

# Strategic Plan

## Introduction

As a natural consequence of the strong vision and mission of SUNY New Paltz, the reputation and profile of the college have grown substantially. The faculty, staff, administrators, students, alumni, and community members are proud of this momentum. As we survey the past and look to the future, we cannot ignore that the horizon for public higher education has changed dramatically. We face uncertainties related to demographic change, globalization, skepticism about the value of our work, heightened accountability demands, economic upheaval, and emerging educational technologies. Fast-paced changes in educational technologies will bring competition from markets we can only imagine. New Paltz will continue to serve its primary mission of educating the next generation of citizens while addressing these unprecedented challenges for higher education with a clear focus on purpose, vision and mission.

In this context, it is essential that New Paltz look beyond recent successes and extend previous planning efforts to provide a focused consideration of questions about our future:

- What do we want to be?
- What must we change to sustain the extent and quality of our contribution and our institutional viability?
- What must we preserve?
- What is the shared vision that our entire community can work toward?
- What is the most important work for us to undertake in the near future to sustain and grow our institution and its contributions?

This strategic plan sets the course for the priorities that will receive special attention during 2013-2018. Enacting this plan will position New Paltz for even greater success in an uncertain future. The plan is a framework that builds on 1) the distinctive identity of New Paltz, 2) an assessment of external challenges that we must address, and 3) a community sense of our past and where we are going. This plan will provide guidelines for determining the priorities and decisions for new initiatives or redirected effort at all levels of the institution, while we continue to provide the highest quality teaching, learning, residence-life, and service programming that has characterized our recent achievements.

The plan begins with an assessment of the foundations in research that has established the New Paltz identity and informed prior planning efforts.

## **The New Paltz Identity**

Extensive research into the perception of SUNY New Paltz among current students, alumni, faculty and staff was completed and shared with the campus community in 2010. The College “identity” developed from this research is clear, as reflected in our “Branding Positioning Statement.”

*New Paltz provides one of the nation’s most open, diverse, and artistic environments in order to prepare students to excel in rapidly changing times that demand creativity and worldliness. Our tradition of intellectual discovery is enhanced by a location of stunning natural beauty, in a dynamic college town, with easy access to New York City. Our unusually wide array of professional and liberal arts majors fosters a rich academic milieu in which students, selected through a competitive admissions process, can develop to their highest potential.*

The growing strength of New Paltz has allowed us to make the following commitments to our enrolled students:

- 1. As a SUNY comprehensive college, we deliver an extraordinary number of majors in Business, Liberal Arts, Sciences, and Engineering and are particularly well known for our programs in Fine and Performing Arts and Education.*
- 2. We provide rigorous academics in a highly selective admission environment where students receive and create close personal links with real scholars and artists who love to teach.*
- 3. New Paltz embraces its culture as a community where talented and independent-minded people foster openness, diversity, artistry, and creativity.*
- 4. Our geographic location is stunning in its natural beauty, located in the heart of a dynamic college town, 90 minutes from metropolitan New York City.*
- 5. In keeping with the tradition of the nation’s great public universities, New Paltz is linked to the health and vitality of the region, state, and nation through the education of its citizens.*

Our marketing research also produced the following essential characteristics of the college experience that New Paltz aims to provide. These attributes were tested among prospective and current students, employees and alumni:

- *A degree...and an education*

- *Creative environment of discovery*
- *Engagement through impassioned teaching*
- *A location for life*
- *Come as you are*

This characterization of the New Paltz identity clearly resonates with other evidence. Several examples can be drawn from the 2012 SUNY Student Opinion Survey. As compared with the other 12 SUNY colleges, our students are more likely to believe that they develop an understanding and appreciation of themselves, openness to the opinions of others, and a greater understanding of social and political issues. They also indicate that their experiences at New Paltz enhanced their acceptance, understanding, and appreciation of ethnic and cultural diversity and individual differences. Students respond that instructors were available to them and required them to think analytically, make judgments about the value of information, and build ideas and concepts. New Paltz also ranked highly on quality of instruction (#2 among the SUNY colleges), availability of health and wellness programs, quality of instruction and the acquisition of knowledge and skills for lifelong learning.

This identity is affirmed by SUNY New Paltz's recognition and regard among public colleges in the region and nationwide (*New York Times*, 2009, *US News and World Report*, *Kiplinger's Guide*, *Princeton Review*). In spring 2013, an organization called *Affordable Colleges Online* released its 2013 rankings of the Most Affordable Colleges with a High Return on Investment. The return on college investment comes in the form of higher salaries through the careers of graduates from these colleges. This organization reviewed 875 colleges across the U. S. to compile a list of 50 schools across the nation that are both affordable and provide an array of degree programs that prepare students for careers with significant earning opportunities. SUNY New Paltz was #2 in the nation on that list, after Georgia Tech.

We receive more applications for first-year admission than any other SUNY comprehensive college and our undergraduate enrollment has for many years been at capacity. The campus has met numerical enrollment targets, with incoming classes of academically qualified, bright, and engaged students. Since 2009, more than 40% of our incoming first-year students have come from the highest selectivity group used by SUNY to assess student academic preparation. Our retention and graduation rates are high and increasing. Compared with a national average rate of 56%, the 6-year graduation rate in 2012 was 73%, up from 70% the year before and 67% in 2010.

In short, New Paltz has a distinctive identity, favorable feedback from students on a number of measures, and a reputation as a highly regarded and selective public institution.

## Previous Planning

The process and the plan outlined here are logical extensions of previous planning that has supported the growth in our reputation, quality and profile. These efforts have been diverse, extensive, and produced concrete and well-documented results. Institutional planning in the late 1990s resulted in the major direction of raising selectivity and becoming a more competitive-admission institution, providing high-quality public higher education opportunities for New Yorkers. The eight “vision points” developed in 2005 have guided planning and resource allocation since then. Recent and ongoing improvements in grounds and facilities grew out of our Site and Landscape Master Plan (2007) and our Facilities Master Plan (2010), and that planning has established priorities for 2013-2018 funding requests for renovation and construction.

The extensive planning and research that articulated the New Paltz identity were noted above. Responses to two recent, major budget reductions in the face of reduced state funding were planned carefully, using established processes and agreed-upon criteria. Similar approaches guided recent decisions about investing new tuition revenues. In 2010-11, we aligned campus goals and mission with themes in *The Power of SUNY* plan. A thorough and thoughtful Emergency Management and Response Plan guided us through severe weather events, and subsequent planning applied lessons learned from that experience to improve the plan. The revision of the general education curriculum was informed and guided by participation of campus teams in two Institutes on General Education and Assessment sponsored by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). Subsequent planning by the Liberal Education Ad Hoc committee set the stage for our pending general education revision. We were recognized in 2011 by Middle States for having built a strong culture of assessment, in which evidence and data inform our planning and decisions.

The Sustainability Committee (a governance subcommittee of the Budget, Plans, and Goals Committee) completed a Campus Sustainability Plan 2012, which President Christian submitted as part of the reporting requirements for the “American College and University President’s Climate Commitment.” This document is a planning blueprint for the College’s continuing sustainability work, which will be among the priorities addressed in the current 5-year period and beyond, within the constraints of financial resources, technical issues, and staffing time and effort. A sustainability coordinator has been hired, and will guide significant parts of this work. Pending initiatives include participation in a campus energy audit coordinated through SUNY system, completion of our second greenhouse gas emission study, curricular innovation, and research efforts guided by the Sustainability Committee to improve the College’s sustainability achievements.

## Environmental Assessment

(This paragraph draws heavily from President Christian's January 2013 Report to the Academic and Professional Faculty). We have focused for the most part on successful teaching, learning, scholarship, service, and managing our institution. However, as we look to the future and plan, it is important to consider larger issues in higher education. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) provides an annual assessment of top state policy issues for higher education. The AASCU report, "Policy Matters," (January 2013), identified "Boosting Institutional Performance" as the top state policy issue. "Boosting Institutional Performance" includes efforts to increase graduation rates, performance-funding policies, and alignment with state goals." For the first time in six years, state support for higher education did not top the AASCU's list. The report indicates that there is a "broadening acceptance that state reinvestment in public higher education will be slow in coming -- and institutions must readjust both their operations and revenue mix accordingly." In a report issued in January 2013 by *Moody Investors Services*, as reported in *Inside Higher Education* (IHE), the credit reporting agency gave "a negative short-term outlook for the entire sector" in higher education. The report warned that "revenue streams will never flow as robustly as they did before 2008." The following factors contributed to the negative outlook: "The major revenue constraints the report details are attributed to larger changes in the economic landscape, including lower household incomes, an uncertain economic and federal government picture, a decline in the number of high school graduates, the emergence of new technologies and a growing interest in getting the most value out of a college education – particularly as it pertains to employment after graduation (IHE)."

New Paltz faces other challenges stemming from our geographic location and from our own institutional history and past priorities. A projected reduction in the number of high school graduates (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education) in the Northeast from 2010-2021 has the potential to threaten our competitiveness in recruiting academically well-qualified students in numbers to sustain enrollment. Historically, we have drawn students from Long Island and New York City. Other SUNY campuses have increased their recruitment in these areas. SUNY Community Colleges are building residence halls and recruiting students statewide. These forces are showing their impact across New York in spring 2013 as colleges and universities struggle to meet enrollment targets and, inevitably, revenue streams that sustain programs.

Like other public colleges and universities, New Paltz has felt the impact of financial resources that have at best not kept pace with the demands of modern educational programming, and at worst in some years have actually declined. That overall funding constraint has been coupled with a pronounced trend of declining state taxpayer support and increasing reliance on tuition. This trend has seriously affected the ability of many students and their families to afford even the modest cost of SUNY tuition, which is in the bottom quartile of tuition rates nationwide. In 2012, a significant number of students (43%) reported difficulty financing their New Paltz

education. In a 2012 survey of students who declined offers to attend New Paltz, 61.5% responded that the lack of scholarships influenced their decision to go elsewhere.

These financial challenges are especially pronounced for New Paltz because historically the campus has placed limited emphasis on fundraising and alumni engagement. Now we must play “catch up” in developing new capacities and levels of success in both of these areas. Some of our SUNY peers have alumni giving rates over 14%, double the SUNY average and that at New Paltz. We are particularly aware of the limited scholarship funds we have to offer, and of the impact that increased scholarship support can have, both in educational affordability for students and families and in our ability to recruit top students. Results of recent small “experiments” in allocating state resources for increased financial aid show a dramatic increase in first-year student acceptance rates with offers of 4-year tuition scholarships.

We must be attentive to mixed indicators of our success and of student satisfaction with their educational experience at New Paltz. As noted above, our graduates have given us high marks on measures that are central to our identity. In the latest (2012) Student Opinion Survey, New Paltz ranked #2 among SUNY comprehensive colleges in whether students “would choose this college again.” In the most recent survey of graduating seniors, 85% said they would definitely or probably choose to attend New Paltz if they could start over again, and 85% rated their entire educational experience as excellent or good. But only 48% indicated they would definitely choose New Paltz again, and only 37% rated their educational experiences as excellent. National Survey of Student Engagement results show that both first-year and senior New Paltz students rate their entire educational experience almost identically to peers at other regional institutions. Other surveys show that accepted students who declined to attend our institution have indicated they chose other institutions based on perceived academic quality.

Results such as these tell us that we are performing well as an institution but that opportunities surely exist for improvement in educational quality and student experience, especially as we position ourselves to recruit and educate students in an increasingly competitive environment.

Chancellor Nancy Zimpher delivered her *State of the University Address, 2013* well after the fall semester 2012 consultation and discussion that form the core of this plan. Nonetheless, her vision and priorities must be part of the New Paltz campus plan and vision for the near future. The Chancellor offered a philosophy for SUNY that acknowledged the issues raised by the reports of AASCU and Moody’s noted above. She argued that we need to “step up” and prove that higher education is an excellent investment by doing “a better job of keeping costs down and providing our students with the knowledge and tools they need to be successful in college and career.” SUNY will do a better job by making a commitment to goals of expanded access, increased completion, and assured life and career success. As we plan for the future, we must align our efforts with the priorities outlined by Chancellor Zimpher:

- **Open SUNY:** online programs, especially those meeting workforce needs
- **SUNY Smart Track:** to be adopted by all campuses by 2014, new financial aid information and guidance that will decrease student loan indebtedness and debt default
- **Three-year bachelor degree programs,** relying heavily on online offerings
- **SUNY Plus Diploma Designation:** a co-curricular transcript, paralleling those already adopted by New Paltz and several other SUNY campuses
- **SUNY Innovation Hubs:** one in each economic development region, to focus on research, academic and workforce training, and economic development
- **Common Data Systems:** to increase efficiency, support sound decision-making, and enhance transfer student success

In sum, the overarching challenge for our planning is to identify the most important opportunities for adaptive change to ensure that New Paltz continues to thrive in a radically changed environment for higher education than existed even a few years ago. The priority objectives and activities that represent the plan must be consistent with and support system-level goals and priorities as well as state needs, and must be responsive to external threats and opportunities. These priorities also must build on, retain, and promote elements of our identity and strengths as noted above.

## The Planning Process

Our planning process is described and documented at <http://strategicplanning.newpaltz.edu/>. During September and October, 2012, Dr. William Weary, the consultant assisting with our process, met with members of the Steering Committee and about 100 faculty, staff, students, administrators, alumni, and others. Information gained from those conversations, along with review of institutional data and documents, guided a day-long planning retreat on November 2. The planning retreat centered on a series of group discussion and problem-solving activities, organized in the following sessions. Each group reported out at the end of each activity, a plenary session followed, and we moved on to the next group activity:

- **Past and Future:** Peak moments, milestone events 2003-2012, New Paltz as it should be (2018), New Paltz in 2018 if nothing changes
- **Environmental scan:** Defining characteristics, changes, surprises
- **Performance 1:** What New Paltz does well, has a hard time doing, puts up with, avoids, denies, must stop/start doing; where New Paltz functions smoothly, where it does not; what unites, divides, confuses New Paltz; strategic assets, vulnerabilities; service to students, employees, and people beyond the College we interact with as is, as should be; New Paltz 10 years ago, what is better, worse, the same
- **Performance 2:** Generic criteria for ideal performance; characteristics of ideal 21<sup>st</sup> century programs, ideal university governance

- Obstacles and Drivers: For experiences of students, faculty, staff; decision making; programs; governance; service to the community; accountability; fairness; consistency; empowerment; initiative; teamwork; pride; boldness; identity; best funding and allocation of resources
- New Paltz Agenda: 3-5 tasks, jobs, or projects that will advance the vision, make best use of the environment, lift performance, remove obstacles, and strengthen drivers, as reported by each of 9 groups

The Steering Committee, in discussion with the consultant, drew major themes, recommendations, shortcomings, and ideas about priority initiatives from the group reports of each activity, including the final activity of identifying 3-5 tasks or projects. These take-homes form the basis of the plan outlined in the remainder of the report. As examples, improving alumni relations was a top priority for all 9 groups; strengthening service to students and expanding learning opportunities was a top priority for 7 of 9; improving processes and governance to enhance efficiency, safeguard time, and use resources wisely was a priority for 7 of 9 groups; and improving internal and external communication for 6 of 9 groups. Other priority initiatives below were identified by multiple groups in various exercises throughout the retreat, and were identified as key tasks by several groups in the final exercise.

## **Essential Initiatives**

The following represent eight broad areas that will receive special focus and guide our growth over the next five years to improve the institution, our contributions, and the quality of education we provide for students and the region. Most bear directly or indirectly on our students and on improving their educational experience. Indeed, a clear focus on students and their success must be an overarching framework for this plan and its implementation. Some of the goals are clearly “primary” educational ones, relating directly and immediately to our core mission of educating students. Others may be regarded in part as “enabling” goals that enhance our long-term ability to fulfill our primary mission. The various areas are not independent of each other, but investment and improvement in some areas will enhance others. It is clearly recognized that advancing some of these goals will require investment of new or reallocated resources (financial and human), at the same time that we will continue to work with constrained resources that will demand prioritizing activities and investments.

### **Nurture Innovation and the Learning Environment**

We must adapt to changes in higher education and look to best educational practices if we are to continue to recruit top students and keep them actively engaged in their intellectual, personal, and social development. These changes require that while we maintain our focus on liberal



education, we understand educational markets, new modes of organizational structure, and innovative teaching methodologies. Traditional modes of teaching have been joined by new and innovative approaches, driven in part by advancing information-technology inside and outside the classroom. Students are increasingly more comfortable using computers and multimedia resources while their tolerance is declining for some kinds of in-class lectures. The AAC&U report on *College Learning for a New Global Century* (2007) recommends that teaching and learning must be “active, hands-on, collaborative, and inquiry-based” (p. 11).

New Paltz has had a longstanding commitment to active, hands-on, collaborative, and inquiry-based teaching and learning. Such goals correspond with George D. Kuh’s AAC&U report on “High-Impact Educational Practices” (2008). Kuh identified the following high-impact teaching and learning practices: first-year seminars and experiences; common intellectual experiences; learning communities; writing-intensive courses; collaborative assignments and projects; undergraduate research; diversity/global learning; service learning, community-based learning; internships; and capstone courses and projects. High-impact practices improve rates of student retention and the level of student engagement. These are also among the experiences that enhance the ability of our graduates to succeed in and contribute to the complex societies and economies they will inherit. .

Many students on our campus are already engaged in a variety of these high-impact practices, but expanding such opportunities and ensuring that all students take advantage of them must be among our priorities. We must review and develop curriculum, pedagogy, programs, and service to advance our distinctiveness, lift our innovative and creative value, and welcome and serve our students. Encouraging and strengthening collaborative efforts between our educational and student-life programs in these ways – and ensuring that these successes are known beyond the campus – will help ensure our future competitiveness.

- Provide curricula, course scheduling and delivery, and co-curricular experiences that meet the demonstrated needs of students, support institutional goals, and expand access to the high- impact practices noted above
- Support and incentivize interdisciplinary teaching and learning practices
- Focus on hiring and mentoring faculty and professional staff committed to innovation and “high impact” practices
- Re-think the purpose and structure of the Teaching and Learning Center
- Provide the necessary training and resources to support faculty and staff creativity and innovation and recognize achievement in these areas
- Re-invigorate graduate education including delivery approaches to address current trends, meet student needs, and support the region
- Markedly improve the effectiveness of advising by creating plans to value student advising as “teaching,” and support faculty and professional staff in advising efforts, and improving clarity of program and advising materials.

## **Establish an Engaged Living and Learning Community**

Our identity as a campus that welcomes people of diverse backgrounds, cultures, political views, and ambitions makes us ideally suited to meet educational challenges and prepare students to live and work in a global century. The AAC&U report on *College Learning for the New Global Century* stated, “Today it is clear that the United States - and individual Americans - will be challenged to engage in unprecedented ways within the global community, collaboratively and competitively. The seismic waves of dislocating change will only intensify” (p. 15). We need to be more focused on helping students make connections between their classroom work and applying what they learn outside the classroom in regional and global communities.

New Paltz is positioned to provide a distinctive living and learning community that demands a commitment to curricular and co- and inter-curricular learning opportunities that are fully embraced and supported by faculty, staff, alumni and community. Such an environment will meet the call for high-impact teaching and learning practices that provide students with an opportunity to engage in intellectual activities and programs that promote intellectual curiosity, inventive problem-solving skills, leadership and active engagement within an increasingly complex global society. The continued cultivation of this living and learning environment will require support for the right balance between, on the one hand, high-quality teaching and student focus, and, on the other, essential expectations for faculty research/scholarship/creative activity, in ways that differ from a research university. Supported by faculty, staff and external stakeholders in the College, students will be given opportunities to learn about themselves, to explore their interests, and become leaders in and beyond the classroom.

- Commit resources to expand living-learning communities and cultivate social engagement for students to foster greater connections with faculty, staff, each other, and alumni, values that are integral to the residential living-learning mission.
- Encourage and support collaboration among academic and administrative departments, creating opportunities to increase familiarity with other programs that will enhance opportunities for partnership
- Achieve national recognition as an institution of higher education where student involvement in leadership and intellectual pursuits in and out of the classroom is central to a New Paltz student’s experience
- Support a culture of teamwork, tolerance, and collaboration through student clubs, campus organizations, athletics, and other programming that encourages active support from faculty, staff, alumni and students
- Recruit, support and encourage students across the broad spectrum of diversity including age, economic status, gender, race, sexuality, and disability status. Develop an inclusive

residential community of first-year and continuing students, transfers, international students, and graduate students.

- Encourage and support faculty scholarship of teaching and learning and creative activities

## **Strengthen Philanthropic Relationships and Success**

In the Planning Retreat, lack of funding was cited as a major obstacle in nearly every criterion identified for the College's future success. This included the student experience, faculty experience, the ideal 21st century undergraduate program, service to the community, and pride, boldness and identity. As described earlier, the absence of a strong philanthropic tradition and record of major fund-raising success at New Paltz is a current shortcoming that constrains our quest for excellence in many ways. In 2012, the College and Foundation Board undertook a feasibility study (results summarized in President Christian's 2012 State of the College address) that identified the most pressing steps that must be taken and barriers overcome for the College to undertake a credible, first-ever campaign to raise significant private support (tens of millions of dollars). Those steps are currently in progress, but much work remains and must be a significant focus during the 5-year life of this strategic plan.

The major areas of needed improvement include: convincing college members and constituents about the importance of philanthropy for a public college; connecting more effectively with friends, alumni, and prospective individual and corporate donors and foundations; improving the capacity and efficiency of our development operations and Foundation; increasing the effectiveness and reach of our communication and marketing about New Paltz and our faculty, staff, students, alumni, and programs; investing in and realigning financial and human resources to achieve these goals.

- Begin to create a culture of philanthropy (or "giving") among current students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, Foundation Board, and supporting community members
- Clarify roles and increase involvement of these constituents in continuing and new fund-raising initiatives
- Continue progress on feasibility-study implementation that expands capacity and builds a foundation for a major fund-raising campaign (years 1 and 2)
- Initiate and advance a major, multi-year fund-raising campaign

## **Engage Alumni in the Life of the College**

Alumni are among the most important assets of any college or university. They are the living embodiment of the values within the institution's DNA – values that can inform decisions and directions well into the future. Their own stories about their successes and challenges they have faced in their lives and careers since graduation provide important assessment information to inform curricular and program revision. Alumni can be key ambassadors, for example by supporting recruitment goals by connecting prospective students and their parents with their alma mater; speaking on behalf of an institution's financial or other needs with state legislative or executive leaders; or introducing potential major donors to the development office. Alumni may mentor students, and serve as inspiring and informative speakers. Working alumni are often key to identifying internship, research, or cooperative educational opportunities that are critical in the learning and career preparation of current students. Certainly alumni are often the primary philanthropic supporters of their alma mater.

As noted earlier, New Paltz has not had a strong record of engaging its alumni, despite having nearly 60,000 alumni and despite every indication that large numbers of our alumni have deep affection for the College and the impact of their education on their lives and successes. In December 2012, the College filled a long-standing vacancy for a dedicated leader of its alumni relations efforts, and President Christian subsequently announced the formation of a task force that will identify ways to engage our alumni for all of the above reasons.

- Develop and implement a program of effective alumni relations and engagement, building on recommendations of the alumni task force
- Expand the geographic base of connecting with alumni beyond the Hudson Valley, New York, and the Northeast
- Engage the campus at every level, students, staff, faculty, departments, schools, and other units in alumni affairs

## **Market New Paltz Internally and Externally**

Marketing activities have become more critical to the college's success. It is an inescapable reality that higher education functions in an intensely market-driven era. New Paltz is in a competitive market environment, vying with both public and private institutions, within New York and beyond, for students, recognition and prestige, financial resources, and political and social support. New Paltz is now a top-tier institution, and remaining at that level requires further investment in marketing and outreach. Historically, New Paltz has invested limited – and clearly insufficient – resources in highly decentralized marketing and outreach activities.

Although New Paltz has enjoyed measured success with identity branding, a more substantial focus on “telling the New Paltz story” to various stakeholders is required, for purposes that include student recruitment, philanthropy, alumni relations, and political and public awareness of the College’s strengths and accomplishments.

**Value**, a combination of cost and quality, is increasingly important in how we position ourselves and how we are perceived. The cost advantage of New Paltz, with relatively low SUNY tuition, is largely a given. But the perception of our quality is not, and the success of any of the following goals depends on continued improvement in academic and student-life programming noted above.

- Increase impact of outreach activities to enhance visibility and quality of public perception about New Paltz as **the** public university in the region
- Situate New Paltz in terms of our price-to-value proposition
- Increase awareness to sustain undergraduate and grow graduate enrollments
- Through an integrated, centralized marketing effort, engage and support departments in marketing of the College through its programs, lifting the profile of online and graduate programs, and stressing the College’s distinctive identity; gather and make better use of the voices and experiences of students, faculty members as scholars and mentors, and alumni in these efforts
- Expand alumni communication materials and connect to philanthropic efforts

### **Improve Internal Processes and Address Institutional Capacity**

Faculty, staff, and administrators need to have clarity in roles, expectations and consistent support to achieve institutional goals. A climate of cooperation should be enhanced. Much work has begun in these important support areas in recent years. Initiatives for the years to come will include generating clear and helpful descriptions of roles and responsibilities for all positions; reviewing, tightening, and streamlining policies and procedures (academic, human resources, business, and other); laying out full plans for professional development throughout the college; allocating staff resources among departments for greatest efficiency and effectiveness; and creating campus unity and community.

- Refine and expand plans to allocate resources to best support the College’s goals and priorities

- Commit resources to clarifying and streamlining personnel, business, and academic processes and policies
- Under leadership and direction of faculty, review and streamline faculty governance and committee structure and function, a need identified by faculty in the 2010-11 Middle States self-study process

## **Build Quality Online Education**

New Paltz has succeeded in recruiting a diverse group of bright students and establishing a reputation as a highly selective state institution. The changing educational landscape requires that we take thoughtful and determined steps to continue attracting the best and brightest students and serving them well. The geographic market for students has expanded; there are national and global competitors for market share. State institutions such as New Paltz will compete with online courses and degree programs offered by for-profit and prestigious state and private institutions.

It is not realistic or desirable for New Paltz to compete head-to-head with major, online, for-profit institutions or online publics like our SUNY sister Empire State. Nonetheless, there is ample opportunity (arguably imperative) for us to expand our online programming without sacrificing our distinction as a residential college. These may include: revamping current and developing new graduate programs that emphasize online and hybrid teaching and learning; developing limited and select online undergraduate programs that might include degree-completion initiatives; offering online undergraduate courses that advance student academic progress and degree completion; and serving populations that we do not now serve.

The report on *Open SUNY* calls for active teaching and learning through online instruction that will “connect a global community of learners, through faculty partnerships and innovative online and mobile learning environments.”

- Develop institutional goals for high-impact teaching and learning practices for online course offerings
- Commit resources to support high impact pedagogical practices and professional development for online learning
- Expand online undergraduate and graduate learning opportunities to correspond with the strategic goals of “Open SUNY”
- Use online learning to engage with the global community

## Strengthen Regional and Community Engagement

New Paltz enjoys assets of “place” that are unparalleled within SUNY: proximity to New York City and Albany; the beauty, outdoor and recreational amenities, and cultural and historic resources of the Hudson Valley; strategic placement relative to other SUNY comprehensive campuses and community colleges. We have a unique opportunity to hone our identity and strengthen potential assets by taking better advantage of these resources, and to strengthen our contributions to the region and the State.

New Paltz is a cultural and intellectual hub in the region with arts, cultural, and educational events open to the entire community. The living and learning environment for students is enriched through these events that benefit the entire community. The *Power of SUNY* alignment document maps the strength of the connection of programs at New Paltz to the region at large, an engagement far more extensive and successful than generally recognized.

- Position New Paltz as **the** public university in the region
- Establish the New Paltz setting as a common and connected theme in the curricula
- Integrate the campus community with Mid-Hudson Valley and greater New York City metro area through New Paltz publications, curricular planning and fieldwork opportunities, theater and music performances, lectures, exhibitions and educational talks, demonstrations and workshops
- Position the College to apply for first-time Carnegie Community Engagement Classification at the next opportunity (2020)
- Expand and showcase College contributions to business and economic development in the Hudson Valley
- Explore opportunities to make fuller use of campus facilities and expertise to support revenue goals and the mission of the college
- Advance the work that CRREO, Sojourner Truth Library, The Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art, and other academic and support units undertake in supporting the region, and strengthen public perception and understanding of these contributions

## **Implementation**

The strategic plan will provide a framework for decision-making at the College during the next 3-5 years. All units on campus will look to the strategic plan to identify tasks or projects appropriate to their areas. The president and the cabinet will charge individual areas with assignments taken directly from this plan. A campus-wide Strategic Planning Council will be established to advise campus leadership at all levels on translating the goals of the strategic plan into multiyear action. This Council, working in collaboration with Institutional Research (IR), will be charged with developing benchmarks for the plan objectives and will oversee the development of measurable outcomes.