



ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

PURSUING TRUTH

TRANSFORMING LIVES

Providence College Strategic Plan

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FEBRUARY 6, 2015



OUR MOMENT: The Providence College Centennial Strategic Plan Update 2015—2017

Introduction

In 2011, the Corporation and Board of Trustees of Providence College enthusiastically endorsed the bold and forward-looking Strategic Plan—*Achieving Excellence. Pursuing Truth. Transforming Lives*. The “Vision” of the College that formed the basis of the Plan was expressed as follows: *Providence College will be a nationally recognized, premier Catholic liberal arts institution of higher education that embodies the rich intellectual and spiritual tradition of the Dominican Order, and whose students, transformed by wisdom and enabled by grace, lead lives of virtue, purpose, and meaning—lives that will transform society.*

The Plan was built upon five Core Values and related strategies:

- Advancing the Catholic and Dominican Mission of Providence College
- Enhancing Academic Excellence
- Embracing Diversity
- Preparing Our Students for Lives of Meaning and Purpose
- Building Lifelong Relationships, Growing Financial Resources, and Increasing Overall Institutional Effectiveness

Many of the strategic initiatives in the 2011 Plan have been completed. Most notably, the new Core Curriculum has been introduced; the Providence College School of Business has attained AACSB accreditation; the College has established its Office for Institutional Diversity and hired its first Chief Diversity Officer; and the Ruane Center for the Humanities was completed. We believe that the successful completion of these initiatives has had a strong and positive effect on Providence College, and has enhanced our reputation as a premier Catholic liberal arts college. The academic profile of our students is stronger than ever; more and more students are applying to the School of Business; the revised core curriculum has challenged the faculty and students in new ways; our campus is more diverse than ever; and, despite negative trends in the demographics of college-age students, our enrollment yield has increased year after year. We attribute our success to the College’s fidelity to the core values that defined our Strategic Plan. Rather than becoming complacent, however, we continue to seek ways of making Providence College even better.

In 2017, Providence College will celebrate its Centennial, a milestone we regard as a passageway rather than a destination. The Vision and Core Values that defined the 2011 Strategic Plan remain relevant and have not changed. We recognize, however, the need to develop new and exciting strategies to guide the College as we approach this important milestone. These strategies are presented in this update to the Strategic Plan.

The “*Our Moment*” title, which identifies the Plan, highlights the connection to the College’s \$140 million Our Moment Capital Campaign. The monies raised in the Capital Campaign have been

designated largely to fund the strategic initiatives outlined in this Plan. We believe that completing these initiatives will strengthen even further Providence College's identity as a premier Catholic liberal arts institution, and will enable us to provide our students with a life-changing educational experience.

We also recognize the challenges facing Providence College and higher education in general. Changing demographics of college-age students are likely to make it more difficult to recruit students; therefore, it is more important than ever to provide a quality education that is affordable. Annual tuition increases are not sustainable, yet the amount of financial aid necessary to enroll and retain students is likely to increase. Our desire to engage the best faculty, provide the best academic programs, and maintain state-of-the-art facilities is ever more costly. The costs associated with running a Division 1 athletics program continue to increase.

There are additional challenges and threats that are beyond the control of Providence College. Any significant and sustained downturn in the economy, for example, would negatively impact the College's endowment, as well as our students' ability to afford a PC education. The Obama administration's impending ranking system, based on factors like average student debt and post-graduation salaries, is likely to affect liberal arts colleges negatively. Ongoing litigation within the NCAA is likely to change the face of college athletics and possibly increase costs associated with our athletics program.

While the College is financially secure and well managed, it is important that we not become complacent and inattentive to the challenges we face. The Board of Trustees expects us to think strategically about, and plan for, these challenges. Many of the strategic initiatives presented in this Plan are designed with this in mind, and our aim continues to be to make Providence College a first-choice destination school in a highly competitive market. At the same time, it is important that we intentionally safeguard the resources of the College. To this end, as described in this Plan update, we will create task forces to prepare for, monitor, and address the challenges that we face. They will be charged with critically examining areas like tuition, enrollment, and retention; the allocation of financial aid; faculty/staff compensation, benefits, and staffing levels; athletics; and major areas of enterprise risk management.

The initiatives in this Plan are carefully prioritized and, as described below, most will be funded through philanthropy and through the careful reallocation of existing revenues. It will be necessary, at times, to make difficult choices, but these efforts to control costs will not compromise the standard of education that has defined Providence College. Implementation of the Plan update will not only provide direction as we approach the Centennial, but also will position us for the next hundred years to continue to provide education of the highest quality to our students.

Measuring Success

As we implement the initiatives set forth in this Plan update, we will evaluate regularly our progress toward realizing the goals that we set. To that end, we have developed a series of action steps to follow and metrics against which we will track our progress. The metrics, listed below in Schedule A, are both objective and quantifiable, and will allow us to both evaluate ourselves internally and to provide meaningful comparisons to our peer institutions.

Funding the Initiatives

Comprehensive financial planning has been developed to support the implementation of the update to the Strategic Plan. Many of the initiatives will not make demands on the College budget, and others will be met by reallocating existing financial resources. Annual costs (non-incremental) for each of the initiatives are detailed below in Section B, and a schedule of total costs follows in Schedule C.

As described in Schedule D, a portion of the initiatives will be financed through additional tuition revenues. The long-term financial plan for the three years of this update (FYE 2016—FYE 2018) is based on class sizes of 1000 students. This can be comfortably increased, based on recent enrollment trends, to 1015 students annually.

The financial plan also is based on annual increases of operating expenses of 2.5%. Reallocating a percentage of these budgeted expense increases to strategic initiatives will fund a portion of the Plan.

The full implementation of the Plan, however, will call for substantial new funding, particularly in implementing the initiatives associated with Academic Excellence (e.g., financial aid and endowed chairs). The Plan is closely aligned with the “Our Moment” comprehensive campaign, and certain initiatives are contingent on the success of the College’s philanthropic efforts. If sufficient funds are not raised, the initiatives will be postponed until fundraised monies are available.

Certain improvements to existing facilities (e.g., Moore Hall) will be funded through the College’s normal annual practice of “funding” depreciation. New construction, as well as the Campus Transformation Project, will be funded through philanthropy, issuance of new debt, and use of the unrestricted endowment.

In summary, the careful reallocation of existing resources, the prioritization of strategic initiatives, and the strategic issuance of new debt will allow the College to implement most of the initiatives in this Plan update *and* maintain a healthy operating margin.

Advancing the Catholic and Dominican Mission

We will *initiate* mission-centered leadership and peer-ministry programs and *provide* resources to ensure that the Catholic and Dominican mission of Providence College is clearly understood and embraced, affects and animates all that we do, and, in this way, guides the transformation of self and society to which the grace of God invites us.

The Vision Realized:

A CAMPUS CULTURE that is mission-driven, student-centered, and aligned with the institution's core values

A MINISTRY OF PEERS by and for students which brings the message of the gospel and the heart of the College's Catholic and Dominican mission to all parts of the College community

LEADERSHIP FORMATION for individuals both within the College community and the Rhode Island area which highlights the Catholic and Dominican mission in teaching, scholarship, work, study, and service

MEANINGFUL INTELLECTUAL, RELIGIOUS, AND SPIRITUAL programs that reflect the Catholic and Dominican mission, new initiatives oriented toward interreligious dialogue, and opportunities for faith-inspired service and advocacy based on Catholic social teaching, the witness of Jesus Christ, and the work of the Spirit among all peoples

BROAD AND READY ENGAGEMENT with Dominicans by students, alumni, faculty and staff, and friends and supporters of the College

Initiatives:

WE WILL DEVELOP the pilot program *Learning Circles @ PC*—a new, broad-based community discussion and reflection program that invites faculty and staff to explore deeper Catholic and Dominican mission integration with enriched campus climate.

WE WILL SUSTAIN AND ENRICH the College's Catholic and Dominican intellectual tradition, with a particular emphasis on the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas. The Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies and Academic Affairs will sponsor activities and support efforts to animate the tradition and will nurture the campus conversation around this tradition.

WE WILL DEVELOP *Faith Speaks*—a new outreach and evangelization program that is run by and for students and that will further enliven Catholic and Dominican values integration.

WE WILL SOLIDIFY *Faith Works* and expand *Faith Abroad*—Campus Ministry's immersion and service programs that provide students with the opportunity to serve their local and global neighbors when and where help is most needed and the chance to study or serve in the context of a Catholic, Dominican community.

WE WILL EXPAND the Dominican Heritage lecture series—the program by which notable speakers address issues central to the Dominican mission of the College, Dominican history and tradition, and Dominican forms of education.

WE WILL EXPAND Interreligious Dialogue initiatives for the campus community and for the local diocese—these initiatives will increase authentic understanding and appreciation of differences and commonalities between people of various faith traditions.

WE WILL ENHANCE Dominican identity within the campus community—working together with the Province of St. Joseph and with Dominican Provinces across the world to ensure appropriate Dominican presence and succession at the College.

WE WILL IMPLEMENT the international travel-pilgrimage program *In the Footsteps of St. Dominic*—the program will enable community members and friends to explore the early foundations of the Dominican Order.

Measuring Our Success:

- *Degree of involvement in Learning Circles by Faculty, Administrators, and Staff*
- *The presence of Catholic and Dominican scholars on campus to augment engagement with the Catholic intellectual tradition*
- *Quality of programs and number of students participating in Faith Works, Faith Speaks, and Faith Abroad*
- *Number and quality of presentations and extent of community participation in the Dominican Heritage Lecture Series*
- *Number of events and level of participation in Theological Exchange between Catholics and Jews*
- *Establishment of, and level of interest in, increased interreligious dialogue initiatives*
- *Number of Dominican Friars and Sisters participating in the mission of the College*
- *Number of participants in the travel program*

Enhancing Academic Excellence

By *capitalizing* on and *promoting* the unique qualities of Providence College, we will establish the College as a nationally recognized, premier, Catholic, liberal arts institution that is a first-choice destination for prospective students, faculty, and staff.

The Vision Realized:

A CLEAR COMMITMENT TO THE LIBERAL ARTS, including full implementation of the re-imagined Core Curriculum, by which the College sets the context and the foundation for all of its programs of study

A HIGHLY ACCOMPLISHED AND DIVERSE STUDENT BODY, unencumbered by financial barriers to sharing in the PC experience, and engaged intensely in learning within and outside classroom walls and extending beyond their years as students

A RENOWNED AND DIVERSE FACULTY, educated at the best graduate schools in the United States and abroad, and dedicated to exceptional teaching, scholarship, and service

AN ACADEMIC COMMUNITY notable for bringing stakeholders – students, faculty, and staff included – together respectfully and productively in the process of making weighty decisions and in communicating their complexities, outcomes, and impacts

AN ACADEMIC CULTURE COMMITTED TO ACCOUNTABILITY, continuous improvement, and meaningful assessment of learning, overall institutional effectiveness, and quality

Initiatives:

WE WILL ENHANCE AND PROMOTE the College's identity as a prominent liberal arts institution—we will support and nurture academic offerings in the arts and sciences and across our Core Curriculum; strengthen the connections between the liberal arts and other programs of study at the College; and join the national conversation on the primary role of liberal arts in higher education.

WE WILL PRIORITIZE the retention of superior faculty who are exceptional scholars and teachers, and who will help to attract highly qualified and diverse students. We will continue to recruit superior faculty whose diversity will reflect the increasing globalization and outlook of our students. We will acknowledge, empower, and develop faculty in their roles as campus leaders.

WE WILL ENGAGE all students deeply in their learning—the College will be known as a first-choice destination where students can pursue rigorous independent and faculty-mentored research, study, and service; where diversity, inclusion, and internationalization will be integrated across the curriculum and co-curriculum; where students' best work will be recognized and promoted; and where innovative, engaging pedagogies will be investigated, implemented, and supported.

WE WILL LEVERAGE areas of academic strength and capacity in developing a vision for graduate and continuing education—these programs will attract increasing numbers of students and enrich learning across the College's academic offerings.

WE WILL RECRUIT AND RETAIN a diverse and superior student body—our students will be motivated and supported to learn deeply and to contribute positively to the College and global communities and will face fewer economic barriers in accessing the Providence College experience fully.

WE WILL ESTABLISH a culture of accountability and continuous improvement—the College will conduct regular reviews and assessments of effectiveness, increase and enhance communication among stakeholders, and bring greater transparency and accountability to College operations and decision-making.

WE WILL IMPROVE the academic governance of the College by increasing communication between College stakeholders and by better distributing and communicating academic responsibilities. We will support and enhance the *collegium* of the faculty by giving them a greater stake in the success of the College, and we will empower students to have a louder voice in their academic experiences.

Measuring Our Success:

- *Center for Interdisciplinary Studies established by 2017*
- *Acceptance to Phi Beta Kappa Society*
- *Increased scholarship aid available to liberal arts majors*
- *Faculty credentials, compensation, pre-tenure research leaves, awards*
- *Percentage of undergraduate students involved in research, academic service, or out-of-classroom fieldwork*
- *Qualitative and quantitative evaluation of “Celebration of Student Scholarship and Creativity”*
- *National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) results*
- *Quality of academic advising*
- *Enrollment numbers and related revenue for transfer/SCE students*
- *Implementation of selected initiatives from Instructional Technology Strategic Plan*
- *Student and faculty retention rates*
- *Diversity of enrolled students*
- *Student graduation rates*
- *Level of student loan debt*
- *Level of unmet student financial need*
- *Quantitative and qualitative outcomes of Friar Foundations Summer Bridge program*
- *Results of Continuous Improvement Program and other assessment tools*
- *Establishment of post-tenure review/development program and faculty merit/recognition program*
- *Establishment of a system of shared governance that is based on best practices and that is agreed to by Faculty, Administration, and Trustees*

Embracing Diversity

Recognizing that all are created in the image and likeness of God, we will *promote* a campus culture that is respectful of the dignity of every person and in which diversity in its many forms and expressions is valued and appreciated.

The Vision Realized:

A STELLAR AND DIVERSE COMMUNITY of students, faculty, and staff that mirrors the catholicity of the Church and the broader world in which we live, and that is inclusive and welcoming of all

A CULTURE IN WHICH DIVERSITY IS CONSIDERED AND RESPECTED in every area of campus life and is a factor in, and component of, institutional decision-making

A CAMPUS CLIMATE THAT INSPIRES respect and that provides support for the academic, social, spiritual, and personal development of diverse students, faculty, and staff

Initiatives:

WE WILL INTENTIONALLY CREATE a more inclusive and dynamic learning environment—increasing diversity in its many forms among students, faculty, staff, and Trustees will reflect authentically an ever more global society into which our future alumni/ae will live, learn, serve, and worship.

WE WILL ESTABLISH the “Center for Inclusive Excellence and Cross-Cultural Engagement”—the Center, through collaborative efforts between the Office of Institutional Diversity, Academic Affairs, and Student Affairs, will promote student social and intellectual development, the connection between diversity and academic excellence, and the development of a welcoming and diverse community.

WE WILL ESTABLISH AND FUND the “Reverend Robert A. Morris Speaker Series” in honor of retired professor Father Robert Morris, O.P.—the Series will feature eminent leaders in diplomacy, education, business, and the arts and sciences, promoting excellence and active engagement of diverse perspectives and voices.

WE WILL ESTABLISH “The Difficult Dialogues Initiative at Providence College”—the multifaceted program will promote respectful, transformative campus dialogue on controversial topics and complex social issues.

WE CONTINUOUSLY WILL EVALUATE our campus climate—evidence of inclusiveness and respect will be gathered systematically and used effectively to ensure a diverse and empowering campus environment in which all members enjoy dynamic, reciprocal, and compassionate interactions reflective of St. Dominic’s “wide embrace of all people.”

Measuring Our Success:

- *Diversity of faculty, staff, students, and Trustees*
- *Number and quality of presentations, and extent of community participation in the “Rev. Robert A. Morris, O.P. Speaker Series”*
- *Quantitative and qualitative assessment results of Pathways program*

- *Improvement in diversity/cultural competence results and rankings in the ACUHO-I/EBI Resident Study and the National Survey of Student Engagement*
- *Quantitative and qualitative assessment results related to structural diversity, diversity initiatives, and diversity interactions*

Preparing Our Students for Lives of Meaning and Purpose

Beginning with the Development of Western Civilization (DWC) Program, we will prepare every student to be someone, other than to do something. Students will flourish because the ways they live will be consistent with who they are and who they believe they are meant, ought, and called to be.

The Vision Realized:

STUDENTS WILL LIVE LIFE with intention and reason. With practice they will become expert at reflection, contemplation, and discernment in a world of increasing clutter and distraction. Happiness will be pursued through the virtues of courage, generosity, justice, friendship, compassion, and citizenship. They will demonstrate what Jesus and St. Thomas Aquinas referred to as "beatitude."

MOMENTS OF CURIOSITY, WONDER, AND AWE, in the classroom and the laboratory, on the stage, fields, and courts, and in residential communities, clubs, and organizations, will be so compelling that students will experience transformations.

EVERY STUDENT WILL RECEIVE the preparation, guidance, and support necessary to reach his or her full academic, athletic, and human potential.

GRADUATES WILL BE ENGAGED SERVANT LEADERS in their professions, families, and communities.

Initiatives:

WE WILL PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES AND PROGRAMS, based on our Catholic and Dominican faith tradition and proven practices, that promote human flourishing, cultural agility, integrated learning, and contemplation and communication—ideals referred to as the "Friar Four."

WE WILL FOSTER IN OUR STUDENTS the qualities of compassion, good citizenship, and commitment to social justice. Through collaborative efforts, we will collectively respond to human needs locally and globally.

WE WILL HELP PREPARE ALL STUDENTS FOR THEIR LIFEWORK, beginning their first year, by providing meaningful opportunities to assess their strengths, discover their passions, and hone their professional and leadership skills.

WE WILL ENGAGE STUDENT-ATHLETES, who while competing at the NCAA Division I level, will participate in the life and mission of the College. They will benefit from the programs and services afforded to all students.

WE WILL CELEBRATE student excellence in research, academics, the performing and creative arts, and athletics—this will serve to promote community and strengthen institutional affiliation among students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, and the local community.

WE WILL EXPAND AND IMPROVE THE SCOPE OF ADVISING by preparing more staff and faculty to guide, coach, and support students.

Measuring Our Success:

- *Quantitative and qualitative results of “Friar 4” assessments*
- *Participation rates in recreational or intercollegiate sports programs*
- *Reduction in binge drinking levels*
- *Participation rates in, and results of, qualitative and quantitative analyses of sexual assault and bystander education*
- *Results of diversity/cultural competence assessments*
- *Results of ACUHO-I/EBI Resident surveys*
- *Rankings in National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)*
- *Usage of PC/Smith Hill Annex*
- *Student usage of Career Education Center*
- *Number of internship opportunities*
- *Student-athlete participation in community service initiatives*
- *Student athlete GPA and graduation rates*
- *Rankings in Learfield Sports Directors Cup*
- *Ticket revenues and student attendance rates at athletic events*

Building Lifelong Relationships, Growing Financial Resources, and Increasing Overall Institutional Effectiveness

To provide for the highest quality of education, to continually improve the utility and physical beauty of the campus and its facilities, and to support the College mission and all strategic priorities, we will adhere to sound business practices and will establish and strengthen lifelong relationships with key constituents (students, parents, friends, alumni, corporations/foundations) to increase philanthropic support for the College.

The Vision Realized:

A STRONG CULTURE OF PHILANTHROPY in which giving back to PC has become second nature for graduates from all decades

AN ENDOWMENT that provides us with the ability to invest in enhanced curricular and co-curricular programs that are worthy of our mission and reputation; to hire stellar faculty and staff; to more fully meet the financial need of our student body; to reduce the College's dependence on tuition revenue, and to help us realize the full potential of our strategic initiatives

STATE-OF-THE-ART, well-maintained academic, residential, social, and athletic facilities that enhance the quality of life for our students and that provide appropriate environments for community, recreation, and learning

A ROBUST NETWORK of regional and international alumni clubs committed to establishing lifetime connections to the College

A CULTURE in which the College community embraces continuous improvement and is committed to ongoing assessment of quality

Initiatives:

WE WILL REALIZE the goals of the College's comprehensive campaign, "Our Moment: The Next Century Campaign for Providence College," as aligned with our 2017 Centennial Celebration—the Campaign and Centennial will promote a shared and deep understanding of the participation levels necessary, and responsibilities involved, in securing the College's future success.

WE WILL EXPAND AND INCREASE revenues beyond undergraduate day-school tuition—in order to diversify income, further enhance sustainability, better utilize institutional resources, and support new strategic initiatives, we will establish innovative educational programs and/or facilities rental opportunities for part-time learners, alumni, community neighbors, and institutional friends and guests.

WE WILL BUILD an even more vibrant and diverse alumni network—a culture of philanthropy and outreach will be created and opportunities for involvement will be maximized across alumni class years and local alumni clubs.

WE WILL CONTINUE our comprehensive program of renovation and new construction and will complete a campus transformation project—the quality of our facilities will meet or exceed those of our major competitor institutions, and the transformation project will unify the campus landscape, enhance and

beautify the College's park-like environs, maximize open and green space, and minimize vehicular traffic on campus.

WE WILL ENHANCE AND EXPAND the College's use of information and instructional technologies—effective technologies will promote academic and administrative excellence and efficiency, and digital technology will be used to enhance students' self-direction and as a gateway to meaningful in-person interactions.

WE WILL EXPRESS the College's new brand identity across communication channels—the College will be regarded as a nationally known, first-choice destination institution of higher education.

Measuring Our Success:

- *Success of new revenue-generating and expense-reduction programs*
- *Optimal use of campus facilities throughout the year*
- *Successful attainment of capital campaign target goal*
- *Value of College endowment*
- *Value and extent of alumni and donor giving*
- *Participation in alumni events and campus visits*
- *Average age of facilities*
- *Completion of campus transformation project*
- *Successful implementation of initiatives in the College's IT Strategic Plan*
- *Quality and impact of redesigned Web presence to reflect the College's new brand*