Strategic Planning Process
Phase II: Defining CWU's Values
November 4, 2022

Activity Directions:

1. Read through the traditional definitions of the values included below. These definitions will sound familiar as they derive from our current values and from those at other higher education institutions. They do not make us distinctive.
2. As a table, choose 3 values to discuss. Allocate 15 minutes for each value.
3. Using the paper at your table, develop a new definition for your selected values that will differentiate CWU in how we think about and live into this value. This can and should be aspirational and make us distinctive. It may lead to content areas for our Strategic Plan.
4. With your remaining time, rank all 8 values in priority order.
5. If time allows, we will provide an opportunity to walk around the room and vote on the statements you like from other tables' definitions.

Guiding questions for your table:

Differentiating or Aspirational Values are intended to set CWU apart from its peers. These values encompass what creates a unique, meaningful experience central to an education at CWU. Defining values will help us operationalize our Vision and Mission and inspire how we work together.

- How might we redefine these values in ways that will help distinguish CWU from other institutions of higher education?
- As we operationalize these values, how can we do so in ways that set us apart and allows us to live into our Vision and Mission?

Example 1: Access

Traditionally, when we think about the value of Access, we think about easing pathways into higher education, giving more students access to entering our community.

We might assert this value as a basic way of operating at CWU, which does not set us apart from other institutions like us.

But we might go the next step and transform the value of Access to focus on what students need access to in order to be successful: food, housing, high impact practices, financial aid, culturally sustaining pedagogies, integrated student services, a multicultural center, etc.

Your task is to reimagine traditional values in ways that capture Central Washington University's distinctiveness and allow us to live into our Vision and Mission.

Example 2: Shared Governance

Traditionally, Shared Governance describes the interactions between the faculty, administration, and governing board. These descriptions prescribe specific roles and responsibilities and ways in which these three groups participate in jointly governing the university.

At CWU, like at other institutions of higher education, we have appropriately broadened our definition of shared governance to include staff and students, but we have not clearly explained what this means or how it operates. We might elevate and transform our work through clarifying how all the various constituents—faculty, staff, students, administration, and trustees—participate in governance.

And we might transform this work further by defining what it might look like to operate through a shared leadership model that blurs the boundaries between participating groups. Such a transformation could only occur if we have clear and effective communication and trust. And further yet, we might transform our work into engaged leadership, where we create an ecosystem of leaders-in-place who participate from all of their various roles to guide the university towards its fullest potential.

Current CWU and/or Traditional Higher Education Values

The values included here are based on the feedback provided from offices and departments in Phase I of this activity. As you transform, elevate, and make distinctive the values you select, you might also consider renaming them.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging

CWU believes that diversity of peoples, cultures, and ideas is essential to learning, discovery, and creative expression. CWU believes that all faculty, staff, and students must be and must feel physically, professionally, and emotionally safe in order to fully engage in and benefit from the university experience.

Diversity is those enduring characteristics assigned to us at birth and those life experiences built from those enduring characteristics (Cleary, n.d.). Inclusion refers to the way in which individuals are empowered to participate in the fabric of campus life. Inclusion is intertwined with and furthers the purposes of diversity. Equity refers to ideals of fairness and justice and the subsequent recognition our society generates, maintains, and reifies disparities that require redress (NACE, n.d.). Belonging is the feeling of security and support when there is a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity for a member of a certain group or place (Cleary, n.d.).

Student Success

CWU believes that student success is best achieved by providing supportive learning and living environments that encourage intellectual inquiry, exploration, and application. CWU believes that learning is best achieved in small classrooms or group settings with ample opportunities for individualized instruction, mentoring, advising, and programming.

Access

CWU believes in providing educational opportunities to as many qualified students as possible. CWU believes that restrictions of place, time, and finances can be overcome through the effective use of partnership with community colleges and by effective and efficient use of learning, communication, and social technologies.

Community Engagement

CWU believes that learning, research, and creative expression are enhanced by engagement with external partners. CWU believes as a publicly-funded institution, it has a responsibility to help address the social and economic challenges faced by our communities. We contribute to individually enriching and socially beneficial experiences within our community.

Sustainability

CWU strives to serve as a resource to the region and the state through sustainable and effective stewardship of resources. We align with state educators to "develop a responsible citizenry capable of applying knowledge of ecological, economic, and socio-cultural systems to meet current and future needs" (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction).

Shared Governance

CWU believes that shared governance is most effective when information systems and decision-making processes are both robust and transparent. CWU believes that communication channels should be open and two-way and that faculty, staff, and students should be empowered to participate in the governance systems.

Safety

CWU believes it has a responsibility to providing a working and learning environment that is both physically and emotionally safe. CWU believes this responsibility extends to the off-campus environment of its full-time, residential students.

Educational Empowerment

CWU believes that students gain their highest personal and collective aspirations when they are empowered through their learning experiences. Through real-world, culturally responsive, and applied learning experiences, students will engage in relevant education that prepares them for an uncertain world.