

**Penn State Altoona
Executive Summary
10-Year Master Plan Program Statement, 2008-2018**

Priorities: Penn State Altoona will continue to build a tradition of excellence in undergraduate education by attracting and retaining outstanding faculty and students, and building a culture of engaged student learning. This vision can be achieved through a continued strengthening of our historical bonds with the local community, enhancing outreach, carefully expanding curricular offerings, and an attendant expansion of high quality and diverse faculty and students. Expanding our physical plant, while sustaining the beauty of the Penn State Altoona campus, will move the College towards its vision of becoming a distinguished baccalaureate institution within the Pennsylvania State University.

	Fall 2008	Fall 2018
Student Enrollment	4,019	4,400-4,600
Faculty Size	152 full-time 66 FTE part-time	180 full-time 70 FTE part-time
Baccalaureate Degree Programs	19	24-28

Academic Program Changes

Curriculum: With the approval of the Information and Cyber option of the Security and Risk Analysis degree for Fall 2008, Penn State Altoona has authority to grant 19 baccalaureate degrees. By 2018, this will expand to 24-28 offerings. Currently, proposals to offer the Second Degree option in the B.S. in Nursing and the B.A. in Political Science are working their way through the consultation and approval processes, and should be in place for Fall 2009. The current strategic plan calls for consideration of Economics, Sociology, Chemistry, and Secondary Education majors, and a proposal to create a new program in Railroad and Transit Engineering is being developed for consideration. New minors are also being considered. It is likely that the feasibility of offering M.B.A. and M.Ed. programs will be evaluated during the next ten years.

Academic Support: The College is building out three floors in the Aaron Building, and one floor will house the Communications program with TV, radio, and studio space. The Geo Trusty property is being updated to house the Visual Art Studies program. However, additional space for faculty offices, classrooms, and research, especially to include undergraduate students, is needed.

Non-Academic Program Needs

There are major pressures for additional facilities in student life and housing. Space for student activities and organizations was identified as a critical need in the most recent planning cycle. The Adler Athletic Complex was built for a campus of 1,200 students (1970), and supports class instruction, intercollegiate athletics, intramurals and club sports, and recreational needs of the campus. Despite various minor additions and renovations, the lack of space in Adler serves as the major constraint on expanding intercollegiate and intramural sports, and often forces these two complementary athletic arenas into difficult trade-offs. Adler is also the site for our Distinguished Speakers Series and commencement ceremonies, and the lack of space has required the College to hold two separate commencement ceremonies during the spring. An alumni center would provide the necessary space for graduation as well as other large events at the College and for the community.

Offices of various kinds are needed and will remain at full capacity for the next few years. Parking remains at capacity, but the new parking fee should provide funds to add a new multi-layer facility in the near future. Child care facilities are still not available on campus, although a plan has been developed to partner with a local provider once appropriate space has been identified.

Penn State Altoona 10-Year Master Plan Program Statement, 2008-2018

The Strategic Plan for 2008-2013 outlines the framework for academic growth and institutional development for the first half of this period. However, the broad goals and core vision will inform and guide our development for most of the period of the master plan. We continue to work on our vision of becoming a distinguished baccalaureate institution within the Pennsylvania State University. We seek to realize the six principle goals of the University through the enrichment and enhancement of engaged undergraduate learning (see Appendix A).

The highest priorities for achieving our vision are the recruitment, retention, and intellectual development of outstanding students and faculty. At the same time, we recognize the need to expand and enhance our physical environment to meet the needs of a dynamic public college. This program statement looks forward to a future that realizes our vision of becoming a distinguished comprehensive college within Penn State.

Key challenges for the future development of Penn State Altoona as a comprehensive college include:

- Managing the uncertainty and impact of the recent economic downturn on tuition, enrollments, and the operating budget.
- Re-invigorating the growth of upper division enrollments by adding select baccalaureate degrees and sharing current best practices in student recruitment and retention.
- Connecting programs that are delivered at the Devorris Downtown Center (Communications) and Geo Trusty property (Visual Art Studies) to the broader college community, and ensuring their continuing growth.
- Developing the full physical plant necessary for becoming a distinguished baccalaureate college which enhances and expands engaged student learning.

Enrollments

Beginning in Fall 1996, Penn State Altoona has had the largest undergraduate enrollment outside of University Park, until Fall 2007 when Penn State Erie tied Altoona with 4,031 undergraduates, and then surpassed Altoona in Fall 2008. Altoona's enrollments fluctuated around 3,700-3,800 students from 1997 through Fall 2004. Enrollments in this period peaked at 3,877 in Fall 2002, and then declined over the next three years to 3,647 in Fall 2005. In Fall 2007, enrollment at Altoona topped 4,000 (4,031) for the first time, and enrollments remained steady for Fall 2008 (4,013).

However, the enrollment growth in the past three years has primarily occurred at the lower division with baccalaureate freshmen classes of 1,329 in Fall 2006, 1,335 in Fall 2007, and 1,331 in Fall 2008. During this same period, upper division enrollments at Altoona peaked at 773 in Fall 2006, and then fell to 685 in Fall 2007, and to 679 in Fall 2008 (see Appendix B). The gap between upper division enrollments and projections has grown to 91 students in Fall 2008, and we will need to adjust our enrollment plan accordingly. At the same time, the College plans a renewed focus on upper division growth by adding new degree programs which build on faculty strengths and meet local needs, and by charging a newly-re-established Retention Committee with focusing on best practices in program recruitment and retention.

Limited, but steady growth of around 50 juniors and seniors per year would allow the College to reach its target range of 4,400 to 4,600 students by 2018. However, there remains pressing needs for additional teaching and research space, offices, student life and activities space, recreational and athletic space, and parking. The growth of our alumni base after a decade as a baccalaureate college increases the need for a large meeting space to greet friends of the university.

Complicating enrollment management are the changing demographics of our region and the state, as well as the internal dynamics of our baccalaureate programs. The overall population of our service area has continued to decline (by 2.1% from 2000 to 2006), and the percentage of high school graduates in our service area is the lowest of any of the campus colleges and is expected to continue its steady decline through this planning period. However, Altoona remains the top first choice and top second choice campus among baccalaureate applicants, and we have worked with the University to expand out-of-state enrollments to over 15% of the campus population from 2006 to 2008.

The second complicating factor involves the dynamics of baccalaureate development. Our experience over the past decade of adding new baccalaureate suggests that a new program will meet an unmet demand and grow quite rapidly in its first 2-3 years. However, after that initial growth, programs see enrollments decline somewhat, and then will sustain modest peaks and valleys in subsequent years. We will continue to add programs (see next section) to build our upper division enrollments. However, except for Political Science and perhaps Sociology, there are few likely high enrollment majors remaining to add. The economic downturn is likely to continue pressures to increase tuition, as state funding for the University continues to decline. The impact of the economy and tuition increases will continue to create uncertainty for enrollment management, and thus create uncertainty for our operating budgets.

Faculty and Staff

Despite hiring 12 tenure-track and six fixed-term faculty for Fall 2008, the number of full-time faculty has fluctuated from a low of 141 (Fall 2007) to a high of 152 (Fall 2005 & 2008) over the past six years (see Strategic Indicators 1.b.). There are currently 13 tenure-track and two fixed-term searches underway for Fall 2009, which should further improve the ratio of classes taught by full-time and part-time faculty. In Fall 2008, the ratio of classes taught by full-time faculty rose by 5% to 63%, overall, and jumped by 11% to 54% in the Division of Arts and Humanities, the first time it has been over 50% since 1998.

Staff lines at Penn State Altoona grew rapidly through Fall 2004 (161). However, with some belt-tightening, staff lines declined to 151 in Fall 2006, but rebounded to 156 in Fall 2007. With the campus expanding the Devorris Downtown Center and moving the Visual Art Studies program to the Geo-Trusty building in Fall 2009, additional staff will be necessary to provide supervision of these off-campus sites, especially for student usage during off-hours.

In the past three years, the Registrar's Office was moved and reconfigured for better traffic flow, a new office of Planning, Assessment, and Education Abroad was established, the Admissions Office was expanded to provide additional space for visiting families, and the DUS Office was renovated and re-organized to bring all academic advisors into one location.

The new campus master plan will need to sort out needs and priorities for additional office space (both faculty and staff), teaching spaces (general classrooms and labs), and student life facilities. Given the likely impact of the current economic downturn on university budgets, prioritizing facilities needs will be a critical component of the new plan.

Program Development: Academic

Penn State Altoona currently has the authority to grant 19 baccalaureate degrees, 8 associate degrees, and 19 minors. Five baccalaureate degrees have two or more options (Biology, Business, Mathematics Science, and Psychology), and three degrees that have built in flexibility (Environmental Studies, Integrative Arts, and Letters, Arts and Sciences). Three degrees are offered in both the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science formats (Criminal Justice, Mathematics, and Psychology). Thirteen of the baccalaureate degrees are shared with other academic units, and four others are closely aligned with programs offered at other units.

Currently, proposals to offer the B.A. in Political Science and a new Second Degree Option in Nursing are working their way through the curricular consultation and approval processes, and both programs should begin in Fall 2009 at Altoona. The Education faculty are also working closely with counterparts at Berks, Lehigh Valley, and the College of Education on creating a new major in Childhood and Early Adolescent Education to replace the current Elementary and Kindergarten Education program and meet new state certification requirements. A proposal for a new program in Railroad and Transit Engineering is also under development.

The 2007-2008 strategic planning process identified social sciences (Political Science, Sociology, Economics), physical sciences (Chemistry) and performing arts (Theatre) as key gaps in the array of degree offerings at Altoona. The Strategic Plan also calls for evaluation of new programs that enhance opportunities for professional study, such as additional education programs, a post-baccalaureate certificate in Premedical Studies, and minors in Business and Accounting. This planning period should also include evaluation of potential high demand graduate programs, such M.B.A., M.Ed., or other masters programs.

Since 2007, the College has created a social sciences research lab, renovated a space for engineering research, established an instrumentation lab, and renovated Elm Building to provide a suite of offices for the Division Heads. The College is currently renovating three floors in the Aaron Building to provide space for Continuing Education, additional classrooms, and a Communications suite which will include TV, radio, and other spaces for the Communications program. The Geo Trusty property is being renovated to provide space for a wood, metal and sculpture shop, studios for classes and senior projects, a gallery, faculty offices, and studio space for the Visual Art Studies program (VAST). A key challenge for the College will be to develop mechanisms to connect the VAST and Communications programs to the rest of the campus.

The College has also recently purchased a 40-acre tract of land adjacent to campus, which includes five parcels of land and a one-story concrete block single-family residence. The Penn State Altoona Environmental Studies program will use the land for erosion study and stream analysis. The property also will offer hiking and camping opportunities for classes.

Classroom occupancy has risen above 82% during the day, which is the highest level since 2001 (see Strategic Indicators, 6.c.). The Science and Holtzinger buildings were built in 1969, and currently are rated as poor by Penn State's facilities website. These buildings provide the core for our undergraduate research programs in the sciences and engineering, and thus limit our ability to expand and enhance engaged student learning in these programs. Currently, the College is reviewing options for offices for the new faculty who are expected to start in Fall 2009, but the shortage of faculty office space is likely to continue for the next few years. A new master plan will need to provide an integrated assessment of academic facilities needs, including offices, general classrooms, specialized classrooms or labs for new programs, and research space, especially for undergraduate research.

Program Development: Non-Academic

There are several key elements of non-academic infrastructure that have emerged in the recent planning discussions as key to the next steps in our maturation as a comprehensive college. Penn State Altoona needs to expand student life and activities space in order to provide the kind of engaged learning, both in and outside of the classroom, that is envisioned. The Slep Student Center was built when the College had 1,000 students (1963), and has not been expanded. The Adler Athletic Complex was built for a campus of 1,200 students (1970), and supports class instruction, intercollegiate athletics, intramurals and club sports, and recreational needs of the campus. Adler is also the site for our Distinguished Speakers Series and commencement ceremonies. Both of these areas are significantly over-subscribed and place constraints on student activities outside the classroom.

With the growth of academic programs, over 400 students graduate from our associate and baccalaureate degree programs annually for each of the past four years (see Strategic Indicators 4.b.). In the spring, commencement exercises will be held off-campus since Alder can no longer accommodate the number of faculty, graduates, and their families who wish to attend. With the growth of graduates from Penn State Altoona programs, the need to connect with our alumni also has grown, but there is not a dedicated space for alumni to return to campus and meet with colleagues. An alumni center is a key item for fundraising and would provide a critical connection between the campus and its growing alumni base.

The expansion of operations at the Devorris Downtown Center will include a home for the Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE) and Society of Business Students (SOBS) organizations, a base for the Entrepreneurship Education Program, and room for a Center for Community-Based Learning and Research. These properties will enhance the connections between the College and community and contribute to our outreach operations, but enhancing connections between downtown operations and the broader campus community will require careful attention, as well as continued work with Amtran to provide bus transportation between the campus and downtown.

The lack of child care on campus is a long standing concern for students, faculty, and staff. A number of studies over the years have shown considerable demand for child care, but space and cost constraints have limited action. In the past year, a plan to partner with a local child care provider to operate in the Cypress Building has been advanced. This plan would require the College to develop an appropriate space which would be managed by a local provider, which would limit the direct costs to the College while building partnerships with the local community.

With 900 beds on campus, the College cannot house its entire first-year class. While strong ties have been developed with off-campus landlords, there are ongoing pressures for expanded on-campus housing with the growth to over 4,000 students. Maple Hall (1968) and Oak Hall (1963) have been rated as in poor condition, and are nearing the end of their usable life. There have been discussions with Housing at University Park about an additional residence hall, but any new housing provided by the University is a long way off. The College should consider expanding partnerships with local landlords to increase the availability of housing complexes in close proximity to campus, especially in light of new restrictions on student housing by the City of Altoona.

Finally, parking remains in short supply. Master planning needs to include consideration of additional parking, including creating a parking deck along Juniata Gap Road, which would simultaneously enable the college to increase its green spaces. The student parking fee can contribute towards this project and assist with maintenance and upkeep of existing parking areas.

Appendix A: Strategic Plan: Goals & Objectives, 2008-2013

Goal 1: Cultivate academic excellence through the support of high-quality teaching, research and service. Penn State Altoona will cultivate academic excellence by building a culture of assessment and improvement for all of our degree programs, by expanding and enhancing honors education, and by placing undergraduate research at the center of the Penn State Altoona experience. Recognizing that the vitality of the faculty, both collectively and individually, is key to fostering academic excellence, Penn State Altoona will continue to develop effective strategies for supporting research and extramural funding opportunities and support faculty working in disciplinary communities.

- Create a college-wide *culture of continuous quality improvement* in academic programming.
- Make Honors education a hallmark.
- Develop effective strategies for supporting research and extramural funding.
- Support participation in Disciplinary Communities.
- Enhance online learning opportunities for faculty and students.

Goal 2: Enrich the educational experience of all Penn State students by becoming a more student-centered University. At Penn State Altoona, a student-centered environment is defined as a setting that is “learning centered, includes engagement and individual effort, accessibility and services, community, inclusivity, and feedback and assessment.”

- Emphasize learning and opportunities for engagement outside of the classroom.
- Promote co-curricular activities within student organizations.
- Use the web, social networks, and on-campus fairs to reach a broader range of the student body.
- Enhance and improve support services for students.
- Use assessment to determine the effectiveness in becoming a student-centered college.

Goal 3: Create a more inclusive, civil, and diverse University learning community. Penn State Altoona’s recent update to its *Framework to Foster Diversity* shows that the College has made significant progress in implementing its diversity initiatives. However, we recognize that it is important for the College to remain committed to equity and diversity in all its forms, and continue to identify and implement improvements.

- Recruit and retain a diverse, highly qualified student body.
- Seek to increase the recruitment and retention of adult learners.
- Hire diverse, highly-qualified faculty and staff.
- Develop a supportive climate.

Goal 4: Develop new academic programs as resources allow, and continue to expand current academic programs to better serve our students and their communities. Penn State Altoona will seek to add carefully selected degree programs from the Top 30 nationally that round out the College’s offerings in the liberal arts, and will develop programs that enhance opportunities for professional study. Penn State Altoona will develop the facilities, faculty and support services to expand our existing degree programs, and seek to expand enrollments in our upper-division programs.

- Add three to six baccalaureate degree programs.
- Enhance and expand our current degree programs.
- Improve student recruitment and retention; expand upper division enrollments to over 1,000 by Fall 2011.

Goal 5: Serve society through teaching, research and creative activity, and service. Penn State Altoona will continue to seek to expand its engagement with the surrounding communities and beyond. Recognizing the importance of service to society and a healthy symbiotic relationship with our communities, we will strive to create partnerships with the community where possible. Penn State Altoona will continue to advance outreach and engaged scholarship, and enhance incentives to encourage participation in community engagement and outreach.

- Advance outreach and engaged scholarship.
- Engage Altoona and surrounding communities in life-long learning.
- Promote community service by faculty, staff, and students.
- Serve as a center for the arts and cultural activities.

Goal 6: Develop new sources of non-tuition income, increase tuition income through enrollment growth, and reduce costs through improved efficiencies. With an uncertain outlook toward obtaining central funding to support the College’s budgetary needs, Penn State Altoona must creatively identify new sources of restricted and unrestricted income, reduce annual department costs, and improve efficiencies throughout the College. To meet Penn State Altoona’s mission, funding must be established for additional class and office space, updated labs, additional conference rooms, new faculty, staff and tech service positions, transportation expenses, and physical plant improvements.

- Increase philanthropy.
- Implement technologies and reduce departmental expenses.
- Develop and implement enrollment plan.

Appendix B: Upper Division Program Enrollments, 2000-2008

Program (Yr Started)	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008
BSBAL (1997)	115	144	153	139	134	129	125	130	125
LASAL (1997)	34	43	20	38	34	29	27	19	27
CJ (BA & BS) (1999)	104	126	87	75	100	107	102	79	70
HFSAL (1999)	72	75	54	52	53	49	50	34	44
ENGAL (1999)	47	39	37	31	26	24	18	15	24
ENVST (2000)	3	16	18	23	19	19	24	23	26
IARAL (2000)	4	15	15	16	16	13	19	16	6
SCIAL (2000)	0	10	8	9	9	4	10	11	7
COMAL (2002)	--	--	1	13	31	41	39	44	43
MATH (BA & BS) (2002)	--	--	0	5	4	5	8	8	7
PSYCH (BA & BS) (2003)	--	--	--	9	35	61	61	49	48
EEDAL (2003)	34	34	10	59	84	98	88	87	67
BIOAL (2004)	--	--	--	--	1	14	19	25	17
HISAL (2005)	--	--	--	--	--	9	20	22	23
VAST (2007)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0	6
Altoona Common Year					22	27	34	28	24
Sub-Total- Upper-Division-Altoona	289	363	392	514	568	629	643	590	564
SRA (2008)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0
EMET (1997)	44	55	48	50	53	48	35	41	47
NURN (1997)	31	24	25	18	34	39	44	25	36
OLEAD (2002)	--	--	--	0	0	0	0	7	3
Upper Division-other colleges	74	69	70	88	87	92	79	73	86
Other Common Yr/DUS/ Exceptions	92	99	96	75	51	70	75	22	29
Total	455	531	558	626	691	768	773	685	679

