Penn State shield logo with black text and blue shield

Unit Strategic Plan: Development and Alumni Relations

2014/2015 through 2018/2019

A more detailed version of this plan can be found at:

<http://giveto.psu.edu/s/1218/images/editor_documents/ddar_documents/strategicplan_draft_final.pdf>

**Division of Development and Alumni Relations**

**The Pennsylvania State University**

**Strategic Plan UPDATES**

**2014-15 to 2018-19**

# Overview

The Division of Development and Alumni Relations is an institutional advancement team of more than 350 employees whose work supports every aspect of Penn State's mission. Overseen by the Senior Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations, the division encompasses two distinct entities that share a commitment to strengthening the University and enhancing the experience of Penn Staters, past, present, and future: the Office of University Development (OUD) and the Penn State Alumni Association (PSAA). By working together creatively and collaboratively, these entities have formed a productive partnership with benefits for both our institution and our constituents. Ambitious fundraising goals cannot be achieved without a strong alumni relations effort, and philanthropy gives our alumni, as well as friends of the University, a way to deepen their engagement and express their passion and vision for the future of Penn State.

Despite our past success, we recognize that the higher education environment in which we work is forever fluid. We continue to face both internal and external challenges in our daily work, and we view these as opportunities to be even better University ambassadors. As we prepare for this strategic planning cycle from 2014-15 to 2018-19, we remain proud of our division-wide success and optimistic about the road ahead.

# Challenges and Opportunities

As we approach the 2014-15 to 2018-19 planning cycle, we have identified thirteen challenges that will need to be addressed by our division. These challenges represent incredible potential and opportunity to grow and improve:

1. Continuing to show integrity and be ethical in everything we do
2. Withstanding new economic constraints and increased competition
3. Serving new leadership at Penn State
4. Initiating a new fundraising campaign during the 2014-15 to 2018-19 planning cycle
5. Attracting, developing, and retaining a talented and diverse workforce in our division
6. Addressing regulatory unknowns (e.g. new credit card laws, right to know legislation)
7. Aligning communications messages with University-wide branding efforts
8. Showing the University community a compelling return on investment for our work
9. Rewarding staff performance
10. Boosting student and young alumni engagement with the University
11. Raising the bar on volunteer engagement
12. Breaking out of our offices’ respective silos to foster cross-division collaboration
13. Responding to continuing fallout from the University crisis that started in 2011

New leadership at Penn State certainly brings both exciting opportunities and challenges. We are looking forward to working with President Eric Barron, and we want to make him an integral partner with our development and alumni engagement operations. We will also need to respond to his vision for Penn State. While our division has responded well to crisis fallout, we still have a long road ahead as our donors and alumni learn about and respond to the direction our new President will take us. We need to be prepared to continue being trustworthy, credible sources of information for our stakeholders and be flexible enough to adjust our goals as this vision and direction unfold.

Within the division, aligning the messages and work of the Office of University Development and Penn State Alumni Association is paramount. One of the greatest challenges facing our division is continuing to move offices and units out of their respective silos into a more collaborative working environment. The first step toward this new mindset and work model is this strategic plan, which has been conceived to reflect the shared mission, vision, values, and goals of everyone in the division.

As we step into this environment in 2014-15, the division’s strategic plan builds upon our successes and turns challenges into opportunities. Five broad goals are set forth, each with corresponding strategies, measures, actions, and timelines.

## Vision

We will be a dynamic force to ensure every Penn State constituent is a member of the Alumni Association and a donor to the University, and we will act as an essential agent in the continued success of Penn State.

## Mission

Our core mission is to generate contributions of all kinds by building and strengthening meaningful relationships and fulfilling experiences to advance the mission of Penn State.

## Values

**Service:**

We value a culture centered on serving our broader Penn State family: alumni, friends, donors, members, and volunteers.

**Respect:**

We value and respect individuals in the division who advance the University’s overall mission and the division’s strategic plan.

**Diversity:**

We value a diverse community where individuals are recognized, accepted, and embraced for their humanity and unique characteristics. These characteristics include, but are not limited to: age, condition of physical and mental ability, educational background, ethnicity, gender, geographic origin, marital status, parental status, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic condition, work experience, and cultural, political, and spiritual belief, practice, and tradition. Every member of our division contributes to the diversity and richness of our culture and to our overall success as an organization.

**Teamwork:**

We value and respect staff, faculty, students, donors, members, and volunteers who collaborate and encourage successful teamwork.

**Collaboration:**

We strive to be recognized as a leader in collaborative practices and attitudes, and the ability to work with the larger University community of staff, faculty, and students is critical to our success.

**Integrity:**

We will conduct ourselves with professionalism and integrity at all times.

### Goal 1: Increase engagement and satisfaction of alumni, friends, University partners, patients, students, volunteers, and other stakeholders.

| **Strategies** | **Measures** | **Actions** | **Timeframe** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Seek new ways to measure satisfaction and involvement of internal and external constituents. | 1. Increase satisfaction scores on the annual Alumni Opinion Survey from FY15 to FY19 as follows: from 71% to 75% on inclusion in the Penn State community; from 59% to 65% on net promotion; from 85% to 90% on speaking highly of the University, and from 66% to 75% on high trust in the Alumni Association. | 1. Initiate new, appropriate constituent satisfaction surveys and use smart consumer research techniques to inform future engagement plans. (Williams) | 1. 2019 |
| 2. Evaluate target audiences to identify underrepresented groups for possible new events or programs. (Williams) | 2. 2016 |
| 3. Develop a Memorandum of Understanding between the Alumni Association and the University to clarify roles, responsibilities, and expectations. (Kirsch, Williams)  UPDATE 3-17-15: Deferred to FY 2016 when a new Executive Director is in place. | 3. 2015 |
| 4. Purchase a division-wide business intelligence system and central repository of information to maximize constituent outreach and track engagement. (All) | 4. July 2014 |
| 5. Increase programs and activities aimed at involving greater numbers of underrepresented constituencies. (Dietz, Williams) | 5. 2019 |
| 2. OUD will survey its donor audience in the first half of FY15 to assess their satisfaction with their philanthropy to Penn State. This data will serve as a benchmark that will be reassessed with a portion of our donor base each year. We will seek appropriate growth in donor satisfaction commensurate with the findings of the baseline survey. | 1. Engage Survey Research Center or other entities to structure and execute surveys. (Dietz)  UPDATE 2-3-15: Survey of “For the Future” donors completed in February 2015. Data to be analyzed by June 2015. | 1. Annually |
| 2. Build undergraduate and graduate student programs to introduce students to philanthropy and membership duties. | 1. Plan and implement a student giving program focused on outright gifts. This program will seek to replace the donors and funds generated by the current General Deposit system which will be discontinued in FY19.  UPDATE 2-3-15: General Deposit discussions underway. Annual Giving preparing alternative plans. | 1. Instill a culture of philanthropy, membership, and volunteerism among our undergraduate students through collaborative efforts with networks. (Dietz)  UPDATE 2-3-15: Senior Class Gift and Student Philanthropy Council programs expanded in September 2014. Dietz met with student leaders in January 2015. | 1. 2019 |
| 2. Create new philanthropy-focused programs that enhance the graduate and post-doctoral experience. (Dietz) | 2. 2019 |
| 3. Use and evaluate social media and crowdfunding as new solicitation strategies. (Dietz) | 3. 2019 |
| 3. Create a stronger “culture of membership” for the Alumni Association across all internal and external constituencies. | 1. Increase Alumni Association membership to 183,000 by June 30, 2019. | 1. Create stronger intra-DDAR support for the efforts of the PSAA membership team (e.g., use LionLine to issue membership message). (Williams, Dietz) | 1. Ongoing |
| 2. Foster greater awareness across all constituencies of Alumni Association members’ contributions to the University (compared to non-members). | 1. Disseminate member v. non-member results of the annual Alumni Opinion Surveys to all DDAR staff and academic leadership. (Williams)  UPDATE 3-2015: Posted on PSAA website; presented to PC & BOT | 1. Annually, upon completion of surveys |
| 2. Re-institute college impact statements and present them to deans of academic colleges, showing the value of PSAA to colleges’ goals and objectives. (Williams) | 2. 2016 and 2019 |

### Goal 2: Serve as a trusted and credible source of communications that informs and responds to our stakeholders.

| **Strategies** | **Measures** | **Actions** | **Timeframe** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Ensure a collaborative and cooperative approach to communications within the division and with our University partners. | 1. Appoint members of the division to serve on the Core Communications Council. | 1. Create a division-wide Core Communications Council and a broader Communications Working Group to develop messaging, establish priorities, and ensure effective implementation of a communications plan. (Williams, Dietz)  UPDATE 2-3-15: Core Communications Council was established July 2014. Monthly meetings occurring and various initiatives being undertaken. | 1. 2014 |
| 2. Develop themes and content that are relevant, adaptable, and accessible to all colleges, campuses, and affiliate groups. (Williams, Dietz) | 2. 2019 |
| 3. Create and maintain a division-wide communications calendar. (Williams, Dietz, Songer)  UPDATE 2-3-15: Early version of calendar on LaunchPad November 2014. | 3. 2014 |
| 4. Develop and implement a segmented, unit-specific communications plan. (Williams, Dietz) | 4. 2015 |
| 5. Ensure that content and messaging on the various technology platforms align with division-wide strategy. (Williams, Dietz) | 5. 2019 |
| 6. Develop appropriate metrics to measure our communications impact. (Williams, Dietz) | 6. 2015 |
| 7. Foster a culture of sharing relationship data and constituents’ inbound feedback. (Williams, Dietz) | 7. 2019 |
| 2. Ensure that current communications practices and platforms have value and are necessary. | 1. Complete audit of current communications practices and implement results of audit by end of plan.  UPDATE 2-3-15: Audit being planned by Core Communications Council. Target June 1, 2015. | 1. Implement a new division-wide intranet with employee discussion forum. (Dietz, Williams)  UPDATE 2-3-15: LaunchPad III currently under design December 31, 2014. Will go live on 5-4-2015. | 1. 2014 |
| 2. Determine if there is a need to hire, train, and/or restructure staff with regard to emerging technology and communications platforms (e.g. social media). (Williams, Dietz, Songer) | 2. 2015 |
| 3. Enhance data collection of information necessary in communicating to our constituents. (Williams, Dietz, Songer) | 3. 2016 |
| 4. Ensure underrepresented constituents are well represented in communications materials. (Williams, Dietz) | 4. Ongoing |

### Goal 3: Secure and strengthen revenue streams.

| **Strategies** | **Measures** | **Actions** | **Timeframe** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Increase total private gift support. | 1. Increase total voluntary support from $207.7 million (FY12-FY14 average) to $246 million (FY17-FY19 average), as defined by the Council for Aid to Education (CAE) to reflect a 6% annual growth rate. | 1. Improve compounded annual growth rate of institutional total private support to exceed the mean of the Leading Public Research Universities (LPRU) cohort as identified in the Grenzebach Glier & Associates Strategic Review. (Kirsch) | 1. 2019 |
| 2. Increase Penn State Hershey Medical Center and College of Medicine private support as a percentage of total voluntary support from 14% to 20%. (Altland) | 2. 2019 |
| 3. Create sustainable broad-based solicitation and gift upgrade plan that delivers at least a 1-2% alumni donor increase annually by end FY19. (Dietz) | 3. 2019 |
| 4. Increase private support in the following focus areas: improve major gift proposal (redefined at $100,000+) yield rate to 46%; secure 50 principal gifts ($5 million+) by end FY19; increase foundation giving by 100% by end FY19; implement parents giving program with emphasis on $100,000+ prospects; and increase annual leadership giving by increasing membership in the President’s Club from 7,800 in FY14 to 9,000 by FY19. (Dietz, Lieb, Kirsch) | 4. 2019 |
| 5. Track and publicly post implementation of the Grenzebach Glier & Associates Strategic Review recommendations. (Kirsch)  **UPDATE 2-3-15: GG&A implementation activities currently underway. All actions are updated and posted on LaunchPad. Most recent update was January 15, 2015.** | 5. 2015 |
| 6. Present a new campaign plan to University leadership, including staff and budgetary requirements, predicated on University goals established in University 2015 strategic plan. (Kirsch, Lieb, Dietz, Altland, Songer)  **UPDATE 3-17-15: Date changed to July 2016. Seven (7) task forces to be appointed in May 2015.** | 6. 2017 |
| 7. Enhance the Goal Setting process by moving to three-year planning horizon by FY16. (Lieb) | 7. 2015 |
| 8. Provide fundraising expertise to generate philanthropic revenues to support diversity-related unit priorities. (Lieb, Dietz) | 8. 2015 |
| 2. Increase total revenue for the Alumni Association. | 1. Sustain moderate growth rate in total annual revenues from $11 million to $12.5 million. | 1. Maintain and grow net membership by 1-2% annually to reach more than 183,000 members by end FY19. (Williams) | 1. 2019 |
| 2. Grow the investment portfolio by achieving a median return of 8.3% per year (with a volatility index of 12.5%) and by lowering the Alumni Association’s endowment spending policy from 4.7% to 4.5% annually. (Williams) | 2. 2019 |
| 3. Renew corporate contracts to generate at least 25% of operating revenue. (Williams) | 3. 2019 |
| 4. Promote annual growth in sponsorship and advertising revenue from $300,000 to $450,000 by end FY19. (Williams) | 4. 2019 |
| 5. Work with Alumni Association diversity-related affiliate groups to begin or revitalize their fundraising for scholarships. (Williams) | 5. 2019 |

### Goal 4: Recruit, retain, develop, and reward a diverse, collaborative, and talented workforce.

| **Strategies** | **Measures** | **Actions** | **Timeframe** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. To grow and retain a diverse and engaged staff, and ensure the division operates with the highest ethical standards, we will provide clear career paths, constructive feedback, coaching, and targeted approaches to development planning and training at all levels of the organization. | 1. Retain 80% of all new employees for a minimum of two years and central and unit director-level employees for an average of five years. | 1. Instill a culture of ethical behavior by including ethics in new employee orientation materials, providing information related to ethical fundraising in major gift officer presentations, and requiring directors to dedicate time to discuss issues related to ethics and integrity with staff. (All)  **UPDATE: Kirsch directive in January 2015 for all departments to discuss retaliation concerns and career growth concerns.** | 1. Ongoing |
| 2. Increase the percentage of employees from underrepresented groups to 10% by 2019. | 2. Explore implementation of a performance-based bonus plan by close of FY15. (Dietz, Lieb)  **UPDATE: 2-3-15: A preliminary plan/program was presented to DODs in December 2014, but this program was eventually discarded. New program being considered.** | 2. June 2015 |
| 3. Increase access to a broad array of professional development opportunities – both skill-specific and leadership development – by fostering collaboration between Human Resources, Talent Management (TM), and other key University functions. (Songer) | 3. 2019 |
| 4. Hire a full-time trainer no later than calendar year 2017 to further assess and address key professional development needs of division staff. (Songer) | 4. 2017 |
| 5. Require comprehensive performance management training (24 hours) of all division directors every three years, focusing on common supervisory weaknesses identified across the division. Evaluative methods might include measures such as 360 degree appraisals. (Kirsch, Songer) | 5. Ongoing |
| 6. Encourage and reward strategic collaboration within and across the division. (All) | 6. Ongoing |
| 7. Broaden and enhance the Diversity Committee’s programming and participate in the CASE Diversity Recruiting Fair on an annual basis. (Songer) | 7. Ongoing |
| 2. A key to creating an effective Talent Management function is to expand and enhance our recruiting efforts to attract the best talent in the industry. | 1. Develop a robust and diverse candidate pool for 75% of open frontline development positions and reduce time to fill open positions from an average of 80 days to 60 days by June 2015. | 1. Hire an Associate Director of Talent Acquisition dedicated to identifying and cultivating candidates for critical development positions.  **UPDATE 2-3-15: Drew Kovacs hired August 2014.** | 1. Dec 2014 |
| 2. Engage and train development staff to partner with Talent Management in order to actively recruit qualified candidates from their professional circles (via networking and conference attendance).  **UPDATE: Referral program has produces 2 new hires.** | 2. June 2015 |
| 3. The TM team will engage directly in key searches to provide consulting support, context, and calibration across all OUD units. | 3. Ongoing |
| 4. Identify strategic recruiting venues that are appropriate for each hiring unit (region, industry, etc.)  UPDATE 2-3-15: Cheryl Kaplan and Drew Kovacs are currently determining appropriate venues. | 4. June 2015 |

### Goal 5: Serve as effective and efficient stewards of our human, financial, and natural resources.

| **Strategies** | **Measures** | **Actions** | **Timeframe** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Create a division-wide committee to draft a University-wide stewardship plan in FY14/15. | 1. Develop stewardship plan for each constituent audience.  UPDATE 2-3-15: Completed by Donor Relations and Special Events September 2014. | 1. Survey division staff and campus partners to identify what data, both stored and not stored within the division central systems, are priorities for each unit. (Dietz)  UPDATE 2-3-15: Completed by Donor Relations and Special Events September 2014. | 1. 2014 |
| 2. Upon completion of the plan, create a division-wide committee to develop a plan for storing key stewardship data points in a central system such as AWA or the proposed Business Intelligence tool. | 2. Document new information about constituents’ preferences and store these in a central system. (Dietz, Songer) | 2. Ongoing |
| 3. Identify new ways for important data points to be more visible within current systems and to share them more efficiently. (Dietz, Songer) | 3. January 2016 |
| 2. Enhance management of financial resources following fiscally sound practices and University policies. | 1. Achieve return on investment of at least $6.50 in receipts per dollar spent on development costs on an annual basis for the life of this plan. | 1. Automate collection of fiscal spending information required for stewardship reports on non-endowed donations including corporate and foundation gifts. (Dietz) | 1. 2016 |
| 2. Provide regular reports to constituents on business expenditures and impact of expenditures. (Dietz) | 2. 2015 |
| 3. Create formal endowment spending plans for all active endowments. (Dietz) | 3. 2015 |
| 3. Identify our unique contribution to the University’s vision of sustainability by modeling sustainable resource policies and practices. | 1. Direct every office in the division to participate in the Penn State Sustainability Institute’s Green Paws program (or to adopt related measures, where the program is unavailable) by end FY19.  UPDATE 2-3-15: A majority of University Park offices are Level 1 Green Paws December 31, 2014. | 1. Implement a division-wide commitment to develop sustainable business practices. (Dietz) | 1. 2019 |
| 2. Create cohort of fundraising professionals who are adept at raising funds for sustainability initiatives across the University. (Dietz) | 2. 2014-2019 |
| 3. Investigate electronic delivery vehicles for communication to constituents. (Dietz, Williams) | 3. 2014-2019 |
| 4. Conduct special events with an emphasis on waste diversion and utilization of locally sourced goods and services. (Dietz, Williams)  UPDATE 2-3-15: Mobius in Beaver Stadium suites has been successful with a 99% waste diversion rate for 2014 football season. | 4. 2014-2019 |