



COMBINATIONS 2020 ALLEGHENY COLLEGE

Teaching & Learning Global & Local Diversity History & Future Confidence & Visibility



■ A 2020 VISION FOR ALLEGHENY COLLEGE — OUR PROMISE

In 2020, Allegheny College will stand among the most distinguished and recognized colleges in America. High achieving students from around the world who possess an unusual combination of interests, skills and talents will make Allegheny their first choice among liberal arts colleges. And because of its commitment to access, Allegheny will ensure that these exceptional young women and men will be able to attend our college, irrespective of socioeconomic status.

They will choose Allegheny because they know that here, on one of the most beautiful campuses in the country, the student experience is second to none. Here, faculty challenge students to explore the full range of their interests, develop unmatched critical thinking skills, learn to live and work in community, and develop confidence in their own promise and potential. Allegheny will also be the choice of extraordinary students because they recognize the “value added” it promises, a relevant liberal arts experience that prepares them for meaningful lives after graduation. We will evaluate these outcomes to ensure that this promise is fulfilled. In communities across the nation and around the world, to be an alumna or alumnus of Allegheny College will warrant recognition for being part of a proud and respected tradition.

True to its history, Allegheny will continue to prepare its graduates for leadership in the professions, business, and the public sector. Moreover, it will prepare citizens who contribute to the cultural and economic lives of their communities and act with insight, passion, ethical awareness and sensitivity on the complex challenges of their world.

These are our promises to the students of our third century—promises that are rooted in our history, true to our traditions, and relevant to an increasingly complex world.

■ THE ALLEGHENY STORY — OUR FOUNDATION

As the thirty-second oldest college in the nation, Allegheny will celebrate its bicentennial in 2015. Only one generation of Alleghenians will have the historic privilege of setting the foundation for the College’s third century.

Certain values have defined Allegheny since its beginning. We are dedicated first and foremost to academic excellence. Founder Timothy Alden had a bold concept—to provide the kind of academic experience to deserving students on the American frontier that could formerly be found only at elite east coast institutions. We remain unwaveringly committed to that ideal: providing a transformative education to ambitious, talented students independent of their financial or social means. Upon graduation those students become difference-makers who

give back in the form of deep engagement in their communities and workplaces. So the cycle has gone for 200 years—excellence, access, and engagement.

These values brought us to our bicentennial; we will affirm and build on them to propel us through the next stage in Allegheny’s history. Academic excellence has always been rooted in bringing talented faculty together with inquisitive students and immersing them in a carefully designed and challenging educational experience. That will remain our core principle, with the understanding that changing technology and demographics demand that we seek innovative ways of doing so. Access will continue to mean that no capable and qualified student should be turned away for lack of funding. And engagement—so critical a part of Allegheny’s contribution to this region over the years—must be redefined to encompass a global society. Students will need to experience a genuinely diverse campus and become engaged in life beyond the region’s borders if they are to continue our proud tradition of becoming difference-making alumni in their communities and throughout the world.

Allegheny’s mission is straightforward and essential: to prepare young adults to excel as citizens of a diverse, interconnected world. If, as we approach our bicentennial, we are to sustain and enhance that mission, it is critical that the important work we do and the distinctive way in which we do it become more widely known. With this plan, Allegheny College claims its place in the world—a model of what it teaches—serving the needs of talented students from all nations and cultures with passion, engagement, and excellence.

■ THE ACTIONS — OUR COMMITMENTS

These initiatives are the next chapter in Allegheny’s story. They build on our traditions and our strengths by integrating unique qualities in distinctive ways. Allegheny is a place of unusual combinations—where teachers are scholars, where students are engaged in Meadville and in the world, and where our distinguished history meets our limitless future. Growth in Allegheny’s endowment is fundamental to the success of our plan and to our efforts to achieve pre-eminence.

TEACHING & LEARNING

The strength of an Allegheny education rests upon the excellence of its faculty and staff. As teachers, our faculty guide students through the rigors of an academic major and Senior Project; as scholars, they publish and present their research throughout the world, often collaborating with a student co-author. As a residential college, teaching occurs not only in the classroom but also throughout campus and in a variety of learning settings. These initiatives will allow the College to support a faculty and staff that is at once of the highest quality preparation and committed to the College’s distinctive mission.

Maintain close student/faculty relationships

When alumni reflect on their Allegheny experience, they invariably think of the close relationship they enjoyed with faculty who made a particularly important contribution to their intellectual or personal growth. To support the teacher/scholar model that underlies the excellence of our faculty and educational model, we must endow professorships in support of faculty teaching and scholarship. We will significantly increase the number of endowed positions across campus and increase the size of the faculty to achieve a student/faculty ratio of 11-1, a ratio that is comparable with our peer institutions.

Develop new interdisciplinary programs

Allegheny will build on the strength of its disciplinary majors to create new interdisciplinary programs reflective of the need in today's society to connect, synthesize, and transfer knowledge. We will support and make visible the many innovative interdisciplinary minors and programs that already exist while expanding opportunities for students to make intentional connections among multiple learning experiences and sources, understand issues and positions contextually, and negotiate the differences encountered when bringing separate disciplines to bear on a common theme.

Re-examine our curriculum and revise our “distribution requirements”

It is time to re-examine the four years of an Allegheny education to ensure that our students' coursework and various out-of-class experiences are forged into a coherent educational whole. In particular, our “distribution requirements” need to be revised to support intentional and shared student learning outcomes. We must ensure that all students participate in a selection of courses designed to develop core competencies and address institutional values such as personal and social responsibilities.

Enhance collaboration among academic and student life programs

As a residential college, we have a responsibility to provide an education for students that extends beyond the four walls of the classroom to pervade the campus environment. Our most recent strategic plan achieved the goal of having 90 percent of all students live on campus; now we must make that living experience more meaningful and integral to the educational experience. Through activities such as living-learning communities, safety and wellness initiatives, enhancing the scholar-athlete experience, and an integrated First-Two-Years program, we will create a campus that is intellectually vibrant in all settings and at all moments of the day.

Consolidate and focus our community outreach activities

Part of our heritage is a strong commitment to engage in the civic life of our community. While this commitment has resulted in numerous excellent individual outreach activities, sometimes those initiatives occur in isolation from one another. We will consolidate and coordinate our community efforts, putting them more directly in service to our educational mission.

Create a new Center and implement technology to support the above initiatives

Initiatives like those we imagine cannot thrive in isolation or without support. We will create a new

Center to coordinate, integrate, and support them as they unfold, drawing in and building on existing College programs as it makes sense to do so. We will also explore technologies—e.g., videoconferencing, portfolios, blogging, social networks—to identify and tap their potential to support the work of the Center.

GLOBAL & LOCAL DIVERSITY

To excel, our graduates must understand and be able to navigate a complex, multi-cultural world while grounding their actions in the wisdom gained from personal experience. These initiatives will help ensure that they are prepared to do so.

Diversify the campus and curriculum

In recent years, the College has significantly increased the diversity of the College community. We will leverage this success to further enhance diversity so that our community more closely resembles the increasingly heterogeneous world in which our graduates operate. In addition, as we re-examine our curricular and co-curricular programs, we will give priority to initiatives that increase the capacity of our graduates to understand and appreciate diverse perspectives.

Internationalize the campus and curriculum

The College attracts international students each year who receive an excellent liberal arts education and provide our domestic students extended, meaningful interactions with people from outside the United States. We also provide a growing number of strong majors and minors focused on international study. We will exploit new technologies and develop new initiatives to enhance our international programs and create a multi-cultural campus promoting the global understanding of both international and domestic students.

Require study away

Experiences that require leaving a familiar cultural context to engage with others in a domestic or international environment governed by unfamiliar cultural norms are critical to the education of global citizens. Such experiences include the traditional study abroad for a semester or year, our innovative program of faculty-led EL Seminars, college sponsored internships, alternative spring break programs, and community based learning through educational experiences such as our Bonner scholars/leaders program. We will expand the available options to make these experiences common to all Allegheny students, and in doing so ensure that our graduates are prepared to take their place on a global stage.

Expand scholarships for high-achieving students of limited means

At the heart of Allegheny's story are generations of graduates who started with few financial resources but deep commitment to learning and service. The socioeconomic diversity of our student population is one of Allegheny's defining characteristics and a strength of our educational program. We must maintain that diversity by increasing endowments to support scholarships even as we diversify the campus in other ways.

HISTORY & FUTURE

Allegheny's future is bright because of those who built and sustained this extraordinary college for nearly two centuries. These initiatives honor our history and position Allegheny to be competitive in tomorrow's world.

Continue to restore and beautify the historic campus, beginning with Bentley Hall

Allegheny's first formal classes were taught in Bentley Hall nearly 200 years ago, and with historically sensitive and sustainable renovation, graduating seniors can continue to march through Bentley for two more centuries. We will restore it to its rightful place as one of America's foremost examples of Federalist architecture, and at the same time equip the building for modern, technology-based teaching, learning, and administration.

Invest in Meadville in ways that support our mission and provide a marketing advantage to the town and the College

Allegheny's success has been intertwined with the well being of our local community since the College's inception. Both must be successful if either is to thrive. We will join with other community organizations and the local government to support efforts to develop and sustain thriving residential neighborhoods, invigorate the business sector, expand experiential learning opportunities, and increase the city's attractiveness.

Renovate science facilities to maintain and enhance our reputation for excellence in the sciences

Allegheny has a long history as a leader in science education, and our science complex from the early 1990s remains a model for innovative and collaborative science education. Our interdisciplinary Environmental Science program, which applies scientific, economic, political, and artistic principles to pressing environmental issues, was one of the first in the nation and continues to be nationally and even internationally recognized. However, this very success has meant that our facilities have become cramped and even inadequate, especially for the Environmental Science (and Biology) program. All science students need access to cutting-edge technology and to a first-class teaching and learning facility. We will build the Richard J. Cook Center for Environmental Science in Carr Hall and renovate other science spaces to ensure our continuing strength in science education.

Complete our commitment to the President's Climate Commitment

Allegheny is fortunate to be located in a region with abundant natural resources. As a charter signatory of the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment, we affirm our commitment to implementing a climate action plan to strategically reduce our environmental impact and realize the economic benefits of improved operational efficiencies.

CONFIDENCE & VISIBILITY

Allegheny's educational program is competitive with those of the nation's top liberal arts colleges and deserves to be recognized as such. Modesty is part of Allegheny's charm, but our characteristic humility must be combined with justifiable confidence and pride as well as shared understanding of our mission and goals if we are to enhance Allegheny's visibility and reputation.

Implement a communication plan to raise Allegheny's visibility

A world-class reputation can only be created when messages are expressed consistently and frequently. We will develop a message that emphasizes our brand and the accomplishments of our graduates and communicate that message through a disciplined program with coordinated outreach and measurable outcomes. By so doing, we will significantly increase Allegheny's national and international visibility as a premier educational institution.

Leverage technology to enhance and make more visible our extended community

Current technology offers new ways to foster meaningful connections among alumni, faculty, and students engaged in internships, service opportunities, job searches, and other experiences. In so doing, we will raise our awareness of one another's accomplishments, enhance students' educational experiences, and strengthen ties between alumni and the College.

Improve campus communications

Before we can celebrate and promote our accomplishments, we have to know about them. To make best use of our resources, increase the impact of campus events, and focus our message, we must become more aware of the initiatives on our campus and coordinate scheduling so that events support rather than compete with one another. We will develop processes to better integrate and communicate our work.

Enhance the unusual combinations brand

The unusual combinations brand has garnered Allegheny a great deal of positive attention, especially among prospective students for whom it validates their interests and justifies liberal education as preparation to solve real-world problems. We will develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of the brand among other segments of the College community, especially alumni, who must be equipped to serve as ambassadors of the College. We will further amplify the brand by combining traditional marketing tools with innovative techniques such as partnerships, use of physical spaces, art, music, and technology.

■ OUR CHARGE

Allegheny is positioned very well in a crowded market place of more than 4,000 American colleges and universities. Accomplishing the aggressive and powerful goals in this plan will make our college preeminent.

We celebrate human complexity. We relish the recognition that the educational experience at Allegheny is an adventure—that students (and faculty and staff and alumni) do not always take direct routes. Indeed, they rejoice and are rewarded by exploring and by creating unusual combinations of interests and sets of knowledge on campus and around the globe that result in the much valued ability to examine critical issues from multiple perspectives.

Allegheny College will be nationally recognized for this distinctive culture, for this relevant education and for the exceptional total experience we have the great fortune to live.

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