

**GATEWAYS
TO GREATNESS**

COLLEGE *of*
CHARLESTON

STRATEGIC PLAN





COLLEGE of
CHARLESTON

THE MAKING OF A GREAT UNIVERSITY

Gateways play a prominent role at the College of Charleston. Historic wrought-iron gates, as numerous as books in a library, connect the many avenues and walking paths leading on and off campus. Like the College, they are elegant, strong, well built, timeless.

In fact, one of the College's oldest traditions is passing through the gateway of Porters Lodge, which symbolically serves as an entrance into a student's academic life as well as a departure point for the new graduate: a special moment that ties generations of students and alumni together.

But gateways are more than a mere physical presence at the College. Books and professors are gateways to knowledge. Study abroad and the arts are gateways to cultural understanding. And the College experience as a whole is a gateway to careers, happiness and a life of fulfillment.

For the past two years, the College has taken a hard look at itself, assessing its strengths, its current realities, its core purpose and what will make it a great university.

But what is greatness? For the College, greatness is a concept that inspires action. A feeling. An attitude. A state of mind.

It's a way of approaching each day and solving each challenge. It's a commitment to excellence in every facet of college life. And it's also a moving target – one for which the measure changes as the university grows and expands.

The strategic planning process has reaffirmed the core values that make the College what it is – and what it will be. For the next 10 years and beyond, the College is focusing its energy and resources on three key areas: academic excellence, a student-focused community and the power of place. Together, these three intertwined themes represent the foundation and strength of the institution as well as the vehicle for moving the College of Charleston toward greatness.

I hope you will join us as we work to make the College a leader in teaching, scholarship and innovation.



P. George Benson
President





In 2020, the College of Charleston will be the Southeast's leading public liberal arts and sciences university.

Through adherence to its student-focused approach to education, its commitment to academic excellence and the special opportunities inherent in its unique location, the College will serve as the region's gateway to greatness, providing leadership in intellectual exploration, artistic expression and cultural understanding.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN: A SUMMARY

CORE PURPOSE

To pursue and share knowledge through study, inquiry and creation in order to empower the individual and enrich society.

CORE VALUES

Academic Excellence

- Educational excellence that furthers intellectual, creative, ethical and social development through a broad range of programs centered on the liberal arts and sciences.

Student-Focused Community

- Student-focused community that embraces mutual respect, collaboration and diversity for the welfare of the individual and the institution.

Power of Place

- The history, traditions, culture and environment of Charleston and the Lowcountry that foster distinctive opportunities for innovative academic programs and relationships that advance our public mission in the city of Charleston, the state of South Carolina and the world.

GOALS

- Provide students a highly personalized education based on a liberal arts and sciences core and enhanced by opportunities for experiential learning.
- Develop or enhance nationally recognized undergraduate, graduate and professional programs in areas that take advantage of our history, culture and location in Charleston and contribute to the well-being of the region.
- Provide students the global and interdisciplinary perspectives necessary to address the social, economic, environmental, ethical, scientific and political issues of the 21st century.
- Establish and promote a vibrant campus-life atmosphere dedicated to education of the whole person through integration of curricular and co-curricular or extracurricular activities.
- Create a sustainable financial model that enables the envisioned future.





ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Sounds simple. But academic excellence is a critical concept upon which the entire college experience is built.

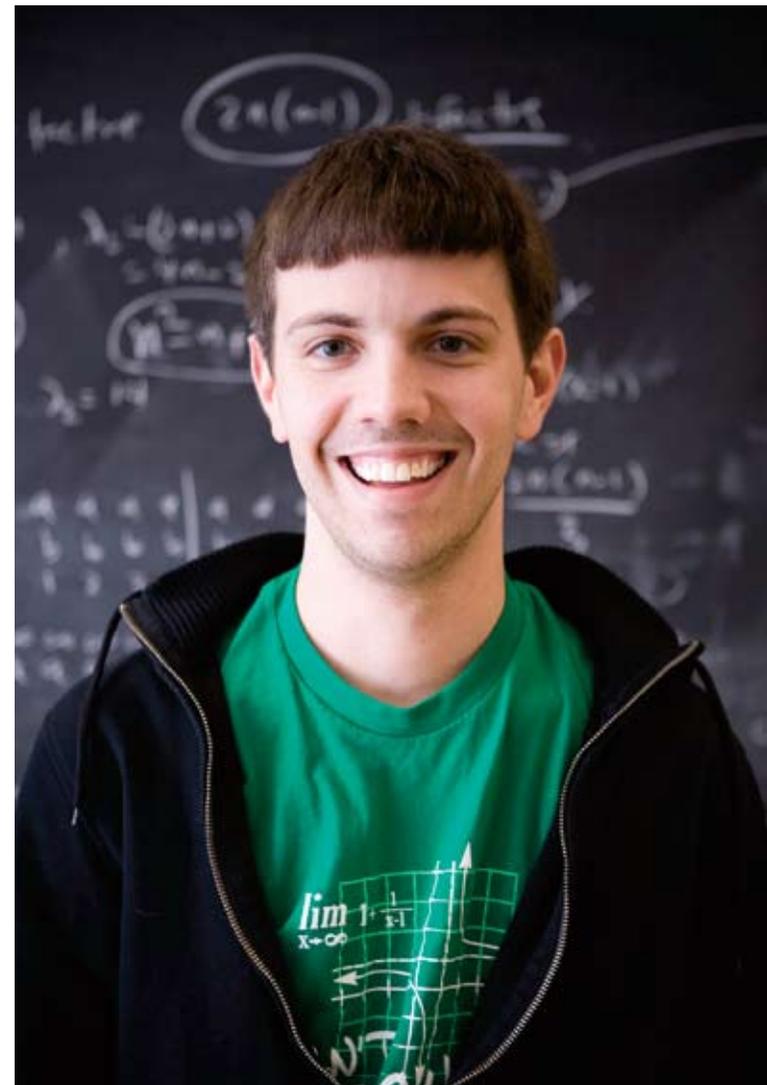
With it, all things are possible. Without it, mediocrity reigns.

At the College, instruction is highly personalized, with professors who care about their students' achievements, in and out of the classroom. But the faculty also are demanding. They expect the best of their students as together they explore their subjects of study. College is a time to tap into the power of thought, and our professors help students push themselves to discover a world with limitless possibilities.

Through the strategic plan, the College is bolstering its faculty and programs across the curriculum so that students, both undergraduate and graduate, can better develop intellectually, creatively, ethically and socially.

The approach is multifaceted, but here are a few highlights:

- The addition of faculty in both new and existing disciplines, which will expand the academic opportunities available to students.
- A restructuring of the General Education requirements so that the students' core studies incorporate more international perspectives and include new requirements in areas such as research, creativity, internships, study abroad, civic engagement and peer education.
- The creation of more co-curricular and interdisciplinary learning opportunities with different campus groups, both academic and non-academic, collaborating on programming, from student clubs to themed residence-life communities.
- An investment in increasing diversity across campus, both in the student body and among the faculty. We do not live in a homogeneous world, and the College must reflect that reality.
- A comprehensive evaluation of academic facilities, resulting in a new campus master plan and updated priorities for new construction and renovation.





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STUDENT-FOCUSED COMMUNITY

Faces, not numbers. That's how the College approaches its student body.

First and foremost, the College is a place of individual development and discovery. All faculty and staff, no matter their department or title, understand that they play a part in the educational process at the College. The classroom is not limited to the four walls of a lecture hall or laboratory. Learning happens in every corner of campus, every second of the day.

As an institution tasked with educating tomorrow's leaders, we at the College always ask ourselves: How are we putting our students first and how can we better enhance our students' learning and, therefore, educate the whole person?

A student-first college is not revolutionary in theory, but it is rare in practice. The College, as it has been for more than two centuries, is committed to keeping the student the centerpiece for all decisions and developments across campus.

With that in mind, the College has ambitious plans that will strengthen and enrich the student experience and the university as a whole.

Examples of this include:

- *Scholarships.* Affordability is a critical component of accessibility, and the College will greatly expand its scholarship programs, both in quantity of scholarship recipients and the amount of awards.
- *Scientific literacy and superior communication skills.* Today's graduates face a very different world than those who received their diplomas just five years ago. They need to be technologically savvy, possess acute scientific reasoning skills and, most importantly, be effective communicators. The College will address these needs through revamped testing, a revised General Education program, an institutional investment in cutting-edge technology and a campus writing center.

- *Global citizenship.* The College will implement a comprehensive plan for internationalization that embraces curricular and co-curricular life in the broadest sense, from General Education requirements to increased study abroad opportunities.
- *Sustainability.* It's not a passing fad, but a core understanding for an educated citizenry. The College will be a pioneer in showcasing how an institution can be environmentally responsible and fiscally sensible, and will also train and prepare tomorrow's leaders in green living and technology.
- *The total person.* Academic success is most likely to occur when students' life needs are being met. That means a vibrant campus with a broad range of student activities and state-of-the-art facilities, such as a new student wellness center.





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THE POWER OF PLACE

Charleston is unlike any city in the world. It defies easy description because it possesses so many different elements, so many different true faces. It's historic, yet modern. It's forward thinking, but has deep roots in tradition. It's urban within a pristine coastal setting. Simply put, Charleston is a 21st-century paradise.

The College shares in the magic that makes Charleston so special. This sense of place is inextricably linked in the College's identity and is a great source of differentiation and advantage.

One critical component of the strategic plan is the development and repurposing of a historic plantation west of Charleston. By creating a center for environmental research on this pristine 862-acre site, located on the Stono River, the College may change the very concept of a Lowcountry plantation in the public's imagination. Specifically, the College plans to convert this space into a composite of student activity areas, executive programs and state-of-the-art learning laboratories.

Through the strategic plan, the College also will bolster select programs and offerings that tie directly into the Lowcountry's history, culture and geography, and will strengthen relationships that advance its public mission in the city of Charleston, the Southeast region and the world.

These programs include:

- African American studies
- arts management
- Atlantic studies
- environmental sciences and policy
- fine arts
- global logistics
- historic preservation
- hospitality and tourism management
- international business
- Southern Jewish studies
- Latin American and Caribbean studies
- marine biology
- M.P.A. in marine policy
- real estate
- urban and regional planning







ABOUT THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON

The College of Charleston is a nationally recognized, public liberal arts and sciences university located in the heart of historic Charleston, South Carolina. Founded in 1770, the College is among the nation's top universities for quality education, student life and affordability. The College offers a distinctive combination of a beautiful and historic campus, modern facilities and cutting-edge programs.

Students from 50 states and territories and more than 60 countries choose the College of Charleston for its small-college feel blended with the advantages and diversity of an urban, mid-sized university. The College provides a creative and intellectually stimulating environment where students are challenged by a committed and caring faculty of distinguished teacher-scholars, all in an incomparable setting.

The city of Charleston – world renowned for its history, culture, architecture and coastal environment – serves the College's approximately 10,000 undergraduates and 1,500 graduate students as a living and learning laboratory for

experiences in business, science, teaching, the humanities, languages and the arts. At the same time, students and faculty are engaged with the community in partnerships to improve education, enhance the business community and enrich the overall quality of life in the region.

At the College of Charleston, students learn how to succeed and grow, both inside and outside the classroom. This comes from a rigorous exposure to the arts, sciences and humanities, and from dedication to achievement in education, business and other professional careers. It comes from exceptional opportunities to pursue knowledge and conduct research at the undergraduate and graduate levels. It comes from a vibrant and enriching campus life that provides meaningful opportunities to become engaged and involved, to make a difference and to become a leader.





GREAT EXPECTATIONS

The College's strategic plan is about gateways. It's about opening doors of opportunity for the entire College of Charleston community, from its students to the people of the state, the nation and the world.

This is a transformative moment in the College's history. By adhering to the philosophy of academic excellence, by re-affirming its commitment to a student-first campus and by harnessing the power of place, the College of Charleston is entering a golden era of academic vigor and international distinction.

The founders' centuries-old dream was essentially about greatness, and now is the time to turn an old dream into a new reality.

To learn more about *Gateways to Greatness*, please visit www.cofc.edu/strategicplan, where you can read about the planning process, specifics of the strategic plan and ways to get involved.









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