St. John's University Strategic Priorities: An action plan[1]

Strategic Priority 1: Ensure student success

1. <u>Campus Climate, Equity, and Inclusion</u>:
   a. Effectively communicate the University's commitment to a diverse, inclusive, and equitable University community and actions directed at improving the campus climate.
   b. Continue to evaluate the campus climate, as well as institutional processes and procedures related to academic attainment, co-curricular, and social activities, to identify areas of needed improvement; measure, assess, and report out annually efforts around diversity, equity, and inclusion.
   c. Continue to foster and enhance cultural competence, racial literacy, empathy, and an understanding of social identities among members of the faculty, administration, staff, and student body.
   d. Develop and employ more equitable and inclusive pedagogical practices and instructional curricula accessible to our diverse student body, and ensure assessment of their implementation.
   e. Provide all members of the University community with access to a rich array of educational, spiritual, and social events and programs that support our Catholic and Vincentian mission and values, encourage mutual respect and tolerance, reflect, honor, and embrace our diversity, and promote equity and inclusion.

2. <u>Advisement, Mentoring, and Career Development</u>:
   a. Strengthen undergraduate advisement, including associated technologies and data management, with effective processes for the transition of undergraduate students from the University Freshman Center to the individual school/colleges, improved uniformity across campuses/locations, robust training and appropriate accountability for professional and faculty advisors, increased usage of mobile technology to connect students with faculty and advisors, and sustained integration with Career Services.
   b. Continue to develop and coordinate University-wide student success initiatives to monitor and improve University-wide metrics (retention, persistence, graduation, employment/graduate school placement rates) and to promote accountability for college-specific retention goals of CPS 83%, CPHS 93%, SJC 83%, SOE 93%, and TCB 87%, for an overall retention rate of 85-86% for the 2020 entering class.
   c. Expand student engagement opportunities through new types of mentorship, peer ministry, scholars, honors, summer research discovery, and learning community programming, including in partnerships with other universities and external organizations, to enhance academic quality, improve the undergraduate student experience, promote inclusivity, and facilitate career success.

3. <u>Curricular Development and High-Impact Educational Practices</u>:
   a. On or before Fall 2020, implement a revitalized undergraduate core curriculum that is consistent with the St. John's mission and values, supportive of University learning goals and outcomes, provides exposure to high-impact educational practices and integrative learning, and is responsive to the programmatic needs of each school/college.
   b. Monitor the impact of the core curriculum with respect to University-level student success metrics and assess the extent to which the core curriculum allows students to double major, double degree, minor, take courses from any college, or transfer into St. John's without negatively impacting time to graduation.

c. Use student success metrics, as well as data analytics where applicable, to drive decision making at the school/college- and program-levels to improve academic and experiential learning outcomes, including prioritization of the teaching of introductory-level disciplinary and first-year core courses, and implement a more effective University-wide assessment process to oversee and support the units charged with assessment at every level in closing the assessment loop, thereby continuously improving student learning outcomes.

d. Audit curricular pathways and revamp curriculum as necessary to incorporate high-impact and engagement practices (e.g. first year seminars/experiences, common intellectual experiences, learning communities, writing-intensive courses, collaborative assignments/projects, undergraduate research, diversity/global learning, academic service-learning/community-based learning, internships, and capstone courses/projects) to improve student learning outcomes and achieve student success targets; implement a method to document the use of high-impact and engagement practices.

4. Enrollment Management:
   a. Continue to pursue a dynamic enrollment strategy sensitive to regional, national, and international market and demographic forces, budget, mission and other key variables consistent with efforts to increase the retention, persistence, graduation rates, and overall academic achievement of students. The strategic goals of each school/college and campus/location must consider the University's overall enrollment strategy.
   b. Expand partnerships with regional and targeted national schools, especially Catholic elementary and high schools, and leverage relationships with guidance counselors, administrators, and students at these schools, through robust recruitment, on-campus events, highlighting student success stories, and faculty and student participation to grow the College Advantage Program and undergraduate enrollment pipelines.
   c. Establish field offices and partnerships with organizations world-wide to increase the number of international students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate programs.
   d. Implement more effective University-wide and program-specific enrollment, marketing, and branding strategies, including the development of feeder programs (e.g. consortia, 4+1 programs, academic and industrial partnerships), location-specific recruiters, and the utilization of existing technology platforms to efficiently and effectively engage prospective students.
   e. Develop, improve, and expand undergraduate and graduate academic offerings in growth areas to meet market and industry demand, including the development of experiential learning pathways, interdisciplinary programs and centers, cross-college collaborations, and new academic programs in support of hybrid and distance learning, including expanded continuing education and alternative credentialing opportunities (e.g. certificates and badges).

Strategic Priority 2: Recruit, recognize, and retain the best faculty, staff, and administrators
1. Recruitment:
   a. Ensure that faculty hiring and administrative staffing continues to be consistent with institutional and unit strategic priorities, institutional mission and values, a commitment to diversity and inclusion, and program revenue generating activities and enrollment growth.
   b. Strategically fill full-time faculty positions through national and international searches to recruit outstanding candidates who embrace the University's Catholic and Vincentian mission and values, including a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion.
   c. Provide academic and administrative leadership with robust development opportunities and best practices for minimizing bias in the search and hiring processes and to improve the depth and diversity of candidate pools.

d. Fill key administrator positions through a combination of national and international searches and by promoting the best personnel from within who understand and support the University's Catholic and Vincentian mission and values, including a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion.

2. <u>Employee Performance, Evaluation, and Compensation</u>:
   a. Ensure that the appropriate infrastructure and accountability exist to support the professional needs of a diverse faculty, administration, and staff of a university with a diverse study body.
   b. Provide employees with a rich array of development opportunities to promote a culture of shared ownership and accountability for student success, a deep understanding of the University's Catholic and Vincentian mission and values, and the appropriate skillset to successfully engage a diverse student body.
   c. Explore the ability to differentiate employee performance with variable merit increases or other incentives that enable alignment of compensation with performance and development.
   d. Reexamine the faculty evaluation, compensation, and support structure, including that provided for in the collective bargaining agreement, to more closely align compensation and scholarly support with performance (teaching, research, service), provide ample opportunities for individual growth and advancement, ensure equity, and encourage advancement of our strategic priorities.

3. <u>Scholarly Productivity and Faculty Engagement</u>:
   a. Enhance faculty scholarly and creative activity and engagement in all disciplines to advance the Catholic intellectual tradition and excellence in teaching, research, and service.
   b. Foster and incentivize interdisciplinary projects, entrepreneurship, and public-private partnerships to advance faculty research and scholarship, including through the development of entrepreneurial incubator policies and procedures to support value creation from scholarly work and a means for student engagement.
   c. Increase the number of faculty seeking external resources in support of their research, scholarship, and creative activities, as well as the number of faculty engaging directly with undergraduate and graduate students in research, scholarship, creative activity, and relevant mentorship.
   d. Through fundraising initiatives, create more endowed chairs and professorships, as well as other funds for faculty research, scholarship, and development, to recruit, recognize, and retain accomplished faculty.

4. <u>Responsibility-Centered Leadership</u>:
   a. In conjunction with the development of a University-wide academic plan, update and when needed prepare individual plans for each academic and administrative unit, including for each satellite campus/location, indicating how each will contribute to the University-wide strategic priorities and unit contribution goals.
   b. Cultivate an ownership culture and continue to enhance collaboration between all members of the University community to advance student success initiatives, and foster among the faculty a deeper understanding of the role and importance of a team effort to ensure student success including for enrollment management.
   c. Continue the revenue sharing program to create incentives for individual academic units to increase revenue based on appropriate targets of enrollment, retention, persistence to graduation, and other key factors. Establish enrollment and retention goals by school/college considering budgeted revenues and expenses.

d. Establish additional revenue generating activity goals for appropriate administrative units and the academic schools/colleges, beyond those associated with net tuition revenue, and pursue means to diversify academic revenue by school/college to minimize operational budget dependence on traditional programs.
e. Exercise continued discipline in managing expenses with strategic processes (e.g., the Hiring Process Committee and Expense Management Team), including the development of centralized targets, and where applicable, the redirection of academic programs with negative contributions.

Strategic Priority 3: Enhance the teaching and learning environment

1. Faculty Development for Teaching and Learning:
   a. Employ a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to faculty development, which streamlines existing groups and processes and encourages pedagogy that engages students, prioritizes student learning, incorporates high-impact practices, reflects the University's Catholic and Vincentian mission, is equitable and inclusive, and makes effective use of technology for student engagement and curriculum delivery as appropriate.
   b. Identify the developmental needs of the faculty with respect to critical aspects of the teaching and learning process (e.g., pedagogy, student engagement, instructional design, classroom management, equity and inclusion, technology, mission, etc.) and ensure that programming exists to meet those needs; review implemented successful programming to create informal training modules composed of various workshops, demos, and other opportunities, available both online and face-to-face and accessible to both full- and part-time members of the faculty.
   c. Establish mechanisms to reward and recognize members of the faculty who are outstanding teachers and who incorporate technology effectively, e.g., a Master Teacher program; establish more effective evaluation processes and accountability for teaching quality; incentivize all faculty to improve their teaching.

2. Integrated Technology Solutions for the Student Success Pipeline:
   a. Utilize up-to-date, integrated technology solutions (i.e., CRM-type systems) that support and enhance administrative and co-curricular aspects of the student success pipeline, e.g., recruitment, advisement, retention, persistence, graduation, career advisement and professional success, and alumni engagement.
   b. Raise awareness as to the various technology solutions available in support of the student success pipeline; educate administrators, program chairpersons/directors, advisors, faculty, staff, and students to make effective use of technology; implement a university-wide training plan that incentivizes professional development for the adoption of technology tools.

3. Facilities Planning:
   a. Under the direction of the Provost and Chief Financial Officer, continue the work of the Capital Planning Working Group to identify the critical priorities of facility needs, develop capital plans to address these needs, and create and communicate a matrix of capital needs, goals, outcome measures, actions, timelines and results for improved community awareness.
   b. In conjunction with the development of the University-wide academic plan, develop a master space plan to anticipate the future needs of the teaching, learning, and research environment in alignment with the University's strategic priority to ensure student success.
   c. Continually assess the quality of the teaching and learning environment, as well as the effectiveness of existing technology-based classrooms and other specialized learning spaces to ensure that disciplinary needs are being met.

    d. When renovating or creating new learning spaces, prioritize those which are forward-looking, interdisciplinary, and foster collaboration between schools/colleges through the sharing of resources.

4. <u>Technology Planning and Infrastructure</u>:
    a. Continuously evaluate the academic technology needs for teaching and learning; review the goals and outcomes of the Academic Information Technology Council (AITC), the university-wide committee tasked with identifying critical academic technology priorities and needs; establish a framework wherein metrics connecting student success outcomes to the usage of student-centric pedagogy and the usage of technology are articulated and assessed for continuous quality improvement.
    b. Create governance and oversight around University technology needs to support process efficiencies and automation, as well as to maintain an information security program that identifies and mitigates information security risks, safeguards IT systems and data, educates employees on data security and awareness, and complies with privacy and security regulations.
    c. By 2020-21, over 90% of all classrooms are expected to meet the minimum standards of technology developed by the AITC and required for optimal teaching and learning (i.e., use of the classroom podium tools, including lecture capture, online learning platforms, and web-based applications).
    d. By 2020-21, 75% of all courses are expected to be taught using these minimal standards of technology, as well as other student engagement techniques leveraging technology (e.g., flipped classroom, hybrid online approach, computer-aided design, simulations, augmented reality, artificial intelligence technology, adaptive learning, etc.).

Strategic Priority 4: Expand global and community partnerships

1. <u>Institutional Advancement</u>:
    a. Launch a major comprehensive campaign to celebrate the University's 150th year anniversary, with the goal of creating new funding sources for the University's strategic priorities, particularly providing resources to financially support students and faculty, and to promote academic and athletic excellence and student success.
    b. Increase alumni engagement efforts to promote and improve alumni participation rates at all levels.
    c. Deepen the coordination between Alumni Relations, Career Services, Office of University Mission, and the academic units to strengthen ties to the alumni network to grow student opportunities for mentoring, experiential learning, research, employment, and scholarship support.

2. <u>Academic and Community Partnerships</u>:
    a. Establish an Office of Partnerships to support and develop strategic partnerships, joint ventures, and mergers with institutions to complement and enhance the University's strengths and current academic offerings, develop new high-impact programs, enhance scholarship, grow enrollments, diversify revenue, and enhance brand and reputation.
    b. Encourage faculty and administrators to engage in creative, innovative, cross-disciplinary academic and entrepreneurial collaborations, programs, and initiatives through internal and external partnerships.
    c. Expand academic partnerships with global institutions to develop new study-abroad programs in other regions such as in Asia, Latin America, and Africa to augment existing St. John's facility locations in Europe, increase the number of visiting scholars at St. John's,

increase the number of St. John's faculty members teaching and studying abroad, and develop undergraduate and graduate student enrollment pipelines.
d. Seek institutional partners with shared values consistent with the Catholic and Vincentian mission of the University, particularly organizations serving the poor, marginalized, and those most in need.

3. <u>Public Relations, Marketing, and Communications</u>:
   a. Enhance the St. John's identity through an aggressive public relations, marketing, and communications strategy that engages the University community with a sense of pride and ownership, showcasing student-faculty-employee achievements, athletics, and mission, with a strong external component in strategic markets domestically and abroad.
   b. Improve coordination between units for a university-wide marketing strategy and specify the ways in which each unit participates, particularly in the use of digital technology and social media.
   c. Develop coordinated University-wide and program-specific, reputation-enhancing strategies, including marketing efforts and an increased presence of faculty expertise on the St. John's website, so that faculty and other employees are engaged by news media as experts to comment on current and future international, national, or regional news and events.