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Updates in Academic Affairs: February 1, 2016

Inside Updates: Focus group sessions to collect feedback on revised University Strategic Plan, Preferred Name Policy is in effect and all are invited to the upcoming Spring Convocation.

UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY INVITED TO GIVE FEEDBACK ON REVISED STRATEGIC PLAN

In a series of focus groups beginning this week, members of the University Community are invited to weigh in on the first draft of the University Strategic Plan 2020. The draft is available for review at the strategic planning website.



The draft lays out priority objectives and strategies that address information gathered in the review of the 2014-15 strategic planning reports. It also reflects feedback from the University Stakeholder Survey that was conducted in the fall.

Listed below is the focus group schedule for colleges and units that report to Academic Affairs. A comprehensive and updated list of all focus group meeting times and locations is available on the [strategic planning website](#).

A second revision of the plan reflecting feedback from the February focus groups will be presented to the campus community on March 2 and then forwarded to the Board of Trustees for approval.

Questions regarding the strategic plan draft and finalized meeting locations may be directed to Brynne Belinger at (269) 387-0392 or brynne.belinger@wmich.edu and Jody Brylinsky at (269) 387-2314 or jody.brylinsky@wmich.edu.

Date	College/Area	Time and Location
Thursday, Feb. 4	University Libraries	9:30 to 11 a.m., Stewart Clock Tower
	Arts and Sciences - Group 1	10 to 11:30 a.m., 2500 Knauss Hall, Humanities Center
Friday, Feb. 5	Education and Human Development	9:30 to 11 a.m., 1730 Sangren Hall
Wednesday, Feb. 10	Health and Human Services	9 to 10:30 a.m., Location TBA
	Fine Arts	9 to 10:30 a.m., Location TBA
Friday, Feb. 12	Aviation	1:30 to 3 p.m., AEC 1207, Battle Creek

Monday, Feb. 15	College of Business	3 to 4:30 p.m., 2150 Schneider Hall
Thursday, Feb. 18	Graduate College	1 to 2 p.m., Walwood Hall Emeriti Lounge
	Arts and Sciences – Group 2	2 to 3:30 p.m., 2500 Knauss Hall, Humanities Center
	Engineering and Applied Sciences	2 to 3:30 p.m., Location, TBA
Wednesday, Feb. 24	Academic Forum	3 to 4 p.m., 208-209 Bernhard Center
Wednesday, March 2	Second Draft Open Forum	11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Fetzer Center, Putney Auditorium

BE AWARE OF THE RECENTLY IMPLEMENTED PREFERRED NAME POLICY



The University began a phased implementation of a student Preferred Name Policy this past fall. The policy allows students to denote a preferred first name that differs from their legal name. The campus community can play an important role by supporting the effective implementation of this policy in the following ways:

- Address students by their preferred first name, when one is indicated, and their legal last name. Class rosters indicate students' preferred first name, legal first name and legal last name. If a preferred first name is indicated on the roster, instructors should address students only by the preferred first name unless the student requests otherwise. For some students, calling out a legal first name instead of or in addition to a preferred first name can create an unwelcoming, even unsafe, classroom environment.
- Inform students about the Preferred Name Policy. Many students are still learning about the policy and may not be familiar with how to go about indicating their preference. Under this policy the University reserves the right to deny the use of or remove the preferred name if it is deemed to be inappropriate. Information about the policy and how to indicate a preferred name can be found at wmich.edu/registrar/policies/preferred-name.
- Allow students to submit assignments and exams with their preferred first name and legal last name. For some students, a preferred first name is more than just a nickname, it may affirm who they see themselves as and how they want to be identified. In some instances, instructors may find it helpful for students to include their WIN.

While many systems at WMU already reflect a person's preferred name, implementation is forthcoming for others. Instructors should be aware that the self-service grading applications and D2L continue to display students' legal name only at this time.

For more information about the Preferred Name Policy, please contact the Registrar's Office at (269) 387-4300.

SPRING CONVOCATION SET FOR FEB. 4, 5

The University community is invited to attend the 2016 Spring Convocation Thursday and Friday, Feb. 4-5 in the Fetzer Center. Subtitled as a “Recognition of Discovery, Diversity and Global Engagement,” this collaborative celebration is sponsored by the following units: Academic Affairs, Diversity and Inclusion, Extended University Programs, the Haenicke Institute for Global Education and the vice president for research.

The schedule of events is available here: [2016 Spring Convocation Schedule](#)