

ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY
STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

EXCELLENCE *by* design



Roger Williams
University



As we launch this strategic planning process, we usher in the next chapter of RWU with a unified vision that will ensure our students are prepared to succeed in a rapidly changing world. The world our students will enter requires problem-solvers that can navigate complex social, economic, environmental and civic challenges that no single industry or profession can solve. As an institution of higher education, we have a distinct responsibility to prepare our students to be lifelong learners and agile thinkers who can design solutions and translate ideas into action.

With our unique mix of liberal arts and professional programs, top-notch faculty and staff, the state's only law school, and hubs of innovation in Providence and Bristol, Rhode Island, we are poised to align our efforts and provide what the world needs from a modern, comprehensive university. We will continually seek new partners, adapt our strategies, and make a difference with the communities and organizations we serve. It is what we are called to do, and is the type of engaged learning and leadership we expect of every RWU student throughout their educational and professional journey.

Over the past few years, hundreds of faculty, staff, and students along with input and guidance from our Trustees and various boards of advisors have participated in working groups and various other aspects of strategic planning that have ensured we connect our past to our future. Five strategic priorities have emerged that provide a guiding framework for the years ahead for our collective, divisional, and individual initiatives across the university.

Academic Excellence, Engaged Learning, Student Success, Thriving Community and Sustainable Futures

To realize our vision, we must embrace an iterative planning process and a culture of assessment that allows us to innovate and act in ways that will challenge the status quo, move us beyond the walls of our campuses, and push the boundaries of student learning to new heights. We will invest in our faculty and staff to design meaningful experiences for our students that continue to strengthen the RWU brand and our recognition and reputation. We will embed equity into our institutional policies, practices, services and programs to ensure our community feels a sense of inclusion and belonging. And we will seek ways to engage and collaborate with the RWU community and with our local, regional and global communities and industry partners to provide the diverse, real-world experiences our students need to succeed.

I invite all members of the RWU community and our partners to join us as we write this next chapter together. Let us draw inspiration from the word “hope” and the symbol of an anchor inscribed on the State of Rhode Island seal to make this pledge: We stand here today, anchored firmly within our core values, guided by a rich history, full of hope and optimism for an amazing future together, in service to our students, our region, and the world.

Ioannis N. Miaoulis
President

As we design our future and direct our purpose toward the institutional priorities in our strategic action plan, this is the time to imagine the dreams and hopes for the future of Roger Williams University – and to move those dreams into action.

5 THE EQUITY IMPERATIVE

The Roger Williams University community has committed to diversity, respect for all races, ethnicities, genders, identities and abilities, and access to an affordable education.

6 INCLUSIVE PLANNING

We have developed a planning model that allows RWU to remain nimble as new opportunities emerge, and to respond dynamically to the changing needs of our students.

7 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our university core values weave throughout our five strategic priorities, creating the foundation and inspiration on which they were built.

Academic Excellence

Now is our opportunity to unite our schools, work across disciplines, and to explore opportunities for new, interdisciplinary programs and research initiatives to make a difference for the communities and organizations we serve.

Engaged Learning

We will provide a transformative, experiential and engaged education that is centered around research experience, hands-on learning and community-engaged opportunities for our students.

Student Success

We must turn our efforts towards becoming an institution that goes beyond student-focused to become a student-ready institution. We will focus on proactive efforts to meet the needs of today's students, viewing learning through the lens of inclusion, accountability and educational value.

A Thriving Community

The Roger Williams community will be distinguished by a commitment to excellence, integrity, equity, collaboration, and belonging for our faculty and staff, fostering a deeper shared sense of mission and pride.

Sustainable Future

We strive to develop sustainable futures through the responsible stewardship of our people and resources, and in so doing, cultivate an enduring institution and sustainable legacy for Roger Williams University.

18 THE ROAD AHEAD

VISION & VALUES

Roger Williams University prepares our students to be successful leaders and innovators in today's rapidly changing world. Our distinctive focus on original research, engaged learning, and hands-on apprenticeships, practicums and clinical learning opportunities provides our students with real-world experiences, on and off campus, that empower them to be career- and job-ready, to succeed immediately and continue to advance throughout their careers. As we embed our core values and mission into every facet of RWU, we will continue to discover opportunities for interdisciplinary connections and innovative ideas that synthesize into collective action that will launch our considerable strengths in exciting, new directions. We are poised to make RWU an even more distinctive, resilient and enduring institution.

Our core values, originally established during the Vision Project in 2014, were reaffirmed in 2019 through Vision Working Groups, the creation of our first Equity Action Plan and are connected intentionally to our ongoing academic master planning. As we chart the course for our future, we draw inspiration from our namesake, the radical and visionary 17th-century leader, Roger Williams, who founded Providence and Rhode Island on his beliefs in freedom of conscience, equality and tolerance. His legacy inspires, informs and guides the ideals to which RWU dedicates our mission and purpose.

Our Strategic Action Plan strategically embeds our core purpose – to strengthen society through engaged teaching, learning and research – into the fabric of our institutional mission and infrastructure.

CONNECTING TO OUR CORE VALUES

During our strategic planning process, our Vision Working Groups reaffirmed and clarified the university's six core values. These core values will help us to achieve our institutional mission – To build the university the world needs now.

UNIVERSITY CORE VALUES

- We will meet the educational needs of a diverse multigenerational **community of learners**.
- We will work with local and global communities to **address problems that matter most** to society.
- We will provide **transformative educational experiences** to all students to fulfill their potential as lifelong learners, professionals and citizens.
- We will create a community in which diversity is visible in its population and culture and by implementing explicit institution-wide practices that **advance equity and belonging**.
- We will commit to on-going collaborations of education, inquiry, and implementation of sustainable practices which enhance **human and environmental well-being** on our campuses and within our communities.
- We will be **financially accessible** to all who aspire to a Roger Williams University education.

Our university core values weave throughout these strategic areas, creating the foundation and inspiration on which they were built. Deepening our commitment to academic excellence and engaged learning will enable RWU to provide a transformative, experiential and engaged education that is centered around research experience, hands-on learning and community-engaged opportunities for all our students and throughout their years with us. In continuing to build our focus on student success and employee experience, we will ensure that all of our students, alumni and employees feel a sense of belonging and grow as a thriving, inclusive and equitable community. And it is with a spirit of innovation and abiding respect for our communities and our land, that we strive to develop sustainable futures through the responsible stewardship of our people and resources, and in so doing, cultivate an enduring institution and sustainable legacy for Roger Williams University.

As we design our initiatives and direct our purpose toward these institutional priorities, this will be a time to imagine our dreams and hopes for the future of Roger Williams – and to move our dreams into action.



THE EQUITY IMPERATIVE

In order to realize our Vision and Values, we need to build a future that ensures equity and inclusion for all of our community members. For the past several years, hundreds of members of the Roger Williams University community have engaged in a deep exploration of what makes RWU a distinctive, resilient and enduring institution that is committed to diversity, respect for all races, ethnicities, genders, identities and abilities, and access to an affordable education. The shared vision that has emerged unifies our campuses in Bristol and Providence and eight schools of study, guides us in designing new solutions to the problems that matter most to society and allows RWU to be responsive to the world around us.

EQUITY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

In 2020, the Equity Action Plan provided RWU with a blueprint for creating more equity across the university. Launching at the same time as our strategic planning process, we had the opportunity to truly embed equity within our Strategic Action Plan, aligning our priorities with diversity, equity and inclusion goals and integrating equity within our institutional infrastructure, policies, programs and services. Doing so will ensure that equity becomes not just a responsibility and the right thing to do, but a part of who we are as an institution.

INCLUSIVE PLANNING

Successful institutional planning is larger than any one person, department, or initiative. RWU's integrated planning approach has been designed to instill a shared set of institutional values and initiatives across our community. Being an agile university means committing to a process that is responsive to changing needs and instituting a datainformed decision-making and assessment process.

Cultivating a university-wide culture of planning means embedding strategic planning and thinking into all we do. This will allow us to be a modern, agile university that is constantly seeking innovative solutions and opportunities for our students, while being responsive in our actions to the communities and organizations around us.

Integrative planning aligns institutional strategies and actions in each office and division up to our shared priorities (vertical planning), while also ensuring collaborative operational efforts across the university (horizontal planning). Planning and budgeting decisions are consciously integrated so that we tackle the two in concert, rather than in isolation. Internal data and research support our planning efforts, utilizing the strengths of our collective talent and resources and the power of collaboration.



Diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, including RWU's Equity Action Plan, drive our thinking and are embedded within each strategic focus area. Inclusive excellence is at the core of all our initiatives. This full-university focus on our vision and goals models the interdisciplinary learning, collaborative problem-solving, and research-based approaches to problems that we work to instill in our students.

Strategic action must be an ongoing process of planning, implementation, and improvement that provides a sense of direction to our annual initiatives. Rather than making a static plan, RWU will review and refine our processes, share data openly, celebrate our successes, and seek new initiatives based on our interconnected goals. This planning model allows RWU to remain nimble as new opportunities emerge, and to respond dynamically to the changing needs of our students.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Scholarly endeavors are journeys of discovery that drive our global economic engine, provide solutions to complex problems and generate new knowledge that strengthens and advances society. They serve as the foundation for all our work and aspirations as a modern university. As an institution of higher education, we should not only focus on the preservation of knowledge but also the dissemination of our learning and skills to our students and to the greater communities we serve. We are dedicated to inspiring learners that are problem solvers in their pursuit of new knowledge, conducted with the highest standards of rigorous inquiry.

Roger Williams University is committed to academic excellence as the essential cornerstone of our education, research and scholarship. We will strengthen an academic culture that empowers our faculty and staff to pursue a wide-ranging scholarly agenda, inclusive of research, policy analysis, creative works, and the scholarship of teaching that connects us to the communities of scholars beyond RWU. We will lead the way in developing new insights and new solutions in our tireless pursuit of equity for the greater good of our local and global communities and our planet. To do so requires imagination, innovation and agility. It asks that we think beyond our singular academic discipline and think of new ways to work together across our university community and to collaborate beyond RWU with our alumni and with experts, practitioners and community leaders. We must

foster an interdisciplinary culture that harnesses our expertise to address the wicked problems that require more than one knowledge area and more than one perspective to design a solution. As we move forward, RWU will direct our collective efforts toward an unfailing interdisciplinary approach to research, scholarship, shaping policy and law, learning and working within our communities. Our faculty are distinguished by their commitment to our students and to developing pathways and programs that connect across our undergraduate, graduate, law and professional programs. Now is our opportunity to unite our schools, work across disciplines, and to explore opportunities for new, interdisciplinary programs and research initiatives to make a difference for the communities and organizations we serve.

With an interdisciplinary culture we will better leverage our unique talents and our distinctive areas of excellence by integrating our expertise to bring a greater diversity of knowledge and our inimitable spirit of curiosity toward addressing the most challenging problems. Interdisciplinarity enables us to attract and hire accomplished faculty, create innovative, multidisciplinary programs, and provide a distinctive opportunity to our external partnerships, fundraising and grant strategies. In this next phase of RWU, we prioritize the following interdisciplinary initiatives as exemplars of the interdisciplinarity we strive to model within all our efforts.

EMBEDDED EQUITY

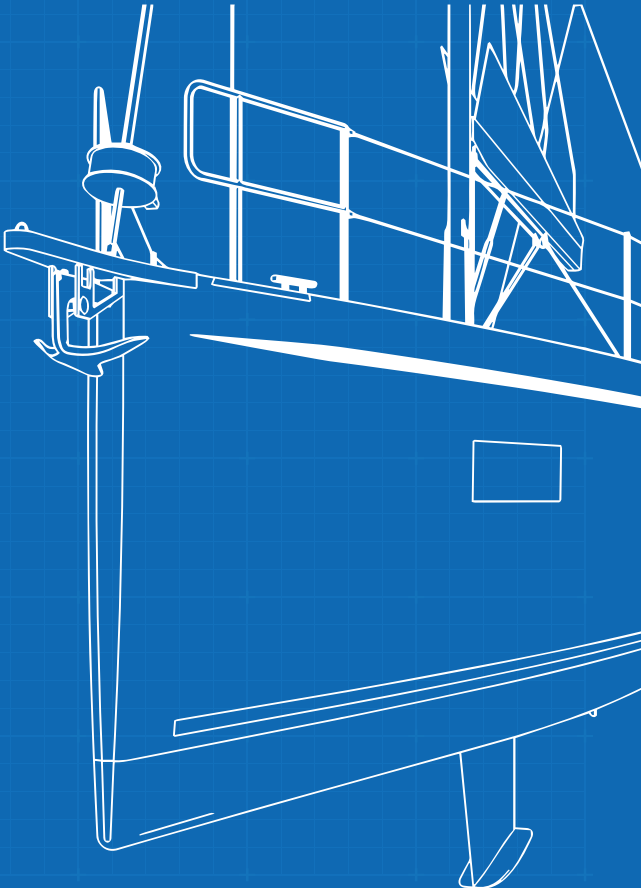
Through our faculty expertise, extensive community-engaged work, real-world research, professional and trades programs, and pro bono legal clinics, RWU is uniquely positioned to serve as an exemplar for pedagogical approaches and research initiatives that radically interrupt structures of oppression. Our new interdisciplinary initiatives, a revised core curriculum, social justice-focused law programs, and engaged learning in our professional programs are evolving to include DEI frameworks, course content and real world learning opportunities that will redefine the RWU experience.

As a community, we are deeply committed to social justice, racial justice, economic justice and environmental justice through academic innovation and intercultural fluency. With campuses in Bristol and Providence, RWU has an obligation to educate our students and local communities about the capital city and town’s roles in the Transatlantic slave trade and in the colonization and enslavement of Indigenous peoples.

PROJECT	RWU STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN	
TITLE	EXCELLENCE BY DESIGN	
PRIORITY	ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE	PAGE 1

SUSTAINABLE OCEANS AND COASTAL FUTURES

With our existing leadership in marine science, research, marine and coastal law, expanding our work across all schools towards the Blue Economy will leverage our diverse expertise and create a robust platform for learning. It will enable us to implement ocean strategies and legal policies to serve the Ocean State and forge new relationships around the country and the world, as we collaborate and share our knowledge to make our communities, coastal economies and the environment stronger and more resilient. To grow and thrive in the Blue Economy, RWU must play a critical role in academic innovation, policy advocacy, K-12 ocean and climate literacy, and nurture the pipeline of interest in studying these issues in the next generations of students. Areas of academic opportunity span fisheries, aquaculture, offshore renewable energy, recreation and eco-tourism, ports and shipping, marine trades and defense, and marine and coastal law. The Blue Economy intersects with the Green Economy, where tackling climate change through renewable energy, decreased carbon emissions, reducing pollution, and preserving the biodiversity are critical to preserving our planet for future generations with sustainable practices within our coastal and marine habitats. Our unique position as a coastal university with expertise in marine science, shellfish aquaculture, marine and maritime law, architecture and historic preservation in coastal communities, wind energy, and sailing recreation can make a positive impact in the Blue Economy.



REAL ESTATE

The complex field of real estate education creates an opportunity for RWU to provide a distinctly interdisciplinary approach to learning that will connect the university, partners and industry to ensure program design, relevancy, and student success. We will create a nationally and internationally recognized Real Estate program serving a range of students – undergraduate, graduate, practicing professionals in full-time and part-time studies – and focused on a project-based curriculum that will utilize industry partners and learning experiences in the Boston to New York corridor.

RWU is uniquely positioned to teach across the real estate industry by aligning relevant topics and faculty expertise from established programs in Architecture, Construction Management, Finance, Law, Marketing, Planning, and Preservation Law, combined with distinctive specialties in areas that include sustainability, social innovation and policy and advocacy through our HousingWorks RI and community partnership initiatives in Bristol and Providence.

The real estate industry needs professionals with a holistic view of real estate that combines theory, practical experience, and early exposure to the industry through internships and problem-based learning and team-based projects. Our region presents the perfect backdrop to real-world real estate challenges with complicated regulatory issues, challenging site selection, coastal and environmental issues, historic preservation and zoning complexities.

As we establish Roger Williams University as a dynamic center for Real Estate education in the United States, our students will graduate with the competencies needed to design, plan, shape law and policy, finance, build and market the projects of the future, with the depth of understanding and knowledge of the changing needs of various aspects of the design and construction processes critical to innovating at the intersection of space and society.



PUBLIC HUMANITIES AND ARTS COLLABORATIVE (CO-LAB)

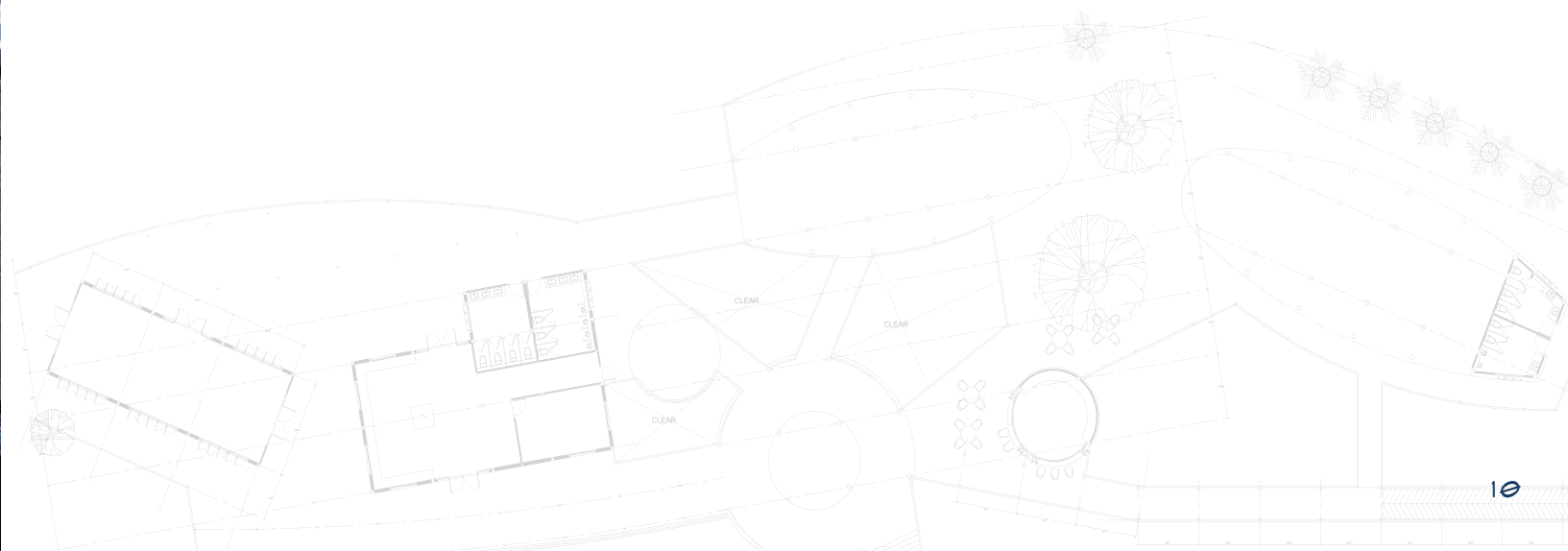
The Co-Lab at RWU reimagines public stories, histories, and storytelling for historically marginalized or erased populations and will strive to define new narratives and representations for the New England region. The Co-Lab will allow students and scholars to learn from our community partners about their histories, heritage, and cultures that allow our graduates to enter the world equipped with cultural competencies and the capacity to engage equitably and justly with others. The Co-Lab will undertake publicly engaged scholarship across the humanities to transform society and lived realities by contributing and engaging in contemporary debates, amplifying community voices and histories, supporting communities that must navigate difficult experiences and preserve culture and justice in times of crisis and change. In its work, The Co-Lab at RWU especially will foreground the exploration of race and race relations as they structure our world and seeks to build community-centered pathways toward reconciliation, equity, and justice.

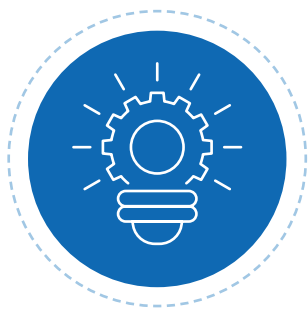


STEM EDUCATION

RWU possesses distinctive excellence in STEM programs and teaching, with a diversity of curricular and extracurricular work currently underway in the areas of STEM education, including outreach activities, new course offerings, research activity, and faculty workshops. Through a renewed commitment to K-12 education, the STEM Education interdisciplinary initiative will bring together efforts from disparate spaces and programs across our campuses and achieve enhanced collaboration and coordination across disciplinary lines. We will aim to create new pathways through interdisciplinary course offerings and degrees and encourage students to develop customized education programs through unique combinations of double majors and minors across STEM, liberal arts and professional programs, with the opportunity to expand into further graduate programs and teaching credentials and certificate programs in future years.

Connecting and enhancing our strengths and offerings in STEM will help us better recruit and retain students in STEM majors, particularly underrepresented minorities and women, as well as build a more diverse faculty teaching pipeline for the region and the country. RWU is distinctly positioned to be a leader in K-12 STEM education with a unique focus on ocean and climate literacy, curriculum development partnerships and teacher training across Rhode Island. To prepare our students as teachers for success in STEM fields, we will reach out and cultivate new external partnerships that will both provide our students with real-world learning opportunities and deepen the impact of our service within our communities. Opportunities to expand RWU's role in STEM education in non-classroom settings include, for example, the gaming (AR/VR) industry, cultural tourism, industry-aligned data literacy (such as insurance, finance and healthcare industries), broadening our engagement with K-12 students and teachers, and establishing summer camps or after school programming for local youth.





INNOVATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND LEADERSHIP

We believe that entrepreneurship is a mindset, a way of thinking, solving problems, and identifying opportunities that can apply to nearly any professional pathway that our students may follow. A recent Wall Street Journal survey of young adults reported that 50 percent seek to work in small, fast-moving, customer-driven organizations where they make a direct contribution to the organization's impact on consumers and society. Entrepreneurial thinking provides the opportunity to creatively solve significant organizational challenges and advance both personal goals and those of an organization. Long-term successful institutions solve market problems with innovative thinking quickly, effectively, and efficiently. RWU has a unique opportunity to prepare young graduates for the demands and opportunities of the workplace. By modeling an innovative and agile institution and by exposing our students to entrepreneurial thinking and practice, we will give our graduates a competitive edge in successfully navigating the evolving needs of modern organizations. RWU will create the next generation of leaders and problem solvers that can positively contribute to the changes our world needs now. RWU is ideally suited to merge innovation, leadership and entrepreneurship with critical thinking fields in the social, technological, and professional fields across all our schools of study.



FOOD STUDIES

As an emerging field grounded in our vital connection to food, Food Studies examines the historical, cultural, behavioral, biological, and socioeconomic dynamics of food while focusing specific attention as well to the environmental consequences of food production. Because food sits at the center of all life, it is a vital instrument for creating environmental and social change and addressing long-standing equity issues in our communities related to economic and health disparities. Built on our campus commitment to sustainability, social justice, and ethical community engagement, our food studies initiatives will support and contribute to current food movements and food culture in the Northeast. From agriculture to aquaculture, our coastal and urban locations allow RWU to understand and contribute across fields that support industries as diverse as hydroponics, sustainable fisheries, and much more. Students, faculty, and staff will collaborate with community stakeholders to develop solutions to problems associated with locally and regionally based food production, distribution, and consumption grounded in a focus on sustainability and social justice.

ENGAGED LEARNING

In order to prepare our students for their place in the world and to succeed in their careers and lives, we must connect beyond our borders to bring the real-world issues into the classrooms and place our students out into the world for hands-on learning. Students need to turn concepts they are studying in the classroom into practical know-how. They need to grow more adept through practice, have the space to question, experiment and sometimes fail, and learn and grow from those missteps. Taken together, these experiential learning opportunities improve critical thinking, build well-rounded hard and soft skills, and result in a richer and more meaningful transcript and résumé. Today's students yearn to make a difference with their knowledge and actions, and they want to do it now rather than years after they have completed their studies. RWU students gain the high impact experiences that make them job ready on day one, able to work and live as fully engaged citizens.

RWU will provide our students with the best educational experiences: acquiring knowledge through classroom learning, and then applying their new skills and learning on and offcampus through research, project-based work, clinical practice, apprenticeships and internships, and creative endeavors that connect with our communities and our environment. They will acquire the intellectual habits, practices and passion they will need in order to be lifelong learners, ready and able to pursue any new

personal and professional challenge that they will face, embracing the spirit of continually acquiring new skills and expertise.

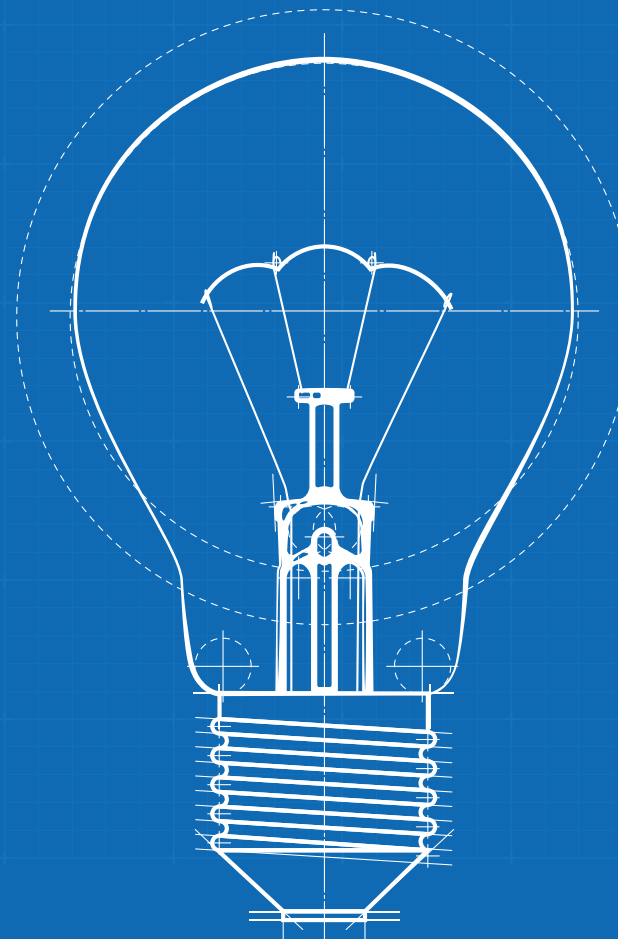
RWU is committed to closing the widening gap between academia and industry through unique collaborations with our expansive network of industry, nonprofit and governmental advisors and partners. Working with external partners provides an excellent opportunity for RWU alumni to become engaged citizens and thrive in their work and life. And in this way, we are building a lasting and engaging relationship between RWU and the world around us.

When we extend our expertise beyond our campus borders, we strengthen the local, national and global communities around us, while that work also serves to enrich the educational experiences, we provide our students. We envision a future where RWU is known for creating resilient communities that can bounce back from disruptions, innovate to meet new needs and thrive. Prioritizing active scholarship provides our community and organization partners with rigorous and relevant insights and research, and the tools to ensure long-term sustainable and equitable practices for their systems and the people they serve. Making a meaningful difference in our society and our planet is the essence of our engaged teaching, learning and scholarship.

EMBEDDED EQUITY

We challenge students to put their knowledge and skills to the test by working on real needs and issues in our local communities, including research, policy work and advocacy that advances equity among our community members.

We must honor, support and acknowledge the communities with which we collaborate. In order to do so, we conduct engaged learning through a social justice lens to ensure we truly collaborate with and respect and value the voices and ideas of our community and organizational partners. That means preparing our students to ethically and respectfully engage in this kind of work, so that they make a meaningful impact within our communities.



PROJECT	RWU STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN	
TITLE	EXCELLENCE BY DESIGN	
PRIORITY	ENGAGED LEARNING	PAGE 12

STUDENT SUCCESS

RWU has a long tradition of being a student-focused institution. To continue responding to the evolving needs of today’s students, Roger Williams must turn our efforts towards becoming an institution that goes beyond student-focused and become a student-ready institution (McNair, Tia Brown, et al. “Becoming a student-ready college: A new culture of leadership for student success”). Working to become a student-ready institution challenges us to focus on proactive efforts to meet the needs of today’s students, viewing learning not through the lens of a deficit model but rather through the lens of inclusion, accountability and educational value.

We aim to create institutional change by: working with all students to develop their educational pathways, providing mentorship that is integrated with academic advising and career advising, adapting our institutional supports to best serve students and identifying and removing barriers to success.

We must be proactive in our response to student needs, embrace new and creative ways to help students develop and set them on a course to thrive in their lives and careers.

TO HELP OUR STUDENTS ACHIEVE THEIR FULLEST POTENTIAL, WE COMMIT TO:

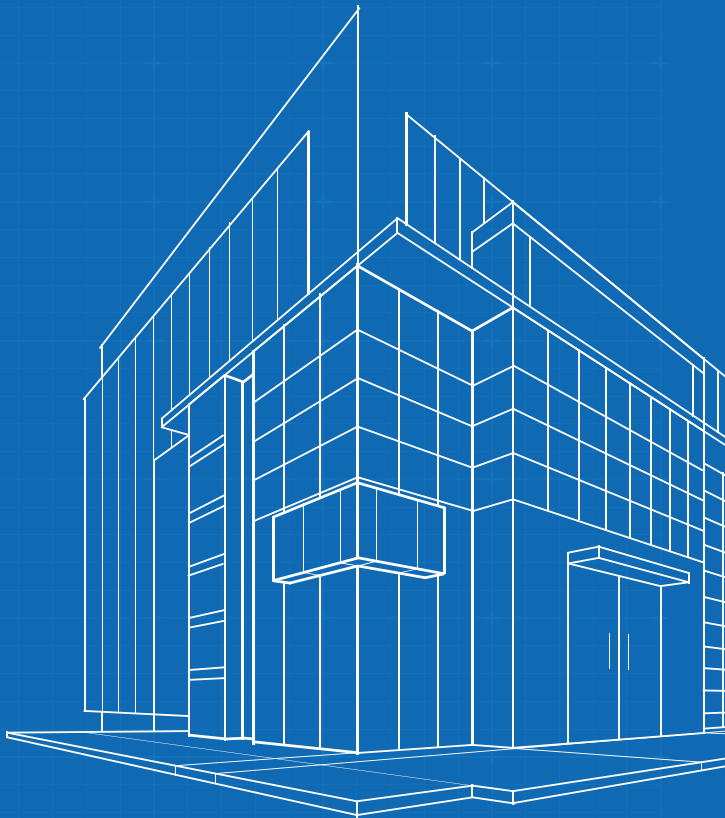
- Integrating career and academic advising throughout all of their years at RWU, with scaffolded support and programming based on where students are in their education.
- Prioritizing equity and inclusion in all of our efforts.
- Increasing access and financial assistance to an RWU education.
- Ensuring support for the physical and mental well-being of our students.
- Launch new data collection and sharing initiatives that analyze student academic performance, student experience and graduate outcomes.

While our goals for student success are inextricably linked to other strategic priorities, particularly academic excellence and engaged learning, the following focus areas will help RWU direct its efforts to even better serve our students.

EMBEDDED EQUITY

RWU began as an adult educational institution inside the Providence YMCA in 1919, rooting our values in providing access to education for underserved students and in directing our collective energy toward student success for every student, especially those in need of additional support.

Increased access and equitable student outcomes have always been at the core of RWU’s mission. It is in our DNA. Our Equity Action Plan set the stage for understanding the experiences of underserved populations and challenged us to move towards becoming a student-ready college. Our current efforts to support students with minoritized identities, including first-generation students, students of color, students with disabilities, students in the LGBTQ+ community, economically challenged students, and veterans, have helped us harness data and explore best practices that will inform the university’s efforts to continue improving inclusive student support.



PERSONALIZED EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS

RWU must create pathways to and through the university that meet students where they are and guide them to where they strive to go in their lives and careers. While our academic rigor will challenge and push students to develop intellectually, we will also support every learner along their educational journey. RWU offers endlessly customizable educational pathways for all students through our undergraduate, graduate, law, professional and trade programs, residential and commuter educational experiences, accelerated undergraduate and graduate programs, joint undergraduate and law degrees, advanced college-credit courses to prepare high school learners for college, and credentials, certificates and trade skills to help working professionals advance in their careers or make a career change.

We will help students identify their academic and personal goals through robust approaches to academic and career advising, mentoring and opportunities for community engagement. Personalized support will allow every student to create an academic plan, explore their interests, and identify opportunities that will help them succeed in their academic pursuits and career aspirations. This approach to student success requires close coordination across faculty advising, professional advising, academic support services and academic engagement offices, including the academic schools, the Center for Student Academic Success (CSAS), the Center for Career and Professional Development (CCPD), Community Engagement (CE), University College’s Center for Workforce and Professional Development (CWPD), and RWU Law’s Office of Career Development.

SERVING DIVERSE LEARNERS

As higher education experiences a shift in the student population to a more multigenerational community of learners, RWU must continue to understand the varied needs, learning styles, and resources required to best support them. Our experience serving diverse student populations at University College will provide a foundation for how we can apply those strategies to all of our current and future students.



The university needs to be innovative, utilizing new technologies, pedagogies, and strategies in teaching to serve our increasingly diverse learners, and to continue to offer the flexibility and customization in educational pathways that students and families are seeking. Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion has resulted in an equity-minded approach that will allow us to develop more inclusive academic and socio-emotional support, promote affordability and return on investment, increase representation, and create a sense of belonging for all students. We will strive to remove barriers to an RWU education, promote access, and provide financial assistance, counseling and emergency assistance. We aim to eliminate obstacles to academic achievement by promoting equitable policies, procedures and support across our campuses.

FOCUS ON STUDENT WELLNESS

RWU is committed to being a leader in student wellness, because we know students can only thrive in their educational studies when they feel supported in all parts of their lives. In order to educate the whole person and enable a transformative educational experience, we will provide holistic support that allows students to become self-advocates, develop their sense of self, meet their developmental needs, and feel empowered to take charge of their academic, emotional, financial, and physical well-being. We will make this an institutional priority and part of the RWU educational experience for residential and commuter students, undergraduate, graduate and law students, non-degree learners at University College and dual enrollment students.



PROJECT	RWU STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN	
TITLE	EXCELLENCE BY DESIGN	
PRIORITY	STUDENT SUCCESS	PAGE 13

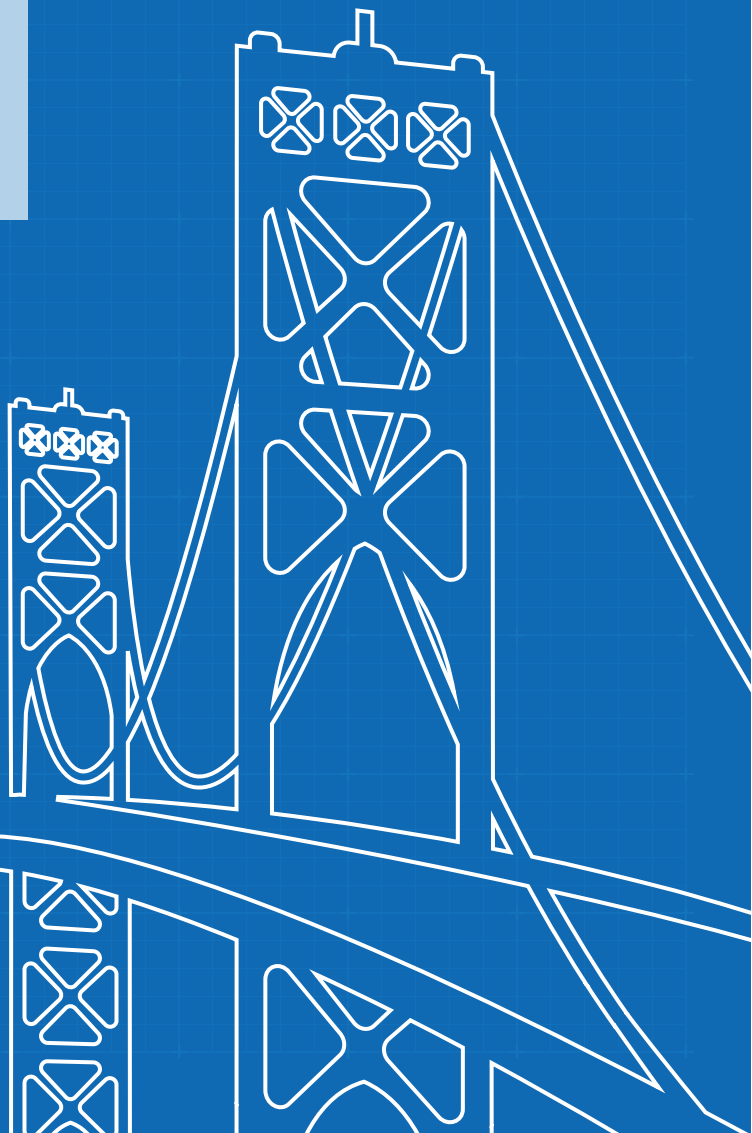
A THRIVING COMMUNITY

The health and well-being of our employees is essential to being a thriving community that is fully engaged and interconnected. Great universities are built upon a foundation of academic and operational excellence. The Roger Williams community will be distinguished by a commitment to excellence, integrity, equity, collaboration, and belonging for our faculty and staff. It is through fostering a deeper shared sense of mission and pride that RWU will attract and retain a talented, diverse workforce that will deliver the high-quality educational experiences our students deserve.

EMBEDDED EQUITY

We cannot build a strong foundation for student success without first ensuring that those who are serving our students feel valued and supported. As a community of life-long learners, RWU administrators, faculty and staff must make a collective commitment to strengthen our intercultural fluency. Our leadership practices, institutional decision-making and classroom policies must reflect our commitment to creating an institutional culture of belonging.

While we will provide ongoing professional development that grows our employees’ skillsets and competencies to enable career advancement, we also commit to offering training in equitable and inclusive practices, including implicit bias and inclusive classroom practices, that will help bring social justice to our classrooms, offices, student recruiting and employee hiring. We are also dedicated to developing an inclusive design of our campus spaces that create an atmosphere of belonging and comfort for both our employees and students.



PROJECT	RWU STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN	
TITLE	EXCELLENCE BY DESIGN	
PRIORITY	A THRIVING COMMUNITY	PAGE 15



ONBOARDING

RWU must recruit, develop, and retain a world-class faculty and staff who all work together towards the greater good in an environment that supports well-being for all our community members. RWU will be an employer of choice for talented individuals who embrace the institution’s ambitious diversity, equity and inclusion goals and objectives. And we will ensure all new employees are welcomed, trained, and feel a sense of belonging from day one.



PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

For every employee to reach their highest potential, it takes investment in professional development and ongoing training to hone talents and skills. We are committed to making employees feel like they belong, are valued, and can grow in their role and career path in an environment where their personal and professional goals are in alignment. RWU must provide the resources, mentoring, and training to help nurture success and guide skill and career development. Supervisors and managers will participate in leadership development training to lead highly productive and satisfied teams and provide them with the tools and environments they need to thrive.



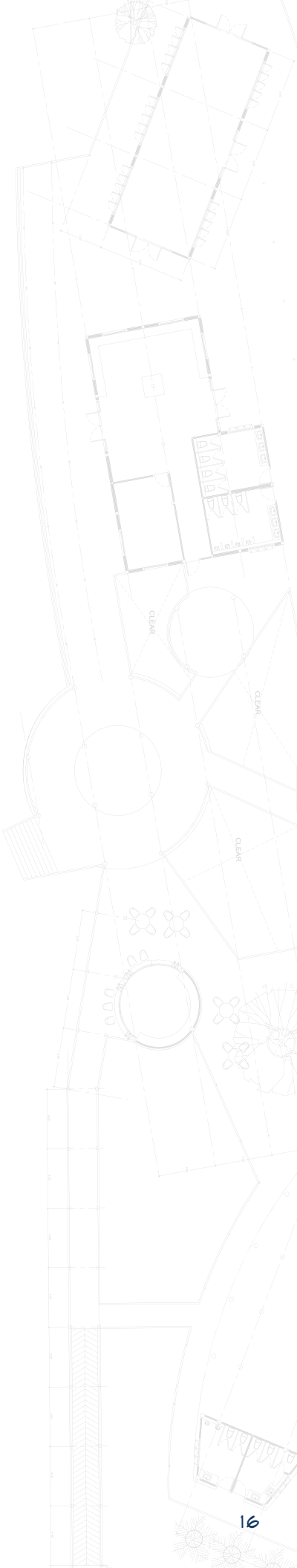
RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

RWU is known for our commitment to our students and the personalized environment we deliver: from instruction to student research to athletics and academic support, we go the extra mile for our students. There are many small but impactful actions that many employees instinctively take every day, many that go unseen or unnoticed. Creating a more formalized culture of appreciation, accolades, and awards, is essential to an employee’s growth and satisfaction. We will revamp and revitalize how we recognize contributions, not just from direct supervisors but also from senior leadership of the university.



VIBRANT PLACES AND SPACES

The physical settings we navigate affect us in positive ways; space can inspire, comfort, and welcome us. Conversely, spaces can be a barrier, affecting how we learn, work, and interact. We especially appreciate the role that the spaces and design of our campuses must create a sense of belonging, inclusion, and comfort. As RWU has grown over the years, now is the time for us to consider our entire master space footprint and redevelop the places and spaces that our community members need to be successful and thrive. We will refresh our campus master plan and revise our place-based strategies to become a vibrant year-round community that meets the needs for all working and learning in our community.



SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

We believe in responsible stewardship that nurtures the human and environmental wellbeing of our campuses and our community and organizational partners.

Humans live, work, and play at the intersection of the natural and built worlds and hold immense power to tip the balance toward sustainable or harmful practices through our choices. At RWU, we choose the path of sustainable growth, believing that it is a moral imperative to achieve balance between our actions and our impact.

We are stewards of the natural lands we now occupy, our human resources and our physical infrastructure, and we have a sacred responsibility to care for the land, our people and places with sound environmental practices and resource management. Our decisions and actions will be designed with sustainable principles that provide a lasting foundation for current and future generations of students, employees, alumni and community members.

We are called, therefore, to direct our research and scholarship toward solving the world’s most urgent problems, to shape policy and law to achieve greater environmental and social justice, to develop future leaders, professionals and tradespeople dedicated to sustainability, and to build operational infrastructure, facilities, and external partnerships to make that possible. It strengthens our capacity to build a flourishing community centered around the success, well-being and continued development of our students, alumni and employees. It empowers us to embed equity and inclusion across our campuses and in all facets of the institution, because we recognize that RWU will only become stronger when we remove barriers, and provide the support and sense of belonging for all of our community members. And it requires a thoughtful and sustainable approach to campus master planning that maintains and designs new inclusive spaces for living, learning and working and is mindful of the impact of our built environment and landscape on our surroundings.

EMBEDDED EQUITY

We recognize that equity and inclusion require a holistic university effort, so that means we uphold these ideals and think about how they should be incorporated in all policies and systems, including our goals for a sustainable and enduring university.

We will ensure that divisional plans and budgets align with institutional priorities and reflect diversity, equity and inclusion goals. Our business practices must include strategic fundraising targets, inclusive campus master planning, working with a more diverse pool of vendors who support our goals and meet our standards of sustainability.

PROJECT	RWU STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN	
TITLE	EXCELLENCE BY DESIGN	
PRIORITY	SUSTAINABLE	PAGE 17
	FUTURES	

BLUEPRINT *for* SUCCESS

As we continue to integrate a new culture of planning, where divisions across the university and all individuals align their efforts in the same direction, we will create an amazing community together in service to our students. We will launch new programs of study, new partnerships, and reimagine spaces on our campus, all intentionally designed with excellence at their core. It is our calling and what our students and the world need from us at this moment.

This way of planning provides a framework for our work ahead. We will require the efforts of the entire University community – faculty, staff, and partner organizations – to accomplish the objectives we set forth. When we realize all the facets of this plan, Roger Williams will be recognized as a place where:

- Our approach to interdisciplinary learning will be **recognized as centers of excellence** for the innovative ways we align education and industry to solve pressing societal problems.
- Our students will be guided by **personalized educational pathways and integrated academic advising with comprehensive career and professional development** that align their passion and talents to prepare them for successful careers and advanced learning opportunities.
- Our faculty and staff will receive the same level of personalized attention and care to **enhance their professional development and success** at RWU and cultivate a deeper sense of belonging in our RWU family.
- Our campus communities will reflect the **geographically and culturally diverse communities** around us and become a more thriving, inclusive and unified community.
- Our **vibrant year-round campuses** will be animated by students taking courses, adult learners and organizations engaged in conferences, trainings, and workshops, and community members and partners enriching their lives.
- And our entire community, from student and alumni ambassadors to faculty and staff, will embrace a **culture of philanthropy** that truly celebrates RWU’s mission and helps advance the reach of the Roger Williams vision and story beyond our university.

The continued success of our collective momentum lies in the commitments we make to our students and to each other across RWU and for us to move from vision to action. We are already in a great position, because we are not starting from a blank slate. As we head in new directions, we can focus our first efforts on strengthening and marketing those centers of excellence and flagship programs that already exist across the University, such as architecture, the CAFE program, marine science and aquaculture, personalized academic services, a world-class sailing program, and connecting our food studies interdisciplinary focus with our top-rated food services.

We have all the right ingredients at Roger Williams. Our iterative strategic planning process will help us focus and build upon what we already have while dreaming and designing an even greater future.

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