

## Working Draft

### **A Strategic Plan for Keene State College, 2007-2011**

#### **A Vision of Excellence . . . Our History**

Keene State College is New Hampshire's public liberal arts college, a distinction we embrace and celebrate. Since its founding in 1909, this institution has grown, matured, and undertaken new challenges in its evolution from normal school to teachers college to an institution serving the diverse needs of this state and region. Now, another transformation is underway - the dynamic progression to a new level of academic excellence, and the pursuit of the great promise this institution holds. It is our responsibility, together as a community, to lift Keene State to prominence as an outstanding center of the liberal arts and sciences, and an institution that prepares its students for lives and work rich with meaning.

This transformation is grounded in the College's commitment to providing predominately undergraduate programs in a residential campus environment; the curricula and pedagogy of liberal education; and our high quality and accessible academic programs in arts, humanities, sciences, teacher education, and other professional studies.

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#### **Our Vision**

Keene State College will become a center of academic excellence - an academic community where critical thinking and the life of the mind are honored and people feel respected and valued. The College will offer strong curricula and co-curricula that excite, challenge, and engage the campus community in the issues of Keene State, the community, and the world.

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#### **Our Mission**

Keene State College prepares promising students to think critically and creatively, to engage in active citizenship, and to pursue meaningful work. As the public liberal arts college of New Hampshire, we offer an enriching campus community and achieve academic excellence through the integration of teaching, learning, scholarship, and service.

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## **Our Values**

Our liberal arts mission dedicates us to the development of knowledge and skills necessary to meet the challenges of our changing world. As a public institution, we provide educational opportunities for all qualified students and continue our heritage of service to New Hampshire and the New England region.

We value

- All members of our community: students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends.
- Strong relationships among students, faculty, and staff.
- Excellence in teaching, learning, and scholarship.
- Commitment to learning and cultural enrichment.
- Social justice and equity in our community and in our curriculum.
- Educational challenge and support for a wide range of learners.
- Physical and financial access and support.
- Balanced development of mind, body, and character.
- Diversity, civility, and respect.
- Civic engagement and service to the community.
- Environmental stewardship and sustainability.
- Partnerships that enhance the quality of life in the Monadnock region, New Hampshire, and the world.
- An attractive campus that inspires and supports inquiry, reflection, and social interaction.

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## **Our Goals Are Ambitious**

In order of priority, they are:

1. To significantly enhance and become recognized for the quality of our academic programs and the academic achievements of our faculty and students.
  2. To clearly and continuously communicate our mission and values in all that we undertake, and to foster a strong sense of community on campus in pursuit of academic excellence.
  3. To invest in faculty and staff so they can provide leadership for the College's transformation.
  4. To actively engage our students in a learning process that is grounded in service, citizenship, and ethical awareness.
  5. To provide high-quality academic programs that are affordable and accessible to a wide range of learners.
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## **A Commitment to Achieving our Goals**

Our planning process aims to be open and transparent and will seek college-wide consensus on priorities and strategies so that Keene State College may attain its vision and goals of excellence.

In fall 2005, President Helen Giles-Gee engaged the campus in discussions of College priorities. These conversations were held in every administrative division and with the faculty, student leaders, and concerned alumni. Each of these constituencies was asked to consider three questions: What do you believe to be the five most important priorities for Keene State College? What do you believe to be the most important core values of the College community? And, what should the College look like in 2009 - the one-hundredth anniversary of the founding of Keene Normal School?

Five strategic goals and five core values emerged from these discussions. Clearly evident is that members of the Keene State College community share a commitment to the transformation of its academic programs and the quality of academic life on campus. This consensus reflects a strong sense of community and a commitment to the work of teaching and learning across disciplines and schools, a commitment shared by faculty, staff, and students. It also reflects the spirit and purpose articulated in Our Plan, the strategic road map that grew out of the campus-wide Speak Out in the 1990s.

In Fall 2006, President Giles-Gee established a College Planning Council to engage in a thoughtful process of deliberation of Keene State College's goals, to develop and recommend a comprehensive strategic plan to the President's Cabinet based on these goals, and to establish a process whereby this strategic plan is reviewed, evaluated and updated on an annual basis. The KSC Planning Council is charged with the following:

- To review campus annual reports and other pertinent documents;
  - To identify and prioritize strategies to fulfill the goals of the strategic plan;
  - To collaboratively engage the Keene State College community members, including faculty, staff, students, alumni and community partners) in discussions about the priorities and to receive their feedback on proposed strategies and priorities;
  - To recommend evaluative criteria for recommending strategic initiatives and assessing effectiveness of strategies;
  - To develop a plan for a continuous cycle for reviewing and updating the strategic plan and the College's mission; and
  - To evaluate the College's progress in implementing the strategic plan through an annual status reports.
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## Initiatives to Fulfill the Goals of the Strategic Plan

### 1. **To significantly enhance and become recognized for the quality of our academic programs and the academic achievements of our faculty and students.**

A stimulating and challenging academic program provide the core for preparing students to think critically and creatively, to engage in active citizenship, and to pursue meaningful work. Achieving academic excellence requires a faculty dedicated to the integration of teaching, learning, scholarship, and service, and a staff that aligns its services to faculty and student success. The following strategies contribute to this goal.

#### *Strategy 1: Curricular Transformation*

One core measure of the quality of the academic program is the success of the curriculum in addressing the needs of students as they enter the changing world of work. Another core measure is the extent to which students develop and demonstrate through their academic work and accomplishment, a growing quality and sophistication of intellectual thought, creativity and analysis. Keene State College is committed to a transformation of the curriculum and ongoing changes that keep curriculum and pedagogy current, incisive and of increasing quality.

#### *Move to four-credit curriculum*

The College's curriculum has undergone a transformation as a result of implementing a new four-credit curriculum. Each academic program has revised its courses updating them for content and taking advantage of the greater depth students will experience under this model. The four-credit curriculum advances the College's goal to enhance the intellectual life and development of our students.

#### *Implement Integrative Studies Program*

A second milestone is the introduction of new Integrative Studies Program (ISP) which replaces the former general education program. (<http://www.keene.edu/isp/ISfull%20version%203-30-06.mht>) The Integrative Studies Program facilitates an integrative teaching and learning process in which connections can be and are made. Integrative teaching and learning is purposeful, intentional and transparent. The program provides sustained opportunities to develop skills while engaging content, and to make connections across disciplines and beyond the classroom (applying learning, connecting theory and practice). The Integrative Studies Program is a foundation for a liberal arts education that embraces critical and creative thinking, intellectual inquiry and the life of the mind.

### *Integrate Technology Into The Curriculum*

As the College prepares students for the world they will enter, it must insure proficiency with technology. The College will support the integration of technology throughout the curriculum first through the development of an Academic Technology Plan that will articulate a vision for student learning and use of technology in pedagogy and then through specific initiatives that implement the goals of the plan.

### *Development Of Service Learning And Civic Engagement Initiatives*

Service and civic engagement, core values of Keene State College, must also be integrated into the curriculum. We support the pedagogy of civic engagement and service learning and will provide support to faculty to facilitate coursework that includes a service component through initiatives sponsored by Academic Affairs.

Co-curricular service and civic engagement experiences support and strengthen the academic program. Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, through the Center for Community Engagement, will work together to provide service opportunities for students and to meet the needs of our community partners.

### *Strategy 2. Measuring Student Achievement*

A fundamental part of these significant changes involves increased emphasis on learning outcomes assessment. Initiatives underway to enhance the assessment of student learning include:

- Teacher Education Portfolio Assessment
- Assessment and Development of Fundamental Quantitative Skills
- Student Affairs Assessment and Development of Learning Outcomes
- Enhanced Student E-learning Support, including the introduction of an electronic portfolio for collection of student work and better technology support for student projects.
- Development of learning outcomes and other measures of institutional effectiveness by all support departments.

Additionally, the College must provide professional development activities to support the work of faculty and staff as they begin to measure student achievement. Grant supported and campus initiatives will provide training and resources for faculty and staff to support student success and the measurement of student achievement.

### *Strategy 3. Academic Program Development*

During the period covered in this plan, the College will study and consider initiatives that enhance existing programs and create new programs that further our mission, generate new intellectual interest and enthusiasm of faculty and students, anticipate the needs and

conditions of a changing world, and serve the needs of our state, region and the world. Initiatives under development or proposed include:

*Enhancing existing programs.*

- Expanding the scope and vision for the Safety Studies Program
- Introducing a new Holocaust and Genocide Studies program to enhance the offerings currently in the Holocaust Studies minor
- Introducing a new Elementary Mathematics major
- Moving the option in Athletic Training to a new major

*Creating and implementing new programs*

- Creating a New Bachelor of Architecture Five-Year Program & concomitant new BS in Construction Management, building on the new B.S. in Architecture
- A new Honors Program (<http://www.keene.edu/academics/honors/>)
- A new Political Science major

**2. To clearly and continuously communicate our mission and values in all that we undertake, and to foster a strong sense of community on campus in pursuit of academic excellence.**

Keene State College, is a founder of the national Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges. The College's initiatives deepen its commitment to this mission and the values that distinguish our academic community. Strategies below aim to strengthen our community and the clarity by which we communicate our mission and values.

*Strategy 1: Enriching student communities*

Recognizing the developmental needs of incoming first year millennial students, the Department of Residential Life identified specific traditional residence halls to exclusively house freshmen. Hall programs are directed toward the clearly documented freshman adjustment needs providing personal support and academic skill development as well as an understanding of community rights and responsibilities.

The creation of 17 living/learning programs within specific residence halls provides the opportunity for students to integrate their academic, intellectual, and shared interests with others who have a desire to delve more deeply into content and connect subject matter. By virtue of living together, students extend learning beyond the classroom. By designating space for upperclass student living/learning programs in Pondsides III or special interest housing for first year students in Fiske and Mondanock Halls, participating students design meaningful programs and activities that draw together residents interested in sharing their knowledge and developing new skills and understandings.

Strategy 2: Partnerships that enhance the quality of life in the Monadnock region, New Hampshire, and the world

College's possess development potential, when leveraged with those of their communities, can create economic growth. This economic development potential is realized through projects such as housing development, research parks, technology commercialization, athletic/performance venues and k-12 partnerships. At Keene State College we are involved in partnerships that will create the following developments.

- Conversion of former rail-trails to a bike/recreation path along the Ashuelot River with the City of Keene
- Create a biodiesel production, research and testing facility with City, Investor and business partners
- Establish the Greater Keene Exposition Center, for recreation, sport, performance and exposition events
- Work with UNH to offer a BS in Nursing for KSC students
- Develop transfer articulation agreements with NH community technical colleges

Strategy 3: Valuing all members of our community: students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends.

- A new Alumni Center creation will provide an accessible facility to support programming that keeps alums connected to the College.
- The College's Diversity Commission prepared a Civility Script that communicates expectations to entering students at orientation.

Strategy 4: Environmental stewardship and sustainability.

Keene State College's President has signed on to a national climate change commitment. Supported by the Council on Sustainable Futures, the College sustains efforts that educate and demonstrate a responsible use of resources. The following initiatives are aimed at heightening shared environmental responsibility.

- Attaining our first Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design (LEED) recognition for Pondside 3 residence hall
- Modernizing the Central Heating Plant and adding Electrical production capability will reduce electrical consumption by 10 percent and the College's carbon footprint by 3 percent
- Entering the Energy Star program for all appliance purchases
- Closing the loop on grease waste diverting it from the waste stream into biodiesel fuel production, establishing a fuel quality testing program and conducting emissions testing to determine environmental benefits

### Strategy 5: Communicating Excellence

Through publications, assessment and physical changes, the College aims to inform the community and the public of its effectiveness in achieving goals and the quality of its programs and events. Several approved initiatives supporting this goal include:

- Developing campus strategic indicators that augment those reported to USNH Board of Trustees
- Develop information that conveys to campus, prospective students and national audiences accomplishments and recognition received
- Events Marquis for Corner of Main St. and Wyman Way

### **3. To invest in faculty and staff so they can provide leadership for the College's transformation.**

People will always be the College's most important resource and professional development opportunities are critical if the College is to be successful. Current efforts to create a human resources master plan will support this strategic goal as will the following initiatives currently underway.

#### Strategy 1: Ensure adequate full-time faculty to lead curriculum development, community service and student advising initiatives

The college will establish a goal for full-time faculty staffing that places it competitively with its peer public liberal arts colleges. Full-time faculty are expected to lead and support the college's curriculum transformation, fill campus and community service needs and mentor students through on-going academic advising.

#### Strategy 2: Implementing a Human Resources Plan

A Human Resources Master Plan is being developed and foundational work has begun to remedy productivity, equity, and morale issues on campus. Priority items for development and implementation include:

- Communicating range changes and title reconfigurations due to promotions, rightsizing, and reorganizations.
- Improving campus diversity through support for international employees
- Developing a comprehensive staff compensation philosophy that ensures a Living Wage, establishes benchmarks for range movement requests, codifies starting salary calculations, and emphasizes recognition for experience and education.
- Equity reviews for faculty and staff
- Faculty Training on responsibilities under the American Disabilities Act
- Training and Employee Development (Non-instructional)
- Development of strategic indicators of staffing levels as compared over time and to other institutions.

### *Strategy 3: Provide Leadership Opportunities*

The college will provide new opportunities for faculty and staff to assume leadership positions on the campus. The college will support this initiative by providing professional development experiences around leadership.

- Creation of assistant deans to develop faculty administrative leadership and support an enhanced role for the deans
- Continue periodic leadership seminars for directors, chairs and deans

### **4. To actively engage our students in a learning process that is grounded in service, citizenship, and ethical awareness.**

Active learning is the pedagogy of liberal education, and service is a core value of Keene State College. The College's service-learning initiatives lead to nearly 500,000 hours of student service and builds connections between the curriculum and the community.

### *Strategy 1: Create Opportunities for Service and Volunteerism*

- Establish a centralized, coordinated approach on campus to facilitate service and volunteer opportunities
- Develop more efficient means for community partners to connect with appropriate faculty and staff

### *Strategy 2: Create Partnerships to Support and Facilitate Student Engagement*

- Fostering Academic and Co-curricular service learning and community engagement opportunities for all students
- Integrative Studies courses will incorporate one of the following themes: ethics, diversity, global issues and social and environmental issues.
- Living-learning communities in campus residence halls
- The Learning Commons – Ctr. For Faculty/Student Engagement in Teaching/Scholarship/Learning/ Service

### **5. To provide high quality academic programs that are affordable and accessible to a wide range of learners.**

The "public" in "public liberal arts" grounds Keene State College's commitment to serve the citizens of New Hampshire, KSC offers access to higher education to many who could otherwise never consider such a step. The College remains committed to meeting the financial need of all students who apply on time.

Ensuring affordability requires the College attracts resources that help students manage the rising cost of a higher education

Strategy 1: Efficiently manage college resources

- Conduct assessment and evaluation of academic programs and department functions
- Explore ways in which to reduce and/or eliminate KSC's cost of credit card processing
- Increase IT accessibility for students with disabilities
  - Raise awareness across the college – workshops with faculty
  - Conduct research and identify adaptive technologies that will increase accessibility for students with disabilities
  - Assess physical resources for Disability Services Program
- LED Exit Lights – installing LED lights saves energy and increases College's environmental stewardship efforts.
- Develop Energy Measuring and Monitoring Benchmarks – collecting good data on building energy use provides us a starting place from which to improve upon with regards to building energy efficiencies

Strategy 2: Reduce geographical and/or time barriers to KSC by developing (on-line) e-learning course, programs and/or services.

- Implement new on-line application – Active Apply
- Expansion of e-commerce opportunities

Strategy 3: Support strategic priorities through endowments for academic excellence, student grants and need based financial awards and facility improvements.

- Transform and realign merit and talent scholarships to support access and affordability.
- The College will solicit gifts and endowments that further the College's goals for academic excellence, student access and affordability and athletic facilities. An endowed faculty chair in Holocaust & Genocide Studies and a scholarship program for Honors students are among the first accomplishment towards these goals.
- In 2009, Keene State College will celebrate its Centennial Year inviting the campus, community and alums to participate in events that recognize

## Appendix A

### College Planning Council Membership:

The Keene State College Planning Council will be co-chaired by the Vice President for Finance and Planning and a member of the faculty appointed by the President.

- Representatives of the KSCAA, KSCEA, the PAT and OS Councils, the College Senate, and Student Assembly (6)
- Representatives of the following groups: Alumni Association, CITC, Human Resources Master Plan Task Force, Enrollment Management Council, the Commission for Diversity and Multiculturalism, the President's Commission on the State of Women, the President's Commission for the Promotion of Wellness (7)
- Up to two appointments by the Keene State College President to insure representation of all areas of the College (2).

### Ex Officio Membership:

- The Executive Assistant to the President
- The Director of Institutional Research.
- Associate VP for Finance