

***DRAFT***



# Mansfield University

## Strategic Plan

### 2008-2013

*Developing Tomorrow's Leaders*

This version of the draft strategic plan includes input from President Loeschke and recommendations from cabinet members as of July 8, 2008. There is opportunity for final input from the Strategic Planning Committee, campus community, Council of Trustees, Foundation Board, Alumni Board and community over the next month.

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## **A Message From Mansfield University President, Dr. Maravene Loeschke**

The Mansfield University Strategic Plan is the road map that will guide the University's journey for the next five years. Mansfield University's path will guide our students to fulfill their dreams and achieve professional and personal success as educated, responsible citizens.

The Strategic Plan was developed by an inclusive process that included faculty, staff, administrators, students, alumni, faculty emeriti, the Council of Trustees, the Foundation Board, the Alumni Board and the community. All campus and community constituents had many opportunities to provide their input. The result is a Strategic Plan that captures our culture, reinforces our mission, articulates our vision, and reflects the heart and pulse of our determination to provide an excellent, individualized education, leadership development, and growth of the whole person as a lifelong learner.

The University's commitment to diversity is inherent in the mission, vision and all eight goals. The University has made a deliberate choice to integrate our diversity goals throughout the Strategic Plan rather than segment diversity into a separate goal. Our desire is that inclusion be an integral part of the University culture.

Diversity as referenced in the Strategic Plan refers to our commitment to bring underrepresented students, faculty and staff into the campus community, and to encourage students, faculty and staff to explore, understand and respect diverse, social identities in order to contribute to a civil planet.

Mansfield University is one of fourteen universities that comprise the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. We are proud to be a part of and support our sister institutions: Bloomsburg University, California University, Cheyney University, Clarion University, East Stroudsburg University, Edinboro University, Indiana University, Kutztown University, Lock Haven University, Mansfield University, Millersville University, Shippensburg University, Slippery Rock University, West Chester University.

The Mansfield University Strategic Plan 2008 is aligned with and supports the goals articulated in the Strategic Plan for the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. Those goals are: Student Achievement and Success, University and System Excellence, Commonwealth Service, Resource Development and Stewardship, and Public Leadership.

## **A Message From The Mansfield University Council of Trustees**

The Council of Trustees, individually and collectively, will be engaged to foster communication and interaction within their respective spheres of influence. Trustees will be considered ambassadors of MU to cultivate cultural, philanthropic, economic and social relationships on behalf of the University.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS 2007-2008**

In the Fall of 2007, Mansfield University President Dr. Maravene Loeschke announced that the University would undertake a new strategic planning process. It was Dr. Loeschke's intent that this process be undertaken by the entire institution, rather than be dictated from the top down. The President charged Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Dr. Michael Renner with overseeing the formation of a committee to be created through a combination of appointments and nominations/election. By late October 2007 a committee was announced that included:

Dr. Deborah Erickson, Associate Provost – Co-chair  
Dr. Adam F. Brennan, Professor of Music – Co-chair  
Dr. Catherine Renner – Associate VP for Institutional Research and Planning  
Dr. Michele Moore – Assistant Professor of Education/Special Education  
Dr. Azizur Molla – Assistant Professor of Sociology and Anthropology  
Dr. Adrienne McEvoy – Associate Professor Philosophy/FYE Coordinator  
Ms. Edith Gallagher – Head Coach of Women's Softball  
Mrs. Denise Berg – Director of Alumni Relations  
Mrs. Susan Sweet – Director of the Center for Lifelong Learning  
Mr. Michael Reid – Vice President of Finance and Administration  
Mr. Edgard Domenich- Staff Representative  
Mr. Michael Kohler – Graduate Student Representative  
Ms. Renee Slyster – Undergraduate Student Representative  
Mr. Matthew Pilkerton- Undergraduate Student Representative

In early November 2007, the committee began holding campus conversations and discussion sessions to solicit feedback from faculty, staff, alumni, students and community members. An online survey form was developed for staff/student participation and to encourage a broad spectrum of input. Primarily, the questions asked in this early stage dealt with perceptions of the institution by its constituents, generalizations of the perceived mission of the institution and our effectiveness in meeting that mission, and input regarding the direction the university should take to ensure its place in the future.

By the end of November, Dr. Deborah Erickson, co-chair of the committee, stepped down to deal with pressing issues in the Education Area. Graduate Student representative Michael Koehler also stepped down to assist to Dr. Erickson in meeting her expanded responsibilities. The committee requested that new members be appointed to replace Dr. Erickson and Mr. Koehler. Permission was granted, as was a specific request to ask Dr. Janeen Sheehe (Heath Sciences) to serve. Dr. Sheehe accepted and a new graduate assistant to the committee, Mr. David Post, was appointed. At about this same time, the committee realized that additional perspectives were missing from the committee – those of employers and of our newly established student leadership program. To rectify this, the committee requested of the Provost that Ms. Julia Overton-Healy be added to the team. With permission of the President, Ms. Overton-Healy joined the team. Elections

for a new co-chair were held within the team in December. Dr. Janeen Sheehe was elected and served as co-chair with Dr. Brennan.

The revised team included:

Dr. Adam F. Brennan, Professor of Music – Co-chair  
Dr. Janeen Sheehe, Professor of Health Sciences – Co-chair  
Dr. Catherine Renner – Associate VP for Institutional Research and Planning  
Dr. Michele Moore – Assistant Professor of Education/Special Education  
Dr. Azizur Molla – Assistant Professor of Sociology and Anthropology  
Dr. Adrienne McEvoy – Associate Professor Philosophy/FYE Coordinator  
Ms. Julia Overton-Healy—Director, Career Center and Mountaineer Leadership Program  
Ms. Edith Gallagher – Head Coach of Women’s Softball  
Mrs. Denise Berg – Director of Alumni Relations  
Mrs. Susan Sweet – Director of the Center for Lifelong Learning  
Mr. Michael Reid – Vice President of Finance and Administration  
Mr. David Post – Graduate Assistant

Regularly scheduled meetings began taking place in January 2008, prior to the start of the spring semester. Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOC) surveys began immediately and were incorporated into University Days sessions. At this time, the committee also concluded that several other perspectives were not sufficiently represented by the committee. Rather than add new members, the team determined that they would invite various areas to engage in formal and informal dialogue with the committee as a whole and with individual members. These additional views were critical to formulating a strategic plan that considered all aspects of the institution. Specifically sought out were representatives from Student Affairs, Residence Life, Advancement and Grants Development, and Enrollment Services.

Additional Key Contributors:

Mr. Chuck Colby, Residence Life  
Mr. James Harrington, Student Affairs  
Mr. Steve Besse, Advancement  
Mrs. Betsy Brune, Grants Development  
Mr. Brian Barden, Enrollment Services  
Dr. David Flesch, Biology  
Mr. William Phillips, Campus Technology

All members were extended open invitations to attend meetings, and regular dialogue with these areas was made a priority. An on-line survey was also posted for alumni, students and community member contributions. While SWOC analysis closed on February 12, 2008, the committee continued to engage the campus and community in conversation. The Strategic Planning Committee began writing an action plan for the institution in February 2008, focusing on eight elements that emerged from data gathered over the previous three months. The key issues identified (in alphabetical order) were:

- Advancement
- Assessment
- Community Relations
- Environment/Safety
- Leadership
- Liberal Arts as a Foundation of Excellence
- Quality of Faculty and Staff
- Student Recruitment and Retention/Focus on Students

The team was charged with creating a draft document for distribution and campus discussions to take place prior to April 2008. The draft was revised after the April discussions, submitted to the Cabinet for review in summer 2008, and completed in September 2008 after one final opportunity was provided for community input.

This process is new to Mansfield University, particularly in that the administration has, for the first time in our history, asked that our strategic plan be done from a grass roots level, rather than from a top down model. This is a welcomed change, but one that presents a few unique obstacles to overcome. Most outstanding among these obstacles is the timeline, which is not wholly conducive to a depth of process that the SPC had hoped to achieve. These conditions have underscored the belief that for this process to prove meaningful there must be a commitment by the campus to see this process as ongoing and participative. To that end, we believe that it will be critical to form implementation teams for each of the eight elements of the strategic plan.

Mission and Vision statements were among the first elements of the strategic plan revisited. The Strategic Planning Committee considered other institutional plans, sought feedback and input from faculty, staff, students, alumni, key employers and the community and considered the current Mission and Vision. Primary discussion and investigation of our mission and vision was complete in the late fall of 2007. Following University Days at the start of the 2008 spring semester, the Strategic Planning Committee began to use the following as a guiding force in the development of our new strategic plan.

The plan presented herein is intended as a *living document*. It is offered to guide and focus the institution on critical issues believed to be of the greatest import to our future. This plan will impact our ability to lead through the delivery of excellent instruction and opportunity. We will emphasize partnership and service as a resource in our community to instill in our constituents a thirst for knowledge and a meaningful manner in which to contribute positively to the world.

It is equally imperative that we understand this document as responsive as the world around us changes. The Strategic Planning Implementation Teams will be empowered to respond appropriately, developing, altering or reprioritizing the elements contained within this plan. Those individuals serving on the teams must have a forward looking vision as well as an ability to work collectively in developing specific strategies to

successfully implement and assess this plan. In short, the institution is relying on leadership from all members.

### **MANSFIELD UNIVERSITY MISSION**

The Mansfield University community is dedicated to a personalized education with all programs grounded in the liberal arts. As a small, comprehensive public university, we are committed to promoting leadership development through character, scholarship, cultural awareness and service to others. Through our passion for learning, we positively influence the world.

### **MANSFIELD UNIVERSITY VISION**

The community of Mansfield University will embody the four virtues of our Creed – Character, Scholarship, Culture, and Service.

#### ***CHARACTER***

We will hold ourselves to the highest standards of ethical behavior, incorporating respect for self, others and our surroundings. We will devote ourselves to the holistic development of individuals, fostering personal accountability, honesty and advocacy through character education. Courage, integrity, and honor exemplify our core values.

#### ***SCHOLARSHIP***

The Mansfield University community will foster a life of intellectual curiosity, celebrating the creation and dissemination of new ideas. We will embrace the use of rigorous, responsible and critical inquiry to understand, acquire and share knowledge. We apply what we learn by recognizing that each of us is both student and teacher engaged in the continuous pursuit of learning.

#### ***CULTURE***

Mansfield University will lead the region and beyond in promoting diversity and cultural awareness. We will accomplish this mission by vigorously engaging with one another, capitalizing on the gifts bestowed on our community through the arts, and celebrating our similarities and differences. Through open discourse, we will create meaningful experiences that compel us towards understanding and compassion for all humanity.

#### ***SERVICE***

Knowledge invests us with the power to improve our world and the responsibility to act. We will be engaged in our community. Our students, faculty and staff will partake in volunteerism and service activities as a natural outgrowth of the University Mission in order to impact lives now and in the future.

## **I. MAKE LIBERAL ARTS THE FOUNDATION FOR EVERY STUDENT**

The general education curriculum is a core element of the liberal arts education for every Mansfield University student, and as such affects every one of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni. As the central theme of our institutional mission, it is the unifying element underlying all areas of study and permeating every aspect of our vision. In order for our entire curriculum to reflect this mission and vision, our definition for a liberal arts education must be clearly articulated. There must be a single coherent model for all programs that is both internally responsive to the institution's needs and aligned with requirements of external accrediting bodies and state mandates.

- We will undertake a thorough analysis of best practices among liberal arts institutions with regard to the educational elements that are common in the experience of all students at the institution, including a liberal arts base for professional programs.
- We will establish university-wide learning outcomes that reflect Mansfield University's Mission in cooperation with the assessment implementation team to be formed through this strategic plan.
- We will review the current General Education curriculum. If appropriate, we will restructure it to reflect Mansfield's dedication to the development of the skills, diversity and dispositions consistent to a Liberal Arts Education.
- We will develop assessment methods that determine whether our students are achieving the desired outcomes, and that inform continuous improvement of the curriculum toward this goal.
- We will engage in regular, intentional, and meaningful campus-wide conversations about the nature of a liberal arts education and the role Mansfield's general education curriculum plays in this education.

## **II. ENSURE QUALITY FACULTY AND STAFF**

Mansfield University will recruit and retain the finest faculty and staff to ensure that our constituents have the opportunity to interact and study with outstanding and culturally diverse leaders.

- We commit to recruiting employees who have the strongest credentials in their respective fields and who have the best experience and creativity to offer.
- We commit to hiring individuals who express their desire to contribute to the greater good of the institution, who believe in the values we express in our Creed and who will commit to bringing these values to life in their daily interaction with our constituents.
- We commit to addressing issues as a community in order to provide excellent service to all employees.
- We will work to provide faculty and staff opportunities that foster their connection to the community.
- We will encourage and reward faculty and staff who, through collaborative effort both inside and outside the institution, advance society through their work (e.g. publication, collaboration, etc), recognizing that these kinds of activities are what keep our personnel fulfilled, connected and current in their fields.
- We will hold all employees accountable for contributing to the mission of the institution.
- We will develop mentorships, retreats, and empowering/learning opportunities for personnel to support and cultivate their efforts and actions.
- We will celebrate diversity of opinion and encourage an atmosphere of open dialogue.
- We will communicate clearly our expectations for participation in achieving our mission as we hire new employees with the collaborative support of our various collective bargaining units.
- We will evaluate resource allocation and will work to ensure that we can deliver all of our programs with excellence.

### ***III. MAKE STUDENT SUCCESS OUR CENTRAL FOCUS***

Mansfield University will recruit an academically prepared student body. We will provide the context and the tools for student success, as shown by persistence and timely degree completion as appropriate to the academic major and the student's life circumstances. Mansfield University will, to the best of our ability, recruit a culturally diverse student body.

- We will use an Enrollment Management Plan to attract and retain students from a wider region, including national and international pools to further increase our ethnic diversity, and will increase our local competitiveness with traditional and non-traditional students.
- We will develop an administrative structure for marketing and a marketing plan tied to enrollment targets.
- We will increase enrollment to 3,740 headcount by Fall, 2012.
- We will review our admission standards and increase requirements for admission to our programs while increasing support for under-prepared, under-achieving students.
- We will develop a comprehensive approach to improving Orientation and the First Year Experience, including Residence Life and Student Affairs.
- We will develop programs that assist students beyond the first year.
- We will increase and improve connections/communications/collaboration among Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Residence Life and Athletics in order to reinforce and create a climate that encourages students to participate in campus life.
- We will review and address funding allocation within Student Affairs and Residence Life to insure that funds are used in ways that are consistent with the institution's mission and to support University priorities.
- We will educate and support faculty to provide advising and advising assessment consistent with identified best practices.
- We will develop methods to fairly evaluate advising effectiveness and include this information in faculty evaluation and reward processes.
- We will increase Student Support Services for students who are academically under-prepared or who under-perform.

- We will develop programs that encourage faculty, staff, administration and alumni to interact with and mentor students.
- We will explore coordination and implementation of an academic and events calendar that is responsive to the needs of our entire student body.
- We will improve services to our international students.
- We will explore implementation of a co-curricular transcript.
- We will increase freshman to sophomore retention to be consistently 72% or higher.
- We will strive to meet the special needs of commuter students.
- We will increase enrollment of international students to 5% of the student population.
- We will increase our ALANA (Asian, Latino, African and Native American) enrollment from 7.2% to 10% of the student population.
- We will increase the number of financially viable, innovative Master's programs in order to serve the emerging needs of working adults and nontraditional students.

**IV. ENSURE FINANCIAL STABILITY THROUGH ADVANCEMENT, RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND STRATEGIC ALLOCATION**

The University is committed to solid financial stability and best practice operations that provide long range projections, responsible planning, efficiencies, midterm shifts and allocations aligned to goals, inclusively determined priorities, and assessment.

Mansfield University will base resource allocation on our mission and vision and on Assessment activities to ensure institutional quality. We will facilitate the Office of Advancement and Grants Development in their pursuit of endowments, grants, , employee and alumni support, sponsorship and collaborative agreements, and community involvement and public relations.

- We will explore partnership opportunity with corporations and foundations.
- We will increase our five year rolling average of grant submission by 10 % on average.

- We will work with the Mansfield University Foundation to build financial support for students and University needs.
- We will increase our current 23% employee participation to 50% and sustain that level of employee giving.
- We will increase our alumni giving rate from 12% to 17% and sustain that level of alumni giving.
- We will embark on a public relations campaign that promotes our image and strengthens our media relations.
- We will expand opportunities for alumni to support internships and engage in volunteer experiences for the University as they directly relate to our mission.
- We will redefine and broaden our efforts in public relations to celebrate our success at every opportunity. We will inundate the region with news of activities, accomplishments in academics, athletics, and the arts.
- We will establish a baseline comparative by September 2008 and increase scholarships by 10% per year thereafter.
- We will review staffing in the Office of Advancement and Grants Development and restructure, if necessary, in order to maximize the institution's financial soundness.

**V. MAKE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OUR SIGNATURE**

Mansfield University will be recognized as a center for leadership development.

- We will collectively create a shared and flexible operational definition for leadership as understood at Mansfield University.
- We will mindfully, deliberately and actively practice ethical leadership which creates a leadership culture on campus.
- We will conduct a leadership audit to identify current and viable leadership development activities.
- We will foster advanced scholarship in leadership, exemplify best practices and advance a leadership-as-service culture.
- We will foster leadership development through structured opportunities to develop personal and professional leadership experiences and understanding for all members of our community.

- We will encourage Mansfield University constituents to apply for competitive funding to explore leadership development opportunities.
- We will expand the Mountaineer Leadership Program and other leadership programs to include alumni and community members, thereby providing opportunities for students to engage with a wider spectrum of individuals connected to Mansfield University, which fosters a deeper sense of community integration.
- We will provide leadership enrichment through a leadership lecture series.
- We will define, standardize, monitor and routinely assess Mansfield University Leadership Scholarships.
- We will continue to support the minor in leadership.
- We will implement the Masters in Organizational Leadership.
- We will consistently utilize and market our institutional brand of “Developing Tomorrow’s Leaders” on and off campus.
- We will foster social inclusiveness by providing exposure to professionals with global experiences and perspectives.
- The Leadership Institute will raise self-supporting revenue for the University by providing training for corporate clients and summer programs for adults.

## **VI. ENGAGE IN CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT THROUGH ASSESSMENT**

Mansfield University dedicates itself to the systematic, ongoing, intentional and meaningful assessment of institutional effectiveness by linking student learning outcomes and assessment data to the budget process.

- We will develop and manage continual assessment of curriculum and the structure in which our various curricula operate.
- We will use assessment as a tool for continuous institutional effectiveness and improvement.
- We will designate a person to be in charge of the coordination, implementation, and evaluation of assessment efforts across the campus.
- We will develop a team to investigate and suggest *measurable* university-wide learning outcomes and assessment mechanisms that are related to these outcomes

in conjunction with our desire to reflect a Liberal Arts Education with the understanding that accredited programs may have a number of outcomes externally demanded. We will determine these outcomes within two years and fold them into annual program reviews.

- We will require yearly program reviews (academic and co-curricular) to include:
  - a.) The level to which the employees, courses, programs, pedagogies, curricula etc. reflect the University's Mission and/or Creed.
  - b.) The level to which students demonstrate proficiency of the learning outcomes, keeping in mind that learning outcomes do not belong solely in the classroom.
- We will empower department heads to ensure meaningful student and employee assessment in order to raise accountability among all constituents.
- We will develop a mechanism for frequently communicating best practices for program, student, and employee assessment.
- We will assist those involved with program assessment (both academic and co-curricular) to understand what they are already doing in terms of outcome evaluation and discover new ways of approaching assignments and activities that foster the skills and dispositions of the University's Learning Outcomes.
- We will engage in and appoint a coordinator for assessment of non-academic departments.
- We will assess effectiveness of the leadership brand.
- We will commit to systematic, transparent, and meaningful student assessment.
- We will actively encourage students to involve themselves in the assessment process. Specifically, institute opportunities for student self-assessment, which divert focus away from grade acquisition and toward the quality of knowledge attained and level of individual skill they have developed.
- We will in all circumstances look to provide meaningful, practical and engaging opportunities that link to hands-on experiences that partner with our community members.
- We will engage in program review and balance the needs and costs of programs with the importance of and impact on our region and beyond.
- We will allocate resources to support the development and change necessary to improve and to maintain institutional quality based on ongoing assessment.

**VII. CREATE A SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT TO SUPPORT LEARNING**

Mansfield University will improve the campus culture and climate. We will strengthen and maintain an aesthetically stimulating, inspiring and green campus that supports opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and community members to engage; our sensitivity to and stewardship of our resources will give the campus a distinct identity. While attempting to maintain an appropriate balance in the institutional environment that supports academic endeavors, we will seek to ensure campus safety and security of our diverse constituents on campus.

- We will increase the knowledge and response-readiness level of all constituents to understand their personal role and responsibilities related to a safe campus environment.
- We will work with campus and local police to prevent crime.
- We will create a vibrant, invigorating, and safe campus which enhances learning and living opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and community members.
- We will recruit and support employees and students who encompass diverse ethnic groups, divergent socioeconomic backgrounds, mixed opinions, alternative global concerns and disparate world views, all of which enhances the academic environment.
- We will strengthen efforts which foster supportive, dynamic and inventive experiences for students.
- We will simplify bureaucracy and redundancies of systems which impede service and our collective sense of achievement.
- We will institute a campus one-card system to deliver enhanced business services and control building access.
- We will honor our role as a regional attraction and endeavor to make campus welcoming and hospitable to all visitors.
- We will embrace a green environment and will move towards activities and facilities that promote environmental stewardship.
- We will establish better mechanisms, on and off campus, to foster clearer and more timely communication.
- We will take leadership to provide a full spectrum of educational, aesthetic, entertaining and cultural events.

- We will build new residential facilities.
- We will complete construction on the replacement for Allen Hall.
- We will complete renovation of Grant Science Building.
- We will plan for a new classroom building/multipurpose room facility.
- We will address our infrastructure needs, particularly in the area of campus technology in order to support and sustain the best possible resources for our constituents.

### ***VIII. BUILD COMMUNITY RELATIONS***

Mansfield University will commit to forming mutually beneficial partnerships with the local, regional, state and global communities.

- We will utilize our Council of Trustees, Alumni, Faculty, Staff and Students as resources to our broader community and will seek to build positive relationships and partnerships that foster entrepreneurial development opportunities, a more vibrant campus life, and a revitalization of our local community.
- We will develop proactive measures that emphasize the importance and benefits of our consistent participation & involvement in community organizations, schools, and business environments.
- We will support and be involved with the community as a vital member of the community.
- We will expand internship opportunities and other mechanisms which support student engagement off campus in productive ways.
- We will be actively involved with the revitalization of Main Street and the community.
- We will encourage expanded employer presence at campus events, such as camps, conferences and job fairs.
- We will assess our effectiveness in offering a variety of summer programs to attract campus visitors, optimize the use of our facilities, and invigorate our summer activities.
- We will improve access to campus through accurate, consistent and highly visible signage.

- We will develop a centralized location for all campus information to assist visitors and students alike.
- We will investigate and, if appropriate, implement an Entrepreneurial Leadership Center/Student Business Incubator Center.
- We will provide robust leadership summer programming across the spectrum of personal, academic and artistic development for pre-college students through the Center for Lifelong Learning.
- We will enhance our collaborative relationships with regional school districts to develop professional development school (PDS) partnerships to strengthen the educational learning environments for all of our students.
- We will work to build a safe, welcoming and diverse community on and off campus.

*DEVELOPING TOMORROW'S LEADERS*

*CHARACTER · SCHOLARSHIP · CULTURE · SERVICE*

An implementation plan and a strategies/outcomes grid are separate documents and available upon request.