

STRATEGIC PLANNING MEMO #1: LOOKING FORWARD

November 6, 2017

Dear Otis College Community,

The 2015-19 [Working Strategic Plan](#) was approved by the Board of Trustees in 2014. At that time, it had become known that the then President would soon relocate out of state, and an interim Presidency and a search for a new President would soon follow. The Board, interim President, and College leadership wanted to make room for the new President to review the Working Strategic Plan and revise, as needed.

Since my arrival in May 2015, the Working Strategic Plan has served the College well, and now, after three years, most of its objectives have either been met or are making good progress toward completion. I, along with the Provost and the senior leadership team, have monitored the plan's progress to-date and framed a process and timeline for a new strategic plan to guide the college from 2019 - 2023.

This process will build upon the considerable input gathering, needs assessment, and synthesis that was undertaken with your help in 2013-14, and that had led to the Working Strategic Plan, which will be augmented going forward by additional community engagement on the following timeline:

- Summer '17: Develop a comprehensive [Progress Summary](#) for the Working Strategic Plan and note any objectives or strategies that remain priorities to carry forward and any potential new ones to propose
- Fall '17 Form a Strategic Planning Taskforce to guide and inform the process, going forward; message the campus community about the process and timeline for the new Plan
- Spring '18 Present a new Proposed Five-Year Strategic Plan outline for input from the college community to be disseminated widely and shared directly via Academic Assembly, a Town Hall, and a Board of Trustees meeting followed by input gathering through FormStack and thoughtful revision after synthesis of all responses
- Summer '18 The revised plan to be presented to the college community and Board of Trustees for approval.

The 2019 - 23 Strategic Plan will be deeply guided by the input and community feedback processes of the former plan, as well as by new input.

A review of the Working Strategic Plan's [Progress Summary](#) shows that Otis College has advanced well, with most of its five SMART (Simple, Manageable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely) Goals, 25 Objectives, and 92 Strategies having advanced to the *Accomplished* stage; 15 are in *Good Progress*; and only 2 remain *To Be Completed*. This is without precedent at the institution, and is an extraordinary indication of the full community involvement and commitment the Plan has enjoyed—from the faculty through the staff, administrators, and trustees.

In recognizing these accomplishments, and the benefit they represent to the organization, the campus, and the larger student experience, discussion next turns to the development of a new strategic planning process, to begin in January 2018. The new process, like that which culminated in the Working

Strategic Plan, will involve all campus stakeholders.

In preparation for using a more formal and participatory structure, the Senior Team has articulated four primary themes to propel the process, with the understanding that the Centennial of Otis College and numerous related events will serve to focus much strategic thinking and planning activity. The four primary themes include:

1. A review and revision of Otis College's mission statement to sustain a community with shared core values.
2. An expansion of volunteer leadership—Trustees, Governors, Fashion Council, Friends of the Gallery, the Group, Alumni, etc.
3. Ensuring diversity of visible and other minorities, particularly in the faculty ranks, to maintain relevance as a pedagogical institution
4. A significantly prioritized and intentional budget that allows the development of new, sustainable revenue streams to partially relieve tuition dependency. This would include an increased general endowment and specific endowments (focused on certain purposes); offerings, and new academic programs/initiatives to include accelerated degree programming for working adults, new majors and/or curricular areas of emphasis at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, and international presences of fitting programs.

As referenced in the timeline above, the planning process will be guided and informed by a Strategic Planning Taskforce, which includes:

- The President
- Senior Team
- Academic Assembly co-Chairs
- Faculty Senate Leaders
- Trustees 1, 2, and 3 (or more?)
- Student Voice Association Leaders
- Others as invited

More details about the Working Strategic Plan's conclusion and the new planning process will be outlined for the campus community in the months ahead. The Senior Team and I look forward to learning your input and leveraging it to successfully meet the future.

As a reminder, all materials pertaining to the College's Strategic Planning process can be viewed at <https://www.otis.edu/strategic-planning>.

Best regards,
Bruce W. Ferguson, President