Access to Baccalaureate and Graduate Education in the North Puget Sound

Washington State University Everett

Strategic Academic Plan: 2017—2027

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

Washington State University
A STRATEGIC ACADEMIC PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This executive overview serves as an introduction to the Washington State University at Everett's Strategic Academic Plan 2017–2027, *"Fulfilling the Promise: Access to Baccalaureate and Graduate Education in North Puget Sound."* In this summary, we discuss strategic issues and conditions that impact access to STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education and economic opportunities in the North Puget Sound region of Washington State; introduce Washington State University Everett's (WSU Everett) proposed strategy for addressing educational, economic, and labor force concerns of the region; describe the scope and structure of our strategic planning process; explore the University's internal capacities, external macro-environmental influences, and contingencies required for the success of the WSU Everett STEM program; and begin the conversation regarding value-added educational and research opportunities presented by the partnership between WSU, the State of Washington, business and industry and the North Puget Sound community. Throughout, our priorities, goals, and strategies underscore WSU's commitment to academic scholarship and research excellence.

A CALL TO ACTION: A PARTNERSHIP EMERGES

Political, business, and education leaders in the State of Washington and the North Puget Sound region have long recognized that access to postsecondary education, especially in STEM fields, is imperative to close workforce gaps at a time of dramatic economic shifts, macro-environmental and demographic transitions, and increased global competition. For more than a decade, North Puget Sound leaders grappled with the far-reaching ramifications arising from a lack of expertise and competence in STEM-related and other high-demand disciplines. During this time, it became increasingly apparent that local access to higher education at a four-year research university was required to address workforce shortfalls, supply/demand imbalances, human capital needs, and economic development concerns in the region. To this end, advocates prevailed in their efforts to elevate the levels of education and professional expertise of underserved, indigenous residents of the North Puget Sound region. The primary objective was, and continues to be, improved access to baccalaureate and graduate degree programs, especially in STEM disciplines, with the intent of creating economic value and competitive advantages for residents, business and industry, and the broader North Puget Sound community.

Regional and statewide concerns and discussions regarding the detrimental impact of labor force deficiencies and the lack of local access to STEM education on the economy culminated in the passage of Senate Bill 5636 (SB 5636) during the 2011–2012 Washington State legislative session. The goal of SB 5636 was to expand educational access and improve economic opportunity for residents of the North Puget Sound region, specifically, the Everett Metropolitan area and North Snohomish, Island, and Skagit Counties. Pursuant to this legislative directive, Washington State entrusted WSU with the leadership and operational responsibility for an expanded STEM-education program with baccalaureate-level degree offerings. When weighing the strategic and academic merits of this undertaking, it was clear that this STEM-education program and community partnership would yield enormous benefits for citizens, local businesses, the state, and the economy. At the same time, it would position WSU to advance its mission and vision, achieve sustainable growth and prominence in STEM education, and increase its reach, stature, and influence as a distinguished, education- and research-intensive public institution. Given these advantages and the expressed support of the State of Washington, WSU established a new STEM program and branch campus, now known as WSU Everett.

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE: LASTING COMMITMENTS

We began this new STEM-education program with a competitive advantage in undergraduate education by leveraging WSU's strengths as a distinguished research institution. In leading this endeavor, we combined forces with individuals and organizations seeking to increase educational access and support economic improvement: local and State government, educators, business and industry leaders, and third-sector/civic organizations. This complex undertaking will require sound guidance and ample resources to ensure that our vision is realized and that its accompanying strategy reflects both the intent of SB 5636 and the ideals upon which WSU was founded. A comprehensive, time-bound strategic academic plan establishes program direction for WSU Everett and serves as a guide for program development and critical decision-making over the next decade. In the course of fulfilling the commitments articulated in our mission, vision, values, and strategic intent, we will deliver a program that is vitally important to the education and economy of North Puget Sound and Washington state.

STATEMENT OF MISSION AND PURPOSE

WSU Everett's primary charge is to significantly expand access to high-quality baccalaureate and graduate degree programs in the North Puget Sound region and the state. With a focus on undergraduate education, research, scientific inquiry, innovation, entrepreneurship, global interconnectivity, and sustainable growth, WSU Everett will

address critical regional and state economic development needs, while readying graduates and associates for success and leadership in a rapidly changing, less vertically integrated, and globally connected world.

A VISION FOR THE NEXT DECADE

WSU Everett will be recognized as one of the state's leading public undergraduate baccalaureate programs, preeminent in STEM education, innovation, research, and application. As a preferred University partner of choice, we will gain distinction as a forward-leaning education, business, and research partner.

OUR STAKEHOLDERS—OUR PARTNERS

We anticipate entering into value-added, mutually beneficial transactional relationships with the University community, state and local government, regional businesses, third-sector parties, leaders in education and other stakeholders for the benefit of our students. We share, with each of our partners, a commitment to elevate the quality of educational offerings and advance economic and workforce development in the North Puget Sound region.

WSU CORE VALUES

Washington State University's core values permeate all aspects of academic practices at WSU, and inherently, WSU Everett. These values are imperatives, embedded within the structure of this WSU Everett's strategic plan: *Quality and Excellence; Integrity, Trust, and Respect; Research, Innovation, and Creativity; Land-grant Ideals; Global Citizenship and Diversity; Freedom of Expression; and Stewardship and Accountability.*

STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC INTENT

We will provide our students, within STEM and non-STEM disciplines, with the knowledge and practical exposure to enable them to function as informed, responsible professionals and leaders. In addition to developing students who excel in discipline-specific competencies of practice and technical proficiency, we seek to inspire the creation and dissemination of knowledge for an evolving global economy and landscape. To do so, it is necessary to promote openness to innovative solutions. Critical thinking, adaptability, problem solving, and leadership are hallmarks of this shift toward preparing students who have the skills necessary to resolve complex project-specific, technical, economic, and social problems. At the core of this approach is the adoption of an entrepreneurial spirit and value.

ESTABLISHING STRATEGIC FOCUS AND DIRECTION

Considering the complex nature of the WSU Everett initiative, our priorities reflect a three-pronged approach. Priorities include optimizing access to a quality educational experience, extending the University's reach and impact through strategic leadership and excellence, and (3) building a sustainable ground-up infrastructure that will support and sustain organizational growth and impact. Six organizational priorities for the next decade align with those of the WSU Strategic Plan and are interlocking pieces of a broader University strategy for fostering excellence on all levels. Multiple themes, priorities, and goals provide the context for ongoing planning. Strategies and initiatives capitalize on opportunities for growth and increased intellectual engagement within and outside the University community.

MULTIPLE THEMES AND PRIORITIES

Theme I: Improved Education Access
Priority I: Optimize Access to Baccalaureate STEM Education and STEM-Related Career Opportunities

The strategies and actionable initiatives associated with priority I speak to enrolling, retaining, and educating talented and diverse traditional and nontraditional college-going students, including groups that have been underrepresented in STEM education and STEM careers. The creation of distinct educational pathways and portals of entry by which students can take different routes to STEM competency are explored as high-level priorities. Attention will focus on the development of an educational continuum that supports active learning, promotes access to STEM-related degree programs and degrees, encourages equitable participation, and dismantles barriers to education. In so doing, we expect to improve persistence to degree attainment and ultimately, foster a successful transition to careers in STEM professions. In support of long-term human capital development and a sustainable educated and highly skilled labor force, we anticipate the breaking of new ground in lifelong, end-to-end professional development opportunities for graduates and STEM professionals.

Theme II: A Culture of Excellence
Priority II: Promote Excellence in Scholarship, Research, Global Education, and Entrepreneurship

The strategies and actionable initiatives that emerge from priority II leverage the expertise of our current faculty to attract and retain a strong cadre of discipline-specific experts with diverse backgrounds and experience. The ability to inspire excellence in learning and research among students and the development of graduates equipped to compete and lead in a complex, globally connected society will be at the core of the STEM education and research experience. This goal will be accomplished through scientific, inquiry-oriented pedagogy, cross-disciplinary methodologies and initiatives, and undergraduate research—all of which are responsive to trending education, workforce, and societal needs. Emphasis is placed on the development of exceptional, culturally literate, and digitally-skilled graduates and global citizens prepared to advance scientific knowledge that generates innovative solutions to societal problems and to lead in a competitive global environment.

Theme III: Active Learning—Student Engagement
Priority III: Engage Students to Excel in a Competitive Global Society and Challenging Labor Market

The strategies and initiatives that arise from priority III engage students in challenging educational experiences that promote the accomplishment of prescribed learning outcomes. By immersing students in evidence-based, high-impact, multidimensional education models and interventions, students will have the opportunity to hone their critical thinking and leadership skills, as well as the soft "employability skills" in demand in business and industry. Significant aspects of the undergraduate experience will be providing learning reinforcements and educational supports that expedite the transfer and application of knowledge to real-world situations and integrating students into an undergraduate research agenda that emphasizes scientific/critical inquiry, analysis, and discovery.

Increasing its stature and focus as an Honors Campus, WSU Everett will engage students as young scholars and introduce these cohorts to high-impact learning experiences (e.g., learning communities, honors- and “fellows”-specific programming, internships, service learning, employment opportunities, and capstone projects). These activities will move the WSU Everett undergraduate experience from a purely theoretical one to an applied, practical level that provides added exposure to business, leadership, and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Theme IV: Public/Private Partnerships—Outreach
Priority IV: Forge Strategic Partnerships That Advance Education, Research, and Economic Development

The strategies and initiatives connected to priority IV place emphasis on strengthening the links between WSU Everett, regional businesses, and third-sector partners to create value-added alliances that accelerate and bolster scholarship, innovation, research, and other vital resources. Outcomes will include learning and career opportunities for students, sponsorships of faculty-student initiatives, and philanthropic support of projects and research.
The strength of these University-community collaborations will encourage regional economic prosperity, and the development of programs, research, and other initiatives of mutual interest and benefit will create networks that serve as forums and venues for documenting and exploring STEM-related business practices. Key research themes of

value will help generate solutions in the workplace and in the local and global economy. Formal networking systems will encourage the sharing of expertise and consequential research that keep partners abreast of trending national interests, labor force developments, business strategies, and STEM-education developments. Shared collaborations will help keep our program relevant and provide ingress to important industry and job market information.

Theme V: Organizational Capacity and Sustainability
Priority V: Align the Infrastructure with Programmatic and Organizational Priorities

The strategies and initiatives in priority V aim to strengthen WSU Everett's organizational capacity to provide a reliable core infrastructure that facilitates the achievement of our goals and academic outcomes. Work in this area will concentrate on building/augmenting the physical and IT infrastructures, pedagogical supports, research capacity, and administrative systems needed for organizational effectiveness and managing growth to ensure the long-term sustainability of the WSU Everett program. Attention will be paid to creating an environment that is conducive to maximizing and ably leveraging resources (e.g., financial, people, IT, physical plant). Primary emphasis will be given to greater nimbleness and swift adaptation when responding to challenges and opportunities. At the heart of our efforts will be building a robust platform for future revenue generation and fund development.

Theme VI: Institutional, Local, and Global Reach and Impact
Priority VI: Become a Leader in Undergraduate STEM Education, Research, and Labor Force Development

Capitalizing on the strengths and research talents of the University community, the strategies and initiatives in priority VI will help us attain distinction for delivery of academic outcomes that underscore WSU's commitment to excellence in scholarship, undergraduate research, public service, and global engagement—thereby propelling us to prominence as a University partner of choice for discerning stakeholders. The creation of formal networks and opportunities for sharing expertise and important research will enhance the University's visibility as a scholarly and entrepreneurial educational institution. Through these efforts, we expect to fortify a position of leadership in STEM education and research, build an active community of supporters, and enhance our value to partners locally and around the globe.

DEFINING AND CREATING CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS

Our strategic priorities and initiatives reflect WSU's overall mission and vision, best practices in higher education, findings from internal capacity and macro-environmental assessments, and our aspirations for the WSU Everett STEM program. For an in-depth treatment of priorities, goals, and strategies for achieving WSU Everett's vision, see the "Priority Investment Areas: A Transformative Educational Experience" section of our strategic plan.

STRATEGIC ENABLING CONDITIONS—KEY RESULT AREAS

WSU Everett's success will be made possible by a group of educational and operational conditions and capabilities that expedites achievement of our vision and program outcomes. All enabling conditions are essential to academic excellence and the sustainable growth of the program. Minimally, forward momentum and positive results will be required in the following key result areas:

*Enrollment-management, Marketing/Communications	*Undergraduate Research Focus
*Diverse Educational Pathways/Portals of Entry	*Global Engagement—Interconnectivity
*Faculty Excellence in Teaching and Research	*Targeted In-demand Academic Programs
*Equality of Opportunity	*Outstanding High-impact Educational Experiences
*Leadership and Student Services Supports	*Teaching/learning and Core Infrastructure Supports
*Strategic Partnerships	*Continuous Review and Improvement
*Resource Development, including Revenue Enhancements, Fund Development, Appropriations/ Resource allocations	*Organizational Development, including Staffing, Performance management, Professional Development, Changes in Structure/Organization

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

The agenda of our strategic plan is ambitious with significant resource requirements over the next ten years. Ample funding and well-thought-out business models (resource allocation, strategic budgeting, revenue generation, and fund development) are critical for ensuring that essential initiatives are adequately resourced over time. Some organizational needs will merit priority attention in the start-up (launch) phase of the STEM program. Early faculty/staff recruitment is exceedingly important, given enrollment trajectories and anticipated launch dates for degree programs. Early competitive recruitment/enrollment activities and aggressive strategic communications/marketing to targeted audiences are imperative if we are to compete successfully with universities with a secure position and first-mover advantage in STEM education. Effective teaching and learning and core infrastructure support will help ready the organization for student admissions and engagement post-enrollment. Beyond the immediate future, funding for basic recurring costs—e.g., operational, research, and programming—is required to sustain the organization. A first-cut, pro forma operating budget begins the conversation about resource flow and revenue streams. A targeted fund-raising program is integral to program development and capacity-building over the next decade.

MEASURING PROGRESS—CONTINUOUS REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT

To evaluate our progress, stakeholders—including potential investors—will require documentation of growth based on meaningful criteria. Our progress and success will be tracked and gauged using objective qualitative and quantitative measures. Goal-linked key performance indicators, criteria, and metrics will assess our performance in critical success areas. Broad success parameters include quality of the undergraduate experience, financial and operational effectiveness, faculty and student engagement and satisfaction, successful academic outcomes, and critical program occurrences—e.g., enrollment, inclusion, retention, and time to degree— against predetermined targets. Continuous quality reviews and collegiate learning assessments will provide valuable information regarding

our ability to sustain excellence in the presence of actual outcomes, internal organizational capacity, shifting macro-environmental impacts, and increased business and industry demands.

INNOVATING IN A DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENT

To achieve and sustain optimal growth and excellence in STEM education and research, we require a thorough understanding of conditions that will influence our delivery of a superior educational experience. We begin by exploring the first value-creating opportunities that are presented by this initiative. We anticipate additional opportunities with far-reaching impacts and potential gains as the STEM program evolves. In our internal capacity assessment, we identify key differentiating strengths that support our aspirations and consider the issues and challenges that will mark the next decade. In our macro-environmental assessment, we explore demographic, labor force, business, and societal trends. During internal and external assessments, we consider ways to mitigate/eliminate threats to our success. Essential observations gleaned from these assessments will influence our strategy and have a bearing on the achievement of our goals.

VALUE-CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

Numerous value-creating opportunities with potentially high returns on our investment are presented through our program and community partnership. Chief among possibilities will be the chance to collaborate with STEM professionals and political leaders who are joined in ensuring both local and national economic interests. The federal government and its advisory councils on science, technology, and the developing economy continue to express serious concerns about the lack of STEM professionals and the country's ability to retain its preeminent role in science and technology. Undergraduate STEM education is critical to scientific and technological advancements and the overall success and prosperity of the nation. WSU is positioned to play a leading role in this area and, specifically, to:

- Model an outstanding undergraduate STEM education;
- Foster ground-breaking research in STEM education and practice;
- Champion innovative paradigms for lifelong learning and end-to-end professional development;
- Shape new mutually beneficial partnership-alliance models;
- Deliver professionally competent and technologically proficient STEM graduates, capable of practicing, competing, and leading in a rapidly changing global culture and competitive landscape; and
- Make a substantial contribution to a well-educated local, national, and global STEM workforce.

INTERNAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

Key differentiating strengths in support of our aspirations include a reservoir of and access to local business talent, broad educational and research capabilities throughout the WSU system, a community of scholars and professionals who are committed to WSU's success and a confidence-inspiring mandate for STEM education from the State of Washington. Additional strengths and opportunities are provided by the initial capital funding of our 95,000 square foot state-of-the-art academic and research facility and approved cross-disciplinary research initiatives, such as those offered by JCDREAM, the Metropolitan Center for Applied Research, and the proposed Institute for Advanced Manufacturing and Aerospace. Existing WSU Everett programs are successful and are models for future program development. Activities designed to strengthen the organizational infrastructure are in progress. We are fostering beneficial partnership alliances with our partners, who will assume a significant role in the educational development of our students and, as ambassadors, provide marketing leverage for our program. Our location and geographic proximity to a fertile, resource-rich external industrial environment ideally positions us to grow in stature and influence, forge mutually beneficial partnerships, and enrich our curricular and research endeavors. All serve as resources that will attract and nurture students, faculty, and researchers.

At the same time, many challenges will arise in the coming decade and weigh heavily on decisions regarding our program growth and strategy. In particular, we must successfully navigate the financial constraints and fiscal realities of WSU and the current higher-education environment. Sturdy, reliable infrastructure supports will be necessary to sustain the programmatic and organizational growth required to expand access to education and enhance its quality. Continual upgrades and renewals will be needed in Key Result Areas.

MACRO-ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

National, state, and regional trends and conditions that we expect will affect our ability to enroll, educate, and graduate STEM professionals over the next decade include shifts in area demographics and enrollee profiles, emerging employment trends, a changing labor and workforce landscape, the status of the local and national economy, less than favorable access to higher education, and business-sector growth that increases business and labor force demands. Challenges will arise from college affordability concerns, heavy student-debt burdens, and gaps between college attendance, achievement, and completion rates, most notably in high-demand and STEM-related disciplines. The number of high school graduates is expected to decline through 2020 and then trend upward. The largest "college admissions bubble" since 2009 and the most diverse student population are expected in the year 2025. The percentage growth of the North Puget Sound region's nontraditional college-going cohorts (ages 25-44) is

projected to outpace that of the traditional college-going cohorts (ages 17-24). Still, other challenges will relate to the lack of access to postsecondary education and workforce training for time-, place-, or financially constrained residents of the three North Puget Sound counties. Additional areas of strategic significance for academic planning are described below; more extensive discussions can be found in the strategic plan.

STEM Education and Labor Force Requirements: STEM-related occupational employment groups are expected to represent more than 46% of all U.S. job openings by the year 2022. The preparation of students for postsecondary education is far from adequate to maintain sufficient interest and capability in STEM education and careers. Groups such as the National Science and Technology Council's Committee on STEM Education and the Council of Advisors on Science and Technology point to the need for a well-qualified and increasingly diverse workforce that can lead innovation in STEM-related industries. The shortage of evidence-based research on the characteristics of students who are most likely to succeed and enter the STEM workplace severely limits our capacity to recruit and educate STEM-capable individuals. The radical underrepresentation of women and minorities in STEM education and careers begins early and persists across the P-12, postsecondary, and STEM workforce spectrum.

Labor Market/Employment Trends*:* Through 2023, we anticipate increases in regional, state, and national employment growth rates for STEM-related and high-demand professions in three Department of Labor Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) job groupings: Computer and Mathematical Occupations, Architecture and Engineering Occupations, and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations. The Washington State Employment Security Department projects increased demand in the following jobs and occupational groups:

- Emerging transdisciplinary specialties, with Cybersecurity and Data Analytics representing the fields in highest demand in the computer professions, followed by Computer Systems Design and Related Services, and Information Services;
- Civil and Industrial Engineering—with Civil Engineering adding the most jobs and the largest percentage/growth rate of any engineering category, nationally and statewide, and Architects, Surveyors, and Cartographers, with most growth occurring in the architect group, except Naval Architects; and
- Graduate-level Nurse Practitioners, as essential providers and leaders in a complex healthcare environment.

In Washington State, there remains a supply/demand gap at the baccalaureate level in some STEM-related positions. Employment categories in which demand for degreed workers will continue to exceed in-state supply include computer science, engineering, software engineering, and architecture—with a gap estimated as high as 1,200 jobs

per year that cannot be filled by qualified Washington State residents. Compared to other States, Washington State is reported to have one of the highest proportions of STEM job openings.

Business and Industry Priorities*:* Our discussions with business leaders representing more than 6,000 employees in the North Puget Sound region focused on business priorities, human capital needs, and emerging labor force trends in a variety of industries and disciplines. A key theme was the need for new paradigms for lifelong learning to sustain a well-educated workforce and a robust regional economy. STEM literacy and expertise in STEM disciplines topped the list of required competencies across a wide range of high-demand industries and practice areas. Assuming professional and technical competence, leaders identified six distinguishing characteristics of tomorrow's successful employee. These defining capabilities form the core of a required entry-level "employability skill set" that is in demand in business and industry: adaptability, critical/analytical thinking, "big picture" focus, a flexible and innovative mindset, teamwork, and an entrepreneurial perspective and spirit.

Workplace/Workforce Trends*:* Emerging technologies, automation, big data, and new media ecology are driving competitive business processes and outcomes. Technology is advancing at an unprecedented rate. Data management and analysis are crucial for commercializing business products and services. Global interconnectivity and communication across geographic and international borders are triggering upsurges in innovation and competition. The Cloud and mobile technologies are shifting workers away from the office and toward an "in-my-own-time-and-place" work culture, and the trend toward "contingent" and flexible employment is escalating. These trends, along with shifts in labor relations practices and employee demographics—e.g., age, ethnicity, and gender—are changing the dynamics of traditional employment models, particularly given our aging population. Longevity in the workplace is becoming more common, with many opting out of retirement to continue in their current jobs or embark on new careers. More flexible career paths, coupled with continuous learning, is needed to help ensure that job responsibilities and skill sets are correctly aligned for the mutual benefit of local businesses, workers, and state/national interests.

MOVING FORWARD: ADVANCING AN AMBITIOUS AGENDA

Our mission, vision, and values serve as the primary drivers of our strategic plan and provide vantage points from which WSU Everett can be viewed and evaluated. Strategies are proposed for implementation over the life of the strategic plan and will (1) provide the context for action planning and (2) channel the efforts of team members and strategic partners.

A PATH TO IMPLEMENTATION

Successful execution of our strategic plan will proceed in five phases. In Phase I, the state's call to action was affirmed, the vision was refined per University and state mandates and strategic priorities were delineated. Initial degree programs were initiated with positive results. In Phase II, which is currently underway, the formal launch of the WSU Everett campus continues. A compelling case statement and marketing/communication strategy are being finalized. Particular attention is being paid to high-priority areas and conditions essential to our initial success. These areas include sustainable funding and resource allocation models, integration of breadth and variety of degree programs, recruitment of faculty and administrative leadership, enrollment management, and augmentation of teaching and organizational infrastructures—all of which will be needed to support start-up activities and initial program developments. In Phase III, an inventory of accomplishments will help establish a trajectory for the expansion of our program. The validity and relevance of academic outcomes will be tested and reaffirmed. In Phase IV, in collaboration with University leaders, a University-wide call for leading-edge STEM education and research initiatives, within and across disciplines, will be outlined. Approved initiatives will help set the tone and focus for further growth through the year 2027 and beyond. Phase V will usher in the "Years of Accelerated Innovation and Program Refinement." Before embarking on the next planning cycle, we will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of our progress. This evaluation process will enable us to establish the strategic direction for the next planning cycle.

CONCLUSION

The establishment of the WSU Everett program and partnership between WSU, the State of Washington, and the North Puget Sound community is momentous, mainly in its bearing on the future of the North Puget Sound region. This STEM education endeavor venture brings to life a long-held vision of Washington State and local leaders seeking to build a more robust regional economy, provide an educated and highly-skilled labor force, and create economic value and competitive advantages for underserved, indigenous North Puget Sound residents, local businesses, and the state. At the same time, this new education program and community partnership will position the University to advance its mission and vision further, achieve sustainable growth and prominence in undergraduate STEM education, and increase its reach, stature, and influence as a distinguished, education- and research-intensive public institution. Our vision is *to become recognized as one of the state's leading public undergraduate baccalaureate programs—preeminent in STEM education, innovation, research, and application, and to gain distinction, among discerning stakeholders, as a forward-leaning education, business, and research partner.* In our pursuit of excellence, we expect to deliver professionally competent, culturally literate, and technologically proficient

STEM graduates who are capable of practicing, competing, and leading in a rapidly changing global culture and competitive landscape. As a responsible partner and leader in education and research, we will work collaboratively with our partners to find sustainable solutions to labor force and economic problems. Our achievements will be made possible through collaborations with our partners and by sharing our expertise, consequential research findings, services and products in the form of highly qualified graduates and faculty who are poised to make significant contributions to STEM education and practice and the economic development of the region and state. Our success is highly contingent upon the forward momentum and positive results in areas that are important to sustainable growth and academic excellence. These capabilities and conditions are identified in this overview as "Strategic Enabling Conditions: Key Result Areas." Over the next ten years, our progress in these areas and our overall performance will be tracked and gauged using a continuous review and improvement process.

WSU Everett's strategic academic plan, "Fulfilling the Promise: Access to Baccalaureate and Graduate Education in North Puget Sound," puts forth a strategy for attaining and sustaining excellence in STEM education well into the future. Our academic portfolio and strategy will evolve as new, scientific, and evidence-based knowledge continues to redirect STEM education and business paradigms. This strategic academic plan spans a ten-year period and incorporates a comprehensive list of strategy options. To encourage faculty and leadership to tailor pursuits of excellence to fit the needs of students and the demands of industry/business sectors, we are flexible in our approach and planning. When implementing the plan, leadership is afforded flexibility in determining the most immediate and appropriate strategies at critical junctures and will adjust academic/business plans accordingly. While priorities and goals will remain relatively constant, strategies and initiatives are subject to change due to the emergence of new opportunities and shifts in institutional priorities or the political environment or resource reallocation.
We have been presented with an exciting opportunity and are on the cusp of an exciting decade. Our agenda is bold—and, if properly executed, the return on investment will be significant. We are on a journey to distinguish WSU and WSU Everett's students and faculty as leaders in undergraduate STEM education and research. In so doing, we expect to set our STEM-education program apart from similar programs, institutions, and initiatives.

We invite you, our partners, to join in our ongoing quest for excellence as we work to sculpt a future of promise—one that extends the depth and impact of WSU's scholarship, research, and outreach, both in the North Puget Sound region and around the globe.

We invite participation and encourage collaboration with all constituencies. Join us at everett.wsu.edu/wsu-everett-strategic-plan/.as we fulfill the promise of access, education and opportunity.

Inquiries, feedback and correspondence should be directed to the attention of:

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