**Penn State leader shares road map for academic excellence**

**Justin Schwartz, executive vice president and provost, shares details on Penn State’s academic program and portfolio review and strategies for addressing the evolving needs of our students and society.**

We are a strong university with excellent faculty, doing great work with our students in and out of the classroom every day. Nonetheless, even strong universities need to self-assess to ensure we are meeting the challenges and taking advantage of the opportunities of the moment. Now is the time for us to define our own future. We are committed to our mission, and our decisions will be mission-driven. Yet they must also be financially sustainable.

It's time for an academic program and portfolio review of our entire university to ensure we are meeting the needs and interests of today's and tomorrow's students. We need to ask ourselves if we have the right programs in the right places to meet our students where they are and take them where they want to go. The outcomes of this process are not predetermined.

Would we be doing this if we were not facing a budget challenge? Absolutely—yes. Because in a challenging time for higher education nationally, with changing demographics and societal needs that are evolving, we want to be the university that is ahead of the curve. We want to be the national exemplar of academic offerings and pedagogical best practices, while also leveraging our unique multi-campus university structure.

So, you're wondering how we'll do this. Well, we're still working out the details on that, but we do look forward to broad participation from faculty and staff across the university. Community engagement will be critical every step of the way.

So you might have questions about the timeline. Well, we're starting now, and we anticipate final recommendations by this summer—so we can begin Faculty Senate processes in fall 2024 for implementation in fall 2025.

What are the goals? Who are we going to be when all of this is done? Well, we're going to have the right mix of residential, online and blended programs to best meet our mission, addressing the demands of our students and the needs of our society to the greatest extent possible. We will optimize the opportunities for our students, meeting them where they are with the programs that are going to excite them. We will be mission-driven, but with a truly sustainable business model, and we will have alignment of our academic and our research portfolios. And as always, excellence and impact will be our highest priorities.