

Greatness Through Difference

Case Statement
Dimensions
Difference Makers

Provost's Town Hall Meeting
6 October 2014

“Greatness Through Difference”

The Narrative

- From its founding in 1829, RIT has always been a different kind of institution
 - Many unusual qualities from the start
 - Unlikely partnership between a Mechanics Institute and an Athenaeum
 - Set the pattern for RIT’s long history of disciplinary integration
 - Unusual mission: to educate prospective employees for jobs in local business and industry
 - Initially free
 - Women welcome from the founding
 - Curricula constantly updated

Reaping the Benefits of Difference

- Through the years, we got pretty comfortable with doing things differently, with doing things that needed to be done, and with doing them quickly
- And we were seeing the positive results
 - Program portfolio represented many non-traditional disciplines
 - Many “first of its kind” academic programs developed
 - Biotechnology, Imaging Science, Information Tech, etc.
 - Unusual group of interdisciplinary Ph.D. programs
 - 2014: Named nation’s “geekiest” campus
 - Unique international footprint

Reaping the Benefits

- When the disruptions of the late 20th and early 21st century blew in (economic, technological, demographic), we were prepared
 - **Families demanding jobs at the end of college**
 - ✓ 95% placement rate
 - **More STEM graduates**
 - ✓ Currently 2nd highest # STEM grads among privates
 - **Interdisciplinary research**
 - Imaging Science, Microsystems, Sustainability
 - **Diversity**
 - 50% grad population international
 - NTID

Reaping the Benefits

- By 2014, our uniqueness is looking pretty good to our competitors
- We believe we're now in the enviable position of being the institution that the rest of higher education wants to emulate
- So while they're doing that, we're moving ahead to anticipate new challenges that our difference, our comfort with rapid change, our flexibility will help us address

Enter the RIT 2015-2025 Strategic Plan: “Greatness Through Difference”

- The document you have sets up and previews the plan at the dimension and goal (or “Difference Maker”) levels
- Very soon, the community will get a draft of the full plan, which fills out each dimension with objectives and action steps.
- Plenty to discuss today at the Dimension and “Difference Maker” levels

Five Dimensions

1. Career Education and Student Success
2. The Student-Centered Research University
3. Leveraging Difference
4. Value, Affordability & Return on Investment
5. Organizational Agility

Dimension 1: Career Education and Student Success

➤ **Difference Maker #1:**

Enrich the learning outcomes assessment process by conducting the deepest possible analysis of student learning and satisfaction instruments like the Noel-Levitz SSI and the National Survey of Student Engagement.

➤ **Difference Maker #2:**

Beginning in AY 2015, design and implement an academic program review process that prioritizes the criterion of academic quality while including other measures like institutional fit and cost.

➤ **Difference Maker #3:**

RIT will educate students at the intersections of technology and the arts, imagination and application, and rigor and curiosity, all designed to meet the demands of curiosity, all designed to meet the demands of future careers in our ever-expanding global economy.

Career Education & Student Success

➤ **Difference Maker #4:**

100% of RIT undergraduate students will have an experiential learning experience relevant to their degree program and designed to provide skills and competencies of growing importance to employers.

➤ **Difference Maker #5**

Students and their advisors will develop comprehensive, multi-dimensional Educational Plans, with the purpose of ensuring on-time graduation for as many students as possible. Plans will be monitored and revised as necessary throughout the RIT career.

Dimension 2: The Student-Centered Research University

➤ **Difference Maker #1**

RIT will earn a distinguished international reputation as a research university through its focus on specific interdisciplinary research areas selected on the basis of current internal strengths, emerging areas of global need, and external funding opportunities. Among the areas that could meet these criteria are Digital Media; Global Resilience; Accessibility and Inclusion; and Advanced Design and Manufacturing.

➤ **Difference Maker #2**

RIT's research enterprise will be a national model of interdisciplinary and inter-generational collaboration based upon the principle that diverse teams formed from members of diverse experience levels and diverse disciplines drive good questions, good processes, and good solutions.

The Student-Centered Research University

➤ **Difference Maker #3**

RIT will enlarge its graduate portfolio through adding professional and research-focused programs in STEM fields and in the arts, bringing the graduate population to 30% of the total student population. New programs will include experiential learning, research and scholarship opportunities.

➤ **Difference Maker #4**

RIT will be ranked among the top 100 U.S. National Universities by *U.S. News and World Report*.

Dimension 3: Leveraging Difference

➤ **Difference Maker #1**

RIT will be the most engaged private university in the United States as measured by the breadth and size of its international populations served both in the United States and abroad.

➤ **Difference Maker #2**

RIT students and faculty will be internationally recognized for their international experience, their mastery of intercultural competencies, and their engagement with global problems.

➤ **Difference Maker #3**

RIT will be the largest producer of female and minority male STEM graduates among all private colleges in the U.S.

Leveraging Difference

➤ **Difference Maker #4**

RIT will eliminate the achievement gap between minority and majority students, becoming a model of inclusive excellence for all students, faculty, and staff.

➤ **Difference Maker #5**

RIT will become a national model for the appointment of female and minority candidates to supervisory and leadership positions.

Dimension 4: Affordability, Value, and ROI

➤ **Difference Maker #1**

RIT will be the university with the best placement rate and return on investment of all private universities in the United States.

➤ **Difference Maker #2**

RIT will become the university that best utilizes educational technology to reduce costs, improve access, and achieve desired learning outcomes.

➤ **Difference Maker #3**

RIT will produce and apply a creative tuition containment program to address the financial needs of promising low-income students and to ensure a positive return on investment for all graduates.

➤ **Difference Maker #4**

RIT will seek alternative methods of raising revenue, including enrolling more students in fully online programs and providing services for the Rochester community.

Dimension 5: Organizational Agility

➤ **Difference Maker #1**

RIT's curricular, administrative, and organizational structures will serve, not impede, discovery, border crossing, and collaboration among students, faculty and staff.

➤ **Difference Maker #2**

The university must embrace a transparent process of resource allocation (budget, space, personnel).

➤ **Difference Maker #3**

RIT must undergo a thorough and complete budget and space audit and be willing to reassign and/or reallocate existing space to optimize and support interdisciplinarity.

Difference Maker #4

RIT will seek alternative methods of raising revenue, including enrolling more students in fully online programs and providing services for the Rochester community.

Organizational Agility

➤ **Difference Maker #4**

RIT will re-design its budget and costing models to encourage savings while rewarding calculated risk through increased collaboration within and across colleges.

➤ **Difference Maker #4**

RIT will seek alternative methods of raising revenue, including enrolling more students in fully online programs and providing services for the Rochester community.

What's Missing?

- Sustainability
- Major stakeholder: alumni
- Students self-flagging courses in registration
- Removing barriers to interdisciplinary education
- Clear connection between reward system and interdisciplinary activities
- External partnerships and collaboration on interdisciplinary projects
- Specific actions for becoming a top 100 university
- Role of alumni engagement in elements of strategic plan
- Ways for measuring 25 difference-makers

What's Missing?

- Faculty and staff satisfaction
- How will educational technologies be used to reduce costs?
- Fundraising campaign
- Marketing efforts outside of Rochester
- Community service and volunteerism among faculty
- Engaged scholarship and community learning
- Goals for endowment
- Core RIT strengths (imaging science, etc.)
- Stronger link between growth in research and graduate programs

What's Missing?

- How the plan affects the size of the student population
- Adding more study abroad opportunities for students
- Relationship with secondary education
- Changing demographics of secondary education students

Other notes

- Benefits of becoming a niche university
- More dynamic articulation of kind of graduate the plan will produce
- Relationship between technology and social
- How is ROI determined?
- What is the timeline for input from staff/faculty into the final version? (Oct. 28)
- Full version should be on the website by the end of the week
- Experiences of faculty and staff with strategic planning process has been largely positive

Other notes

- Faculty play a critical role in moving the plan forward
- Ensure that the students participating in online programs have same quality education as those in person