

PENN STATE CAMPUS RECREATION

Aspiring for Excellence

Serve. Connect. Lead. Inspire.



STRATEGIC PLAN
(2018-2021)

Penn State Campus Recreation

Vision Statement

We inspire a healthy, engaged, and inclusive Penn State Community

Mission Statement

Penn State Campus Recreation provides a wide variety of recreation programs, spaces and services that foster meaningful connections and support positive choices for lifelong holistic wellbeing

Philosophical Statement

Campus Recreation is committed to the highest standards of professional excellence in the delivery and oversight of programs, services, and facilities. These standards dictate who our participants/patrons are and how we deliver services to them. Additionally, these values and professional standards provide the framework for us to remain student-centered, while also providing opportunities to faculty, staff, alumni, retirees and the greater community.

In providing these services, we support a pricing structure that indexes all user fees to the student-initiated fees specifically dedicated to Campus Recreation that students pay annually. Furthermore, we utilize various consultation and advisory groups to share ideas, present challenges, garner feedback, and seek advice on improving programs, services, and facilities. These groups are critical in engaging student leaders, campus partners and other constituent groups to bring forth matters and for us to acquire valuable feedback.

We believe in the power of collaboration with strategic partners to build relationships, foster community, and create efficient and mutually beneficial opportunities. We remain committed to providing students and our staff with development opportunities that support personal and professional growth.

In alignment with the academic mission of the university, we dedicate our efforts to support Student Affairs in accommodating ever-evolving organizational needs and structures. We will highlight our contribution to the success of the University and broaden our exposure such that we are seen as an essential partner to those delivering the academic mission of our campus. While extending our visibility and reach, Campus Recreation staff will be leaders within the field of recreation and beyond, with organizational and managerial competencies essential to the excellence of Student Affairs and the institution as a whole.

Our Values

Campus Recreation supports the overarching values of Penn State University and is committed to:

Student Centricity – we primarily serve and support student success through the delivery of recreation and well-being programs, facilities, and services. We believe that the participation of faculty, staff, alumni, retirees and the greater community can enrich the student experience.

Integrity – we believe in honesty, fairness, and high ethical standards, embracing trust and mutual respect and transparency as the foundation of our organizational culture.

Inclusivity – in embracing the ‘All In’ initiative, we are dedicated to creating welcoming recreational programs, services and safe spaces that reflect the diversity and ever-changing needs of our participants.

Excellence – with attention to detail, we aspire to the highest standards, utilizing resources effectively and responsibly, and strive to exceed expectations in all that we do.

Collaboration – we foster mutually beneficial relationships and serve as good citizens of the university by partnering with students, campus entities, and the greater community to support common success.

Innovation – we embrace creativity and imagination, resulting in a visionary approach to positive change and continuous improvement.

Consultation – we actively seek the input of students and our non-student constituents through the utilization of advisory councils, assessment tools, and other feedback mechanisms.

Strategic Plan Implementation

This strategic plan is an ambitious plan for action over the next 2 – 4 years and is intended to guide us in our decision making as we embark on this journey. The framework will help us establish organizational-wide objectives that will prioritize and put into action the goals we have created. Over the next 10 months, individual units in the department will collect participation data and will report success and challenges through a common reporting tool directly aligned with this plan. This data will allow us to see application and meaning in the plan, and will allow us to achieve our ambitions through the attainment of our goals. Our unit-specific work and department-wide initiatives will continuously support the Penn State Values and Student Affairs Strategic Plan, and our efforts will demonstrate the department's commitment to the University and to the academic success of our students.

Goals, Strategies, and Metrics

Introduction

All Campus Recreation professional staff were engaged in various components of the strategic planning process. Using the Penn State Values and Student Affairs strategic plan as our primary foundational documents, we reviewed trends affecting higher education and collegiate recreation and discussed how these trends might influence our constituents and therefore our programs, facilities and services. These trends influenced our approach in establishing the foundational resources and helped create the roadmap for the development of the strategic areas of focus. Subsequently, we did an organizational analysis (SOAR) to better understand how we were positioned to address these goals over the next 2-4 years.

The result of all these efforts is the creation of this strategic plan. It includes a series of goals, strategies and metrics that will guide our efforts, both as a comprehensive organization and as individual units within our department. The plan will allow us to achieve our newly established vision and mission, in ways that are consistent with our philosophic orientation and values, and our commitment to the greater objectives of Student Affairs and Penn State as a whole.

Goals

In order to refine our focus for future planning, we developed core goals and supportive goals. Core goals are the reason we exist, answering the question “What is the purpose of Campus Recreation at Penn State?”. Supportive goals are tools that will allow us to achieve our core goals. Both sets of tools are critical to our success.

Core Goals

- Student Development
- Inclusivity
- Strategic Partnerships
- Holistic Wellbeing

Supportive Goals

- Staff Development
- Modernize Facilities
- Risk Management
- Assessment & Evaluation
- Communication

Foster Student Development

Use student development theories, strategies and practices to prepare our students to develop skillsets to be successful for life after Penn State. We strive to offer a unique participatory environment and leadership opportunities where students contribute to a community that fosters diversity and lifelong learning while supporting their academic success.

Strategies

- Create a formalized student employee development model that includes consistent onboarding, annual training, and ongoing performance evaluation processes
- Commit to student development initiatives that are identifiable, common and intentional
- Develop annual curriculum to deliver to student employees and Club leaders
- Work intentionally to attract applicant pools that are representative of the student population
- Create and cultivate fund sources to support student development opportunities
- Develop employment promotional/advancement opportunities and pathways rooted in demonstrable knowledge, skills, and abilities
- Develop an evaluation process and assessment tool that provides an opportunity for conversation, feedback, self-reflection and growth
- Develop standards and departmental trainings for student employees specific to providing outstanding customer service

Indicators of Success

- Develop a student development plan for Campus Recreation Employees
 - Identify core learning objectives for all employees
 - Identify job-specific objectives
 - Develop and communicate paths for advancement across all areas
 - Define semester staff training topics and expectations for delivery
- Develop and implement a standardized departmental performance evaluation template for wage employees, supplemented by unit-specific criteria
 - Year 1: Core expectations across all positions plus unit-specific categories
 - Year 2: Modified evaluation tool with criteria correlated to development plan
- Develop training plan for student employees that supports the student development plan

Embrace Inclusion

Support and uphold the University's "All In at Penn State" initiative and provide a place "where people want to be and belong." Ensure that Campus Recreation is a place that participants want to be, feel welcomed, and can engage in their recreational activity of choice.

Strategies

- Configure and utilize Fusion effectively to track accurate participation and demographic information
- Identify specifically who our campus constituents are, assess their needs and interests and develop specific programs and services to welcome all students into our community and spaces
- Create and utilize participation reports for all programs and services to ensure we understand whom we are serving
- Partner with campus entities to reach under-represented populations within our department offerings and break down barriers to participation
- Support Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) through hiring and training of student and professional staff

Indicators of Success

- Implement mechanisms of tracking student and participant demographics
- Determine baseline reflection of campus ethnic background
- Work to improve hiring practices to meet or exceed campus demographic breakdown
 - Encourage hiring of all types of students – shapes, sizes, ages, ethnicities, gender identification, etc.
 - Seek candidates on all levels that represent marginalized/underrepresented groups
- Create Feedback Mechanisms
- Identify barriers to participation and develop strategies to increase participation rates across demographics

Create and Nurture Strategic Partnerships

Ensure that our strategic partnerships are derived from our student-centric perspective. Create mutually beneficial partnerships that allow for a sharing of resources and increased efficiency. Partnerships will include on-campus, divisional and academic partners as well as off-campus organizations.

Strategies

- Seek and create mutually beneficial partnerships, both on and off campus, that have measurable benefits for all parties.
- Review, revise and restructure current partnerships to ensure financial sustainability
- Clearly and consistently communicate the Department's value for potential partnerships to serve various constituent groups.
- Keep in mind that not all partnerships are transactional and some are solely for the betterment of the student experience.

Indicators of Success

- Create Partnership Maps (in individual units and Department-wide)
 - Demonstrate breadth and depth
 - Determine Gaps
 - Build relationships within all levels of departments

Promote and Inspire Holistic Wellbeing

Support and promote all participants to develop lifelong healthy habits and learn to make positive, thoughtful choices. Collaborate with and support key partners to position Campus Recreation at the center of addressing holistic wellbeing.

Strategies

- Expand a wellbeing education component for our staff and to our participants
- Collaborate with Student Affairs partners (e.g. Student Health, Health Promotions & Wellness, CAPS, etc.) in pursuit of efficient and effective delivery of services related to wellbeing
- Develop communication and educational strategies to support the visibility of Campus Recreation as integral to wellbeing
- Provide programming that is specific and focused on wellbeing
- Align programs and services to one or more of the specific realms/dimensions of wellbeing
- Stay abreast of national trends in regards to holistic wellbeing

Indicators of Success

- Create a Wellbeing Education Plan
 - Define holistic wellbeing and why it's important to us – what it is and what it's not
 - Determine wellbeing realms and, as a Department, adopt those elements
 - Brand wellbeing realms
 - Determine existing programs/services ties as a baseline
 - Identify gaps

Remain Committed to Staff Development

We employ individuals whom reflect high standards of professional knowledge, technical skill, and experience. We are dedicated to supporting professional staff by promoting continuing education and encouraging staff to be leaders in national organizations. We encourage our staff to contribute to, and be leaders in, the field of recreation.

Strategies

- Support and encourage increased involvement in professional development opportunities for all staff
- Participation in professional and staff development will be included as a measurable achievement and goal in annual performance appraisals
- Create fund sources for staff development opportunities
- Develop and support a culture where staff are prepared and comfortable with nominating/applying for awards, scholarships, and volunteer/committee positions
- Create an intentional process for staff to share knowledge and experiences gained from professional development opportunities
- Develop core competencies and minimum standards for all levels and positions in the department to demonstrate steps needed for advancement and position changes
- Promote on-campus development opportunities from departments across campus

Indicators of Success

- Establish core competencies for each position
 - Coordinator; Business Service Reps; Sr./Assistant Director; Senior Associate Director, Senior Director
- Create Professional Staff Development Plan
- Determine expectations for travel and clearly communicate those expectations
- Determine acceptable/expected avenues to “bring back” information
- Track investment in full-time and student employees and the return on that investment
- Promote/support committee involvement, scholarship applications and acknowledge awards and recognition

Modernize Facilities

Facilities have been identified as a component that will be impacted by emerging trends. This requires us to be good stewards of our existing facilities and be mindful of the need for future renovations, and/or construction of new facilities. Campus Recreation will develop a plan to update and maintain facilities and equipment, aligning all facilities with departmental standards of excellence.

Strategies

- Maintain high expectations for facilities, explore ways to make our facilities “destinations” for our students and members
- Explore mutually beneficial collaborations with Student Affairs and university partners desiring access to Campus Recreation facilities
- Ensure facilities accommodate the diverse needs of our constituents, building flexibility into long-term plans
- Utilize state of the art materials to maximize life-expectancy of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities and to allow for increased use and projected increased demand
- Develop short, midrange and long-term plans to modernize facilities, utilizing feedback from students and campus constituents
- Ensure project planning is inclusive in terms of serving a broad spectrum on needs and desires
- Develop partnerships and collaborate with entities such as ICA, OPP, Campus Planners, etc.) to ensure long-term facility goals are met
- Stay abreast of campus-wide planning initiatives to ensure our involvement in discussions relevant to, or affecting, the department
- Ensure sustainable funding models for facilities and equipment not supported by student fees.
- Formalize rental policies and procedures to:
 - Shelter the student investment in Campus Recreation resources
 - Ease unnecessary wear and tear of spaces while programming spaces for their intended use
 - Create additional revenue streams to offset direct and capital expenses

Indicators of Success

- Create Facility development and renovation plans that include opportunities to expand the reach of Campus Recreation programming
 - Develop priority list for projects
 - Develop appropriate timelines
 - Develop budget plans to ensure sustainable funding models and appropriate operating budget to coincide with new/renovated areas
 - Develop capital plans to address facility needs
- Develop facility and equipment maintenance and replacement plans

Effectively Manage Risks

Continue to emphasize the importance of risk management in all aspects of Campus Recreation. Emphasis will be placed on education and awareness surrounding industry standards, best practices and emerging technologies for managing risk in recreation settings.

Strategies

- Develop a risk management plan for Campus Recreation incorporating each specific unit
- Monitor national trends and best practices through active communication and engagement in national associations and with colleagues at peer institutions
- Support professional development opportunities specifically related to risk management
- Continue to work with the office of Risk Management to develop sensible and practical processes and procedures for managing risks that keep the safety of our participants at the center of our plan
- Work with Environmental Health and Safety to ensure that we maintain a safe and healthy workplace environment for all our staff
- Identify workplace health and safety training needs for each position and ensure necessary training is completed as part of the onboarding process
- Effectively communicate Emergency Action Plans (EAP's) amongst all staff
- Analyze incident reports and other data to identify trends and opportunities for strategic enhancements to the risk management plan
- Develop a risk management plan for Campus Recreation incorporating each program/service area
- Develop and implement drills/skill checks and internal auditing procedures

Indicators of Success

- Develop and train staff on departmental and unit area EAPS's
- Develop and implement on-boarding materials, training, and tracking specific to risk management and workplace safety
- Audit staff on life-saving emergency skills
- Create tracking system for certifications

Effectively Utilize and Generate Resources

Campus Recreation will need to establish a sustainable fiscal model by diversifying its sources of funding and revenue and remaining committed to the responsible stewardship of our resources. Alternative funding sources may include development, and sponsorships.

Strategies

- Develop departmental and unit specific philosophy and vision for diversifying resources that speaks to the values and mission of our department
- Develop plans for new sources of revenue, such as sponsorships, grants, and endowments to support programming, facilities, and services
- Review current rates/fees and examine our capacity to expand fee for service offerings.
- Conduct a valuation process to determine possible marketing, sponsorship and naming opportunities
- Identify services, programs and facilities that can be used synergistically to support colleagues' efforts and initiatives (e.g. THON, Shaver's Creek, etc.)
- Routinely review our rates and fees to ensure they are reflective of cost recovery goals while also keeping student accessibility at the forefront of our pricing model
- Benchmark our rates with peer institutions

Indicators of Success

- Develop departmental philosophy and vision regarding fee structure, program and facility support
- Audit fee for service programs and services to establish baseline values and consistency
- Establish realistic goals for program and service revenue growth
- Develop department-wide philosophy and vision for sponsorship generation and revenue

Utilize Assessment & Evaluation

We will be strategic in all planning efforts by utilizing assessment and evaluation, defined learning outcomes, metrics and data-driven decision-making. Through metrics, data and participant satisfaction surveys, we will effectively tell “our story” and the impact we have on the Penn State Community.

Strategies

- Research best practices for developing learning outcomes and assessment tools
- Develop common language and key data points for assessing and reporting our success using both qualitative and quantitative data
- Develop Learning Outcomes for all programs and services (for employees, student leaders and participants) as well as overarching outcomes for the department
- Expand analysis of user data and create standard questions and measurements for reporting user satisfaction
- Build department-wide procedures for gathering student employees’ and leaders’ demographic data and measure their satisfaction, success rates, job skills, and overall impact of employment with Campus Recreation
- Implement post-commencement data collection (employment, graduate school) of student employees
- Utilize technology (ie.e Canvas) to assess our intended outcomes
- Use retention rates as an indicator of success

Indicators of Success

- Create consistent unit-specific report format
- Create framework to build understanding of defined outcomes (how to write, measure, assess and report)
- Create an assessment plan to measure
 - student and non-student participation
 - student employee growth and learning
 - Wellbeing indicators
 - Participant satisfaction

Enhance Communication

Campus Recreation must be more proactive with both internal and external communication. Focal points will include marketing our programs, facilities and services, strategies to effectively articulate our value to the University, and on information sharing within the organization. Developing communication and marketing plans will be essential to the success of our programs, reaching new participants, sharing our story, spreading our vision and ensuring that staff at all levels can articulate departmental goals and objectives and advocate.

Strategies

- Develop and build upon departmental model of “Find You” and future campaigns to convey the vision, mission, and values of Campus Recreation
- Restructure and design all marketing materials to reflect vision and mission of Campus Recreation brand
- Develop marketing and communication plans for programs and services
- Review and refine roles and expectations around inter-department communication and sharing; set clear expectations for staff in regards to information sharing
- Create processes and procedures for communication (including expectations, both Campus Rec’s and all user groups) with all patrons groups regarding appropriate use of Department spaces
- Solicit feedback and communicate responses “we’re listening...”
- Respond to participant emails and social media inquiries in a timely manner

Indicators of Success

- Develop and implement an annual department-wide marketing plan and campaign
- Develop and implement a membership marketing campaign that results in increases in faculty, staff and community memberships
- Develop and implement a consistent and effective brand strategy across all marketing materials and efforts
- Develop an inter-department communications plan including specific communications paths, roles, and expectations as it relates to information sharing
- Develop and implement communication plans specific to individual programs and services along with feedback mechanisms to assess the success of our efforts