

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2023

INTRODUCTION

The Mission of Franklin University Switzerland is:

to provide a cross-cultural and multinational learning and living environment that inspires students to engage the world. We challenge students through a curriculum that integrates the liberal arts with professional pathways, and classroom learning with Academic Travel to destinations around the world. A Franklin education produces critical thinkers who are culturally literate, ethically aware and intellectually courageous. We prepare students to become responsible, compassionate, and collaborative leaders in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

In the 5 years since the formation of the above statement as Franklin's mission its importance and its relevance have only increased.

As we near the end of the period covered by the 2013-2019 Strategic Plan it is appropriate to recognize that much has been achieved. We have implemented the transition from 1-credit to 3-credit academic travel courses. A new major has been introduced in Psychology and new minors in International relations and human rights, and in Social justice and sustainability, with increased library support being provided for these disciplines. The faculty teaching load has been reduced for faculty doing research. We have hosted numerous international workshops with the collaboration of, and/or funding by, organizations such as the Swiss National Science Foundation and the Global Liberal Arts Alliance (GLAA). We have strengthened our collaboration with international bodies, such as GLAA and AAICU (the Association of American International Colleges and Universities), and AMICAL (American International Consortium of Academic Libraries). We have strengthened our operational efficiency through the implementation of a new CRM system (Slate), recruitment to a new position of Web/Database Programmer and Analyst, and through the expansion of our Staff Development Fund to provide greater opportunities for staff to increase their knowledge and expertise. We initiated a major rebranding strategy, including the launch of a new corporate mark and university web site. We have restructured our marketing and communications functions. Our support for students seeking careers advice and internship opportunities has been expanded through subscription to a job and internship portal (*GoinGlobal*) and the initiation of the Franklin Futures Program.

However, Franklin's internal and external environments have changed considerably since 2013. The university adopted an Enrollment Management model in 2016 and hired a new Director of Admissions and, in the summer of 2017, a Vice President of Enrollment Management & Marketing. We also recently hired a Director of Advancement. These changes may explain recent increases in enrollment. Potential students and their parents, particularly in the US, are questioning the value of higher education, which is leading to decreasing numbers at liberal arts institutions generally. This in turn has led to fierce competition among higher education institutions to attract students to enrol in their programs. In addition, there is more competition from the increasing number of universities seeking to recruit international students. Safety has become a growing concern for many parents and students. Recent elections have seen countries vote for more insular policies.

In April 2017 the President established a Strategic Planning Task Force charged with the creation of a new five-year strategic plan that would allow Franklin to realize its mission in the current environment.

The Task Force's membership is: Co-chairs Nigel Butterwick (Dean of Libraries & Institutional Assessment) and Kim Hildebrant (Chair of the Board of Trustees); Trustees Peter Aschenbrenner and Jeffrey Reimer; Cabinet members Tomaso Rizzi (Vice President for Finance and Administration), William Mullen (Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing), and Sara Steinert Borella (Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs); Corinne Young (Director of Graduate Studies); Faculty members Erich Prisner (Professor of Mathematics) and Alison Vogelaar (Associate Professor of Communication and Media Studies); Staff members Lucila Perez Mollo (Director of Admissions) and Russell Martin (Director of Student Leadership and Engagement).

As was the case in 2012 when the university undertook a 360-degree approach to strategic planning, the institutional mission is paramount. The mission was revised in 2013 as part of the strategic planning process. It now remains in place and the institution remains committed to liberal arts education that prepares its graduates for the challenges of a future where the only certainty is change. Franklin must strive to be innovative, but it must also remain true to its values. It must continue to be profoundly international/multicultural and to insist on quality in the curriculum and student experience. Internationalism and quality, our "IQ", must remain part of the institution's DNA; together they will produce both our values and our value proposition, our institutional differentiation.

PRIORITIES

Through regular meetings, both collectively and in smaller working groups, the Task Force has carried out an assessment of the University's challenges and opportunities, and used this to inform the development of a set of major goals that have been further refined through input and feedback from other members of the Franklin community. The outcome of this process has been the identification of three institutional priorities that the Task Force believes will enable Franklin to continue to grow and to flourish.

1. Support academic excellence by enhancing integrated, interdisciplinary, and international academic and co-curricular programs.

This institution has always placed the highest priority on the quality of the education it provides to undergraduate students. In recent years this has been broadened as we have introduced our first Masters programs. We will support faculty research and teaching across the disciplines, implement new programs, and enhance the cross-cultural, interdisciplinary and liberal arts learning environment at the heart of the institution.

2. Implement Strategic Enrollment Management by developing one, three, and five year enrolment plans to meet the academic, net revenue, and learning community needs of the University.

As a primarily tuition-funded institution, Franklin is highly dependent on revenue raised through student enrollment for its on-going financial health. Our initial target of 500 undergraduate students will enable us to build financial stability, provide needed services for students, and maximize our utilization of campus assets. We will research and develop new programs to create multiple streams of revenue, and meet external demands. Ultimately, we will design programs, structures and campus(s) to facilitate 700-1,000 students per year.

3. Foster institutional sustainability and innovation by developing plans and initiatives that address current and future institutional needs.

These plans and initiatives will aim to bring forward major improvements in key areas, fundamental to the stability and growth of the institution. We will:

- Develop and maintain a Campus Facilities Plan that identifies the ongoing and future needs of the community;
- Develop and maintain a plan for Information Technology that addresses the ongoing and future needs of the community and regulatory bodies;
- Develop a plan to increase the safety and security of the campus community;
- Develop a plan to increase the salaries of staff and faculty, and to increase opportunities for faculty and staff development;
- Increase the support for student professional development and career preparation;
- Create an Innovation Hub that supports innovative initiatives by faculty, staff, and students;
- Foster a campus community that values inclusiveness, respect, trust and wellness;
- Develop advancement goals that specifically support the strategic plan;
- Continue to institute governance structures that enable the Board of Trustees to embody and further the multicultural mission of the university.