

Drexel 2030 Strategic Plan Initiative Team Guide

Initiative Team: Undergraduate Online (UG Online)

Introduction

The Drexel 2030 Team Guide will serve as an introduction to the initiative team and provide information on the charge, goals, values and timeline for the group. Elements of this guide may change over time as work begins and teams identify additional elements for consideration, updates for environmental changes, etc. Your work on this initiative team will have great impact on the future of Drexel University including students, faculty, staff, alumni and the community. Thank you for your time and contributions.

Impact

Since its founding, Drexel's distinctive fusion of experiential learning, research, and scholarship has prepared students of all backgrounds to face the world's challenges with creativity and a spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship. In the coming decade, Drexel will build on this heritage of collaboration to respond both to profound shifts in higher education and to the broader challenges facing society, which include the fault lines around inequity, systemic racial injustice and economic uncertainty exposed by a global public health crisis. To ensure that the education—and student experiences—that we provide are as responsive, impactful, and inclusive as possible, this plan articulates strategies for more effectively and intentionally uniting our academic and scholarly enterprise to meet the needs of the rapidly changing work environment that our students will encounter, whether for the first time, or as lifelong learners.

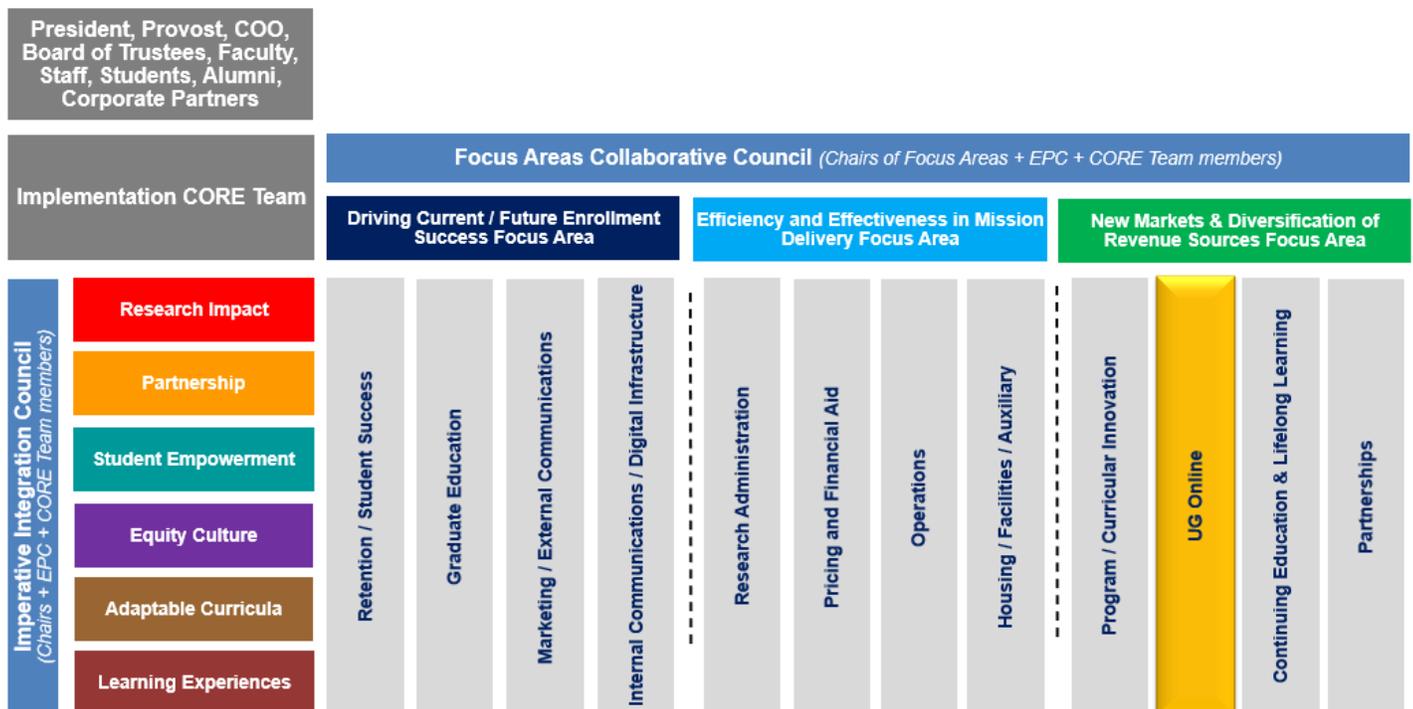
One of the growing groups of students at Drexel are those choosing to pursue their education online. With approximately 7,000 students learning online across the United States, the online format allows access to education for those unable to enroll in a traditional program. The year 2020, more than ever before, solidified the need for a quality virtual education experience. In order to stay competitive, Drexel must ensure its online programs are market-friendly, employer-driven, and provide a top-quality student experience. This is especially important at the undergraduate level, as the number of universities offering online programs has increased significantly, causing a decline in Drexel's market share. Growth in and enhancements of online programs impact multiple areas of Drexel's strategic plan:



- *Agile curricula* – through partnerships with top employers, developing undergraduate online programs with curricula that respond to today's key skills needs.
- *Empowered Students* – graduates of online bachelor's programs are career-ready and prepared to impact the workforce.
- *Enhanced Experience* – ensuring that all students, regardless of learning modality, experience the same top-quality Drexel education, make meaningful connections in and contributions to the Drexel community.
- *Culture of Equity* – providing access to online education to students from diverse racial, ethnic and financial backgrounds.

Drexel 2030: Designing the Future is the University-wide implementation effort to execute the goals of Drexel’s 10-year strategic plan. Comprised of 12 initiative teams, a wide group of faculty, staff, and senior administrators from across the institution will focus on efforts such as retention/student success, pricing and financial aid, program/curricular innovation, online and continuing education/lifelong learning.

Spanning across these initiatives, collaborative and imperative teams will connect these various efforts and infuse core imperatives such as a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion into each of the initiatives. Each team will drive success through an implementation plan consisting of initiatives, milestones, and financial and non-financial targets that integrate with one another and to the broader strategic plan. The work of the UG Online team will not only impact the new markets and diversification of revenue sources focus area, but through its efforts will also inform the student empowerment, equity culture, adaptive curriculum and learning experiences imperatives.



These wide-ranging implementation efforts will be regularly communicated with the Drexel community to engage all stakeholders for broad feedback to facilitate continuous development and improvement.

Taken together, these implementation efforts will transform Drexel through executing the University’s strategic plan and vision into a reality, thereby moving the University forward to 2030.

Charge

The UG Online initiative team will strive to:

- Influence positive changes to increase net tuition revenue in existing online bachelor's degrees, which will serve as a revenue source for Drexel University.
- Provide recommendations on the future of online bachelor's degrees at Drexel; for both the degree completion market as well as a potential market for the traditional student. The impact of COVID-19 may accelerate the need for an online undergraduate experience for a traditional first-time freshman. The work of the UG Online team in this area would prepare Drexel as an early respondent to this need.

Recommendations developed should:

- ✓ Align with Drexel's mission
- ✓ Connect to the [Drexel 2030 Strategic Plan](#)
- ✓ Create sustained financial impact
- ✓ Drive continued student satisfaction
- ✓ Be feasible for near-term implementation

Goals

Recommendations developed by the UG Online initiative team should support progress toward three primary goals:

- Increased competitiveness of Drexel’s existing online bachelor’s programs
- Enhanced support of degree completers
- Development of new market-driven bachelor’s degree programs



Increased Competitiveness

of Drexel’s existing online bachelor’s degree programs for degree completers (short-term) & traditional students (long-term)

- Price
- Admission criteria
- Ease of application/responsiveness
- Student experience/retention



Support of Degree Completers

Create processes and systems at Drexel to support degree completer student needs

- Preparation before enrollment
- Coaching
- Proactive check-ins/advising
- Technology assistance

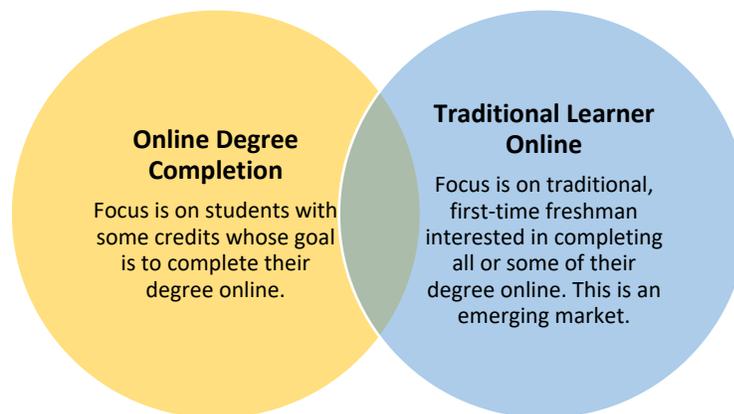


New Programs

Development of new market-driven online bachelor’s programs

- Based on:
- Conferral growth
 - Competitor saturation
 - Existing faculty/expertise at Drexel
 - Academic Capacity

The UG Online initiative team will be divided into two subcommittees:



Subcommittees will also need to work together as there will be some overlap between the two audiences.

Questions for Consideration

Degree Completion:

- Do we offer the right portfolio of degrees at Drexel? (new program areas? Interdisciplinary programs?)
- How do we make our existing programs more competitive? (Tuition, admission criteria, concentrations, timeliness to response, transfer credits, credit for work experience, stackable certs, experiential learning (optional co-op/residency/on-campus activities))
- How do we provide a supportive learning experience for adult learners? (Coaching, retention, flexible pedagogy)
- How do we partner with organizations that have learning needs for their employees? (Example: FedEx partnership with University of Memphis)
- How can Drexel's online programs provide access to education for students from diverse racial, ethnic and financial backgrounds?
- Current students/alumni 1:1 interviews
 - Optional to inform questions/strategies above

Traditional Learner:

- What is Drexel's role in online bachelor's degrees for traditional students?
- In what areas/disciplines do we focus? (Health sciences? Business? Other?)
- What is our value proposition? (Co-op? Hybrid? Residencies? Credit for work experience?)
- What does the experience look like? (Student life? Extracurricular? Campus visits?)
- What resources are needed? (Additional advisors? Mentors? Professors? Different learning management systems?)
- How are these degrees priced?
- How can Drexel's online programs provide access to education for students from diverse racial, ethnic and financial backgrounds?
- Current students/alumni 1:1 interviews
 - Optional to inform questions/strategies above

Meet the Team

Undergraduate Online Initiative Team



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Values

Team values listed below are a critical component to the success of the UG Online initiative team. All team members should strive to uphold and cultivate the values that will drive quality outputs.



Collaboration



Trust



Commitment/dedication



Problem-solving



Engagement/enthusiasm



Innovation



Equity & Inclusion

Communication Expectations

One of the goals of the Drexel 2030 Strategic Plan implementation is transparent, multi-directional and frequent communication with University stakeholders. Each initiative team should assign an individual who will be responsible for notetaking and production of quarterly progress reports. The progress reports will be made available to the Drexel community. Templates will be provided to facilitate and ensure consistency.

Additionally, a feedback form will be available on all communications (emails, web, etc.) to allow for Drexel community members to ask questions or provide feedback on a specific initiative. Questions or feedback related to the UG online initiative team will be directed to the subcommittees, which should respond or follow-up in a timely manner. These questions and answers will populate a frequently asked questions (FAQs) section of the Drexel 2030 strategic plan website as appropriate.

Timeline *(rough dates – subject to change)*

