

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-PARKSIDE CIVIC ACTION PLAN

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CIVIC ACTION PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of Wisconsin-Parkside seeks to live the Wisconsin Idea as an authentic community partner and steward of place as well as an effective laboratory for its students to learn through community engagement. By signing the Campus Compact Civic Action Statement in November 2015, Chancellor Deborah Ford pledged to develop a plan that deepens and strengthens the campus commitment to community engagement and provides guidance to implementation of action steps to do so. The plan was created through the efforts of a team of faculty, staff, administrators, and community partners who collected input and feedback over the course of the last nine months. This included focus groups, facilitated discussions, and surveys of students, faculty, staff, and community members.

The following three goals were developed and related objectives and metrics were defined.

GOAL 1

Prepare UW-Parkside graduates to be fully knowledgeable, active citizens committed to on-going engagement with the campus, local and global communities.

GOAL 2

Campus is an active citizen and authentic partner in improving the economic, social, political and cultural life of its local, regional and global communities.

GOAL 3

Build and sustain a culture that appreciates, fosters and supports a diverse, inclusive campus and regional community.

These goals, objectives, and metrics provide guidance for implementation strategies, which will be owned by various campus planning committees. It is anticipated that this plan will be a continuously evolving document. The following action items are the first steps the university will take to achieve the Civic Action Plan goals.

- Refine standards for community-based learning course designation and establish CBL Steering Committee to review proposed courses.
- In partnership with regional Strive Together collective impact initiatives, implement the student success recommendations from the 2017-2018 Parkside Academic Plan.
- Work with the Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee to develop strategies to engage community members in support of under-represented minority students.

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INTRODUCTION

As part of the University of Wisconsin System, the University of Wisconsin-Parkside is grounded in its commitment to the public purposes of higher education.

“The expansive community engagement efforts of UW-Parkside are guided by a strong vision of reciprocal partnerships among the university and many communities of southeastern Wisconsin. This vision calls for the university to engage the people, organizations, and businesses on its campus, in the region, and in the world by being a nucleus of community engagement and life-long education. A fully engaged university is not only a vision at UW-Parkside, but is also a central value expressed in the mission and the guiding principle known as the Wisconsin Idea.”

UW-Parkside’s Higher Learning Commission Self Study, 2013

Over the last twenty-five years, UW-Parkside has created infrastructure to ensure that it is an authentic partner and steward of place with the community as well as an effective laboratory for its students to learn through community engagement. The Office of Continuing Education and Community Engagement (CECE) serves as a hub of lifelong learning providing programming for nonprofit representatives as well as other professionals with its continuing education programming. In addition, CECE provides resources to build capacity in regional nonprofit organizations, businesses and government agencies through matching them to community-based learning projects and research conducted by students and faculty. The Small Business Development Center, Solutions for Economic Growth Center and the App Factory provide additional resources for businesses. The University also helps to build community capacity as a sponsor for an AmeriCorps National Service program and through a network of faculty, staff, and students who serve on community boards and committees. The Office of Student Activities oversees student volunteerism and student organizations, which often engage in service activities. The Office of Advising and Career Services, as well as individual departments, organize hundreds of internship placements each year. In addition, many departments on campus engage in regular partnerships that support the community in a variety of ways.

UW-Parkside is an active member of Wisconsin Campus Compact, the state affiliate of a national network of organizations that promotes community engagement and civic action on college and university campuses. Last year, national Campus Compact urged the presidents and chancellors of its member institutions to sign a pledge that committed their institutions to develop a plan in the following year. Over 450 Campus Compact member presidents and chancellors signed the pledge, including UW-Parkside Chancellor Deborah Ford. As one of the early signers of the pledge, Chancellor Ford recognized the opportunity to strengthen the campus’ role as a steward of place and build increased capacity for community engagement for the benefit of the students and the local, regional, and global communities.

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UW-Parkside's Civic Action Plan will broaden and deepen its work realizing the five commitments from the Campus Compact Civic Action Statement signed by Chancellor Ford. UW-Parkside has pledged the following:

- We empower our students, faculty, staff, and community partners to co-create mutually respectful partnerships in pursuit of a just, equitable, and sustainable future for communities beyond the campus—nearby and around the world.
- We prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.
- We embrace our responsibilities as place-based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities—economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically.
- We harness the capacity of our institutions—through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practice—to challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.
- We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.
- These commitments are neither a checklist nor a menu of options. They are guideposts to developing an integrated and comprehensive approach to achieving the public purpose of higher education. The UW-Parkside Civic Action Planning Committee has created a set of high level goals linked to the five commitments. Below are our goals and how they tie to the commitments:

GOAL 1

Prepare UW-Parkside graduates to be fully knowledgeable, active citizens committed to on-going engagement with the campus, local and global communities.

With this goal, UW-Parkside is empowering and preparing our students to conduct lives as engaged citizens. UW-Parkside is also embracing its responsibility to contribute to the health of its communities.

GOAL 2

Campus is an active citizen and authentic partner in improving the economic, social, political and cultural life of its local, regional and global communities.

With this goal, UW-Parkside makes a stronger commitment to harness the capacity of our institution to improve our communities by setting high expectations for students, faculty, and staff to engage with our communities. It will also help us foster an environment that affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education and embraces our responsibilities as a place-based institution to contribute to the health and strength of our communities—economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically.

GOAL 3

Build and sustain a culture that appreciates, fosters, and supports a diverse, inclusive campus and regional community (race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age and nationality).

This goal will help prepare and empower our students to live lives of engaged citizenship in which they support and appreciate a diverse community. It will also harness the university's potential to lead by example and challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.

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PLANNING PROCESS

To ensure that we heard from across campus as well as the community in developing this plan, a Civic Action Planning Team was formed with representation from across campus as well as from the community. Below is a list of the team members:

- Fay Akindes, Community-Based Learning and Research Faculty Director/Professor, College of Arts and Humanities
- Aaron Carlstrom, Professor, College of Natural and Health Sciences
- Amanda DesLauriers, Community Engagement Specialist, Office of Community Engagement
- Rob Ducoffe, Provost
- Michele Gee, Associate Dean, College of Business, Economics and Computing
- Peggy James, Interim Dean, College of Social Science and Professional Studies
- Debra Karp, Community Engagement Director, Office of Continuing Education and Community Engagement
- DeAnn Possehl, Executive Director of Persistence and Completion
- Tammy McGuckin, Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Enrollment Services
- Tedi Winnett, Director, UW-Extension Cooperative Extension, Community Partner
- Timothy Kruger, Student
- Andre Holland, Student

In August 2016, eight planning team members attended a two-day workshop hosted by Wisconsin Campus Compact which revolved around crafting the plan. The workshop consisted of presentations, dissemination of resources and opportunities to discuss with representatives from other universities and colleges. After this initial workshop, regular bi-weekly meetings were set. A major task the committee set for itself before drafting the three goals that make up the bulk of the plan was to gather ideas, opinions and information from more people both on campus and in the community. Representatives from the group presented on the Civic Action planning process to Parkside Student Government to encourage any who were interested to participate. After this presentation, two students (listed above) joined the committee. The information gathering activities included the following:

ALL ADVISORY BOARDS MEETING

On September 26, 2016, UW-Parkside held its first All Boards Meeting. Organized by the Talent and Economic Development (TED) Committee, the purpose of the event was to bring together representatives of the university's many community advisory boards to engage them in exploring how to prepare UW-Parkside students for success in the 21st Century. Attended by approximately sixty people, the event featured a keynote presentation by UW-Parkside alumna Rebekah Kowalski, Vice President for Right Management North America, and talent strategist of the landscape of the 21st century workforce. The goals of the event were to generate enthusiasm and ideas for the ways in which Advisory Board members can contribute to enhanced student success, and to use suggestions gathered as a springboard for discussion, planning and action. Many of the ideas generated in this planning session were relevant to the Civic Action commitments and were incorporated into the Civic Action planning process.

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Attendees of the All Board meeting comprised community representatives serving on the following boards: Alumni Association, College of Arts and Humanities, College of Business, Economics and Computing, College of Natural and Health Sciences, Community Engagement, Continuing Education, College of Social Sciences and Professional Studies, Information Technology Practice Center (ITPC), and the UW-Parkside Foundation.

STUDENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNER FOCUS GROUPS

At the beginning of the 2016 fall semester, the Civic Action Planning Committee enlisted the help of Sociology professor Dr. Helen Rosenberg and her students in a community based learning project to conduct three focus groups with various groups of people. These included students who were highly engaged in the community, a random group of students who were not necessarily identified as engaged and a group of dedicated community partners. The focus groups used different scenarios to foster a conversation about what each party considered the university's role in the community and how they recommended enhancing and deepening this role. The results from these groups was compiled into a report by the students and delivered to the committee, which then incorporated the results into their planning process.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COUNCIL FOCUS GROUP

On January 26, 2017, Kenosha County UW-Extension's Tedi Winnett (also the community partner representative on the planning committee), organized a workshop to get feedback from the Community Engagement Advisory Council, which advises the UW-Parkside Office of Community Engagement. The Advisory Council is made up representatives of regional nonprofit and government organizations, with ties to UW-Parkside. This activity provided these individuals with the opportunity to share their ideas on how the university could achieve its Civic Action goals, and how and where they would like to see partnerships develop to achieve greater impact. As with the other focus groups, this information was compiled into a report and shared with the Civic Action Planning Committee.

SURVEY

After crafting the goals and corresponding high-level objectives, based on both the Campus Compact Action Statements and the feedback from the various focus groups, a draft of the goals was presented to the University Committee, the governing body of the Faculty Senate for preliminary feedback. The Provost suggested that we create a brief survey and send it out to the entire campus. Students, staff, and faculty were sent the survey that asked them to rank whether they thought each goal of the plan was not important, somewhat important or extremely important. 95% responded that they believed Goal 1 was either somewhat or extremely important. Goal 2 was considered somewhat or extremely important by 96% of respondents. And Goal 3 came in with 95% of respondents believing it was somewhat or extremely important. The survey, which was completed by 136 respondents (3% of total campus population—1% of students, 20% of faculty and instructional staff, and 8% other staff.) Of the respondents 40% were students, 29% were faculty/instructors and 31% were other staff. Campus staff, faculty and students were then given an opportunity to comment on how ingrained they thought each goal was already at the university, share any ideas that had to deepen the work we do to address a particular issue and volunteer to help implement the goal in the future.

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GOALS, HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVES AND METRICS

GOAL 1

Prepare UW-Parkside graduates to be fully knowledgeable, active citizens committed to on-going engagement with the campus, local, and global communities.

OBJECTIVES

Students participate in courses and events designed to increase their awareness of local, national and global community conditions and the factors that contribute to these conditions.

Students participate in activities with campus, local, national and global partners to address economic, social, political, cultural and environmental issues.

Students engage and partner at levels of increasing responsibility and commitment with campus, local, national and global communities to address community conditions.

HIGH LEVEL METRICS

Percentage of students who take courses and attend events that address community conditions, vote, do internships, study abroad, enroll in community based courses and the Community Engagement Certificate, become involved in student government and other campus service organizations, volunteer in local, national and global settings.

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GOAL 2

Campus is an active citizen and authentic partner in improving the economic, social, political and cultural life of its local, regional and global communities.

OBJECTIVES

Participate as an active partner with the Southeast Wisconsin Strive Together Initiatives.

Create new vehicles for on-going communication and feedback with representatives of diverse segments of the community to ensure community engagement activities are responsive to community needs and priorities.

Build and strengthen relationships with diverse organizations working toward community revitalization and enhanced opportunities for all.

Strengthen civic engagement through policies and practices for selecting, developing, supporting, rewarding, and deploying faculty and staff who participate in high-quality community engaged teaching, research and scholarship as well as volunteerism in the community.

HIGH LEVEL METRICS

Number of Parkside-sponsored national service members, students, and faculty/staff engaged in Strive Together work and other community revitalization efforts; data from annual UW System Partnership Reports.

Revised faculty and staff development programming, workload policies, and recognitions that provide incentive for community engagement; faculty and staff job descriptions and evaluation criteria include community engagement.

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GOAL 3

Build and sustain a culture that appreciates, fosters and supports a diverse, inclusive campus and regional community (race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, and nationality)

OBJECTIVES:

Create and sustain an environment on campus that is welcoming, engaging and safe for all students, faculty, staff and community members.

Increase the success of typically under-served populations of students by increasing their participation in high impact learning practices that include community engagement.

Conduct a feasibility study on UW-Parkside becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI).

Re-focus and reorganize human resources to build campus capacity in addressing issues of equity and inclusion both on campus and in the community.

HIGH LEVEL METRICS:

Increased retention and graduation rates for typically under-served populations of students

Increase in the percentage of typically under-served students who participate in high impact practices that involve community engagement

Reported increased impact of university experience related to key learning outcomes (e.g. empathy, cultural competence, and personal code of ethics) by graduates, as measured through the annual Graduation Survey

Increase in the diversity of community organizations and initiatives with which UW-Parkside partners

Increase in the percentage of students, faculty and staff who report high levels of comfort with the campus climate as measured by a Campus Climate survey