

HWS|2015



HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH COLLEGES



**WORLDS OF EXPERIENCE.
LIVES OF CONSEQUENCE.**



“

Hobart and William Smith Colleges are a student-centered learning environment, globally focused, grounded in the values of equity and service, developing citizens who will lead in the 21st century.”

—*Hobart and William Smith Colleges Mission Statement*





INTRODUCTION

A great deal of the Colleges' success in the past decade can be attributed to two strategic plans, each one emerging from community-wide engagement around issues of critical importance to the Colleges. With an inclusive planning process in which faculty, staff, students and trustees reflect on our strengths and weaknesses, these strategic plans chart the next level of excellence at HWS.

HWS 2005, the Colleges' first comprehensive strategic plan, identified a number of initiatives that would benefit the Colleges and the Geneva community. The recommendations were numerous, affecting academic engagement, student life and physical and financial resources. The outcomes were equally broad and included everything from the establishment of The Finger Lakes Institute to the creation of the Colleges' mission statement.

HWS 2010, which evolved into Campaign for the Colleges, proposed the growth of the student body to 2,000 students while maintaining our 11:1 student to faculty ratio, the completion of new and renovated capital projects, an increased endowment, and sustained annual giving. The growth of the student body was achieved one year in advance of the five-year goal, and the growth in new faculty achieved two years in advance. Despite the effects of the recession, the Colleges are close to achieving all of the objectives outlined in Campaign for the Colleges. We are currently making progress in fundraising on the campaign's final capital project – academic space for the performing arts.

In preparation for our next strategic plan, in December of 2009, the HWS community gathered once again to conduct a year-long process to formulate the next set of ideas that will propel our work – HWS 2015.

On the following pages are the key recommendations of HWS 2015 broken down into three areas: Liberal Arts in the 21st Century, Community and Inclusive Excellence.





LIBERAL ARTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

At the heart of our institution is the education of men and women in the liberal arts tradition. Through the transference of knowledge and the skills necessary to obtain and create knowledge, we are educating students to become active and engaged members of society who will go on to lead lives of consequence. How we do that – the curriculum we employ, the faculty members we entrust, the courses we offer, the co-curricular opportunities we create – are all decisions that make up the very heart of the Colleges. Nothing could be more critical to our mission than the ongoing evaluation and enhancement of the Hobart and William Smith education.

Key Recommendations

1. The nature, pace and structure of life and learning both inside and outside the classroom are all changing rapidly; in many ways formal education today is characterized by greater fluidity and integration with other aspects of life. We believe that a liberal arts education is the best preparation for an uncertain future; however, we also recognize that students benefit from connecting their liberal arts education with other components of their HWS experiences in ways that make all of the pieces relevant for learning and for post-graduation life. As a key component of HWS 2015, we will complete a faculty-driven **general education curriculum review** that is evidence-based and that considers ways in which we can promote diversity, inclusivity, integration and coherence of student-learning experiences.
2. In conjunction with this curriculum review, we intend to **improve, enhance and extend advising** so that it connects to the broader context of student outcomes. Our most successful students are ones whose development is guided by faculty mentors who help them navigate an array of individual itineraries. Advising is strongest when a faculty member and a student work together to create a roadmap that leads the student to find his or her intellectual passion and then translate that passion into a career or further





education in graduate school. Our goal in improving the advising process is to find ways to foster these relationships between faculty and students and to more clearly define some of the possible roadmaps given the array of our majors and minors, our interdisciplinary orientation, and the now very rich and ever-expanding opportunities for internships, research and scholarship.

3. In considering the liberal arts in the 21st century, we must contemplate **recruitment and retention as a balance**, with each side affecting the other. We must determine which actions are necessary to enroll students whose intellectual passion, character and potential will persist and thrive at Hobart and William Smith. This does not place the responsibility of retention in enrollment, but rather spreads the responsibilities for both recruitment and retention across the institution, to be jointly owned by all faculty, staff and students. Faculty and staff must create and sustain the intellectual environment that will attract prospective students and then, once they are enrolled, work deliberately to engage and retain these students. Enrollment must closely match the actual experience of the Colleges to its recruitment communications on the web, in print, via social networking and ultimately in the face-to-face interactions that consistently convert prospects to students.
4. As part of this work, the Colleges seek to expand the base of its applicant pool to more broadly encompass transfer students, creating **reciprocal partnerships** with some of the most prestigious community colleges in the country.
5. Whether considering traditional or transfer students, we must resist the notion that recruitment only happens before students arrive on campus for the first time. Instead, we must **re-recruit our students** every year, in every class, and in every interaction they have with the Colleges. This is a wholly more complicated endeavor, one that is sophisticated in its ideology yet individual in its execution.



Complete a curriculum review
Enhance advising
Improve recruitment and retention
Create reciprocal partnerships with community colleges
Re-recruit our students
Extend the student experience beyond the BA/BS
Revisit campus master plan
Create a plan for residential spaces
Complete performing arts project
Improve accessibility, sustainability and flexibility

6. We will explore program offerings including the creation of distinctive master’s degree and certificate programs that will enhance and extend the student experience **beyond the BA/BS**. These may include degrees or certificates in the health professions, architecture, environmental science, environmental sustainability, technology and community engagement.

7. In 2000, the Colleges completed a comprehensive master planning process that incorporated a space needs analysis for academic and administrative functions. By identifying deficiencies and outlining opportunities, the master plan, along with strategic plans HWS 2005 and HWS 2010, allowed the Colleges to make significant changes to campus in a relatively short amount of time. These have included adding or substantially renovating academic, campus center, residential and athletic facilities as well as improving access to the lake. As part of HWS 2015, we intend to revisit the **campus master plan** in an effort to identify the next set of capital priorities.

8. When, how and what students learn is often dependent on their residence hall life experience. We envision an environment where the lines between curricular and co-curricular activities integrate and merge. We must have facilities, and in particular residence options, that foster this kind of comprehensive learning. To date, students live in 50 different structures on campus in everything from multi-floor, traditional residence halls to converted homes that serve as theme houses. It is therefore important that our campus master plan include a **comprehensive plan for residential spaces**. We intend to find ways to create a strong sense of community within residence life, building on the theme house character that has been a part of HWS history for decades.





9. We will complete fundraising to construct **academic space for the performing arts**. The first of its kind at Hobart and William Smith, this structure will create a dynamic theatre, dance and music complex that will foster greater collaboration between departments, faculty and students. The new performing arts space will serve as a competitive advantage as we seek to attract a higher caliber of students and a new generation of scholars. Standing across from the Scandling Campus Center and next to the Quad and Medbery Hall, the new performing arts center will be a geographic intersection of culture and creativity for the HWS and Geneva communities. Engaging sensibilities and stretching imaginations, the performing arts facility will offer our students, faculty, staff, visitors and community members - both as performers and spectators - a living laboratory for active learning.

10. One of the Colleges' greatest assets is its natural and built environment. Maintaining and improving that environment's **accessibility, sustainability and flexibility** is critical to HWS 2015. Our current Facility Capital Renewal program budget is less than recommended or necessary so HWS 2015 seeks to increase and stabilize that budget. Capital projects, whether for new construction or renovation, must follow HWS sustainability practices, giving appropriate attention to Americans with Disabilities Act requirements and best practices. They must also be energy efficient and funded to ensure appropriate maintenance. Likewise, technology, including pervasive wireless capabilities and one-card access to services and facilities, is essential as students, faculty and staff extend the boundaries of teaching and learning. By eliminating barriers to the physical campus, increasing resources to better provide for nontraditional learning needs, meeting the requirements of the Colleges Climate Action Plan, and building and maintaining the campus with an eye toward flexibility, we can continue to lay a solid capital and technology foundation for future generations of the HWS community.



COMMUNITY

We often tell prospective students that at Hobart and William Smith, they will be known. Students are known by their professors and deans, by their classmates and coaches, by the Colleges' staff and the residents of Geneva. They are known for their accomplishments in the classroom and on the playing field. They are known for their community engagement, entrepreneurial spirit and passion for new ideas and experiences. They are known for the joy they take in intellectual discovery and for their commitment to thoughtful and open inquiry. But no matter how well-known they may become in their professions or how far they may travel to pursue lives of consequence, they are connected by lifelong membership in the HWS community.

It is our community that remains one of our most enduring and powerful strengths. Consequently, HWS 2015 elevates the concept of community by committing to community engagement as a tangible, measurable goal.

Key Recommendations

1. As part of HWS 2015, we recommend a deeper relationship with the City of Geneva so that we can improve life for all who live, work and study in the region. We intend to **expand the Geneva Partnership** by implementing a wide range of mutually beneficial initiatives with substantive results for students and community. With so many models of citizenship in Geneva for our students to learn from – men and women who care deeply about this community and who work to make it better – our students will learn the role they play in sustaining and improving their own communities.
2. As part of the expansion of the Geneva Partnership, we will explore the creation of curricular opportunities related to community as well as the **establishment of a Certificate of Engagement**. In this work, we will prioritize initiatives that put the HWS campus into use beyond the traditional academic calendar, that make the campus a resource for the community, and that create overlapping enrichment for faculty, staff, students and community members.



Expand the Geneva Partnership

Establish Certificate of Engagement

Develop a nationwide Regional Structure

Create deeper engagement with recent graduates

Grow high performing, highly engaged workforce

Explore all avenues of cost control and revenue enhancement

3. When students graduate from Hobart and William Smith, they join a vast network of nearly 20,000 alumni and alumnae scattered across the world and living in nearly every country on the planet. Pockets of density in urban areas like New York City, Boston, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, San Francisco and Chicago, offer opportunities for us to translate the sense of community that students feel on campus to post-graduation life. As part of HWS 2015, we intend to **develop a nationwide Regional Structure** for engaging alums, parents and prospective students. HWS staff and high level volunteers in nine regions will manage activity and communication to broaden our reach across the continent. In doing so, we hope to deepen the sense of affiliation that alumni and alumnae have with their alma mater, consolidate the management of volunteers allowing for more efficient support of their work, and establish a wider, more consistent HWS presence throughout the country.
4. Approximately 24% of all HWS alums are graduates of the last decade. Creating a **deeper engagement with recent graduates** is necessary for the longtime health and vitality of the Colleges. As part of HWS 2015, we will re-envision an alumni and alumnae relations program that fosters stronger ties with the Colleges through new forms of communication, services, benefits, events and volunteer opportunities.





5. During the past 10 – 15 years, research in the field of organizational productivity and sustainability has focused on the concept of employee engagement. This term is often defined as people who possess a purpose and a passion for their work and employer. They are emotionally invested in their jobs, believe their work is meaningful and recognized, commit to continually improving their skills, are willing to advocate for the organization, and trust their employer. As part of HWS 2015, we will implement programs and processes that heighten motivation and engagement. With a focus on professional development, we will support and grow a **high performing, highly engaged workforce**.

6. Of priority to HWS 2015 will be investigating and implementing procedures and policies that give the admissions and financial aid offices greater flexibility to enroll those students best equipped to add academic and social value to the fabric of the HWS community, regardless of their demonstrated financial aid. We will therefore **explore all avenues of cost control and revenue enhancement** so that the campus can function as both a source of revenue and a resource for the community. This includes the implementation of night programs, summer programs, lifelong learner programs, continuing education, and online courses.

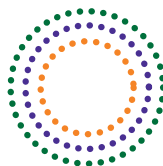


INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

Threaded throughout initiatives related to ‘Liberal Arts in the 21st Century’ and ‘Community’ is an unwavering commitment to inclusive excellence. By 2015, it will be evident that inclusive excellence is a core value of the institution. We envision a community that goes beyond tolerance of difference to become one of inclusive excellence – one that is guided by the principles of equity, social justice, cultural competence and engaged citizenship.

Inclusive excellence includes all features, ideas, processes and challenges connected to diversity or individual differences. A policy of inclusive excellence pushes the discussion, advocacy and call to action to include far-reaching institutional change that infuses every aspect and sector of the Colleges. Inclusivity is essential to achieving the standards of excellence to which we aspire.

As part of HWS 2015, we will continue to build a diverse community of faculty, staff, students, alums and affiliates. We will develop policies and practices that allow equitable access, progress, success, safety and recognition for all members of the community. We will address, review and revise where necessary all print and online communication to highlight our historic and continuing commitment to inclusive excellence. We will also create ways to have on-going, proactive inclusive excellence dialogue, celebration and education at all levels of the institution. Finally, we will seek curriculum and community development that will result in greater engagement of inclusive excellence at all levels.





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