

Strategic Planning Template

Governmental Affairs

June 8, 2021

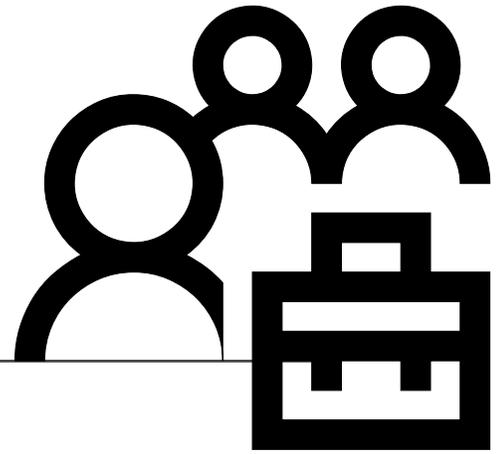


Committee Charge

Conduct a review of emerging changes in Governmental landscape that could affect the University. Evaluate the impact of legislative initiatives at all levels and determine how well the University is positioned to address new or modified policy changes. Examine the levels of engagement and capability of University supporters to influence outcomes that benefit the University, within the state and nationally. Identify opportunities to enhance relationships and collaborations with Governmental entities.



Data Analysis – EXTERNAL



- **Governmental Affairs – Local, State, National**

- Engagement levels of Local Governmental Officials (program and initiatives)
- External Affairs Impact
- Engagement Level of Alumni – Government
- Collaborations with Governmental Agencies
- Legislative Initiatives and Impact



Summary of Findings

Examples Only

- Staffing ratios exceed national and peer benchmarks
- NTTF Ratio % is comparable to peer institutions
- Greater focus is required to improve student success metrics (retention % and graduation rate % versus peer institutions)



Strength

- Office directly reports to Chancellor
- Generally positive reputation in the external community
- Positive experiences of legislators who interact with the campus and leadership
- Proactive Partnerships with other universities, community colleges, K-12, agencies and corporations
- Faculty and staff support the campus mission
- Proactive students
 - WSSU Student Government has a Political Action Committee
- Campus Characteristics
 - Small/Medium size campus that should allow for agility in making decisions
 - Faculty/Staff who are engaged in boards/civic groups across the state
- A core group of Dedicated and Expert faculty that is increasing
- Campus wide involvement in planning
- Strong, active and supportive Board of Trustees, especially in recent years
- Increase in Federal funding via our growing research portfolio



Weaknesses

WSSU has a budget of \$0 exclusive of salary for Government relations. Peers range from no dedicated budget to a dedicated budget of \$30k at VSU and \$600k at Villanova exclusive of salaries)

- Lack of a dedicated budget significantly impacts ability to travel, create materials for distribution and generally influence and inform legislators and agencies
- Budgets have been used for
 - Geofencing
 - Memberships (International Town and Gown Association, U.S. Chamber, Professional Associations etc)
 - Contract lobbyists
 - Google Search Prioritization

Distinguishing qualities and identity of WSSU not well known



Weaknesses (Contd)

- Operational structure/bureaucracy of UNC System
- Sluggish responsiveness *to* student and community needs based on legislative opportunities (legislation allowing Pell to be used by convicted felons-Yale & Georgetown have capitalized-NSU is planning/evaluation stage)
- Fiscal uncertainty (i.e. WSSU's credit rating has been used against us in legislative circles)
- High and unequal workloads compared to staff at other institutions
- Ability to hire & retain government relations staff
- Formal Student government relations internship/leadership program (see Opportunities for more detail)
- Adjusting to pressures of enrollment growth
- Varying perceptions of appropriate investment in government relations
- Lack of strong, pervasive presence in the external community
- Limited resources for faculty and staff development (professional lobbying organization memberships etc)
- Highly competitive environment for government support/resources

Opportunities

Increase Partnerships in support of university initiatives (Increased/deeper corporate partnerships at the C-Suite level see responses to Georgia voting bill)

Expand region of influence (legislators – private industry) outside Forsyth County

Strategic Use of Alumni and Students (see Villanova & NSU)

Villanova:

- Alums in office became a natural caucus and were used to advance the legislative agenda
- Utilizes connected alums, to get VP & Director on lists of invitations to fundraisers/special events for elected officials
- Created Public Policy Society aimed at alums that are in the field. The mission of the group is to network amongst themselves, place students in offices of elected officials and at government agencies
- Created opportunities for alums to come in to speak at seminars that allow them to speak about their work in the government sector (agencies, lobbying etc). The Director would moderate these discussions and they are used to develop/maintain relationships with former alums
- Created 3 week minimester and immersion program on Capital Hill, at think tanks and government agencies and etc. in order to help place students and build influence. Alums in government were used to help facilitate placements



Opportunities (contd)

Norfolk State University:

- NSU has developed a program to strategically develop students and place them in legislative offices and government agencies so that they can then leverage those students as alums. These opportunities are often facilitated by alums
- CAAMP's student ambassadors participate in weekly training leadership training that includes guest speakers from government and NSU Alumni
- To this point 5 students have been placed in the Governor's office, 10 in State Legislative Offices, 4 in U.S. Senate offices and 125 students in law schools across the country since 2019
- Alums in office and at government agencies are used to advance the legislative agenda

VSU also strategically places students in legislative offices and government agencies

External Community and University relationships

- Interest in program expansion (i.e. CSEM)
- Interest in University services (i.e. Policy Center see NSU)

Growth potential of Government Relations office (see NSU & FSU)

- Create a viable budget
- Increase staff

Opportunities (contd)

Societal trends

- Increased value of support for HBCUs based on current societal pressures
- Growing demand for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Technological advances– There are many software options available that manage/support external relations (i.e. Quorum & etc.) that can be used to support & advance WSSU efforts

Advocacy

- Increased partnership opportunities w/ Higher Ed Advocacy Groups
 - TMCF, NAFEO, AASCU, ACE
- Increased focus on partnerships with Private Sector Advocacy Groups
 - Chamber of Commerce, W-S Alliance, Business Roundtable

State Capital

- development of annual/semi-annual event in Raleigh to Increase university meaningful connections (students, alumni & friends) in government agencies and offices

Opportunities (contd)

Engagement

- Breakfasts/Luncheons w/ Legislators
 - Villanova regularly host breakfast/luncheons with leaders that are organized by the Chamber of commerce
 - NSU host Fall and Spring event where State leaders and Federal leaders will visit campus to give a recap of their respective sessions. This event was also leveraged to get VIPs on campus that would not normally visit NSU.
- Debates
 - NSU hosted a U.S. Senatorial debate on their campus and leveraged sponsorships in order to have no cost out-of-pocket and generated several days of media coverage with local news outlet due to partnership which allowed for the station's news anchors to moderate the debate. This event was also leveraged to get VIPs on campus that would not normally visit NSU.
- Sporting Events
 - Villanova regularly hosts elected officials at basketball games. The national championship teams have made it their most effective engagement tool

Threats

- Potential reduction of spending on public universities by State and Federal Government
- Negative perception/Lack of understanding of HBCUs amongst certain legislators and government agencies
- Development of other universities in the system at the expense of WSSU (i.e. inequitable funding of the state's hbcu's (University of MD System lawsuit))
- Continued underinvestment in the External Relations office



Priorities or Areas of Focus

- Develop an internship program for the office of external relations to include practical experience for students that would ideally be for credit
- Create a dedicated budget for the office to
 - Increase Visibility and Presence: Host events throughout the year (i.e. marketing, travel, breakfasts, luncheons, debates and etc.)
- Build executive relationships (private and public sector)
- Maintain and Build WSSU Caucus (Trustees, Faculty, Staff, Students) through engagement 365 days a year
 - Includes but not limited to seminars similar to Provost's ELiTE series

