

Seattle University's Strategic Plan for 2013–2018

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#### **PREFACE**

Seattle University is dedicated to educating the whole person, to professional formation, and to empowering leaders for a just and humane world. This strategic plan articulates the work that, over the next five years, will help us best fulfill our mission in a changed and changing world and prepare us for greater prominence and achievement in the future. It provides a path for Seattle University to become more effective in how we serve our students and stronger in our impact on the city of Seattle, the Puget Sound region, and the global community.

We face significant opportunities and challenges. The weakened economy makes it more difficult for students at all levels to afford our education, even as the need for higher education grows. These students graduate in an environment that demands the competencies they develop through our Jesuit education, including critical thinking, effective communication, leadership, and an ethic of service to society. At the same time, our world increasingly requires and rewards knowledge and skills in science, technology, and health care. Our students are concerned about the value of higher education, the burdens of debt, and the extent to which a university degree, whether undergraduate or graduate, positions them for professional success. Technology represents an urgent challenge and opportunity, as it brings new competition, increasing student expectations, and the potential to deliver education to new students in new ways.

To meet these challenges, we will strengthen our core assets, including an outstanding and dedicated faculty and staff, rigorous academic programs rooted in the Jesuit educational tradition, and a beautiful campus in a vibrant location. We will continue to advance the university's five strategic priorities of ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE; ENGAGING THE WORLD; CATHOLIC, JESUIT CHARACTER; GREAT STUDENT EXPERIENCE; and INVESTING IN THE EXCELLENCE OF OUR FACULTY AND STAFF. We will build on our recent accomplishments, including a stronger Core curriculum, the Seattle University Youth Initiative, Division I athletics, balanced compensation and benefits programs, and the construction of exceptional facilities. We will align to our changing environment and meet today's students where they are by promoting diversity and responding to the differing needs and expectations of our undergraduate, graduate, and professional students.

We cherish our history and are proud of the work we are doing today. The purpose of this strategic plan, however, is to foster transformational change that brings our mission into the future. Through this plan, we will strengthen our education, deliver programs increasingly demanded by students and society, ensure our graduates have the best opportunity for success, and become a model for engagement with the region and world. This plan positions us to move in new directions as we build essential capabilities that respond to the challenges we face, seize emerging opportunities, and enhance our vitality and our impact.

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#### **GOALS AND INITIATIVES**

To support the mission and aspirations of the university, this plan identifies four goals, each supported by three or four initiatives. The next section provides additional information on the initiatives, including rationale, actions, resource estimates, and measurable objectives.

#### Goal One

## Strengthen our capacity to provide a high-quality and transformational education rooted in the Jesuit tradition.

- A. To foster an outstanding learning environment for our students in which teaching and scholarship enrich each other, we will improve our capacity to attract and retain outstanding faculty by supporting them in their development as scholars and educators.
- B. To deepen student engagement with the world, we will develop and strengthen programs and opportunities in community-based learning and global education.
- C. To promote the Jesuit Catholic character of the university, we will make strategic investments that advance the Jesuit mission, strengthen our understanding of the Catholic tradition, and position the university as a leader in interreligious dialogue.

#### Goal Two

## Prepare our graduates to lead meaningful and successful professional lives.

- A. To maximize the lifelong professional success of our students and alumni, we will broaden and deepen support of our students through highly effective academic advising and career preparation programs and develop professional networking opportunities for alumni.
- B. To better serve the community and to establish greater opportunities for education, research, and career placement, we will develop partnerships that help us address the challenges of key local, regional, and global organizations.
- C. To assist students with selecting their career path and developing their professional skills, we will expand internships, experiential and field-based education, paraprofessional opportunities, and other approaches to integrating career preparation.
- D. To develop the intellectual curiosity and lifelong learning skills of our students, we will promote a culture of student scholarship and research, including more inquiry-based courses, independent research opportunities, and collaboration with faculty on scholarly projects.

#### Goal Three

# Meet the challenges and opportunities of the changing educational and economic environment.

- A. To meet the needs of the changing environment, respond to demand from prospective students, and take advantage of our strategic location, we will develop new and innovative academic programming. In particular, we will pursue opportunities in science, technology, engineering, math (STEM) and health science programs.
- B. To broaden access to Seattle University's transformative education, we will develop continuing education, graduate, and adult degree completion programs and ensure that student services are accessible to all students.
- C. To address the financial challenges faced by our students, we will increase financial aid, contain costs, and ensure that students are able to make informed decisions to avoid graduating with untenable debt burdens.
- D. To meet the demands of prospective students and take advantage of new technologies, we will develop hybrid and online academic programs and services that are commensurate with Seattle University's Ignatian pedagogy.

#### Goal Four

## Realize an infrastructure that supports excellence and innovation in all facets of our education.

- A. To grow and further distinguish our programs in the fields of STEM and health sciences, we will design and build innovative new science facilities.
- B. To support our educational programs, prepare our graduates to meet the challenges of a technical world, and enable the university to operate efficiently, we will significantly invest in our technology infrastructure.
- C. To create a welcoming and high-functioning environment, we will develop, improve, and maintain the physical infrastructure of the university in accordance with our strategic priorities.

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## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

#### STRATEGY-LEVEL ASSESSMENT AND NEXT STEPS

This strategic plan focuses on service to students and the community in ways that ensure the financial health of our mission and our institution. It recognizes and responds to economic trends, particularly the financial limitations of current and future students. It emphasizes opportunities for new or increased revenue, including undertakings with new market potential. Finally, the plan increases our value and competitive advantage in traditional areas of enrollment that retain market relevance so that these areas remain strong and sustainable.

The initiatives outlined in the following section provide early projections of the resources needed for and produced by the actions called for in the strategic plan. The resources required by the full plan are greater than what we can fund within the next few years, and by integrating this plan with a comprehensive financial plan, the pace and level of funding will be more clearly defined. This financial plan will be presented to the Board of Trustees in May 2013.

The resource implications of the initiatives, when looked at in aggregate, lead to six key points.

- The plan calls for significant investment in faculty and staff resources that, if fully funded, would cost in excess of \$7M. These costs include additional faculty positions where new programs are proposed, course releases, stipends, and other forms of faculty support, and new staff positions. Through financial planning and budgeting, the university will determine what combination of new funding and redirected priorities best supports these initiatives.
- Infrastructure improvements represent a necessary but costly undertaking. The strategic plan advocates an increase of deferred maintenance funding to an annual target of \$13M, plus major renovations of aging infrastructure, particularly our residence halls. A new facility supporting growth in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) and education and health sciences will cost approximately \$100-150M. Expanded health science offerings will require both high-quality science facilities and close partnerships with local medical centers and healthcare organizations. The university faces a significant space shortfall such that long-term growth will require building and acquiring new facilities, particularly student residences and faculty offices. Enhanced technology funding remains a critical need.
- Elements of this plan have philanthropic appeal and are candidates for the capital campaign. Examples include improving and expanding science and health science education through new facilities, enhancing faculty development, the management of student debt, increasing the success of diverse populations, and enhancing the Jesuit Catholic character of the university.

- Containing costs and better helping students constrain debt is an important component to this plan. It is critical to institutional values, including care for students and diversity. It will require the university to significantly grow endowment for student financial aid. Given our dependence on tuition revenue, it will also require difficult decisions regarding pricing and affordability.
- Initiatives that support student success and the quality of the student experience, including improved educational experiences, enhanced advising, greater internship and professional opportunities, and improved residential, co-curricular and social experiences will improve student retention and graduation. The costs for these are included in the first bullet above. It must be recognized that improved retention represents a significant revenue opportunity for the university (a 1% increase in the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate produces an additional \$200-250K in net tuition) that could offset or exceed the investments required to produce such a change.
- This plan emphasizes the development of new academic programs that are financially viable and capable of generating revenues to support increased expenses proposed elsewhere within the plan. Some initiatives, including adult degree completion programs and expanded professional education, are recommended primarily because of their potential for financial returns. Other initiatives, including new programs in health sciences, will be expensive to implement regardless of strong student and employer demand. Careful operational planning will ensure that approved programs are financially realistic and sustainable.

What follows is the heart of this strategic plan: the initiatives that articulate the concrete work to be undertaken, detail the resources required, and define success through measurable objectives. The initiatives bring specificity to the plan, ensure accountability, and foster a strong link between the strategic plan, the upcoming five-year financial plan, and detailed implementation planning. They identify the work we must do better to serve all of our students, whether first time in college, transfer, graduate, or professional. Through progress on these initiatives, we will ensure that Seattle University fulfills its mission to educate the whole person, provide professional formation, and empowering leaders for a just and humane world.

Seattle University's Strategic Plan for 2013–2018

#### **INITIATIVES**

#### Goal One

Strengthen our capacity to provide a high-quality and transformational education rooted in the Jesuit tradition.

#### Initiative 1.A

To foster an outstanding learning environment for our students in which teaching and scholarship enrich each other, we will improve our capacity to attract and retain outstanding faculty by supporting them in their development as scholars and educators.

## Rationale and intended impact

The quality of our students' education depends on the caliber of our faculty. Our scholar-educator model recognizes that faculty scholarship informs, enriches, and is enhanced by pedagogy, student learning, and professional practice. To promote a strong culture of faculty scholarship, we must enhance infrastructure to support the interconnection of teaching, research, and professional practice.

#### Summary of major actions

- 1. Enhance faculty capabilities in higher education and Ignatian pedagogy and practices through development of professional development programs commensurate with faculty career stage and roles/responsibilities (e.g. for chairs, associate professors, non-tenure-track faculty, etc.).
- 2. Promote a culture of scholarship through increased resources for faculty research, including fellowships, professional development and travel funds, research collaboration programs, and release-time policies.

## Measurable objectives

Number of faculty who participate in professional development programs and satisfaction with those programs

Levels of student engagement as measured in the National Survey of Student Engagement Student achievement of learning outcomes and other measures of teaching effectiveness Increased external grant funding, faculty publications, and profile of SU faculty Increased number of students engaged with faculty in research Increased applications for tenure-track positions and increased quality of applicants

## Cabinet responsibility

**Provost** 

#### Goal One

Strengthen our capacity to provide a high-quality and transformational education rooted in the Jesuit tradition.

#### Initiative 1.B

To deepen student engagement with the world, we will develop and strengthen programs and opportunities in community-based learning and global education.

## Rationale and intended impact

As a Jesuit Catholic institution with a rich history of local and global education and service, Seattle University has long recognized that, in order for our students to become leaders committed to a just and humane world, they must be provided opportunities to experience and interact with communities on both the local and global stage. This service-oriented engagement at local and global levels is at the heart of Ignatian pedagogy and a hallmark of a Seattle University education.

We must build upon current initiatives to create new innovative community-based learning and global education programs to foster excellence in learning and scholarship while deepening ties through local and global engagement, including service-learning, community-based research, and clinical and internship experiences, education abroad programs, global convergence sites, globally oriented courses, and we must increase opportunities for these experiences for all students at the university.

- 1. Sustain and expand support for the Seattle University Youth Initiative as a critical component of our community engagement efforts.
- 2. Strengthen existing partnerships and build new ones with local organizations to broaden service-learning site options. Deepen and broaden opportunities to link faculty and students to local partners for collaborative, community-based research.
- 3. Increase student funding for education abroad, including reviewing policies for financial aid packages and providing greater resources to supplement student funds.
- 4. Pursue partnerships with other institutions abroad, both Jesuit and non-Jesuit, to develop and deliver new and innovative global programs such as convergence sites.

Number of partnerships, programs, and courses that promote student engagement with the world (i.e., service-learning sites, community-based research partners, convergence centers, global partnerships, study abroad, campus programs promoting global understanding)

Level of activity these produce (number of student participants, number of events)

Frequency of student engagement with people of different perspectives and levels of intercultural competencies

Amount of external funding secured to support and grow the Youth Initiative and other partnerships

## Cabinet responsibility

Provost

Vice President for Communications

#### Goal One

Strengthen our capacity to provide a high-quality and transformational education rooted in the Jesuit tradition.

#### **Initiative 1.C**

To promote the Jesuit Catholic character of the university, we will make strategic investments that advance the Jesuit mission, strengthen our understanding of the Catholic tradition, and position the university as a leader in interreligious dialogue.

#### Rationale and intended impact

Seattle University is anchored, defined, and inspired by its Jesuit Catholic character. Strategic investments must be made to secure our Jesuit Catholic educational mission for the future by enhancing our programs and services and increasing their visibility to the campus, potential donors, and public. Our Jesuit Catholic character is expressed through leadership development in the Jesuit tradition, spiritual development, Ignatian pedagogy, and broadly advancing interreligious dialogue. These are essential elements of educating leaders for a just and humane world and serving the larger community.

## Summary of major actions

1. Build on the Office of Jesuit Mission and Identity to create the Center for Jesuit Education. The first objective is to provide permanent endowed funding for current programs, including Ignatian spirituality and immersion programs, Ignatian retreats, and domestic and international immersion experiences. The second objective is to expand programming.

- 2. Increase recruitment of Jesuit faculty and staff through an endowed fund. The fund would replace current reliance on contingency funding and ensure a consistently strong Jesuit presence on campus.
- 3. Establish a project or center for interreligious understanding and dialogue that builds upon and coordinates the work of the divisions, schools, and colleges. Campus programs will consist of opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to increase their understanding of religious diversity, including courses, workshops, and seminars on interreligious understanding. Academic scholarship is also a component. Community programs will consist of outreach efforts to engage alumni, the public, and religious leaders in the topic of interreligious understanding through conferences, lectures, etc.

Number of participants in programs and attendance at events open to the public Effectiveness of interreligious dialogue programs to increase understanding of religious diversity Level of commitment to service and justice (students, faculty, and staff) Number of Jesuits working at Seattle University Amount of external funding acquired through campaign and grants

## Cabinet responsibility

Vice President for Mission and Ministry Vice President for University Advancement

#### Goal Two

Prepare our graduates to lead meaningful and successful professional lives.

#### Initiative 2.A

To maximize the lifelong professional success of our students and alumni, we will broaden and deepen support of our students through highly effective academic advising and career preparation programs and develop professional networking opportunities for alumni.

#### Rationale and intended impact

Seattle University must provide effective career development services that prepare our students to be highly competitive in the job market. Our mission calls us to form professionals who provide leadership for a just and humane world; to fulfill this mission, we must ensure our graduates have opportunity to progress in the career of their choosing.

## Summary of major actions

- 1. Integrate academic and career planning through coordinated advising that assures the opportunity for each student to develop a cohesive educational and career plan.
- 2. Provide specialized advising, workshops, courses, and events that assist students in determining their career direction and prepare them for successful entry into their profession.
- 3. Connect alumni to each other, to Seattle University, and to current students through events, mentoring opportunities, and shared information.
- 4. Develop integrated systems to collect and communicate data regarding experiential learning opportunities, internships, externships, alumni, employer, and other organizational opportunities.

## Measurable objectives

Number of job placements and percent of students employed at graduation, three months after graduation, and six months after graduation

Number of students with an integrated educational and career plan in place

Student satisfaction with major choice, career choice, and career services

Number of alumni who participate in the career network and related activities; satisfaction of those participants

## Cabinet responsibility

Provost

Vice President for Student Development

Vice President for University Advancement

#### Goal Two

Prepare our graduates to lead meaningful and successful professional lives.

#### Initiative 2.B

To better serve the community and to establish greater opportunities for education, research, and career placement, we will develop partnerships that help us address the challenges of key local, regional, and global organizations.

## Rationale and intended impact

Our Seattle location offers significant opportunities for the university to connect with businesses and non-profit organizations in ways that are mutually beneficial and create rich opportunities for

student learning. Coordinated and intentional outreach to employers and other organizations allows us to better support our community and increase learning opportunities for our students.

## Summary of major actions

- 1. Design and implement a formal partnership model for employers and organizations.
- 2. Research and mine existing faculty, staff, and donor connections to generate further opportunities for research, internships, and job placements.
- 3. Assess employer education needs and match curricular offerings to address these needs.
- 4. Ensure cross-campus coordination of employer and organization cultivation, including our alumni network.

## Measurable objectives

Number, level of activity in, and level of satisfaction with institutional partnerships and affiliations Number of opportunities for research, internships, and job placement identified Number of curricular offerings initiated or modified to meet employer needs Number of graduates placed in partner organizations

## Cabinet responsibility

Vice President for Communications Vice President for University Advancement

#### Goal Two

Prepare our graduates to lead meaningful and successful professional lives.

#### Initiative 2.C

To assist students with selecting their career path and developing their professional skills, we will expand internships, experiential and field-based education, paraprofessional opportunities, and other approaches to integrating career preparation.

#### Rationale and intended impact

Experiential education with strong mentoring is a powerful tool for assisting students with clarifying and focusing their career goals and learning professional skills and behaviors. Academic learning develops depth of meaning when it is applied out of the classroom in situations similar to professional employment. Participation at job sites with active professionals presents real-world professional challenges and the opportunity to develop a career network.

## Summary of major actions

- 1. Encourage and support faculty and staff engagement in identifying, developing, and promoting experiential education opportunities.
- 2. Develop policies, practices, and procedures that ensure experiential education opportunities are accessible to all students and beneficial to both the student and the placement site.

## Measurable objectives

Number and percent of students participating in experiential education opportunities Number of faculty participating in experiential education opportunities Website outlining policies, practices, and procedures created Survey of student satisfaction with experiential learning participation

## Cabinet responsibility

**Provost** 

Vice President for Communications

#### Goal Two

Prepare our graduates to lead meaningful and successful professional lives.

#### **Initiative 2.D**

To develop the intellectual curiosity and lifelong learning skills of our students, we will promote a culture of student scholarship and research, including more inquiry-based courses, independent research opportunities, and collaboration with faculty on scholarly projects.

#### Rationale and intended impact

Students learn best when engaged in practices and opportunities which connect their academic learning to real-world challenges and issues. Through these opportunities, students will make greater connection between theory and practice and will have résumé-building experience that provides a competitive edge in the marketplace. Students not only gain experience, but also develop critical thinking and learning skills central to Seattle University's Jesuit mission.

- 1. Expand and promote student research and scholarship opportunities. This will be closely linked with efforts to promote and expand faculty research and scholarship.
- 2. To facilitate student research, develop and implement a searchable database that includes opportunities with faculty and offsite.

- 3. Provide financial resources and space to support a higher level of research engagement.
- 4. Develop support systems that promote a culture of scholarship that values inquiry and research.

Number of students engaged in research and scholarship Number of inquiry-based courses Number of joint student/faculty research projects

## Cabinet responsibility

Provost

Vice President for Communications

#### Goal Three

Meet the challenges and opportunities of the changing educational and economic environment.

#### Initiative 3.A

To meet the needs of the changing environment, respond to demand from prospective students, and take advantage of our strategic location, we will develop new and innovative academic programming. In particular, we will pursue opportunities in science, technology, engineering, math (STEM) and health science programs.

#### Rationale and intended impact

GIVEN THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INITIATIVES 3A AND 4A, THEY SHARE THIS STATEMENT ON RATIONALE AND INTENDED IMPACT.

Seattle University provides excellent programs in science, technology, engineering, math, and health sciences. The university has increased the centrality of science education: the number of science majors has grown, programs such as nursing and criminal justice require scientific training, and the new Core curriculum has an additional science component. Seattle University's academic rigor and emphasis on engaging students in active learning and research make it an important producer of high-quality science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) graduates and professionals.

Externally, several factors point to the potential to grow enrollment in STEM and health sciences. Health care is a growing industry with positive labor market projections. There is a nationwide push to create jobs and enhance national competitiveness by increasing STEM graduates. Student demand for degrees with solid employment prospects continues to grow, and the university's location in the high-tech Puget Sound region as well as its close proximity to several large hospitals facilitates clinical placements and internships.

At the same time, our current facilities pose a severe limitation on our ability to respond. Over 50 years old, our science building is sized for a smaller university and modeled on outdated teaching and learning approaches. Despite a renovation in the past decade and the leasing of off-campus research space, the university is struggling to accommodate current space needs.

For Seattle University to become an institution celebrated for its outstanding Jesuit education in STEM and health sciences, we must make significant investments in both programs and facilities. Initiative 3A speaks to the need to explore opportunities to expand STEM and health sciences programs by adding capacity to existing programs and launching new programs; initiative 4A addresses our need for specialized facilities to support current and future needs. STEM and health science programs are expensive to launch and sustain; they require labs, relatively low student-faculty ratios, and an effective network for clinical placements and internships. Expanding health science programs (such as physical therapy, pharmacology, or public health) and increasing STEM enrollments represents a significant strategic opportunity that must be actively and thoughtfully explored in close concert with our capital plans.

## Summary of major actions

- 1. Identify market needs in the form of demand from employers and students. Assess the skills that employers are seeking. Map current and potential degree programs to demand and skills.
- 2. Assess investment needed to deliver programs/add capacity for which there is unmet demand. Recognize need for expanded and specialized facilities, research and library support, and new faculty. Weigh these against potential resources, including tuition revenue, potential grant support, and philanthropy through the capital campaign.
- 3. Develop sustainable, quality new programs and grow enrollment in existing programs as appropriate and feasible given constraints.

#### Measurable objectives

Number of STEM and health sciences graduates (or completers, in the case of certificates)
Launching of more than one new program in STEM and/or health sciences
Number of partnerships, clinical placement sites, internships, etc. with organizations in the region

#### Cabinet responsibility

Provost

Vice President for Enrollment Management

#### Goal Three

Meet the challenges and opportunities of the changing educational and economic environment.

#### **Initiative 3.B**

To broaden access to Seattle University's transformative education, we will develop continuing education, graduate, and adult degree completion programs and ensure that student services are accessible to all students.

## Rationale and intended impact

This initiative addresses two trends: enrollment challenges in current programs and a growing demand for continuing education. Certificate programs are increasingly sought after by students looking to improve a particular skill set or who are not able to commit to a full degree program. Graduate enrollments have declined but there are opportunities to improve enrollment through revised and new programs; while competition locally and online is considerable, SU occupies a valuable niche. Market research indicates that Seattle University could reach a new population of students regionally: adults seeking to complete their undergraduate degrees. As traditional undergraduate enrollments are challenged, this demographic will become more important.

The intended impact is a series of high-quality academic programs that attract new student populations and generate resources to help sustain other areas of the university.

- 1. Launch self-sustaining professional certificate programs that align with student and employer interests. Partner with employers when possible to offer programs at their sites that meet their specific needs.
- 2. Address declining graduate enrollment by identifying areas of interest for new programs, implementing curriculum revisions to better match the current environment, and adopting alternative scheduling and online/hybrid formats where appropriate.
- 3. Continue exploring the potential for adding a new adult degree completion program. Building on the completed feasibility and market research studies, research organizational structures, and business models that meet both student and institutional needs. Considerations include: standalone vs. integrated undergraduate populations, tuition and aid strategies, which degrees and certificates to offer, and the importance of flexibility and convenience through evening, weekend, and online courses.

4. An audit will uncover issues regarding availability and access of student services outside of usual Monday through Friday business hours. Essential student services should be available online or over the phone, and services should be responsive to a diverse student population.

## Measurable objectives

Launch of programs
Student enrollment and retention/graduation/completion
Satisfaction with student services, especially availability and quality
Program expenses relative to revenues

## Cabinet responsibility

Provost

Vice President for Enrollment Management

## Goal Three

Meet the challenges and opportunities of the changing educational and economic environment.

#### **Initiative 3.C**

To address the financial challenges faced by our students, we will increase financial aid, contain costs, and ensure that students are able to make informed decisions to avoid graduating with untenable debt burdens.

#### Rationale and intended impact

Seattle University values its diverse student population and places a high priority on making education available to students of limited economic means. The recent recession and lingering slow economic recovery have limited students' ability to pay and raised questions about the value of a degree given employment prospects. In response to these problems, we will make Seattle University more affordable by addressing both the cost and net price of programs.

- 1. Make student aid a fundraising priority for annual giving and the upcoming campaign with the goal that this increases aid available to students.
- 2. Define untenable debt using factors such as degree level, market value of the degree, and level of unmet need. Share this information with admitted students within the context of their aid package so they can make informed decisions about enrolling.

- 3. Examine tuition pricing, revenue, aid, and demand for undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. Explore policy shifts such as differential pricing, fellowships/assistantships, experiential credit, and increasing transfer credits.
- 4. To contain costs, pursue two strategies: operational efficiencies and limiting instructional costs. Carefully examine class sizes and the student-to-faculty ratio, monitor demand to ensure efficient use of faculty resources, and explore cost-effective ways to deliver new programs.

Reduction in percent of students graduating with untenable debt
Increase in retention among students who take out loans
Increased giving and endowment for financial aid
Student net costs to complete degree programs
Growth rates in direct instructional costs per student compared to tuition increase rates
Percentage of need met with gift aid

## Cabinet responsibility

Provost
Chief Financial Officer
Vice President for Enrollment Management

#### Goal Three

Meet the challenges and opportunities of the changing educational and economic environment.

#### Initiative 3.D

To meet the demands of prospective students and take advantage of new technologies, we will develop hybrid and online academic programs and services that are commensurate with Seattle University's Ignatian pedagogy.

## Rationale and intended impact

Hybrid and online education is becoming a necessary component of higher education at all levels. Universities that fail to fully develop, implement, and brand their educational offerings to include some distance component will likely be noncompetitive over the next decade. The intended impact of this initiative is to provide the impetus, resources, and development of specific degree and course material which is suitable to a hybrid learning approach. A long-term impact is to provide the university with the knowledge and foundation to adapt to new technologies and business models that rely on technology.

This initiative encompasses courses and programs at the undergraduate, graduate, professional, and certificate levels. Hybrid courses or programs consist of a mix of face-to-face and online instruction.

## Summary of major actions

- 1. Identify new programs and courses to offer in online/hybrid formats, including partnering with employers and organizations to create programs that meet the needs of their employees. Identify existing programs and courses that are suited for conversion.
- 2. Provide pedagogical and technical support to faculty as they create and convert courses. Course releases and stipends may also be appropriate. Develop quality control mechanisms to ensure that the student experience is consistently high and academic rigor matches that of traditional face-to-face curriculum.
- 3. Ensure that student services, including academic support and library materials, are appropriate to and accessible by students in online and hybrid programs.

## Measurable objectives

Number of courses offered online/hybrid

Launching of new programs designed to attract students seeking flexible and convenient programs

Number of students enrolled in such programs

Student satisfaction with online/hybrid offerings

Student FTE per square foot

#### Cabinet Responsibility

Provost

Vice President for Enrollment Management

#### Goal Four

Realize an infrastructure that supports excellence and innovation in all facets of our education.

#### Initiative 4.A

To grow and further distinguish our programs in the fields of STEM and health sciences, we will design and build innovative new science facilities.

## Rationale and intended impact

GIVEN THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INITIATIVES 3A AND 4A, THEY SHARE THIS STATEMENT ON RATIONALE AND INTENDED IMPACT.

Seattle University provides excellent programs in science, technology, engineering, math, and health sciences. The university has increased the centrality of science education: the number of science majors has grown, programs such as nursing and criminal justice require scientific training, and the new Core curriculum has an additional science component. Seattle University's academic rigor and emphasis on engaging students in active learning and research make it an important producer of high-quality science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) graduates and professionals.

Externally, several factors point to the potential to grow enrollment in STEM and health sciences. Health care is a growing industry with positive labor market projections. There is a nationwide push to create jobs and enhance national competitiveness by increasing STEM graduates. Student demand for degrees with solid employment prospects continues to grow, and the university's location in the high-tech Puget Sound region as well as its close proximity to several large hospitals facilitates clinical placements, internships, and partnerships.

At the same time, our current facilities pose a severe limitation on our ability to respond. Over 50 years old, our science building is sized for a smaller university and modeled on outdated teaching and learning approaches. Despite a renovation in the past decade and the leasing of off-campus research space, the university is struggling to accommodate current space needs.

For Seattle University to become an institution celebrated for its outstanding Jesuit education in STEM and health sciences, we must make significant investments in both programs and facilities. Initiative 3A speaks to the need to explore opportunities to expand STEM and health sciences programs by adding capacity to existing programs and launching new programs; initiative 4A addresses our need for specialized facilities to support current and future needs. STEM and health science programs are expensive to launch and sustain; they require labs, relatively low student-faculty ratios, and an effective network for clinical placements and internships. Expanding health science programs (such as physical therapy, pharmacology, or public health) and increasing STEM enrollments represents a significant strategic opportunity that must be actively and thoughtfully explored in close concert with our capital plans.

- 1. Pilot student-centered and hybrid-friendly educational environments within existing space to model best practices in the design of classroom, lab, office and research space for potential STEM and health sciences programs.
- 2. Design, fundraise, and build a new LEED-certified science building. The building will include: teaching and research laboratories, shared instrumentation and research labs, classrooms, integrated technology, offices, and meeting spaces.

- 3. Feasibility studies have indicated that incorporating nursing and health sciences facilities into a new science building will not be affordable. Presuming that continues to hold true, explore leasing or other options for health sciences.
- 4. Following the completion of the new science building, remodel the Bannan Center for Science and Engineering.

Amount of funding raised for new science building during campaign Construction of new building

## Responsible parties

**Provost** 

Chief Financial Officer

Vice President for University Advancement

#### Goal Four

Realize an infrastructure that supports excellence and innovation in all facets of our education.

#### Initiative 4.B

To support our educational programs, prepare our graduates to meet the challenges of a technical world, and enable the university to operate efficiently, we will significantly invest in our technology infrastructure.

#### Rationale and intended impact

The university's core educational and business operations depend on technology. It is hard to imagine any other strategic initiative that can be accomplished without a strong technology foundation; this initiative provides that infrastructure for success.

The university has for much of the last 10 years under-invested in technology with the result that we are in the bottom third of our peer group with regard to technology staffing and spending. To bring our technology infrastructure to a point where it is reliable and sized to meet demand will require a substantial, one-time, catch-up investment. To keep the infrastructure at this level will require additional and continuing base funding.

Additional staffing and spending will focus on: 1) improving the reliability and performance of (and user satisfaction with) the technology infrastructure; 2) building and deploying applications and technology services that enable the university to achieve the intent embodied in its strategic plan;

and 3) providing substantially improved business continuity of university operations through robust disaster recovery and operating continuity of its technology infrastructure.

Areas of impact include: a technology infrastructure (network, data center, and communications environment) that meets user needs and can withstand disasters; a technology-mediated classroom and instruction environment that fully supports the full spectrum of online, hybrid, and blended education; a robust application systems architecture, coupled with efficient, effective, and well-designed business processes; a full-featured technology support capability that is nimble, responsive, and that enables faculty, staff, and students to effectively use the technology we place at their disposal; and tools and support for faculty as they develop online and hybrid education.

## Summary of major actions

- 1. Grow IT staffing to 80-90 FTE (40 in FY14) and maintain at approximately 1 FTE per 100 faculty/staff/students. Use a combination of in-house, outsourced, and temporary project staff.
- 2. Grow annual IT funding to \$20M. Maintain it at approximately \$2K per faculty/staff/student, but constrain it below 10% of annual university operating expenditures.
- 3. Revisit staffing and spending levels after 5 years. Scale back from "catch-up" spending levels to "sustaining" levels if warranted.

## Measurable objectives

Improved reliability and performance of technology infrastructure User satisfaction with technology and IT support Improved business continuity and disaster recovery capabilities

#### Cabinet responsibility

Vice President for University Planning Chief Financial Officer

#### Goal Four

Realize an infrastructure that supports excellence and innovation in all facets of our education.

#### **Initiative 4.C**

To create a welcoming and high-functioning environment, we will develop, improve, and maintain the physical infrastructure of the university in accordance with our strategic priorities.

## Rationale and intended impact

Seattle University is fortunate to have an attractive campus in the heart of Seattle. The buildings and grounds create an environment that fosters learning and promotes community. As the campus has aged and enrollment has grown, however, investment in the physical infrastructure has not kept pace. The university faces two distinct problems: first, there is not enough space to meet needs, and second, current facilities require substantial maintenance.

The current deferred maintenance backlog is approximately \$159M; a reasonable level for an institution our size is \$100M. This backlog has grown over the past five years despite significant capital expenditures, and major renovations are required to address this backlog. Planned maintenance is currently funded at \$3M annually; a reasonable target is \$13M given current depreciation values. We have identified potential needs for over 120,000 square feet (SF) of additional space over the next five years, excluding the science building, which vastly outstrips the 10,000 SF of unassigned office space. This space constraint is impacting our ability to carry out our mission. Programs, offices, and labs are placed in sub-ideal locations, including facilities leased off campus. Parallel to the need to create additional space is an effort to examine and optimize utilization of our current space.

## Summary of major actions

- 1. Address the excess maintenance backlog (~\$59M) by funding major renovations of buildings such as Campion and Xavier Halls.
- 2. Increase annual planned maintenance funding from \$3 to \$13M to enable ongoing maintenance work to maintain the value of our physical assets.
- 3. Explore ways to meet space needs and potentially acquire 100,000+ SF office building.
- 4. Develop a master space utilization strategy that promotes efficient and flexible office, classroom, and activity space utilization; online and hybrid learning; and integrated learning environments.

#### Measurable objectives

Reduction of deferred maintenance backlog Reduction in unmet space needs Satisfaction with campus facilities

## Cabinet responsibility

Chief Financial Officer