



WILMINGTON COLLEGE  
**STRATEGIC PLAN**  
2020



Wilmington  
College

BOARD  
APPROVED  
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# STRATEGIC PLAN

## PROCESS AND FOUNDATIONS

In the life of any institution of higher education, the importance of strategic planning cannot be emphasized enough. It is through this process that the values and mission of an institution are codified and put into action.

Over the course of Wilmington College's history, there have been moments where concerted efforts by committed individuals have created the momentum for success. At the founding of the College, it was a small group of Friends that found the courage and had the vision to purchase a fledgling college and rename it "Wilmington College" and connect it with the Religious Society of Friends. President Benjamin Trueblood gave the Commencement Address to the first graduating class of the College in 1875 and he used the words that still guide our academic mission and values today: "Education is for use and not merely for display...". In the early 1900's, it was President Edwin Jay who spearheaded the purchase of Lebanon Normal University, creating the teacher education program on campus and doubling the enrollment. In the mid-1940's, it was President Sam Marble who urged members of the campus community to help build a dormitory to house the burgeoning student population as a result of the use of the G.I. Bill. Later, in the 1950's, a work program with partnership from the Randall Corporation provided the means for students who weren't financially able to attend college without the accumulation of debt to attend and graduate from Wilmington College. All of these moments are a testament to the strength and self-reliance of the Wilmington College community. Each time the College has been placed in a position where there is a need for action, we have responded.

The Wilmington College Strategic Plan 2020 serves as an essential guide for the College community, providing the critical areas where achievement requires collaboration across the campus and broader region. The purpose of this strategic plan is to provide a blueprint for forward momentum and continual programmatic and institutional improvement. The general goals and objectives contained in this set of strategies are designed to direct and to prioritize institutional decision-making regarding the allocation of human and financial resources. This plan has been crafted as a result of a collaborative process that invited all community members both internal and external to offer input into the college's priorities and direction for the next four years leading up to our 150th Anniversary. The strategies listed on the subsequent pages of this document are a culmination of the discussions that have taken place over the last 18 months with the various constituency groups that have a prominent stake in the success of Wilmington College. Over the course of many hours, meeting face-to-face with 17 different focus groups, allowing for comments to be made anonymously through a strategic planning website, and the work of seven subcommittees, the Strategic Planning Steering Group has come to consensus around these strategies to focus our attention for the next four years.

While this plan is complete and current for this moment in time, it is not meant to limit the creative forces present on our campuses. It is inevitable that over the course of the next five years, the landscape of higher education will change. These changes will likely require a re-evaluation of the strategies and goals contained in this current iteration. However, this plan causes our campus community to reflect on how best we can work in partnership to create the best Wilmington College that is possible. The Strategic Plan is a blueprint for enriching, enhancing and sustaining excellence at Wilmington. It sets forth critical goals and steps necessary to accomplish those goals; the basic focus of the plan, like all our decisions at Wilmington College begins by asking: ***how will this contribute to our students' success?*** We ask this question in the context of the College's core values: Integrity, Community, Diversity, Excellence, Peace and Social Justice, Respect for All Persons, Service and Civic Engagement. And we ask it in reference to the College's Educational Program Goals:

- Independence and Interdependence of Thought;
- Improvement of Communication and Critical Thinking Skills
- Breadth of Knowledge
- Global Awareness
- Depth of Knowledge
- Respect for Self and Others

## WILMINGTON COLLEGE VISION

Wilmington College intends to make significant progress in the next decade toward being a model college that melds the liberal arts and career preparation in order to graduate liberally educated professionals. To move towards this vision, Wilmington will:

- integrate career preparation with the traditions and foundational skills of the liberal arts;
- challenge students to live the Quaker testimonies as practiced at Wilmington College of integrity, service, peace and social justice, stewardship and respect for all persons and to practice them in their communities and workplaces;
- promote every student's participation in hands-on experiences including internships, community service and international study programs;
- create a caring campus community that embraces civility, respect and trust; and
- demonstrate a commitment to this vision by placing the needs of students at the center of decision-making.

## WILMINGTON COLLEGE MISSION

The mission of Wilmington College is to educate, inspire and prepare each student for a life of service and success.

To fulfill our mission, Wilmington College provides a high quality undergraduate and graduate educational environment shaped by the traditions of the liberal arts, career preparation and the distinctive practices of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). By offering academic programs, practical experience and co-curricular activities in a variety of settings to students from diverse backgrounds, the College leads students to gain an awareness of the world, to acquire knowledge of career and vocation and to seek truth and social justice.

In keeping with the rich heritage of the liberal arts, the College seeks to educate the whole person – intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual – in ways that foster critical thinking, reflection, the free exchange of ideas, open inquiry, respect for all persons and a desire for lifelong learning. The liberal arts are integrated with career preparation to help students develop the knowledge and skills to succeed in a career or further education.

As an academic community, Wilmington College is rooted in historic Quaker values, also known as testimonies, which, as practiced on our campus, include integrity, service, stewardship, equality, peace and social justice and respect for all persons. These testimonies motivate those who learn and work at the College to make positive contributions to their professions and their communities.

## WILMINGTON COLLEGE CORE VALUES

The following core values are fundamental to the success of Wilmington College in realizing its mission and vision. These values are drawn from the College's founding faith, The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), from important traditions of American higher education, and from universally held beliefs that serve to guide the best in human thought and action.

***Integrity*** – This value has been described as the value from which all other values emanate and has importance in this ordered list of values. Integrity is defined by the College community as the fundamental requirement to be fair, honest and ethical in all dealings on campus and requires each of us to assume responsibility for our actions.

***Community*** – This value is defined on campus as the desire to create in partnership a learning and working environment that supports and encourages a shared sense of purpose about the importance and value of broad participation, active engagement, open sharing of information, shared responsibility for decision making, and a culture that emphasizes continuous improvement and growth.

***Diversity*** – This value is purposeful in guiding our willingness to recruit, retain and graduate a student body that reflects the global communities that the College serves and seeks to foster our understanding and appreciation of different people, cultures and ideas.

**Excellence** – This value requires the College to support and encourage a commitment to the highest standards in all areas of the College’s mission.

**Peace and Social Justice** – This value comes directly from our Quaker heritage and asks all members of the community to seek non-violent resolution of conflict and just treatment of the world’s resources, both human and physical.

**Respect for All Persons** – This value is fundamental to the development of a peaceful and just community that values the dignity and worth of all persons.

**Service and Civic Engagement** – This value seeks to foster all members of the campus community to serve others and to accept individual responsibility for being an engaged and effective citizen.

## STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### 1 Improve the Quality of the Educational and Co-Curricular Experience for Students

**Goal #1:** Improve overall retention on main campus, emphasizing first to second year retention

- Repurpose the Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees to focus on first year to second year retention
- Initiate the programs and structures described in the Title III grant that was awarded to the College and track the results
- Improve academic advising through careful program assessment and evaluation of faculty advisors
- Enhance student peer tutoring and supplemental instruction services for first and second year students
- Enhance systems and supports for working with at-risk students
- Create opportunities for intentional encounters by first year students with faculty/staff/alumni that support their transition to college
- Improve living and learning spaces dedicated to first-year students
- Enhance student life programming to ensure that students are engaged in non-academic activities designed to maximize a connection with the College

**Goal #2:** Cultivate student success and engagement as a way to improve educational quality

- Develop a comprehensive plan for Athletics designed to examine appropriate growth in the number of sports, optimal team/squad size, and improved competitiveness of each team
- Conduct a comprehensive review of our internship/cooperative learning programs to examine the quality and quantity of these experiences and make recommendations for their continued use
- Develop a comprehensive plan for growing the number of internship opportunities for Wilmington College students by 15 – 20%.
- Enhance career services support for students and improve the tracking of career placement data
- Determine how best to involve more students in service and service learning projects
- Conduct a comprehensive review of Greek Life on campus and provide recommendations about how best to improve the quality of membership in a Greek Letter society for both the individual student and the campus

**Goal #3:** Attract, retain and develop professional faculty and staff committed to student learning and educational quality

- Develop an Academic Master Staffing Plan for all academic programs with recommendations on optimal full-time faculty/student ratios and optimal faculty/staff numbers for coverage of the curriculum
- Enhance and expand opportunities for faculty and staff pedagogical, scholarly and professional development
- Enhance the formative means by which effective teaching and mentoring by faculty can be evaluated
- Establish systems for regular review of learning spaces and technology to ensure quality and currency
- Establish a Teaching and Learning Center to promote and cultivate effective teaching practices and assessment of student learning
- Reward faculty for teaching innovation, excellence and commitment
- Develop a plan to have at least one online degree program started at the Cincinnati Branch campuses
- Establish a working group with appropriate faculty and staff representation to explore the opportunity to develop online programs
- Create incentive programs that reward staff contributions to the learning environment through their connections with students outside of the classroom

## **2** Integrate Enrollment Management and Academic Programming to Maximize Enrollment and Retention

**Goal #1:** Expand and create programs that are consistent with our Mission and Values and will attract new students

- Identify academic programs of distinction, programs that are central to the mission of the College, and areas for growth opportunities through a comprehensive academic program review plan
- Create a comprehensive plan for developing new academic programs serving traditional, adult and graduate students, beginning with a five-year master's program in Athletic Training
- Develop a comprehensive enrollment management plan that intensifies the recruitment of students within Ohio and expands the recruitment of students regionally, nationally and internationally
- Increase the capacity of the Agriculture and Athletic Training programs
- Develop and implement a plan to increase faculty, staff and Trustee engagement with recruiting undergraduate and transfer students
- Create new Enrollment Management Committee for the Board of Trustees that focuses on recruitment

**Goal #2:** Expand our outreach to Community Colleges to increase the number of transfer students on campus

- Establish/reaffirm articulation agreements with Sinclair Community College, Southern State Community College, Clark State Community College, Edison State Community College, Chatfield College, and Cincinnati State and Technical Community College
- Create a transfer module such that any student who holds an A.A., A.S. or A.F.A. from an accredited community college will have substantially completed the Wilmington College general education requirements
- Enhance the number of specialized transfer student recruiters to maximize contact with potential transfer students
- Examine the tuition pricing structure at the Blue Ash campus and determine the market appropriate tuition for adult degree seekers in our primary market

### **Goal #3:** Examine other strategies to provide opportunities for enrollment growth

- Develop a comprehensive marketing plan that seeks to educate the public in our recruiting regions about the value added dimensions of a Wilmington College education
- Examine the College's comprehensive communications strategy and develop recommendations on how best to increase the visibility of the College in local, regional and national media
- Develop a comprehensive alumni engagement plan that seeks to support student recruitment, career mentoring and internship opportunities
- Develop an Institute for Rural Revitalization with an emphasis on "green" businesses/ technologies, local food production and rural leadership
- Examine the appropriate role for summer academic programs and determine the optimal use of academic programming for revenue generating purposes
- Create a Division of Continuing and Professional Studies that develops curricula and programs to attract those that need additional education credits for their careers

## **3 Create a Sustainable Advancement Model Focused on Current Operations and Long Term Asset Growth**

### **Goal #1:** Create a Sustainable Advancement Model Focused on Current Operations and Long Term Asset Growth

- Develop a comprehensive advancement plan that seeks to engage alumni and friends of the College in philanthropy that provides additional revenue to the operating budget of the College
- Examine the organizational structure of the Advancement Office and modify to maximize focus on fundraising
- Develop key performance indicators that allow for oversight and assessment of fundraising efforts by the Board and V.P. for Advancement
- Establish a top-quality staffing model that will provide adequate contact with alumni and friends of the College
- Develop a more robust planned giving program with an emphasis on scholarships and endowment growth
- Develop a more complete strategy for corporate and foundation fundraising and grant writing
- Develop a communication plan to inform all campus constituencies about current operations as well as to educate the campus about the process of advancement

## **4** Create and Implement a Sustainable Long-Term Business Model that Ensures the Financial Health of Wilmington College

**Goal #1:** Develop an annual budget with a 5% operating surplus

- Develop a performance-based budgeting model that allocates resources to achieve specific program objectives
- Benchmark minimally required goals for administrative units regarding expected productivity measures
- Create a plan for administrative cross-training to enhance operational efficiencies
- Examine opportunities for alternative revenues from conference services and other auxiliary services on campus
- Create a long-term plan to maximize net revenue from the Cincinnati programs

## **5** Review and Update the Physical and Procedural Infrastructure of the College to Ensure a More Integrated and Efficient Campus Community

**Goal #1:** Re-assess current infrastructure and develop up-to-date plans and policies for the College

- Update the Campus Master Facilities Plan and develop a comprehensive plan for renewal, upgrades and reconfigurations of existing buildings
- Create a Technology Task Force and develop a Campus Master Information Technology plan that determines future needs for staffing, wireless access to the Internet, additional classroom technology capabilities and needs for administrative software upgrades
- Create Departmental/Area Policy and Procedure manuals so current day practice in all areas of the College are documented and available for review
- Create a Sustainability Plan for all campuses which examines current resources and necessary additions for the future

# 6

## Develop, Implement and Support Appropriate Communications Systems that Enhance the Marketability and Visibility of the College

**Goal #1:** Create structures that re-inforce our brand identity

- Create an integrated marketing strategy for the College
- Review Brand Guidelines to ensure that they are functional and represent the best guidance for the constituent groups on campus

**Goal #2:** Create internal and external marketing systems to build identity and communicate purpose

- Establish intentional and effective systems of communication for faculty, staff and students to provide up-to-date information about the opportunities and services offered on campus
- Implement and sustain a campus master calendar of events and programs
- Share specific identity messaging about the College using social media
- Review and update the College's website on a regular basis



# Wilmington College

HANDS-ON LEARNING. HANDS-ON LIVING.