Academic Growth Plan:
Platforms for Learning Experiences
May 2013
What is the Academic Growth Plan?
The Academic Growth Plan is:

- A framework for new program development.
- An opportunity for a broad spectrum of our community to consider the academic direction of the university as a whole.
Priorities for Academic Growth Planning:

• design high quality programs
• bridge exiting capabilities
• build on our strengths
• address weaknesses
• stay relevant
• leverage cross-college resources
Our main focus is to plan for responsible enrollment growth to generate more revenue for investing in the academic programs.
The goals of the Academic Growth Plan are to:

- Use new program development to drive growth and produce revenue in the University to *invest in the academic programs*.

- Proactively respond to challenges to higher education with innovative and experimental curriculum design and delivery.

- Create new educational offerings to improve academic and educational experience for students.

- Design new program opportunities that leverage and build cross-college capabilities to create University-wide teaching and learning experiences.
Outcomes from 2012 Academic Growth Plan:

• Global Portfolio (new learning experience)
• BS Multi-media Narratives (new program)
• Sustainability Ecosystem
  C-ABE core (new potential core)
  MARCH/MS Architecture (new programs)
• Performance Materials Ecosystem
  MS Performance Materials (new program)
• Health, Wellness & Human Performance Ecosystem
  MS Health Innovation (new program)
• Fashion Ecosystem
  BS Fashion Merchandising & Management (revised program)
  with credential clusters
  Groundwork for revision of fashion & textile design
The Academic Growth Plan is integrated with shared governance and new program development process and approvals.
AGP Program approval process (abbreviated)

- **AGP: Proposal Development**
- **Abstract to AOOC**
- **Curriculum Innovation Space**
- **Collaborative Working Group**
- **Feasibility Studies**
- **Market Research**
- **Approvals Continue at College level, etc.**

Wagner is the first Innovation Education Fellow at the Technology & Entrepreneurship Center at Harvard University.
Take-aways from Wagner’s TEDx:

- Knowledge is a commodity
- Creating and integrating knowledge through application and practice
- Radically flipped classroom: a site for integrating knowledge created within and beyond the classroom.
Platform learning

- Asking the right questions
- Collaboration across networks
- Entrepreneurialism
- Agility & flexibility
- Communication
- Curiosity & Imagination
- Accessing & evaluating information
Platforms for Learning Experiences
Traditional notions of authority delivering content is shifting to providing a platform for generating knowledge and co-creation.

Nina Simon
What would the role of the institution be to create the ideal conditions for Nexus Learning?
The institution would provide rich opportunities for the students to engage with the world outside of the classroom and integrate their experiences with education on campus.

This requires the institution to:

- Facilitate access to resources (from outside).
- Create unique alliances and partnerships to support students and faculty work.
- Arrange its resources and design curricula so students could go out.
The institution would bring students and faculty together in new ways.

*This requires faculty to:*

- Shift from delivering content to supporting and guiding students in their learning.
- Create the conditions to support generating knowledge together through research and application.
- Interact with each other and others outside of the university in new ways.
What are [Nexus] learning platforms?

• Something we (students, faculty, etc.) use to create unique and customized educational experiences that emphasize co-creation, problem-based learning, leveraging peer networks, etc.

• The platform is the common knowledge that enables students to personally and communally explore its implications.
Ultimately the goal would be for the institution as a platform to allow students, faculty, staff to accomplish things beyond it.
Curricular strategies

for optimizing the use of a learning platform:

• ecosystems
• badges
• lean cores
• modular curricula
• competency-based programs
• online strategies
• built-in scalability
**Ecosystems as platforms**

• Ecosystems are platforms for developing programs.

• Ecosystems create the conditions for Nexus Learning.

• Ecosystems create an ecology or platform of shared resources and expertise and a network of shared opportunities, resources and networks for students.
Badges as platform components

• Provide a means of credentialing units of knowledge.
• Support competency-based learning.
• Support platform learning by acknowledging the fact that content delivery in the classroom is one of many ways that students need to learn.
Lean cores & modular curricula as platform components

• Lean core = core content

• Modular units = flexible conditions where students customize their learning (fosters “play, passion and purpose.”)
What we are doing

Lean core
• Distilled, essential, spartan, disciplined: perhaps 90 credits including College Studies.
• About methods of inquiry.
• Clearly differentiated in market.
• Plug and play: designed to integrate with credential clusters

Credential clusters
• Apply methods from lean core to more specific areas of study: 3 to 5 courses/experiences

How it is organized

Platforms

Platform components

Concept of a **lean core with credential clusters**

**User experience**
- IDP ethnography
- Interactive design 1
- Game design (shared)
- Human behavior and design

**Creative multi-media narratives**
- Telling and selling the story
- Creative Writing
- Game design (shared)
- Interactive narrative

Freshman                  Sophomore               Junior                           Senior
Lean core: course distribution and capstone

**User experience**
- IDP ethnography
- Interactive design 1
- Game design (shared)
- Human behavior and design

**Creative multi-media narratives**
- Telling and selling the story
- Creative Writing
- Game design (shared)
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**Capstone**
- Encourages synthesis of lean core disciplinary methods and credential cluster themes.

**Sequencing of CCs**
- Could occur in same year
- Could be distributed over multiple years
- Credentials awarded as clusters are completed and appear on student transcripts.
What we are doing

How it is organized

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Lean core: more than courses

**User experience**
- IDP ethnography
- Interactive design 1
- Game design (shared)
- Human behavior and design
- Learning community

**Creative multi-media narratives**
- Telling and selling the story
- Creative Writing
- Game design (shared)
- Interactive narrative
- Internship

**More than courses**
- Lean cores could incorporate lecture series, workshops, internships, community service, internships, etc.

**Credits: sketch**
- 48 credits: College Studies
- 42 credits: Lean Core
- 30 credits: credential clusters
- 120 credits TOTAL
Scalable programs and online delivery create the potential for platform learning by providing:

- curricular flexibility.
- expanded audiences.
- student-centered programs.
- streamlined time to completion.
1) Monday, May 13 | PLATFORMS FOR LEARNING EXPERIENCES
   FOCUS: The institution, college, and program as platforms for co-creation

2) Tuesday, May 14 | THE TRANSFORMATION IMPERATIVE
   FOCUS: Prototyping a new model

3) Wednesday, May 15 | A VISION FOR ONLINE
   FOCUS: Strategies for hybridizing a course

4) Thursday, May 16 | SCALABLE PROGRAMS
   FOCUS: Strategies for scaling our current and future programs

5) Friday, May 17 | SUMMER PLANS REPORT

6) August date for summer work reporting & feedback
To repeat:
Our main focus is to plan for responsible enrollment growth to generate more revenue for investing in the academic programs.
FRAMEWORK FOR WORKSHOP

1. In what ways would Philadelphia University have to change (generally and specifically) in order to become a learning platform for students?

2. Design a program or redesign an existing program so that it acts as a learning platform.

3. Create a list of courses and experiences that have characteristics of learning platforms at Philadelphia University. Then, develop a new learning experience that embodies the characteristics of a learning platform.

SCHEDULE

1 – 2.15pm: Work in teams
2.15 – 3.00pm: Report out/sharing your findings