



Annual Report: 2020-2021 Academic Year

The Mercy College 2025 Strategic Plan, finalized in October 2020, specifies four strategic goals and related objectives that are rooted in the College's mission of providing transformative educational experiences to students. The strategic goals focus on teaching and learning, support for student success, affordability and financial health, and building college community. The development of the plan was informed by evidence from focus groups conducted with faculty, staff and students; data-rich self-studies of the first-year experience and of the institution during the decennial review; institutional indicators, and market data on enrollment and regional trends.

To evaluate progress on the plan, metrics for each strategic goal were identified and reviewed by the Strategic Planning Committee in spring and fall 2019. Within this document is an update on each of those metrics and a summary of the key strategic activities that contributed toward our strategy in the first year of the plan. The timeframe for this report is July 2020 through June 2021.

Goal 1: Teaching and Learning

KEY INITIATIVES:

- 1. New Academic Programs:** Expanded program offerings across campus locations and distance learning. New programs include: Advanced Certificate Teaching Students with Disabilities Early Childhood and Childhood (September 2020), Advanced Certificate Teaching Students with Disabilities, 7-12 (September 2020), Advanced Certificate Teaching Literacy, Birth – Grade 6, Manhattan and Distance Education (January 2021), Advanced Certificate Teaching Literacy, Grade 5 – 12, Manhattan and Distance Education (January 2021), MS School Counseling, Bronx, Dobbs Ferry, Distance Education, Curriculum Changes Bronx and Dobbs Ferry, (January 2021), Certificate Dispute Resolution – New Program, Bronx, Dobbs Ferry, Distance Education (April 2021).
- 2. New Campus, New Format, and/or Curriculum Changes:** DPT Physical Education, curriculum changes (July, 2020); Mental Health Counseling, curriculum changes (July 2020); Mental Health Service Management, Dobbs Ferry, curriculum changes (August 2020); BS Cybersecurity, Manhattan (September 2020); BS Computer Science, Bronx and Manhattan (September 2020); MS Marriage and Family Therapy, curriculum changes (December 2020); MS Teaching Literacy, Birth – Grade 6 and Grades 5 – 12, Manhattan and Distance Education (January 2021); BS International Relations and Diplomacy, Distance Education (April 2021).
- 3. Faculty Support Education:** Expanded initiatives to support faculty excellence. Conducted 350 faculty workshops with over 1,000 registrations, launched new faculty online teaching pedagogy courses, initiated new Tech Expo for faculty, supported faculty as the majority of courses transitioned to a blended, synchronous, or asynchronous format, and conducted Master course initiative. Conducted student Blackboard support and training, in which more than 4,600 students successfully completed the Online Student Blackboard Interactive Orientation.
- 4. The Center for Teaching and Learning:** The CTL promotes teaching excellence to improve learning for all students. CTL provides high-quality faculty development events and activities as well as instructional design across all disciplines and modalities. 674 faculty participated in faculty professional development events, 42 faculty participated in Pulse On Learning. CTL staff assisted faculty with the creation of 157 Digitation ePortfolios for use in classroom practice and/or contract action submission.

Goal 2: Student Success

KEY INITIATIVES:

- 1. Continued Response to the COVID Pandemic:** The college continued to address the needs of the students to ensure students success through the pandemic. Extensive campus restart plan and social distancing protocol implemented via the OnCampus Plus initiative.
- 2. Strategic Blend of Course Modalities:** Implemented varied types of course modalities to address the changing CDC requirements and student needs via blended learning, in-person, online synced, online, and online hybrid course offerings.
- 3. CAEI:** The Center for Academic Excellence and Innovation (CAEI) provided no-cost tutoring to all Mercy students upon request. In Fall 2020, the CAEI provided tutoring services to 617 distinct students for a total of 2,187 individual sessions, and in Spring 2021, the CAEI provided tutoring services to 552 distinct students for a total of 2,027 individual sessions.
- 4. Additional Academic Support Initiatives:** Expanded academic support programs throughout the pandemic, with initiatives including: Peer Teaching Assistance, Teaching Assistance, Targeted Workshops, Aim to Graduate, Targeted Learning Support, Structure Learning Assistance, and Testing Center services.
- 5. Nursing Program Partnership:** Partnership with Essen Health Care will allow Essen employees to apply to Mercy's Family Nurse Practitioner Program. Essen will also provide FNP clinical placements to Mercy students.

Goal 3: Affordability and Financial Health

KEY INITIATIVES:

- 1. Continued Fundraising:** Successful fundraising of \$2,309,912 in FY21, including \$444,943 for Mercy Scholars Cohort 5 (FY21).
- 2. Relief Funding:** Distributed a total of \$7.0M during FY 21 and FY 20 to students from funds received from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund.
- 3. ROI:** Endowment earned a net return of 28% during FY 21, bringing the total endowment balance to \$321.4M as of June 30, 2021.
- 4. Financial Strength:** Achieved an operating surplus of 8.4% during FY 21, compared with a 6.7% operating surplus in FY 20. Net assets increased to \$411.2M in FY 21 from \$332.7M in FY 20.
- 5. Facilities Reconfiguration Projects:** Multiple facilities reconfiguration projects underway to use space more effectively across the Bronx, Dobbs Ferry, Manhattan, and Tarrytown campuses.

Goal 4: College Community

KEY INITIATIVES:

- 1. Workforce Credentialing Initiative:** Initiated the development of the Division for Workforce Development and Online Credentials. The purpose of this initiative is to address the need for workforce development and certificate programs to adapt to the changing landscape of the education marketplace cause in part by the COVID pandemic.
- 2. CNR Legacy:** Continued to preserve the CNR legacy at Mercy College. Maintained ongoing CNR alumni communication and engagement through various methods (e-newsletters, obituary notices, holiday messages, general updates, Maverick Magazine, Mercy/CNR Book Club, and virtual reunions). In addition to communication and engagement, CNR alumni were solicited to support the CNR Legacy Scholarship, MavMarket, and Student Emergency Fund (totaling \$54,058). These initiatives will continue with additional programs and engagement.
- 3. Virtual Events:** The college maintained the College community connection by conducting various community events via a virtual setting. Events were across many campus community populations: students, potential students, faculty and staff, alumni, campus clubs and organizations, wellness groups, external community groups and organizations, keeping the communication and connection continuous and strong through the pandemic.
- 4. Community Garden:** Students spearheaded a project to establish the College's first community garden. Leading the efforts were two student groups: The Mercy College Environmental Alliance, and the Student Steering Committee of the Federated Conservationists of Westchester County. With the help of their faculty advisor, students' plant and maintain a high-yield vegetable garden. The garden has yielded enough produce to supply the College's Mav Market, Mercy's on-campus food pantry, and donations will also be made to a local food pantry when garden yield surpasses Mav Market demand.
- 5. Partnership with BronxNet:** Dr. Bill Latimer hosts a new weekly show "Public Health America" on the network; the show aims to promote health and social justice and will reach a large population within the local viewing area.