



RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE
Affirming our Strength
Building our Future



Three-Year Strategic Action Plan
July 1, 2017–June 30, 2020



Rhode Island College has a legacy and inspiration that has positioned us with unlimited potential and an extraordinary opportunity. Looking forward, we must prepare the Ocean State's first public college for a brilliant, and perhaps unimagined, future.

– President Frank D. Sánchez



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RIC Mission Statement

Rhode Island College is a public higher education institution anchored in liberal arts and experiential learning opportunities, with an unwavering commitment to student-centered teaching. Through their experience on campus, and with myriad community partners, students gain knowledge, skills and insight necessary to contribute to, and benefit from, our ever-evolving culture and economy. RIC continually strives to provide a safe and respectful campus environment that assures freedom of thought and expression, rooted in the belief that we, as a community and individually, all benefit from a diversity of ideas, philosophies and cultural representations. With a strong focus on intellectual and personal growth and professional development, RIC is a force for positive change in the lives of our students and in the state and region.
(pending formal approval by Council)

RIC Vision Statement

Rhode Island College will be recognized as a thought leader among public colleges, acknowledged for its individualized, student-centered programs and preparation of the state and region's diverse populations. The college will be distinctive in providing industry-leading, dynamic curricular and co-curricular learning experiences, fostering student retention, degree completion and professional development. Renowned for the expertise and leadership of its faculty, staff, students and alumni, the college will continue to focus on its entrepreneurial approach to preparing students for a 21st century workforce; adaptability to the changing social and economic environment; and collective impact on Rhode Island's economy and culture.
(pending formal approval by Council)

RIC Core Values

- ≈ Excellence and Innovation
- ≈ Access and Opportunity
- ≈ Student-Centered
- ≈ Diversity and Inclusion
- ≈ State and Community Leadership
- ≈ Transparency

Dear Members of the Rhode Island College Community,

Over the course of our nearly 164 years, Rhode Island College has remained steadfastly committed to quality, value and innovation as part of the teaching and learning enterprise. We regularly review our practices to adapt to changing student needs, community employment needs and higher education environmental factors.

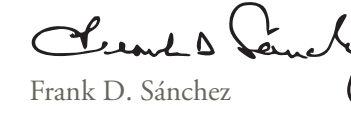
RIC is one of the leading public colleges in the region and remains an important economic driver for Rhode Island. It is clear we do not need to reinvent ourselves to succeed. Through this three-year strategic plan, we will build on the impressive achievements of our past while setting a new course for the future.

For a college, the strategic planning process is often part practical planning and part inspirational imagination. The strategic pillars and goals outlined in this plan will guide us as we build an environment in which all our community members can flourish, while maintaining flexibility to meet the dynamic nature of higher education as we pursue our aspirations.

As we end this phase of the planning process, I am grateful to the many faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends of the college who came together to offer review, input and feedback. The strategy outlined in this plan has been well vetted and is widely supported among our community.

While the challenges addressing higher education nationally and locally are many, I am optimistic about RIC's future and excited for the opportunities that lie ahead!

Yours in education,



Frank D. Sánchez

President



Strategic Framework

An effective planning process includes multiple steps. The college must determine where we want to go, how to get there, who does the work and what measures are used to assess progress.

For the purposes of this plan, a strategic framework was developed to organize the Strategic Plan's content. Several central themes emerged from our community discussions, as well as informative evidence and data gathering. Many of these central themes were often mentioned as part of RIC's history, academic fabric and as keys to future success. The college also conducted an environmental scan that pointed to these themes as being essential to what RIC represents today and where we need to be in the future.

If the mission, vision and values serve as our foundation, then these concepts serve as our pillars. They represent the strategic investments prioritized within this three-year action plan and provide the framework for our goals, objectives and work plans. Associated with each objective are select priority initiatives that signify necessary steps toward achieving our goals.



↻ Learning Innovation

A college ethos that elevates the teaching and learning enterprise in effective, innovative and extraordinary ways with leading instructional practices.

↻ Student Success

A student collegiate experience that helps students identify their strengths, talents and passions and encourages, supports and challenges them to achieve their goals and receive a college degree.

↻ Inclusive Excellence

A college campus that intentionally designs welcoming and inviting learning experiences for all students, regardless of background, income, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion or politics, for the benefit of the entire college community.

↻ Community Partnerships

Purposeful collaborations with local, state and national partners, both public and private, to provide the highest quality college degree and address critical issues for the broader community.

↻ Institutional Effectiveness

An administration and college community committed to being exceptional stewards of public funding while incorporating evidence-based, high impact practices.

Implementation Planning & Progress Reporting

Senior managers have been assigned to each objective and will complete an Implementation Plan for their respective areas. This plan identifies the action steps necessary to meet the objective, along with required resources and anticipated deliverables, and allows for regular status updates, success measurement and, most importantly, accountability.

Decade of Technology

The use of innovative, advanced technology is necessary for the future effectiveness of the college. The digital landscape continues to barrel forward and we must be ready to meet new educational demands without compromising RIC's high-quality instruction and student interactions in the classroom. As the college implements this strategic plan, we will simultaneously embark upon a major campaign to transform RIC's technological infrastructure and capabilities for instruction, student services and administration. This signature initiative will require us to marshal resources toward enhancing exceptional faculty-student interactions while advancing high-tech, high-touch classroom instruction and student services in a traditional college setting. The vast majority of students at RIC were born in this new era of mobile devices, social media communities and access to information around the world. Tomorrow's RIC experience must be designed with these new realities in mind. Technology must integrate into our culture in a systematic and relevant way. Utilizing the best appropriate technology will help to achieve the goals outlined in this plan.





Learning Innovation

Now

more than ever, the college is poised to deliver a degree of the highest quality, value and innovation while preparing our students to succeed in an increasingly complex world. As a strategy to further enhance a culture of learning innovation, we will invest in our exceptional faculty, promote active teaching strategies and embed student experiential learning opportunities throughout the entire collegiate experience. RIC will capitalize on its position among regional higher education institutions and become a leader in creating a culture of learning innovation across our faculty, student and staff communities.

GOAL

Rhode Island College will create a culture of learning innovation that involves and supports our students, faculty and staff in a dynamic and stimulating environment of critical thinking and inquiry.

Faculty Support

Invest in highly qualified, diverse faculty and staff through equitable and competitive salary structures.

- ☞ Conduct a third-party analysis of RIC's salary and benefit structure, jointly supported by faculty and administration.

Significantly increase the use of technology in the classroom to improve instruction.

- ☞ Launch a task force that will:
 - ☞ Outline ways to improve the student experience with better instruction methods.
 - ☞ Identify growth opportunities for increased use of technology based on market study data.
 - ☞ Identify areas to invest.
- ☞ Provide faculty training in the best practices of online pedagogy.

Expand active teaching strategies in the classroom.

- ☞ Increase investments in faculty professional development, with an emphasis on active teaching methods.
- ☞ Increase number of faculty to employ active teaching methods in the classroom.



GOAL

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Leverage Academic Expertise

Develop degree and non-degree certificate programs in high-demand areas to meet regional economic development needs.

- Partner with other institutions in the co-development of workforce-related initiatives recognizing the unique role, scope and mission of each institution.
- Promote interdisciplinary programming among schools, departments and faculty.
- Partner with Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC) on the development of RIC-sponsored programs at the new Westerly facility.

Invest in data infrastructure to support RIC's ability to provide statewide policy and planning guidance.

- Work with state policy entities (e.g., OPC, K-12 Council, Workforce Board, Skills Cabinet, Children's Cabinet and Commerce Corp) to assess what support and/or state and regional information RIC is positioned to provide.

Strengthen and expand graduate study opportunities at RIC.

- Develop an organizational and financial plan to invest in an Office of Graduate Study.
- Increase support for graduate assistantships.
- Investigate partnership opportunities with other higher-education institutions.

Experiential Learning

Significantly expand experiential learning opportunities for students.

- Determine the feasibility of a 21st Century Skills Requirement for all RIC undergraduates.
- Invest in growing the number of internships, undergraduate research, study abroad, apprenticeships, job shadowing and service learning opportunities.



Learning Innovation

Feinstein School of Education and Human Development (FSEHD)

Develop overall improvement plan leveraging community partners and local, state and national expertise.

- Establish, charge, and implement the coordinating structures and communication systems to engage the school's stakeholders, bring in external perspectives, partner with RIDE and begin to implement a clearly defined plan and tactical strategy.

Increase proficiency with standards-based instruction and assessment, integration of technology, and instruction in working with English language learners and students with disabilities.

- Undergo a comprehensive review of all of the educator preparation curricula in FSEHD, reorganizing the course work and content to incorporate and emphasize new elements, enhance clinical experiences and reduce the overall credit requirements for the majors.

Strengthen relationships with local districts and develop more robust clinical experiences.

- Develop a coordinated strategy to connect with the leadership and teachers in every district in Rhode Island.
- Establish a plan to recruit and support cooperating teachers and provide longer, more intensive clinical experiences, including the co-teaching model where appropriate.





Student Success

Congratulations Class Of 2017



A student-focused

institution, Rhode Island College has a responsibility to foster students' success by helping them effectively navigate the collegiate experience, build academic momentum and ensure degree completion. Providing relevant, high-quality, well-coordinated student support services that lead to high levels of student satisfaction is a good predictor of student success and an essential element to RIC's success. To further emphasize student success, the college will invest in the organization including student academic services, student life, enrollment management and other high impact and evidence-based practices.

GOAL

RIC will support student success through high-quality learning with effective and engaging delivery of services. All students will be provided with an enriching, purposeful and attainable pathway to graduation.

Organization

Align the college's organizational structure to best support student success.

- Establish the role of Vice President for Student Success focusing, enhancing and improving student services, policies and programs.
- Align enrollment management, key academic services and student affairs under new Division of Student Success.

Implement high-impact practices for student supports and engagement.

- Administer comprehensive review (NASPA) of student support services to ensure we are adhering to national best policies and evidence-based practice.
- Establish nationally indexed benchmarks for student satisfaction across all student services.
- Create President's Leadership Program to cultivate top student leaders on campus.
- Assess effects of RIC's current model for awarding financial aid and administering work study on student success.



GOAL

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Student Academic Services

Establish centralized, well-coordinated student academic services.

- ☞ Make critical investments to professionalize academic advising for all students.
- ☞ Centralize student academic support services to promote easy access and delivery.

Invest in high-impact practices to improve academic momentum, course completion and degree attainment.

- ☞ Establish supplemental instruction for high-risk courses to improve course completion rates.
- ☞ Examine and enhance existing First-Year Experience efforts and address “summer-melt.”

Student Life

Invest in a comprehensive first-year experience program for all incoming freshmen and transfer students to foster student involvement and connection to campus community.

- ☞ Provide leadership in programs and services to create a distinctive freshman year experience.
- ☞ Develop programming to help newest undergraduates, both freshmen and transfer students, transition into the intellectual, social, and cultural community of RIC.
- ☞ Prepare new college students with the skills and knowledge they need beyond academics to persist to completion and meet their individual goals.

Enhance campus experience by improving co-curricular offerings for residents and commuters to encourage greater student involvement and participation.

- ☞ Launch a “Beyond the Classroom” task force to provide recommendations for enhanced engagement, services and experience.
- ☞ Identify relevant technology to facilitate student involvement, access to services and information.

Invest in coordinated, wrap-around student academic and wellness services.

- ☞ Establish centralized student support services.
- ☞ Expand access to services for all students.

Student Success

Enrollment Management

Develop a comprehensive enrollment management plan providing strategies for graduate, international, adult and traditional enrollment growth.

- ☞ Establish an enrollment management committee that includes expertise from the RIC community.
- ☞ Engage a consultant to work with committee to lead policy review and standardize enrollment requirements.
- ☞ Develop a marketing and outreach plan for targeted areas.

Establish new brand for Rhode Island College that recognizes our exceptional strengths and showcases the quality, value and innovation of Rhode Island’s first public college.

- ☞ Engage a private firm to assist with RIC branding and marketing with input from students, faculty, staff, alumni and broader community.
- ☞ Establish consistency and cohesiveness by incorporating new brand into all college materials, web and communications.
- ☞ Raise the profile in the community of RIC’s performing arts program and theater facilities through marketing and media outreach.

Improve and expand residential options to attract diverse enrollment segments (i.e. out of state, international).

- ☞ Explore financial options for renovating, building or partnering on new and improved housing opportunities.





Inclusive Excellence



Over

the past several years, we have seen a dramatic shift in the demographics of our undergraduate student body. The entire RIC community benefits from a community comprised of individuals from diverse backgrounds, including but not limited to race/ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and disability. RIC's teaching and learning enterprise will encourage opportunities to understand ourselves and our communities within diverse contexts. Applying the principles and practices of inclusive excellence will support the continuous development of a welcoming campus culture that values safety and stimulates critical thinking.

GOAL

RIC will promote an inclusive campus culture in which every participant will grow in their understanding of the benefits and value of diversity and be better prepared to prosper in a world that is increasingly both culturally rich and complex.

Organization

Invest in the college's organizational structure to best support inclusive excellence.

- Establish an Associate Vice President for Community, Equity and Diversity who will adopt an effective and aggressive work plan to assure that RIC is making progress on inclusive excellence.
- Establish a President's Commission on Inclusive Excellence that will develop policies, practices and programs to assure that each RIC student is prepared to engage in and facilitate success with inclusion issues, and thrive in our increasingly diverse society.

Increase diversity among faculty, staff and administration to reflect the demographics of the college and the state

- Expand and improve recruitment efforts to increase workforce diversity among professional staff, faculty, and administration.
- Establish clear HR protocol that supports inclusive excellence.

Campus Climate

Review and strengthen key policies and practices involving Title IX, bias response and safety.

- Engage consultant expertise to review current policies and practices and work with campus constituencies to adopt national best practices.
- Ensure that students, faculty and staff are aware of, and have access to, Title IX resources on campus related to gender discrimination and/or sexual assault, and general safety policies, procedures and protocols.
- Provide students with an effective mechanism for expressing any perceived biases and inequities in their college experiences.

Improve campus climate for all members of the Rhode Island College community.

- Administer campus climate survey to better assess concerns on campus.
- Provide faculty and staff professional development on a culture of inclusion, including through HR workshops, orientations, and consultations.





Community Partnerships



RIC will build

on existing community partnerships and actively explore opportunities for collective impact. We will embrace stakeholders and 'outsiders' as an important part of the innovation ecosystem at our college. Our community partnerships will provide innovative experiential learning opportunities for our students while involving and strengthening our relationships with key external stakeholders. These mutually beneficial associations will be a part of our commitment to 21st century skills development and inclusive excellence, as well as a means for RIC to provide state leadership in the areas of education, healthcare, technology and the arts.

GOAL

RIC will actively seek to partner with organizations, governmental entities, foundations and businesses to promote community well-being and provide beneficial opportunities for our students, faculty and staff.

Build Strategic National, State and Local Partnerships

Strengthen and expand partnerships with national and federal level organizations and agencies to support RIC's highest priority initiatives and provide opportunities for students, faculty and staff.

- ☞ Explore potential opportunities to partner with national organizations whose missions align with RIC's mission.
- ☞ Expand visibility of and accessibility to partnership opportunities between RIC and outside organizations.
- ☞ Develop a campus-wide database of existing and past partnerships between RIC and outside organizations.

Strengthen and expand partnerships with state organizations and agencies to support RIC's highest priority initiatives and provide opportunities for students, faculty and staff.

- ☞ Improve collaboration and cooperation with CCRI, URI and OPC to reflect RIC's commitment to and support of a strong system of public higher education in Rhode Island for the benefit of our students and the state.
- ☞ Execute a Rhode Island College economic impact study. Develop a set of indicators to measure RIC's impact on the community and Rhode Island's economy, and track the college's performance on these indicators.
- ☞ Expand visibility of and accessibility to partnership opportunities between RIC and outside organizations.
- ☞ Develop a campus-wide database of existing and past partnerships between RIC and outside organizations.

Strengthen and expand partnerships with local community organizations agencies and business to support RIC's highest priority initiatives and provide opportunities for students, faculty and staff.

- ☞ Review existing relationships with local organizations to maximize benefits to both RIC and the community.
- ☞ Invest in programs and activities to unify the college's student, faculty, staff and administration.
- ☞ Invest in local and national experts, building on RIC's mutually beneficial partnership with the Central Falls community, school district and the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) to develop a national model school district leveraging the resources and strengths of all partners.
- ☞ Expand visibility of and accessibility to partnership opportunities between RIC and outside organizations.
- ☞ Develop a campus-wide database of existing and past partnerships between RIC and outside organizations.



Institutional Effectiveness



We will continue

to improve our business practices to provide greater value to our students and the state. An audit in the summer of 2016 provided clarity on institutional shortcomings, as well as an opportunity for us to take a closer look at how we operate. Additionally, state and national focus on student retention and completion, the college's rapidly changing student demographics, and difficult economic conditions combine to provide both a challenge and an opportunity. Individually and collectively, we must develop new modes of resource management in order to foster collaboration, transparency, data-driven decision-making and creativity to bring about success. We must also value the talents and contributions of our alumni, both in Rhode Island and throughout the country, as critical resources for institutional advancement.

GOAL

RIC will employ technology, transparency, communication, collaboration and innovation in our management of information and resources to foster a shared commitment to seeking the best and highest use of resources to achieve success.

Fiscal Resource Management

Strengthen capacity for effective, transparent resource management.

- ✔ Leverage the Bureau of Audits report to establish and present timely, appropriate and transparent fiscal processes and controls.
- ✔ Institutionalize the Workforce Planning Committee to review all hiring proposals to assure investments are aligned with institutional priorities.
- ✔ Create an efficient, equitable and transparent system for the allocation and maximization of physical spaces on campus.
- ✔ Establish an informative and transparent budgeting process incorporating a three-year forecast.

Enhance the use of technology to promote communication, learning and access.

- ✔ Build RIC's web presence to communicate the college's brand and make information about programs, procedures, and personnel accurate, sensitive and accessible.
- ✔ Review and consistently update the college's media-based communication strategies to meet the needs of students in a digital environment.
- ✔ Increase the number of multifunctional, technology-enhanced spaces for meetings, presentations and events that promote and advance academic goals, such as experiential learning and civic engagement.



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RIC will employ technology, transparency, communication, collaboration and innovation in our management of information and resources to foster a shared commitment to seeking the best and highest use of resources to achieve success.

Fiscal Resource Management (cont.)

Strengthen revenue streams to promote affordability by maintaining tuition and fee levels below regional peers.

- Strengthen advocacy efforts for increased state support.
- Increase revenues from private fundraising.

Establish a comprehensive master plan addressing the long-term physical plant needs and vision for the college's overall footprint.

- Issue an RFP to engage education master planning services from a consultant.
- Engage campus community to provide input, needs and challenges to shape RIC's master plan and ensure the college can adapt to changing conditions into the future.
- Prioritize use of renewable energy sources where feasible.

Institutional Development

Enhance communication and relationships with alumni by recognizing them as a valuable and critical resource for institutional growth and success.

- Begin monthly e-newsletter to alumni to keep them abreast of campus activities and developments.
- Add capacity to more easily solicit, receive and track contributions online.

“RIC reimagines a bold new design and delivery of student services, programs and resources, leveraging the digital-mindset of today's and tomorrow's students.”

– President Frank D. Sánchez



Reimagining Rhode Island College

This Strategic Plan offers a roadmap to success in a new era for RIC. It capitalizes on our great strengths and positions us to make a more significant impact on the critical issues of our institution, our state and our region.

We envision Rhode Island College as a regional leader in the five strategic pillars outlined in this plan. Everything we do will be for the benefit of our students and measured by the advancement of these pillars. Through the successful implementation of this plan, RIC will better prepare its students for a 21st century workforce and build on our reputation for quality, value and innovation.



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