

# PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Strategic Planning Forum #3

**Serving Our Students  
and Community**

Wednesday, February 3, 2016





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## Overview

As part of Shawnee State University's strategic planning process, three community forums were held where participants were asked to explore the themes of access, academic programs, and service to students and the community, all in the context of the University's new guiding principles.

The third forum focused on "Serving our Students and Community."

Participants discussed how Shawnee State University is meeting the needs of its internal and external communities and ways to better serve students and the region in the future.

Feedback from these forums will inform the institution's strategic plan.

## Introduction of the Topic

Participants were provided with an overview of the forums, the strategic planning process, and the guiding principles. Key information shared included:

- Shawnee State serves a diverse student population that includes traditional high school graduates, non-traditional students, veterans, first-generation college students, commuters, those still in high school, professionals looking to advance their careers, and those wanting to take a few classes without seeking a degree. Each of these student populations has different needs.
- Shawnee State also serves a diverse community that includes businesses, K-12 partners, local and state government, donors, alumni, parents, and residents. Each of these segments has specific needs from SSU.
- Shawnee State is a vital part of southern Ohio's past and present – and is uniquely poised to play an even more integral role in defining its future.
- Students who have a sense of belonging have a higher likelihood of persisting to graduation. The community – internal and external, play a role in providing that sense of belonging.
- Just as important as the types of services we provide is how we provide them.



## Guiding Principles

### MISSION

A mission statement succinctly describes why we exist — our purpose.

### WE PREPARE TODAY'S STUDENTS TO SUCCEED IN TOMORROW'S WORLD.

As a university, we serve many roles in society. At the heart of it all, we exist to prepare students to succeed today, and into the future.

### VISION

A vision statement stakes a claim on our aspirations and states the kind of university we plan to become.

### WE WILL BE A BEST-VALUE UNIVERSITY OFFERING A WIDE RANGE OF HIGH-QUALITY SIGNATURE PROGRAMS.

Our vision is to be recognized as a "best-value" university, combining academic excellence and student success with affordability, and establishing signature programs that give us a competitive edge.

### ENDURING VALUES

Enduring values provide a foundation for everything we do. They guide how we behave in our interactions with our students, families, alumni, friends of the University, and each other. They tell our clients what is important to us and what they can expect from us.

### STUDENT-FOCUSED SERVICE

We place students at the center of everything we do and every decision we make.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We value the diverse perspectives of the people within our community — on and off campus — and our role in enriching the lives of those who work, live, and discover here.

### AUTHENTIC DIALOGUE

We respect open, honest, and sincere two-way communication.

### THOUGHTFUL RISK-TAKING

We value innovation and encourage those around us to dream big and explore new possibilities.

### CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

We look for opportunities to make what we do well today even better tomorrow.

## Forum Planning Activities

Participants were assigned to one of twelve groups with nine participants per group. Following the topic overview and review of the institution's guiding principles, participants were asked to:

1. Identify ways Shawnee State University meets the needs of students.
2. Identify ways the University meets the needs of the community.
3. Identify how Shawnee State can better serve its students and community.



# Results

## Common Themes

### **Students should be at the center of every decision made at Shawnee State.**

- Processes should be reviewed to make sure they meet the needs of students, not the institution.
- Students should have a voice in decisions that impact them.
- Each student population has unique needs that need to be addressed.

### **Outreach efforts to both students and community could be strengthened.**

- Shawnee State needs to be more proactive in getting students the assistance they need and in continuously assessing and acting upon community needs.
- Need to re-examine outreach functions and establish clear points of contact for the community.

### **Shawnee State University serves a vital role in the community.**

- Shawnee State graduates feed local businesses. SSU is poised to drive economic development in the region.

### **Opportunities exist to improve communications with both students and community and to engage both on multiple levels.**

- Many don't know about the resources currently available or the type of engagement (community and student life) that is underway.
- New lines of communication need to be found and/or strengthened.
- SSU needs to look for opportunities to partner with the community on initiatives and projects.





## Group Discussions

The following summaries for each key topic were presented during each groups' report-out to the entire forum audience.

### Group 1

How Shawnee State meets the needs of our students

- We have a small environment with friendly, helpful staff and faculty.
- Student involvement – offer a lot of opportunities for engagement, clubs with everything from academic to bbq, a lot of activities on campus

How Shawnee State meets the needs of the community

- We are a large employer. Our graduates feed local businesses.
- Opportunity to further education. Location, students wouldn't go elsewhere.

How Shawnee State can better meet the needs of our students and community

- Self-promotion lacking: resources, programs, activities, social activities, community.
- University community needs to be more proactive in getting students to the resources that they need.

### Group 2

How Shawnee State meets the needs of our students

- Affordability
- Provide an opportunity to change life path. A lot of our students are the first in their families to go to college.

How Shawnee State meets the needs of the community

- Provide qualified employees.
- Community enrichment through the VRCFA; continuing education helps employers.

How Shawnee State can better meet the needs of our students and community

- Better Outreach – to high schools, igniting the hope to go to college, share what they need to prepare, mentor and partner with the community.
  - Incubator – look at ways for business to achieve what they want to do, collaborate on projects.
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### Group 3

How Shawnee State meets the needs of our students

- Idea of village, importance of family and community, mentoring and advising, we do provide a sense of belonging.
- Location. We are a campus that has both residential and commuter students, College Credit Plus, internships, workshops, work study.

How Shawnee State meets the needs of the community

- We are an engine for economic development, cultural resource.
- Community service opportunities for students, engage in research.

How Shawnee State can better meet the needs of our students and community

- Outreach. We are bound by certain contracts, need to reexamine if ties can be loosened so we can engage with Community.
- Expand course offerings, flexibility, hybrid courses. The student population is changing. The term “traditional” is an outdated term. We need to be more creative with our offerings.

### Group 4

How Shawnee State meets the needs of our students

- Programs, intimate learning environment.
- Education happens in and out of classroom.

How Shawnee State meets the needs of the community

- We are a big part of the local economy. We attract and keep people here in the area.
- Community and civic engagement.

How Shawnee State can better meet the needs of our students and community

- Identify how we really engage officially and unofficially.
- Continually refine how we assess community needs and our role in meeting them.





## Group 5

How Shawnee State meets the needs of our students

- Our 80+ programs, services like the Student Success Center, library, advising, and faculty
- Co-curricular programs like Student Affairs, provide opportunities and support for students.

How Shawnee State meets the needs of the community

- We drive local, regional economy and provide employment opportunities, educational opportunities, internships.
- Event conference services venue, catering, bring people to the area.

How Shawnee State can better meet the needs of our students and community

- We need to drive economic development in the region – influence the process.
- Provide internships for students, encourage entrepreneurial spirit, Want graduates to be able to use their degrees here.
- Continue to develop international services.

## Group 6

How Shawnee State meets the needs of our students

- We have caring professors who provide individual attention.
- Well prepared grads who experience lots of field work

How Shawnee State meets the needs of the community

- Provide a well trained workforce (education & health fields).
- Provide the city with opportunity to reinvent itself, bring in people from other areas.

How Shawnee State can better meet the needs of our students and community

- Civic: survey community needs, civic engagement
- Education: pre-college youth programs, graduate programs, more flexible scheduling.







## Group 7

How Shawnee State meets the needs of our students

- Relationship between students and faculty/staff, commitment to those relationships
- Resources available to students, academic, facilities, laboratories, some things you might not be able to access at a larger institution.

How Shawnee State meets the needs of the community

- Facilities/events open to community, public lectures.
- Provide talent to the community – faculty and staff who serve on boards, do community service, our students graduate and stay here.

How Shawnee State can better meet the needs of our students and community

- Clear commitment to putting students at the center of our decision making process. We need to ask ourselves if it impacts students – and if it does, involve them in the process.
- Joint projects between SSU & city/region, partnerships.

## Group 8

How Shawnee State meets the needs of our students

- Student-faculty interaction and academic programs.
- Affordable tuition with scholarship and financial aid.

How Shawnee State meets the needs of the community

- Educating future employees of the community and incorporating clinicals and internships in the community.
- Cultural activities through presentations and VRCFA, active children's theater program.

How Shawnee State can better meet the needs of our students and community

- Re-examine outreach functions and establish point of contact for community.
- Student program expansion: first-year experience, TRIO, organized community service.





## Group 9

How Shawnee State meets the needs of our students

- Affordability, skills that students need to contribute to society.
- Cultural, social, and personal development

How Shawnee State meets the needs of the community

- Employment, economic impact, stability for the community.
- Professional expertise and resources.

How Shawnee State can better meet the needs of our students and community

- Town/Gown integration. During Weekend of Welcome we should welcome students to the entire community.
- Increase Communication about all the opportunities available here, both internally and in the community.

## Group 10

How Shawnee State meets the needs of our students

- Small, personalized, allows students to make connections and build relationships with faculty and fellow students.
- Affordability

How Shawnee State meets the needs of the community

- Employable graduates.
- Cultural and arts opportunities and events.

How Shawnee State can better meet the needs of our students and community

- Student transportation, work with a bus company to help students go out to different areas.
- Financial aid education.





## Group 11

How Shawnee State meets the needs of our students

- Ways for students to feel they belong and are supported, through student organizations, academic organizations or Greek Life.
- Weekend of welcome and orientation.

How Shawnee State meets the needs of the community

- Major employer and ongoing growth.
- Volunteerism, service learning, internships, clinicals.

How Shawnee State can better meet the needs of our students and community

- Dialogue between university, community and alumni.
- SSU app, better communication.

## Group 12

How Shawnee State meets the needs of our students

- Holistic approach and welcoming atmosphere that creates a community of students who are more likely to invest in the community.
- Career-readiness.

How Shawnee State meets the needs of the community

- Drive the local economy.
- Commitment to community involvement and sharing resources with the community.

How Shawnee State can better meet the needs of our students and community

- More effective communication of our resources on and off campus.
- Target commuter students to make them feel more involved.





# Participants

## Group Discussions

Tess Midkiff, community  
Lavanya Vemsani, faculty  
Debbie Schwamberger, staff  
Adam Miller, faculty  
Michael Barnhart, faculty  
Kim Moore, faculty  
Jessica Pacula, staff  
Dick Schisler, community/staff  
Julia Wisniewski, community  
Bob Trusz, staff  
Rick Scarberry, community  
Jennifer Scott, faculty  
Ryan Warner, staff  
Kris Liles, staff  
Loretta Harvey, faculty  
Heather Cantrell, staff  
Amber Montavon, student  
Joanne Charles, staff  
Janet Stewart, staff  
Bobbie Massie, staff  
Jonathan James, staff  
Weni Carpenter, faculty  
Tiffany Hartman, staff  
Brenda Haas, administration  
John Whitaker, faculty  
Mistie Spicer, staff  
Dr. George White, community  
Drew Feight, faculty  
Dave Zender, staff  
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Connie Mulder, community  
Alexis Kegley, student  
Bill Rockwell, staff  
Taylor McQuinnif, student  
Gabe Havens, community  
Chelsea Cavender, student  
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Sherri Powell, staff  
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Marissa Hike, student  
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Elinda Boyles, Vice President of Finance and Administration  
Jonica Burke, Director of Finance and Administration  
Marcie Simms, Dean of Students  
Sean Dunne, Social Sciences  
Mich Nyawalo, English & Humanities