

# ***Veritas est Lux***

## **Implementation Plan**

December 2019

Lawrence's Strategic Plan, *Veritas est Lux*, identifies a wide range of institutional aspirations. Extensive research and institutional data have enabled the University to focus on our most pressing needs in light of the rapidly changing higher education sector. The goal is to establish a clear and highly focused approach for advancing Lawrence's development over the next three years. The implementation plan will allow us to focus intensively on a few strategic initiatives that will allow us to continue to realize our mission of the "development of intellect and talent, the pursuit of knowledge and understanding, the cultivation of sound judgement and respect for the perspectives of others."

This document outlines five priorities:

- Sustain Financial Equilibrium,
- Deepen the Academic Program,
- Raise Retention Rates,
- Strengthen the Co-Curricular Experience,
- Support the Academic Enterprise.

The effort to accomplish each priority cuts across every administrative and academic organization of the University. The initiatives within each priority are intended to be mutually supportive and interconnected. Paramount to our work over the next three years is to secure financial equilibrium for the University for the next decade or more. We will also need to continue to cultivate a campus learning culture in which every student as well as every faculty and staff member can thrive.

The five priorities which grew out of our strategic plan were developed through a process that began at the Spring 2019 meeting of the Board of Trustees. The President's Cabinet colleagues devoted its summer retreat to establishing priorities, and the priorities have been refined in collaboration with many campus and volunteer leadership groups. The Board of Trustees unanimously endorsed these priorities at the Fall 2019 meeting. The specific initiatives outlined with each priority may change as the University's circumstances evolve, and in consultation with appropriate shared governance entities.

We will use these documents to guide and track our work for this and the next two academic years. We will rely on Academic Year 22-23 to develop the next strategic plan and also complete any remaining initiatives enumerated in these priorities.

## Sustain Financial Equilibrium

As Lawrence implements the *Veritas est Lux* strategic plan, the stewardship of the University's financial position is a critical component of its overall health. With a strong and growing endowment, there is a solid foundation for intergenerational equity, but there remains an important need to have balanced operating budgets that do not draw excessively from this resource.

Faced with demographic changes and sector-wide revenue pressures, the University must focus on sustainable revenues and optimizing its expense base to ensure that Lawrentians have equitable access to their education while providing adequate resources for a high-quality learning and living experience. Along with the successful conclusion of the \$220 million *Be the Light!* campaign, the desired goal of a balanced budget with a modest contingency surplus has imbedded goals of \$3 million in new net revenues and \$3.5 million in operating expense reduction.

### \$3 million Additional Net Revenue Goal

The net revenue goal is achievable through a combination of net student revenues (NSR) and auxiliary revenues. Net student revenue goals include actions over the next three recruiting cycles for fall matriculants in 2020, 2021 and 2022 that will increase the student population to an average of 1,500 student FTE:

- Annual matriculation of 400 first-year students is a primary goal of our admissions team. With strong entering classes in Fall 2018 and Fall 2019, significant work to expand the breadth of our recruiting strength and build stronger affinity in the applicant pool has set a path to build on these classes in future years.
- Improve first and second year retention (see 'Raise Retention Rates' priority document).
- Expand transfer admissions to 40 students per year, including the addition of a transfer coordinator to help transfer students navigate the path into and through LU, and a future implementation of Transferology, an online tool which helps match transferring students with appropriate institutions. **New investment required.**
- Identify new visiting/exchange programs following on the prior successes of the Waseda exchange program.
- Launch the Bachelor of Musical Arts (BMA) degree to expand the capabilities of the conservatory of music (see 'Deepen the Academic Program' priority document).
- Launch women's hockey as a Division III sport to attract a new segment of students.
- Continue curricular enhancements in areas of increasing student demand (see 'Deepen the Academic Program' priority document).

Additionally, a number of auxiliary revenue enhancement programs are in development and/or implementation:

- Expand campus rental income to provide additional revenue streams from corporate events, weddings, camps and conferences that bring activity to the campus during underutilized times. New staffing here is focusing on building a portfolio of clients and pipeline of events.
- Develop an executive education partnership with the business school of UW Madison with campus rental and revenue-sharing goals.
- Change policy for various student activities and athletics/wellness facilities to follow best practices and generate modest additional revenues.

- Update policies for student health insurance and medical services on campus to allow some billing of insurance for on-campus health services, potentially creating additional net revenues. **New investment required.**
- Simplify and standardize corporate sponsorship of campus events to generate additional revenues.

While a growing endowment will support some of the actions needed to grow NSR, many NSR and auxiliary revenue initiatives require investments of staffing, technology and other resources which will be included in the five-year financial model.

### **\$3.5 million in Operating Expense Reductions**

From 2015-2017, the University achieved \$3.4 million in operating expense reduction initiatives during a time of sector-wide pressure on NSR. This allowed for significant reinvestment in the academic program, student success and mental health and wellness. The new financial equilibrium goal utilizes the shared governance processes and institutional priorities from these previously achieved savings to achieve permanent savings to the operating budget. To date, we have identified \$3.0 million in cost savings and are reviewing what further actions may take us beyond that goal.

The most significant impact of the cost savings has been a reduction of 12 positions which took place in July 2019. Eight filled positions were separated, and a further four open positions were permanently eliminated from the operating budget. Further savings are anticipated from additional departmental budget savings, technology and operational efficiency processes, and potential institutional cost reductions from employee benefits and debt management.

Many of the savings identified have one-time and ongoing implementation costs which are being identified and included in our financial planning. Separation packages and investments in technology resources and staffing are core components of the efficiencies gained through these initiatives.

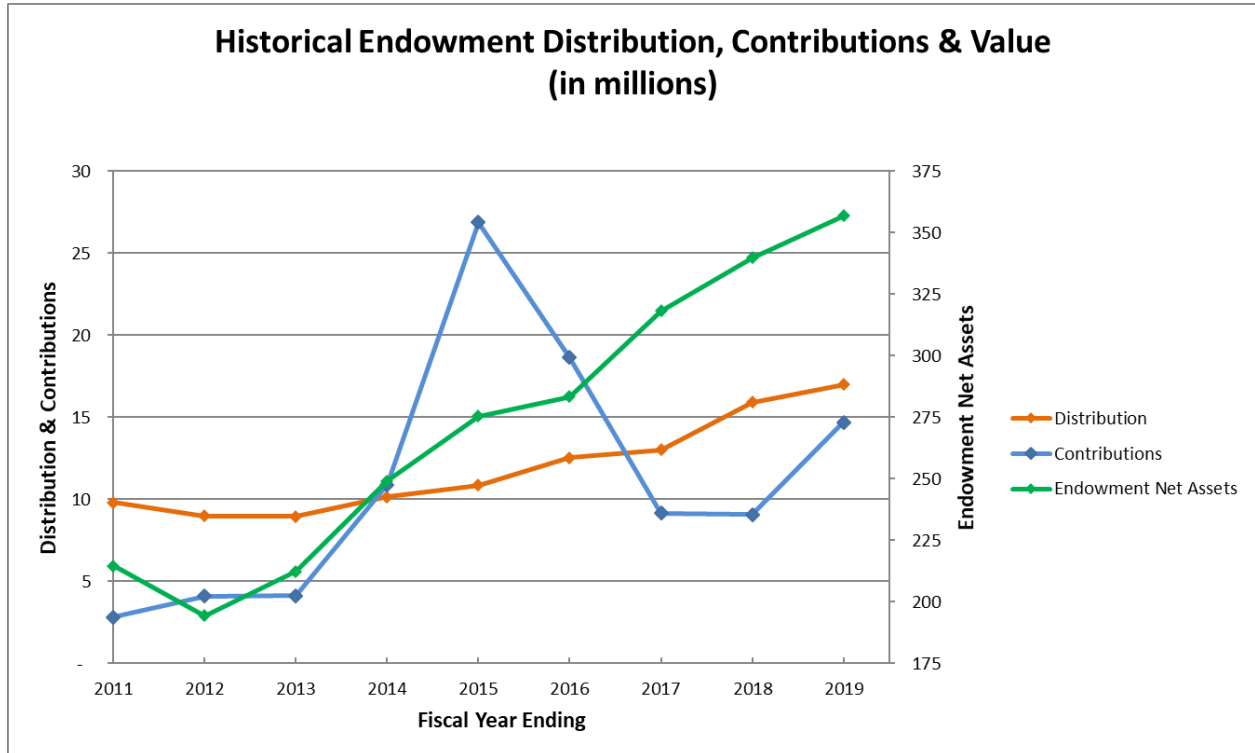
### **Measuring Success**

Progress toward financial equilibrium is, in many respects, the financial expression of success in the other strategic priorities. Checkpoints of matriculation, enrollment and retention on an annual and by-term basis will provide an evaluation that net student revenue goals are achievable and progressing. The five year model will show the financial impact of base assumptions which will inform annual budgeting processes and allow updated enrollment data to inform course correction. Auxiliary revenue checkpoints for each initiative will be monitored and reported periodically and used to evaluate if goals are set properly.

Measurement and reporting of savings is ongoing, with management reviewing initiative-level savings and providing institutional review of savings progress to faculty, staff and trustees periodically.

The impact of each initiative included in the revenue and expense targets is included in the five-year financial model, as well as the necessary one-time or ongoing investments to achieve them. Progress on NSR initiatives will be included in enrollment management reporting, while auxiliary revenue and operating expense reduction goals will be regularly tracked and reported as part of financial reporting processes. Progress toward goals will be used to inform updates to the multi-year financial model for regular reporting.

## Existing Strengths



The *Be the Light!* campaign has strengthened the endowment significantly, and the Lawrence Fund continues to bring just under \$4 million in unrestricted resources each year. The success of the campaign-in-progress has helped the endowment grow from \$185 million to \$357 million since 2012, providing additional need-based financial aid, endowed faculty positions and significant programming to support our students. With one year remaining in the campaign, we are confident if the Lawrence community continues to support the university as it has over the past five years that we will reach the goal of \$220 million, significantly changing the trajectory of our institution.

Lawrence has worked through several cycles of improvement in application growth, fine-tuning of financial award distribution and is moving close to targeted class sizes in fall 2018 and 2019. Continued work on program communication, segmentation and affinity-building build upon this previous work. Similarly, Lawrence has been able to build habits of renewal and adaptation in its operations and physical campus, achieving significant savings in recent years through negotiation and cost containment.

## Impediments to Success

Sector-wide enrollment and discount factors are a significant risk to revenue goals. With changing procedures around student recruitment and student behavior in the admissions cycle, this is the largest risk by far. Savings goals risk includes the risk of damage to program and employee morale and retention by over-cutting.

## **Deepen the Academic Program**

The plan to deepen Lawrence's academic program aims to update and revitalize our academic offerings in both the College and the Conservatory. The goal is not only to bring our academic program into stronger alignment with national trends but also to further elevate our reputation for offering a transformative undergraduate education. This refreshed academic program will provide rich and innovative intellectual and artistic experiences that prepare students for rewarding, productive lives after Lawrence. We expect that these initiatives will also enhance ongoing recruitment and retention efforts.

In the next three years, we will launch a new degree program, establish several new fields of study, and overhaul course offerings in many departments, particularly in our STEM disciplines. Parallel to these curricular priorities, we will revise our system of advising to ensure that our students take full advantage of the opportunities these new academic developments offer.

### **New Degree Program: The Bachelor of Musical Arts**

Our goal in adding a third music degree option is to recruit and better serve students interested in jazz and improvisational music who also want to split their studies between coursework in the College and the Conservatory more evenly within a four year degree. We will accomplish this goal over the next three years by admitting progressively larger first-year cohorts into the B.M.A. between Fall 2020 and Fall 2023.

This initiative requires no additional faculty resources. We will need to carefully track the development of this program and its relationship to our existing B. Mus. and dual degree programs, as the aim is to grow Conservatory enrollments by 30 students, not to redistribute current Conservatory enrollments.

### **New Major: Creative Writing**

The goal of this initiative is to recruit and retain students interested in majoring in creative writing, a group we have not consistently attracted, given that Lawrence currently offers only a minor in creative writing. Interest in creative writing has grown nationally, as skills learned in the major have application well beyond poetry and fiction writing (for instance, in advertising, public relations, grant-writing, and product development).

The English department is finalizing a proposal to completely recast its single major curriculum into two tracks in literary studies and creative writing to better capture this interest.

Assuming a program launch of Fall 2020, we will measure progress through annually growing numbers of applicants and matriculants who applied to Lawrence in order to pursue creative writing. We have existing strengths in creative writing; as with the B.M.A., no new faculty resources are required.

### **New Minor: Data Science**

With this priority, we will capitalize on our growing expertise in statistics and data science (two new hires in the past two years in Mathematics—one made possible through a strategic reallocation of teaching resources—with additional strong junior faculty expertise in Biology and Economics). The long-term goal is to eventually offer a data sciences major that will make us more competitive in student recruitment and meet growing demand among current students.

The immediate goal is to develop a data science minor for launch in Fall 2020. Progress will be measured by the successful development and rollout of the curriculum, then by student engagement, as measured in enrollments and course evaluations. A data science major by 2023 would be a “stretch” goal, but not impossible.

Faculty working in this field need access to high performance computing, and Lawrence does not yet have this capacity. We will need this critical requirement for the program to be successful.

### **New Fields Within Existing Majors: Cognitive Neuroscience, Social and Organizational Psychology**

Searches underway this year will allow us to offer new courses in Cognitive Neuroscience, Psychology, and Innovation & Entrepreneurship. The aim is to recruit faculty with fresh perspectives and new approaches to areas of the curriculum already enjoying student interest. In this goal, strength builds on strength.

The faculty in Neuroscience and Cognitive Science will be designing an entirely new major, with multiple tracks, once the Dennis and Charlot Singleton Professor in Cognitive Neuroscience joins the faculty (anticipated Fall 2020). Several new courses specializing in neuroimaging and cognitive science will support the new major, and will be in place by the 2023-24 academic year. New courses in the art and science of collaboration, offered by the J. Thomas Hurvis Professor in Social and Organizational Psychology and cross-listed in Psychology and Innovation & Entrepreneurship, will expand curricular options for students with interests in human relations, management, conflict resolution, and social change.

### **New Paths Through Existing Majors: Impact of the HHMI “Inclusive Excellence” and Mellon Inclusive Pedagogy Initiatives; Curricular Revisions After External Reviews.**

We are entering the second year of a five-year, \$1 million grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute to completely revise introductory-level courses in Biology, Physics, and Chemistry to support inclusive excellence and the third year of a \$500,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation to adopt inclusive pedagogies in our entry-level courses in the humanities and humanistic social sciences. The focus here is curricular transformation that will deploy project-based learning, flipped classrooms, and other techniques proven to boost students success, particularly among first generation and low-income students.

This work will be nearly complete by the 2022-23 academic year. HHMI requires the university to establish metrics and assessments for measuring progress toward increases in student success and retention within STEM majors. We will rely on those instruments to track our success in this initiative. Annual reports to Mellon have reported curricular renewal in several departments, including Global Studies, Psychology, and Musicology.

In addition, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, and Biochemistry all underwent external reviews of their curriculum. Modifications of courses and course sequencing in response to reviewer recommendations are also underway in those departments, as they are for the department of History, as well. External reviews planned for the 2019-20 academic year in Philosophy, Music Theory, Environmental Studies, and Economics likely also will spur curricular transformation.

### **Improved Academic Advising**

The goal of this initiative is to improve faculty academic advising of students as part of a multi-pronged effort to raise our graduation rate. The 2018-19 academic year saw the creation of a new standing committee of the faculty, the Academic Advising committee. That committee will oversee the implementation of an “advising syllabus” setting out procedures and best practices for academic advising.

By Fall 2023, we expect to have further enhanced academic advising by adding software tools that allow students and faculty to track “real time” progress toward degree completion. Technology priorities described in “Support the Academic Enterprise” speak to this aspect of the goal. This work will speak to efforts to address student stress over workload and activities described in the Emotional Well-Being Task Force.

### **Assessment and Metrics**

The following data will allow us to track progress in accomplishing the goals of these initiatives:

- Number of applicants inquiring about/declaring an interest in a new area of study
- Acceptance yields for those applicants
- Numbers of majors in new/revised programs and departments
- Enrollments in new courses
- Persistence and retention in STEM majors with HHMI-revised curricula
- Measurements of student satisfaction related to advising and academic options
- Persistence to graduation

## Raise Retention Rates

### 3-year Focus Goal: Raise Y1 to Y2 retention to 90%; Y1 to Y3 retention to 85%

Average (5-year) retention to Y2 and Y3: 88.6% and 82.8%, respectively

*Note: We have not abandoned our goal of reaching a 6-year graduation rate of 85%. We need to focus on a shorter horizon so we can measure early and correct rapidly. This 90% goal is an intermediate goal on our way to our higher goal of 92%, which appears in the Fact Book.<sup>1</sup> Since 2000, we have met or surpassed 90% Y1 to Y2 retention five times, and 85% retention to Y3 only once.*

### Year One Initiatives<sup>2</sup>

The President's Committee on Student Success is leading the charge in achieving the goals associated with this priority, and is approaching year one by focusing on four primary areas. Each of the areas has been assigned a team composed of PCSS members, as well as a captain to keep the team on task.

1. Data & Surveys
  - a. Conduct a data inventory (quantitative and qualitative) to determine what we already collect and what we still need to learn about why students stay and why they leave. (Will include analysis—including conversations with students—of policies and practices that are not student-friendly.)
  - b. What do the data—from research studies to survey responses and exit interviews—tell us about why students leave and why they stay?
  - c. Launch student satisfaction surveys. Look for patterns within the class, opportunities for intervention.
  - d. Work toward being able to answer the question at any given point during the year: how many students do we have? What is their status? And who do we expect to return next year?
2. Investigate our retention management system (i.e., Sunstone)
  - a. What can it do—are we using it to its fullest extent? What have we not yet enabled it to do? Why?
  - b. What are the barriers to adoption across campus?
  - c. Who sets (or needs to set) the policies around how we use our RMS?
3. Case Managers/Lawrence Navigators
  - a. Define the need and scope of work
  - b. Investigate approaches used by other colleges and validate assumptions for use here at Lawrence.
  - c. Determine best early (i.e., pre-arrival and first year) and later interventions.

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<sup>1</sup> Goal of 92% developed from historical enrollment patterns. Retention has followed a similar pattern from Y1 to Y2 and from Y2 to Y3: if Y1 to Y2 attrition is X% of original cohort, then Y2 to Y3 attrition is half that attrition (i.e.,  $[X\% \text{ of original cohort}] \times [0.5]$ ). For example, if we lose 12% from Y1 to Y2, we would lose another 6% off the original cohort from Y2 to Y3.

<sup>2</sup> All initiatives listed for years one through three are focus areas for the President's Committee on Student Success, chaired by the Vice President for Enrollment & Communications.



4. Communication to Lawrence community
  - a. Educate Lawrence faculty and staff about the work of the preceding three teams.
  - b. Synthesize data, past reports, and themes to share with members of Lawrence faculty and staff so we have a shared understanding of causes and remedies for attrition and retention—as well as what they each can do about it.
  - c. Celebrate successes.
- Continue improving our institutional approaches to advising. (This initiative is discussed in more detail in the Deepen the Academic Program priority.)

#### Year Two and Three Initiatives

- Measure and evaluate existing efforts to improve retention—look for opportunities to combine redundant resources.
- Invest in degree-checking software like Degree Works to help students (and advisors) map the student journey “from their first class to graduation day,” making it easier to stay on track with individual students’ progress toward degree/graduation requirements. ***This is underway with full implementation in 12-18 months.***
- Establish Sunstone coordinator<sup>3</sup>, ideally in the Center for Academic Success, who can identify support services for students and manage appropriate referrals/rerouting.
- Encourage broader adoption of Sunstone by faculty and staff, including completing Course Performance Reports in Sunstone rather than Voyager.
- Strengthen how we manage/maintain contact with students on leave who may be returning.
- Set a smoother course to graduation with clear, intuitive explanations of our degree/graduation requirements, making them easier for students and advisors to understand.
- Investigate partnership with Questbridge. If we limit our enrollment to 400, this influx of students would give us a new channel to recruit the nation’s highest-achieving low-income students, expanding our opportunities to recruit students who are well-matched for Lawrence. ***New financial investment required.***
- Investigate a “case management” approach to identify and intervene with students who struggle with the ability to cope with difficult challenges and circumstances, and get them back on track for success. ***New financial investment required.***<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Sunstone is a digital case management and tracking system we own and use to refer students who need support to the appropriate resources on campus (e.g., student with financial issues gets referred to financial aid, student not engaging socially might get referred to residence hall director or community advisor). The coordinator role is interdepartmental in reach, coordination and influence.

<sup>4</sup> Case managers have been used effectively at other institutions, including [Case Western Reserve](#), which assigns all first-year students a Navigator whose “mission is to make sure you find your way at Case.” These navigators work closely with faculty advisors to ensure each student is “up to date on academic progress, experiential learning activities and any other developments important to [the student’s] well-being.” Such an initiative could help address proactively concerns expressed by Chris Card, VP for Student Life, who has written, “While our institutional capacity to identify struggling students is growing, we are still deficient in our ability to intervene effectively and help students **get on and maintain a path to success**. Several institutions [employ] a social work case management model... and are seeing good results keeping students... progressing to graduation. Given the challenges we see regarding student resilience and lessened ability to cope in difficult circumstances, case management may assist those students who need more direct intervention and assistance in navigating the college experience. Essential to these efforts is closer collaboration between Student Life, CAS and

**Existing Strengths**

- The players are in place: from leadership in academic affairs and student affairs, to departmental heads in the Center for Academic Success and registrar.
- An institutional sense of urgency with a positive, can-do mindset.
- Full Speed to Full Need campaign driving an endowment that is maturing to help close gaps.

**Impediments to success**

- Financial constraints preventing us from making necessary investments in roles and tools.
- Failure to set expectations for faculty advising, including providing advisors with tools (and clear instruction for use) that improve student experience.
- Failure to create communal sense of how each member can help foster a “stickier” Lawrence experience.
- Failure to identify and appropriately address institutional causes for attrition—e.g., structures, assumptions, practices, policies, siloes—or to do so collaboratively.

## Strengthen the Co-curricular Experience

This plan seeks to renew and re-energize the co-curricular aspects of the student journey at Lawrence University. Current trends across the sector include a deeper focus on building community, development of living and learning communities in the residential spheres, better support of emotional wellbeing and general wellness, and mentoring relationships to support student success. Recent hires in the Student Life division, along with the re-deployment of some existing staff, position us well to rethink the student experience. Strategic allocation of new resources to some departments (e.g. CLC and Residential Education and Housing) also allow for new directions and focus. As the division continues to re-evaluate its mission, there is also an opportunity to better align resources to the mission.

Building on existing structures and programs where practical and possible, the plan ensures that life outside the classroom remains rigorous, supportive, innovative and transformative. Further, it aims to ensure a stronger system of support, intervention and success for all students. The three main areas of the plan are:

- I. Student Transition and Support
- II. Engagement and Belonging
- III. Life After Lawrence

### Student Transition and Support

- Pre-Orientation programs have been used extensively as co-curricular tools to support transitions to college and assist with the onboarding of new students to the campus community. The plan is to offer these programs for a few days before the start of Welcome Week and accommodate about one third of the incoming class. These would be offered in addition to existing summer academic programs that live on the academic side (for example Summer Institute). **We are fundraising for these programs currently and expect to implement for AY 20-21.**
- Co-location of first year students (eventually to be based on based on Freshman Studies sections) with a specialized Community Advisor and upper-division peer mentor. This would require significant revisions to the current CORE program and may ultimately replace CORE. Expect to begin multi-phased implementation for AY 20-21. We anticipate using existing resources to facilitate these changes.
- Create first and second year co-curricular experiences that are distinctive, intentional, and linked to the curricular learning. The Student Life division will collaborate across its offices and departments to identify and develop specific “curricula” which class deans for the first and second year will lead. We expect to be more deliberate about connecting co-curricular programming and education to specific milestones in the student journey. Expect to implement over the next three years. The sophomore dean is already in place and the “curriculum” is currently being developed. **We expect to repurpose some existing resources, but we will need additional financial investments to meet these goals.**
- Apply the recommendations from the Emotional Wellbeing Task Force report in program development and assessment. Resource needs are captured in the plan to “Support the Academic Enterprise.”
- For our student-athletes, continued development of pre-season programming to ease the anxiety of transitioning to college life - visit Björklunden as a team, create community through team meals, orient students through educational sessions with multiple academic and student life departments.

## Engagement and Belonging

These efforts seek to deepen a student's sense of belonging to and affinity for Lawrence. We will identify and develop effective programming that will connect every student to the communities that make Lawrence a vibrant place and strengthen supportive relationships. Further, we plan to articulate and model effective engagement in campus activities while instilling various skill sets appropriate for emerging adults. Areas of focus for the next three years will be to strengthen existing initiatives around:

- Mentor relationships (broadly defined to include peer-to-peer and student-to-faculty/staff/alumni). New technology is being implemented which will support greater student-alumni connections.
- Emotional and physical wellness; balance in life.
- Better support for specific demographic groups e.g. LGBTQIA, first generation, low-income, students of color, transfer students.
- Partnership with the athletics department and ensure that the student-athlete journey remains a focal point in our efforts to reinforce belonging.

A restructuring of the office of Campus Life and revisions of roles and duties for some staff have already taken place to support these initiatives. Several of these initiatives are already underway and we expect the remainder to be implemented over the next 2-3 years. We will redeploy existing resources to minimize the amount of financial investment that is needed.

## Life After Lawrence

Life after Lawrence planning must be one of the anchors for co-curricular enhancements. Having recently developed new initiatives for Life *after* Lawrence, this focus on life *at* Lawrence supports a holistic view of the student journey from admissions through to career and graduate school. We have begun to implement the Life after Lawrence plan, which intersects with enhancing the co-curricular experience. Recent Life after Lawrence successes include greater partnership with faculty advising, getting students registered in and utilizing Handshake, early outreach to new students, utilizing peer leaders to support student engagement with the CLC, and launching career communities. Our expectations are that Life after Lawrence initiatives can be woven seamlessly into the "co-curricular curricula" that will guide the education and training offered to each class cohort. As we think through the unique needs of each class, fully implementing the Life after Lawrence plan will be a critical component of the co-curricular renewal.

Athletics also has an important role in the Life after Lawrence co-curricula. Scholar-athletes have practiced networking and mentorship between former and current student-athletes for several years. The department is collaborating with the CLC team to provide a more robust experience for current students and a more coordinated experience for alumni and employers. Additionally, the athletics department in partnership with the CLC plans to help students learn to effectively *articulate* how athletics participation has honed their skill set. With a ready-made and eager cohort of current and former students, athletics will act as one of the pilot areas for the CLC when implementing Life after Lawrence strategies.

**We will continue to scale up our work in the CLC and increase the pace of the plan implementation for Life after Lawrence as resources become available. Fundraising to support plan implementation is ongoing.**

### **Assessment and Metrics**

The following will assist in evaluating the efficacy of these measures to strengthen the student experience outside the classroom. While these are not intended as distinct retention initiatives, it is anticipated that success in these areas will lead to a higher graduation rate. We hope these efforts will also bolster clarity of purpose, mission and vision in the co-curricular spaces. Assessment data will include:

- 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> year retention.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> year retention.
- Graduation rate for underrepresented groups.
- Survey of levels of student anxiety/stress.
- Campus climate survey – equity of experience within the student body.
- Measurements of student satisfaction.
- Destination reports from the CLC.
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NNSE) data.

Possible impediments to success include:

- Insufficient financial resources to implement initiatives.
- Staff responsible for planning and implementing these initiatives are already at or near full capacity.
- Reluctance to or apprehension around changing or ending existing programs.

## **Support the Academic Enterprise**

*Veritas est Lux Implementation Plan 2019-2022*

Lawrence University's purpose is to educate students in the liberal arts and sciences. We do so through our undergraduate College and the Conservatory. Demands on institutional infrastructure – that is, our people, physical plant, communications, and technology – to meet the needs of our aspirations and the challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> Century higher education are great.

This priority is organized in four categories: Campus Renewal, Policy, Technology, and Communications. In many cases, measurement of success in this specific area will be as simple as tracking completion of projects, however, the work we support will be measured in more nuanced outcomes such as retention and graduation rates, climate survey findings, and measures of capital renewal such as the age-of-facilities ratio.

### **Campus Renewal**

We must carefully prioritize our limited capital renewal resources to meet our strategic goals. The Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee will employ the following filters to evaluate needs and to allocate resources: Safety and Compliance; Maintenance; Learning Enhancement; Quality of Living Environment; Wellness and Emotional Wellbeing; and Environmental Sustainability.

#### Capital Categories and Existing Priorities

*Safety – Code Compliance Projects; Fire System Upgrade; Pedestrian Lighting Improvements*

*Campus Improvements – Accessibility projects when opportunities exist as part of larger projects (including gender inclusivity); Continued small “curb appeal” interventions; Efforts to “warm” the campus; Hardscape replacement; Storage facilities*

*Housing – Kohler Hall Renovation; Small House improvements; continue renewal of residence halls*

*Sustainability & Maintenance – Building envelope projects; Elevator Replacements; Energy Infrastructure Projects including work with Johnson Controls; Possible gift-funded carbon-neutral Bjorklunden project; Sustainability projects or components when opportunities exist as part of larger projects*

*Program Enhancements – Center for Academic Success; Dining space improvements (Bon Appetit-funded); Hockey Locker Room; Science Commons (Youngchild Hall 121) renovation and possible other classroom projects to support pedagogical innovation if donor funds are available*

### **Policy**

Policy organizes and defines how the University frames work. Since 2013, nearly every significant University policy has been reviewed and affirmed or revised. Many operating units and shared governance bodies have engaged in the important work of updating policy. The next phase of work involves cataloging our policies and ensuring each has a clearly-defined owner. Additionally, our Registrar's office continues to undergo major change and will need further institutional resources to modernize its policies and procedures.

## Policy Categories and Existing Priorities

*University Policies – Categorize existing policies as part of web redesign; Update and Implement Inclusive Hiring Policy*

*Academic Policies – Review & Revise Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Process; Implement degree audit; Implement updated course registration and advising system; adopt revised faculty allocation procedures; revise academic standing policies, credit requirements, and weekly schedule*

### **Technology**

Technological infrastructure includes both physical and virtual elements of our information and communication systems. From the wires that run in our walls to the platforms that enable us to do business and communicate internally and externally, technological needs are ever-changing. Changes in the needs of the institution driven by new technology, administrative leadership renewal, and regulatory requirements have placed significant strain on our technological resources. While hardware is constantly evolving, our systems and processes also require heightened attention. We have deployed additional resources to accelerate efforts to modernize and streamline processes in the service of greater efficiency. Our top priority in technology is to address projects that have the greatest immediate benefit to the largest segments of the University, especially in areas that support priorities in graduation rate and financial equilibrium.

## IT Project Categories and Existing Priorities

*Academic & Student Support – Course Registration and Advising System; Prerequisite Checking System; Degree Progress System; Academic Accommodation Management System; New Safety Incident Tracking and Title IX System; Student Housing System; Classroom Technology Infrastructure*

*Administrative Efficiency – Campuswide Workflow and process improvement projects with emphasis on the Registrar and Provost offices; Effort Tracking Systems (IT & Facilities); Data Collection & Process Approval Workflows; Benefit Enrollment System; Expense Management System; New system to streamline transfer of credits process*

*Maintenance & Security – Hyperion-to-Argos Conversion; Data Protection Process Improvement; Data Governance/Cataloging; Website content management system upgrade; Database system upgrades*

*Hardware & Connectivity – Campus Network Infrastructure Upgrades; Phone System Replacement; Bjorklunden Internet Upgrade; Migration to cloud-based communication platforms (email and collaboration)*

### **Communications**

Communications itself is a form of infrastructure. It connects every constituent group of the institution and frames everything we do and every issue we face. Internal communication allows us to work together despite a set of colleagues spread across an 88-acre campus, with nodes all over the world. It allows us to engage with students, and to respond to events on our campus and elsewhere in near real-time. External communications drive our recruitment of students, faculty, and staff. It connects us with our alumni, families, and friends.

Our website is a central component of our overall communication infrastructure. In a time when nearly half of the entire applicant pool is composed of “stealth applicants,” meaning they evaluate the institution and decide to apply without ever visiting campus or formally connecting, our website has become the front door of the University. Since the beginning, the website has also served as a repository of institutional information used by faculty and staff to carry out their roles. Over time, the website as marketing tool and internal utility has changed significantly, and a comprehensive overhaul is warranted.

#### Communications Categories and Existing Priorities

*Internal Communications – Enhance General Protocols and Processes; Emergency/Crisis Communications Policy Review & Improvement; Review Tools for Internal Communication and Develop Improvement Proposals*

*External Communications – Website Overhaul; Continue Work on Institutional Identity and Storytelling*

#### **Measuring Progress**

In addition to measuring progress by completion of projects, this work will also contribute to important ongoing objectives for the University, some of which are tracked by standing committees of the Board and in the Fact Book. Those include:

- Total Capital Expenditure, including gifts
- Age-of-Facilities Ratio
- Faculty Rate of Progression – Reappointment, Tenure & Promotion
- Completion of Projects
- Communications Targets TBD
- Technology Targets TBD

#### **Conclusion**

Lawrence is well-positioned to meet the infrastructure needs of the academic enterprise. Senior leaders and their teams are focused on how best to serve the needs of our students, faculty, and staff. Robust plans have been developed and evaluated around IT infrastructure and app development. Emerging partnerships and evolving management philosophy are changing the way we maintain and renew the physical campus. Nearly every one of our significant institutional policies has been updated in the last decade, creating momentum as we continue to enhance our policy infrastructure. Leadership and capital gifts have fostered major improvements in our external communications, and increased focus on internal communications and the policy and technological infrastructure needed to make improvements sets the stage for real progress.

There are two prevailing impediments to our success in this work overall. First and foremost, our aspirations around infrastructure are beyond our financial capability, requiring us to be strategic and scrupulous in our mix of strategic work and maintaining readiness for unexpected failures. The second major challenge is the limit of institutional capacity to conceptualize, design, implement, absorb, and evaluate changes in our infrastructure. In addition to these prevailing impediments, we should note that the sheer volume of deferred maintenance means our work is cut out for us.

Fortunately, our team of faculty and staff are highly capable, and increasingly so, of mounting and executing major initiatives in the service of University infrastructure.