Welcome! I’m very pleased to share our strategic plan for FY 2017-18. Student Life is a very large and diverse organization that touches on nearly all aspects of the lives of our students. We employ over 1,200 staff members and 2,200 students working in 24 different departments. As such, it is critically important that we all share a clear vision, common principles and a commitment to work strategically across a broad range of objectives as we make our unique contributions to student success at Purdue.

If you are reading this, then it is likely that you are among the many constituencies that we serve. Your support of our initiatives is greatly appreciated, and your input on this document would be welcomed. Please feel free to share any thoughts, suggestions or concerns by emailing us at vpsl@purdue.edu.

Again, thank you for your interest in Student Life, and Hail Purdue!

Sincerely,

Dr. Beth McCuskey, Vice Provost for Student Life
I. HISTORY AND CONTEXT

The Division of Student Life was created in 2015, when institutional issues of access and affordability led to a structural reorganization. Two formerly separate entities (Housing & Food Services and Student Affairs) were conjoined under the leadership of the newly appointed Vice Provost for Student Life, Dr. Beth McCuskey.

Student Life is a very holistic entity, responsible for and focused on the care and well-being of all students on the West Lafayette campus. Its reach is both broad and deep—University Residences, Dining & Catering, the Purdue Memorial Union, Student Activities & Organizations, Leadership & Professional Development, Recreation & Wellness, Convocations, Hall of Music Productions, University Bands, Purdue Musical Organizations, and the Dean of Students Office, including Purdue University Student Health, Counseling & Psychological Services, Fraternity, Sorority & Cooperative Life, Student Rights & Responsibilities, Center for Advocacy, Response & Education, Student Legal Services and Parent & Family Connections. These departments and functions are housed in over 5.4 million square feet of space on campus, with a total annual budget nearing $200 million. The Division is supported by a comprehensive portfolio of functions including accounting and business services, advancement/development, human resources, marketing and communications, outreach and strategic initiatives and assessment.
II. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Division of Student Life has sought to create a forward-looking blueprint—one that attempts to honor the past, embrace the present and, most importantly, envision a successful future for our students, our staff members and the many constituencies that we serve.

Our strategic plan begins with a common vision for all Student Life units, followed by our foundational principles, practices and pledges. As an internal exercise, we periodically conduct a “situational analysis” using the SWOT approach, identifying our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This analysis helps us identify our short and long-term priorities and understand how we might best approach them.

While some strategic plans attempt to cover time periods of 5 to 10 years or more, the rapidly changing landscape of higher education does not always lend itself to that approach, and thus our plan covers only a one-year time period. We also recognize that units within Student Life often need their own strategic plans in order to navigate the specific issues that they face.

For Student Life at-large, we utilize a “bottoms up” strategic planning process wherein each unit generates an annual report which documents achievements from the past year and identifies new or continuing goals for the following year. By carefully reviewing these many goals, we identify “Areas of Focus” that capture and categorize our many and diverse efforts. Each individual unit goal then becomes a “strategic objective” within a particular Area of Focus.

In this manner, the annual reports serve as the ongoing vehicle by which we assess both unit and divisional progress while also populating the divisional strategic plan with new goals and objectives, guiding our activities and our use of resources on behalf of Purdue at-large and Student Life in particular.

Accountability for the accomplishment of our objectives rests with individuals, teams and departments, depending upon the nature and scope of the item in question. This accountability is reinforced through our performance evaluation system, where progress toward or accomplishment of goals is a significant factor in an individual’s overall evaluation.
III. STUDENT LIFE VISION

Student Life fosters student success through learning opportunities inside and outside of the classroom. We focus on co-curricular education and leadership development as integral parts of the Purdue experience. In collaboration with our colleagues across campus, we challenge students, faculty and staff to explore the value of working and learning together as leaders in our local communities and our global society.

Student Life acts responsibly in all endeavors to uphold the highest professional principles and practices as we fulfill our pledges to our students.
IV. STUDENT LIFE PRINCIPLES, PRACTICES & PLEDGES

With a large and diverse portfolio of functions and thousands of employees, Student Life has identified key, common principles by which we are all connected, best practices to guide us, examples that help clarify and bring focus to our practices, and pledges to our students about what they can expect from us. The “Student Life Is U” (SLISU) acronym helps all employees remember our common principles so that they may be consistently practiced on a daily basis.

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<tr>
<th>Student Life Principles</th>
<th>Student Life Practices</th>
<th>Student Life Pledges</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Learning</strong></td>
<td>Instill in all students the importance of continuous intellectual growth. <em>Provide students with academic or social learning opportunities through programming, work or internship positions, coaching or training.</em></td>
<td>Experience co-curricular opportunities where classroom learning intersects with real world practice.</td>
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<td><strong>Leadership Development</strong></td>
<td>Create opportunities for students to lead and increase their ability to make a difference. <em>Mentor students, adopt a common framework and provide an opportunity for students to develop their strengths and lead the world forward.</em></td>
<td>Explore their interests, discover a passion and serve their local and global communities.</td>
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<td><strong>Inclusion</strong></td>
<td>Develop community through welcoming environments, offering both formal and informal opportunities for diverse interaction. <em>Take an active role in students’ lives or participate in groups or events with students and staff from all backgrounds.</em></td>
<td>Embrace human diversity, the value of each individual and the importance of civility.</td>
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<td><strong>Stewardship</strong></td>
<td>Manage the roles, duties, resources and responsibilities entrusted to their care at all levels. <em>Honor the organization and implement ideas to optimize resources. Celebrate the traditions of the institution while advocating for ways to improve the campus environment for students and staff.</em></td>
<td>Act as ambassadors and honor their opportunity to serve by exercising careful, responsible management of everything entrusted in their care.</td>
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<td><strong>Unity</strong></td>
<td>Be committed to a culture of collaboration and teamwork to create transformative student experiences. <em>Be a positive influence in the workplace and look for ways to coordinate efforts with co-workers to better serve the student population.</em></td>
<td>Engage in partnerships to enhance their own education</td>
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V. AREAS OF FOCUS AND STRATEGIC THEMES

In support of Purdue’s vision and our own, we have identified ten Areas of Focus for the current fiscal year, along with sub-themes that demonstrate some of the many strategic objectives and tactics that are ongoing within Student Life.

Areas of Focus and Strategic Themes

A. Support Purdue Moves

- Accommodating Increased Demand for Services is a common theme for us, as demand to live in our residence halls is greater than the current supply. Current initiatives include building the case for an Arts/STEM residence hall, expanding the Wiley Hall dining court, and participating in a campus-wide housing market study as part of Purdue’s Master Plan.

- Cost Efficiency across all of our many operations has helped hold the line on inflation—a fact noted often by our President as he continues to make the case for an affordable Purdue education.

- Scholarships and other means of financial support help keep a Purdue education accessible, and our departments work diligently to enhance these opportunities on behalf of our students. Purdue Bands and Purdue Musical Organizations have been particularly effective in this regard, including support for travel and study-abroad opportunities.

- Purdue’s Year-Round University Initiative strives to help students graduate earlier by making non-traditional academic periods more attractive. The Purdue Memorial Union Program Department is heavily involved in “Think Summer” programming, and Recreation & Wellness also provides significant support to scholars participating in these programs.

B. “Academicize”

- Learning Communities within our residence halls help first-year students earn higher grades, make friends more quickly and graduate earlier than students who do not participate. University Residences added 10 new Learning Communities in 2017, with the total number projected to grow to 28 by the end of 2017-18.

- Curricular Integration is a key strategy for Student Life departments as we work collaboratively with our academic partners and leverage our resources to enhance a Purdue education. Collaborations include Purdue Bands and the College of Liberal Arts, Purdue Convocations and the departments of English and Communications, Hall of Music and Purdue Polytechnic Institute, and the Union Club Hotel’s for-credit laboratory course (HTM 181) with the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management.

- Internships and Graduate Assistantships provide opportunities for students to apply classroom learning while working in real-world environments. Almost all Student Life departments participate in this effort, and Purdue Dining & Catering alone sponsors over 30 internships each semester.
C. Develop Leadership

- **Leadership Development Programs** are conceived and implemented throughout our division, supporting Purdue’s goal of providing every student with meaningful leadership experiences. Our Leadership & Professional Development Initiative takes the lead here, with programs including Strengths Quest, the “Women’s Leadership in A Global Context” travel and study-abroad course, and the “Chew on Change” program, using video, social media and other platforms to ensure that the leadership testimonies of student leaders reach a wide audience.

- **Experiential Learning Opportunities** abound in Student Life, including our support for over 900 recognized student organizations and their many activities. Current examples include Peer Advocates in the Dean of Students Office, Peer Educators in the Center for Advocacy, Response and Education, and the many programs conceived and executed by the Purdue Student Union Board.

- **Student Employment as Student Development** is a challenging but important goal for us, as we employ over 2,200 students each year in a wide range of services and operations. A prime example is the “Emerging Leaders” program for student employees in Recreation & Wellness.

D. Embed the Arts

- **Arts Programming** is an ongoing effort across many Student Life departments, exposing students to a world full of creative expression and inviting their active participation. Examples include the Student Concert Committee within the Convocations department, the “Jazz at Marriott Hall” program sponsored by Purdue Bands, and the free campus performances by Purdue Musical Organizations.

- **Departmental Collaborations** between Student Life units take advantage of our knowledge, skills and facilities and create unique synergies in support of the arts. Current initiatives include pre-show dinners cosponsored by Convocations and Purdue Dining & Catering, and the provision of facilities and services by Recreation & Wellness for PMO, Bands and Convocations events.

- **Community Partnerships** with other arts organizations in Greater Lafayette strengthen “town and gown” relations and contribute to our collective quality of life. Examples include visits to elementary schools by Purdue Musical Organizations, subsidized tickets to art events for underprivileged populations and the use of off-campus community venues for Convocations performances.
E. Embrace Diversity and Inclusion

- **Diversity Programming** provides educational opportunities for the entire campus while reinforcing our key Student Life principle of inclusion. Examples include the Diversity Series sponsored by Purdue Dining & Catering and the decidedly inclusive 2017-18 season of Convocations performances.

- **Collaborations and Partnerships** with cultural organizations at Purdue and in the community at-large help create a welcoming environment on and off-campus for our students. A current example is the Lunch-N-Learn program cosponsored by campus cultural centers and the Leadership & Professional Development Initiative.

- **Recruitment and retention** of underrepresented populations are key university goals, and almost everything we do on a daily basis in Student Life has the potential to further those goals. Examples include the Parent & Family Connections web page link with specific resources for international families, menu authenticity efforts by Purdue Dining & Catering, and a study of the effect of Resident Assistant ethnicity on the academic success of student of color being conducted by Strategic Initiatives & Assessment.

F. Create New Synergies

- **Departmental Partnerships** capitalize on the breadth and depth of our division and leverage our skills, experiences and resources on behalf of students. Current initiatives include a programming partnership between Convocations and Residential Life learning communities, and an effort by Recreation & Wellness and Student Activities & Organizations to develop a student organization classification system.

- **Collaborative Programming** between Student Life departments is an efficient and effective way to maximize the impact of our efforts while building important programming relationships. Examples include a collaboration between the Purdue Student Union Board and Purdue Dining & Catering to host events in the 1869 Tap Room and the ongoing support provided by the Hall of Music for Purdue Musical Organizations and other departments that program in Elliott Hall, Loeb Playhouse and Fowler Auditorium.

- **Community Engagement** provides opportunities to expand the reach of our services and programs to new audiences within the larger community. Current initiatives include the Partner’s in Music Education program within local public schools, sponsored by Purdue Bands, the partnership between community first-responders and the Center for Advocacy, Response and Education, and the “Fuel a Future Boiler Campaign” providing funding to the local United Way through consumer retail contributions at Purdue Dining locations.
G. Support our Students

- **Wellness Services and Programs** address the growing health needs of our students as they strive to reach their full academic, personal and professional potential. A prime example is the work being done by Recreation & Wellness to further the recommendations of the Mental Wellness Task Force.

- **Student Input** is a critical value across Student Life departments, keeping us in touch with the changing needs of students and providing us with daily opportunities for improvement. Many of the Student Life departments have standing student advisory boards and other committees whose sole purpose is to provide student input on our programs and services.

- **Training Initiatives** for both students and staff help keep us current in our collective support of students. Examples include Safe Zone training, ServeSafe certification and Suicide Prevention (QPR Gatekeeper) training.

- **Outreach** to students, creating awareness of the important services and programs at their disposal, is an important and ongoing challenge across all Student Life departments. An excellent example is the work being done by the Dean of Students office, increasing outreach responses generated by Student of Concern reports and currently achieving an 85% response rate.

- **Recognition** of the many wonderful achievements of our students is the responsibility of every Student Life staff member, honoring student progress and motivating others by example. Current examples include involvement in National Student Employee Appreciation Week, Student Employee of the Month programs, and the Student Employee Professional Development Grant Program.

H. Engage with Alumni

- **Communication** with our alumni is the key to keeping them informed and involved, and we do this through multiple channels. Examples include the Student Life “Perspectives” publication, the biannual “Fanfare” published by Purdue Bands, and biannual alumni newsletters generated by Recreation & Wellness.

- **Networking** activities that bring students and staff in contact with our alumni provide numerous opportunities for positive interaction and mutual learning. Current examples include the Summer Alumni Trip sponsored by Purdue Bands, training and development programs for alumni advisors by the department of Fraternity, Sorority & Cooperative Life, and alumni outreach events in Chicago and other major cities sponsored by Purdue Musical Organizations.

- **Advisory Roles** are an important way that our alumni can contribute to Student Life, and we have a variety of advisory groups that work diligently to assist us in our work. Current groups include the Student Life Advisory Council, the Purdue Bands Advisory Board, and the Purdue Student Union Board Alumni Association.

- **Fundraising** is a natural extension of the relationships we build with our alumni, providing them with opportunities to have a positive influence on the lives of current and future students. Initiatives include promoting alumni contributions during the Purdue Day of Giving, cultivation of donors by Convocations to expand curricular connections, and seeking external support to expand leadership development and civic engagement experiences by the Leadership and Professional Development Initiative.
I. Demonstrate Stewardship

- **Sponsorships, Grants and Other Revenue Enhancements** allow us to grow in our service to Purdue without the need for additional University financial support. Current initiatives include partnering with corporate sponsors to support student programs within Purdue Bands, a $120,000 in-kind grant from Google to Convocations for digital marketing, and developing a new concessions policy at the Hall of Music to generate additional revenue by allowing food and drink sales at its performance venues.

- **Policy, Procedure and Program Reviews** are an important part of our commitment to continuous improvement, using self-studies, peer reviews and best practices from across the country. Examples include comprehensive program self-studies at Recreation & Wellness, Purdue Dining & Catering and Student Rights & Responsibilities, as well working with Purdue Safety & Security to expand facility usage by allowing new, non-traditional events on the stage of Elliott Hall of Music.

- **Staff Development and Recognition** are critical aspects of managing one of our most precious assets: our people. Efforts include the Student Life Is You and BRAVO awards, nominations of staff members to Purdue's Council for Management Development, advanced certification programs for staff in Purdue Dining & Catering, and the Forging Professionals program within University Residences—a four-part seminar targeted for new staff members.

J. Maintain and enhance Operations, Programs and Services

- **Programmatic Initiatives** that expand beyond our current offerings reflect our firm commitment to continuous improvement. Examples include new Family Weekend programs sponsored by Parent & Family Connections, the Strengths 101 sessions offered by the Leadership & Professional Development Initiative, and the Men's Leadership Series and Amelia Earhart Faculty-in-Residence Program, both sponsored by University Residences.

- **Programmatic Reductions** are necessary at times to ensure that as we invest resources in new opportunities, we maintain a high level of quality. All Student Life departments are expected to assess and prioritize their programs on an ongoing basis, making thoughtful decisions about what may need to be reduced or replaced to accommodate growth in other areas.

- **Facility and Operational Improvements** are critical to maintaining our reputation of excellence in providing high quality services to the campus. Current initiatives include completing a major ADA project at Owen Hall, operating the URBA apartments to accommodate a larger freshman class, and implementing a new customer service philosophy within Purdue Dining & Catering.

- **Marketing and Communication** are key elements in sharing our story with our many constituencies, creating awareness and building support for what we do. Current efforts include a comprehensive website review and update by Student Life Marketing in conjunction with ITaP, creation of a Neighborhood Brand Recognition program for University Residences, and the redesign and launching of a new catering menu (online and print) within Purdue Dining & Catering.

Thanks again for viewing our FY 2017-18 strategic plan.

Please send any comments or suggestions to vpsl@purdue.edu