

Summit: A Strategic Plan for the Future of Trinity College

Set on Summit Street in the capital city of Hartford, Trinity College is where the liberal arts meet the real world. Since it opened its doors in 1823, founded in the Episcopal tradition and rooted in principles of religious and academic freedom, Trinity has remained steadfastly committed to providing a liberal arts education that is both relevant and timeless.

Today, as we look toward the College's bicentennial, we do so in the context of a world in which technology has led to innovations we couldn't have imagined a half-century ago; in which scholarship has advanced understanding of our history, ourselves, and our planet; and in which our lives on campus can connect to those around the globe in ways that are at once instantaneous and enduring.

At the same time, we contemplate our future and that of the College in a challenging moment. Higher education has a singular role to play in creating knowledge, promoting inquiry and freedom of expression, and developing citizens who think critically, embrace complexity, and engage across differences in building a free, just society.

Trinity College is distinctly positioned to advance these ideals and meet these considerable responsibilities, all the while attending to the stability and sustainability of this historic institution. The strategic goals we set forth here will serve as our roadmap in this all-important work. As we pursue our goals, we affirm our values as an institution of integrity and intellectual vitality and as a community that encourages innovation, builds resilience, promotes balance, and instills the joy of lifelong learning.

- As a small, residential liberal arts college in a state capital, we can provide a distinctive, rigorous educational experience that will equip students with the perspectives, knowledge, and skills to advance society. We have a responsibility to bring together students, faculty, and staff from different backgrounds and to challenge and empower them to be active campus community members and global citizens.
- As an engine of innovation and creativity in one of the most socioeconomically, culturally, and ethnically diverse cities in the country, we can meaningfully connect the classroom and the world. We have a responsibility to be a virtuous institutional citizen, to be a leading partner in advancing the Hartford region, and to demonstrate for our students the power of education to transform the world.
- As participants in a nearly 200-year old educational idea, we can create a built environment that fosters collaborative, interdisciplinary learning and realize opportunities to secure lasting financial strength. We have a responsibility to steward this College for future generations and to embrace environmental and financial sustainability as fundamental values.

It is our collective endeavor—our ability and our responsibility—to envision the Trinity we want to be and to pursue it unwaveringly. Together, we will honor the College's history as we ascend to an ambitious new summit in the years ahead.

Bold learners. Inclusive Community. Engaged Citizens.

As the preeminent liberal arts college in an urban setting, Trinity College prepares students to be bold, independent thinkers who lead transformative lives.

Goal #1: Design a distinctive, relevant liberal arts education that positions Trinity College as a first-choice destination for students, faculty, and staff

Objectives

1. Connect the curriculum more fully to the College's mission, including its valuing of guided self-reflection and experiential learning, articulating clearly what defines a Trinity liberal arts education

Strategic Initiatives

- A. Ensure that degree requirements emphasize subject matter expertise, skills, proficiencies, and experiential engagement outside the classroom
- B. Integrate opportunities for all students to reflect on their learning and passions, incorporating technology and innovative pedagogy
- C. Adopt new measurable college-wide learning goals that align with the College's mission and address academic, personal, and leadership development

2. Prepare students for success inside and outside the classroom in a dynamically changing world

Strategic Initiatives

- A. Strengthen first-year pre-orientation and orientation, other first-year programming, and the Bantam Network to lay the groundwork for academic success, intellectual risk taking, balance, and civic engagement
- B. Strengthen advising programs and campus initiatives that assist students in choosing a major and nurture community values and shared responsibility
- C. Strengthen career development and internship opportunities that leverage our location in a diverse, vibrant capital city and the state of Connecticut and our devoted network of Trinity alumni and parents, including by cultivating industry-specific networks

3. Attract and retain the highest caliber of students, faculty, and staff

Strategic Initiatives

- A. Build financial aid resources and use them strategically to attract and support a high quality and engaged student body that embraces a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives
- B. Ensure competitive salaries and benefits and enhance resources to support and recognize faculty in their scholarship, teaching, and professional development
- C. Ensure competitive salaries and benefits for staff and opportunities for their enrichment and professional development
- D. Deploy communications efforts to convey more effectively the Trinity story to prospective students, faculty, and staff

4. Foster an inclusive campus community that embraces diversity and complexity, engages across differences with integrity and empathy, and participates actively in the life and governance of the College

Strategic Initiatives

- A. Reduce financial barriers for all students to access the full Trinity educational experience
- B. Enhance resources to support an increasingly diverse community of students, faculty, and staff where all are welcome
- C. Develop learning opportunities, in collaboration with students, to advance cross-cultural understanding and bridge divides in the classroom, in student activities, athletics, and in residential communities
- D. Improve internal communications and strengthen governance structures to align with iterative institutional planning, increase collaborative engagement, and build trust among the Trinity community

Goal #2: Connect the Trinity College community to the Hartford region and the world beyond to empower individuals and transform the world

Objectives

1. Take advantage of our urban setting by providing enhanced support for and promotion of curricular and experiential engagement in the city of Hartford and the surrounding region

Strategic Initiatives

- A. Enhance research, course, internship, and co-curricular opportunities for learning in and around Hartford as a distinct feature of the College
- B. Reduce barriers (financial, transportation, and other) to connect classroom learning to experiential learning
- C. Develop Trinity's downtown campus at Constitution Plaza, in collaboration with local partners, as a hub for experiential liberal arts

2. Redefine and recommit to Trinity's role in advancing the Hartford region

Strategic Initiatives

- A. Articulate a vision for coordinated, enhanced community engagement and provide the resources and support for achieving it
- B. With surrounding neighborhood organizations and area institutions, advance or develop coordinated, sustained long-term partnerships that support urban solutions and local economic development
- C. Effectively convey the story of Trinity's relationship to Hartford with prospective students, alumni, local and regional public officials, and the national media

3. Educate students to become global citizens, on campus and abroad

Strategic Initiatives

- A. Reduce barriers (financial, curricular, and other) to study away and global engagement, providing all Trinity students with access to global experiences

- B. Ensure that study away programs align with the College’s mission and are sustainable, bolstering their integration with campus academic experiences
- C. Increase globally engaged faculty and promote global engagement in the curriculum, including emphasizing our distinctive transnational connections to Caribbean and Latin America communities abroad and in Hartford
- D. Leverage Trinity’s international alumni and parent network to increase student opportunities for academic and professional networking experiences abroad

Goal #3: Build on Trinity’s historic past to ensure a vibrant, sustainable future

Objectives

1. Renew Trinity’s historic campus and plan a physical environment that fosters community and learning both inside and outside of the classroom

Strategic Initiatives

- A. Establish a collaborative and transparent process for participation by the campus community in facilities and green-space planning and prioritization of new projects and deferred maintenance
- B. Develop facilities plans for academic and student life spaces that facilitate collaboration and interdisciplinary learning (including the chapel, residential facilities, and athletics spaces)
- C. Develop plans for College-owned properties on the edges of campus, continuing to partner with neighborhood associations and area institutions in enhancing the surrounding areas
- D. Strengthen and leverage digital and technological resources to enhance learning and support the work of staff in advancing the College’s mission
- E. Working with our partners, develop plans for the maintenance and improvement of our study-away sites

2. Steward Trinity’s resources to achieve long-term financial sustainability

Strategic Initiatives

- A. Build the endowment to support mission-related investments and to provide for the College’s financial strength in the future
- B. Strengthen existing and build new programs that generate revenue, serve Trinity and the region, enhance our core mission, and accommodate an evolving population of non-traditional students and life-long learners
- C. Aggressively and creatively pursue partnerships and efficiencies to make the best use of resources on campus and in the surrounding region
- D. Assess, continually and rigorously, opportunities for cost savings that do not compromise our core mission or values
- E. Enhance fundraising efforts broadly and plan and undertake a comprehensive fundraising campaign to support our vision

3. Embrace and promote urban environmental sustainability as a fundamental value of the College

Strategic Initiatives

- A. Develop achievable, ambitious goals for environmental sustainability in an urban setting; track and report on progress toward them
- B. Provide the infrastructure to support our environmental goals
- C. Work actively to uphold the goals articulated in the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment to develop a plan for achieving carbon neutrality, take action to significantly reduce greenhouse gases in the interim, and provide public access to and updates on our climate action plans
- D. Develop curricular and campus programming (e.g. internships and classes) to embed environmental sustainability into the academic and campus experience, engaging students, staff, and faculty intellectually in pursuit of these goals and fostering shared responsibility

A Path to the Summit

In the coming months, we will develop feasible implementation plans to make more specific and concrete our strategic initiatives and to achieve our goals and objectives. These plans and the tactics they set forth will require the collective commitment and creative energy of students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, neighbors, and friends. As we advance with a shared sense of purpose, we will engage the Trinity community in developing these plans, carrying them out, and assessing progress toward our goals in the years ahead.

This plan is a guide toward the future we imagine for Trinity College at its bicentennial in 2023. It is meant as a living document that will undoubtedly — and necessarily — evolve over time. We will seek to remain flexible to meet challenges that arise and seize opportunities that emerge, and we will do so by fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

In measuring the effectiveness of this plan, we will look toward the Bicentennial in 2023 and a set of broad indicators of success we hope to reach by then. Many more specific metrics of success will be included in detailed implementation plans that will grow from this strategic plan.

Our broad indicators of success will include:

- Higher yield of top students and consistent success in hiring first-choice faculty and staff
- Improved retention, graduation, and job/graduate school placement rates
- Improved campus climate (overall satisfaction of students, faculty, and staff; increased participation in the life and governance of the College)
- Increased engagement of alumni, parents, and friends (including giving participation, overall fundraising, and participation in volunteer and leadership activities)
- Coordinated plan for community engagement and enhanced reputation for our role in advancing and connecting with the Hartford region
- Reduction in our impact on the environment; leadership in promoting urban sustainability
- Financial equilibrium (including balanced budgets, a strengthening of financial aid resources, and significant growth in Trinity's endowment)

A note about college rankings: While we don't believe that any ordinal ranking of colleges can adequately paint a comprehensive comparative picture of institutions, we understand the importance of rankings to many prospective and current members of our community. We hope and expect to climb in college rankings in the years to come. But we do not articulate that as a goal in and of itself here; rather, we choose to focus on those indicators that we value, many of which are, in turn, valued by those whose job is to rank colleges.

As we plan for the future, we acknowledge and honor our rich past and build on the important work of those who came before us. In 1893, 70 years after the founding of the College, Bernard Christian Steiner asserted in his book *The History of Education in Connecticut*, "a prosperous future seems destined for Trinity College." A half-century ago, in a societal context that was at least as tumultuous as today's, the College embarked on its first sustained effort at continuous, long-range planning, with committees that considered whom the College should educate; to what purpose the

College should educate; and the College's relationship to its environment—local, national, and international.

Today, in a world of new challenges and opportunities, our ambitions for the future of Trinity College are grounded in the same fundamental questions about the College's greater purpose and its relevance in the world. At the core of our endeavor is our belief in the distinctive power of a twenty-first century liberal arts education, one that prepares students to be bold, independent thinkers who lead transformative lives.