

## **A Strategic Plan for Keene State College, 2009-2013**

### **A Vision of Excellence**

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 commitment and 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, natural sciences, social sciences, teacher education, and other professional studies.

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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

In order of priority, they are:

1. **Advancing academic excellence** - To significantly enhance and become recognized for the quality of our academic programs and the academic achievements of our faculty and students.
  2. **Communicating our mission and fostering community** - 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. **Investing in faculty and staff** - To invest in faculty and staff so they can provide leadership for the College's transformation.
  4. **Supporting service and citizenship** - To actively engage our students in a learning process that is grounded in service, citizenship, and ethical awareness.
  5. **Making KSC accessible and affordable** - To provide high-quality academic programs that are affordable and accessible to a wide range of learners.
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## The Strategic Planning Process

### A Commitment to Achieving our Goals

In 2005, President Giles-Gee led a campus wide process that defined our five strategic goals and five of our core values. 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

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. 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.

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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.

#### **1.1 *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 the [Integrative Studies Program](#) (ISP) which replaces the former general education program. 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.

Fully Integrate Technology Into The Curriculum - As the College prepares promising students for the world they will enter, it must insure proficiency with technology. The College supports the integration of technology throughout the curriculum through the implementation of an [Academic Technology Plan](#). This plan articulates a vision for student

learning and the use of technology in pedagogy and provides specific initiatives designed to accomplish the goal of the plan.

Development and Coordination Of Service Learning And Civic Engagement - Service and civic engagement, core values of Keene State College, must also be integrated into the curriculum. The College supports the pedagogy of civic engagement and service learning and provides support to faculty to develop coursework that includes a service component through the services provided by the Center for Engagement, Learning, and Teaching (CELT). In addition, co-curricular service and civic engagement experiences support and strengthen the academic program. Student Affairs and Academic Affairs are working together to support civic engagement through the American Democracy Project and through the collaboration of the Center for Community Engagement and CELT, provide service opportunities for students and to meet the needs of our community partners.

## **1.2 Strategy 2. Measuring Student Achievement**

A fundamental part of these significant changes involves increased emphasis on the assessment of learning outcomes. Methods and tools used to enhance the assessment of student learning include:

- Teacher Education Assessment
  - Portfolio Assessment
  - TK20 used to assessment programmatic outcomes
- Integrated Studies Program Outcomes Assessment
- Student Affairs Assessment and Development of Learning Outcomes
- Annual College Wide Assessment Day
- Development of learning outcomes and other measures of institutional effectiveness by all support departments
- Adoption of an assessment management and tracking information system; TracDat
- Pilot Evaluation of the Collegiate Learning Assessment

Additionally, the College will continue to provide professional development activities to support the work of faculty and staff as they measure student achievement.

## **1.3 Strategy 3. Academic Program Development**

The College will continue to study and consider initiatives that sustain and enhance existing programs and that create new programs which further our mission, generate new intellectual interests and enthusiasm, anticipate the needs and conditions of a changing world, and serve the needs of our state, region and the world.

Some examples of sustaining existing academic programs include:

- Replacing music practice modules in Redfern
- Rehabilitating the ceramic studio
- Renovating facilities for Professional and Graduate Studies—Joslin, Adams and Butterfield

Examples of enhancing existing academic programs include:

- Expanding the scope and vision for the Safety Studies Program by introducing a Safety Honors Program for the B.S. in [Safety Studies](#)
- Funding Media Arts Center Technology
- Introducing an undergraduate research scholars pilot program for entering students in Sciences & Social Sciences
- Redesigning the [Biology curriculum](#) through the addition of integrated laboratory/lecture experiences
- Creating the [Center for Engagement, Learning and Teaching](#)
- Providing academic excellence and leadership in the visual arts by making better use of the existing collections and exhibitions and skilled staff at the [Thorne-Sagendorph Art Gallery](#)
- Creating a mobile computer laboratory for Physical Education
- Seeking Chemistry program accreditation

These new programs have been or soon will be created and implemented:

- [College Honors Program](#)
- B.A. in [Mathematics Education for Elementary Teachers](#)
- B.S. in [Architecture](#)
- B.A. in [Holocaust and Genocide Studies](#)
- B.S. in [Athletic Training](#)
- B. A. in [Political Science](#)
- B.S. in [Sustainable Product Design Innovation](#)
- Minor in [Criminal Justice Studies](#)

**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, 25 campuses across the country that commit to providing superior liberal arts and sciences education to their students, evidenced by the allocation of resources and outcomes achieved. 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.

**2.1 *Strategy 1: Enriching student communities to facilitate personal growth***

First Year Residence Halls - Recognizing the developmental needs of incoming first year students, the Department of Residential Life identified specific traditional residence halls to exclusively house first year students. Hall programs are directed toward the clearly

documented first year adjustment needs, providing personal support and academic skill development as well as an understanding of community rights and responsibilities.

New Student Orientation - To facilitate community development and affiliation with the college for incoming students, the entire college hosts a five-day New Student Orientation program held immediately before classes begin. The program includes building connections between students and academic advisors, providing students with tools and resources for personal and academic success and a concentration on community building for students.

Living-Learning Communities - 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 upper class student living/learning programs in Pondside III or special interest housing for first year students in Fiske and Monadnock Halls, participating students design meaningful programs and activities that draw together residents interested in sharing their knowledge and developing new skills and understandings.

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

Colleges possess economic development potential, that when leveraged with community resources, 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 result in the following accomplishments:

- Converting former rail-trails to a bike/recreation path along the Ashuelot River with the City of Keene
- Creating a biodiesel production, research and testing facility with city, investor and business partners
- Establishing the Greater Keene Exposition Center, for recreation, sport, performance and exposition events
- Working with UNH to offer a B.S. in Nursing for KSC students
- Continue to grow transfer articulation agreements with the seven campuses of the Community College System of New Hampshire and Keene State College. These articulation agreements support NH students considering transfer to KSC for a baccalaureate degree and facilitate timely degree completion.

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

The College greatly values its strong community and continues to foster and sustain this community through the following activities.

- Creating an Alumni Center that will provide an accessible facility to support programming that keeps alumni connected to the College.
- Using a Civility Script, prepared by the College Diversity Commission, that communicates expectations to entering students at orientation.
- Involving students, faculty, and staff in the redesign of student course evaluations
- Creating, staffing, and funding a new Office of Diversity and Multiculturalism
- Creating a director of Multicultural Student Affairs

#### 2.4 *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 Pondsides III residence hall
- Modernizing the Central Heating Plant and adding electrical production capability to 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 by diverting it from the waste stream into biodiesel fuel production, establishing a fuel quality testing program, and conducting emissions testing to determine environmental benefits
- Installing LED lights to increase the College's environmental stewardship efforts
- Reconstructing Wyman Way helped to reduce the College's water use by 30%
- Moving the recycling coordinator and support offices, as well as the recycling functions, to a suitably sized location

#### 2.5 *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 objective include:

- Developing campus strategic indicators that augment those reported to USNH Board of Trustees
- Developing information that conveys to campus, prospective students and national audiences the College's accomplishments and recognition received
- Creating a new office focused on online communication and Advancement technology
- Creating Sports Information Officer position
- Completing the Portfolio Database project in College and Media Relations

### **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 to the College's on-going success. Current efforts to create a human resources master plan will support this strategic goal, as will the following strategies which are currently underway.

#### **3.1 *Strategy 1: Provide a level of full-time faculty sufficient to provide instruction, lead curriculum development, community service, and student advising initiatives and other vital services***

Faculty Staffing Plan - 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. To begin to address the need for additional full-time faculty, an initiative to create three new faculty lines per year has been implemented every year since FY2008.

#### **3.2 *Strategy 2: Implementing a Human Resources Master Plan***

A Human Resources Master Planning process 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.
- Carrying out equity reviews for faculty and staff
- Training faculty on responsibilities under the American Disabilities Act
- Training and Employee Development (Non-instructional)
- Developing strategic indicators of staffing levels compared over time and to other institutions.
- Converting term positions in Advancement Division to permanent status
- Implementing HRIS for position management, performance evaluation, and applicant tracking

#### **3.3 *Strategy 3: Provide Leadership and Development Opportunities***

The College will continue to provide new opportunities for faculty and staff to assume leadership positions on the campus, as well as provide professional development for faculty and staff. The College supports this strategic through the following initiatives:

- 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
- Continue individual professional enhancement funding and pooled professional development funding for faculty
- Supplement funding for the Professional Administrative and Technical (PAT) and Operating Staff (OS) councils to provide development opportunities for staff.

### 3.4 *Strategy 4: Provide Enhanced Student Support Services*

A chief priority for the College is to effectively meet the needs of its students, which calls for periodically reassessing its student support services. Examples of reorganized and improved student support services include:

- Reorganization of human resource needs in the Office of Disability Services to reflect the increased demand and expertise required to accommodate students
- Transition five part-time coaches to full-time status in order to enhance student experiences in Athletics
- Expanding staff appointment lengths in order to provide more appointment hours and meet student demand in Counseling Center
- Creation of a coordinator of Employer Relations and Student Career Advisor

## 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 over 450,000 hours of student service annually and build connections between the curriculum and the community.

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

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

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

- Fostering Academic and Co-curricular service learning and community engagement opportunities for all students
- All Integrative Studies courses incorporate one of the following themes: ethics, diversity, global issues and social and environmental issues.
- Living-learning communities in campus residence halls

## 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. Keene State College offers access to higher education to many who could otherwise never consider such a step. The College remains committed to helping to meet the financial need of all students who apply on time, with a particular focus on in-state students.

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

**5.1** *Strategy 1: Efficiently manage college resources from both a cost savings and a revenue generating perspective*

- 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
- Develop Energy Measuring and Monitoring Benchmarks – collecting better data on building energy use from which to improve building energy efficiencies
- Review Telecommunications Funding & Billing Practices to Ensure Campus Objectives are Met
- Increase budget analysis capacity to provide dedicated support to Academic Affairs/Schools
- Study feasibility of transitioning to smart card technology for student ID operations

**5.2** *Strategy 2: Reduce geographical and/or time barriers to KSC by developing online courses, programs and/or services.*

- On-line application process including use of the Common Application and on-line scholarship application process
- Expansion of e-commerce opportunities
- Course catalog published exclusively on-line
- Introduction of hybrid on-line/on-campus courses

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

- Celebrate the College's Centennial in 2009 by inviting the campus community and alumni to participate in recognition events
- Transform and realign merit and talent scholarships to support access and affordability.
- Solicit gifts and endowments that further the College's goals for academic excellence, student access and affordability and athletic facilities

- Endowed faculty chair in Holocaust & Genocide Studies
- Scholarship funding for students in the College Honors Program
- Endowed faculty chair in Chemistry
- Enhance development staffing to fund scholarships, academic programs, faculty, and scholarship
- Hire an additional assistant director of Student Financial Services

## 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

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.