



ST. NORBERT COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN FOUNDATION

August 2021

Foundation and Focus

The primary purpose of our strategic planning effort is to ensure that our abiding mission to develop our students as whole persons, in a way that is richly grounded in our Catholic, Norbertine and liberal arts traditions, flourishes far into the future. Our mission, traditions and values anchor our work to perpetually renew the student experience and ensure it is relevant and compelling. Our greatest measure of success is something to behold: our holistically educated, principled, purposeful and action-oriented graduates.

As we embark on this planning, we do so with the firm belief that the world has never been in greater need of citizens educated in the St. Norbert College tradition. Further, in a context of widespread economic, demographic, societal and political challenges for higher education, combined with the increasingly more rapid pace of change and disruption in our sector, our strategic plan must be simultaneously nimble and laser-focused.

Our Planning Process

Over a period of four months of spring semester 2021, members of the Strategic Planning Task Force offered multiple opportunities and invited every member of the SNC community to contribute reflections on, ideas about and input toward the strategic plan's three pillars: Educational Quality, Financial Strength and Operational Excellence, and Mission Radiance. Surveys were distributed, forums held and conversations invited with SNC community members spanning faculty, staff, students and board of trustees, as well as with the SNC Parish and with local community partners and leaders in health care, K-12 education and others. Further data and insights were drawn from the More Than Numbers initiative, the NSSE Survey (National Survey of Student Engagement), OIE student data, the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan and key published resources, among them "*Fratelli Tutti*" by Pope Francis, "Generous Thinking" by Kathleen Fitzpatrick, "Collaborative Strategic Planning" by Patrick Sanaghan, and "The Goals of a Liberal Education" by William Cronon. An analysis of all data resulted in 13 mutually informing key initiatives to guide work across the three pillars.

Three Pillars and Key Initiatives

1. Educational Quality

The essence of our mission is to offer a vibrant, holistic, and engaging educational experience for students. Continual renewal and investment in the student experience – the curricular and co-curricular – is foundational to offering a high quality education and producing meaningful outcomes. Developing centers of excellence and endowed chairs, in support of the educational experience of students, will help raise the reputation of St. Norbert College.

Key Initiatives:

a. Offer an Integrated and Impactful SNC Signature Student Experience

The SNC Signature Student Experience reflects our mission commitment to the holistic development of our students, is rooted in experiential learning, and leads to the integration of disciplines and perspectives. Further investment will enhance our primary aim of preparing students for a purposeful life serving the Common Good. Components of this initiative include:

- Mission-centered First-Year Seminar and First-Year Experience program
- Expansion of existing experiential and high-impact learning offerings (e.g., study abroad and global immersion, service-learning course offerings, collaborative research experiences, faith and spiritual development, internships, leadership development, and service and volunteer experiences)
- Vibrant residential educational experience
- Impactful and visible programs for career development, meaningful student work and vocation exploration
- Advance the diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) work rooted in the curriculum and co-curriculum
- Complete the implementation of Wellness by Design, including an integrated approach to wellness offerings for students, faculty and staff
- Enhance strategies to support the college's culture of assessment

b. Develop a Center for Teaching, Learning & Norbertine Pedagogy

The center will provide critical support for faculty, staff and students by bringing together teaching and learning pedagogical development work, academic advising, select high-impact practices, instructional design, assessment, faculty and staff development (including offerings for mission, DEIB, and teaching and learning outcomes), and our recognition programs. The center will be distinctive and profoundly impactful as it will be built on the foundational elements of our mission: Catholic, Norbertine and liberal arts.

c. Develop a Center for Entrepreneurship

This multidisciplinary center, drawing from our rich liberal arts tradition, will help further position St. Norbert College to attract and educate the next generation of innovative leaders and entrepreneurs. The center will include curricular innovation (major and minor in entrepreneurship) and co-curricular offerings (pitch contests, start-up workshops and clinics, speaker series). This center will engage faculty, staff and students across a wide range of academic areas. Students interested in consulting, freelancing, taking over family businesses and other forms of self-employment also are likely participants.

d. Ensure Curricular and Co-curricular Program Balance and Innovation

Develop a system, with a spirit of innovation, to support the continual renewal and reinvestment of the student learning experience. This initiative will include launching new programs; reinvesting in existing programs in need of renewal; exploring new program offerings which align with mission, market opportunities, faculty expertise and interest, and student learning needs; and, evaluating and seeking opportunities to serve new markets, multiple degree levels, a variety of instructional delivery modalities, and post baccalaureate partnerships with other institutions of higher education.

2. Financial Strength and Operational Excellence

Essential for St. Norbert College as a thriving institution in the post-pandemic era will be strong financial management; strategic enrollment planning and healthy enrollments; successful fundraising; contemporary investment in technology; a vibrant, educationally aligned and environmentally responsive campus ecosystem; and superior operations.

Key Initiatives:

- a. Continue to invest in our **Strategic Enrollment Management** plan, one designed to identify, enroll, retain and graduate students in an increasingly more competitive market.
- b. Successfully complete our **Support What Matters** campaign.
- c. Further develop and refine our **Financial Planning and Analysis** infrastructure, systems and processes to support a high level of operational excellence, sustained financial health, superior educational programming and pursuit of our mission.
- d. Extend our investment in **Technology Integration and Digital Transformation** to support our educational purposes (teaching and learning), nimble financial and leadership strategies, vibrant mission-centered community, and operational excellence.
- e. Develop and implement a **Campus Master Plan** (CMP) to align our physical facilities and ecosystem with our programmatic values and emphasis. Such a CMP prioritizes retention, is student-experience driven, advances sustainability and is financially prudent.

3. Mission Radiance

The entire college community will continue to advance and amplify our institutional traditions of mission in increasingly more contemporary, relevant and impactful ways. The core of this effort is to achieve a fuller understanding and integration of the Catholic, Norbertine and liberal arts elements of our mission with the student experience and with the experience of working at the college. We will build on a strong history of mission integration, our faithful stewardship of mission, and an already healthy understanding and practice of mission.

Key Initiatives:

a. Hiring, Onboarding, and Faculty and Staff Development for Mission

Building from current efforts, further develop and implement a comprehensive and integrated program for hiring and onboarding for mission, which fully articulates mission traditions and supports student learning, a healthy workplace and our educational purposes.

Offer a professional development program to advance our mission traditions of Catholic, Norbertine and liberal arts. Possible topics include: Catholic intellectual tradition (CIT), Catholic social teaching tradition (CST); Norbertine values of *stabilitas loci*, *actio*, *contemplatio*, *communio*, peace and justice, and radical hospitality; and our liberal arts tradition, which calls us to help students realize explicit learning outcomes; to dialogue with diverse cultures, perspectives and beliefs; and become responsible members of society.

b. Sustainability

Working with the Environmental & Sustainability Advisory Committee, the college will advance our efforts to reflect our mission and responsibility to environmental stewardship and the Common Good. Toward this end, we will incorporate this foundational responsibility, a platform set forth by Pope Francis in his encyclical, "*Laudato Si*," in the educational experience of our students (FYS, FYE, clubs and organizations, service and volunteer programs, programs of study, etc.); the facilities and operations of the college, including the Campus Master Plan; and via community engagement toward producing economic and social justice in our community, as well as in De Pere and northeast Wisconsin.

c. A Community Committed to Human Flourishing

Given the realities of our time – a world emerging from a pandemic and struggling to overcome racial injustice, political strife and human suffering – St. Norbert College will be a model for the world as we seek to uphold the dignity of each person and provide an educational experience and work environment that promotes human flourishing. To this end, we will provide regular ritual, programs and educational opportunities to lament pain, suffering and injustice while we work to radiate our mission. We will use the rich resources of our mission to lament with hope and develop new community expectations for how we can enhance student learning, work environments and the vibrancy of our community and mission.

d. Community Pathways and Engagement

Core to our SNC mission is the foundational tenant of the global Norbertine life and ethos *stabilitas loci*: a life of stability amidst a hectic world and care for each other in our local community. Inspired by and true to our community commitment, we advance a contemporary integration with, service in and of, and deliberate pathways toward community engagement, including:

- Nurturing pathways toward co-creating solutions to local, mission-centric, community-defined issues of poverty, homelessness, hunger, educational access, economic development and others.
- Continued diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging work in and across all areas of the college and into the community as defined by community needs.
- Intentional expansion and nurturing of relationships with local schools, nonprofits, government, St. Norbert Abbey, the international Norbertine order and the Diocese of Green Bay, through student, faculty and staff experiences and connections, such as study abroad, service and community-engaged learning (local, national, global).
- Graduate programs, single courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels, and engagement opportunities forging pathways of reciprocal learning and service: SNC into and with the community, and the community more engaged with SNC.