

ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN

“Excellence In Liberal Education”

2007 – 2012

R·I·T

May 2007

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**COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
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I. HISTORY AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The College of Liberal Arts, one of eight colleges within the Institute, has a rich and unique history. As the Institute has grown, so has the College of Liberal Arts. In fact, the College can trace its origins to the very beginnings of Rochester Institute of Technology's predecessor organizations, the Athenaeum, the Young's Men's Association, the Rochester Literary Company, the Mechanics Literary Association and the Young Men's Society. In 1839, the Athenaeum listed American History, human physiology, the phenomenon of chemistry, architecture, ancient empires, Scottish history, and political economy among its sponsored lecture topics. In 1847, the Athenaeum featured lectures by Ralph Waldo Emerson, Oliver Wendell Homes, and James Russell Lowell.

Formal courses in the humanities and social science were developed early in RIT's history. From 1901-1917 new courses were developed in English, sociology, psychology, history of education, public speaking, educational psychology, and pedagogy. Calvin Thomason was appointed supervisor of the Liberal Studies Component of the curriculum, directs the development of liberal arts courses for students in the industrial arts. There were four courses taught in the liberal arts component: economics, psychology, management, and human relations. Mark Ellingson, later president of the Institute, was hired in 1926 to assist Calvin Thomason.

The College of General Studies was established in 1961 and renamed the College of Liberal Arts in 1982. The College's first degree programs, social work and criminal justice, were launched in the early 1970s. By 1975 there were 60 fulltime faculty. The College continued to grow in the 1980s with new degree programs in economics and professional and technical communication. The College's first graduate degree, school psychology, was established in 1986. Through the 1990s a new degree program in psychology was added and by 1999 the College initiated the first minors at RIT. In 2001, a graduate degree program in communication and media technologies was established along with Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in public policy. The newest degree in Urban and Community Studies was approved in 2006.

The College has grown to include over 140 faculty in 14 departments in the social sciences, humanities, and the arts. The College currently offers eight undergraduate degree programs and three Master degrees, serving over 600 students. The College provides over 30 minors in a wide range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary areas.

The College of Liberal Arts has played an increasingly important role at RIT. The College's position as steward of RIT's general education curriculum in the social sciences, the humanities and the arts, means that all RIT undergraduate students benefit from the educational experiences provided by the College. As RIT's enrollment has grown, so has the enrollment in the College general education courses. The College currently fills approximately 27,500 seats annually in its undergraduate courses.

<u>Course Level</u>	<u>Number of Seats Filled (actual enrollment)</u>
Core Courses	13,000
Upper Level Courses	13,500
Summer Courses	1,000

The College currently offers eight undergraduate degrees - Advertising and Public Relations; Criminal Justice; Economics; International Studies; Professional and Technical Communication; Psychology, Public Policy; and Urban and Community Studies – and four graduate degrees – Applied Experimental and Engineering Psychology; Communication and Media Technologies; School Psychology; and Science, Technology, and Public Policy. The College also offers two non-degree programs – RIT Exploration and a Certificate of Advanced Study in School Psychology.

Since Fall 1998, the College has experienced a 41.5% increase in overall enrollment in degree programs and RIT Exploration.

<u>College of</u> <u>Liberal Arts</u>	<u>Fall</u> <u>1998</u>	<u>Fall</u> <u>1999</u>	<u>Fall</u> <u>2000</u>	<u>Fall</u> <u>2001</u>	<u>Fall</u> <u>2002</u>	<u>Fall</u> <u>2003</u>	<u>Fall</u> <u>2004</u>	<u>Fall</u> <u>2005</u>	<u>Fall</u> <u>2006</u>
Undergraduate			420.						
FTE:	410	428.3	7	463	479	441	473.3	476	543.3
Graduate FTE:	43.7	42.7	35.7	44.7	71.7	69	75	76	91.7
			456.	507.	550.				
Total FTE:	453.7	471	3	7	7	510	48.3	552	635
Undergraduate									
Headcount:	432	449	452	486	509	474	502	510	565
Graduate									
Headcount:	47	48	39	52	81	89	98	98	113
Total Headcount:	479	497	491	538	590	563	600	608	678

RIT's Office of Enrollment Management projects that the number of students in degree programs in College will grow to between 800-1,000 students by 2010.

These numbers reflect the success of the College and highlight the challenges of meeting the LA general education curriculum requirements while simultaneously offering high quality degree programs. In addition, as College has grown the space requirements have also increased to provide faculty and staff offices, laboratories, student gathering and research space, and meeting space.

This Strategic Plan focuses on the College's strengths and highlights the important opportunities for the College at this critical juncture. Anticipating new leadership in the Institute and College, this is the time for the College community to come together to articulate a common vision and to position itself to be the intellectual center for RIT as RIT strives to become a "Category of One" university.

II. THE PLANNING PROCESS

In September 2005 the College faculty voted to commission a steering committee, comprised of three tenured and three tenure-track faculty, one member of administration, one staff member, and one student (later amended to include two students, one graduate and one undergraduate), to facilitate the strategic planning process in identifying key issues and future directions for

College. This Strategic Planning Steering Committee (referred to hereafter as the SPSC) was charged with facilitating the strategic planning process, working closely with faculty, staff, and students, all of whom would ultimately develop the plan. The committee was formed and began meeting in November of 2005.

Early in the process, the SPSC met with Dean Andrew Moore and the College Advisory Board to gain their perspectives on the process, content, and outcomes of strategic planning. The committee then set up meetings with all College departments, as well as staff and students, to solicit perspectives on the College's strengths and barriers, key issues and future directions. The committee concurrently began to draft vision, mission, and core values statements.

Meetings with departments took place during the Winter and Spring quarters of 2006. The committee members also met in pairs or small groups with each Senior Vice President, gaining their perspectives on the roles, issues, and future directions of the College. The committee also met with President Simone and Provost McKenzie on separate occasions. Reports from each of these meetings were distributed to all College faculty and staff.

In June 2006, the SPSC hosted a faculty/staff retreat aimed at generating faculty and staff discussions regarding the strengths, barriers, key issues and future directions as identified in the focus group meetings (departments, students, Senior Vice Presidents, etc.). Reports from the focus group meetings were distributed prior to this retreat and included in the participant packets. Building on the focus group reports, faculty and staff were assigned to smaller groups to discuss key issues in 7 areas identified by the SPSC as recurrent themes. Everyone was invited to list, and vote on, issues they consider as important. The SPSC used the information generated from the retreat in specifying priorities for goals and objectives.

The Mission, Vision, and Core Values statements were distributed to the faculty in the fall of 2006, and formally adopted at the November 10, 2006 faculty meeting. The SPSC expanded to include a representative from NTID, to ensure that the Strategic Plan reflects the needs and interests of RIT students who are deaf or hard of hearing. The SPSC continued to consult with other committees of the College as it began to draft the goals and objectives for the seven areas identified from results of the focus group meetings and the retreat.

Communication was vital in moving forward with this process. Frequent updates were sent to the faculty and staff over email, and a section of the College website was dedicated to sharing of written products emerging from the SPSC. The committee extended an open invitation for feedback on any of its products to all faculty, staff, students, and the Dean's office. The committee chair made a report at each monthly College faculty meeting.

III. DEFINITIONS

Recognizing that terms may have multiple meanings, the following definitions were used in preparation of this plan:

Goals: a desired state to be accomplished sometime in the future.

Objectives: Identifies the dimensions through which the goal will be obtained.

Proposed actions: The specific activities that will be undertaken that moves toward the goal.

IV. CONSISTENCY WITH THE RIT STRATEGIC PLAN

Throughout the planning process attention was given to assure consistency of the College plan with the RIT Strategic Plan for 2005 – 2015 - *Category of One University: Uniquely Blending Academic Programs with Experiential Learning for Student Success*. Enhancing the programs and degree offerings of the College will greatly contribute to RIT's status as a "Category of One University." It is unlikely that RIT could become a C1U university without substantial contributions from the College. The College can play an essential role in every aspect of the RIT Plan:

Career Focus: Through its own degree programs and through the LA general education experience, the College will continue to be a significant contributor to RIT's career focus. The College will continue to grow in the areas of student participation in research, increased faculty scholarship and applied research linked to undergraduate teaching and learning, greater integration of experiential learning and classroom-based learning, continuous improvement in teaching and learning, and especially increased emphasis on the skills and learning outcomes necessary for lifelong learning and career development overtime. New degrees in the College will emphasize interdisciplinarity and global awareness.

Student Success: The College's faculty is dedicated to student-centered teaching and learning and will continue to support a stronger environment for teaching and learning through an exceptionally talented and diverse faculty. The College will implement new strategies to enhance student advising and will promote universal access in all course offerings and degree programs. The College will continue to develop double majors and dual degree opportunities for students both within LA and with other colleges.

Scholarship: The College plan directly integrates the expectations of the RIT plan with regard to faculty scholarship. The College plan calls for new college policies that are consistent with the Institute policy on faculty scholarship, that recognize faculty who engage undergraduate students in research and scholarship, and that encourage faculty to integrate their own research and scholarship into educational experiences for students both within and beyond the classroom.

Global Society: The College will continue to be a major contributor to the global knowledge and understanding of all RIT students through its courses in the social sciences, humanities and the arts, and will develop global issues courses as part of its general education curriculum. The College will undertake steps to enhance global awareness in its degree offerings.

Community: In order to be an active participant in the RIT campus community, the College of Liberal Arts will endeavor to increase its sense of community. The College will become a leader in offering students experiential learning that promotes civic engagement and will model principles of best practice to ensure the highest quality learning experience that links classroom learning with learning in the Rochester community.

V. PLAN CONTENTS

Based on input from faculty and staff meetings and the planning retreat held in June 2006, this plan is divided into seven dimensions – **Student Success, Curriculum, Scholarship and Teaching, Community, Facilities, Operational Support, and Shared Governance**. Although these dimensions are addressed in separate sections, there is considerable overlap among the seven dimensions. As is true in the RIT Strategic Plan, “this reinforcing overlap adds to the strength, synergy, and Collegiality” of College Strategic Plan.

VI. MISSION, VISION, CORE VALUES

Mission

College of Liberal Arts encourages the creation, development, dissemination, and application of human knowledge in the arts, humanities and social sciences by promoting innovative teaching, scholarship and research, thus providing a comprehensive education for all RIT students both in its general education and professional/career oriented undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

The College further strives to prepare students for a lifetime of personal growth and responsible citizenship in an increasingly technological and rapidly changing society by maintaining and promoting the intellectual climate on campus, contributing to students’ awareness and understanding of diversity, and enhancing students' abilities to reason critically and communicate effectively.

Vision

Through its excellence of programs and national and international reputation, the College of Liberal Arts at RIT will become a premier resource, bridging the scientific and technological disciplines and the humanities and social sciences.

By attracting and retaining faculty and staff of the highest quality, the College of Liberal Arts will encourage the intellectual growth of each student, help prepare students to be successfully engaged in a global society, and will be the preferred academic choice for outstanding undergraduate and graduate students.

The College will stimulate a passion for lifelong learning and will provide an intellectually and artistically vibrant environment for the whole RIT community.

Core Values

The College of Liberal Arts values a rigorous liberal arts education that encourages innovative experiential learning and active scholarship, through investments in the arts, humanities and social sciences.

The College of Liberal Arts fosters the highest ethical standards in all of its work. The College of Liberal Arts values the educational and social benefits of diversity and global awareness. The College recruits students, faculty, and staff from a wide range of experiences, viewpoints, cultures, and backgrounds and all members of the College community are valued contributors to campus life.

The College of Liberal Arts promotes an inter-disciplinary and collaborative environment of openness and academic freedom.

The College of Liberal Arts cultivates a working environment in which all staff and faculty are supported in their work, can develop and use their talents, and enjoy respect and recognition.

The College of Liberal Arts values the active and meaningful participation of all members of the College community, assuring significant input in decisions that shape its destiny.

VII. STRATEGIC DIMENSIONS, STRENGTHS, BARRIERS, GOALS OBJECTIVES AND PROPOSED ACTIONS

A. STUDENT SUCCESS

Preamble

The College of Liberal Arts values student success as a measure of the salience of its curriculum and the effectiveness of its teaching. Its outstanding faculty and support services will foster the best possible environment for student success. Student success will embody and excite community spirit among the colleges of the Institute. Through the rigorous scholarship of our student body the College will bring prestige to Rochester Institute of Technology.

Strengths

The College offers a unique liberal education that supports the personal and professional success of students. Students have more educational opportunities and curricular flexibility than are available at peer institutions. The College provides opportunities for RIT students to transfer into high quality degree programs and thus supports student retention across the Institute.

The College faculty and staff have identified several areas of strength within the College regarding student success, including, most notably, the overall quality of teaching in the College with a strong focus on student needs and outcomes. Teaching is highly valued and supported through internal grants. Students value smaller class sizes particularly in the upper level courses. A growing emphasis on student research is also seen as highly beneficial to students and fosters stronger student/faculty bonds.

Faculty and staff also lauded the support services available to foster student success, such as the Student Services office, library support, student mentoring programs, and recent improvements to the first year orientation and advising systems. Recent research, performed by the Faculty/Staff Advising Committee, revealed that students and faculty value the innovative advising strategies and noted the overall success; when compared with National Association of Academic Advising best practices in advising, the College excelled.

Finally, the College student body was identified as a current strength of the regarding student success. Faculty and staff described the students as focused, goal-directed, smart, enthusiastic and engaged, and interested in their own learning. These characteristics undoubtedly increase the likelihood for student success.

Barriers

Despite the many strengths outlined in the previous section, faculty and staff have also expressed several concerns that bear directly on student success. One theme centers on the issues of scheduling, space, available technology for teaching, interpreting services, and technical support for students. The quarter system is seen by many as a barrier to effective teaching particularly in some content areas, such as foreign languages. Many of the focus groups expressed concerns over the lack of space available on campus for students to work independently and collaboratively. Space for teaching is increasingly scarce, as instructors are being required to

work their schedules around available space. Enhanced opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing student have increased the demand for support services, which currently exceeds available resources.

Another theme of concerns is related to the availability of learning experiences to help students reach their highest potential. For example, it was noted that in some departments, too many students are being closed out of upper-level courses. The elimination of senior seminar and inadequacy of library support for advanced students in the Liberal Arts were also noted. Many also feel that student writing is not adequately fostered and supported—students may graduate possessing substandard written communication skills. Student attrition also continues to be a source of concern.

Future Directions

Building on its strengths, the College will give the highest priority to assuring student success. Interaction with other colleges will be encouraged in order to create a feeling of equality and common interest. Our curriculum will be strengthened and diversified to meet an increasing academic appetite among our students. The College will focus on global awareness as a reflection of our commitment to diversity and solidarity in the growing global community. Our attention to advising and mentoring will create an effective climate of academic correspondence among faculty and students, precipitating dynamic scholarship.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL A1: The College of Liberal Arts will critically evaluate the current state of student success.

Objective A1A Current student success in both degree programs and general education will be objectively evaluated through new surveys and analysis of existing statistics (such as graduation/retention rates).

Proposed Action A1A.1 The office of Student Services, in collaboration with degree chairs, will develop and administer an exit survey for students who graduate or withdraw from College degree programs.

Proposed Action A1A.2 The College will develop a process for eliciting student feedback regarding their success in general education curriculum.

Proposed Action A1A.3 The College Student Council (created in Proposed Action G2E.1) will assist with survey development, implementation, and interpretation.

Objective A1B The College will identify the conditions leading to the enhancement of student success.

Proposed Action A1B.1 The College will seek outside consultation in order to see beyond the limits of the system in place.

GOAL A2 The College faculty advisors will assist students to take ownership of their education and to graduate in a timely manner based on their personal educational goals.

Objective A2A The College of Liberal Arts will foster collaborative relationships between students and advisors that provide a supportive and challenging environment where students are empowered to make decisions promoting life-long learning.

Proposed Action A2A.1 Faculty advisors for each student in Liberal Arts programs will help the student formulate and realize his or her goals, provide information on degree programs, assist with course selection and load, guide student success, and guide the student to appropriate resources.

Proposed Action A2A.2 The College will review and implement recommendations of the Faculty Advising Committee, reported in June 2005.

Proposed Action A2A.4 The College will sponsor a workshop to develop strategies for enhancing the faculty role in advising in general education and to compliment the professional advising provided by the office of student services.

Proposed Action A2A.5 All departments will develop an advising strategy for all minors.

GOAL A3 The College will develop new strategies, in addition to enhanced advising, leading to student success.

Objective A3A Student scholarship will be encouraged by the creation of more research assistant positions and independent research opportunities.

Objective A3B Interaction between faculty, academic advisors, and students must become more frequent and more effective.

Proposed Action A3B.1 The office of Student Services, in collaboration with faculty, will plan and sponsor an annual concentrations and minors fair to promote the unique opportunities provided by the liberal education curriculum.

Objective A3C Facilities will be improved with the goal of enhancing student success including, but not limited to, encouraging collaboration and research among students and faculty (see section E).

Objective A3D The College of Liberal Arts faculty and staff will increase its efforts in assisting students in academic difficulty.

Proposed Action A3D.1 The College will invite representatives from the Academic Support Center and Student Health Center and other appropriate offices to attend a general faculty meeting to present information on Institute-wide services and student support programs.

Proposed Action A3D.2 The College will sponsor professional training for full-time and adjunct faculty to inform them how to assist students who are experiencing academic difficulty.

GOAL A4 Student success will be the focus of all promotional activities of the College of Liberal Arts.

Objective A4A The programs, activities and courses in the College of Liberal Arts will be actively sought by students from all areas of RIT who desire intellectual growth and the College's reputation for student success will be an important factor for students choosing RIT as their university.

Proposed Action A4A.1 A persuasive marketing campaign will be implemented which features the unique aspects of all curriculum offerings within the College and their ties to student success.

Proposed Action A4A.2 The College will create a full-time position of webmaster whose responsibilities will include the redesign of the website to incorporate such elements as a student profiles section, greater interactivity, and overall enhanced features. The Webmaster will also be responsible for continuously monitoring and maintaining the website.

Objective A4B The College will strengthen ties with RIT alumni to showcase the contribution of the College to overall student success.

Proposed Action A4B.1 The College will encourage alumni to visit campus and speak with current students, develop co-op opportunities for Liberal Arts majors where possible, and establish alumni scholarships for students based on academic achievement and/or monetary need.

Proposed Action A4B.2 The College will develop workshops, in coordination with the Office of Cooperative Education and Career Services and the office of Alumni Relations, to highlight for current students the value of liberal education.

GOAL A5 The College will ensure the success of students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Objective A5A The College will ensure that deaf and hard of hearing students have the support they need to be successful through enhanced partnerships with the NTID Department of Liberal Studies and Department of Access Services.

Proposed Action A5A.1 Working with the NTID Department of Liberal Studies, the College will evaluate and make recommendations for improvement to the current level of support services for students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Proposed Action A5A.2 Working with its NTID partners, the College will take steps to anticipate and plan for student access and academic needs as current programs and courses evolve and new programs and courses are planned and developed.

Objective A5B The College will undertake specific steps through high expectations, teaching, and evaluation with an understanding of the dynamics of learning, language acquisition and growth as experienced by students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Proposed Action A5B.1 The College will provide ongoing training to raise faculty consciousness regarding how deaf students experience the classroom.

Proposed Action A5B.2 To better understand and support those in the deaf and hard of hearing community, occasional workshops addressing deaf culture and awareness will be offered to faculty and staff.

Proposed Action A5B.3 Working with the Liberal Arts NTID support office, a weekly sign language lunch workshop will be initiated to teach simple phrases and finger spelling in order to better communicate with deaf students.

Proposed Action A5B.4 Faculty will have access to supportive tools for teaching deaf students, including on-line modules specifically designed for issues such as approaching the first day of class, working with interpreters, pace of instruction, testing, and a variety of frequently faced challenges.

Proposed Action A5B.5 New and adjunct faculty will receive an extensive orientation to deafness and considerations for teaching students who are deaf and hard of hearing at the start of their teaching in the College.

Proposed Action A5B.6 Student success will be monitored to see that retention, course completion, and academic achievement among students who are deaf and hard of hearing is comparable to that of all students, and to identify courses and teaching approaches that are problematic.

Proposed Action A5B.7 The College will participate in Project Access (See section C2F.1).

B. CURRICULUM

Preamble

The College of Liberal Arts at RIT is a unique asset that has the potential to contribute significantly to the future of the Institute. The foundation of this potential is curricular offerings that reflect the philosophy that a Liberal Arts education allows students to gain an understanding of human, social, cultural and environmental relationships, and encourages them to develop a critical and inquiring attitude, an appreciation for complexity and ambiguity, a respect for persons of different cultures, and a better understanding of their self and their role in a complex world. This philosophy is found in both general education courses and professional degree programs of the College.

Strengths

The College of Liberal Arts is host to an exceptional faculty, most of whom hold the highest degree in their disciplines. Drawing from a wide variety of intellectual interests and expertise in the social sciences, humanities, and the arts, the faculty provides high quality educational experiences as evidenced by evaluations, Eisenhart teaching awards, and other modes of recognition. With the addition over the past few years of several new faculty in a number of departments, the College curriculum has the potential to grow in both breadth and depth. Many new faculty have strong scholarship records and this will contribute to the College growth and curricular development. A number of new innovative degrees provide evidence of the growing potential within the College. A number of College offerings are strongly linked to science and technology; this distinguishes RIT's College from more traditional liberal arts colleges.

In department meetings and retreat discussions, faculty expressed a strong desire to work across disciplines and noted opportunities to experiment and to work with colleagues both within the College and with other Colleges through interdisciplinary teams in both Liberal Education and new degrees. Many faculty observed that the College has the potential to become a leader in Liberal Arts programming within a technological university. In addition, there is a strong desire to enhance the College writing program.

Faculty also noted that the quality of the students in both graduate and undergraduate degree programs has improved markedly and this will impact new curricular developments. Strong student/faculty bonds have developed through collaborative research and scholarship.

Barriers

Fundamental to new curricular initiatives is the need to determine the appropriate balance between degree programs and non-degree Liberal Education course offerings. The perception of the College as a service college must be overcome if students and faculty from other colleges are to view CLA as equally important to the RIT educational experience. Even though the College faculty are well regarded, its faculty talent is not adequately utilized to advance the vision of the Institute.

Continuing inordinate reliance on adjunct instructors in degree programs and liberal education courses hampers new curriculum development and implementation. Recent curricular changes,

such as reduction of Liberal Arts general education requirements, discontinuance of the Common Text and elimination of a capstone experience in Liberal Arts, has resulted in limitations of the College to be able to provide a well-rounded liberal education that has both breadth and depth. Faculty noted the need to provide more upper level courses in several degree programs.

In the absence of a clear strategic vision for Liberal Arts at RIT, departments often encounter obstacles for approval and lack adequate resources to effectively implement programs, and departments frequently look out for themselves and do not always act in the best interest of the College. In addition, conflicting interests among colleges sometimes lead to curricular duplication across colleges, offering parallel courses that do not reflect the potential for collaboration.

Faculty also noted the need for stronger administrative support for interdisciplinary endeavors in general education and degree offerings both within the College and with other colleges.

Future Directions

Future curricular initiatives of the College will reflect a continued commitment to both undergraduate general education and the development of innovative degree programs. New courses and degrees will encourage interdisciplinarity and cross-department and cross-college collaboration. The College will be a model for writing programs and promoting student civic engagement. Through innovative curricular development, College of Liberal Arts will continue to enhance its reputation within the Institute to ensure Institute-wide support for Liberal Education.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal B1 The College of Liberal Arts will be the intellectual center at RIT and will provide the academic foundation and standard for excellence for all RIT students in the humanities, social sciences, and the arts.

Objective B1A Students will be encouraged to actively seek new ways of knowing and new knowledge through the Liberal Arts. The College will provide broad exposure to multiple disciplines and ways of knowing, along with more in-depth study in at least one field or area of concentration.

Proposed Action B1A.1 The College will charge the Curriculum Committee to conduct a comprehensive academic review of its general education Liberal Arts offerings.

Objective B1B All RIT students will be introduced to the intellectual life of the College as early as possible.

Proposed Action B1B.1 One day of first-year student orientation week will be dedicated to an introduction to the importance of Liberal Education at RIT. Students will attend lectures and advising sessions, and will participate in discussions associated with a common reading.

Proposed Action B1B.2 In continuing collaboration with faculty from the College of Science, the College will establish an annual common text for all entering students. This text would be used as reading material in a variety of courses offered in both colleges, as a foundation for imbedding liberal education in the context of RIT students' intellectual development. A permanent committee of faculty from both colleges and NTID would be established to oversee this process.

Proposed Action B1B.3 Workshops for academic advisors in all colleges will be conducted to promote the relevance of the Liberal Arts curriculum to the overall education of every RIT student. Workshops will include information about minors, concentrations, and core courses offered within the College.

Objective B1C The College will provide innovative Liberal Education offerings that emphasize the historical, cultural, ethical, and global environments that surround the application of professional work.

Objective B1D The College will be the leader in innovative offerings in general education at RIT through collaboration among faculty within the College and with faculty from other colleges, consistent with Institute-wide general education goals.

Proposed Action B1D.1 The College will redefine learning communities by sponsoring and piloting two thematically based, interdisciplinary general education course clusters within the College, to include core courses, arts of expression, concentrations, and minors. These learning communities will be led by faculty from several departments and should include at least one faculty from humanities, social sciences, and the arts. Themes must be broad enough for all the participating fields of study to find ways to connect and be bridges that engage students and faculty in conversations across disciplines and among courses. Themes should provoke students to explore how disciplines offer multiple perspectives and cross-disciplinary approaches that both connect and contradict. Possible themes might include: *Computer Meditation, War and Peace, Going Global, Gender in Context, Ideas that Matter, Global Environment, Technology and Social Change*.

Proposed Action B1D.2 The pilot should include an assessment plan to evaluate whether this should become a permanent curricular model.

Proposed Action B1D.3 The College will seek support from the Vice President for Academic Affairs, including resources for faculty planning and implementation, such as summer symposia for interested faculty, course materials, field trips, and other costs required to develop and implement a Liberal Arts learning community model (as defined above).

Objective B1 The College will be the leader in innovative offerings in general education at RIT through collaboration with faculty from other colleges, consistent with Institute-wide general education goals.

Proposed Action B1D.1 College faculty will host a symposium with COS faculty to explore opportunities for collaboration with the general education curriculum, with the possibility of incorporating COS faculty in the pilot learning communities described above.

Objective B1E Academic advisors, faculty and staff of all RIT colleges will actively seek advice and guidance from College faculty and staff on opportunities for learning within the College of Liberal Arts.

Proposed Action B1E.1 All members of the College community will be charged with promoting Liberal Education at RIT, emphasizing the importance of the social sciences, humanities, and the arts in conjunction with professional education.

Proposed Action B1E.2 Information about the Liberal Arts (social science, humanities, the arts) will be posted on the College website and distributed to academic advisors in all of the undergraduate degree programs. Examples:

The Social Sciences: The social sciences represent the systematic study of human behavior and culture. They are concerned with the development of principles that explain individual thought, action, and experience; the interactions between people in the context of small groups, communities, institutions, states, and societies; and the functioning of social systems. Taken together, the social sciences form a base for public discourse, inform us about ourselves, and provide insight into the behavior and cultural patterns of other people. They provide students with analytical tools and principles that will help them to make informed decisions in their personal and public lives, and assist them to become aware of their responsibilities as citizens of a national and international community. (Adapted from AACU references)

Humanities: The humanities examine the intellectual foundations and values of political cultures through literature, languages, the history of ideas, and the theoretical and historical aspects of the fine and visual arts. These studies emphasize the relationships of past and present, sensitivity to aesthetic expression, an appreciation for the complexities of problems, and the abilities to make critical discernments and to express them with logic and clarity.

Arts: The term art is used to describe a particular type of creative production generated by human beings, and the term usually implies some degree of aesthetic value. An artist makes a work of art for various purposes, such as creating an experience for others or as part of a ritual. In the College of Liberal Arts the arts encompass the fine and performing arts. Students in the College will be engaged in both production and critical analysis of art.

Goal B2 The College will be a national leader in offering degree programs grounded in the Liberal Arts in the context of a technological university

Objective B2A Degree programs will reflect the following programmatic criteria:

- i. Draw from the intellectual strengths of faculty in the humanities, social sciences, and the arts.
- ii. Emphasize unique attributes of Liberal Education in a technological university.
- iii. Emphasize interdisciplinarity, integrating knowledge from multiple disciplines, reflecting contemporary circumstances that are too broad or complex to be dealt with adequately within a single discipline.
- iv. Emphasize global awareness and knowledge.

In addition, encouragement should be given to new degrees that incorporate collaborations across departments within the College.

Objective B2B To insure the viability and sustainability of degree programs the following operational criteria will be considered:

- i. Offer maximum flexibility allowing all students “off quarter” entry.
- ii. Provide optimal opportunities for students to complete double majors and multiple minors.
- iii. Provide access and support for all students including those who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Proposed Action B2A.1 The College Curriculum will explore the potential for offering a general Liberal Arts degree in the humanities or social sciences.

Objective B2C The College will develop criteria for assessing the impact of new degree proposals on College’s capacity for maintaining excellence in general Liberal Education.

Proposed Action B2C.1 The College will charge the Curriculum Committee to develop a process for reviewing preliminary or concept proposals for new degrees to assure consistency with the strategic direction of the College and adequacy of resources and the criteria listed in Objectives B2A and B2B.

Proposed Action B2C.2 The College will initiate a comprehensive academic review to assess existing and planned graduate and undergraduate programs. The results of this review will provide an additional foundation for assessing new degree proposals.

Proposed Action B2C.3 The College will encourage and support interdepartmental collaboration and interdisciplinary degrees.

Goal B3 The College will be a leader in offering double majors and dual degrees between departments in College and with other colleges.

Objective B3A: Opportunities for double majors and dual degrees will be encouraged among the degree offerings in the College.

Proposed Action B3A.1 Degree chairs will be expected to maximize opportunities for degree collaboration within the College in the form of double majors and dual degrees.

Objective B3B Opportunities for double majors and dual degrees will be encouraged among the degree offerings in other colleges.

Proposed Action B3B.1 Degree chairs will be expected to maximize opportunities for degree collaboration with other colleges in the form of double majors and dual degrees.

Goal B4 The College will be recognized by prospective students for its combination of exceptional general Liberal Education curriculum and degree programs.

Objective B4B Institute recruiters and advisers in other departments will promote the unique educational opportunities available in the College of Liberal Arts.

Proposed Action B4B.1 The College will create materials that highlight the unique curricular opportunities in the College for use by recruiters and advisers.

Goal B5 The College will become a model for other RIT Colleges in writing programs, reflecting the principle that writing is the responsibility of the entire academic community.

Objective B5A The College will increase and strengthen writing instruction in the first year.

Proposes Action B5A.1 Professional development will be provided for all writing instructors to include best practices for teaching writing in a ten-week, first-year course.

Objective B5B The College Writing policy will be modified to include appropriate criteria for developing writing intensive courses and to encourage Writing in the Disciplines to ensure that students have continuous writing instruction throughout their Liberal Education experience.

Proposed Action B6B.1 The Director of Institute Writing, in collaboration with the College writing committee, will facilitate an assessment process and develop recommendations for changes to identify appropriate opportunities to develop writing intensive courses in discipline-based courses.

Proposed Action B6B.2 Professional development will be provided for all faculty who wish to develop writing intensive courses; the focus will be both writing to learn as well as learning to write in the disciplines.

Objective B6C All Liberal Arts minors will include at least one writing intensive course.

Proposed Action B6C.1 The Director of Institute Writing will work with minor advisors to assess the opportunities for including writing intensive courses.

Goal B6 The College will be a leader at RIT in promoting student civic engagement and will be a model for promoting the scholarship of engagement.

Objective B6A The College will become a resource to other RIT faculty who seek to embed civic engagement in curriculum.

Proposed Action B6A.1 Working with RIT's Teaching and Learning Center, the College will develop examples of curricular models and best practices, as well as resources for embedding civic engagement in the curriculum, instructional development, and research opportunities.

Proposed Action B6A.2 The College will develop criteria for merit, tenure, and promotion that recognize the value of scholarship of engagement, and acknowledge efforts to incorporate civic engagement in teaching and learning outcomes.

C. SCHOLARSHIP AND TEACHING

Preamble

Scholarship and teaching are integral to the development of the College because these are its two primary activities. Institute policy states, “While teaching is the foremost activity of the RIT faculty, faculty are expected to engage in significant scholarship as measured by external disciplinary and professional standards as acknowledged by department and program practices of faculty review.” It is important to keep in mind that our commitment to excellence in each of these areas affects the other; and, while they often operate in tandem it is necessary here to separate some of the issues by category; other issues are clearly intertwined. If the College is to be successful in continuing its excellence in teaching and scholarship, there needs to be a higher level of Institute support and financial resources.

The Institute Strategic Plan calls upon each college to address the adequacy of college policies to support and guide scholarship in the context of the types and levels of scholarship articulated in Institute policy E4.0.5. In order to accomplish this, the College needs to engage in an active process to clarify the definition of scholarship for the College and to assure that scholarship expectations for faculty are consistent with Institute policy and consistent with the necessity of balancing teaching and scholarship obligations.

Scholarship Specific:

Strengths

The College of Liberal Arts is home to gifted scholars who work well to maintain a strong record of scholarship. The College offers the possibility for inter-department and inter-college collaboration and is moving in the direction of improving the reputation of the College.

Barriers

While the College has great human resources, it lacks funding opportunities and an adequate travel budget to maintain the efforts of its faculty and the infrastructure (space, technology, and other resources) to house them. Although there have been redefinitions of scholarship, many in the College believe that there is an archaic notion of scholarship, with too much emphasis on book publication. Many also believe the expectations for scholarship are unclear and differ from the Institute, and that discrepancies about scholarship are emerging among departments.

Teaching Specific:

Strengths

The faculty in the College of Liberal Arts are recognized for effective teaching and many faculty have received Institute recognition through the Provost Excellence in Teaching Award and Eisenhart Teaching Award. Additionally, faculty have been recognized for innovation in teaching through the Online Learning Award and been involved in cross-disciplinary and cross-college course development and teaching. Most faculty feel that team-teaching is encouraged and that

there is a measure of flexibility in curriculum. College faculty continue to be actively involved in the First Year Learning Communities Initiative.

Barriers

The inordinate reliance on adjunct faculty who are not well treated and given inadequate computer access, office space and pay diminishes the ability of the College to provide teaching excellence to our students. The library does not meet the needs of more advanced students. Writing requirements are not as strong as seems needed. Many feel that the focus on scholarship has become clearly more important than teaching in decisions about tenure and promotion and the College's view more generally.

Integrated

Strengths

The College is fortunate to be able to host a diversity of scholarly interests and pedagogical approaches, which help to distinguish the College.

Barriers

Many in the College feel that managing the transition from teaching orientation to more scholarship and research will be a difficult, but necessary task because the demand for scholarship can be perceived as a threat to teaching.

Future Directions

The College will work to enhance the scholarship of its faculty and students, while maintaining and building on its already excellent degree programs and dedication to first-rate liberal education for all students. The College will work toward national and international recognition of its faculty and student scholars, while showcasing these talents throughout the Institute. The College will focus on creating an environment within which interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary scholarship and teaching can flourish and are recognized and rewarded through internal and external funding.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL C1 The College will provide an environment conducive to excellence in faculty development, scholarship and teaching.

Objective C1A The College will insure that expectations for all faculty responsibilities reflect an appropriate balance among teaching, scholarship, and service.

Proposed Action C1A.1 The College will develop and implement a transparent process for assessing all faculty responsibilities (such as research, scholarship, student advising, program development and maintenance, teaching load, thesis supervision, and service).

Proposed Action C1A.2 The College will incorporate this assessment to set college-wide expectations for balanced teaching and scholarship, recognizing the value of varying approaches to scholarship and emphasizing the engagement of students.

Proposed Action C1A.3 To insure the development of teaching and scholarship, the College will continue to evaluate and adjust course loads for all faculty, but at minimum will continue to provide course reductions for new faculty.

Proposed Action C1A.4 The College will revisit the June 2000 Report on Teaching and Learning and implement its recommendations, consistent with the goals set out in this plan.

Proposed Action C1A.5 The College will increase travel and research funds available for faculty engaged in scholarship

Proposed Action C1A.6 The College will encourage faculty to apply for earned sabbatical time to promote ongoing excellence in scholarship and teaching.

Objective C1B The College will increase awareness and sharing of faculty and student scholarship.

Proposed Action C1B.1 The College will establish a Teaching and Scholarship Committee to develop a lecture series on scholarship and teaching to showcase the College's research and pedagogic talents.

Proposed Action C1B.2 The Teaching and Scholarship Committee will publish an annual report that highlights major college-wide accomplishments in teaching and scholarship.

GOAL C2 The College will encourage transition to more scholarly emphasis while maintaining high standards of teaching.

Objective C2A The College will create clear criteria for scholarly and teaching expectations.

Proposed Action C2A.1 As recommended in the Institute's strategic plan, the College will identify the types and levels of the four forms of scholarship (per Institute policy E4.0.5) most appropriate for our faculty and staff.

Proposed Action C2A.2 The College will establish college-wide criteria for merit, tenure and promotion with broad interpretation of scholarship that can be understood and adopted by all departments.

Objective C2B Consistent with Institute policy, teaching will continue to be the foremost activity of the faculty, and the College will encourage the integration of scholarship in the teaching and learning process.

Proposed Action C2B.1 The College will establish a high profile teaching award within the College focused on the use of individual faculty's scholarship in the classroom.

Proposed Action C2B.2 Criteria for merit, tenure, and promotion will include integration of teaching and scholarship.

Objective C2C In order to improve overall teaching and scholarship, the College will increase the number of full time tenure-track lines and reduce its reliance on adjunct faculty.

Proposed Action C2C.1 The College will do a benchmark study to determine the percentage of adjunct faculty at peer institutions and reduce our levels below peer institutions.

Proposed Action C2C.2 Consistent with the findings of this study, the College will adjust the number of its full-time tenure-track lines.

Objective C2D The College will support the work of adjunct faculty by providing adequate resources.

Proposed Action C2D.1 The College will create adequate workspaces and assure appropriate resources for the adjunct faculty (such as, computers and software, teaching materials, and administrative support).

Objective C2E The College will adopt the principles of Universal design. Universal design is an approach to designing course instruction, materials, and content to benefit people of all learning styles without adaptation or retrofitting. Universal design provides equal access to learning, not simply equal access to information.

Proposed Action C2E.1 The College will sponsor workshops in collaboration with NTID to implement these principles into curriculum development and instructional design.

Objective C2F The College will ensure that all faculty are responsible for effective teaching of deaf and hard of hearing students.

Proposed Action C2F.1 The College will implement *Project Access*, a teaching development tool for addressing the learning needs, challenges to and strategies for achieving full access for students who are deaf and hard of hearing. This will include workshops and activities on issues generated by the students, faculty, and staff within the College, in consultation with NTID faculty and access service providers and NTID's Office of Research and Teacher Education.

Proposed Action C2F.2 The research agenda of faculty in the College will include collaborative efforts with NTID faculty to study the learning environment, learning dynamics, and pedagogical strategies for effective education of deaf and hard of hearing college students.

Proposed Action C2F.3 Faculty efforts to improve teaching effectiveness with deaf and hard of hearing students will be recognized and valued in the tenure and promotion process. These efforts shall include participation in teacher development programs, sign communication development, and research related to deafness and teaching.

Objective C2G The College will clarify the role and status of lecturer position consistent with maintaining high standards of teaching and scholarship.

GOAL C3 The College will enhance opportunities for cross-disciplinary teaching within the College and across campus.

Objective C3A The College will improve the visibility of team-taught, cross and interdisciplinary courses.

Proposed Action C3A.1 The College will create cross and interdisciplinary fora and planning sessions for all faculty interested in team-teaching (see for example Curriculum section Proposed Action B1C.1).

Proposed Action C3A.2 The College will streamline the process for developing and offering these courses.

Objective C3B The College will reward faculty for innovative proposals for interdisciplinary work.

GOAL C4 The College will be recognized as a model for engaging students in scholarship.

Objective C4A The College will encourage its faculty to more actively engage students in research, writing, presentation and dissemination of scholarly work.

Proposed Action C4A.1 The proposed Teaching and Scholarship Committee will be responsible for promoting student-faculty research collaborations through public presentations, symposia and in its annual report (see proposed action C1B.1).

Proposed Action C4A.2 The College will sponsor peer-to-peer workshops (student-to-student and faculty-to-faculty) to encourage new research collaborations.

Proposed Action C4A.3 The College will assess and reinstate the undergraduate student conference.

Proposed Action C4A.4 The College will establish a fund for both Liberal Arts majors and non-majors to support expenses related to collaborative student/faculty research and conference presentations.

Objective C4B The College will increase on-campus research facilities and resources available for faculty and students.

Proposed Action C4B.1 The College will work with Wallace Library acquisition staff to increase the library's holdings in the liberal arts.

Proposed Action C4B.2 The College will establish a writing center that is available to faculty and students and helps to promote writing throughout the curriculum.

Proposed Action C4B.3 The College will provide adequate research spaces for both undergraduate and graduate students.

Goal C5 The College will develop more internal funding and seek more external funding opportunities for faculty scholarship and College activities (such as speakers, symposia, and workshops).

Objective C5A The College will increase external funding (grants, private and public funding organizations) and establish a better articulation between the development office, sponsored research and the faculty.

Proposed Action C5A.1 The College will create a College funding/grant writing team (including faculty and representatives from the offices of development and sponsored research) which would train and mentor faculty in developing funding opportunities and serve as a liaison between development office administration and college faculty.

Objective C5B Institute funding will be increased to support teaching innovation and scholarship in College Liberal Arts.

Proposed Action C5B.1 The College will create an ad-hoc faculty committee to develop a proposal to request that the Institute provide more equitable funding for scholarship and teaching activities in the College.

Proposed Action C5B.2 Faculty will collaborate with other colleges in developing proposals for research, scholarship, and teaching.

D. COMMUNITY

Preamble

Community represents the overall shared identity and cohesiveness of the faculty, staff, and students in the College of Liberal Arts. This includes the areas of collaboration, socialization, support, and communication. A strong sense of community encourages respect among its members, and promotes higher morale, greater unity, and a more productive learning and work environment. As stated in the RIT Strategic Plan, a stronger sense of community will foster “improved student retention; loyal and committed alumni; increased productivity; increased scholarship; and improved teaching and increased diversity.”

Strengths

Feedback from College faculty and staff indicates that there are many strengths within the College community. Faculty have acknowledged their ability to have fluent dialogue, feedback, and thoughtful discussion among colleagues. Their diverse interests and talents make the College an interesting place to work, and leave open the possibility for collaboration across departments and disciplines. Many faculty members also reported an appropriate amount of support for new members. The College is known for its commitment to and appreciation for diversity. A special inter-college relationship exists with NTID. One-sixth of the College's student majors and approximately 10% of students taking general education requirements are deaf and hard of hearing. A large cadre of NTID faculty and staff whose primary functions are within the boundaries of CLA provide additional expertise, resources, and contributions to the CLA Community.

Barriers

Faculty and staff perceive that the College is viewed by other members of the Institute community as the least important college at RIT. This perception contributes to a low morale and the deterioration of a sense of community within the College.

Staff and faculty feel as though there is a lack of appreciation and respect from administration, and that their talents are not being used fully and effectively. Staff also reported that they perceive a lack of respect and appreciation from faculty, as well as delays in necessary communication.

Further, faculty and staff reported that departments encounter difficulties with cohesion because they are spread out – a lack of physical cohesion that spills over into professional relationships. Many departments were also seen as separate entities, not working together when a collaborative relationship may be appropriate. A similar dynamic is observed between CLA and NTID, where organizational separation lends to a perception of separateness at the student level as well as at the faculty and staff level.

Future Directions

The College will be a model of mutual respect and interdependence, where every member of the community has a voice. The College will continue to sponsor annual events that promote positive interaction among all members of the College community. Operationalizing the principles of Shared Governance will enhance the sense of community and mutual regard within the College. The College will move toward celebrating the accomplishments of its people as way to engage students, staff, and faculty in the life of College and to encourage a sense of mutual cooperation in accomplishing our tasks. Special attention will be given to the role of administrative staff to ensure they are acknowledged as important and valued members of the professional team responsible for student success and vital contributors to the enhanced reputation of the College.

GOAL D1 All members of the College of Liberal Arts will be responsible for maintaining an atmosphere of caring and mutual respect.

Objective D1A The College faculty and administration will work together to become more receptive to the needs and initiatives of all members of the College.

Proposed Action D1A.1 The College faculty and administration will work within the proposed guidelines and definition of *shared governance* to allow all levels of faculty to provide input into college decisions and to foster a sense of collegiality.

Objective D1B The College staff will enjoy working in an atmosphere in which they are valued for their work and rewarded for their efforts.

Proposed Action D1B.1 A Rewards and Recognition program will be created for College staff.

Objective D1C The College will offer multiple opportunities for faculty, staff, students, and the College Advisory Board to come together in order to promote a sense of community.

Proposed Action D1C.1 The College will continue annual events such as opening of the academic year events, holiday party and spring reception, senior toast, student spring barbecue and graduation reception.

Proposed Action D1C.2 The College will sponsor an annual staff/faculty retreat to review and update strategic planning initiatives.

Proposed Action D1C.3 The College will develop a schedule of monthly events within the College. These events will be targeted toward all College members, and departments will encourage attendance.

Objective D1D The accomplishments and the people of the College of Liberal Arts will be more widely recognized both within and outside the College.

Proposed Action D1D.1 The College will apportion time in each of its faculty meetings to celebrate the general accomplishments of the College.

Proposed Action D1D.2 The College Staff Council (as proposed in section F2B) will be charged with the responsibility of developing mechanisms recognizing staff achievement.

Proposed Action D1D.3 The Student Council (as proposed in Section G2E.1), in collaboration with faculty and staff will be responsible for developing strategies that promote a sense of shared identity among students within the College.

Objective D1E. The College of Liberal Arts will embrace students who are deaf and hard of hearing, as well as NTID faculty and staff who work in the service of College, as a natural part of the College community.

Proposed Action D1E.1 The College will develop an increasing awareness, understanding, and inclusiveness of Deaf Culture elements as part of the College community. (This will be addressed, in part, through Project ACCESS.)

Proposed Action D1E.2. The College will anticipate and plan for appropriate access services to support college-wide and departmental events.

Proposed Action D1E.3. The College will include its NTID faculty and staff partners in the distribution of information that concerns the College community.

E. FACILITIES

Preamble

In order for the College of Liberal Arts to play the significant role contemplated in the Institute Strategic Plan, resources must be allocated to the College to enhance facilities conducive to teaching, learning, scholarship, and student success. RIT remains committed to broadening “interactions between students and faculty to create a unique experiential learning environment that sets RIT apart as a Category of One” (A Call to Action, 2005, p. 10). It is noted that “new program development; a strengthened faculty; increased research activities; a greatly enhanced physical campus environment; and increased business, industry and government partnerships have all contributed to RIT’s increasing local, national and international presence” (Category of One University, 2004, p. 1). It is further recognized that in order for RIT to continue its transformation to a Category of One university, “two essential elements must be addressed: (1) institutional will and (2) flexible and responsive processes and models for resource allocation” (A Call to Action, 2005, p. 5). It is this second essential element that captures attention as it pertains to the need for enhancing facilities in the College of Liberal Arts. RIT understands that it “must invest institutional resources to fuel the growth of scholarship that benefits the educational experience of our students” (A Call to Action, 2005, p. 6). For the College, growth of scholarship among faculty and students is contingent upon appropriate facilities (including laboratories, performing arts center, appropriately configured dedicated classrooms with appropriate technology, and meeting spaces for faculty and students).

Strengths

RIT is committed to admitting the best students and retaining them at a higher rate. RIT is also committed to increasing students’ sense of connection to RIT throughout their lives. The College of Liberal Arts is equally committed to these Institute goals.

The College of Liberal Arts remains committed to the enhancement of student success and preparation of students for careers and lives in a global society. Our strength rests in exceptional faculty and dedicated staff who work to ensure that RIT students achieve student success in academic study.

College of Liberal Arts faculty have taken advantage of the tremendous opportunities to secure funding through grants and contracts. Although these funds for research and involved outreach, service and education, student support, training, curriculum development, equipment, and facilities aid the College in achieving goals for student success, the funding efforts fall short in providing the comprehensive space needed.

Barriers

Fundamental to student success is the need to provide adequate classroom space, office space for adjuncts, study/conference space for students and faculty, departmental space, more centralized space and a performing arts center. Student success can be enhanced through adequate facilities that enhance learning and instill a sense of pride and connection to the Institute.

Funding is a key barrier to providing the comprehensive space needed to enhance student success. RIT's largest revenue sources include tuition and related sales and services of auxiliary enterprises, investment return, and government and private grants and contracts. Although RIT has been successful in philanthropic efforts, resulting in the naming of two recent colleges at the Institute, efforts fall short in securing the support needed for similar naming of College of Liberal Arts. The result is a lack of attention to the College department, classroom, and student space needs.

Faculty and staff note that college space is limited, as a result of limited resources and limited control over the available resources. Department members are spread out, not centralized, which limits opportunities for interaction among faculty and with students. These space issues result in competitiveness, where departments feel the need to compete for limited space. Further, the lack of space affects communication/interaction among faculty members. In addition to the need for department space, faculty and staff also recognize the need for adequate space for adjunct faculty who experience inadequate access to computers and office space.

Faculty and staff also note the lack of adequate classroom space. In addition to the need for more SMART classrooms, faculty and staff explain that existing SMART classrooms don't always work; even "old" technology such as overhead projectors don't always work. Current classrooms are not configured for effective communication and interaction among students and faculty in keeping with the principles of Universal Design. Faculty and staff also note the lack of laboratory space and inadequate performing arts space. The space problems affect the times that classes can be offered, resulting in undesirable class times.

Finally, faculty and staff note the need for more meeting space for students. Tuition is high and students aren't getting the same benefits in terms of space and resources as students in other RIT colleges.

Future Directions

Short and long-term space needs as well as the needs for appropriate technology in all College of Liberal Arts dedicated spaces will be addressed. While engaging students, staff and faculty across the Institute through their participation in planning, design and implementation, the College will develop a comprehensive plan, including a proposal for a new building that incorporates principles of Sustainable Design and Universal Design, to address the space issues unique to the teaching, learning, and scholarship needs of the College.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL E1 The College will address short and long-term space needs.

Objective E1A The College will develop a comprehensive plan that addresses the space issues unique to the teaching, learning, and scholarship needs of the College.

Proposed Action E1A.1 The Dean will ask each academic and administrative department in the College to identify in writing all short and long term space needs based on departmental goals and objectives.

Proposed Action E1A.2 Upon identification of all space needs in the College, the Dean will form a committee to develop a formal comprehensive space plan for the College to be used by the Dean's Office and Development Office in obtaining and developing new space for the College.

Proposed Action E1A.3 RIT and the College will partner with alumni and community leaders to identify and secure prospective benefactor(s) and funding to name College of Liberal Arts and develop needed facilities identified in the comprehensive space plan.

Objective E1B The comprehensive space plan will address the need to build a better sense of community and cohesive atmosphere for students, faculty, and staff within the College of Liberal Arts.

Proposed Action E1B.1 The College will develop a proposal for a new building that incorporates principles of Sustainable Design and Universal Design and that provides opportunities for engaging students, staff, and design
and design
and implementation.

GOAL E2 The College will make appropriate technology available in all college-dedicated spaces to address current needs to support teaching and learning.

Objective E2A All College priority classrooms and seminar rooms will be upgraded to SMART classrooms.

Proposed Action E2A.1 The College will secure funding to upgrade at least one College priority area per year.

Objective E2B All College dedicated spaces will be wireless accessible.

Proposed Action E2B.1 The College will identify all those areas that are not currently wireless accessible and develop a plan for implementing this technology.

F. OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

Preamble

The success and growth of the College of Liberal Arts does not depend on one individual or department, but rather upon all individuals and departments working together within the College Community. Faculty, staff, and students must come together to build on existing strengths and creatively develop new ways to promote the goals of the College to foster student success and an atmosphere of cultural richness and learning. It is necessary for the College to address general operational support needs of the College of Liberal Arts as well as those services directly benefiting students.

Strengths

The College of Liberal Arts is becoming more visible to the RIT community and beyond. Musical and theatrical productions along with presentations by College experts and invited guest speakers draw audiences from both RIT and the surrounding area. The College is reaching outside the university and is helping to improve the reputation of the College and the Institute. There has been an increase in additional funding such as grants to support academic endeavors.

It is clear from focus group and retreat responses that the quality of staff support in the College of Liberal Arts is excellent, both in individual departments and the Office of Student Services as well. Advising staff is very responsive to the needs of all RIT students and the College's technical staff is excellent.

Barriers

Although the reputation of College of Liberal Arts is improving, the perception of the College's contributions to the RIT community and beyond is an ongoing concern. The College is not well promoted to the RIT community, and many students and academic advisers from other colleges do not fully recognize the importance of the College to the intellectual growth and development of RIT students. Dissemination of information regarding college-sponsored functions is poor, leading to low attendance at some events.

Information on the College website is not kept up-to-date and this contributes to the perception that the College is not significant.

A lack of internal and external funding for the College has meant there is not enough financial support to neither expand our current programs nor introduce new ones to attract students to Liberal Arts degree programs. Little has been done to create partnerships with businesses or develop close ties with College alumni to generate interest in the College. There are not enough scholarship opportunities to support CLA students who have financial need or reward those who excel academically.

Despite the acknowledgment of staff excellence, morale among staff remains low. They have very little voice in the life of the College. Staff members feel there are no opportunities for advancement in their positions even though they are encouraged to take career development

workshops offered by RIT. In many instances, staff look for job advancement opportunities by applying to open positions outside the College of Liberal Arts. As departments grow and new departments are created, staff are given more and more responsibilities and find themselves spread too thin. There has been a lack of communication between the Dean's office and College committees to staff regarding pertinent information staff need to perform their jobs adequately. This sometimes affects job performance upon which staff reviews are based.

Future Directions

To strengthen the reputation of RIT's College of Liberal Arts and to promote its excellence in program and general education offerings as well as special events and speakers, new strategies for marketing the College will be established. In collaboration with available Institute marketing resources as well as Liberal Arts alumni and the local business community, the College will work to enhance the Liberal Arts learning experience for all students at RIT and also attract students for its unique courses and degree programs.

Support staff in the College of Liberal Arts will be respected for the work they do and will be encouraged to develop their professional skills. Staff will be appreciated and compensated for their contributions to the life of College and be recognized as vital to its success.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL F1 The College of Liberal Arts will have a reputation of excellence locally, nationally, and internationally.

Objective F1A Programs in the College of Liberal Arts will be aggressively promoted locally, nationally, and internationally.

Proposed Action F1A.1 The College will secure funding to establish an Office of Marketing and Public Relations for College of Liberal Arts.

Proposed Action F1A.2 The Director of Marketing and Public Relations for the College of Liberal Arts (see Proposed Action 1E.1) will work with all Liberal Arts departments to promote College events to both the RIT community and the Rochester area and will also work with other colleges to develop cross-college events. The Director will collaborate with University News Services to promote College information to the Institute and to the community.

Proposed Action F1A.3 The Office of Marketing and Public Relations will develop a plan that addresses all the promotional needs of College of Liberal Arts.

Proposed Action F1A.4 The Office of Marketing and Public Relations will work to create partnerships with businesses in the Rochester area to generate community interest and funding for the College. The Office will work closely with the College Grants & Contracts Officer and the College Development Officer to ensure their participation in implementing the College Marketing and

Public Relations Plan, thereby inviting investments into College of Liberal Arts by way of grants, fellowships, and contracts.

Proposed Action F1A.5 To ensure that the College website is an effective promotional tool, the Office of Marketing and Public Relations will work with the College Webmaster (see proposed action A4A.2) to keep the College website information current and exciting in design.

Objective F1B Working with RIT Alumni Relations, the College of Liberal Arts will establish strong personal ties with its alumni to ensure their participation in promoting the programs and activities of College.

Proposed Action F1B.1 The Dean will form a committee to devise ways in which the College can reach out to its alumni and generate interest in the College, such as special mailings and periodic alumni newsletters.

GOAL F2 All support staff in the College of Liberal Arts will be appreciated and respected for their contributions to the success of College endeavors.

Objective F2A The College will perform an evaluation of administrative support needs for all programs, departments and offices.

Proposed Action F2A.1 The Dean, working with managers, department chairs and program chairs, will gather information from all departments regarding current and future administrative support needs.

Proposed Action F2A.2 The Dean will make recommendations to the college community regarding administrative support needs based on available resources.

Objective F2B College staff will be a vital part of the College Community and will participate in the decision-making process in matters pertaining to staff.

Proposed Action F2B.1 A College of Liberal Arts Staff Council will be formed consisting of elected representatives from staff and will include at least one NTID staff support person. Staff members will decide upon the make-up of the Council and develop its vision, mission, and goals. All staff will be invited to submit questions or staff concerns to the College Staff Council for consideration or resolution.

Objective F2C Personal and professional growth will be encouraged and opportunities for advancement will be made available for staff.

Proposed Action F2C.1 In consultation with RIT Human Resources, the College Staff council will develop a career ladder for staff based on education, experience, and achievement.

Objective F2D In order for College staff to effectively perform their jobs, pertinent information will be disseminated to staff in a timely manner.

Proposed Action F2D.1 College department chairs and faculty will work with staff to ensure they receive all information needed to successfully complete required work.

G. Shared Governance

Preamble

In light of the strong expression of concerns by both faculty and staff regarding issues of College governance and decision making, there is a compelling need to address these issues in the context of the College's strategic planning. The following sections include a proposed definition of shared governance, to be adopted by the College, and articulate structures and procedures that operationalize this definition.

The College will adopt the following definition of **shared governance**:

Shared governance refers to shared responsibility and cooperative action among faculty, staff, administration and students. It fosters regular exchanges of information and opinion, consultation, reflection, mediation, and compromise. It is thus imperative that shared governance be structured in such a way that it incorporates the views of faculty, staff, administration and students at all levels of decision-making. (Summarized from AAUP document "Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities.")

Strengths

The College has the largest number of faculty at RIT (over 140), and a nucleus of faculty has given new direction to the College, especially in the areas of scholarship and intellectual integrity. This has provided a public presence for the College that did not exist in the past. In focus groups and retreat discussions faculty and staff have complemented the efforts of administration in this regard and have expressed strong desire to work collaboratively to strengthen further the image of the College.

Faculty have expressed a strong desire to continue the current departmental structure that allows for flexibility and innovation as well as cohesion within departments.

Faculty also noted the smooth running of the central administrative office, especially the Office of Student Services and the Technical Support Services. Despite the small number of department staff, they were universally commended for their excellent job performance.

The ongoing presence of more than 400 baccalaureate students, who are deaf and hard of hearing, including approximately 100 in majors of the College of Liberal Arts, creates a special relationship with NTID.

Barriers

In the absence of a clear definition of shared governance, the members of the College community are not sure how best they can participate in the decision-making process. There is a need to develop a climate of shared governance that relies upon consistent, trustworthy communication that is multidirectional. Decision-making must entail genuine opportunities both to persuade and to be persuaded.

Faculty and staff have noted that there has been lack of consultation between and among various constituencies of the College. This has created low morale and a sense of powerlessness. To avoid what has been described as “administration by surprise,” the decision-making process must include full and open consultation with an emphasis on joint endeavor.

Integration of the NTID academic support faculty has not been consistent and interpreters and other access support professionals are not always integrated into the professional team. There also has not been consistent consultation with the NTID support faculty and staff on appropriate college issues.

Faculty also noted that there are no clear guidelines for tenure, promotion, and merit allocation, and this has resulted in disparity across departments.

Future Directions

The principles of Shared Governance, as embodied in this document will foster the smooth, efficient, and effective management of the College of Liberal Arts, while involving faculty, staff and students in decision-making. These principles will facilitate the achievement of educational excellence, and freedom of thought, inquiry and scholarly expression.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL G1 All members of the College Community—faculty, staff, administrators, and students—will have a right and a responsibility to participate in the governance process.

Objective G1A The College will encourage, acknowledge, and value participation in governance at all constituency levels.

Objective G1B The College will establish organizational structures through which faculty, staff and students are appropriately represented in governance.

Proposed Action G1B.1 The College will establish an ad hoc committee (comprised of representatives from faculty, staff, students, administration, and NTID) to examine the current organizational structure and develop recommendations consistent with principles of shared governance as defined in this plan.

Objective G1C The College will establish and maintain procedures and mechanisms that provide every member of each constituency equal opportunity for appropriate participation in governance.

Proposed Action G1C.1 The College will reward and accommodate institute service and participation in governance by faculty and staff through merit, tenure and promotion processes.

GOAL G2 Under shared governance, the College will acknowledge that certain areas are the primary concern of one group either because the matters considered are of almost exclusive interest of one group or because one group holds the expertise in these matters.

Objective G2A The faculty will have the primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research and those aspects of student life that relate to the educational process.

Objective G2B The criteria for appointment, reappointment, decision not to appoint, promotion, granting of tenure, and dismissal will be primarily the faculty responsibility.

Proposed Action G2B.1 Review and assess the existing policies and procedures to develop a clear set of faculty-approved criteria that can be applied consistently across departments.

Proposed Action G2B.2 In those rare instances when the dean does not concur with faculty judgment on questions of faculty status, the dean shall communicate with the appropriate representative faculty committee regarding the decision.

Objective G2C The faculty and staff will actively participate in the determination of policies and procedures governing salary increases that are reflective of an equitable merit system.

Proposed Action G2C.1 Each academic department will receive an annual faculty merit allocation based upon institute merit pool and distribution among faculty will be decided by the department chair. Each chair will confer with the dean to insure that the department's distribution of the allocation is fair and in accord with the policies and procedures of the department and college.

Proposed Action G2C.2 Staff merit allocation will be determined in consultation with the appropriate academic and staff department head.

Objective G2D The administration and faculty will consult with staff on matters that are consider by staff to be consistent with the principle of shared responsibility and cooperative action. To assure appropriate consideration of the unique benefits and challenges presented by students who are deaf and hard of hearing, perspectives of the NTID community should be systematically included.

Proposed Action G2D.1 The College will seek to ensure that staff have appropriate input into major policy, program, procedure, and budget decisions.

Proposed Action G2D.2 The College will maintain systematic collaboration with NTID to ensure that access and academic support considerations for deaf students are addressed at all levels of planning and decision-making.

Objective G2E The administration and faculty will consult with students on matters that students consider to be consistent with the principle of shared responsibility and cooperative action.

Proposed Action G2E.1 The College will establish a Student Council that will insure that students have appropriate input on decisions of the College.

GOAL G3 Members of the College community will have open, equitable, timely access to all information pertinent to issues and decisions under consideration and adequate time to provide feedback.

Objective G3A Information related to decision-making will be distributed in a timely manner to ensure adequate deliberation and input by appropriate constituencies.

GOAL G4 Shared governance will include constant consultation between and among all constituencies of the College community

Objective G4A Consultation will begin early in the decision-making process.

Objective G4B The procedure for consultation should be uniform and transparent to all parties.

Objective G4C There will be adequate time for constituencies to formulate a response to the request for consultation.

Proposed Action G4C.1 The party requesting consultation will provide an adequate and reasonable timeline for the decision-making process, including an appropriate timeframe for feedback by constituencies.

Objective G4D Outcomes of the decision-making process will be freely available to the constituencies.

Proposed Action G4D.1 When decisions are made, each decision and the rationale supporting it will be communicated to the consulting groups.

GOAL G5 The exercise of authority will be coupled with accountability.

Objective G5A The dean, associate deans, and department chairs will be appraised annually regarding their competence, performance and leadership.

Proposed Action G5A A regular procedure will be established for the annual upward appraisal of the deans' and the department chairs' competence and the community's confidence in his or her integrity.

Objective G5B All participants in the shared governance process (committees, constituent groups, administrative groups) will be accountable for the proper execution of their roles. All committees will report on their decisions and recommendations.

Objective 5.C In the spirit of shared governance there will be an expectation that decisions will be reached collaboratively.

Proposed Action G5C.1 In the event of disagreement among participants, efforts will be made to reach consensus while maintaining mutual respect for all participants.

Proposed Action G5C.2 In the event that administrative decisions do not concur with the recommendations of faculty and staff, the administration will provide the rationale in writing and the appropriate constituencies will respond accordingly.

VIII. RECOMMENDATION FOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION, OVERSIGHT, MONITORING

In order for this Plan to have value and meaning beyond its adoption by College faculty and staff, it is necessary to establish a mechanism for plan implementation, oversight, and monitoring. To this end, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee recommends the establishment of a permanent Strategic Planning Oversight Committee. This Committee will be charged with monitoring plan implementation and will assess College activities to assure consistency with this Plan. In addition, the Strategic Planning Oversight Committee will be responsible for conducting an annual environmental scan of internal and external circumstances and report to the College community at least once a year in the Spring quarter on any circumstances that may require modifications to this Plan.

In addition, it is recommended that the College hold an annual Faculty/Staff retreat during the week following Commencement. The purpose of this retreat will be to review College accomplishments, to identify areas of concern that require College community deliberation, and to prepare for action items to be initiated in the following Fall quarter.