
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

VISION

Create a vibrant and inclusive global community that challenges our students to learn across traditional boundaries with integrated and innovative curricular and cocurricular opportunities preparing them to lead a Life of Consequence.

MISSION

Dedicated to academic excellence and humane values, Hollins offers undergraduate liberal arts education for women and select graduate programs for women and men. Our mission statement describes the purpose of a Hollins education as pursuing “a life of active learning, fulfilling work, personal growth, achievement, and service to society.” It values civility, integrity, concern for others, diversity, and social justice.

STRATEGIC THEMES AND INITIATIVES

1. THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNER

Serving our changing student body requires an integrated learning model in order to provide young women with transformational experiences. Excellent advising is a critical factor for student success and persistence, with faculty and staff helping to convey the value of a liberal arts education to a society that increasingly esteems specialization and work preparedness. We will provide varied and individualized experiences and remain responsive to emerging opportunities to ensure that students can pursue their academic and career interests. The following initiatives aim to provide an inclusive, unbounded educational experience for Hollins students:

- **A new Advising 360° model, featuring an individualized team of advisors for each student, providing a more holistic advising experience for improved student success and persistence.**
- **Guaranteed access to at least two experiential learning opportunities such as our Batten Leadership Institute, study abroad programs, and world-class internship program—and the ability to reflect and integrate lessons and skills learned to find the best post-college career opportunities.**
- **A redesigned innovative liberal arts general core curriculum focused on integrative, cross-disciplinary, and trans-disciplinary learning that helps students “connect the dots.”**
- Launch for Life and Careers: A four-year career development cocurriculum and senior launch common experience course designed to prepare students for the world of work and life after graduation.

NOTE: **Bold** indicates focus during the 2019-20 academic year

2. INNOVATIVE ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS

A changing economy, the cost of higher education, and a competitive labor market have a major impact on how students select a college or university. The focus is now on what majors a university offers and how they directly align with a profession or a job. Traditional liberal arts colleges are changing how they think about the majors they offer and how to compete in an increasingly specialized marketplace. In addition to exploring new program offerings, we must also leverage our reputation and location and build partnerships to expand opportunities for our students and improve our value proposition. Also, continuing to increase the size and diversity of the student body will add to the vibrancy and richness of the campus experience. No one source of new students exists; rather, we must employ a number of strategies:

- **Start new undergraduate programs and graduate academic programs that will attract new students, and assess and strategically invest in existing graduate programs.**
- **Develop educational partnerships with other institutions to expand the quality and variety of opportunities available to our students.**
- **Attract and retain transfer and international students.**

3. FOSTERING A DISTINCTIVE CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

Hollins is primarily a residential liberal arts campus for undergraduate women. As such, we have a terrific opportunity to integrate cocurricular learning opportunities within the academic experience to build a robust living and learning community. Hollins students have the opportunity to grow intellectually, personally, and professionally across all domains of the college experience. These programs and initiatives will contribute to these efforts:

- **Build new and renovate existing student housing.**
- **Continue our commitment to diversity and inclusivity, including necessary programming to support our student body.**
- Grow and invest in our athletic programs.

4. FOUNDATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

While many of the proposed strategic initiatives create a sense of excitement and anticipation, some of the work we must do as a community may not be glamorous—but that doesn't mean it is any less critical to the success of our planning efforts. As part of the strategic planning process, with an eye to the future, we must examine closely all aspects of our operation, gather necessary information, and determine how we could be more effective in delivering our mission and vision. These actions will improve retention, enrollment, and the overall student experience, while helping us embrace future transformation:

- **Invest in faculty and staff professional development.**
- **Diversify our faculty to ensure diverse perspectives in teaching, learning, and knowledge generation, and to better reflect our student body.**
- Review our academic policies to ensure that our procedures are forward thinking, cohesive, fair, intuitive, and support student success and retention efforts.
- Conduct an official audit of all of our data and technology needs, as well as opportunities to elevate the student/faculty/staff experience through technological upgrades and integration.

5. TELLING OUR UNIQUE HOLLINS STORY

Through the lens of our market research and what we know to be the Hollins magic, we will create a compelling, forward-looking, and exciting value proposition for prospective students by doing a better job in telling “the Hollins story.” Highlighting what makes the Hollins experience distinctive, capitalizing on our location, and emphasizing the opportunities and the success stories of our students and alumnae/i is vitally important in recruiting students and engaging our alumnae/i. The stories we tell must be visual, flexible across devices and mediums, and focus on the benefits to students, including the outcomes of a Hollins education. The Hollins story must be compelling and collaborative, and we will develop this narrative through undertaking the following:

- **Conduct a major external review of our current brand, and conduct qualitative and quantitative market research across internal and external constituents.**
- **Create a strong and compelling positioning for Hollins, including messaging, driven by an outstanding marketing and communications strategy and execution plan that differentiates ourselves and makes Hollins the destination for young women.**
- Increase overall alumnae/i engagement, particularly in the mentoring of current students.
- Leverage the Roanoke location in marketing messaging.
- Increase the student, faculty, and staff presence on the website.

The success of this strategic plan depends on the support of every person who cares about Hollins. Our community is invested in institutional transformation and eager to move forward by coming together. Hollins has the opportunity to build on its remarkable heritage of educating women and graduate students and inspiring each of them to lead a Life of Consequence.