ACHIEVING OUR GREATNESS

A Strategic Action Plan for Columbia College Chicago, 2015-2020

Columbia
COLLEGE CHICAGO

Contents

Introduction

In August 1890, Boston-area transplants Mary Ann Blood and Ida Morey Riley established the Columbia School of Oratory in a building on East Adams Street in downtown Chicago. One hundred twenty-five years, three name changes, and several physical relocations later, the institution now known as Columbia College Chicago stands ready to launch an ambitious program of change that will allow us to fully meet the obligations placed upon us by our mission and by the promises we make to our students and to the wider world.

Through *Achieving our Greatness: A Strategic Plan for Columbia College Chicago, 2015-2020*, we will strategically position the college around its distinctive value and raise the bar of our collective aspiration, setting our sights on nothing less than the achievement of our full potential as an educational innovator, an incubator of new creative practice, and a generator of real-world success for young creatives.

The Process

The institutional conversation that has brought us to this point began in May 2014, when President Kwang-Wu Kim issued a White Paper ("Redefining Our Greatness") that set out his assessment of the college's current circumstances and his vision for its future. The college formally launched the planning process in September 2014 under the oversight of a twenty-one-member Strategic Planning Steering Committee (SPSC) of trustees, faculty, staff, and students, chaired by the Provost. The core planning work was assigned to six subcommittees, each organized around an area of critical strategic importance to the college:

1. Student Success
2. A 21st-Century Curriculum
3. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Engaging Difference
4. Community Engagement
5. Optimizing Enrollment
6. Aligning Resources with Goals

Over the next two months, the college community offered feedback about issues and concerns in these six areas at college-wide public forums, in meetings with standing bodies in the college's governance system, and on the Civic Commons, a custom social media platform. All told, nearly 800 members of the Columbia community made active contributions to the feedback collection process.

After feedback collection ended in early December, the six SPSC subcommittees used the results to draft recommended objectives, action items, timetables, and deliverables for their respective strategic areas. A writing team synthesized the recommendations into a first strategic plan draft in February 2015. Following a review by the SPSC and President Kim, a revised draft was released to the college community in late March 2015. After a second community feedback collection process and further revision by the writing team, the SPSC, and President Kim, the Board of Trustees approved the final version of the plan in May 2015.

The Situation

Columbia is embarking upon this five-year project with significant advantages:

» Our focus on readying students to succeed in careers that may not yet exist situates us at a leading edge of higher education in the early 21st century.
» Our curriculum develops both the skills and proficiencies fundamental to the creative fields and industries and the analytical, critical thinking, quantitative, and communications skills that facilitate adaptation to life's unexpected turns.
» Our core values of access to rigorous, hands-on learning; a belief in the power of difference; and the necessity of deep engagement with community connect us directly to key national conversations about the value of higher education in our changing world.
» Our fundamental commitment to preparing students to, in the words of our mission statement, "author the culture of their times" differentiates us from our peers in a powerful and compelling way.

At the same time, Columbia faces a series of complex challenges. A phase of rapid and heady growth is behind us, and we now have an opportunity as well as an obligation to reexamine our programs, structures, and practices to ascertain if, and how, they continue to advance the college's mission and purpose. As we begin this work, we are aware that:

» Technological innovation and new business realities are upending entire industries and redefining modes of creative practice in many of the fields that our students study, creating an imperative for our faculty to retool their teaching practices and curricular offerings, and for the college to reimagine its structures and policies.
» Our investment in emerging technologies and new media platforms, and their integration into our classrooms, studios, curricula, and models of creative practice, has lagged behind our investment in other areas.
» We are evolving from an open-admissions college with a local, commuter student body into a school that recruits nationally and internationally, accommodates a large residential student population, and is focused on student persistence to graduation. This transformation has necessitated a wide-ranging, and ongoing, rethinking of our admissions criteria, student support structures, academic policies, and curricula.
» Our commitment to diversity as fundamental to our academic vision is clearly articulated in our mission and manifest in the composition of our student body. That same commitment, however, is not well reflected in the curriculum or in the composition of faculty, staff, and administration, nor is it systemically embedded in institutional policy and practice.
» Our campus, cobbled together opportunistically over several decades, cannot easily accommodate emerging programmatic needs. In particular, we lack a central facility that would house student spaces for collaborative learning, social interaction, and support services under one roof.

Achieving our Greatness is designed to give a strategic, mission-driven focus to our efforts to address these and other key college priorities:

» It reinforces our commitment to equipping our students with the skills, competencies, and proficiencies – and also with the sense of agency and confidence of purpose – that will allow them to translate their creative passions into lives of professional success and personal fulfillment.
» It challenges us to provide new opportunities for students to interact with, and interrogate, the world around them, whether in Chicago or in other communities across the globe – an essential step if they are to develop the authentic voice that can animate their creative practice.
» It obligates us to bring as many diverse voices and experiences as possible into close proximity within this community, and to hear and honor all those voices and experiences, as a means of generating new ideas and new forms of creative practice.

» It reminds us that we are neither unique nor alone in the work that we do, and that we must always remain attuned to the best practices of American higher education.

» Above all, it demands of us that we design, implement, assess, and revise everything we do through the lens of our distinctive mission.

The Promise

To maximize the value of a Columbia College Chicago education to our students, we will over the next five years implement a series of ambitious, pragmatic, and measurable recommendations that are designed to achieve six key strategic goals:

1. We will become a truly student-centric institution whose core purpose is to serve our students, fostering their personal and creative growth, supporting their academic achievement, and preparing them for lifetimes of accomplishment and meaningful contribution. Our primary student success outcomes will be graduation and employment.

2. We will ensure that our curricula have clear and relevant learning outcomes and are structured so as to best connect our students with current and emerging realities and effectively prepare our students to succeed as creative practitioners and innovators in the 21st century.

3. We will be known as a national leader in higher education for our systemic and comprehensive commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as a fundamental basis for accomplishing our mission.

4. We will be known as an animating force in our communities, in the city of Chicago, and in the larger world beyond.

5. We will engage in sophisticated enrollment management practices to build our optimal student body, one whose composition reflects our mission-based commitment to diversity, and whose members are uniquely suited to take fullest advantage of the distinctive offerings of our institution and to succeed at Columbia College Chicago.

6. We will responsibly allocate our resources to best support institutional priorities and goals, and we will build the wealth of new resources – human, financial, capital, and technological – necessary to fulfill our mission and our promise as an institution.

The detailed objectives and action items that follow establish a bold course for the future. In so doing, they also honor the college's long history and rich heritage, while giving us permission to let go of those legacies that no longer work or make sense for us. As we confront the common challenges facing so many institutions of higher learning, our collective response will be to elevate those features of our institutional culture that truly differentiate us, all of which are located at the level of mission and purpose. Our students deserve nothing less than our full commitment to that which gives a Columbia education its real value in the world.

Photo: Jessi Zambrano

GOAL 1
Student Success

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A Strategic Action Plan for Columbia College Chicago, 2015-2020

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Goal 1: Student Success

While almost all of its major programs of study are in pre-professional fields, Columbia College Chicago does not simply prepare students to take their places in existing occupations. Its ambitions are broader: it is committed to fostering the professional success and personal fulfillment of students who will author the culture of their times and excel as creative agents in the world. At Columbia, we expect our students to define their own success. From Convocation to Commencement, our goal is to provide a robust academic, co-curricular, and student support infrastructure that nurtures an active and engaged student community in which students can begin to envision that success.

Student success begins, but does not end, with a curriculum that facilitates structured exploration, purposeful major and career choices, and the completion of a degree program in a prescribed period of time. We affirm that employment is a desired outcome of a Columbia education, and we recognize that we must teach our students practical skills that help them to navigate the real world. We also must provide the necessary support services to prepare them for employment and help them find employment upon graduation.

The growth of the residential student population and the changing academic and geographic profile of the student body demand that we expand programs and structures that support student engagement inside and outside of the classroom, personal and creative growth, portfolio development, career preparation, and relationship building with industry and creative practice mentors.

Achieving our Greatness calls upon us to fulfill our commitment to promoting student success in the following ways:

1. We will reevaluate our admissions policies and practices to ensure that we are admitting and enrolling students who have a strong likelihood of succeeding at Columbia. We will clarify admissions criteria using an evidence-based assessment of the key factors and attributes most likely to predict that success.
2. We will design a curriculum that encourages students' academic and creative exploration, builds a common foundation through an Integrated First-Year Experience program, promotes carefully considered major/minor choices that support career goals, and facilitates clear and timely progress to degree completion.
3. We will provide comprehensive academic and career advising to all students, and build the student services infrastructure needed to support the emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being of a diverse student body.
4. We will incorporate student portfolio or "body of work" development and evaluation into the curriculum and advising programs, beginning at orientation and continuing until graduation.
5. We will ensure that as part of a Columbia education, all students acquire foundational business and marketing skills and technological fluency, and complete a significant entrepreneurial experience.
6. We will strengthen students' preparation for the world of work by expanding internship and practicum opportunities, and by developing more extensive mentorship networks with industry professionals and Columbia alumni.
7. We will create a centrally located facility on campus that brings collaborative learning spaces, student meeting and gathering spaces, and student advising and support services under one roof.

Goal 1: Student Success

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Increase retention and on-time graduation.	Consistent implementation of all strategic planning objectives.	Years 1-5	» 80% freshman-to-sophomore retention rate. » Six-year graduation rate of 60%.
Assess and revise admissions policies and practices to ensure that Columbia admits and enrolls students who can persist to graduation.	Analyze indicators of student success for recent entering student cohorts, and revise general admissions standards, requirements, and criteria accordingly. (See Goal 5 for more detail.)	Year 1, to be implemented in Year 2.	Revised admissions standards, requirements, and criteria.
	Implement more rigorous admissions requirements (audition, portfolio review) and criteria for programs in which increased selectivity is deemed necessary to generate a cohort of entering students who are prepared to persist to graduation. (See Goal 5 for more detail.)	Years 1 and 2	Revised admissions requirements and criteria for selected programs.
Redefine the first year at Columbia as an integrated institutional experience. (See Goal 2 for more detail.)	Revise the current new student orientation process as a seamless introduction to the Columbia community.	Year 1, to be implemented in Year 2.	Orientation as a part of an Integrated First-Year Experience.
	Faculty creates new foundational learning experiences that align with universal and major learning outcomes and introduce students to disciplinary knowledge across multiple departments.	Year 2, to be implemented in Year 3.	New foundational courses that allow students to explore various majors as part of an Integrated First-Year Experience.
	Faculty revises the required freshman course to align with universal learning outcomes and the other components of the Integrated First-Year Experience.	Year 1, to be implemented in Year 2.	New, more relevant, more engaging course that is an integral part of the Integrated First-Year Experience.
Develop and honor clear pathways to graduation for all students, which will clarify requirements, course sequencing, and estimated time to completion. (See also Goal 2.)	Invest in degree planning, degree audit, and advising software to provide students and advisors with a full suite of tools to support the student advising function and student self-management of curricular and course registration decisions.	Year 1	Degree planning/audit software applications integrated into the student advising function and academic affairs infrastructure.
	Use pre-enrollment data to coordinate academic options for first-semester students (i.e., course availability).	Beginning Year 2	Better planning of courses for first-year students.
	Develop assessment criteria in each department for advanced and developmental placement (e.g., auditions, portfolio reviews, writing samples).	Year 2, to begin implementation in Year 3.	Alternative pathways to degree completion based on testing, prior experience, and prior coursework.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
	Faculty and staff in each department develop clear and consistent roadmaps to graduation that are accessible to students and advisors.	Year 1, to be continued in Year 2 in conjunction with revision of majors.	Dynamic, online roadmaps to graduation for every major.
Revise the current advising model to clarify the roles of professional and faculty advisors and provide students with holistic and proactive advising at all stages of their academic careers.	Increase professional advising staff for advising related to registration, schedule building, degree roadmaps, and graduation. Ensure that maximum caseloads are in line with accepted best practice in higher education.	Year 1 and ongoing	Required, yearly, proactive advising, performed by professional advisors, for every Columbia undergraduate.
	Move professional advising reporting line to Academic Affairs.	Year 1	Change in professional advising reporting structure.
	As part of a broader faculty development program, provide professional development for faculty on advising that goes beyond academic navigation and degree requirements and encompasses professional and creative mentorship, portfolio development, and career advice.	Year 1	All faculty members are prepared to provide professional and creative mentorship.
	Faculty implement new advising practices.	Year 2	Effective partnership between professional advisors and faculty mentors to deliver comprehensive advising to all students.
Emphasize the importance of academic and artistic exploration as a crucial ingredient in a successful career at Columbia.	Develop a Declaration of Major process that allows and encourages students to explore alternative options before they declare.	Year 1	Declaration of Major process.
	Revise academic policies to encourage exploration and to facilitate major-minor combinations that do not lengthen students' time to graduation.	Years 1 and 2	More student-friendly and exploration-friendly academic policies.
Incorporate portfolio development and evaluation into the student experience and curriculum beginning at orientation and continuing until graduation.	Revise Integrated First-Year Experience to include "body of work" or portfolio development.	Year 1	Student introduction to the importance of "body of work" or portfolio development and to the tools for managing it.
	Faculty integrate development and evaluation of the "body of work" or portfolio into major curricula and faculty advising.	Years 1 -2, in conjunction with revision of majors.	Portfolios become central to the educational experience of all students and to the assessment of all curricula.
	Faculty and staff review and evaluate student final and official "body of work" or portfolios before graduation.	Develop model in Years 2 and 3.	No student graduates without a final "body of work" or portfolio evaluation.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Provide all students with foundational business, entrepreneurial and technological skills.	Faculty embed technological fluency and business and entrepreneurial skills in core curriculum and major programs of study. (See Goal 2.)	Year 1; work completed by end of May 2016.	Revised core curriculum ready for curricular review.
Ensure that all students have the opportunity to connect with alumni and industry professionals during all stages of their education.	Create an alumni and professional advisory group for each academic department that will help align curriculum with real-world professional and creative practice and provide a mentorship and internship network for students. (See also Goal 2.)	Year 1	Alumni and professional advisor groups for all students.
	Faculty in every major work with the Alumni Relations Office to develop a local and national network of alumni resources for student learning.	Year 2	Alumni data incorporated into central database.
Integrate practicum or internship requirements into all pathways to graduation.	Streamline and coordinate the internship process across all departments to make internship and practicum opportunities available to all students.	Underway	Centralized and coordinated internship office and process.
	Faculty in every major determine what types of required internships and/or practicums are valuable outcomes/objectives.	Year 3	A comprehensive list of internship or practicum opportunities for each major and implementation plan.
	Develop an internal internship program.	Year 3	A clear statement of best practices that outline the parameters of such internships; internal publicity materials circulated to faculty, advisors, and students.
Assess and revise student support services and initiatives to ensure that all students receive adequate support for academic and employment success.	Assess current initiatives and support services for all students and for targeted student cohorts, e.g., first-generation, at-risk, international.	Year 1	Comprehensive review of all student support services.
	Allocate resources and create necessary changes in support services for all students and for targeted student cohorts.	Year 2	Improved student support services.
	Provide student access to course evaluations to assist them with course selection and degree planning.	Year 1	Student access to course evaluations.
Enhance the student community by creating a campus center where students, staff, and faculty can engage in collaborative learning.	Ensure that the new campus center creates opportunities for interdisciplinary and collaborative learning.	Planning in Year 1, continuing until campus center opens.	Interdisciplinary, collaborative learning opportunities for all students.
	Unite all student services in one building to create a one-stop shop opportunity.	Planning in Year 1, continuing until campus center opens.	One-stop shop for student support services.

Photo: Jacob Boll

GOAL 2
A 21st-Century Curriculum

Goal 2: A 21st-Century Curriculum

Curriculum is the heart of any institution of higher learning, and Columbia College Chicago's strategic vision cannot be actualized without a curriculum that is rigorous, highly attractive to students, and effective in helping students prepare for creative practice, employment, and citizenship in the 21st century. Over the years, the college has built an extensive range of degree programs designed to achieve these important ends.

Our challenge for the next five years is to thoroughly assess curricular content, examining all programs for alignment to the college's mission, real-world relevance, rigor and quality, clarity of learning outcomes, and market position and financial health, all of which will serve as bases for making both necessary changes and new investments. We will rebuild the core curriculum based on learning outcomes that will engender success for all students. We will build new interdisciplinary linkages across the curriculum, create new opportunities for project-based learning to build our students' complex collaborative skills, expand our connections to the physical and cultural reality of the city of Chicago, and weave the development of students' technological, business, and marketing skills into our program offerings. These efforts will define the learning we believe will serve as the basis for our students' life-long success.

Achieving our Greatness sets out our commitment to designing a curriculum that:

1. *Blends the best of arts training and liberal arts models.* Our students will develop a high level of skill in their chosen creative fields under the tutelage of faculty with outstanding credentials as industry leaders and innovators and skilled creative practitioners. At the same time, they will develop the analytical, critical thinking, quantitative, and communications skills – the hallmarks of a liberal arts education – that provide a foundation for lifelong learning and success.
2. *Projects a clarity of purpose, design, and outcome.* The curriculum will facilitate students' academic and creative exploration while establishing clear pathways to graduation in all fields. Faculty, working with external partners from industry and fields of creative practice, will define relevant learning outcomes for the core curriculum and academic majors that reflect current and emerging disciplinary and creative trends.
3. *Provides a foundational base of business, marketing, and entrepreneurial skills.* All students, whatever their field of study, will acquire foundational business and marketing skills and complete a significant entrepreneurial experience as part of a Columbia education. This will develop their ability to define, articulate, and market their own creative capital, and to translate their professional aspirations into reality.
4. *Integrates the best of new technology into teaching, learning, and creating.* This is essential to maintaining the currency and relevance of students' academic preparation and creative practice.
5. *Embeds deep linkages to the city of Chicago across the curriculum.* The college will devise curricular offerings that require students to engage with the city of Chicago as a visual, architectural, physical, historical, cultural, environmental, sociological, and professional landscape. This will draw them into the "in-between" spaces of the city, where the most stimulating, imaginative elements of creative practice and cultural experience are nurtured.
6. *Encourages students to succeed within a multidisciplinary and diverse environment.* Columbia's curriculum will develop students' cultural empathy and cultural literacy; teach them how to think and collaborate across disciplinary lines and other boundaries of difference; and build their capacity to communicate and act effectively in a globalized world.

Goal 2: A 21st-Century Curriculum

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Define clear learning outcomes for every student, regardless of major.	Discuss learning outcomes at the all-college Faculty Forum.	August 2015	Learning outcomes discussed at the Faculty Forum.
	Provost leads Civic Commons discussion on learning outcomes.	Sept. 21 - Oct. 23, 2015	Dataset to inform learning outcomes committee.
	Learning Outcomes Committee begins work.	Fall semester 2015	Draft statement of universal learning outcomes.
	Proposed statement of learning outcomes reviewed in faculty and student forums.	Fall semester 2015	Feedback on learning outcomes statement obtained.
	Learning Outcomes Committee presents statement of learning outcomes to Faculty Senate for review, revision, and approval.	August 2015-April 2016	List of clearly articulated learning outcomes that can be applied across the curriculum.
Reorganize the structure of departments and schools to align with changes in creative industries, enhance the student interdisciplinary experience, and integrate universal learning outcomes.	Engage the community in a discussion regarding the best departmental/school structure for the college. Discussion to be led by Academic Affairs leadership in conjunction with the Faculty Senate.	Year 1	A new organization will be fully proposed by the end of Year 1.
	Establish new structure to inform the revision of majors in Year 2.	Year 2	New structure in place that informs the revision of majors in Year 2.
Revise the core curriculum based on universal learning outcomes.	Office of the Provost works with Faculty Senate, deans, and chairs to form a committee of faculty, staff, and students that will propose a revised core curriculum.	Year 1; work completed by end of May 2016.	Revised core curriculum ready for college-wide curricular review.
	Faculty embed technological fluency and business and entrepreneurial skills in core curriculum.	Year 1; work completed by end of May 2016.	Revised core curriculum proposed for college-wide curricular review process.
Create an integrated first-year/foundations experience for every student.	Office of the Provost works with Faculty Senate, deans, chairs, and Student Success to form a committee of faculty, staff, and students that will develop a new first-semester freshman course.	September 2015	Committee assigned to develop required first-semester freshman course.
	Revise the required freshman course.	Year 1, in tandem with the revision of the core.	New first-semester freshman course proposed for college-wide curricular review process.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
	Academic Affairs and Student Success work together to develop an Integrated First-Year Experience that engages students with the college's core values of diversity, equity, and inclusion and deep engagement with community.	Year 1; work completed in May 2016.	Fully defined Integrated First-Year Experience proposal.
	Faculty revise foundations courses to integrate with First-Year Experience.	Year 2, in tandem with the revision of the majors.	Proposals for revised foundations courses ready for curricular review.
Create credit-bearing, interdisciplinary, project-based, collaborative learning opportunities for every student.	Form committee to map the most productive internal and external collaborations.	September 2015; work finished by Nov. 1, 2015.	Map of recommended interdepartmental and external collaborations.
	Registrar and IT work to remove systems barriers for interdisciplinary courses and create course numbering protocols that make interdisciplinary connections visible to students.	October 2015 – March 2016	Systems and course numbering in place to allow for interdisciplinary course listings in 2016 catalog.
	Begin development and design of interdisciplinary courses.	Nov. 2015. Some pilots may be tested in Spring 2016. All proposals finished by May 2016.	Each major has an appropriate course proposal ready for curricular review.
Examine and redefine learning outcomes for each major, and revise majors.	Departmental faculty revise major curricula.	Year 2; work completed by end of May 2017.	Revised major curricula ready for curricular review.
	Faculty embed technological fluency and business and entrepreneurial skills in major curricula.	Year 2; work completed by end of May 2017.	Revised major curricula ready for curricular review
Create links to the city of Chicago in both the core curriculum and the majors.	Faculty create clear and specific curricular links based on defined learning objectives.	Year 1 and Year 2, in tandem with core and major curriculum revisions.	The curriculum is closely tied to the city, and the relationship of that connection to learning outcomes is clearly articulated.
Embed Community Engagement in the curriculum, with clear and specific learning outcomes and educational rationale. (See also Goal 4.)	Develop learning outcomes related to Community Engagement.	Year 2	List of clearly articulated community engagement learning outcomes.
	Develop Community Engagement best practices statement.	Year 2	A clear statement of best practices that outline the minimum requirements for a course to attain the CE designation.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
	Develop the process by which sections or courses are designated as Community Engagement courses.	Year 2	A proposal about the number and distribution of CE credits required for transcript designation, developed in consultation with curriculum committees across the college and approved through the appropriate channels.
Create a clear and uniform model for approving curricular innovation and change, as well as related academic policies.	Provost continues work with Faculty Senate on new review and approval process, organization, and timeline.	Year 1	Uniform process for all schools and departments; emphasis on learning outcomes, metrics, currency, employability, and market demand.
Create clear and specific published roadmaps to on-time graduation.	Create roadmaps for each academic program, working with advisors. (See Goal 1 for more detail.)	Year 1	Dynamic, online roadmaps to graduation for every major.
Create and promote strategic major-minor combinations that support students' professional and career goals.	Create new minors where appropriate.	Year 2, in tandem with major curriculum revision. Work completed by end of May 2017.	New minor proposals ready for college-wide curricular review process.
	Market strategic major-minor combinations, and proactively advise students on the value of major-minor combinations to their personal and professional success.	Year 2, in tandem with major curriculum revision. Work completed by end of May 2017.	Major-minor combinations become a more common curricular option for students.
Build relationships with external partners in creative industries and other creative communities that can advise the college on the currency and relevance of its existing curricula and learning outcomes.	Create industry and alumni professional advisory panels for each department to provide an external perspective on curricular reviews for all departments and the core curriculum. (See also Goal 1.)	Year 1, in tandem with core curriculum revision.	College can draw on relationships with external partners for ongoing advice and perspective about curricular and program review and revision.
Create alternative pathways to graduation for students with relevant life experience, community college credit, or meaningful proficiencies acquired in high school.	Develop alternative pathways for each program.	Year 2, in tandem with major curriculum revision. Work completed by end of May 2017.	New pathway proposals that specify how credit will be awarded for life experience and define advance placement criteria and protocols.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Develop a clear institutional definition of all degrees awarded to standardize required credit hours.	The Academic Affairs Committee of Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate work with Academic Affairs leadership to develop definitions of degrees.	Year 1; work completed in May 2016.	Clear definitions of degrees, which will inform revision of majors in Year 2.
Create and expand affordable study-abroad opportunities.	Hire Vice Provost for Global Education whose portfolio will include work with departments on student study-abroad opportunities. (See Goal 5 for other duties.)	Year 1	New global education leadership in place.
	Centralize and coordinate all staff working in international programming. The new office will combine study-abroad and international student support functions. (See also Goal 5.)	Year 1	Centralized, streamlined, more efficient organization of staff and processes.
	Initiate conversations between Vice Provost and departments on study abroad.	Year 1 and ongoing	Affordable study-abroad opportunities created.
Strengthen and expand graduate education.	Hire Dean of Graduate Studies.	Year 1	New leadership of graduate study programs.
	Centralize and coordinate all graduate studies staff.	Year 1	Increased organization and efficiency.
	Assess existing graduate programs regarding marketplace demand and budgetary sustainability.	Year 1 and ongoing	Regular assessment process for all graduate programs.
Expand the online delivery of curricula and programs.	Hire Vice Provost for Online Education.	Year 1	Leadership in building online programs, coordination of instructional designers.
	Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies work with faculty to develop online and low-residency professional master's degree programs. (See Goal 5 for more detail.)	Year 1 and ongoing	At least three new professional master's degrees available fully online over the next five years.
	As part of a broader faculty development program, faculty receive appropriate training and support in the design and implementation of online curricula and the provision of online instruction.	Year 2 and ongoing	Increased faculty skill in use of instructional technologies and in effective online course and program design.
Review, with an external component, all existing academic programs to assess their relevance to mission, market appeal, currency, and quality.	Academic programs are scheduled for cyclical review with an external review component.	Year 1 and ongoing	Cyclical schedule of program review for all academic programs.
	Academic departments develop external program review and advisory boards.	Year 1 and ongoing	Functioning external review and advisory boards for all academic programs.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
	Conduct academic program reviews, implement review findings, and establish assessment metrics.	Year 1 and ongoing	The creation of a culture of accountability that ensures that all academic programs offered by the college are relevant to its mission, have market appeal, and maintain their currency and quality.
Review, with an external component, all affiliated entities with an academic or artistic focus to assess their relevance to the college's mission and academic program, their viability, and their quality.	The Center for Black Music Research (CBMR), Dance Center, Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP), and Sherwood Community Music School are scheduled for cyclical review with an external review component.	Year 1 and ongoing	Cyclical schedule of program review for the CBMR, Dance Center, MoCP, and Sherwood.
	CBMR, Dance Center, MoCP, and Sherwood develop external program review and advisory boards.	Year 1 and ongoing	Functioning external review and advisory boards for all academic programs.
	Conduct program reviews, implement review findings, and establish assessment metrics.	Year 1 and ongoing	The creation of a culture of accountability that ensures that affiliated entities clearly define their mission and purpose in relation to that of the college and retain their viability and quality.
Ensure that faculty members remain current in their disciplines, attain and maintain appropriate professional credentials, and have the capacity to design and deliver revised learning outcomes, curricula, and coursework.	Develop a comprehensive faculty development program and center, supported by a qualified staff. Faculty professional development will encompass work in curriculum design and pedagogy, technology, student advising, diversity, community engagement, and scholarly and creative activities.	Completed by end of Year 2.	Faculty professional development center and full programming.
Ensure that those providing academic support services to students remain current in their fields, adhere to current best practices, and are engaged with the college community.	Strengthen staff orientation and professional development as they relate to the provision and coordination of support services, including the appropriate uses of technology.	Year 1	Improved and more coordinated staff support of students.

Photo: Jacob Boll

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Engaging Difference

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Goal 3: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Engaging Difference

Columbia College Chicago's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion can be understood as our commitment to the principle of engaging difference. We believe that a community that brings diverse voices and experiences into close proximity is fertile ground for creating new ideas and new creative practice. The greater the variety of perspectives, ways of being, ways of evaluating truth, relationships to power and privilege and authority, and heritages that we assemble, and the more we bring that range of difference together and make it the setting for our core teaching and learning activities, the greater the likelihood that our students will begin to engage with ideas, concepts, and even entire bodies of work that they had never considered before. It is within this framework that we prepare our students to author the culture of their times.

In order to distinguish Columbia as an educational institution dedicated to these ideals, we will enter into a process of structural and systemic change, institutionally-driven professional development, and ongoing discursive, dialogic, and assessment practices. This collective work will start to transform our campus community, to move us away from the fear of difference that bell hooks identifies with "dominator culture," and toward an embrace of many voices and experiences, as a way of "finding out what connects us, reveling in our differences; this is the process that brings us closer, that gives us a world of shared values, of meaningful community". [1]

Achieving our Greatness challenges us to commit to the following diversity, equity, and inclusion principles and practices:

1. *Open communication.* We will use multiple communication platforms to present a regular and structured series of dialogues that are designed to expand our capacity to understand, analyze, and confront pressing diversity, equity, and inclusion issues.
2. *Expert training.* We will bring expertise to the college to provide required, iterative training that examines the historic and structural manifestations of racism, sexism, classism, ableism, and ageism. This will help us develop the common language, analytical tools, and problem-solving strategies to reshape our institutional culture.
3. *Curricular and pedagogical innovation.* We will embed the principle of engaging difference in our curriculum and our pedagogy at every level — the First-Year Experience, the core curriculum, and academic majors and minors.
4. *Intentional recruitment and retention strategies.* We will bring expertise and intentionality to bear on our recruitment and retention practices for students, faculty, staff, and senior administrators, so as to create a college community that embodies the diversity of communities, cultures, and lived experiences needed to truly inform and enrich our common work and our students' creative practice.
5. *Embedding value in new evaluation models.* We will ensure that work which advances the principle of engaging difference is accorded value in the college's tenure and promotion criteria, faculty and staff evaluation criteria, and the assessment of academic and co-curricular programs.
6. *Shared governance.* We will create a broadly representative body of established experts from our faculty, senior administrators, staff, and students to keep our community attuned to diversity, equity, and inclusion issues and solutions, and to hold it accountable for sustaining that engagement.
7. *Meaningful financial support.* We will ensure that support for our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is manifest in the college's budgeting process and in vendor and business partner selection processes.

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[1] bell hooks, *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 197.

Goal 3: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Engaging Difference

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Create institutional infrastructure for implementation and assessment of diversity, equity, and inclusion planning, programs, processes, policies, shared governance, and initiatives.	President appoints a committee based on demonstrated expertise and knowledge of the current research on diversity, equity, and inclusion.	Year 1	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee appointed.
	Develop and disseminate an institutional statement that places diversity, equity, and inclusion/engaging difference at the center of college values.	Year 1	College statement developed.
	Provost forms a Statement of Policy Committee that, in consultation with the DEI Committee and the Faculty Senate, establishes a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion/engaging difference as a fourth tenure criterion. Faculty competency in this area will not be demonstrated independently, but in evidence of teaching, scholarly or creative endeavor, and/or service activities that reflect such commitment.	Year 1	A fourth tenure criterion that publicly establishes Columbia College Chicago's commitment to diversity and positions the college as a national leader in this area.
	Statement of Policy Committee, in consultation with the DEI Committee and the Faculty Senate, establishes an equivalent requirement of a demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion/engaging difference for full-time non-tenure-track faculty.	Year 1	A full-time non-tenure-track faculty criterion that publicly establishes the college's commitment to diversity and positions the college as a national leader in this area.
	Provost and the part-time faculty union (P-Fac), in consultation with the DEI Committee, establish equivalent criteria for a demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion/engaging difference for part-time faculty.	Year 1	A set of part-time faculty criteria that publicly establishes the college's commitment to diversity and positions the college as a national leader in this area.
	Provost and DEI Committee create clear and specific metrics for assessing and rewarding faculty commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion across the curriculum.	Year 1	Ongoing assessment in this area.
	Create the position of Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and hire an internationally recognized expert who can provide leadership and accountability in this area.	Year 1	Chief diversity officer hired.
Support and foster ongoing and open communication about diversity, equity, and inclusion.	DEI Committee and leadership initiate an ongoing discussion using various platforms (digital, face-to-face, textual, etc.) to foster a broader and deeper understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion issues in a series of cross-difference dialogues. Through this dialogue, the college will strive to remove barriers that marginalize members of the community.	Year 1 and ongoing	A continuing dialogue that leads to increased understanding, knowledge, sensitivity, positive change, and progressive removal of barriers.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Establish ongoing expert training for students, faculty, and staff.	DEI Committee and leadership create and implement a series of training modules to be offered using different platforms. This will be coordinated with broader faculty and staff development programs and structures.	Year 1 and ongoing	Training done by experts that leads to increased understanding, knowledge, sensitivity, and positive change.
Ensure that campus facilities appropriately address the needs of a diverse student body, faculty, staff, and administration.	As part of campus master planning (see Goal 6), DEI, Campus Environment, and campus leadership review facilities for the college's diverse population.	Year 1	Assessment of facilities and associated resource needs.
	As part of the development of a five-year facilities maintenance and renovation project list (see Goal 6), DEI, Campus Environment, and campus leadership implement improvements in campus facilities for the college's diverse population.	Year 2 and ongoing	Improved facilities for the college's diverse population.
Ensure that diversity is addressed in both pedagogy and curriculum.	Faculty establish DEI course designation and identify existing courses that can be categorized as DEI courses.	Years 1-2, in conjunction with college-wide curricular revisions.	A dynamic map of curricular opportunities with a focus on DEI published.
	Ensure that the new Integrated First-Year Experience (see Goal 2) focuses in part on diversity, equity, and inclusion/engaging difference.	Year 1	Commitment to diversity embedded in the Integrated First-Year Experience.
	Faculty include required DEI focus in revised core curriculum. (See Goal 2.)	Year 1, in conjunction with the revision of the core curriculum.	Visible emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the core curriculum.
	Faculty include required DEI focus in each major. (See Goal 2.)	Year 2, in conjunction with revision of the majors.	Increased emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion in all majors.
	As part of a broader faculty development effort, integrate expert training modules on diversity in pedagogy into faculty development.	Year 1 and ongoing	Faculty professional development on diversity in pedagogy.
Ensure the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty, staff, administration, and student body.	Engage expert consultants to train search committees to increase the likelihood of diversity hiring.	Year 1 and ongoing	More diversity in faculty, staff, and administration.
	Require Human Resources department to submit and publish a college-wide diversity self-review and recruitment goal statement.	By end of Year 1, and annually thereafter.	Regular diversity reporting and goal-setting in Human Resources.
	Create and publish college-wide and unit-specific diversity, equity, and inclusion-sensitive hiring strategies.	Year 2, and annually thereafter.	Ongoing unit-level diversity hiring plans.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
	Earmark funds for diversity and opportunity hires, particularly interdisciplinary cluster hires that create communities of expertise.	Year 2 and ongoing	Diversity, opportunity, and cluster hires begin to establish new areas of expertise that elevate the college as a national leader in diversity.
	Create diversity retention strategy. Include mentorship programs that help to retain diverse faculty, staff, and administrators.	Year 1 and ongoing	Improved diversity retention.
	Actively recruit currently underrepresented and historically marginalized student populations; reaffirm the college's longstanding commitment to recruiting these populations in and around Chicago.	Year 1 and ongoing	Increased student body diversity.
	As part of the systematic strengthening of student support services (see Goal 1), review and improve student support services to ensure advising, curricular, cultural, and other support for underrepresented and historically marginalized student populations.	Year 1 and ongoing	Improved student support services.
	Increase the number and variety of international students. (See Goal 5 for more detail.)	Year 1 and ongoing	Increased student body diversity.
	As part of a broader strategy to grow transfer student enrollment (see Goal 5), expand articulation agreements and other partnerships with two-year institutions that will increase the diversity of the transfer student population.	Year 1 and ongoing	Increased transfer student diversity.
Ensure meaningful financial support for diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.	Institute a diversity, equity, and inclusion-informed vendor and partner selection policy to ensure that the college builds relationships with a wide range of individuals and organizations that reflect and extend its own practices of cultivated diversity.	Year 1	New vendor and partner approval policy.
	Create a specific diversity, equity, and inclusion budget to be administered by the chief diversity officer in consultation with the DEI Committee.	Year 2 and ongoing	Committed DEI budget.

Photo: Andrew Nelles

Community Engagement

ACHIEVING
OUR GREATNESS

A Strategic Action Plan for Columbia College Chicago, 2015-2020

Columbia
COLLEGE CHICAGO

Goal 4: Community Engagement

Rather than treating the creative process as disengaged from the social world, Columbia College Chicago's mission charges its students to act as agents of innovation and generate new models of creative practice. To build the confidence of purpose that is essential to that work, students will have to venture outside the boundaries of the college community and test their actions, beliefs, and values in the world. By engaging with other communities, by working with people whose frames of cultural reference may be quite different from theirs, and by interrogating the world around them, as well as their place in it, our students can develop the authentic voice that will allow them to translate their creative passions into fulfilling lives and successful careers.

We have an obligation to ensure that each of our students has an opportunity to embark on this risky, even intimidating, yet ultimately rewarding journey of experiential learning. To support this objective, the college will integrate student-centered and faculty-driven community engagement initiatives into its core teaching and learning activities. The emerging definition of "community engagement" will encompass a wide range of reciprocal partnerships that help to sustain diverse forms of socially engaged creative practice, scholarship, advocacy, and activism.

Achieving our Greatness commits us to designing an innovative community engagement program organized around the following principles:

1. The college will clearly define "community engagement" and articulate the learning outcomes that students will achieve through this work by drawing on the expertise of its faculty and the work of other expert practitioners and scholars. Community engagement initiatives at Columbia will be informed by the most innovative research and practice. They will be assessed on the mutual benefit they bring to community partners and the college, and for their success in helping our students achieve the desired learning outcomes.
2. Community engagement will be embedded in a Columbia College Chicago education through the inclusion of experiential learning modules across the curriculum and the development of a dedicated co-curricular program.
3. The college will build student engagement with the city of Chicago into academic coursework, internship and practicum offerings, co-curricular programs, and less formal interactions.
4. New institutional support and recognition will encourage faculty whose creative research and teaching are based in community engagement work. New faculty development programs will encourage more faculty to explore this area of inquiry, practice, and teaching.
5. Existing community engagement initiatives will be assessed to ensure that they facilitate student growth and learning, offer shared value to all participants, and are not dependent on particular individuals for their vision and sustainability.
6. The coordination of community engagement efforts will be centralized, and the work will become more visible within the college community, with access points added to connect students and faculty to it, and meaningful incentives established to promote success.

Goal 4: Community Engagement

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Define types of community engagement and develop assessment processes and rubrics.	Academic Affairs and Student Success leadership work with faculty and Faculty Senate to develop a shared, working definition of community engagement for the college.	Year 1	Definitions of community engagement that encompass a wide range of activities, purposes, and approaches.
	Develop assessment processes and rubrics for all community engagement activities to ensure that such activities a) are reciprocally beneficial to the community and the institution, and b) are sustainable over time. Ensure that rubrics reflect the need for Institutional Review Board (IRB) workflow process when those activities include a research component.	Year 1	Assessment rubrics and assessment process begin to be implemented for all community engagement activities.
Establish central oversight for all community engagement at the college.	Conduct a review, with an external component, of the Center for Community Arts Partnerships (CCAP), with a particular focus on the alignment of its mission and operations with the college's community engagement mission.	Year 1	Review of CCAP completed, and review findings implemented.
	Form a centralized Office for Community Engagement (OCE) that oversees community partnerships, internships (internal and external), experiential learning, individual faculty initiatives, socially-engaged practice, and community-centered events.	Year 2	A clear outline of how the OCE will interact with other offices and entities (Academic Affairs, Student Success, Public Relations and Marketing, CCAP, Museum of Contemporary Photography, etc.); organizational chart; job descriptions; personnel identified or hired.
Improve internal communication regarding existing community engagement initiatives and resources.	Conduct a comprehensive survey of both existing practices and faculty/staff connections with community organizations.	Year 1	A database of both existing practices and connections maintained and regularly updated by the OCE. A clear, efficient system that faculty, staff, and students can access when developing community engagement projects.
	Review and assess OCE data to make connections and share resources.	Year 2	Efficiencies and new connections established.
	Develop workflow process for IRB approval related to Community Engagement projects when those projects include a research component.	Year 2	IRB community engagement workflow process established for those projects involving a research component.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Improve external communications.	Improve external communication and public relations, making visible the work that Columbia's faculty, staff, and students are and will be doing in community settings.	Year 2	Regular PR materials that highlight community engagement activities and events.
Embed Community Engagement in the curriculum, with clear and specific learning outcomes and educational rationale. (See also Goal 2.)	Develop learning outcomes related to Community Engagement.	Year 2	List of clearly articulated community engagement learning outcomes.
	Develop Community Engagement statement of best practices.	Year 2	A clear statement of best practices that outlines the minimum requirements for a course to attain the CE designation.
	Develop the process by which sections or courses are designated as Community Engagement courses.	Year 2	A proposal about the number and distribution of CE credits required for transcript designation, developed in consultation with curriculum committees across the college and approved through the appropriate channels.
	Develop Community Engagement public relations materials.	Year 2	Internal public relations materials circulated to faculty, advisors, and students, so that everyone is aware of this opportunity.
As part of broader faculty development efforts, devise opportunities and an incentive structure for faculty community engagement.	Develop Community Engagement curricular resources.	Year 2	Pedagogical and curricular resources made available to faculty who are developing or teaching CE courses.
	Develop Community Engagement colloquia and workshops.	Year 2	Regular colloquia or workshops highlighting ongoing CE work for faculty who are interested in these courses.
	Devise an incentive structure to support faculty who will teach such courses.	Year 2	Incentive structure devised.
	Develop experiential learning modules across the curriculum.	Year 2, to be implemented in year 3.	Experiential learning modules developed and implemented.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Develop pathways for current students to participate in, suggest, and implement community engagement activities in curricular and co-curricular settings.	Develop a clear, efficient system that students can access when interested in developing or participating in community engagement projects.	Year 3	Increased opportunity for both student participation in and proposals for community engagement.
Develop a system for potential community partners to engage students looking for community engagement, service, or internship opportunities.	Identify key personnel as primary contacts for potential community partners, charged with maintaining an interface that connects interested students with valuable opportunities.	Year 3	Clear and published points of contact for community partners.

Photo: Jacob Boll

Optimizing Enrollment

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A Strategic Action Plan for Columbia College Chicago, 2015-2020

Columbia
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Goal 5: Optimizing Enrollment

Maintaining healthy enrollment across degree programs is fundamental to Columbia College Chicago's institutional success. The seemingly effortless enrollment growth that accrued to the college for so long has faded into history; our marketing, recruitment, and financial aid response will be strategic, intentional, and well executed. We will devise new methodologies and measures to identify, evaluate, and attract qualified students; develop broader, more productive transfer and international student recruitment pipelines; and create new graduate and non-degree program offerings that appeal broadly to professionals and others in the community. Underlying these strategies is our mission-driven commitment to keeping a Columbia education available and accessible to the broadest range of students who are prepared to succeed here.

To advance our student recruitment, institutional marketing, and financial aid strategy over the next five years, we will:

1. Determine the college's optimal total enrollment, the optimal size of each academic program, and the optimal balance among various student populations, e.g., first-time freshmen, transfer students, international students, graduate students, online students, etc.
2. Develop a strategic, multi-year enrollment plan and budget that includes goals for enrollment (overall and by degree level, program, and student classification), student aid allocation, and net student-based revenues.
3. Plan and successfully execute a student recruitment and admissions program that attracts a large, diverse body of students who can persist to graduation, and leverages financial aid strategically to support enrollment and revenue goals.
4. Develop strategic recruitment plans tailored to different student populations and classifications.
5. Support all student recruitment efforts with institutional marketing campaigns that accurately and compellingly represent the Columbia student experience and the value of a Columbia education.
6. Create new continuing, professional, and executive education and certification programs for non-degree students that are available in state-of-the-art delivery platforms, including low-residency and fully online programs.
7. Create new online and hybrid professional master's degree programs that draw on our faculty's expertise in creative disciplines, business and marketing, and technology to prepare post-baccalaureate students for professional advancement.

Goal 5: Optimizing Enrollment

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Recruit new leadership in the enrollment services area.	Hire a new Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services.	Underway	New Associate Vice President hired.
Determine the college's current optimal size.	Determine the college's current optimal size, based on an analysis of desired student cohort balance (undergraduate/graduate, first-time full-time, transfer, etc.), program needs, program delivery capacity, facilities capacity, budgetary considerations, and market research on program demand and student recruitment trends.	Year 1	College's current optimal size established.
Develop a revised enrollment management model based on new total enrollment parameters that incorporates five-year enrollment, admissions, student aid allocation, and net student-based revenues projections and targets.	Establish revised five-year student recruitment objectives for freshman/transfer/graduate cohorts and key market segments (international, domestic, range of academic ability, special ability, military service, etc.).	Year 1, revised annually.	Revised optimal enrollment targets established and regularly reevaluated.
	Establish revised five-year student aid allocation objectives for freshman/transfer/graduate cohorts and key market segments (international, domestic, range of academic ability, special ability, military service, etc.).	Year 1, revised annually.	Revised optimal student aid allocation targets established.
Grow new first-time, full-time student enrollment by successfully executing the revised strategic enrollment management plan.	Revise and execute targeted recruiting strategies in key market segments (international, domestic, range of academic ability, special ability, military service, etc.).	Ongoing, revised annually.	Enrollment in key market segments grows.
	Revise the mission, policies, and practices of the Student Financial Services office to orient operations around leveraging student aid allocation strategically to support enrollment goals.	Year 1	Student Financial Services adopts student aid allocation leveraging strategies.
	Sharpen admissions communications strategies to encourage students to complete applications, submit FAFSA forms, and (as appropriate) submit admissions portfolio materials by preferred deadlines.	Year 1	Applicant pool builds more quickly, allowing more intensive cultivation of accepted students.
Strengthen the college's capacity to identify, recruit, and enroll students who are prepared to succeed at Columbia.	Working collaboratively, the Academic Affairs leadership, Enrollment Management, Institutional Effectiveness, and departmental faculty identify indicators of student success in recent student populations by major to determine admission criteria that will lead to increased graduation rates. Their findings will be disseminated across the college.	Year 1	Improved evidence-based understanding across the institution of a relationship between admissions practices and student persistence to graduation.
	Revise general admissions standards, requirements, and criteria to incorporate analysis of indicators that predict student success.	Year 1	Revised admissions standards, requirements, and criteria.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Increase admissions selectivity in appropriate programs.	Identify programs that require more rigorous admissions requirements (audition, portfolio review, etc.) and increased selectivity to generate a cohort of entering students who are prepared to persist to graduation, and define the criteria on which more selective admissions decisions will be based.	Years 1 and 2	Clear specification of which programs will become more selective, and of how they will define selectivity, selection criteria, and processes for evaluating students.
	Revise admissions marketing for selective programs to emphasize new admissions criteria and requirements.	Year 2	Revised and targeted marketing and recruitment strategies.
	Offer financial support to programs that are phasing in increased selectivity.	Year 2 and ongoing	Holding programs financially harmless if there is institutional support for and agreement about increasing their selectivity.
	Apply for unit accreditation (NASAD and NAST, for example) where attainable and beneficial for recruitment.	Years 2-3	Will eventually result in unit accreditation for some programs where such accreditation is beneficial to recruitment.
	Optimize search, recruitment, and yield efforts to offset more selective admissions standards, especially in programs requiring audition or portfolio review.	Year 2	Improved search, recruitment, and yield strategies.
	Develop measures of success, e.g. filling selective programs to capacity by a target date, increasing retention in selective programs to 80-85%, and increasing 6-year graduation rates in selective programs to 65-70%.	Year 1, to be implemented in subsequent years.	Evidence of increased retention and graduation rates in selective programs.
Bring student recruitment and admissions practices into alignment with the academic mission of the college.	Assign a recruiting professional from the Admissions Office to each academic area.	Year 1	Improved communication between academic departments and Admissions Office.
	Form a working group of Admissions staff and selected faculty members, and charge this group to develop specific evidence-based strategies to meet recruitment goals by major program.	Year 1 and ongoing	Specific recruitment strategies on a major-by-major basis.
	Provide academic departments with specific information and analysis needed to make important recruiting contacts with both individuals and institutions on an ongoing basis.	Year 1 and ongoing	Improved departmental information for recruiting to major areas of study.
	Define the faculty's role in recruitment by determining where faculty involvement is most essential; hold schools, departments, and faculty accountable for involvement in the recruiting process; create incentives that reward faculty success in recruiting students who persist to graduation.	Year 1	Incentives, clear expectations, and accountability for faculty involvement in new student recruiting established.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Improve college marketing and brand management to clearly differentiate Columbia College Chicago from its peers.	Hire a Vice President for Strategic Marketing and Communications.	Underway	Expert leadership in marketing and communication hired.
	Assess existing marketing and communications messages and delivery channels.	Year 1	Thorough review of all current marketing and communication strategies, practices, and messages.
	Produce an integrated marketing communication campaign targeted at different segments of the prospective student market, with messages that seek to attract students who are the best possible fit for success at Columbia College Chicago.	Year 1	Effective student recruitment campaigns.
	Align all marketing and communication strategies and tactics with the institutional brand.	Year 1 and ongoing	Clear and coherent strategies and tactics rooted in a universal message about the Columbia brand.
	Optimize schedule of communications and marketing campaigns to prospective students.	Year 1	Alignment of campaigns with recruiting season.
Rebuild and grow transfer student enrollment.	Assess infrastructure (staff, technology, policy, and processes) that currently supports academic partnerships and articulation agreements with two-year institutions, and develop additional infrastructure to facilitate an increase in those partnerships.	Year 1	Transfer student recruitment infrastructure assessed and strengthened.
	Improve Admissions Office's responsiveness to transfer student inquiries, applications, and submission of transcript evaluation materials.	Year 1	Admissions Office processes all steps in the transfer application process more expeditiously.
	Partner with selected two-year colleges to develop smooth pathways for transfer students to matriculate to the college.	Years 1 through 5	Transfer student enrollment meets ambitious growth targets by Year 5.
Develop robust continuing education programs.	Conduct market research to determine which programs could facilitate continuing education and are also marketable to prospective students.	Year 1	Identification, based on research findings, of continuing education programs to be developed and marketed.
	Assess infrastructure and support services needs of continuing education students, such as increased building hours of operation and stronger online learning platforms.	Years 1 and 2	Clear sense of infrastructure and support needs for continuing education students.
	Launch continuing education programs and associated student support functions.	Year 2 and ongoing	New continuing education programs with adequate facilities, technology platforms, and student services support.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Develop at least four new on-campus and/or online professional master's degree programs in innovative fields of study with enrollment growth potential.	Create a School of Graduate Studies and hire its dean.	Year 1	Graduate school established and Dean of Graduate Studies hired.
	Centralize and coordinate all graduate studies staff.	Year 1	Increased organization and efficiency.
	Contract with a third-party vendor to assist with marketing, recruitment, admission, and retention of graduate students in online and low-residency hybrid professional master's programs.	Year 1	Contract signed with a third-party vendor.
	Faculty create at least three fully online professional master's programs with enrollment growth potential.	Years 2-5	At least three such programs established.
	Create graduate assistantships and other opportunities to make on-campus graduate programs attractive to students.	Year 1	Graduate assistantships and other recruitment strategies implemented.
Grow international student enrollment.	Hire a Vice Provost for Global Education whose portfolio includes the oversight of international student support services. (See Goal 2 for other duties.)	Year 1	New global education leadership hired.
	Centralize and coordinate all staff working in international programming. The new office will combine international student support and study-abroad functions. (See also Goal 2.)	Year 1	Centralized, streamlined, more efficient organization of staff and processes.
	Conduct market research to identify academic departments that are most attractive to and have the greatest capacity for enrolling international students.	Year 1	Identification, based on research findings, of departments that are the most attractive to international students.
	Assess infrastructure and support services needs of international students, such as expanded visa processing and English as a Second Language programs.	Years 1 and 2	Clear sense of infrastructure and support needs for international students.
	Implement infrastructure and support services programs to support international students.	Year 2 and ongoing	Improved support for international students.
	As part of a broader faculty development program, create professional development workshops and modules to help faculty understand the unique needs, challenges, and opportunities associated with educating international students.	Year 2 and ongoing	Improved support for faculty in their work with international students.
	Begin a coordinated marketing communication and recruitment program focused on international students.	Year 2 and ongoing	Active, intentional recruitment of international students.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
	Continue to build international partnerships, such as 2+2 and 3+2 programs.	Year 1 and ongoing	Robust, strategic, and active international partnerships.
	Consider the creation of a satellite campus in an international location.	Year 3	Assessment of the feasibility and affordability of a satellite campus completed.

Photo: Jacob Boll

GOAL 6
Aligning Resources with Goals

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A Strategic Action Plan for Columbia College Chicago, 2015-2020

Columbia
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Goal 6: Aligning Resources with Goals

Columbia College Chicago cannot fulfill its educational purpose or achieve the aspirations outlined elsewhere in this plan without investing in its people, programs, and infrastructure, or without funding excellence, innovation, and initiatives that advance core institutional values. At the same time, we have an obligation to spend students' tuition dollars and donors' funds wisely and well. While celebrating the college's distinctive mission as an educational institution, we must acknowledge that it is also a business enterprise. As such, in order to flourish, it must be well run and well managed, generating sustainable revenue streams and exercising close control over its costs.   Implementing an ambitious program to identify operational efficiencies, contain costs, strengthen central management systems, invest in institutional priorities, build fundraising capacity, and develop other new revenue sources can help to ensure that this is the case at Columbia.

Over the next five years, we will take the following measures to grow, and to exercise responsible stewardship of our resource base:

1. We will develop more sophisticated budgeting, planning, and budget modeling systems that support long-term strategic thinking and informed decision-making.
2. We will implement a timely, transparent annual budgeting process that aligns resource allocation to current institutional priorities, improves the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative systems, and creates incentives for responsible budgetary management down to the departmental level.
3. We will upgrade the college's technology infrastructure to support effective management, information sharing, and operations.
4. We will continue to attract, hire, and retain the most qualified and capable faculty and staff, and will expand our investment in their professional development.
5. We will create a new campus master plan that sets out a long-term vision for the use and development of the campus, and devise a multi-year schedule and funding program for facilities maintenance, upgrades, renovations, and new construction.
6. We will invest in the college's development team, building an effective major gifts operation that successfully cultivates existing philanthropic relationships while expeditiously building new ones and preparing the college for its next major campaign.
7. We will deepen and broaden our engagement with Columbia's alumni, cultivating them as mentors and role models for our students; as connectors to industry, internships, and other professional opportunities for our students; and as sources of financial support for the college.

Goal 6: Aligning Resources with Goals

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Create new budget model.	Task force formed in Spring 2015 to develop a transparent, rational budget model that ties budget priorities to the college's mission and strategic plan and provides incentives for sound budget management at the administrative and organizational unit level (e.g., departments, offices, service units, centers). The task force will develop Columbia's Responsibility Center Management (RCM) budget model.	Underway	Columbia's RCM budget model developed; greater transparency and accountability in use of resources; incentives for strategic revenue generation and cost containment; alignment of initiative and accountability.
Broaden responsibility for financial outcomes by implementing budgetary responsibility centers that focus financial responsibility for each operating unit.	Each academic and administrative unit implements the new RCM budget model.	Year 1-2	Budgeting initiative and accountability extends to the unit level.
Develop strong multiyear and long-term financial planning tools and models.	Develop financial planning tools and models for capital, facilities, and deferred maintenance (see below); information technology (see below); work force and personnel; enrollment management (see Goal 5); and long-range financial planning.	Years 1-2	Planning tools and models developed.
Use budget model to reward interdisciplinary activities in curriculum development.	Academic Affairs and the Office of Budget, Planning, and Analysis develop a credit- and revenue-sharing model between operating units.	Year 1	Credit- and revenue-sharing model implemented that facilitates interdepartmental activity.
Develop an accountability structure to improve financial responsibility.	CFO and Provost develop means to measure and reward service levels of support units.	Year 1	Service metric developed.
	CFO and Provost develop an incentive structure to encourage good unit budget management, e.g., savings sharing added to compensation pool or carryover percentage for programs.	Years 2-3	Incentive structure established.
	CFO and Provost develop a review and accountability structure to ensure unit budgetary responsibility.	Years 2-3	Accountability structure established.
Identify efficiencies in academic program delivery without compromising academic quality.	Evaluate historically low-enrollment courses to identify and implement greater efficiencies.	Year 1	Academic program delivery efficiencies implemented without compromising program quality.
Re-engineer business practices across the college to streamline processes, make them more efficient, and improve service.	Consolidate core business functions; create service centers to reduce full-time equivalency (FTE) and overhead costs; eliminate unnecessary reviews and approval; outsource services where financially advantageous.	Years 2-3	Core business functions consolidated.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
Generate new and diverse revenue streams.	Grow enrollment in strategically selected undergraduate and graduate programs – for example, online, certificates, executive education. (See Goal 5 for more detail.)	Years 2-3	Growth in student-based revenues.
	As part of its broader campus and facilities use planning work (see below), Campus Environment develops strategies to generate auxiliary revenues from existing real estate and space.	Year 2	New auxiliary revenue stream from real estate.
Invest in capital infrastructure to strengthen college community, educational value, and brand.	Conduct real estate assessment to evaluate assets and determine highest and best use to support campus plan vision.	Underway	Real estate assessment completed.
	Create a new campus master plan that sets out a long-term vision for the use and development of the campus.	Year 1	Campus master plan created.
	Based on the campus master plan, Campus Environment develops a multi-year project list, schedule, and funding program for facilities maintenance, upgrades, renovations, and new construction.	Year 2	A five-year facilities and capital plan implemented.
	Campus Environment works with units to allocate office and class space to support college priorities.	Year 2	Campus space utilized strategically.
Implement facility utilization efficiencies without compromising operational effectiveness.	Develop facility utilization/capacity standards to leverage facilities and reduce program and service delivery footprint.	Years 2-3	Best practice metrics for facility utilization established and applied to facilities use decisions.
Create a fully functional, secure, stable, value-added information technology infrastructure that supports the changing needs of faculty, staff, and students.	Hire new Chief Information Officer.	Underway	New CIO hired.
	IT develops a technology master plan that centralizes responsibility for technology infrastructure, establishes service-level standards, and enshrines accountability.	Year 1	IT master plan developed.
	Create data warehouse for secure and validated data with sufficient and secure data tagging, storage, and retrieval.	Year 1	Secure data warehouse created.
	Develop a smooth and effective Student Information System that is fully integrated with all enrollment management systems.	Year 3	New Student Information System implemented.
	Coordinate efficient and effective use of enterprise systems.	Years 1-3	Efficient and effective use of enterprise systems.
	Develop the IT infrastructure to support online education. (See Goals 2 and 5.)	Years 1-3	Online education infrastructure created.
	Develop smooth and effective Faculty and Staff Information System.	Years 1-3	Faculty and Staff Information System implemented.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION ITEM	TIME FRAME	DELIVERABLE
	Develop reliable and uniform network services.	Years 1-3	Reliable and uniform network services developed.
	Develop uniform standards for purchasing, equipping, maintaining, and replacing classroom instructional technology.	Years 1-3	Instructional technology standards.
	Reduce system duplication across campus.	Years 1-2	System duplication reduced.
Devote financial resources to promote, attract, and retain capable employees.	Conduct a full review of faculty and staff salaries and salary structures and develop a clear, performance-based incentive structure – for example, merit increases, tenure and promotion increases.	Years 1-2	Review is completed and a 3-to-5-year plan to implement a new compensation incentive structure is in place.
	Create 2-to-5-year strategic administrative hiring plans across the college.	Years 1-2	Administrative hiring plans established and implemented.
	Human Resources provides ongoing, substantive professional development opportunities for staff and administrators.	Year 2	Professional development opportunities for staff and administrators.
	CFO and Provost create 3-to-5-year strategic academic hiring plans.	Year 1	Academic hiring plans created.
Strengthen the college's development program, fundraising capacity, and engagement with its alumni.	Development/Alumni Relations Office develops five-year fundraising and relationship-building plan.	Year 1	Five-year plan developed.
	Development/Alumni Relations Office assesses and, as needed, upgrades existing technology and other support infrastructure for fundraising and relationship-building efforts.	Year 1	Technology/support infrastructure assessed and upgraded.
	Based on the development plan, Development/Alumni Relations units develop five-year operating plans with ambitious, achievable goals and metrics.	Year 1	Unit plans, goals, and metrics developed.
	Development/Alumni Relations implements the development plan and associated unit plans, continuously assesses results, and refines strategies and tactics to achieve goals.	Year 1-5	Plans implemented, goals achieved.
	Development/Alumni Relations implements a training and education program to help faculty and academic administrators understand their necessary role in development work.	Year 1-5	Faculty and academic administrators develop skills to help them identify, support, and facilitate the success of development initiatives.

Implementing the Plan

Achieving our Greatness is intended to be a strategic action plan, one that guides our major decisions and actions and shapes our assessment of emerging opportunities over the next five years. The Columbia community invested significant collective effort in the planning process; now that the Board of Trustees has approved the plan, the truly challenging work of implementation can begin. To support that work, we will move quickly to ensure that our collective commitment to the plan is enshrined in operational planning and assessment:

» The Provost will work with the leadership of every administrative unit of the college – division, school, department, center, etc. – to develop implementation plans, with timetables, that assign strategic goals and objectives to specific units and establish metrics for measuring progress and success. Those plans, timetables, and metrics will serve as a basis for evaluations of individuals in administrative leadership positions.

» The Provost will appoint and lead a new Strategic Plan Implementation Committee that will meet quarterly to review plan progress. The committee will issue annual progress reports to the college community for the duration of the plan. It will also receive and review proposals for modifying the plan.

» The Board of Trustees will review, on a regular basis, a strategic dashboard of performance indicators drawn from the plan in order to monitor the college's progress in achieving its goals. The President's evaluation will be based in part on the Board's assessment of that progress.

As we enter the implementation phase, the following guiding principles will inform our common work:

» *Accountability.* We will assign clear responsibility for implementing the various parts of the plan and hold ourselves accountable for achieving stated goals.

» *Assessment.* We will both measure and interrogate success as we proceed. It is not enough for us to assess our progress towards stated goals. We will continuously ask ourselves whether the achievement of those goals is truly making us a better, stronger institution that serves our students more effectively.

» *Integration.* The six areas of the strategic plan are neither distinct nor discrete. Several action items are common to more than one area, and progress in one area will inevitably generate new pressures for change in another. If we are to be successful, we will have to collaborate across departments and domains for the benefit of the college as a whole.

» *Continuous planning.* Much of the implementation timetable focuses on the first three years of the plan. In many instances, that is the time frame in which the necessary work will begin; clearly, several of the stated action items will require our collective effort and attention beyond that point. Still, by year 4 (2018-19), we also will be moving to assess the results of the first three years, to adjust our priorities to reflect what we have learned, and to analyze new developments and trends that have emerged out of our endeavors. That iterative work will form the basis of the next strategic planning cycle and will be incorporated into the self-assessment that the college submits to the Higher Learning Commission as part of its upcoming accreditation review, which is also set for 2018-19.

» *Attention to resources.* A plan that is as ambitious as this one will require more than hard work and thoughtful policy and program development. Success will also require us to identify and obtain significant new resources to address the underinvestment that lies at the heart of so many of Columbia's current challenges. Equally importantly, it will require us to commit to the hard work of reallocating and realigning resources to achieve our institutional goals.

» *Courage.* The history of Columbia College Chicago is marked by instances in which the institution embraced significant change in response to new opportunities. This plan reflects our conviction that we are once again at a moment in our history when we must summon up our collective courage to embrace change. As we progress, we will rally our community around difficult decisions when it is clear that a better future for the college is at stake.

A final note: *Achieving our Greatness* is a roadmap to our future, not a set of prescriptive steps. We will revisit the plan regularly and will not hesitate to adapt it in response to changing circumstances at the college or in the wider higher education landscape. In the spirit of the process by which it was created, any conversations about revising the plan will be campus-wide so that we are always moving forward with a shared sense of mission, values, purpose, and goals.