

Becoming Lafayette: *A Vision for our 3rd Century*

Strategic Planning Update

October 2, 2024

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Strategic Plan Timeline

INITIATE

- Steering Committee organized
- Information gathering (surveys, focus groups, listening sessions)
- Institutional mission and values drafted and workshopped

DESIGN & ITERATE

- Distilled & synthesized themes from Working Group recommendations
- Refined strategic priorities with inputs from Steering, F&I, CMP, Tech Advisory Committees and SLT
- Began drafting strategic plan

**SPRING
2024**

**FALL
2024**

**SUMMER
2024**

AY 2023

EVALUATE & IDEATE

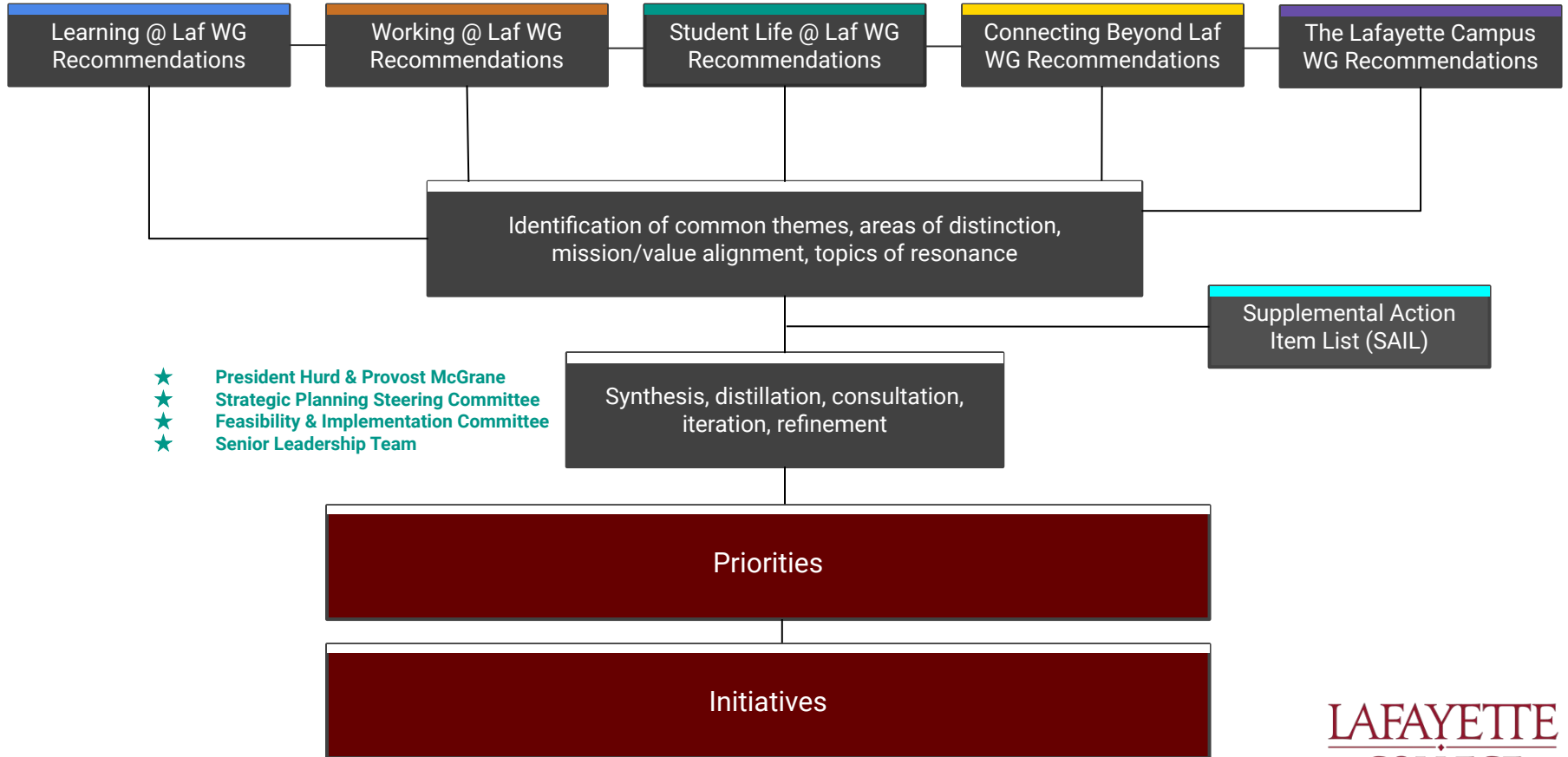
- Finalized drafts of institutional mission and values
- Mobilized Campus-Wide Working Groups and established strategic focus areas
- Conducted market, competitive, & stakeholder analyses
- Strategic goals & action steps from Working Groups

SOCIALIZE & FINALIZE

- Refine priorities and develop Signature Initiatives
- Complete draft strategic plan and present to campus community for feedback
- Finalize strategic plan and present for Board of Trustee approval

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From Recommendations to Priorities & Initiatives



Mission

Chartered in 1826, Lafayette College is dedicated to excellence in undergraduate education. Students are engaged in a transformative educational experience that bridges the liberal arts, engineering, and interdisciplinary study. The College fosters intellectual inquiry, artistic exploration, scholarship, and personal growth in a vibrant, diverse, and inclusive community. Lafayette students become critical thinkers, creative problem-solvers, and responsible citizens of the world.

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LAFAYETTE
COLLEGE

Values

Engaged Learning

We cultivate a residential undergraduate learning environment where faculty and staff foster the interplay among the liberal arts, engineering, and interdisciplinary study, and nurture intellectual curiosity, creativity, and ingenuity.

Community Belonging

We value mutual respect, collaboration, and empathy in an accessible, inclusive, and diverse community where everyone can flourish.

Responsible Citizenship

We are thoughtful members of the global community, educating our students to be compassionate, ethical leaders who constructively participate in society—from Easton and the Lehigh Valley, to the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world.

Purposeful Sustainability

We value an environmentally healthy and socially just world, managing resources with care and accountability, integrating sustainability into our academic and campus life, and pursuing innovative solutions to complex local and global challenges.

Institutional Excellence

We are dedicated to excellence in teaching, learning and scholarship, across co-curricular pursuits, and through the multifaceted work of the College, and hold one another to the highest standards in our respective fields.

The Lafayette Commitment

- ❖ A commitment to undergraduate education squarely centering students and the student experience in the excellent and ambitious scholarship, teaching, and mentorship of faculty and staff
- ❖ An inclusive community of the whole, one that provides an equitable and supportive educational environment that promotes student learning and success regardless of personal circumstance
- ❖ A call to action, that *all* members of the Lafayette community – students, faculty, and staff – have access to the resources necessary to ensure that Lafayette graduates are the critical thinkers, creative problem-solvers, and responsible citizens of the world that our mission aspires for them to be
- ❖ A comprehensive plan that provides every student with a world-class undergraduate learning experience, inclusive of the liberal arts, engineering, and interdisciplinary study

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Dedicated to the Liberal Arts

- ❖ Anchored in the Liberal Arts through a Common Course of Study that ensures all students engage in inquiry from a variety of academic disciplines and interdisciplinary perspectives
- ❖ Committed teacher-scholars and talented staff who encourage students to apply their knowledge and intellectual curiosity through research, field work, creative projects, and co-curricular engagement
- ❖ Exposure to diverse ways of knowing and application of this knowledge to challenges of the day both in and out of the classroom, including engagement with core issues of democracy, sustainability, technology, and community
- ❖ Driven by the belief in a Liberal Arts education as foundational to a productive and meaningful future of responsible global citizenship

Five Priorities

- I. Building into the “And”: *Liberal Arts, Engineering, and Interdisciplinarity*
- II. Experience and Collaboration: *Easton, the Lehigh Valley, and the Globe*
- III. Democracy and Its Technologies: *History, Design, and Civic Practice*
- IV. Creating Ecosystems of Connection: *Inclusivity, Belonging, and Stewardship*
- V. Strengthening Our Infrastructure: *People, Process, and Place*

Building into the “And”: Liberal Arts, Engineering, and Interdisciplinarity

The integration of engineering and the liberal arts is rooted deeply in Lafayette’s common core, and we remain dedicated to realizing the range of opportunities this combination affords across the full curriculum and beyond. We are committed to building upon the strength of existing collaborative initiatives and interdisciplinary programs while generating new resources, spaces, and faculty lines for an educational experience that guarantees opportunities to discover, design, inquire, and create across domains of knowledge.

- ❖ Improve structures and expand opportunities for faculty and students to work across existing departments and programs
- ❖ Explore opportunities for social innovation, creative scholarship and activity, entrepreneurial mindsets, and collaboration and integration across centers and programs
- ❖ Refine and resource academic advising to ensure close advising and mentorship structures
- ❖ Increase resources for an endowed Faculty Excellence Fund
- ❖ Create an Interdisciplinary Challenge Lab that invites faculty and students from across the institution to collaborate on projects

Experience and Collaboration: Easton, the Lehigh Valley, and the Globe

Lafayette has long valued experiential learning, community engagement, and the interplay between coursework and professional opportunities locally and globally. The College is committed to strengthening infrastructure and funding to provide increased access to co-curricular learning experiences, including undergraduate research and creative projects, internships, place-based and global learning experiences, including study abroad and community-engaged scholarship.

- ❖ Expand opportunities across scholarship, pedagogy, and experiential learning for students to engage in Easton and the Lehigh Valley, including connections to employers and industry and training in pre-professional pathways that encourage students to consider the Lehigh Valley as a viable and attractive employment destination
- ❖ Create a support structure for economic and community development ensuring that the College is an active participant in the growth and success of the city of Easton and the Lehigh Valley
- ❖ Optimize resources and support structures for faculty and staff who supervise, design, and/or direct student experiential learning opportunities
- ❖ Offer expanded pathways for global connection and development for all members of the Lafayette community
- ❖ Build on our exceptional career services and advising through robust partnerships with our alumni

Democracy and Its Technologies: History, Design, and Civic Practice

Lafayette, as an institution committed to the liberal arts, has been deeply involved in scholarly and experiential explorations of democracy and the technologies that mediate it. The digital infrastructures and tools that shape our communities of civic practice, of dialogue, and of education are crucial to understand, and Lafayette is at the forefront in its interdisciplinary approaches to ethical AI and critical information studies, administrative law & technology, media, organizational studies, and areas of engineering, design, and scientific research. These issues also undergird our campus understanding of how to foster student learning inside the classroom and out toward engaged and active global citizenship.

- ❖ Build a campus-wide Democracy and Its Technologies Initiative with national reach that includes programming, new spaces for collaborative encounters, curricular enhancements, and extensive public engagement
- ❖ Leverage Lafayette's strengths to create forums for exploring AI, design, ethics, and equitable uses of technology
- ❖ Promote the conditions for civic participation and public discourse both on campus and beyond through constructive dialogue
- ❖ Integrate components of digital fluency and creativity into the first-year experience
- ❖ Provide a co-curricular framework across residential life, student activities, and advising that fosters a diverse and inclusive learning ground for democratic and restorative practices

Creating Ecosystems of Connection: Inclusivity, Belonging, and Stewardship

Inclusivity and belonging are vital components of a campus community that values the well-being of its students, faculty, and staff, and are critical to creating a healthy living and learning environment. To develop a space in which all can thrive, the College will cultivate the conditions for mutual trust and an appreciation for the unique contributions that each individual brings. From this place of connection, a foundation for engagement with one another and the natural environment will be established through a thriving residential program, athletics, and rich curricular and co-curricular engagement. This illustrates the College's broad view of fostering wellness and belonging as methodologies for teaching, research, and efforts to sustain our physical and natural surroundings.

- ❖ Increase investments in an inclusive workplace environment and deepen institutional commitment to recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and staff
- ❖ Expand student health and counseling services, prevention, and wellness programming
- ❖ Structure a student success hub that brings together resources from across the campus
- ❖ Create and upgrade natural and built spaces that support accessibility, environmental sustainability, and well-being
- ❖ Center the College's Division I athletics and recreation programming as a resource for building well-being, competitive excellence, and connection, joy, play, and pride in our community
- ❖ Leverage the residential living and learning experience to foster inclusion, interpersonal growth and leadership development

Strengthening Our Infrastructure: People, Process, and Place

To meet the commitments set forth in this plan, faculty, staff, and students must have access to the tools necessary to achieve these goals. A sustained focus on excellence requires investment in and careful stewardship of fundamental resources including a diverse and inclusive workforce, the physical plant, digital, and financial infrastructure. In all of our work we must be intentional in foregrounding purposeful sustainability with our mission and values close at hand.

- ❖ Refine compensation strategy and invest in professional development for faculty and staff
- ❖ Continue commitment to excellence and affordability through implementing innovative policies and processes that open the doors of Lafayette to talented students from all backgrounds
- ❖ Design physical and virtual spaces that demonstrate Lafayette's commitment to accessibility, belonging, and inclusion
- ❖ Support and sustain foundational infrastructure (physical, systematic, financial, digital) that meets the needs of faculty, staff, and students in a data and technology-rich environment
- ❖ Build campus planning and operations around principles of environmentally sustainable development guided by the most current Climate Action Plan, including improving connectivity between our three physical campuses

Priorities and Tactics → Signature Initiatives

Priority

Thematic area of emphasis identified during the strategic planning process as vital to the College's ability to pursue its mission and uphold its values

Tactic

Specific action that the College intends to take in order to pursue its priorities and ultimately fulfill its strategic vision

Signature Initiative

Bold, distinctive initiative whose focus combines multiple priority areas and/or foregrounds that which is unique and ambitious about Lafayette College

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Signature Initiatives

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Interdisciplinary Challenge Lab: *Generating Solutions Together*

- Create resources, structures, and physical space for faculty and students from across campus to elevate and integrate academic expertise within and across disciplines to explore novel ideas, design possibilities, and develop solutions to societal problems
- Enhance opportunities and academic infrastructure for new academic lines and collaborative models of teaching, scholarship, creative practice
- Build upon the interdisciplinary work of the academic Centers across campus to foreground commitments to inclusivity, design, and inquiry across campus
- Public workshops, showcases, and recognition for projects and initiatives

The Lehigh Valley Immersive: *Internship and Practice*

- Leverage and promote the Lehigh Valley's status as a national hub of industry, manufacturing, and logistics
- Establish an internship/externship pipeline connecting Lafayette students with local industry partners
- Integrate experiential and pre-professional pathways in co-curricular settings that connect community and economic development in the Lehigh Valley

Democracy and Its Technologies: *Shaping Societies Together*

- Foreground the significant strengths of the academic program and libraries across studies of democracy, technologies, and ethics to create a collaborative initiative or center on campus for the study of Democracy and Its Technologies
- Work with experts on campus and across the globe to build networks and generate projects through creative scholarship and practice that undergird symposia, digital initiatives, and engagement with industry and government
- Infuse critical digital fluency and engagement with technology into the student experience

Living and Learning Well: *The Residential Experience*

- Develop a residential curricular model that enhances the living/learning environment for all students
- Create physical spaces that contribute to learning, belonging, and well-being including areas for community gathering, group and collaborative study, and space for well-being and self-care
- Consider dedicated first-year living areas to better target resources in the critical first-year
- Ensure that all living areas have an identity that fosters inclusion, a feeling of home and school pride

The Metzgar Campus: *Ecosystems in Action*

- Engage the campus as a “living laboratory” where learning, research, and creative activity connect with the natural world
- Develop spaces dedicated to human wellness and connection to one another and the natural environment
- Create intercollegiate athletic and recreational spaces for our campus and broader communities

The Student Success Hub: *A Co-curricular Approach*

- Create a centralized student resource hub democratizing and increasing access to resources
- Promote co-location of complementary services, encouraging collaboration and creativity amongst various departments

Strategic and Master Planning



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Questions for Discussion

- What resonates most with you as you consider the context for these priorities and the mission and values we set together last spring? Is there anything missing that you hoped would be included?
- What feels most aspirational and visionary? Are there priorities where you would like to see the College push harder on a more visionary approach?
- Which signature initiatives do you believe will resonate most within the campus community?



Timeline

August

- Share progress and receive feedback on draft plan from Steering, Feasibility & Implementation, and Senior Leadership Team

September

- Provide draft plan materials to the campus community
- Focused feedback sessions with students, faculty, staff, and Easton community members

October/November

- Present draft materials of the strategic plan to the Board of Trustees
- Continue on-campus discussions and stakeholder engagement
- Complete revisions and begin implementation planning
- Engage with potential donors and external stakeholders

December

- Final draft of strategic plan completed and approved by Board of Trustees