xxx University Action Plan submitted 6/21/14

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
The xxx team’s goal is: To integrate and scale up existing HIPs and connect them via evidence to desired outcomes of student success.

We currently offer nearly all recognized HIPs in some form on our campus, but we need to make their implementation more intentional so that we can make them accessible to all students and scaffold them in a way that has the greatest possible impact on our students. We also believe that if we are more intentional as a university community in our use of HIPs and in using assessment to provide a feedback loop for continuous improvement of HIPs, then we will become a national model for the improvement of student success.

The implementation of our plan has three prongs: 1) communication and faculty development; 2) resource (re)allocation to best leverage HIPs and make them accessible to all; 3) integrating and highlight HIPs into our assessment programs at all levels across the University to insure continual program improvement and student success for all students.

As HIPs resource people, the xxx team will take responsibility for initiating the implementation of the communications plan and identifying relevant partners to scale-up communications and carry-out the other two prongs. Xxx has a decided advantage in that HIPs is already integrated into xxx’s strategic plan as an objective to be realized between 2015-2021. One goal of this team is to help the University community see how the improvement and scaling up of HIPs might help the university achieve other identified strategic objectives (e.g., diversity).

Our biggest take-away from the AAC&U HIPs 2014 Institute was that it provided us with the opportunity to think about how to implement the plan—particularly the communications components—by integrating the characteristics of active, engaged learning of HIPs into our own work. To this end, we learned cmap, a visualization tool, that we will use to: 1) educate the University community about what HIPs are and why they are important (through the use of mapping to collect resources relevant to various issues necessary to further discussion and development of high impact practices; 2) help University community members understand how they already contribute to the effort and how they might further improve their contributions and/or 3) help University community members who are not currently involved in HIPs find a way to contribute; 4) facilitate discussions in which University community members visualize priorities and possible means to both scaffold HIPs (to provide clear pathways to learning and success for all students); 5) collect that data

The xxx team thanks our AAC&U cluster faculty member, Dr. Timothy K. Eatman for understanding our goals and introducing us to cmap as a way of engendering productive discussion and action in a participatory way that acknowledges the importance of shared governance and itself models the characteristics of high impact practices (HIPs).

BACKGROUND
xxxr University has approved a new university strategic plan for 2015 to 2021. During the 2014/2015 academic year the schools and colleges of the University and the University Faculty Council will be developing strategic plans tied to the new University Goals and Objectives. The
reports from AAC&U on high-impact practices played a major role in shaping the new strategic plan and this action plan outlines the steps that we will take to advance the strategic plan go that:

By 2021, xxx University will be a leader among metropolitan universities in promoting STUDENT TRANSFORMATION AND SUCCESS through: Rigorous Academic Expectations and High-Impact Educational Practices that support intended learning outcomes.

This plan will allow xxx to better meet the educational needs of our student population. Since high-impact practices are especially important for underserved students, they are strategically important to a tuition-driven institution like xxx where 29% of students are first generation and 25% are minority. With a freshman retention rate just over 75%, a four year graduation rate of 40% and a six year graduation rate of 55%, we need to focus on student success and retention. Even though xxx outperforms many similar institutions, with post graduation surveys showing that one year after graduation 70% of graduates are employed and 19% are in graduate school, in an era of increasing competition among educational institutions we need to leverage our strengths to promote further the success of our students. This action plan identifies how we will leverage our nascent and ongoing efforts at quality improvement and assessment to expand the use of high impact educational practices by identifying methods for scaling up high-impact practices on our campus, creating more connections and conversations about improving learning at xxx.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

Content goals (the “what” of your project)

Our goal is to leverage our nascent and ongoing efforts at quality improvement and assessment to expand the use of high impact educational practices. This will advance the University goals and objectives related to rigorous academics and high-impact practices as our strategic plan is implemented. Our project is to create an action plan for generating opportunities for institution-wide dialogue in order to grow our current use of HIPs, . We would like to attend the institute to build cross-disciplinary bonds within our team, so that we might generate ideas and methods for scaling up high-impact practices on our campus, creating more connections and conversations about improving learning at xxx.

- Process goals (the “how” and “who” of your project)

Communication process
Engagement process
Garnering support and resources
Change management process
Implementation process: program design, implementation, data-gathering/assessment

BARRIERS TO ACCOMPLISHMENT
1. Resistance from faculty – which may be due to:
   a. Lack of understanding and appreciation of HIPs as an effective approach to learning
   b. Lack of proficiency in HIPs design, implementation, and evaluation
   c. Lack of buy-in – skepticism regarding HIP benefits, no time to do it, too much effort required, lack of incentives
   d. Comfort with the status-quo – HIPs are not a priority – WU has bigger issues that must be resolved first

2. Inadequate resources and support
   a. Too many other programs and initiatives competing for resources and staff time
   b. Faculty unwilling to share best practices or other HIP-related assets

3. Lack of coordination among existing HIPs, support services, and faculty
   a. Current structure and culture may not facilitate inter-departmental or inter-school coordination and collaboration

4. Lack of integration with ILOs

5. Lack of data that documents extent and effectiveness of HIPs practices
   a. Lack of data collection plan and data collection mechanisms

6. Other

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUPPORT
In terms of financial support, we are going to make both a business case and a case for prioritizing institutional fundraising goals. Given the evidence that HIPs improve retention rates and time to degree completion rates, we will make a presentation to the President’s Leadership Council that it is wise to invest in HIPs and to make them accessible to all of our students, since the money will be recouped through additional tuition revenue. We also believe that qualitative evidence--particularly evidence that highlights the voices of students through their reflection on HIPs experiences--will provide compelling narratives that can be used to raise money for HIPs initiatives. The key is to insure that the President and his cabinet identify HIPs and the infrastructural needs required to coordinate, support, and grown HIPs as top funding priorities. Given that academic excellence and HIPs are highlighted in xxx’s strategic plan, this should not be a difficult sell for the team.

xxx

ENGAGEMENT PLAN FOR STAKEHOLDERS
Stakeholders: full time faculty; student affairs personnel; administration; part-time and adjunct faculty; students; and community partners. Our team has identified 2-3 key individuals (primarily faculty and/or administrators) identified with each of the 10 HIPs on our campus, although these sub-groupings tend to
be siloed. In addition, each of these groups does not necessarily think of their work (e.g., service learning, civic engagement, undergraduate research) within a HIPs framework. These issues pose challenges for engagement.

At the faculty level, we have identified three sub groups that are likely to have different levels of engagement: those who are heavily engaged in HIPs (whether they utilize this language or not); those who are not currently utilizing HIPs but are open and interested; and those who may be resistant. Some issues that pose challenges for faculty engagement include reluctance to share resources, fear of duplication of efforts, lack of understanding and appreciation of HIPs, and resistance to evaluation of current practices. Faculty resistance to buy-in may be due to not valuing the endeavor or resistance to increasing faculty workload given time constraints and priorities. Engagement strategies with faculty may include: (1) recognition of sustained efforts for those currently engaged in HIPs and discussion of taking this work to the ‘next level’; (2) faculty development and education in proficiency/efficiency of HIPs design, implementation, and evaluation; (3) open discussion of rewards, incentives, and obstacles to implementing HIPs given faculty workload issues.

Part of the engagement plan for students may involve review of xxx’s NSES data on level of student participation in particular HIPs during their time at xxx and perhaps collection of data about how much HIPs have been valued by students. In addition, prospective students and marketing materials should move towards highlighting xxx’s use of HIPs as a vehicle for student transformation and success as a means of increasing student awareness of HIPs and their effectiveness in promoting outcomes. Some HIPs, such as study abroad, require student financial resources, and may pose a challenge for some of our students. Attention may need to be paid to how equitable access is for students for some time of HIPs, which may be related to how curriculum-connected or distant some HIPs are and the kinds of time/resources required to participate.

Some of the engagement issues for particular administrative offices and student affairs personnel include promoting cross-dialogue between such individuals and offices and faculty. The cutting edge for HIPs involves intersecting multiple HIPs and collaborative/coordinated approaches that break down siloed activities that also exist at the administrative and student affairs levels. Some resistance to engagement may be workload, issues of communication and coordination, and development connections with faculty involved with HIPs.

A number of xxx stakeholders have also independently developed relationships with various community partners. Keeping community partners apprised of xxx’s strategic and institutional goals as well as changes to how we are coordinating or approaching them. A coordinated/integrated approach to HIPs may require current partners to be engaged with us in different ways, and perhaps the development of additional community partnerships.

Particularly challenging in promoting HIPs practices at the university may be engagement with part-time faculty and adjuncts. Challenges involve education, training, and ability to keep these individuals apprised of the university’s work and strategic planning mission. Attention will be need to paid to effective means of communication and involvement to ensure engagement.

**COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

**Stakeholders:**
Faculty
Department Chairs
Faculty Council Student Learning Assessment Committee
Faculty Council Academic Affairs Committee
Local committees: academic affairs, curriculum and planning, recruitment and retention, assessment
Specific offices/groups: Global Engagement and Experiential Learning, Service Learning, Diversity and Civic Engagement, Undergraduate Research, Study Abroad, First-Year Experience, First-Year Seminar
Student Affairs staff
Administrators -- Senior Leadership Team
Deans
Students
Development
Admissions
Community Partners

Talking Points:
- Defining HIPs: their characteristics, types of practices, claims for success from the data
- Mapping our work with HIPs onto the strategic plan
- Connecting our work with HIPs to existing assessment processes
- Creating opportunities for HIPs for all students, maintaining our commitment to the student populations we have traditionally served and to equity and access to the HIPs that lead to student success
- Preparing faculty for professional development
- Showing students where the HIPs are and the contributions they will make to their learning; helping them to integrate their experience
- Advocating for resources
- Collaborating with Student Life

Key Questions to ask:
- What are you afraid of?
- What problems are we trying to solve?
- What experiences have you had in the past -- good or bad?
- What do you need to do this well?
- What will success look like?

Plan/Description:

Our communication strategy has several goals; we want to engage as many stakeholders as possible while also being efficient and respecting the time and energy of our colleagues. We need to share information with faculty, staff, and administrators about what HIPs are, why they should be central to a xxx education, how they contribute to student success, and what the data has demonstrated about HIPs and deep learning, engagement, retention, TTD, etc. We also need to advocate for resources and support, engage active faculty, and manage resistant constituencies.

We will use a combination of one-on-one meetings, large-group meetings, working groups, and workshops. These meetings will use a variety of formats such as story circles, open space, etc. We will also bring together both champions of HIPs and more resistant faculty so we can hear about both concerns and commitments regarding HIPs. In each setting/context/type of meeting, we will adjust our discourse/narrative/strategy in order to fully understand the points of view and needs of participants.
These will occur at the local (departmental) level, the school/college level, and the institutional level. We will present our plan and map, and then create/facilitate discussion about how faculty, staff, and administrators fit into the work on HIPs, can support and grow that work, and integrate HIPs into academics (curriculum, assessment), student life, and development.

Communication opportunities
- Faculty Council Executive Committee Retreat - August 19
- Faculty Council Executive Committee/Presidents Executive Team Lunch - August 19
- Faculty General Meeting - August 21
- Provost Council (meet monthly)
- School/College meetings (monthly)
- Office of Experiential Learning and Global Engagement

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<th>TEAM ACTIONS AND TIMELINE (SHARON)</th>
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<td><strong>Action</strong></td>
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<td>One-one-one meetings</td>
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<th>RECOMMENDED TIMELINE FOR CAMPUS WORK (SHARON)</th>
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<td><strong>Action</strong></td>
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<td>High impact practices are widely used at xxx: Departmental analysis of high impact practices in the curriculum; Identify classes and other</td>
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<td>High impact practices are widely used at xxx: Faculty Council-Student Learning Assessment Committee identifies questions from NSSE and other surveys that ask about high impact practices.</td>
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<td>More effective implementation of high impact practices: Departmental/Program analysis of high impact practices in the curriculum; Review characteristics of high impact practices; Identify ways to improve implementation of high impact practices.</td>
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<td>Improved student outcomes - Faculty Council-Student Learning Assessment Committee determines desired increases after reviewing assessment reports. Using: -Assessment reports for Institutional Learning Objectives -Assessment reports for general education goals. -Retention rates -Graduation rates -Post graduation placement rates</td>
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<td>Increased student engagement in high-impact educational practices. Faculty Council-Student Learning Assessment Committee identifies questions from NSSE and other surveys that ask about high impact practices and determines desired increase after Relevant NSSE and FSSE questions identified and initial results reviewed in fall 2015. Follow up spring 18.</td>
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<td>Annual and ongoing faculty and staff development on rigorous academic expectations and high impact practices</td>
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<td>Provost initiatives to fund rigorous</td>
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EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (How will we know we’re making progress?)

1. Expand the use of high-impact educational practices.
   a. After initial analysis each department will identify changes and targets for expanding
      high impact practices.
   b. Desired increase to be determined by Faculty Council-Student Learning Assessment
      Committee after Relevant NSSE and FSSE questions identified and initial results
      reviewed

2. Improve high-impact educational practices and student learning outcomes: More effective
   implementation of high impact practices
   a. After initial analysis each department and program will identify changes and targets for
      expanding high impact practices.
   b. Faculty Council-Student Learning Assessment Committee reports out on effective
      implementation of high impact practices and makes recommendations

3. Improve high-impact educational practices and student learning outcomes: Improved student
   outcomes
   a. Desired increase to be determined by Faculty Council-Student Learning Assessment
      Committee after reviewing assessment reports.

4. Increased student engagement in high-impact educational practices
   a. Desired increase to be determined by Faculty Council-Student Learning Assessment
      Committee after Relevant NSSE and FSSE questions identified and initial results
      reviewed

5. Promote a university culture where academic expectations and high-impact educational practices
   are developed, supported and rewarded.
   a. Number of faculty participating in annual Assessment Days across schools and colleges
   b. Number of faculty participating in initiatives
   c. Number of sessions at bridgeweek and other professional development opportunities
   d. Number of faculty making use of pedagogical fellows and technology fellows
   e. Increased funding for professional development opportunities
   f. Merit documents
   g. Review of criteria for teaching awards

6. Improve communication between student affairs and faculty

7. High-impact educational practices and rigorous academics becomes part of the language used for
   recruitment