



Regis College

Interim Report 2022

Presented to

Corporation for Sponsored Ministries
of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Boston

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Submitted by

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INTRODUCTION

Mission continues to be at the forefront of all that we do at Regis College. Mission centers who we are, what we do and for what purpose. Mission inspires us, directs us, grounds us, challenges us and rewards us. It provides the light through the darkness on hard days and deepens our joy on the good days. Mission is THE lens in which we view and respond to our community. It is the lens in which work, learn, live, relate to one another.

In the written response to our 2022 Comprehensive Report, one of the recommendations offered was, *“We encourage you to stay the course and develop what will eventually become a self-sustaining mission integration formation program.”*

As a way to illustrate continued emphasis on self-sustaining mission integration, this interim report will focus on our **2022-2025 strategic planning and implementation efforts** of this past year. This work has been grounded in and inspired by our mission and values (regiscollege.edu/about-regis/leadership/strategic-plan).

In October 2021, President Hays formally announced the launch of Regis’ next Strategic Plan 2022-2025: *“One Pride, Many Voices: Owning our Future,”* emphasizing our desire to fully engage our community in this important institutional process.

Mary Lou Jackson, Ph.D., Vice President for Mission Integration, and Audrey Grace, Vice President for Inclusive Excellence, have co-led this strategic planning process work for over a year now. This work has reflected a process of **equity, inclusion, transparency, and accountability**. It is an integrated approach that has allowed for all voices to be heard.

The process has included the **participation of our many constituencies** in focus groups and community dialogues; surveying our faculty, staff and students on inclusion and belonging; and aligning many of our other planning initiatives already ongoing, including the decisions that came out of our long-term planning process, facilities master plan, budget plans, re-accreditation processes, our data dashboard design, our upcoming 10-year NECHE accreditation, and program-specific strategic planning processes.

It is imperative to emphasize that mission is fundamental to all that we do at Regis. In this strategic plan, we want to continue to integrate mission in the best possible way—a way that allows Regis and its community to shine. **We will continue to engage in the ideals that are fundamental to our mission: inclusive excellence, academic excellence, access, formation of the whole person, and responsiveness to the common good.** We always want to hold true to the heritage and legacy of social justice of our founders. It is their legacy and charisma of **unifying love** that propels our legacy in a very intentional and important way.

As we engaged in community dialogues and considered ways we can truly shine, it was important to have a shared understanding of our institutional priorities that will provide the framework for discussions and decision-making in the strategic planning process. The Cabinet

over many sessions and discussions determined our institutional priorities for the strategic plan to be: **Equity, Innovation and Investment**, and **Empowerment**.

The following provides a shared understanding and narrative of each institutional priority.

EQUITY

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston have a long legacy of “serving the dear neighbor without distinction.” As an institution, we take pride in this legacy, understanding we are all God’s children loved equally and without condition. **Equity, in its broadest sense refers to fairness, justice, and parity; equity moves beyond access to assessing outcomes.** Equity mindedness requires race-consciousness and awareness of the social and historical context of exclusionary practices that disproportionately affect racially minoritized groups. Equity means recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and that **we must acknowledge and redress the imbalances.** The process is ongoing, requiring us to take responsibility to identify and remove intentional and unintentional barriers arising from bias or systemic structures. Regis is its best when we are intentional about being equity minded in all our practices and work, including:

- identifying and removing obstacles to success while maximizing potential
- making sure we have the most accurate and disaggregate demographic information
- identifying equity gaps and the institutional policies or practices that are causing those gaps
- valuing differences in the community as an asset to the educational community
- engaging in ongoing critical self-reflection of unconscious bias
- reviewing of structures and policies that may favor one group over another
- creating safe spaces and opportunities for welcoming all without distinction
- working towards the goal of becoming a center of excellence for inclusive excellence

Our institutional priority of equity builds upon the foundational work of our commitment to do better institutional action plan, the ongoing efforts of the **Inclusive Excellence Council** for the last five years, the outcomes and work of our Title III grant, our universal design for learning initiative, our exploration of open educational resources all within academic affairs, the work undertaken by our student affairs staff, and the collaborative efforts of our mission, ministry and service and inclusive excellence team. In addition, we have the benefit of the collective experience and expertise of our relatively newly formed **Board of Trustees Inclusive Excellence Subcommittee.**

As we have engaged and solicited feedback and as we have moved through our strategic planning process with our many constituencies, we did so in an equity-minded manner, asking questions that focus on our strengths, our opportunities, our aspirations, and finally how to implement solutions and actions that will effectively deepen, strengthen and more fully integrate this important institutional priority.

INNOVATION and INVESTMENT

The landscape of higher education demands constant analysis, nimbleness, and the ability to pivot. Making the right decisions about where to direct our resources, finding niche markets to invest in, and creating innovative pathways and programs will not only sustain Regis, but allow our community to thrive and prosper. Regis shines when academic identity and mission align, when who we are within our community is articulated clearly and succinctly to our external community. Regis is its best self when we are forward thinking in our investment and innovation strategies, prioritizing:

- partnership development and stewardship
- human capital and building capital investments
- faculty support and development
- innovative pedagogy and classroom technology
- market-driven programmatic prospects and initiatives
- data-driven decision making
- relevant and compelling brand identity centered around mission

It is important to note and to remember what we mean when we say “**community**,” who we are referring to and how they can best be served. The Regis community is made up of individuals who come to learn, who come to teach, who come to lead, who come to serve, who come to make a living. We are also a community whose members may come to seek food, seek shelter, seek a safe haven, as evidenced by our many submissions to the Dear Neighbor Fund. We are also a community of diversity, which means the goals and aspirations of our members are also equally diverse. Yet, all our community members have one thing in common: they want to be a part of a community where **they are lifted up, where they are given the opportunities to move forward in their personal journeys**, however they might define this for themselves.

Therefore, innovation and investment as an institutional priority really means responding in a way that is mindful of **our understanding of humanity and all its variations**. We recognize ultimately, we are in the business of lifting up those within our community.

We understand that we have to make the right decisions at the right time, to be innovative and invest wisely, but ultimately, sustainability and prosperity are measured not just by how much revenue is on the balance sheet, but by our success in lifting up community members by how we see them, how we hear them, how we understand them, how we work with them, how we serve them, how we teach them, how we respect them, how we advocate for them, how we provide the tools for them to be agents of change so that they may lift up others along their own journeys beyond Regis.

In other words, a way in which our graduates can “**serve and lead as advocates for a more just and compassionate global society**,” as our mission statement encourages.

EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment is the manner in which an individual receives the necessary tools and authority to confidently succeed. Regis is its best self when all voices are heard, all identities are respected and valued. We are committed to each individual's well-being, including their intellectual, emotional, spiritual, ethical, physical, and professional development. This commitment is evident in our tag line, "Better You, Better World." We want our graduates to reach their full potential and when doing so, be confident in their abilities to work toward the common good. One of the best ways to contribute to the common good is to allow individuals to recognize their full potential and realize their human dignity. A vibrant university is a vibrant community when the culture and the environment offer all a sense of belonging, where diversity is championed and identities are celebrated by engaging in:

- inclusive excellence practices
- formation of the whole person
- professional development that includes the practices of cultural competence and cultural humility
- a work climate that fosters work life balance, recognition, and appreciation
- solidarity within and among us all, engaging in positive relationships with each other and the institution

How do we define empowerment at Regis today, with a student body diverse in race, ethnicity, identity, age, geography, life experiences, and within an everchanging higher education landscape? Why is "empowerment" important enough to be an institutional priority?

The sisters have always been invited by their charism to read the signs of the times and interpret them in light of the Gospel. Although the signs of the times are complex and often ambiguous, they move in confidence, called to contemplative action—meaning integrating both prayer and action, prayer and social responsibility, prayer and peace, prayer and justice, prayer and responsiveness to the humanity around them.

This integration is central to the sisters' charism...it is an empowering force. Our strategic planning process has been an empowering process for our community, in particular our students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

We will continue to try to understand and respond to the signs of the times, as the sisters have done for over 300 years. **The signs of the times are still complex and ambiguous.** But like the sisters now and before us, we will carry on confidently, inspired by the sisters call to contemplative action—by empowering our community members to reach their full potential, to act in ways that push us to collectively take on the responsibility of making our university a better place, and our world a better world. This is what makes our mission so distinct, this is what makes our mission so profound.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, EMERGENT THEMES, AND OPERATIONAL SOLUTIONS

The data from the focus groups, external surveys, the *Community Survey on Inclusion and Belonging*, and aligned planning processes contributed to determining our eight strategic objectives for 2022-2025. Many Cabinet retreats and meetings led us to making these important decisions about what we want to focus on and achieve over the next three years.

Since March, the Cabinet and Administrative Council have been working at developing an **implementation plan**, our plan to execute many initiatives that will help us to achieve our strategic objectives. Again, we have engaged in several retreats and many meetings to get us to this point.

Being mindful that a strategic plan is a living, malleable document, the following is a high-level review of the objectives and themes that emerged are guiding our decisions for the implementation plan. The strategic objectives are noted along with the longer, descriptive narrative, followed by a *sampling* (over 80 initiatives presently) of implementation plans, or the operational solutions we are committed to achieving, within each theme. Please note resource requirements, key performance indicators, timelines, and benchmarks are documented within the internal tracking report the Administrative Council will use to monitor progress.

➤ **STRENGTHEN** and deepen our equity-minded, mission-driven culture and community.

Although we have made great strides and have engaged in many intentional efforts and initiatives to **build an institutionalized paradigm** of diversity, equity and inclusion, we are still on a journey to transform the culture through individual, institutional and systemic changes that address and eradicate inequities across all aspects of community life.

Emergent Themes:

- Continue to deepen mission alignment and build an institutionalized paradigm of diversity, equity and inclusion across the community.
- Elevate internal expertise to promote systemic changes that address and work toward eradicating inequities.
- Ensure equitable hiring, promotion, and retention policies and processes.
- Support and incentivize diversity, equity, and inclusion learning opportunities and capacity-building throughout our community.

Sample Operational Solutions:

- ⇒ Develop a blueprint for inclusive excellence that will set forth the institutional goals for diversity, equity and inclusion, provide guidance to empower schools / departments to set their own goals, and provide an accountability and assessment plan.

- ⇒ Increase the opportunity for a more diverse group of suppliers to provide goods and services to Regis and increase Regis spending on suppliers identified as diverse (MBE, WBE, LGBTQ+...).
- ⇒ Integrate the lessons learned from this summer's inclusive teaching and equitable learning course throughout the School of Arts & Sciences.
- ⇒ Establish a faculty-led community outreach effort focused on delivering no-cost foundational management expertise to small businesses and startups in marginalized communities: the Regis Entrepreneurial Equity Project.
- ⇒ Enhance hiring and retention of excellent and diverse faculty and staff by strengthening our search and hiring process, new employee

➤ **NOURISH** and sustain strategic collaborations and partnerships.

It is necessary to **expand our notion and understanding of “partnerships”** as a source of both revenue and collaborative opportunity. Regis has amassed partnerships, but we need to examine additional ways to nurture these relationships for our mutual benefit. Also, we can uncover and curate new ways to partner with foundations, corporations, industry, schools, and other organizations to produce sustainable growth opportunities. Partnerships must also extend to our own community members as we look to expand mentoring and collaboration with faculty, staff, students, alumni and other constituencies to empower through experiential and confidence-building connections.

Emergent Themes:

- Uncover and curate new ways to partner with external organizations to produce sustainable growth opportunities.
- Develop internal collaborations across faculty, staff, students, alumni and other constituencies to empower the Regis community.

Sample Operational Solutions:

- ⇒ Establish relationships with local community colleges to create a pipeline of student veterans to Regis College.
- ⇒ Build, strengthen, and formalize meaningful relationships with strategic/employer partners to support career development initiatives and promote student career readiness and outcomes.
- ⇒ Expand upon external relationships in Greater Boston, Commonwealth and Weston.
- ⇒ Develop external partnerships to support multiple aims of the college.
- ⇒ Expand the relationship between the Center for Health and Wellness and the students in the health sciences majors, specifically nursing.

➤ **CREATE** innovative pathways and opportunities for transformative student growth and success.

A Regis educational experience should leave a student transformed and empowered. **Transformational experiences** can be defined as “fundamentally challenging students’ assumptions and preconceptions, as well as their beliefs, and values, affecting how they understand themselves, others, and the world around them.” Whether this transformation is a result of experiences in the classroom or service learning or immersion, in faculty guided research projects or personal counseling and support, in the residence halls or on the playing fields, in clinical sites or the workplace, during study abroad or global experiences, through extra-curricular or co-curricular participation, we want to continue to create and expand access to these high impact experiences for our undergraduate, graduate, and online students.

Emergent Themes:

- Create and expand access to high impact experiences for all students.
- Enhance the student experience by improving existing support systems, communication, and engagement.
- Grow undergraduate co-curricular experiences.

Sample Operational Solutions:

- ⇒ Increase the financial stability/sustainability of Center for Ministry and Service and immersion trips in order to ensure equitable student participation, regardless of financial resources, and shift pre-trip focus from fundraising to transformative education/formation.
- ⇒ Implement best business practice to ensure transfer students success while enrolled at Regis, including the development of task force and a credit-bearing mandatory course for transfer students taken during their first semester at Regis.
- ⇒ Providing financial literacy to both prospective and currently enrolled undergraduate students.
- ⇒ Holistic review of the entire grad student experience from application to graduation and beyond. Including identification and removal of internal barriers to growth.
- ⇒ Expand and strengthen professional advising employing best practices to support, retain and engage professional, graduate and doctoral students from deposit through degree conferral.

➤ **DELIVER impactful academic programs for the contemporary, evolving learner.**

Regis is committed to serving all students. We are committed to designing, developing, and revising our academic programs to ensure that our students not only access a Regis education, but thrive, as **every student should be a success story**. Teaching and learning are dynamic processes that continue to evolve. Therefore, it is important to understand and respond to the needs, learning styles, strengths and challenges of our diverse student body, our first-generation students, our veterans, our working professional students, all of which bring different experiences, skill sets, and learning to the educational experience. It is our responsibility to determine how best to serve them.

Emergent Themes:

- Design, develop, and revise our academic programs and modes of delivery to ensure that our students not only access a Regis education, but thrive, as every student should be a success story.
- Meet the needs of the contemporary learner.

Sample Operational Solutions:

- ⇒ Increase attractiveness of our accelerated 2nd degree programs (16 Month ABSN, 24 Month BSN, DEM*) in a very competitive/saturated market.
- ⇒ To increase recruitment practices and retention efforts by strengthening the Regis fast-track process and the transition between graduate admission and advising.
- ⇒ Graduate Affairs: Simplify, streamline and automate transfer credit process, including but not limited to student submission, internal assessment, recording in Colleague, review process and integrity of data. Establish a consistent process inclusive of Credit for Prior Learning/Life Experience.
- ⇒ Create and offer an information literacy class for all students.
- ⇒ Research and implement a Masters in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Leadership 4+1 Program, BA in CEDS, Humanities and MA in DEI

- **INVEST** in resources, infrastructure, and professional development for our faculty and staff to do their best work.

Investment in **our most precious resource** – our faculty and staff – demonstrates what we value. We want our employees to thrive in their working environments and know they have the resources they need to excel in their efforts. This requires continuous investment in professional development, infrastructure improvements, competitive salaries and benefits, facilities modernization, and systems integration.

Emergent Themes:

- Develop and support impactful professional development experiences for all faculty and staff to ensure that they are leaders in their fields and at Regis.
- Invest in improving our business processes to minimize risk and promote systems integration.
- Modernize our facilities.
- Identify enterprise level risks for Regis College.

Sample Operational Solutions:

- ⇒ Create a training module for faculty and staff, on campus and online, to better educate them on the process within OSAS, the various accommodations and how

they should be implemented, and how to work with the variety of identities they may encounter in their classrooms.

- ⇒ Provide comprehensive faculty development opportunities for all faculty (adjuncts, half-time, full-time).
- ⇒ Support staff professional development opportunities, including membership and affiliation with professional organizations and associations, certification and credentialing opportunities, and internal and external training, to ensure that all staff remain current in their professions and follow best practices for their fields.
- ⇒ Construct a new residence hall on campus that will provide more modern and competitive living arrangements for residential students and incorporate space in the building for the Children's Center and Autism Center to grow their programs.

➤ **IMPROVE** brand recognition by conveying intersection of mission with our distinct academic strengths and authentic identity.

Regis has an **impactful mission**, market-driven academic programs, and a compelling story that differentiates us from others. However, we lack brand identity with our external audiences and markets that conveys our story well. Creating such a brand identity will not only distinguish us from our competitors but will showcase Regis as a place of choice to learn and work.

Emergent Themes:

- Creating a cohesive brand identity to distinguish us from our competitors and showcase Regis as a place of choice to learn and work.
- Increase our brand identity with our external audiences and markets by telling the Regis story.

Sample Operational Solutions:

- ⇒ Ensure consistent brand message and identity that is representative of the institution's mission is disseminated throughout the marketplace.
- ⇒ Develop specific programming and marketing materials that accurately represents and highlights the diversity on campus, while developing sub-strategies (travel, financial aid, recruitment) that promote diversity on campus (socioeconomic, ethnic, gender identity, 1st generation).
- ⇒ Establish a formal government and community relations program to enhance Regis' influence and perceptions of the university among local, state and federal stakeholders and other audiences.
- ⇒ Develop a formal integrated marketing and communications plan for the university that generates leads and builds and strengthens Regis' brand awareness by sharing authentic stories of the Regis experience mission and values.

➤ **CULTIVATE** a culture of continuous assessment, accountability, and transparency.

Good decision-making and planning require a **data-informed assessment strategy** and transparency around decision-making. Building a culture that is data informed requires a continuous commitment to systemic, intentional changes in the way we track, promote, monitor, and report outcomes. It also requires the ability and willingness to change or deviate from policies, practices, or plans that are not the quality demanded or serve our objectives.

Emergent Themes:

- Build a data-informed culture through systemic, intentional changes in the way we track, assess, promote, monitor, and report and respond to outcomes.
- Develop a data-informed assessment strategy.
- Increase transparency around institutional processes.
- Improve, update, or replace existing systems and technological infrastructure to ensure that we can increase efficiency, remove antiquated barriers to workplace productivity, and meet our assessment and transparency goals for years to come.

Sample Operational Solutions:

- ⇒ Enhance Academic Margin Analysis and utilize the tool to inform resource allocation decisions and planning.
- ⇒ Earn ACBSP accreditation for newly launched SBC programs, including the BS in Business Analytics, BA in Marketing & Communications, BS in Financial Planning, and Professional MBA.
- ⇒ Define and implement a comprehensive institution-wide data strategy that enables necessary access to data for consistent and informed data-driven decision making at all levels.
- ⇒ Create Regis College Compliance Matrix.
- ⇒ Create and implement assessment(s) for academic coaching, study groups, and learning communities.

➤ **BOOST financial health to facilitate strategic investment in our future.**

Moving toward a sustainable, prosperous future requires **forward thinking and vision**. Continued efforts to: respond to enrollment trends in all modalities; lower the discount rate; and increase (and/or stabilize) enrollment rates while lowering attrition rates are necessary. Yet, diversifying streams of revenue beyond tuition is imperative for future growth while also supports needed revenue and costs to maintain high quality across our current programs and initiatives. Finding niche markets, work force development opportunities, and innovative pathways that create revenue streams will help us build toward prosperity.

Emergent Themes:

- Diversify streams of revenue to support future growth and maintain high quality across our current programs and initiatives.

- Find niche markets, work force development opportunities, and innovative pathways that create sustainable revenue streams.
- Evaluate our current practices to identify areas for cost-savings and risk mitigation.
- Increase enrollment goals through curricular and co-curricular programming, targeted engagement efforts, and continuous monitoring.

Sample Operational Solutions:

- ⇒ Increase graduate enrollments in each of the 4 schools focusing on potential positive growth programs: SAS – EdD in Higher Education Leadership/SBC – Strategic Communication/SHS – Speech Language Pathology/SON – Doctorate of Nursing Practice, MS and BS entry options.
- ⇒ Launch of professional studies program to serve the educational needs of the workforce.
- ⇒ Develop and operationalize a strategic international recruiting plan.
- ⇒ Continuously develop and implement strategically designed recruitment, visit, travel, and enrollment strategies that focus on student outcomes, academic programming, affordability, and student persistence.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Transparency, accountability, and targeted communications are all incredibly important components to the roll out of an inclusive strategic plan. The Strategic Planning web page, faculty and student meetings, town halls, digital marketing, banners, posters, and student incentives were all incorporated into the communication plan to encourage participation so that all voices could be heard, and all updates about the process would be shared.

Moving forward, as we make progress on the execution/implementation of solutions, we will continue to monitor that progress and update our community. We will monitor key performance indicators, quantifiable measures, to evaluate how to measure our success and outcomes. Yet, this strategic plan is a living, breathing document, allowing for a certain amount of nimbleness to respond to the “needs of the times” as the sisters’ legacy has always reflected. We are excited about the work to be done, the goals to be achieved, and the outcomes measured that will impact, strengthen, and guide Regis through the next three years and beyond.

CONCLUSION

This interim report shares the **process and implementation of our Strategic Plan 2022-2025**, hopefully giving you a greater understanding of our vision for the next several years and the important role mission plays in that vision. It also reflects a community dedicated to hard work, a determination to grow stronger, and a continued “commitment to do better” in our journey to be equitable and inclusive in all that we do. And, it reflects how central mission has been throughout this process.

This strategic planning process has been a **labor of love** for all those involved...our love for Regis, our love for our community and members, our love for our mission and values, and of course our love for our beloved founders...the inspiration behind it all, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston. Regis is proud to be among the sisters' ministries and will always honor their legacy and heritage with great enthusiasm, affection, and love.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Kathleen S. Jose in black ink.

Kathleen Jose, '87, '94, MSN, RN
Chair

Handwritten signature of Antoinette M. Hays in black ink.

Antoinette M. Hays, PhD, RN
President