

LIGHT THE WAY 2020:

# Building on Foundations of Excellence



ASSUMPTION COLLEGE

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LIGHT THE WAY 2020:

## Building on Foundations of Excellence

**As Assumption College marks the mid-point of our six-year strategic plan, *Light the Way 2020: Building on Foundations of Excellence*, we are proud of the progress we have made,**

yet celebrate such success in the midst of challenges facing higher education; challenges that the College is well-prepared to endure. These challenges, which affect most small, tuition-driven institutions, require us to engage in an exercise of self-reflection. This strategic plan, from its inception to this mid-point, is a part of that process of self-reflection.

A key element of this reflection, and the continued success of this plan, is asking ourselves, how do we reimagine this College in the new context in which higher education operates? This plan – one that was inclusively developed with contributions from all areas of the College community – responds to such a query. This plan asks us to reimagine how we approach the delivery of higher education in the current marketplace. It asks us to rethink what we do, how we do what we do, and ways in which we can move away from “business as usual” in all facets of the College, so that we remain a nimble and flexible institution, marked by creativity and innovation but always remaining firmly grounded in our mission.

Thus far, the College has invested \$27 million to implement the priorities outlined in this plan. Our accomplishments in this uncertain, ever-changing landscape of higher education are noteworthy. For example, the new Core Curriculum was implemented and the Tsotsis Family Academic Center has opened, which will greatly impact the educational experience of our students. The new academic building is an embodiment of what the College stands for: a place to explore and connect many different disciplines.

Paramount to our efforts to build upon a foundation of excellence, we must ensure that Assumption continues to develop and maintain a competitive advantage in a highly competitive higher education marketplace. Vital to the College’s future, and our ability



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to recruit students, is the development of new academic programs consistent with our liberal arts foundation while at the same time meeting the needs of the market and the interests of our students.

The plan calls for the integration of the liberal arts with new areas of study, where collaboration among and between disciplines can lead to exciting learning opportunities that will attract students. We have already begun to see the fruits of thinking boldly and creatively in the new academic programs that have been developed. This needs to continue in the remaining three years of the plan.

We must continue to explore ways in which there can be integration between the experience of the student in the classroom, so as to truly provide communities of learning as part of the student's experience across four years.

Recognizing that the demographic of our students will dramatically change in the next decade and beyond, the plan reflects the proactive approach the College needs to take in preparing the next generation of students who will be different on many levels from today's students.

It has been exciting to observe the way in which the plan has fostered new conversation and new ways of thinking about the College so as to gain and maintain a competitive advantage. We have much to recognize as positive and much to celebrate. However, our work is not finished. There is much yet to be accomplished to fully realize the hopes of this plan. I invite you to read in the following pages a summary of those accomplishments achieved thus far as we "Light the way" for future leaders in their chosen fields.

Sincerely,

*Francesco C. Cesareo*

Francesco C. Cesareo, Ph.D.

President

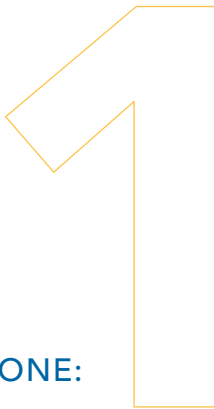
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## PILLAR ONE: **Academic Affairs**

*"Expand, renew and strengthen academic offerings to ensure an intellectually engaging, academically rigorous, and personally and professionally enriching experience for our students consistent with the mission."*

### ACHIEVEMENTS

Designed, approved and implemented new curriculum, programs, centers and approaches:

- **New Core Curriculum** implemented.
- **COMPASS:** Comprehensive first-year experience program established.
- **Common hour established.**
- **Student advising:** Enhanced approaches that are integrated across the student experience.
- **Career Development and Internship Center (CDIC):** Relocated the office and integrated into Academic Affairs.
- **Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE):** Established the Center to support faculty teaching and research.
- **Rome Campus:** Achieved full enrollment. The program is recognized nationally as one of the best of its kind.
- **Experiential Learning Coordinator Hired:** Based in Business Studies Department.
- **Summer School:** The new summer semesters have generated new revenue for the College since its inception in 2014, \$51,000; 2015, \$62,000 and 2016, \$165,000. Summer 2017 generated \$225,000 surpassing estimates. The program is expected to produce meaningful surplus revenue going forward while serving undergraduate students from Assumption and elsewhere.
- **Online Courses:** Masters of Business Administration, Health Advocacy and Rehabilitation Counseling, summer undergraduate courses.



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- ***New Undergraduate Programs***

- Criminology Major
- Data Analytics Minor
- Elementary Education STEM Concentration
- Pre-Engineering Minor
- Health Sciences Major with pre-OT, pre-PT, and pre-Clinical Concentrations, as well as Speech and Language Disorders
- Concentration in Patient Advocacy in new Health Sciences Major
- Applied Behavior Analysis Minor

- ***New Graduate Programs***

- HAP: Health Advocacy Program
- Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in Resiliency
- Certificate of Graduate Studies in Addiction Counseling
- ABA: Applied Behavior Analysis Program
- Transition Specialist in Education/Rehabilitation Studies
- Master's in Business Administration in Healthcare Management



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## PILLAR TWO:

# Student Affairs

*"Enhance the quality of the student experience through curricular and co-curricular initiatives that lead to personal as well as professional success consistent with the mission."*

## ACHIEVEMENTS

Enhanced College's extra-curricular offerings following thorough assessment, specifically with regard to fostering a diverse community.

- Evaluated and adjusted processes, practices and systems that support student life and services
  - Ellucian
  - Colleague
  - Coding
  - Adastra
- In conjunction with other divisions, especially Academic Affairs, established and enhanced programs that enrich and integrate the student experience such as Compass and SOPHIA.
- Plan developed to integrate the Five Principles of Student Engagement outlined in "Lighting the Way in the Assumptionist Tradition."
- Assessed current programs and resources for first generation and ALANA students.
- Assessed current programs and resources for supporting faith development.



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- Enhanced programs that serve emerging student populations especially ALANA, first generation and international students
  - Collegial partnerships: For example, Jessica McCreedy and Bea Patiño have initiated a “First in the Pack” program for first generation students. Many faculty, who are themselves first generation, have offered to be advisors to the First in the Pack student participants. A landing page is complete that provides helpful links for first gen parents including: financing an education, commonly used terminology, student resources, and other helpful links.
  - Assessment of partnerships and co-sponsorships: Through our assessment initiatives we have learned that students of color feel empowered and supported when their ALANA events are attended by community members other than the ALANA students. The faculty co-sponsored programs have helped boost attendance of both faculty and the general student population.



LINA NGUYEN '17  
*Environmental Science*



ABDUL RAUF '17  
*International Business*

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## ACHIEVEMENTS

Enhanced, expanded and/or initiated processes, programs and approaches to marketing and recruitment:

### PILLAR THREE:

## Enrollment Management

*"Enroll, retain, and graduate a diverse student body in a manner consistent with the mission."*

- **New Brand Guidelines developed.**
- **Market/competitor research and analysis:** Produced actionable, new knowledge about target audiences, messaging and communication chain.
- **Digital presence expanded with** display ads, retargeting ads, social media advertising.
- **Website:** Improved content and user experience on Admissions and Financial Aid pages of website.
- **Market expansion:** Adjusted recruitment plan to fortify traditional markets and expand into new markets including California, Florida, Illinois, Texas and Virgin Islands.
- **Athletes:** Enhanced collaboration between Enrollment Management and the Athletic Department to maximize recruitment of student-athletes by establishing new student recruitment goal for each sport.
- Transitioned select part-time coaches to full-time status.
- **Awards:** Established awards for achievement in academic disciplines and co-curricular activities such as the Music Scholarship
- **Campus visits:** Enhanced visit experience offerings and achieved 70% unique visitor/apply conversion.



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- ***Paid Tour Guide Program:*** Promoted, grew and improved the quality of the Paid Tour Guide Program through campus partnerships, recruitment initiatives and enhanced training program.
- ***Developed more off-campus opportunities to showcase Assumption College.***
- Enhanced international recruitment plan through new strategic relationships with international partners.
- ***High academic performers:*** Enhanced current practices to attract high academic performers to apply and enroll.
- ***Academic Scholarships:*** Assessed the current approach to academic scholarship. Implemented improvements.
- ***Princeton Review Best Colleges:*** Achieved inclusion.
- Improved affordability by developing a pricing strategy that considered Net Tuition Revenue and financial aid models.
- Enrollment Management Council updates and renews retention plan annually.
- Report produced identifying attrition indicators.
- Implemented and assessed response strategies to attrition indicators.



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## ACHIEVEMENTS

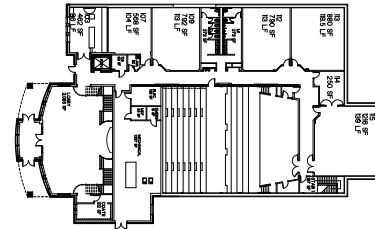
Examples of activity that have taken place within two strategic goals within pillar four, improving the quality and use of existing facilities:

### PILLAR FOUR:

## Facilities and Systems

*"Expand and maintain facilities and systems in support of mission to form the whole person."*

- Construction complete on the Tsotsis Family Academic Center, a signature academic facility
  - More than \$17 million\* of the estimated \$21 million has been raised in cash and pledges thus far.
- Debt has been issued to fund construction with very favorable terms, including a 1.69% interest rate for the first 10 years of the debt.
- Library improvements
  - Open spaces for individual and collaborative learning.
  - Six, private group study offices constructed along the back wall of the library on the first floor.
- Renovation of Taylor Dining Hall complete.
- Renovation of Hagan Campus Center complete.
- Inventoried all teaching spaces and library.
- Submitted recommendations for upgrading and modernization of current classrooms, teaching spaces and library.



\* As of October 25, 2017

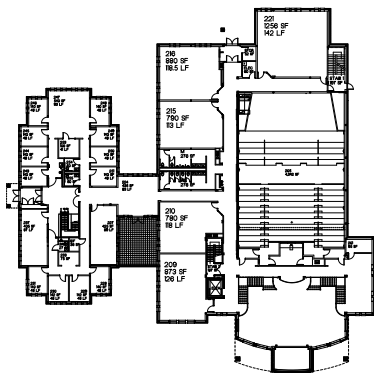
*First Floor Plan*



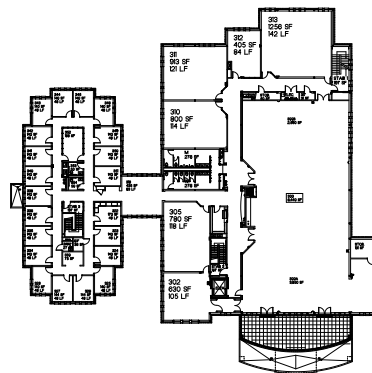
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Second Floor Plan



Third Floor Plan

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