

***The PASSHE Strategic Initiatives was approved by the Board of Governors on October 13, 2010.***

## ***PASSHE Strategic Initiatives***

### **Context**

Throughout its twenty-seven year history, PASSHE has been guided by a series of strategic plans which have identified goals for performance and service excellence. PASSHE's most recent strategic plan, *Leading the Way*, expired in 2009. Much has changed since its adoption and the need for a new vision is critical if PASSHE universities are able to play an ever-growing role in the Commonwealth's future. *PASSHE Strategic Initiatives* serves as the outline of the major strategic initiatives for the System that will frame the next strategic plan for adoption by the Board of Governors. As individual campuses revise their strategic plans in the interim, this document will inform that process. Additionally, it will inform the revised outcomes-based performance funding model.

*PASSHE Strategic Initiatives* is grounded in the System's mission, "to be among the nation's leading systems of public universities, recognized for (1) access and affordability of excellent undergraduate and graduate education; and (2) responsiveness to state, regional, and national needs through quality academic programs, research, and service." PASSHE's focus has always and will continue to be focused on our students, and on how to ensure that the experiences they have are the most enriching possible.

*PASSHE Strategic Initiatives* is predicated on the need for transformation: in how, when, and where learning occurs; in how the resources necessary to ensure learning need to be recruited, retained, and sustained; in how our universities relate to their various communities; and in how we partner with the Commonwealth in creating and delivering a shared vision of the future. Only through such transformation, grounded in thoughtful re-examination of our traditional ways of conducting ourselves, will we be assured of thriving in these very difficult economic times.

### **The Strategic Initiatives**

The four strategic areas are:

- Transforming students and the learning environment
- Transforming resources
- Transforming university-community relations
- Transforming PASSHE's role in determining the Commonwealth's future

Each of these areas will incorporate several key goals that will be the focus of ongoing and planned efforts by individual universities and/or the Office of the Chancellor. Examples of goals under each initiative are not meant to be exhaustive, but reflective of the highest priorities for the betterment of our students and the citizens of the Commonwealth.

### **PASSHE Initiative 1: Transforming Students and the Learning Environment**

To be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, students must be prepared for lifelong learning, a habit of the mind that will force them to continually refresh their content knowledge. To ensure this outcome, PASSHE must lead the way in changing the way students learn, faculty teach, and courses are delivered. To achieve this will require us to provide state-of-the-art support services. To meet its educational mission, PASSHE must ensure that the students who learn in its universities reflect the diversity of the communities from which they come, and that the faculty and staff who teach and support them do as well. Additionally, the physical spaces in which learning occurs and the means by which information and courses are delivered must adapt and be more flexible. Goals in this area include ensuring quality and currency in academic programs and services; expanding greater inter-university collaboration; employing technology and designing facilities to enhance teaching and learning; and providing evidence of student learning and achievement.

### **PASSHE Initiative 2: Transforming Resources**

The human and financial resources necessary to create the highest quality learning opportunities for our students need to be identified and provided. PASSHE prides itself in being a national leader in implementing significant cost reductions and cost avoidance strategies. Providing adequate resources in difficult economic times will require continual rethinking of university entrepreneurship and flexibility, and a realization that new ways of thinking and conducting our operations are essential. Close collaboration with the General Assembly and the Governor will be essential to ensure that PASSHE universities are afforded the same opportunities for revenue creation as other publicly-funded institutions. Investment in our faculty and staff through professional development programs will be even more important as a means to retain and sustain our talent. Goals in this area include creating an inclusive environment in which our diverse students, faculty, and staff can thrive; implementing best practices in teaching and learning; enhancing institutional flexibility; and increasing private fundraising while diversifying financial resources to support our mission.

### **PASSHE Initiative 3: Transforming University-Community Relations**

The communities and regions in which PASSHE universities are located must be better for and enhance those institutions. This mutually beneficial relationship must be nurtured and enhanced in the myriad ways that respect and utilize each other's strengths. PASSHE universities have an obligation to enhance the quality of life of the citizens of our communities, and help improve local and regional economic conditions. All core constituency groups (students, staff, and faculty) must work together with local, regional, national, and international communities to ensure that each of us leaves the situation better than we found it. Goals in this area include enhancing community and regional engagement; expanding opportunities for workforce development; and fostering local and regional economic and community development.

**PASSHE Initiative 4: Transforming PASSHE's Role in Determining the Commonwealth's Future**

As the Commonwealth's universities, PASSHE institutions have a special relationship with it. As a result, we have an obligation to ensure that the strategic needs of the Commonwealth are our focus, and that PASSHE plays an appropriate role in creating the policy and direction for the state's future. This means that PASSHE must be part of the vision of the future, and have a significant role in creating and delivering it. Goals in this area include expanding capacity for public policy development; capitalizing on the broadband initiative for educational, health, and economic improvement; and aligning academic programs at all levels with the Commonwealth's strategic needs.