

Purdue Fort Wayne Strategic Enrollment Plan

This five-year strategic enrollment plan was developed by a Steering Committee of Purdue Fort Wayne campus leaders with support from Huron Consulting Group. This draft plan was developed over the course the Spring 2023 semester, with input from stakeholders across the institution.

Strategic Enrollment Plan Statement of Purpose

Purdue Fort Wayne aspires to **engage, retain, and graduate** a diverse and talented student body by fostering success through intentional services and a supportive experience for students at all stages of their academic careers.

Strategic Priorities

1. The Student Experience

- a. Establish a streamlined, engaging, and holistic student experience for all students by ensuring that university offices, processes and policies are student-focused and designed with student success as the top priority.

2. Regional Public Identity

- a. Position Purdue Fort Wayne as the destination of choice for students in northeast Indiana seeking an undergraduate degree or graduate study, underscoring PFW's role as a critical contributor to economic and workforce development in the region.

3. The Student Mix

- a. Determine the ideal mix of students (e.g., undergrad, graduate, international, transfer, returning adults) to align with the student desires, market demand, and PFW's strength as a university.

Strategic Priority 1: The Student Experience

The Student Experience: Establish a **streamlined, engaging, and holistic student experience** for all students by ensuring that university offices, processes and policies are student-focused and designed with student success as the top priority.

Initiative 1.1 – Create additional and strengthen existing support services and interventions for students who are at a higher risk of attrition (stop out) based on historically predictive factors.

Action Items

1.1.1	Identify and socialize risk factors historically associated with a high likelihood of predicting stop-out.
1.1.2	Establish a written and formal plan for rolling out Navigate to faculty and staff in the Fall 2023 semester. Identify faculty champions in each School/College/office and benchmark goals for faculty adoption.
1.1.3	Prioritize an urgent discussion with faculty to discuss the benefits of requiring midterm grades (a national best practice). Midterm grades help identify students who may be at risk of earning a D, F, or W, especially in their first year – the number one predictor of stop-out at PFW.
1.1.4	Conduct an updated detailed study to identify which first-year and general education course have the highest DFW rates and partner with stakeholders to discuss opportunities and potential interventions (e.g., student placement, scheduling/sequencing).
1.1.5	Establish a marketing plan to encourage summer session courses for first-year students who earned or are on-track to earn a DFW grade in their first year as an opportunity to make up credit and stay on track. Consider targeting Pell-Eligible DFW earners to leverage year-round Pell funding opportunities.

Initiative 1.2 – Strengthen collaboration between and among the Student Success and Advising Center, academic departments, and Admissions to streamline the matriculation experience for first-year students.

Action Items

1.2.1	Conduct two meetings a semester (once at the beginning and once mid-term) where academic departments and first-year advisors supporting those majors meet to discuss schedules, challenges, trends, flags, and anything relevant to advising students in the major.
1.2.2	Partner with the Student Success Standard Process Lifecycle (S3PL) team to support process-efficiency implementation efforts and identify ways to build upon S3PL progress in support of SEP-related efforts.
1.2.3	Introduce a 3 question early alert form as a stop-gap mechanism (prior to full adoption of Navigate) faculty can use to “raise a flag” and request advisor/student experience staff intervention for students not attending class or on track very early in the semester of earning a D or F.
1.2.4	Investigate options to create additional orientation/onboarding experiences for new students in the fall, especially the week before classes begin.
1.2.5	Develop a standardized methodology for evaluating the effectiveness of First Year Seminar courses across Schools and Colleges.
1.2.6	Consider requiring the use of Brightspace, at least for all courses primarily serving first-year students, to help students better understand their progress.

Initiative 1.3 – Establish (or enhance) a centralized, comprehensive multi-channel current student communication plan.

Action Items

1.3.1	Articulate ownership of and responsibility for different elements of the current student communication plan as well as clear timelines and communication channels.
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1.3.2	Create a shared master current student communications calendar to identify timelines, owners, and channels for critical communications.
1.3.3	Identify and socialize a central online location for promotion of campus activities, events, and campus services info. All or nearly all communications to students should drive traffic to this one central digital location.
1.3.4	Identify a small group of students to serve as an advisory board in support of coming changes to goPFW. Engage the students in decision-making related to the updated platform and use them to help socialize coming changes to all students.

Initiative 1.4 – Improve and streamline the transfer process for all students.

Action Items

1.4.1	Conduct an analysis of transfer credits to determine on average if and to what extent students are losing previously earned academic credit when transferring to PFW.
1.4.2	Leverage transfer-specific current state data from the SEP process to inform a written, transfer recruiting plan, focused primarily on strengthening pipelines from Ivy Tech.
1.4.3	Identify the most popular Ivy Tech courses students attempt to transfer that are not currently accepted for PFW transfer credit. Set up meetings between Ivy Tech and PFW faculty to review Ivy Tech course content.
1.4.4	Conduct an analysis of Ivy Tech to PFW transfer students and their success compared with non-transfer peers (e.g., graduation rates, GPA).
1.4.5	Assess the structure, mission, and effectiveness of the Titan to Mastodon (T2M) program and relocate Ivy-Tech-facing elements of the program to the Admissions Office.
1.4.6	Create marketing materials (e.g., co-branded transfer guide specific to majors/departments) designed to proactively promote awareness of TSAP and other transfer student pathways by major.

Strategic Priority 2: Regional Public Identity

Regional Public Identity: Position Purdue Fort Wayne as the **destination of choice for students in northeast Indiana** seeking a college degree or and workforce development in the region. graduate study, underscoring PFW's role as a critical contributor to economic.

Initiative 2.1 – Strengthen the PFW presence and reputation in regional high schools and K12 districts to support recruitment and college access broadly in and around Fort Wayne.

Action Items

2.1.1	Streamline Collegiate Connection enrollment efforts and Admissions recruitment efforts in the high schools with regular communication and fully collaborative approaches to the relationships at relevant schools.
2.1.2	Establish regular meetings between Admissions and Alumni Engagement leadership to identify opportunities to leverage local alumni support for recruitment efforts (e.g., engage the alumni Board of Directors to assist with note writing), which also provides a non-fundraising engagement opportunity for alumni.
2.1.3	Create and maintain a list of all PFW teaching or working in high schools in the 11-county metro Fort Wayne region. Consider opportunities for admission counselors visiting these schools to engage with alumni-- e.g., by dropping off a note and a small gift, or a pennant to display in their classrooms/offices.

2.1.4	Identify additional opportunities for PFW faculty/staff to have a presence in high schools that are not directly related to recruitment– e.g., have faculty guest lecture on a specific topic, support counseling offices with college-going programming not specific to PFW
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Initiative 2.2– Identify new opportunities for the PFW enrollment team to support community engagement efforts in Fort Wayne, especially for prospective student and high school aged audiences.

Action Items

2.2.1	Identify intentional opportunities to feature and promote PFW in partnership with Visit Fort Wayne (e.g., Request to add PFW performing arts events to the Visit Fort Wayne events calendar).
2.2.2	Increase PFW visibility in the Fort Wayne community by encouraging and supporting staff and faculty participation on local boards and committees or support local events as a PFW representative (attending, hosting, volunteering, partnering).
2.2.3	Consider sponsorship or other opportunities to further engagement with the Greater Fort Wayne, Inc. (e.g., consider sponsoring student memberships to the Young Leaders in Northeast Indiana young professionals' network, continue to sponsor faculty/staff to participate in the annual Leaders Luncheon or year-long Leadership Fort Wayne program).
2.2.4	Continue university support for and consider new and additional opportunities to host and/or sponsor events that bring high school aged audiences to campus, like the Innovate WithIN competition.

Initiative 2.3– Determine and define PFW's role in supporting the Indianapolis market, in consideration of coming changes to Purdue Indianapolis.

Action Items

2.3.1	Establish a common understanding of PFW's opportunities in the Indianapolis market for both undergraduate (freshman and transfer) and graduate student populations.
2.3.2	Continue on-going efforts to develop a strategic and targeted marketing plan in Indianapolis, with clearly defined target audiences and messaging.
2.3.3	Begin outreach and relationship-building at Ivy Tech Indianapolis campuses.

Initiative 2.4– Conduct a market alignment assessment of PFW's academic portfolio, focused on opportunities for program and overall growth or innovation.

Action Items

2.4.1	Conduct an internal analysis to determine which PFW programs have the capacity for growth, and which programs would require additional resources (and how much) to support growth based on market demand.
2.4.2	Conduct a regional market demand analysis to understand labor market needs in northeast Indiana.

2.4.3	Evaluate the feasibility of adding online/hybrid options for existing graduate programs.
2.4.4	Leverage the regional market demand analysis to articulate in writing/marketing messages the role of PFW's graduate offerings in supporting workforce development in the region and especially re-skilling/upskilling.

Strategic Priority 3: The Student Mix

The Student Mix: Determine the **ideal mix of students** (e.g., undergraduate, graduate, international, transfer, returning adults) to align with student desires, market demand, and PFW's strengths as a university.

Initiative 3.1 – Establish, formalize, and socialize a dynamic, future-oriented five-year enrollment model consisting of transparent, data-informed enrollment and retention goals for all student populations including undergraduate and graduate students.

3.1.1	Immediately determine how to update data definitions, data mapping and system architecture to reconcile census enrollment data for incoming student populations so IR/Banner census data matches live data in Slate instances.
3.1.2	Leverage historical enrollment data and reconciled Fall 2023 new student numbers to refine five-year enrollment goals established as part of the SEP.
3.1.3	Identify and establish an internal Strategic Enrollment Planning Working Group that includes faculty representatives, tasked with oversight of the SEP and directing and monitoring implementation efforts related to each strategic priority.
3.1.4	Partner with IR and Financial and Administrative Affairs to update the existing enrollment/NTR projection models to consider multi-year scenarios based on data-informed new student input values.
3.1.5	Socialize five-year enrollment model to broader PFW community once goals and metrics are finalized by enrollment team.

Initiative 3.2 – Implement a more strategic and intentional aid strategy designed to leverage every available aid dollar to optimize admitted student yield and retention for current students.

Action Items

3.2.1	Conduct a detailed study on the current state of work study at PFW to better understand why work study dollars are going unused and inform potential interventions (marketing and otherwise) to better leverage valuable federal work study dollars, especially to support students more likely to stop out.
3.2.2	Conduct additional analysis to assess if and how unmet financial need impacts a students' likelihood of retaining at the university.
3.2.3	Strengthen communication between the financial aid team and first year advisors and create additional training opportunities for advisors to better understand financial aid requirements, eligibility, and deadlines.
3.2.4	Identify ways to leverage year-round Pell and especially summer Pell eligibility changes coming in 2025 to support Pell-eligible students, especially those behind on academic progress.

3.2.5	Evaluate the effectiveness of the PFW scholarship and revisit discounting strategies to determine potential funding sources to underwrite merit aid and consider if and how available merit dollars could be leveraged more strategically to positively influence yield and/or retention.
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Initiative 3.3 – Streamline recruitment processes to strengthen the admissions teams' ability to move students through the application, aid, credit evaluation, registration, and matriculation processes seamlessly.

Action Items

3.3.1	Add a question about on-campus housing plans to the admission application and determine by February 1 each year a specific number of on-campus housing spots that will be held for new, incoming students.
3.3.2	Provide additional staff support for international credential evaluation services, especially for graduate students, to eliminate significant backlog and time delays for international applicants.
3.3.3	Move the enrollment deposit process into Slate portal and eliminate the “intent to enroll” form, streamlining the student-facing experience and establishing submission of an enrollment deposit as the formal process by which students indicate an intent to enroll.

Initiative 3.4 – Maximize efforts to improve metrics associated with the State of Indiana's updated outcomes-based funding model for public higher education institutions.

Action Items

3.4.1	Understand and socialize to all faculty and staff details of the new outcomes-based funding model (including different variations not approved for this year but under discussion for future terms).
3.4.2	Determine a cadence for regular monitoring of potential State-led budget model changes, and fold possible projection scenarios into the annual budget model process.
3.4.3	Identify a group of key stakeholders responsible for monitoring and discussing potential coming changes to the State budget model for higher ed, in partnership with and/or led by the Vice Chancellor of Financial and Administrative Affairs.
3.4.4	Run potential financial models to attempt to assess the financial implications for PFW of the State adopting proposed outcomes-based funding models such as those proposed in recent legislative terms.

Critical Enablers

Critical enablers are foundational, cross-functional areas essential to PFW’s ability to achieve enrollment goals. Identifying critical enablers lays the foundation for PFW to implement the Strategic Enrollment Plan.

- Enrollment Marketing:** A clear and coordinated enrollment marketing strategy is critical to PFW’s ability to build awareness with prospective student populations across all student audiences.

2. **Internal Communication:** Engaging, consistent and proactive internal communication maximizes efficiency and resources and creates a culture of shared responsibility among all faculty and staff at the university to support student success.
3. **Data & Technology:** Optimizing technology solutions, data flow and data integrity across the university strengthens PFW's ability to monitor and manage enrollment and leverage data to inform decisions.