

DSU Unveils New Vision Statement and Core Values

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As a fresh new guide to future prominence, Delaware State University's Blue Ribbon Commission has completed the work of establishing a new Vision Statement and set of Core Values for the institution.

The Blue Ribbon Commission was established in January 2010 by DSU President Harry L. Williams. Charged with developing a new visionary roadmap for the institution by June, the commission's earnest work has culminated in the following Vision Statement and Core Values that will guide the University into the future:

Vision

As one of America's most highly respected Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Delaware State University will be renowned for a standard of academic excellence that prepares our graduates to become the first choice of employers in a global market, and invigorates the economy and the culture of Delaware and the Mid-Atlantic Region.

Core Values

Community

Integrity

Diversity

Scholarship

Outreach

The 14-member commission launched into its work immediately after its establishment in January and sought from the outset to incorporate the input of all of the University's key constituencies.

The commission held public forums in all three of the state's counties in March and April. During that period, forums were also held on campus to capture the thoughts of students, faculty, staff, athletics personnel and the DSU Board of Trustees. Interested persons could respond online at www.desu.edu [1].

Alumni were well-represented throughout all public forums. Legislators, government officials, educators, the faith community, business representatives and parents also weighed in.

In the forums and on the website, respondents were asked to look to the future and answer the following set of questions:

1. In the year 2020, what aspects of the DSU experience have become so widely admired as to attract the interest of potential students as their first choice for higher education?
2. In the year 2020, what unique strengths of a DSU education have equipped our graduates with such an outstanding set of knowledge and skills that they stand out in even the most competitive job markets?
3. In the year 2020, what core values has DSU so successfully embodied that the University has become a state and regional leader in teaching, research and community service.

The commission analyzed all the input given from about 400 respondents, especially using it to identify key words and concepts. The commission discussed the indicators of success for graduates and for the institution in 2020. A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis was also part of the commission's activity. Helping facilitate several meetings was Phillip Wescott, a partner in The Hillis Group of Newark, Del., who volunteered his time and services to the effort.



Dr. Dyremple Marsh, Blue Ribbon Commission co-chair, shares his perspective during the June 10 DSU Board of Trustees meeting on the process of crafting a new Vision Statement.

After the commission completed its thorough analysis and discussion of the input, a subcommittee began the task of composing the drafts of the vision statement and core values.

The commission met several times to refine the drafts, resulting in the final product that was formally unveiled to the DSU Board of Trustees during its June 10 regular meeting.

“The commission, which is comprised of a good cross section of the DSU stakeholders, took the charge from President Williams seriously and embarked on a process that sought feedback from the community,” said Dr. Dyremple Marsh, Blue Ribbon Commission co-chair and dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Sciences. “The subsequent discussions were very intense at times; but at the end of the day, the final product was a unanimous statement that we, as commission members, felt will take DSU into a successful future as it guides the institution.”

In addition to Dr. Marsh, the commission included retired Congressman Wayne Gilchrest (co-chair); DSU executive administrators Carolyn Curry, Kemal Atkins and Tamara Crump; faculty representative Dr. Steve Newton; DSU Student Government Association President Kathleen Charlot; and Dr Calvin Wilson, DSU Board of Trustees member; state Sen. Brian Bushweller; Dr. Randy Guschl, director of the DuPont Center for Collaborative Research & Education; Dr. Reba Hollingsworth, Delaware State College class of 1949; Dr. Josette L. McCullough, principal of Fred Fifer Middle School in Camden; and Bernice Whaley, deputy director of the Delaware Economic Development Office.

In addition, each member of Delaware’s Congressional Delegation – U.S. Sen. Thomas R. Carper, U.S. Sen. Ted Kaufman and U.S. Rep. Michael N. Castle – served as honorary co-chairs and contributed to aspects of the overall effort. “As examples of their commitment, Sen. Carper and Congressman Castle spent time with the group, and Lori James, Sen. Carper’s Congressional aide, rarely missed a meeting,” Dr. Marsh said.

Sen. Carper, a long-time supporter of DSU, said he is proud of the institution. “Under the interim leadership of Dr. Claiborne Smith and now, under the new leadership of Dr. Harry Williams, this University is becoming what I always hoped it would be: the economic engine that drives Kent County and downstate Delaware,” Sen. Carper said. “As a member of Delaware State University’s Blue Ribbon Commission, I wholeheartedly support and share this vision and I look forward to the continued growth of DSU. Not only does Delaware State University educate young minds; they are setting the stage for building a stronger future for their graduates.”

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“The work of the commission has been tremendous. In a short period of time, they worked tirelessly to gain an abundance of thoughts that well-informed the vision process,” said DSU President Harry L. Williams. “I thank each of them for their focus and guidance in helping this truly great university to fulfill its immense potential.”

“I also want to thank those who responded,” Dr. Williams said. “We will be referring back to their ideas as we work in the months ahead to articulate our strengths and formulate a blueprint.”

Dr. Williams noted that creating a new vision and establishing core values are the first critical steps in a new strategic process. He said that he will be bringing groups of people together to define the values to help DSU realize the vision. In the fall, he will begin a process to establish new university goals and objectives that will actualize the new vision.

“I truly believe in the promise of this new vision. As a state institution, we will strengthen our connections to the economy, learning and well-being of Delawareans. As among the best HBCUs in America, we will continue to raise our standards in all we do, particularly in ensuring our students are ready to meaningfully contribute to the workforce and society,” he said.

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[1] <http://www.desu.edu/>