Building a Beacon
Unity College Strategic Development 2013-2018

Major transformation through bold & incremental, performance-based change

Stephen Mulkey, PhD, president
What should graduates of a well-integrated sustainability curriculum possess?

**Liberal Arts Prosocial Foundation**

- Superior written, verbal, and media literacy; numeracy; critical thinking
- Normative competency - understanding of tradeoffs in ethical and political context
- Fundamental understanding of management and strategic thinking
- Preparation to be lifelong learners: Ready for their 5th career as well as their 1st

**Transdisciplinary Sustainability Science**

- Reflective problem solvers with practical, experiential understanding
- Scholars able to synthesize information and integrate knowledge across disciplines
- Science and fact based transdisciplinary thinkers who understand natural and human systems as complex and interconnected
- Nimble learners able to anticipate and able to respond to “The Great Acceleration”

cf., Will Steffen
Accomplishments since July 2011

• $10 Million anonymous gift to our endowment; 2010 ~$2.8M, 2013~ $15M

• NEASC accreditation passed with highest endorsement – 10 year certification

• Sustainability Science and transdisciplinary teaching/learning unanimously adopted by faculty and board of trustees

• First college in the nation to divest endowment from fossil fuels; Media value >$1M; Development value > $35K to date

• Strategic Initiative I and global upgrade in facilities 100% completed

• Strategic Initiative II and restructuring of External Affairs 80% completed; Done by May 2014
Accomplishments since July 2011 (cont.)

- **External resources** brought to the College: i.e., Half Moon Garden (~$900K); Allen Island (5 projects $15K each)

- **Faculty salary repair** underway – doubled the overall raises (2% FY12 4.6% FY13)

- **Hiring of 15 faculty** ~40% complete to bring full strength of 40 faculty by fall 2014

- **Exceeded Enrollment projection** by 7% for fall 2013, valued at ~$575K net tuition only - Incoming class up 16% from previous year

- **Retention** first to second year increased 71% to 75% (CIC is 65%)

- **Exceeded Development gift projection** more than 100% for FY13 $210K to $550K
Accomplishments since July 2011 (cont.)

• Year to date faculty & staff **giving to the College up** 312% ($6K to $18K)

• **Graduation four year rate** is 53% - up from 34% (2011) – CIC 6 year 45%

• Increase **Internet** bandwidth **8-fold**. Connected to **Internet2**, high speed education net

• Consistently in the **top 20** Washington Monthly baccalaureate colleges

• 2011 & 2012 **College of Distinction** list (one of three in Maine)
THANK YOU !!
Unity College has the right programs at the right time

Unprecedented climate to begin ~2045 in Maine

Adaptation will be a multibillion-dollar industry
The Unity College Strategic Plan

The Unity College Vision:
To become the nation’s premier liberal-arts college focused on sustainability science and the environment.

The Unity College Mission:
Through the framework of sustainability science, Unity College provides a liberal arts education that emphasizes the environment and natural resources. Through experiential and collaborative learning, our graduates emerge as responsible citizens, environmental stewards, and visionary leaders.

The Unity College Core Values:
• Respect
• Personal and institutional integrity
• Community engagement
• Environmental sustainability
Top strategic outcomes for 2013-2018

- Complete implementation of transdisciplinary academic experience
- Become nationally recognized as the premier undergraduate institution for sustainability science
- Meet and maintain maximum campus enrollment
- Launch comprehensive capital campaign
- Implement mission-driven graduate programs
- Implement mission-driven online programs
- Build a modern liberal arts professoriate with competitive salaries and significantly more resources for scholarship, outreach, and service
- Implement selected alternative revenue streams
- Diversify academic operations to include partnerships, field station, international programs, outreach, etc....
- Complete build-out of our physical infrastructure to include new residence halls, Sustainability Science and Learning and Conference Center, and dining commons
- Achieve recurring annual operating surplus through ROI strategies
Foundational assumptions and beliefs:

- Our distinctive market niche is central to the College’s value proposition.
- The Unity College market niche is growing nationally.
- Academics, student life, and student success are the primary determinants of the Unity College value proposition.
- Marketing, enrollment, and development are the primary drivers of revenue.
- The market for Unity College’s mission is the world, primarily the US.
- Maine is an integral part of the Unity College brand.
Foundational assumptions and beliefs (cont.):

- Although a declining market for students, Maine will continue to be a source of philanthropy & enrollment
- Distance programming in higher education will continue to expand
- Nontraditional students will make up an increasing proportion of all students in the U.S.
- The demand for graduate programming in our niche is growing
- Facilities are a major determinant of increasing residential enrollment
- The liberal arts model is a foundation for prosocial development and is necessary for environmental programming
- Transdisciplinary delivery is superior to traditional delivery for our mission
The Unity College Strategic Plan Implementation

Goal 1. Offer the nation’s best sustainability and science-oriented liberal-arts academic program.

Goal 2. Create and support a world-class student body.

Goal 3. Develop physical, human, and technological infrastructures that allow our students, faculty, and staff to excel.

Goal 4. Align the College’s curriculum, activities, and operations with the goal of sustainability.

Goal 5. Create a distinctive and renowned national brand.

Goal 6. Ensure sustainable financial strength.

Strategic Plan Implementation Structure:

• Goal
  • Objectives
    • Initiatives
    • Actions
Goal 1. Offer the nation’s best sustainability and science-oriented liberal-arts academic program.

**Objective 1:** Develop a nationally recognized liberal-arts curriculum focused on sustainability science

**Objective 2:** Develop a nationally recognized faculty
Goal 2. Create and support a world-class student body.

Objective 1: Ensure that each student develops critical-thinking, personal and social skills needed to succeed at Unity College and after graduation.

Objective 2: Provide robust student-support services that are student-centered and that promote student success at Unity College and beyond.

Objective 3: Create a culture of respect for diversity, inclusion, and social justice.

Objective 4: Provide support for a campus culture that emphasizes holistic wellness.

Objective 5: Provide support to expand and improve the residential experience.

Objective 6: Engage all students in meaningful co-curricular opportunities that promote retention and persistence to graduation.

Objective 7: Provide robust support for student leadership opportunities.
Goal 3. Develop physical, human, and technological infrastructures that allow our students, faculty, and staff to excel

**Objective 1:** Develop physical infrastructure that fully supports all facets of College operations

**Objective 2:** Develop technology infrastructure that fully supports all facets of College operations

**Objective 3:** Develop human infrastructure that fully supports all facets of College operations
Goal 4. Align the College’s curriculum, activities, and operations with the goal of sustainability

Objective 1: Endow all aspects of curriculum, activities, and operations with comprehensive sustainability guidelines

Objective 2: Develop fully staffed sustainability office responsible for advancing sustainability in curriculum, activities, and operations

Objective 3: Achieve a zero carbon footprint

Objective 4: Advance the cause of sustainability to external audiences

Objective 5: Create a fully sustainable campus landscape
Goal 5. Create a distinctive and renowned national brand

Objective 1: Develop a robust institution-wide marketing department and three-year rolling integrated marketing plan

Objective 2: Develop and execute a data-driven market-segmented communication plan

Objective 3: Fully develop and promote our value proposition through sophisticated use of social media, Internet, and targeted collaterals

Objective 4: Achieve top-ten ranking with nationally recognized ranking organizations

Objective 5: Develop ongoing, broad-spectrum, data-driven media relations that ensure consistent national visibility

Objective 6: Develop recurring mission-driven events with national visibility
Goal 6. Ensure sustainable financial strength

Objective 1: Consistently achieve a surplus of revenues over expenditures (primarily enrollment, fundraising, auxiliary)

Objective 2: Increase revenues from existing, traditional programs and operations at the Unity College campus

Objective 3: Diversify revenue to provide new resources to enable strategic growth (primarily online, graduate, satellite programs)

Objective 4: Increase annual revenue from Development to at least 15% of total operational base budget

Objective 5: Apply comprehensive, mission-grounded return-on-investment analyses to all facets of Unity College operations

Objective 6: Achieve identified benchmarks for institutional effectiveness
Example: Academic Affairs Strategic Implementation Plan

**Goal One:** Offer the nation’s best liberal-arts academic program focused on sustainability science.

**Objective 1:** Develop a nationally recognized liberal-arts curriculum focused on sustainability science.

- **Initiative:** Create an innovative liberal-arts foundation that supports the sustainability-science framework.
  - **Action:** Work with Faculty Planning Committee to develop working group to explore best practices. *Start: January 2014. Report due March 2014.*

- **Initiative:** Integrate transdisciplinary teaching and learning philosophies throughout the curriculum.
  - **Action:** Create task force to examine liberal arts, sustainability science, and transdisciplinary teaching and learning at Unity College. *Start: March 2014. Task force reports to Executive Team May 2014. Implementation plan starting June 2014, concluding October 2014.*
Example: Academic Affairs Strategic Implementation Plan

Goal One: Offer the nation’s best liberal-arts academic program focused on sustainability science.

Objective 1: Develop a nationally recognized liberal-arts curriculum focused on sustainability science.

• Initiative: Develop a successful undergraduate research program; support student research presentations at national conferences.
  • Action: Program has been created. Monitor and develop. Establish goals and benchmarks. Start: Underway; goals and benchmarks due December 2014.

• Initiative: develop nationally recognized graduate programming.
Example: Academic Affairs Strategic Implementation Plan
(Half Moon Gardens property)

Goal One: Offer the nation’s best liberal-arts academic program focused on sustainability science.

Objective 1: Develop a nationally recognized liberal-arts curriculum focused on sustainability science.

• Initiative: Create and develop valuable and innovative educational and research spaces that contribute to the excellence of Unity’s academic program.

• Sub-Initiative: Develop Half Moon Gardens as an education and research field station.

  • Action: Upon successful completion of the Gift Agreement, develop aggressive five-year management plan for Half Moon Gardens to create educational, research, and revenue opportunities. By February 2014.

  • Action: Develop business plan to support opportunities and sustainable operations by year 5. By July 2014.

  • Action: Hire a new faculty member to serve as Director of Half Moon Gardens. By May 2014, to start no later than June 2014.

  • Action: Offer courses and research opportunities utilizing Half Moon Gardens As a showcase facility for sustainability science. Begin August 2014.
Example: Financial Affairs Strategic Implementation Plan

**Goal Six:** Ensure sustainable financial strength.

**Objective 2:** Increase revenues from existing, traditional programs and operations.

- **Initiative:** Increase undergraduate residential enrollment to stable, repeatable 625.
  - **Action:** Investigate new areas of recruitment and assign staff to service those areas as appropriate.
  - **Action:** Attract international students, with a goal of 10% undergrads from outside of USA.

- **Initiative:** Increase auxiliary revenue to an appropriate percent per year by date certain.
  - **Action:** examine and expand revenue from campus store, room & board, student center, UCCPA, etc.
  - **Action:** Expand use of campus by outside interests.
  - **Action:** See summer programming.
Goal Six: Ensure sustainable financial strength.

Objective 4: Increase annual revenue from Development to at least 15% of total operational base budget.

- **Initiative:** Increase private gifts to a specified level per year by a date certain.
  - **Action:** Restructure Development Department to focus fundraising on specific targets.
  - **Action:** Enhance culture of philanthropy beginning with Board and senior management, including staff and faculty.
  - **Action:** Create expanded program of targeted giving events and individuals.
  - **Action:** Create active program of planned-giving.

- **Initiative:** Increase grant revenue to an appropriate proportion of total development revenues by a date certain.
  - **Action:** Hire grant writer with ROI mandate.
  - **Action:** See research grants.
  - **Action:** Increase institutional grants.

- **Initiative:** Reallocate resources from underperforming programs.
  - **Action:** Identify and define underperforming programs.
  - **Action:** Reallocate resources to promising programs, but do not impair mission.
Sustainability Science for a Resilient Future

www.unity.edu