

# CONNECTICUT COLLEGE



## *Building on Strength:*

A NEW PLAN FOR CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

**REPORT ON PROGRESS | MAY 2019**

Accomplishments since the May 2018 progress report are shown in red typeface. Some items in the plan require long-term or ongoing work while others involve a discrete activity that can be undertaken and completed. *Completed items are indicated with a green checkmark* ✓

# 1. Enhancing Academic Distinction

## Goal 1: Education

**Become a recognized leader in integrative education promoting the intellectual, social, professional, and civic development of every student.** ①

### OBJECTIVES

- *Ensure the success of Connections*
- *Advance and strengthen the College's centers for interdisciplinary scholarship, teaching, and learning*
- *Deepen faculty and student engagement off campus and around the world*
- *Broaden educational opportunities through new institutional partnerships*

### SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Increase resources and staffing for continued development of Connections ②
- Create Global Commons to integrate world languages, off-campus learning, and local and global engagement opportunities ③ ✓
- Develop new resources to support departments in their work toward full participation
- Clarify curricular requirement for learning about social difference ④
- Enrich STEM opportunities by establishing a program in engineering in partnership with U.S. Coast Guard and Worcester Polytechnic Institute ✓
- Expand opportunities for interdisciplinary teaching and learning, including potential precollege and master's programs ⑤
- Enhance support for the five centers for interdisciplinary scholarship and consider new centers of distinction (e.g., in informatics)
- Extend educational partnerships with the city of New London ⑥
- Develop exchange programs with new global partners (e.g., Universidad de la Tierra in Mexico, Ashesi University College in Ghana) ⑦
- Strengthen academic advising across four years
- Continue improving classrooms to support new forms of teaching with technology ⑧

### DETAILS OF ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MAY 2018 AND MAY 2019:

- ① Advanced College's reputation as a leader in integrative education through consultant visits with Brandeis, Colby, Grinnell, Hamilton, Mount Holyoke, Nichols, Santa Clara, Puget Sound, the community college system of the State of Connecticut, and Eastern Connecticut State University.
- ② Solidified administrative leadership of Connections with appointment of new assistant dean. | Created new pathways in "Media, Rhetoric, and Communication" and "Data, Information, and Society," bringing total number to 13. | Began developing two additional pathways on Food Systems and on Science and Morality. | Offered 40 sections of 31 different ConnCourses, as well as 34 First Year Seminars and 10 Thematic Inquiry courses. | Increased percentage of students participating in Pathways and Centers from 43% in 2018 to 60% in 2019. | Began planning College's first All-Campus Symposium for November 7, 2019.
- ③ Improved selection process for study abroad by implementing new web-based study away information platform, allowing students to search international programs based on discipline, language, region, and scholarships. | Established Robert E. Proctor Scholarship for Summer Language Study and awarded nine inaugural grants. | Became founding member of New University in Exile Consortium, to help protect and support at-risk global scholars.
- ④ Developed new curricular requirement on social difference, to begin with Class of 2024. \*See also *Full Participation*, note 8.
- ⑤ Received \$806,000 Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant to build expertise of faculty in Global Islamic Studies through interdisciplinary collaboration with leaders on campus and at other institutions.
- ⑥ Worked with New London city planner to design a building that would revitalize Hodges Square, as part of Career Informed Learning course in Architectural Design. | Piloted 10-day Global New London Summer Practicum in 2018 with several local non-profits to give students a hands-on, experiential learning opportunity in New London. Twenty students will participate in 2019.

- 7 Launched new exchange program with Ashesi University, with one Connecticut College student studying at Ashesi in Spring 2019 and one Ashesi student at Conn.
- 8 Created new general purpose classroom and two seminar rooms with state-of-the-art instructional technologies and flexible furniture arrangements as part of career office relocation to Fanning Hall (open September 2019).

## Goal 2: Research

Open new channels for groundbreaking research, scholarship, and creative work.

### OBJECTIVES

- Enhance funding, spaces, and technology for knowledge creation
- Multiply opportunities for student/faculty collaboration
- Enrich campus intellectual dialogue

### SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Develop new resources for student and faculty scholarship and conference travel 1
- Establish high-profile scholar-in-residence program 2
- Upgrade research facilities, labs, and other spaces in which faculty and students conduct their work
- Create new program in digital scholarship 3 ✓
- Raise funds for new endowed chair positions
- Improve conditions for obtaining external grant funding 4
- Expand resources for research computing and scientific instrumentation

### DETAILS OF ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MAY 2018 AND MAY 2019:

- 1 Received \$120,000 from Trustee Emerita Linda Lear '62 to establish endowed fellowship for student research and travel, in honor of the late professor of history, Richard Lowitt. | Offered new "Foundations of Postgraduate Study in the Humanities" to promote future research success among Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellows. | Created position in Department of Biology dedicated to inclusive pedagogy and education research. \*See also Full Participation, note 7.
- 2 Welcomed internationally recognized scholar Binalakshmi Nepam to campus with support from The Ann Werner Johnson '68 Scholar Rescue Fund.

- 3 Hosted symposium on Digital Scholarship and Pedagogy in the Liberal Arts, with presentations by faculty, technologists, and librarians on methods and outcomes of collaborative digital scholarship in the liberal arts. | Advanced Connecticut College's leadership in digital scholarship with October 2018 presentation at University of Kansas' Digital Frontiers conference. | Appointed second cohort of three Digital Scholarship Faculty Fellows.
- 4 Launched grants orientation event and workshop for new faculty seeking opportunities for research funding. | Instituted Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative to ensure compliance with Federal guidelines in research with human subjects. | Developed database on post-baccalaureate degree completions to support competitive research grant applications. | Held third annual presidential reception to recognize recent grant winners and applicants.

## Goal 3: Arts

Advance the College's distinction in the creative and performing arts.

### OBJECTIVES

- Attain national leadership in collaborative arts practice oriented toward social change
- Enhance facilities and technology to match the excellence of the College's programs
- Develop academic offerings based on signature programs and centers
- Leverage artistic resources along the Northeast corridor

### SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Renew Palmer Auditorium and other spaces for the arts as part of campus master plan 1
- Establish robust artist-in-residence program
- Build new partnerships with nationally known arts institutions 2
- Expand the mission and program of the Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology 3
- Cultivate internships with distinguished alumni
- Create new summer arts initiatives to promote excellence
- Explore feasibility of master's in digital arts
- Bolster campus connections to Lyman Allyn Art Museum 4

### DETAILS OF ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MAY 2018 AND MAY 2019:

- 1 Completed schematic designs for renovation of Palmer Auditorium, with construction to begin in Spring 2020.

② Partnered with the National Theater Institute, Yale Theater Studies, Brown Theater Arts and Performance Studies, Trinity Repertory, and New York Actors Studio on the Fornés Legacy Project, with production of María Irene Fornés play *The Danube*, directed by Estelle Parsons '49. | Established collaboration with Whittier College for Mellon-funded initiative on integrated arts and humanities. | Established new Masters opportunity in Museum Studies in partnership with Tufts University.

③ Received \$2 million gift from trustee emerita Judith Ammerman to build endowment support for staff and programming in Ammerman Center for the Arts and Technology. | Enhanced support for digital and physical fabrication in arts and technology with appointment of new Technical Support Specialist in the Art Department.

④ Collaborated with Lyman Allyn Art Museum on the exhibition *Chinese Landscape Rethought*, curated by Professor Yibing Huang, March 29-June 9, 2019.

## 2. Enriching the Student Experience

The next priority of Connecticut College's strategic plan builds on the previous one. To achieve greater distinction and integration of student learning, we will commit to creating experiences outside of the classroom that extend intellectual enrichment, build a stronger sense of community, and prepare students for meaningful lives and careers.

### Goal 1: Life and Career

**Cultivate the talents of all students to lead lives of meaning and purpose.**

#### OBJECTIVES

- *Establish the premier liberal arts career program in the country*
- *Increase access to high-quality internships and other career-enhancing experiences*
- *Educate students about the relationships among health, well-being, and success*

#### SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Establish task force on careers to evaluate the state of advising for life after college ✓
- Take steps to relocate career office to central campus ①
- Expand expertise in emerging fields in technology and business
- Fully integrate career education into four-year curricular and advising structure
- Create new career modules for academic courses across the curriculum ②
- Tap alumni and parent network for competitive paid internships
- Increase resources for internships ③
- Make Connecticut College a critical stop for recruiters in key industries ④
- Establish job-shadowing program during winter and spring breaks ⑤

- Develop an intensive summer career workshop for students on campus and beyond
- Integrate new programs related to well-being into career education and across the co-curriculum ⑥

#### DETAILS OF ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MAY 2018 AND MAY 2019:

- ① Started relocation of career office to first floor of Fanning Hall, for completion by August 2019.
- ② Offered 20 Career Informed Learning courses, involving 25 Conn alumni as content mentors.
- ③ Received \$165,286 grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program to establish a Foreign Language Internship | Increased number of employer-funded internships by 10%.
- ④ Enhanced students' employment opportunities by appointing new Assistant Director of Employer Relations and Operations. | Increased Fall 2018 employer visits to campus by 27%.
- ⑤ Created new January Job Shadowing program for launch in January 2020.
- ⑥ Received \$306,000 Garrett Lee Smith Campus Suicide Prevention Grant through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to support Camel Wellbeing, inclusive services for mental health and substance use disorders. | Launched You@Conn online wellbeing platform for students.

## Goal 2: Campus Living

Stimulate a more vibrant, four-year residential living and learning experience.

### OBJECTIVES

- *Implement phased strategy for upgrading campus housing*<sup>1</sup>
- *Redesign campus social spaces to facilitate greater contact among students, faculty, and staff*
- *Expand high-quality social activity, leadership, and mentoring opportunities across four years*<sup>2</sup>
- *Increase student engagement with New London and the surrounding regions*

### SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Renovate and expand the College Center at Crozier-Williams<sup>3</sup>
- Develop comprehensive initiative for intergroup dialogue and leadership<sup>4</sup>
- Increase permanent funding for student clubs and organizations
- Establish robust weekly, monthly, and annual roster of student activities
- Advance plan for improving residence halls as part of campus master plan
- Explore new options for apartment-style living
- Continue expanding spaces and programs that enhance the first-year residential experience<sup>5</sup>
- Develop centralized transportation system to support intellectual, social, and community engagement beyond the campus<sup>6</sup>

### DETAILS OF ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MAY 2018 AND MAY 2019:

- 1** Launched Task Force on Asset Reinvestment to develop new plan for campus deferred maintenance and short- and medium-term capital investments, with focus on residence halls. *\*See also Financial Strength, note 5.*
- 2** Launched outdoor education program to increase resources and opportunities for student recreation in New England region.
- 3** Completed Cro program study and conceptual design.
- 4** Published new statement and policy on Freedom of Expression at Connecticut College. | Created new First Year Seminar on intergroup dialogue, to be offered in Fall 2019. *\*See also Full Participation, note 3.*
- 5** Completed renovation of the College's second all-first-year residence, in Morrisson House.



- 6** Improved transportation services with appointment of new campus coordinator, expanded fleet of vehicles, and driver safety training.

## Goal 3: Athletics

Heighten the competitiveness, success, and integration of the College's athletics programs.

### OBJECTIVES

- *Make strategic investments in infrastructure and operating support for varsity athletics*<sup>1</sup>
- *Develop club, intramural, and recreational programs for everyone*
- *Strengthen connections among athletics, academics, and the co-curriculum*

### SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Develop plan for upgrading athletics facilities as part of campus master plan<sup>2</sup> ✓
- Establish task force on athletics to evaluate team staffing, funding, and performance ✓
- Employ new assessment methods to review program effectiveness<sup>3</sup> ✓
- Provide enhanced professional development for coaches<sup>4</sup>
- Expand Camel Athletics Club to increase engagement of alumni athletes

- Augment funding and oversight of club and recreational sports <sup>5</sup>
- Connect athletes to new initiatives in intergroup dialogue and leadership

#### **DETAILS OF ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MAY 2018 AND MAY 2019:**

**1** Reorganized Athletics Department staff and hired experienced athletics professional to fill new position of assistant director of athletics for business operations. | Elevated two head coaches to associate athletic director to support teams and the department more effectively. | Solidified support for men’s and women’s track as well as men’s and women’s squash by bringing respective coaches from part-time to full-time faculty status. | Hired new full-time head coaches for men’s basketball and men’s soccer after highly competitive search processes.

- 2** Completed strategic plan for athletics. | Retained CHA Design/Construction Solutions to lead the athletics facility program study and design.
- 3** Designed new, more open evaluation process for student athletes to offer feedback on their athletic experiences, to be launched in 2019-20.
- 4** Transformed appointment, promotion, and review processes for coaches. | Brought innovative “Coaching 2 Connect” program to Connecticut College, a three-year program in leadership and communications training, to work with men’s and women’s ice hockey.
- 5** Launched new ice hockey club for women. | Hired coach for men’s hockey club. | Brought two new on-call athletic trainers to Conn to support home events for both men’s and women’s rugby and ice hockey clubs.

### **3. Supporting a Diverse, Just, and Sustainable Community**

The culminating priority of the strategic plan builds on the previous two through a vision that both acknowledges pressing needs and speaks to longstanding values of the institution. To enable a truly just and sustainable institution, we will commit to policies and practices that ensure equity, protect precious resources, and enable all people to flourish in their lives at the College.

#### **Goal 1: Full Participation**

**Empower an increasingly diverse community of students, faculty, and staff to thrive in their work and contribute to the flourishing of others.**

##### **OBJECTIVES**

- *Develop new policies and programs in support of full participation*
- *Enhance resources to enroll and retain students from historically underrepresented groups <sup>1</sup>*
- *Support and retain an increasing number of faculty and staff of color*
- *Foster a culture of respect and recognition for all employees <sup>2</sup>*
- *Improve the accessibility and safety of the campus*

##### **SPECIFIC ACTIONS**

- Develop comprehensive initiative for intergroup dialogue and leadership <sup>3</sup>
- Establish new programs for development and recognition of staff excellence <sup>4</sup>
- Assess and eliminate structural barriers for student success <sup>5</sup>

- Leverage financial aid to expand the socioeconomic diversity of the student body



- Revise policies for opportunity hiring to assist with diversity goals
- Address systemic and cultural impediments to retaining international and domestic faculty and staff of color
- Increase endowed resources for the Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity and relocate the Center to central campus ✓
- Enhance support for, visibility of, and connections among campus centers and programs focused on identity and inclusion ⑥
- Expand staffing and programming to promote inclusive pedagogies across the curriculum ⑦
- Develop new resources to support departments in their work toward full participation
- Clarify curricular requirement for learning about social difference ⑧
- Launch pre-orientation programs to boost student success
- Improve dining options to include halal and kosher food ⑨ ✓
- Generate near- and long-term accessibility plans in conjunction with campus master plan ⑩
- Explore the possibility of a second, accessible pedestrian bridge

#### DETAILS OF ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MAY 2018 AND MAY 2019:

- ① Received leadership gift from John Zeiler '74 to add a second Posse cohort, from New York City, to be admitted December 2019. | Joined the American Talent Initiative, a coalition of educational leaders with a mission to expand access and opportunity to high-achieving, low-income students from across the U.S.
- ② Launched new monthly Faculty-Staff Meeting to provide more inclusive forum for discussion and exchange on important College business among all employees. | Launched monthly workshop series through office of dean of faculty to enhance leadership capacity of department chairs and program directors.
- ③ *See Campus Living, note 4.*
- ④ Supported full-day professional development retreat for academic department and program assistants.
- ⑤ Renegotiated College contracts to eliminate all student fees for laundry services, effective Fall 2019. | Awarded micro-grants to 47 students through Global Scholars Fund to help cover contingent costs associated with international internships and study away programs.

- ⑥ Finalized Equity and Inclusion Action Plan for release in Summer 2019.
- ⑦ *See Research, note 1.*
- ⑧ *See Education, note 4.*
- ⑨ Expanded Halal options in Harris Refectory from a once-per-week dinner to daily lunch and dinner options.
- ⑩ Began construction of elevator for main administrative building, Fanning Hall, to be completed September 2019. | Worked with students, faculty, and staff in newly formed Accessibility Committee to develop short- and long-term solutions for campus accessibility.

## Goal 2: Sustainability

**Become a beacon of sustainability through careful stewardship of the College's physical, natural, and human resources.**

### OBJECTIVES

- *Solidify the institutional commitment to environmentally responsible and socially just practices*
- *Establish principles to guide future campus development reflective of College values*
- *Leverage the natural assets of campus and region to advance the College's priorities*
- *Improve decision-making, conserve resources, and enhance outcomes through the use of new analytical tools*

### SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Undertake a campus-wide master planning process ① ✓
- Take steps to heighten the College's national profile on sustainability ②
- Redouble efforts to spread sustainability across the curriculum
- Expand revolving fund for resource efficiency
- Enhance capacity of arboretum as a vehicle for teaching and research in the natural sciences ③
- Open campus access to the Thames River for scholarship and recreation ④
- Explore potential to develop a sustainable food initiative based on local assets
- Consider developing a sustainable residential facility as part of master planning effort
- Execute space-utilization study to inform capital planning ✓
- Audit administrative structures to ensure efficient and maximal use of talent ⑤

## DETAILS OF ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MAY 2018 AND MAY 2019:

- 1 Released newly approved Master Plan on the College's website to keep campus up to date on guiding principles and current projects.
- 2 Published Campus Sustainability Plan 2018-2028, a comprehensive set of actions the College will take to achieve its sustainability goals. | Completed plans to install fuel cell to reduce carbon footprint and achieve energy savings (to be launched Summer 2019)
- 3 Hired new Arboretum director to expand the collection of curated plants, promote conservation efforts, and support long-term ecological study.
- 4 Partnered with New England Science and Sailing to offer outdoor leadership opportunities in kayaking.
- 5 Reorganized staffing in divisions of Admission & Financial Aid, Advancement, Communications, Dean of the College, Dean of Students, Equity and Inclusion, Finance & Administration, Human Resources, and Information Services to align staffing with current programmatic needs.


## Goal 3: Financial Strength

Protect and grow the College's financial resources.

### OBJECTIVES

- Double the size of the College's endowment
- Strategically deploy operating resources to ensure strong enrollments <sup>1</sup>
- Explore new programming to diversify revenue streams
- Strengthen and expand philanthropic support for College priorities <sup>2</sup>

### SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- Plan and launch a capital campaign in support of the strategic plan <sup>3</sup> 
- Fortify annual giving and gifts to endowment
- Increase alumni engagement and participation <sup>4</sup>
- Develop a long-term budget addressing capital improvements and deferred maintenance <sup>5</sup>
- Create revenue-generating initiatives that take advantage of the campus in summer <sup>6</sup>
- Seek collaborative partnerships to improve operations and achieve efficiencies <sup>7</sup>
- Explore new ways to make a Connecticut College education affordable <sup>8</sup>

## DETAILS OF ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MAY 2018 AND MAY 2019:

- 1 Revised travel assignments for Admission staff to support an additional four weeks of Fall 2018 travel in emerging markets. | Reorganized Admission staffing to support College's strengthened position in national and international admission markets.
- 2 Began implementing Salesforce as the new enterprise system for Advancement to strengthen the College's ability to reach its 25,000 alumni (project to be completed Spring 2020).
- 3 Began designing collateral materials for future Campaign public launch, including Campaign branding and introductory video.
- 4 Completed record-breaking fifth Founder's Day Challenge, receiving over 3,660 gifts and over \$1.2 million in donations in two days, including challenge gifts from Brad Brown P'12 '15 '20, Rob Hale '88 P'20, Zoe Klein Henriquez '99, and Raj Vig '93.
- 5 Continued the discipline of strategic review of all open positions to stimulate the most creative solutions to staffing. | Improved long-range financial modeling capacity by implementing Whitebirch platform. | *See Campus Living, note 1.*
- 6 Signed contracts with iD Tech and Education Unlimited to establish academic summer camps for middle- and high-school students at Conn beginning Summer 2019.
- 7 Increased College's purchasing power by spearheading the CTW OneSource eMarketplace consortium with Trinity and Wesleyan for more efficient procurement process across three institutions. | Implemented new partnership with local vendor to provide high quality printing while achieving savings for campus.
- 8 Received citation from Sustainable Campus Index of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education for reducing textbook expenses through the Connecticut College Lending Library. | Created Open Educational Resources program and made grant awards to 11 faculty members and academic departments with potential to realize \$93,000 worth of textbook cost savings each semester.