state funding. Because of funding issues, Shepherd has made a conscious choice to recruit student from other states. See note 18.

¹⁸ Though our mean score for ACT for Fall 2006 is 21.82 (SAT is 1025), there is a differential between in-state and out-of-state students. The in-state median score for the ACT is 22 while the out-of-state score is 19. For the SAT, the scores are 1020 and 1000, respectively.

¹⁹ Not only are students ill-prepared, they are not being challenged at Shepherd. According to the NSSE report, "First-year and senior students at Shepherd wrote fewer papers in general than students nationally." Also, when it comes to the type of work being completed, the reports shows that "Shepherd first-year students reported a greater likelihood to be asked to memorize facts, ideas or methods and be able to repeat them in the same form ... Shepherd seniors were also less likely to report analyzing and synthesizing ideas than the three comparison groups and less likely than other baccalaureate/general studies schools and nationally surveyed seniors to apply theories in new situations or as a means to solve practical problems."

²⁰ The Academic Support Center (Knutti 106), directed by Joe Green, has been valuable resource for students. The recently initiated stretch model classes for incoming students is also provided under-prepared students an opportunity to stretch out their introductory English and math courses.

We are threatened by the conflicting demands in student lives²¹. We have not developed alternatives to satisfy those demands in most of our major programs. The RBA is considered the best option for curriculum alternatives²².

T7) We are aware that there is a general disconnect between public universities and the community.

Ethical and social perspectives differ between the university community and the non-university community. The progressive/liberal tendencies of university faculty do not match the conservative politics of the area. Certainly not all of our faculty hold moral and social positions that are antithetical to the wider community, but enough do visibly hold such positions that distrust and suspicion develops. Ivory towers are not well received in our region—goal posts are.

T8) We are aware that there is a declining number of high school graduates in West Virginia.

It is a reality that at least through the year 2018 the number of people graduating from high school in West Virginia will be declining. This trend may not be evident in our immediate region or in the high schools from which many of our students come. We must try to draw from other states, particularly given that there will be growing competition from our in-state rivals for Panhandle students.²³

T9) We are aware that the cost of entering the Eastern Panhandle housing market is limiting.

Property values in Jefferson County, particularly near Shepherdstown, are very high. When compared to salaries this becomes a limiting factor in attracting faculty and staff. The Eastern Panhandle is considered an ex-urban area, not a rural area; hence the cost of housing is significantly higher than the rest of the state. While aware of the problem, we are not responding to it.²⁴

T10) We are aware that students and potential students are increasingly engaged in behavioral risk factors.

The risk-taking behaviors of young people and young adults must be considered a threat to Shepherd University. These behaviors reduce the retention potential of students and encourage a climate that is opposed to a good academic culture. Risk behaviors such as drug use, alcohol abuse, and unsafe sexual activity interfere with appropriate student behaviors.

T11) Shepherd University is not conveniently located for easy access.

There is no well-developed public transportation system and primary highway access to Shepherdstown is limited. In addition to the difficulties associated with getting to campus, parking is problematic both in town and on campus. There is currently no plan to respond to the inaccessibility.²⁵

²¹ According to NSSE, “Shepherd first-year students reported working for pay off campus exceedingly more than respondents in the Peer Group” (7). The report shows that “[o]ur first-year students also report that they must provide care for dependents living with them (parents, children, spouse, etc.) at a much higher rate than our selected peer group respondents” (7).

²² In fact, except for education (which averages 82 graduates per year when all certification areas are included), the RBA program graduates more students than any other program (Data for the Shepherd University Board of Governors, May 2007, 22-23).

²³ One opportunity rests with nontraditional students. “In 2000, 16.7 percent of the population over the age of 25 had at least a bachelor’s degree or more in the Eastern Panhandle. This is above the level of the state at 14.8 percent, with both Jefferson and Berkeley County having higher rates than the state with 21.6 and 15.1 percent, respectively. These are well below the U.S. level of 24.4, as well as Maryland and Virginia with 31.4 and 29.5 percent” (“Eastern Panhandle: Regional Outlook, Forecast 2006-2010,” 3). In terms of national ranking, West Virginia, in 2005, ranked 50th in educational attainment for population 25 and older (“Profiles and Trends in West Virginia Higher Education, 29).

²⁴ This also works against our profile of “traditional campus.” Since many of our faculty members commute great distances, faculty are not as present at events; it is a college-town that does not have faculty in residence.

²⁵ The current Campus Master plan has a parking garage being built on west campus during the ten year period ending 2018.

T12) We are aware that dialogue between the campus community and the Shepherdstown community is sometimes ineffective.

Members of the faculty and the administration are involved in many civic organizations and, therefore, have interaction with the community but formal dialogue is limited and unfortunately the parking problem tends to color all other issues. The new president may provide new opportunities for dialogue.

INTERNAL STRENGTHS

S1) Our faculty and staff are invested in the success of our students.

One of the greatest strengths of Shepherd University is the extent to which the faculty is invested in the success of our students. Students are generally the faculty's first interest. We conduct university-wide, learning-centric assessment. We have an active Office of Teaching, Learning, and Instructional Resources, and our VPAA encourages the scholarship of pedagogy. Even with that, complacency is a potential problem, as evidenced by poor graduation attendance by faculty which some may infer to be a lack of interest in students.

S2) Our core values are real to us.

Our recently developed core values statement is widely acknowledged and was unanimously accepted by the decision-making panels of the university. However, in order to become part of the cultural definition of the university the core values must be "sold" by senior administration. Currently they are not being promulgated and they need to be made operational.

S3) We have vibrant art, music, and cultural programs.

Shepherd University has a strong Performing Arts Series at Shepherd (PASS) as well as a compelling Appalachian Heritage Writers' Project. Our music program has highly competitive admissions requirements, our art program has a widely respected professional component, and the Contemporary American Theater Festival has no peer.

S4) We offer a traditional collegiate experience.

Offering a traditional collegiate experience is a doubly important strength because of the opportunity offered by the absence of other schools in the region who can claim this strength. Two components of this strength are the strong sense of community and the faculty accessibility. Several elements of a traditional experience need to be improved: We have 1308 beds in residence halls²⁶, and we have very few intramural teams (although this is being addressed). Our definition of commuter may need to be altered since many "commuters" live in close proximity to the university and are not commuters to campus in any real sense.

S5) Our students are engaged in the community through volunteerism and service learning.

Our campus demonstrates a relatively effective synergy between academic affairs and student affairs with regard to service learning. Our students are involved in many service opportunities²⁷ which are reflective of a community-minded student body. Our strong student-led Multicultural team and nascent Civility Response Team are additional evidences of this. But, service opportunities must be brought more fully to the classroom.

S6) We are aware of the need for student support and intervention.

Our Office of Teaching, Learning, and Instructional Resources has an intervention program that identifies at-risk students and works to help them overcome their deficiencies. We do find that our advising program for lower division students is a problem and an important issue.²⁸

S7) We enjoy the favorable designation as a state university.

Shepherd University has chosen a name that attracts the curiosity of private school seekers yet as a public institution we have the privilege of inter-state collaborations (e.g., academic common market options) and intra-state collaborations (e.g., Med-Step program). We also anticipate that political support will develop with the perception of Shepherd University's national presence.

²⁶ The 2006-2007 occupancy rate was 90%. The year before, the bed count was 1018; occupancy rate, 100%.

²⁷ Last year's Relay for Life raised over \$60,000. Per capita this is the most successful fundraising event in the state of West Virginia. Only WVU raises more, but their per capita is substantially lower.

²⁸ The NSSE report raises some concerns. "Both seniors and first-year students reported feeling that Shepherd did not provide enough academic support to help them succeed" (7).

S8) We offer a good value relative to the cost of tuition.

Shepherd University is affordable. We do not define value for ourselves; it is attributed to us, but those who make this attribution have identified Shepherd as a Best Buy institution²⁹. We must work to continue to benefit from this strength—it is a tenuous designation.³⁰

S9) We are experiencing growing external financial support.

We enjoy a growing body of alumni with improving financial support. David Dunlop's new role as Special Assistant to the President may also have a positive impact on fundraising. There continues to be a large potential.³¹ The Shepherd University Research Corporation (SURC), a non-profit corporation, has the mission to foster and support academic and scientific research at Shepherd; the SURC provides another avenue for financial support at Shepherd.³²

S10) We offer innovative curricular and co-curricular programs.

Innovation, known locally as creative frugality, is an important strength of Shepherd University. Such things as our housing programs and the Gateway program demonstrate this strength. Cross-department options are available but are not growing. In fact, it is left to the student government to support co-curricular activities³³.

²⁹ For the third year in a row, the Princeton Review has named Shepherd a Best Southeastern College.

³⁰ Value, of course, is rather difficult for Shepherd to assign to itself. NSSE offers up a concern when it comes to value. "Seniors and first-year student in the three comparison groups reported their institutions placed a *greater emphasis* (S) on studying and academic work than was reported by Shepherd respondents (7). When asked about satisfaction, NSSE shows that "[b]oth seniors and first-year respondents at this school were *slightly less satisfied* (S) with their overall experience than other respondents" (8).

³¹ Our \$14 million endowment compares well to comparable institutions (\$7 million).

³² In fact, SURC has just received a \$36,000 award from the National Science Foundation (NSF).

³³ The current level of co-curricular funding by the student government association is \$238,800.

INTERNAL WEAKNESSES

W1) We suffer from the absence of a shared vision.

The absence of a shared vision is our most glaring weakness³⁴. Without a shared vision there is no focused effort on the future. A vision is under development but such questions as “Will the new president support the new vision?” “Will the vision be given prominence by the administration?” “Will the new vision be shared clearly and unapologetically?” will determine the viability of the new vision. Without a clearly stated and publicly encouraged vision, no other part of a strategic plan will be successful.

W2) We suffer from the limited availability of financial resources.

Financial constraints are a reality.

W3) We suffer from institutional rigidity.

We are constrained by a culture that is very slow to adapt procedural change and in which territorialism reigns. There is a certain degree of cynicism and some accuse others of inflexibility (e.g., certified graduation and reified general studies curriculum). A lack of systems thinking hinders the development of programs that may not have appeal within certain enclaves. There is no cultural management.

W4) We suffer from a culture that lacks communication standards.

There is within our community no cultural expectation with regard to the use of communication. Not only is there no electronic standard, no communication etiquette has been established. When communication is seen as a luxury, we compound our problems.

W5) Our curriculum does not develop critical thinkers.

The failure to develop critical thinkers is a problem that demands attention³⁵. There is no general awareness of the problem among the faculty, and faculty believe they teach critical thinking by modeling it. A design for developing critical thinking must be implemented.

W6) We offer low salaries and few benefits for faculty and staff.

The low salaries paid to faculty and staff generates a turnover problem. While there have been some recent improvements, mean faculty salaries are still below the national average for similar institutions³⁶. It should be noted that it is only now, after years of insufficient funding, that the Annual Experience Increment for faculty has been achieved. We still must improve salaries to bring them up to a reasonable level for our locality. And, even though the classified matrix is now fully funded, the matrix is woefully insufficient—not only do classified employees top-out after fifteen years of service, entry level employees cannot live on the salaries that Shepherd pays. For an entry level position in the dining hall, for instance, the employee would make \$14,908 per year.

³⁴ Many authorities (only a few listed below) have identified the necessity of a shared vision for unleashing human potential. Perhaps no one has been quite as succinct as John Kotter who said, “Vision is essential.” Bennis, W.G. & Nanus, B. (1985). *Leaders: The strategies for taking charge*. New York: Harper & Row. Drucker, P. F. (1973). *Management: Tasks, responsibilities, practices*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers. Eagles, D. (2003). *Facilitating shared vision in the organization*. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 27(5), 208-219. Kotter, J.P. (1996). *Leading change*. Boston, MA; Harvard Business School Press. Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. (2002). *The leadership challenge* (3rd ed.) San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Senge, P.M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York: Currency Doubleday.

³⁵ See footnote 6.

³⁶ The mean salary for all ranks (except for lecturers) at Shepherd is about 91% of the national mean for all ranks for similar institutions. The difference between Shepherd’s means and the national means varies by rank.

W7) Shepherd University personnel are performing at or near their limits.

The weakness that has developed as a result of overworked faculty and staff is a manifestly unrecognized problem. It not only results in a lack of necessary redundancy in functions and insufficient clerical support, it increases turnover. IT services has half the national average staff for institutions of our size³⁷. Hourly overtime is very high, and the number faculty teaching overloads³⁸ is very high.

W8) Faculty lines are not commensurate with enrollment.

As enrollment has increased faculty hiring has not kept pace. We add faculty more slowly than we add students. Although we did add five new faculty lines this year, some departments are very unbalanced.³⁹

W9) We do not provide a support structure for faculty development.

Faculty development is left largely in the hands of each individual faculty member. There is little mentoring beyond the new faculty learning community⁴⁰. The tenure process is neither managed nor consistent across campus, and often times the tenure process is not mentored. The result is that the process can be adversarial, particularly if tenure standards are poorly defined.

W10) We do not provide formal training programs for staff development.

Shepherd University does not offer the routine development opportunities to staff that result in job enhancement and job enrichment. This is partly because overworked staff cannot afford time for training. And, when a staff member does receive training, it often comes with the expectation to do more which is problematic, particularly given that the staff member is likely already overburdened.⁴¹

W11) We have weak institutional diversity initiatives.

Shepherd University is keenly aware of diversity initiatives. In fact, every presidential candidate identified and commented on the problem. We have a limited number of international students, and we lack diversity—in faculty, staff, and students.

W12) We have an inconsistent commitment to the general studies program.

It is a weakness and a paradox of Shepherd University that we are proud of our liberal studies tradition while at the same time we hold to nearly inflexible liberal studies guidelines and course offerings. We live in an environment that desires professional training, yet we hesitate to improve the general studies curriculum to accommodate that reality. Another indication that the general studies culture is not totally accepted is that we do not make enough general studies classes available for all first-year students.⁴²

³⁷ Personal correspondence with Ed Magee.

³⁸ If an overload is narrowly defined to only include overload “classroom instruction,” during the fall 2006 term, 20 full-time faculty taught overloads; during the spring 2007 term, 27 full-time faculty taught overloads. By using “classroom instruction” to define overload, this does not include a number of courses—like internships, co-ops, research seminars, and independent studies. The overload calculations do not factor courses taught for Graduate Studies.

³⁹ According to the data for the Shepherd University Board of Governors as prepared by the VPAA, the number of full time faculty has increased by one position since 1997 to 116. So, while the FTE Student to FTE Faculty ratio has only increased from 18.9 to 20.3, the FTE Student to FT faculty ratio has increased from 24.3 to 29.9 (18).

⁴⁰ In addition to the First-Year Learning Community, starting this year, the Dean of Teaching and Learning has started a Second-Year Learning Community. On the pedagogy side of the equation, Shepherd also has Focus on Student Learning (FOSL) seminars. So, while the campus has attended to pedagogical issues, the mentoring for the tenure process is still inconsistent.

⁴¹ Also, given the current pay scale for classified employees, there is little reward for degree advancement.

⁴² The “Report on the Availability of General Studies Courses for Registration /Advisement” by Dr. Bruce Kelly reports that “[h]alf-way through the summer registration period of 2006, the University ran out of spaces in general studies (and a few select non-general studies) courses commonly taken by our first-semester students” (5). The report articulates the numerous negative consequences. As you would expect, the problems shift from one year to the next. Bob Warburton reports that the chairs were well organized; there were enough seats. This year’s issue, however, is that many of our new students are enrolled in stretch-model classes. So, if a student enrolled in, say, a stretch-model English class, the student was not enrolled in reading/writing intensive courses, like history. This will likely impact retention rates and time to graduation.

W13) We have limited and aging physical resources.

Although we have several new buildings, building restorations in progress, and other buildings under construction, we are not a progressive institution with regard to updating facilities—classrooms are not technology equipped and classrooms are small. While the Master Plan is being followed, it will not address all of the concerns since additional classroom space is not adequately addressed on the Master Plan. Our classroom seat utilization is 64%. Students have poor perception of classroom accessibility⁴³. Other aspects of this problem are that classrooms do not have a graduate culture feel to them and some buildings have prohibitions on their use.

W14) We have an excessive reliance on adjunct faculty.

Thirty-three percent of total credits at Shepherd University are taught by adjunct faculty⁴⁴. Adjuncts are heavily involved with general studies which tends to have a negative impact on student impression of Shepherd because adjunct faculty cannot offer the insider information and advice that full-time faculty can. Turnover among the adjunct faculty is particularly high and there is minimal effort to convert adjuncts to full-time. We rely on the financial advantage of an adjunct faculty at the expense of having a fully engaged faculty. This engagement includes, of course, committee participation.

⁴³ Physical access issues come into play after storms, in particular.

⁴⁴ In 2006, according to the VPAA's May 2007 Report to Board of Governors, 33% of total credits at Shepherd were taught by adjuncts (19).