

RIDER UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

Rider University

Rider University is a vibrant, student-centered community of learners regionally recognized as a top-tier institution. With campuses located in Lawrenceville and Princeton, New Jersey, Rider is an independent, residential university with 5,500 students – undergraduate, graduate, and non-traditional adult learners. Rider is distinguished by the talent and dedication of its people and by the excellence of its academic programs, its teaching, scholarship, artistic expression, professional practice and service to community.

Rider is proud of its origins in 1865 as a business school in Trenton that provided high quality education in the professions to civil war veterans and men and women in surrounding communities who sought better lives for themselves and their families. It is equally proud of its progressive evolution into a broad-based college in 1913, its merger with Westminster Choir College in 1992, and its achievement of university status in 1994. Today Rider is a high quality, comprehensive institution offering more than 60 undergraduate programs in the fine and performing arts, humanities, sciences, social sciences, education and business, as well as 17 graduate programs principally in business, education and music.

Institutional Values

The aspirations of the Rider University community reflect its values, which include a commitment to the following:

- Student-centeredness;
- Academic freedom, ethical and intellectual integrity, and collegial governance;
- Academic excellence, creativity, and innovation;
- Diversity and community;
- Collaboration and partnerships;
- Continuous planning, assessment, and stewardship of institutional resources.

Overview of Strategic Planning

Universities are founded only once. First-class universities are renewed continuously.

It is in this spirit of renewal that, beginning in the spring of 2004, Rider University embarked on a comprehensive and highly participatory strategic planning effort. The purpose of this deliberate process of renewal is to advance Rider to its next level of excellence. This means enhancing Rider's academic stature, distinctiveness and

prominence. Focused on the year 2010, this renewal will prepare Rider for the opportunities and challenges the institution faces today and will encounter in the years ahead.

Building on a 140 year legacy of distinguished achievements, Rider's new strategic plan augments the University's vision and mission, and provides a framework for strengthening the institution's academic stature, student life, financial robustness and reputation.

The strategic plan represents the dedicated and inspired work of almost one hundred individuals throughout the University community— students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and Trustees. It is organized along five strategic directions, or priority areas of focus, with corresponding goals and action plans. The five strategic directions are:

- Strengthening student-centeredness
- Advancing academic achievement and leadership skills
- Enhancing connections among the liberal arts, education for the professions, and community
- Fostering diverse perspectives and social responsibility
- Building resources for the future

These strategic directions respond to the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analyses conducted by the Board of Trustees and the six strategic planning task forces in spring 2004. Task forces were comprised of students, faculty, and staff from both campuses and were organized in the following areas: academic distinction, enrollment management, facilities, institutional mission and accountability, resources, and student life.

The SWOT analyses confirmed a number of Rider's strengths. They include a dedicated and talented group of faculty and staff who are excellent teachers and scholars; high quality academic programs and national accreditations; a supportive, caring community environment; student-faculty interaction and collaboration; experiential-based learning; a strong record of success of education for the professions on both campuses; the career success of our alumni; and our strategic locations in Lawrenceville and Princeton.

The SWOT analyses also identified a variety of external factors of major importance for the University, particularly within the context of higher education at the state and national levels. These include, among others, decreasing state and federal funding for higher education; increased competition for students and private donations; increased health care, regulatory, compliance, energy, and construction costs which drive tuition rates; substantial dependence on tuition revenues; a growing consumer orientation among students and families; the growing impact of the economy on families' willingness and ability to pay for higher education; growing public demand for institutions to be accountable in terms of value for price; and the changing composition of high school graduates, particularly in New Jersey.

VISION AND MISSION

Rider's Vision

Rider University will be a leader in American higher education celebrated for educating talented students for citizenship, life and career success in a diverse and interdependent world. Rider will achieve distinctiveness by focusing on students first, by cultivating leadership skills, by affirming teaching and learning that bridges the theoretical and the practical and by fostering a culture of academic excellence.

Rider's Mission Toward 2010

Rider attracts and graduates talented and motivated students with diverse backgrounds from across the nation and around the world and puts them at the center of our learning and living community.

As a learner-centered University dedicated to the education of the whole student, Rider provides students the intellectual resources and breadth of student life opportunities of a comprehensive university with the personal attention and close student-faculty interactions of a liberal arts college.

Through a commitment to high quality teaching, scholarship and experiential opportunities, faculty on both campuses provide undergraduate and graduate students rigorous and relevant programs of study to expand their intellectual, cultural and personal horizons and develop their leadership skills. Our highly regarded programs in the arts, social sciences, sciences, music, business and education challenge students to become active learners who can acquire, interpret, communicate and apply knowledge within and across disciplines to foster the integrative thinking required in a complex and rapidly changing world.

Rider attracts highly qualified faculty, staff and administrators with diverse backgrounds who create an environment which inspires intellectual and social engagement, stimulates innovation and service and encourages personal and professional development. As key members of our University community, it is their commitment to our values, vision and mission that will ensure Rider's success.

The University's institutional identity will continue to reflect the strengths of its people, history, location and shared values, among which are a commitment to diversity, social and ethical responsibility and community.

The success of our graduates will be demonstrated by their personal and career achievements and by their contributions to the cultural, social and economic life of their communities, the nation and the world.

GOALS AND ACTION PLANS

Strategic Direction 1: Strengthening student-centeredness

Context

As a student-centered university, Rider is committed to providing an academically challenging and supportive learning environment that motivates students to be actively engaged in their own learning. Our purpose is to develop in each student a sense of responsibility for learning and its outcomes. Among these are the capacity to learn self-reliantly, to think critically, to contribute meaningfully to discussion and action, to raise questions confidently, and to test assumptions and assess established and controversial ideas with assurance and objectivity.

A student-centered focus ensures that different teaching pedagogies are encouraged and practiced, that diverse learning styles are recognized and supported, and that programs and services are responsive to the intellectual, emotional, and developmental needs of students. It recognizes that learning occurs not only in the classroom but also through a variety of life, work and other experiences, including scholarship, all of which build on and enhance classroom instruction. Dedicated to the education of the whole student, Rider's student-centered focus also instills in students an appreciation for life-long learning and prepares them for the personal and professional opportunities and challenges they will encounter throughout their lives.

Rider is well known for its commitment to providing a supportive, community-minded learning environment with small classes, a favorable student-faculty ratio, personal attention, and a high degree of student and faculty interaction and collaboration. Through this first strategic direction as well as the ones that follow, Rider seeks to strengthen its commitment to student-centeredness and to expand opportunities for our students to be challenged and motivated to take an active role in their own learning and in their personal and professional development.

The following goals and action plans will ensure that active and engaged learning continues to thrive throughout the curriculum, beginning early in the freshman year and continuing throughout students' academic careers. They will also provide additional opportunities and experiences that will reinforce Rider's commitment to the education of the whole student.

Goals, Action Plans, and Benchmarks

1) Promote student-learning objectives and competencies¹ across the institution.

Adoption of university-wide student-learning objectives and competencies ensure common learning experiences that emphasize the strategic directions outlined in this plan. They challenge, motivate, and guide students in taking an active role in their own learning and provide a benchmark for assessing student-learning outcomes. They are also particularly important for Middle States reaccreditation.

Action Plans

- a) Develop institution-wide student-learning objectives and competencies. Such competencies may include critical thinking, communication skills (oral, written and reading), computation, and information literacy. Objectives may include leadership, international and multicultural perspectives, and social and ethical responsibility.
- b) Develop student-learning objectives for each academic department and program as an integral part of the academic outcomes assessment program. These will be major and/or discipline specific and will be guided, wherever possible, by institution-wide objectives and competencies as well as disciplinary or professional standards of competency. They will be used to evaluate student achievement and guide academic advising and curricular and co-curricular assessment and revision.
- c) Develop student-learning objectives within the Student Affairs division as an integral part of the division's assessment efforts. Ensure that co-curricular activities and residential and other programming and services support these divisional as well as institution-wide student-learning objectives.

¹ Student learning objectives and competencies – General education goals for what all students will learn and practical skills that students will demonstrate in indicated areas, verifiable through assessment measures or techniques.

2) Establish a comprehensive first year experience for all freshmen and transfer students.

For most entering students, the first year is the critical year of transition from high school to university. For transfer students, it is a critical year of transition from various earlier post-secondary experiences to a distinctive Rider experience. It introduces all new students to the academic, social, and values foundations of university life at Rider and greatly influences student retention and success. The goal of the first year experience in its various aspects is to ensure student academic and developmental success through small group experiences that demonstrate Rider's dedication to personal attention, intellectual engagement, and active and engaged learning.

Action Plans

- a) Develop department or college-based seminars for all traditional freshmen that anchor students in the disciplines and introduce them to the intellectual excitement of a university as well as to the student-learning objectives specific to their majors. Determine how these seminars will be offered in light of the existing freshman seminar program that anchors students to the institution and assists them in the transition from high school to college.
- b) Develop theme or affinity based learning communities² for traditional freshmen that support specific learning needs and initiatives. Link these communities with course content and instruction, advising, and student-learning objectives and competencies.
- c) Integrate and enhance academic and support services provided to new students. Enhance and expand New Student Resource Center programming. Expand use of the electronic progress reporting system³. Expand supplemental instruction, embedded tutoring⁴, and other tutoring support for freshman level courses.
- d) Strengthen the University Studies⁵ program. Require that students participate in a University Studies specific learning community that links required courses, utilizes faculty as both instructors and advisors, coordinates curricular and co-curricular programming, and assists students in declaring a major. Establish a program to recognize academic achievement among University Studies students.

² learning community – a programmed set of paired classes and out of class activities for a defined group of students. Faculty members of a learning community coordinate class preparations and establish a special mentoring relationship with students in the learning community.

³ electronic progress reporting system – Computerized reporting system that identifies students performing poorly in the classroom.

⁴ embedded tutoring – Trained tutors that attend and participate in (as a teaching assistant with the faculty member) the classes in which they serve as tutors.

⁵ University Studies – students without declared majors in the College of Liberal Arts, Education, and Sciences

- e) Evaluate and strengthen the Rider Achievement Program⁶ (RAP), reviewing such things as linked courses, advising, small class sizes, supplemental instruction, and specialized orientation and co-curricular activities, particularly within the freshman year.
- f) Initiate a transition program specifically for the needs of transfer students. Include orientation meetings as well as a mentoring system that pairs new transfer students with students who transferred to Rider previously.

3) Enrich students' intellectual, personal, and social development.

Action Plans

- a) Implement a comprehensive learning community program beyond the freshman year around specific academic and student life initiatives.
- b) Establish goals and assessment for academic advising and mentoring. Provide continued faculty training in and recognition of exemplary advising.
- c) More fully integrate information literacy⁷ instruction across the curriculum.
- d) Expand intramurals, recreation opportunities, and club sports⁸.
- e) Continue to support an intercollegiate athletics program that addresses gender equity needs and continues to emphasize both the academic and athletic success of our student-athletes.
- f) Develop a comprehensive program of co-curricular activities and services that address the developmental needs of our students and complement and support the curricular goals of the institution.
- g) Establish a program of cultural, intellectual, and artistic events and performances for the Rider community and surrounding area. Coordinate programming with the Lecture Series as appropriate.

⁶ RAP, the Rider Achievement Program – A program established to support students in the bottom 10% of our entering class.

⁷ information literacy - An intellectual framework for identifying, finding, understanding, evaluating, and using information. It is integral to all disciplines and to effective teaching, learning, research, and scholarship.

⁸ club sports – Sport teams that compete against other colleges and universities but are not part of the intercollegiate athletic program. Student activities fees cover part of the cost of participation. Player dues cover the remaining costs.

4) Strengthen service to students through student-centered management, technology, and other initiatives.

Action Plans

- a) Adopt a more centralized approach and improved access to University services and resources such as the bursar, financial aid, registrar, etc. Consider physical location and use of technology.
- b) Continue to expand and upgrade the University's technology infrastructure (voice, data, and video networks; Internet and Internet2 connections). Expand the wireless network. Continue to implement web-based services for students and to technology-enable classrooms.
- c) Increase student technology support and staffing.
- d) Enhance key administrative processes and procedures to strengthen efficiency, student service and user satisfaction. Utilize technology, where appropriate, to more effectively support those activities.

5) Ensure that planning and assessment at the division, college/school and/or department level incorporate student-centeredness as an integral component.

Strategic Direction 2: Advancing academic achievement and leadership skills

Context

Academic achievement is advanced by a student-centered learning environment that challenges, motivates, and guides students to be actively engaged in their own learning. It is evidenced by students' motivation and their mastery of specific knowledge, skills, and abilities. Rider seeks to strengthen its commitment to the academic achievement of our students by coordinating honors programs across the institution, further extending learning beyond the traditional classroom, fostering additional student-faculty research and collaboration, and ensuring students' success in their chosen programs, disciplines, and professions and in admission to top graduate and professional schools.

Our students' achievement both in and beyond the classroom is an indication of the excellence and distinctiveness within each of our colleges, and in our various departments and programs. Rider has a rich history of offering high-quality curricula in the humanities, social sciences, sciences, music, the fine and performing arts, and various professional programs such as accounting, business and education. We will continue to build on that history as we celebrate and promote the academic achievement of our students and advance the academic stature of the institution.

Developing leadership skills is one example of the distinctiveness of Rider's academic and co-curricular offerings. Rider has had a long tradition of providing effective leadership skill development and of shaping successful leaders. Our strong system of student government, the wide variety of student-run clubs and organizations, and our governance structure all provide meaningful opportunities for students to exercise their leadership skills and to have an important impact on the life of the institution. The Emerging Leaders Program, coordinated through the Student Affairs division, builds leadership skills through campus involvement beginning in the freshman year and extending through graduation. Programs such as CREWW and DAARSTOC, competitive leadership skill-building programs offered through the College of Business Administration, provide opportunities for students to utilize a variety of skills and knowledge as they apply theory to real-life situations that prepare them for the workplace. In addition, Rider's historical strengths and reputation of excellence in the professions, principally accounting, business, music and education, reflect a legacy of educating leaders as evidenced by the career success of our alumni.

With the recent establishment of the Center for the Development of Leadership Skills, Rider will provide a variety of program opportunities for students of all majors to develop leadership skills that will serve them well throughout their lives and careers. These opportunities will connect classroom instruction with experiential and other skill building activities and enable students to demonstrate their leadership outcomes to employers through a portfolio/co-curricular transcript and certificate.

The following goals and action plans will further promote academic achievement among our students, celebrate and enhance the distinctiveness of our academic programs, and expand leadership skills development across the institution.

Goals, Action Plans, and Benchmarks

1) Strengthen and coordinate honors programs across the institution.

Action Plans

- a) Establish a comprehensive honors program with uniform standards and incentives across the institution, specialized co-curricular programming, and recognition events. Broaden representation on the Honors Council to include representative honor societies and organizations on both campuses.
- b) Develop a mentoring program for students applying for external awards and scholarships for graduating college students (i.e., Goldwater, Fulbright, Jack Kent Cooke, Rockefeller, Rhodes scholarships). Identify students early in their academic career.

2) Foster programming and collaborations that support active and engaged student learning beyond the traditional classroom.

Action Plans

- a) Expand the Undergraduate Research Scholars program. Extend support for student-faculty research opportunities between semesters and during the summer, and for travel to professional meetings and conferences where student-faculty research and papers are presented.
- b) Establish Research Celebration Day, a recognition event highlighting student scholarly achievements. Establish and host undergraduate research conferences where student scholarship is featured and Rider students and faculty serve active leadership and presentation roles. Encourage participation by students and faculty from other institutions.

3) Continue to enhance the quality and distinctiveness of our academic programs.

Action Plans

- a) Continue to invest in and promote excellence and distinctiveness within our Colleges and academic departments and programs.
- b) Strengthen Rider's post-baccalaureate professional programs (i.e., pre-law, pre-med, pre-allied health) by developing articulation agreements with graduate schools, mentoring programs and career fairs, and recognizing student achievement.
- c) Create distinctive centers of excellence within each of our colleges, with the Center for the Development of Leadership Skills serving as a model. These centers will build on our strengths and foster collaborative and cohesive curricular and co-curricular programming.

4) Incorporate leadership skill development across the University.

Action Plans

- a) Expand Center for the Development of Leadership Skills (CDLS) programming and coordinate it with existing leadership development programs across the institution. Offer multiple tracks or levels of participation in leadership offerings and activities to ensure widespread participation. Support learning objectives by embedding leadership skill development in appropriate courses and co-curricular activities through Center initiatives and programs.

- b) Establish a Leadership Lecture series that will include a high-profile lecture along with related events each semester highlighting corporate, non-profit, civic, cultural, or political leadership.

5) Ensure that planning and assessment at the division, college/school and/or department level incorporate academic achievement and leadership skill development as integral components as appropriate.

Strategic Direction 3: Enhancing connections among the liberal arts, education for the professions, and community.

Context

Rider has had a rich history of offering high-quality curricula that make purposeful connections within and among the liberal arts and sciences and education for the professions, particularly business, education, and increasingly, the performing arts. The need for such connections is made apparent by the increasing complexity and interconnectedness of knowledge that both university faculty and graduates in the workplace are called upon to address.

Connected learning, both interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary, results in creative and innovative linkages within and among disciplines that advance learning and understanding. Examples at Rider include, among others, biopsychology, American, global and multicultural studies, and the Baccalaureate Honors Program. Programs offered by the Bristol-Myers Squibb Center for Science Teaching and Learning at Rider connect science and education. Science and business are connected through a variety of academic programs run jointly by the Colleges of Business Administration and Liberal Arts, Education, and Sciences, preparing graduates for careers in the pharmaceutical and medical technology industries, among others. And music and the performing arts at our Lawrenceville and Princeton campuses are connected with business in the arts management minor.

Connected learning also bridges theory and practice, creating meaningful linkages between curricula and experiences that help students achieve greater coherence, understanding, and utility in their studies. This integrated style of learning and scholarship builds life, work, and leadership skills. It also engages students in internships, community-based research and other projects. At Rider, we refer to this integrated style of student learning as the practical liberal arts.

Rider is ideally situated for this approach to connected learning. The University is accessible to New York and Philadelphia and is ideally situated near New Jersey State government, as well as the headquarters of major corporations, non-profit organizations, and research institutions. In addition to internships, connections between academic departments and these workplace settings advance learning and provide practical and creative opportunities to bridge the classroom, community and the world of work.

Connected learning also involves greater integration and linkages between Rider's two campuses, enhancing their strengths and expanding program offerings to students on both campuses. It also offers opportunities for shared expertise, services, resource management and outreach. Our objective is to be viewed as one University with two successful and connected campuses and one University with distinct yet connected programs, particularly involving the performing arts.

The following goals and action plans will strengthen connected learning in the curriculum, in experiential opportunities, in community and in integrating our two campuses.

Goals, Action Plans and Benchmarks

1) Build connections within and among the liberal arts and sciences and education for the professions.

Action Plans

- a) Continue to develop and promote new academic programs that connect business and science, communication and business, and education and communication, among others.
- b) Foster an interdisciplinary approach in developing or revising courses and programs within and among departments and colleges.
- c) Integrate academic and career advising through use of the co-curricular transcript⁹, e-portfolio¹⁰, and/or other enhancements.

2) Integrate the two campuses more fully, building on each campus' strengths.

Action Plans

- a) Establish a university-wide course schedule that allows students to participate in academic programs and co-curricular activities offered on either campus.
- b) Promote academic and co-curricular programming and activities that unite the two campuses, enhance their mutual interests, and/or extend recruitment, marketing, and communications efforts. Explore a performing arts theme across the two campuses.
- c) Continue to develop academic programs that connect existing programs such as music and musical theater with theater, fine arts, communication, education and business, including a new minor in arts management.
- d) Integrate the student affairs and development/alumni relations divisions across both campuses, strengthening student service, alumni and donor relations, and fundraising efforts.

⁹ co-curricular transcript - a verified web-based summary of students' experiential learning including extra-curricular, personal development and community service activities. This complement to the academic transcript is intended to demonstrate the breadth of learning experiences outside the classroom.

¹⁰ e-portfolio – a computerized portfolio of a student's work. An e-portfolio includes examples of the student's work as well as the student's co-curricular transcript.

3) Integrate experiential learning¹¹ across the curriculum, connecting it with course content, student-learning objectives and competencies, and classroom instruction.

Action Plans

- a) Establish a comprehensive experiential learning initiative that coordinates existing department and program-based credit and non-credit bearing experiential learning opportunities, expands the number of experiential learning placements, and supports the connection of experiential learning to the curriculum.
- b) Develop course-based programmatic connections between academic departments and businesses, corporations, non-profit organizations, and government agencies in the region. Encourage the use of different learning strategies in establishing these connections such as academic research projects, community based research, and co-curricular involvement.
- c) Utilize on-campus work experiences as experiential learning opportunities and/or internships.
- d) Engage alumni and others in leadership roles as mentors, lecturers, consultants, and sources of internships.

4) Ensure that planning and assessment at the division, college/school and/or department level incorporate connections among the liberal arts, education for the professions, and community as integral components as appropriate.

¹¹ experiential learning – a teaching method that pairs practical application in a work setting with reflection and theoretical classroom work.

Strategic Direction 4: Fostering diverse perspectives and social responsibility

Context

We live in a rapidly shrinking world. The forward rush of trade, technology and communications is fast increasing global interdependence. Nevertheless, many people here and abroad still retain attitudes and values more appropriate to a past age when different cultures existed within self-contained nations. To contend with our multicultural and global realities, our students need to develop global and multicultural perspectives to better understand and manage the opportunities and challenges of an interdependent yet conflicted world. Developing such perspectives means expanding international and multicultural curricula, facilitating study of foreign cultures through the study of different languages, literature, history, sociology and politics, among others. It also means study abroad opportunities and more international faculty and students on our campuses.

We will also engage our students more fully as integral members of our local communities by embracing diversity and social responsibility as important institutional values and by connecting the classroom with civic and other service to the community. Promoting an understanding of diversity in all its many forms provides students with increased awareness and an appreciation of the diversity of ideas and cultures. This is crucial to helping our students develop the insights necessary to function as active members of an inclusive democracy.

Rider's commitment to social responsibility is reflected in our Statement of Community Values, which is posted throughout the campus and introduced to all first year students at opening convocation. Through it we seek to instill in our students a sense of empathy and fairness, a social awareness, a proclivity to treat others with dignity, a respect for and appreciation of differences between peoples and cultures, and a willingness to be accountable for one's actions. This commitment is also reflected in our service learning program, campus wide community service projects such as Habitat for Humanity, Midnight Run, and annual university-wide events such as Unity Day and Martin Luther King Day celebrations.

The goals and action plans that follow will foster increased diversity in our campus community, encourage both multicultural and global perspectives, and evoke the value of social responsibility. In all these cases, we are extending education beyond the academy's classrooms, allowing us, as Theodore Long writes, "...to embrace a larger civic purpose that can inspire, renew, and integrate all aspects of collegiate study."

Goals, Action Plans and Benchmarks

1) Establish a comprehensive international education program.

Action Plans

- a) Create a single international education office that provides comprehensive services for international students and expanded study abroad and international exchange opportunities for existing students. Provide support for the integration of international and multicultural perspectives throughout the curriculum and institution.
- b) Coordinate and expand international events, including International Week and prominent international speakers and visitors.
- c) Support international study/research as part of the Undergraduate Research Scholars program.

2) Enhance cultural, racial, ethnic, and international diversity among our students, faculty, and staff.

Action Plans

- a) Implement a student recruitment and retention plan that increases minority and international enrollments. Ensure the provision of academic and student life programs and services that address the needs of these diverse populations.
- b) Establish the Multicultural Student Leadership Institute in coordination with the Center for the Development of Leadership Skills. Create a minority alumni mentor program as an integral component of the Institute.
- c) Utilize additional minority recruitment sources for faculty and staff hires, particularly in persistently underutilized employee categories, and engage academic and administrative departments more fully in the recruitment of minority candidates.

3) Promote civic engagement and social awareness and responsibility to enhance student learning and to respond to the needs of the surrounding community.

Action Plans

- a) Establish a comprehensive service learning¹² initiative that expands the number of Rider Community Scholars¹³, supports existing and promotes additional department efforts to integrate community based research and service learning in the curriculum, coordinates volunteer opportunities in the surrounding community and university-wide community service projects, and provides training resources for non-profit organizations.
- b) Establish a university-wide honor code.
- c) Integrate ethical perspectives in the curriculum.
- d) Integrate the Statement of Community Values more fully across the institution. For example, use the Statement as a standard for making major student awards (such as the President's Award and Homecoming King and Queen), incorporate it into all university-wide events (such as new student convocation and Commencement), and use it for selecting speakers for the Lecture Series and other occasions.

4) Ensure that planning and assessment at the division, college/school and/or department level incorporate diverse perspectives and social responsibility as integral components as appropriate.

¹² service learning – a teaching technique that pairs community service with classroom teaching to achieve educational objectives.

¹³ Rider Community Scholars – a group of scholarship students that performs either 300 hours or 450 hours of community service during the academic year as part of an Americorps program.

Strategic Direction 5: Building resources for the future

Context

Through its strategic planning process and each of the four strategic directions previously discussed, Rider will enhance its distinctiveness, academic stature and prominence. The institution will be prepared for the opportunities and challenges it faces today and in the years ahead. Implementing the goals and actions plans associated with those strategic directions will require Rider to strengthen its resource, operating and infrastructure base. This involves enrollment management, marketing, fundraising, facilities, human resources, finances and technology.

Rider will increase and diversify its revenues through more effective fundraising and other endowment building strategies, improved service and productivity, and the vigorous implementation of our new enrollment management approach to increase enrollments and retention and strengthen the profile of our student body. The University will also market more effectively and more widely to enhance its visibility to prospective students, alumni and the public. Rider will address its facilities needs to create a supportive and “enabling” environment for learning, living and working. And through investment in professional development, we will prepare all members of the Rider community to innovate, collaborate, and participate actively in the institution’s renewal.

Building Rider’s resources for the future is not an end in itself. Doing so provides the means to invest in the programs, services and facilities that will best serve our students, and to attract and retain talented faculty, staff and administrators.

The following goals and action plans will strengthen our resources for the future, helping Rider achieve the goals of the strategic plan and instilling in our community a sense of pride, affection, and appreciation for the value that Rider has added to their lives.

Goals, Action Plans and Benchmarks

Enrollments and Institutional Identity

1) Strengthen undergraduate, graduate, and Continuing Studies enrollments.

Action Plans

- a) Implement an enrollment management plan that increases the average SAT score and high school GPA of incoming freshmen; improves retention and graduate rates; and increases freshmen, transfer, graduate and Continuing Studies enrollments.
- b) Implement enrollment management and financial aid strategies that improve recruitment and retention and recognize academic achievement and leadership skills among students.

- c) Offer new graduate, certificate, and other innovative academic programs and course delivery methods that respond to the needs of adults and non-traditional learners. These may include professional development seminars, on-line courses, certificate programs and off-campus programming.

2) Market and brand the institution more effectively and broadly.

Action Plans

- a) Implement integrated marketing, advertising, and public relations plans that expand awareness of the University beyond the immediate region into other states, contribute to improved new student recruitment and alumni and donor engagement, build institutional pride, and inform the internal and external communities of current and/or significant initiatives, events and achievements.
- b) Continue to strengthen Rider's website, including both internal and external components, and ensuring a consistent look and image throughout.
- c) Utilize external validations (i.e., specialized accreditations and rankings) as key strategic components of Rider's marketing, advertising and public relations efforts.

Fundraising and Revenues

3) Strengthen institutional fundraising and advancement efforts.

Action Plans

- a) Increase major and planned gifts, annual giving, and corporate and foundation support.
- b) Build the endowment through gift support from all sources.
- c) Establish the Westminster Circle of Leaders¹⁴ and utilize Westminster Conservatory connections to increase fundraising specific to the Princeton campus.
- d) Develop and implement a comprehensive advancement plan that will lay the groundwork for Rider's next capital campaign and/or establish smaller campaigns specific to key strategic funding initiatives. Engage faculty, Deans, department chairs, and existing advisory boards more fully in fundraising and alumni and donor relations efforts.

¹⁴ Westminster Circle of Leaders – a group of community and music leaders who will advise and guide implementation of Westminster's strategic planning and fundraising efforts.

- e) Foster a culture of engagement among alumni, beginning in the freshman year, instilling in alumni a connection to and responsibility for the University throughout their lives and careers.

4) Build unrestricted net assets to meet capital and operating needs.

Rider will deploy its resources strategically to serve both current and future students. Building unrestricted net assets enables Rider to make much needed facilities investments, either directly or by issuing bonds.

Action Plans

- a) Strengthen annual institutional financial planning to better address capital needs funding while continuing to include reasonable contingencies. Ensure that the Rider community continues to be engaged in and informed of budget development and resource allocation decisions. Continue to invest endowment and operating funds to generate competitive returns.
- b) Increase the scope and profitability of conference business throughout the year.
- c) Explore the development of non-academic acreage as a source of revenue.

Human Resources, Facilities, and Technology

5) Expand faculty and staff professional development programs and technology training.

Rider's ability to serve students effectively and achieve its planning goals requires an ongoing investment in professional development for its faculty and staff. As the demands of individuals' positions change, Rider will help prepare them to effectively meet new challenges through quality program offerings.

Action Plans

- a) Offer faculty development programming in the areas of student-learning outcomes, active and diverse learning strategies (including those that connect the curriculum with practical applications), innovative instruction, technology use, service learning, and information literacy.
- b) Create a leadership-training module for faculty and staff in coordination with the Center for the Development of Leadership Skills (CDLS). Continue to offer diversity training and other specialized faculty and staff development programs.

6) Develop and implement coherent and continuing facilities and landscape master plans that address student, academic and institutional needs, deferred maintenance, campus access, ongoing repair and renewal, and other related needs.

Rider's campuses in Lawrenceville and Princeton comprise academic, residential, student life, athletic, and administrative facilities. Their condition is a visible reflection of institutional identity and pride and the quality of our academic and student life programs. Maintaining, modernizing and enhancing the physical plant are therefore essential to supporting Rider's vision, mission and Strategic Plan. Therefore, development of comprehensive planning documents will facilitate prioritization, fundraising, and ongoing dialogue of institutional needs.

Action Plans

- a) Identify and prioritize capital renewal and renovation projects that ensure appropriate classroom, study, library, rehearsal, research, meeting, office and recreational space that accommodate the needs of students, faculty, and staff on both campuses.
- b) Develop a program of new construction and phased residence hall renovations that increase housing capacity and options on both campuses and support academic and student life programming.
- c) Support a safe, pedestrian-oriented core on both campuses and encourage the use of outdoor space as an integral part of the academic and student life experience.
- d) Create a unified and identifiable image for both campuses through the use of landscape and signage enhancements.
- e) Reduce deferred maintenance on both campuses, including ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliance and infrastructure improvements.

7) Develop and implement a coherent, comprehensive, and continuing information technology master plan that will ensure a pervasive, state-of-the-art, and well-utilized electronic environment.

Action Plans

- a) Identify and prioritize new technology initiatives that enhance students' academic and student life experience and support teaching, learning and scholarly activity.
- b) Develop a program to expand and upgrade the University's technology infrastructure, wireless network, web-based services and technology-enabled classrooms.
- c) Utilize technology to enhance key academic and administrative processes and procedures to strengthen efficiency, student service and user satisfaction.
- d) Ensure information security and disaster recovery across all aspects of the University's operations in which technology is utilized.

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

Commitment to Continual Planning and Assessment

Rider is committed to continual planning and assessment, key components of any successful strategic planning effort. A university is accountable to its students, faculty, staff, and alumni, to the community it serves, and to the public at large. To be accountable, an institution must assess the degree to which it fulfills its vision and mission and achieves goals and objectives as outlined in its strategic plan. Such assessment must be conducted regularly and consistently, must be responsive to evolving opportunities and environmental and other changes, and must be clearly and effectively communicated.

Implementation and Assessment Timeline

The following timeline outlines Rider's annual implementation and assessment timelines as it relates to the Strategic Plan.

June 1	Division heads submit to the President assessments of their current year divisional plans, including benchmark and other progress, needed changes, etc.
	Division heads submit to the President their preliminary divisional plans for the upcoming year.
July 1	Associate Vice Presidents for Planning and Institutional Analysis present their analysis to M4 (senior management) of the divisional assessments and the current year's key performance indicators as outlined in the Strategic Plan.
	M4 holds a retreat to discuss their findings, determine priority areas for divisional planning for the coming year, and to revise the Strategic Plan as needed.
August 1	Division heads submit their final divisional plans for the year.
September 1 (or thereabouts)	The President summarizes in his Convocation address the prior year's progress and presents divisional priority areas of focus for the year as they relate to the Strategic Plan.
October 15 (or thereabouts)	The Board of Trustees is updated regarding the prior year's progress and presented divisional priority areas of focus for the year as they relate to the Strategic Plan.
Jan - Apr	Division heads submit revenue projections, key expenses, and critical needs as part of the upcoming year's budget development cycle. Decisions regarding resource development and allocation are made in the context of the Strategic Plan.