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Introduction

Rhode Island School of Design was originally scheduled to submit its NEASC Interim (Fifth-Year Report) in January 2011. Since the college was embarking on a long-range, strategic planning process scheduled for completion in spring 2011, a deferment to January 2012 was requested by the college and granted by NEASC with the exception of a response to Area of Emphasis Two, which was submitted in January 2011. Members of the college's academic and administrative leadership convened in spring 2011 to develop a collaborative process and work plan. Significant coordination of this process was the responsibility of Margot Nishimura, Director of Academic Planning and Assessment, and Jennifer Dunseath, Director of Institutional Research. When Ms. Nishimura left RISD to accept a position at Brown University, Patricia Phillips, Interim Associate Provost, stepped in to work with Ms. Dunseath to guide this process. Both Ms. Nishimura and Ms. Phillips attended NEASC workshops on Interim (Fifth-Year) Reports and have benefitted from the thoughtful guidance and insights of NEASC leadership.

A core group was identified, and particular responsibilities in Areas of Emphasis and NEASC Standards were assigned based on individuals' areas of expertise and roles at RISD. Data First forms were handled in a similar way. Institutional Research completed the S series, and individual department heads provided the E series data with support from academic deans. All of the Data First forms have been available to core group members to assist them with their own reports and narratives.

In fall 2011, following conversations and correspondence between NEASC leadership and the Office of the President at RISD, a second extension was requested to March 1, 2012, so that the submission could include the strategic plan, scheduled for presentation to the Board of Trustees at its February 24–25, 2012, meeting. Given this revised schedule, an edited draft of the entire report was provided to members of the Executive Cabinet (as well as other members of the core group and academic deans) on January 17, 2012. Responses from cabinet members and others were received and reviewed in late January, and the final report was completed for discussion with the RISD Board of Trustees at its February meeting. With the approval of *Critical Making/Making Critical: Strategic Plan 2012-2017* by the Board of Trustees, the plan and the Interim (Fifth-Year) Report were sent to NEASC on March 1.

Throughout the Interim Report, we have sought to integrate salient background, concepts, and actions, developed during a multi-year planning process, that will guide and shape RISD's future. While we have tried to avoid glaring redundancies, the strategic-planning process and other new developments are trajectories that give form and emphasis to the report.

It has been very productive to work concurrently on the NEASC Interim Report while engaged in substantial final revisions and campus-wide discussion of the school's strategic plan. RISD is grateful to NEASC for its support and for the constructive opportunity to work simultaneously on these planning and reflective processes.

Key staff members involved in the preparation of the Interim Report include:

Candace Baer, Vice President, Human Resources

Steven Berenback, Registrar

Linda Murphy Church, Director of Budget

William Decatur, Executive Vice President, Finance + Administration

Jennifer Dunseath, Director of Institutional Research

Jean Eddy, Senior Vice President, Students + Enrollment

Molly Garrison, Trustee Relations Officer

Alice Geoffrey, Assistant to the Associate Provost

Mara Hermano, Chief of Staff, President's Office

Steven McDonald, General Counsel

Margot Nishimura, Director of Academic Planning + Assessment (July 2010–July 2011)

Patricia Phillips, Interim Associate Provost

Judith (Anj) Shaw, Institutional Research + Budget Analyst

Jack Silva, Associate Vice President, Facilities + Environmental Health and Safety

Rosanne Somerson, Interim Provost

Institutional Overview

For more than a century, RISD has been considered one of the preeminent institutions of art and design education. Its mission—the education of artists, designers, and scholars engaged in contemporary culture through works of art and design—remains central to the college’s identity and reputation. RISD educates critical thinkers and makers whose skills and imaginations influence and change the world. The conditions of a competitive, complex, and ever-changing world, however, call for a reimagining of the future of art and design education, and the role RISD plays within these dynamic conditions.

RISD currently has 1,972 undergraduates and 424 graduate students. It offers 10 degrees in 19 major areas. Most departments have both undergraduate and graduate programs; however, there are three solely undergraduate departments and three independent graduate departments. Given the size of the college, it has a remarkable scope of programs and departments in areas of architecture, design, fine arts, art and design education, and liberal arts. A common feature of this programmatic breadth is the immersive character of discipline-based education, which engages students in traditional practices and theories as well as cutting-edge processes and emerging developments in various disciplines and media. Student learning and faculty teaching is richly supported by the extensive collections and accomplished professional staff in the RISD Museum of Art, the Edna W. Lawrence Nature Lab, and the Fleet Library at RISD (relocated and expanded three-fold in 2006.) In addition to these resources, students have access to courses and facilities at Brown University, as well as increasing opportunities to link their studies and practices with publicly and socially engaged work in Providence, the region, and global sites.

In the six years since its last NEASC/NASAD accreditation, there have been many significant changes at RISD. John Maeda was inaugurated as President in 2008. There has been a complete transformation of executive-level leadership, with new Vice Presidents in Finance + Administration, Students + Enrollment, Institutional Engagement, Media, and Human Resources. A new Provost was appointed in 2008; she stepped down at the conclusion of her three-year appointment, and an Interim Provost was appointed in July 2011. The search for a Provost is currently underway.

A strategic planning process was launched in fall 2009 that unfolded in four phases. During this time, there were significant passages of momentum, breakthroughs, and consonance, as well as challenging interludes and difficult debates that became important opportunities to review and rethink processes of communication and collaboration, planning and progress. Following a setback in February 2011 when an initial version of the plan was not supported by the faculty, President Maeda revisited and reconstituted the process, charging the five academic deans, along with the Interim Provost and Interim Associate Provost, to guide the next phase of planning, which included a timeline, communication, and consultation process. Less than a year later, a revised institutional strategic plan was endorsed with enthusiasm by the faculty.

RISD began the 2011–2012 academic year with many interim leaders. There are three interim academic deans: in Architecture + Design, Fine Arts, and Graduate Studies. As noted, there is an Interim Provost and Interim Associate Provost. There is also an Interim Dean and Interim Associate Dean of Student Affairs. While this might suggest a striking transitional time of instability or inertia, this has not been the case. Individuals in interim roles have embraced their

responsibilities and pursued opportunities to guide RISD and provide leadership that inspires faculty, staff, and student confidence. Significantly, the President, Cabinet, and Academic Affairs Council (Provost, Associate Provost, and Deans) have worked consistently, collaboratively, and successfully to move important initiatives forward.

As RISD prepares for its next NEASC/NASAD accreditation in 2016, the institution has commenced a new chapter of notable progress and remarkable potential. We believe that this Interim Report genuinely represents forward momentum, as well as presenting areas that continue to require thoughtful and persistent attention in the next few years. The NEASC Interim Report has provided an opportunity to reflect on and assess institutional change in the past six years and to project new and ongoing work for the future. *Critical Making/Making Critical: Strategic Plan 2012–2017* that accompanies this report is a navigational tool and invaluable resource to direct, realize, and evaluate institutional goals, objectives, and actions.

Area of Emphasis One

Integrating strategic planning in the areas of academic programs, finances, and facilities, and communicating these plans widely within the campus community.

Description

RISD's last comprehensive strategic plan was completed in 1997. Academic plans were formulated in 2000 and 2008, but were not fully implemented because multi-year financial plans were not developed to align or integrate with academic plans. The most recent planning effort was launched in fall 2009 and concluded in February 2012. The first phase of the planning process (January–May 2010) engaged more than 70 faculty, staff, and students in exploring the core academic mission and four additional themes through working groups: Life At/After RISD; Sustainability and the Environment; Health Care and Wellness; and Local and Global Engagement (See Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation, and strategic plan, Appendix B). The Board of Trustees was involved in discussions with the working groups at its February and May 2010 meetings.

In summer of 2010, the plan began to integrate operational objectives in the areas of administration, facilities, technology, financial aid, student services, diversity and inclusion, and fundraising, as identified by the President's Cabinet members. Goals and objectives were refined further in fall 2010 for prioritization by President Maeda.

Throughout this process, a monthly planning e-newsletter was circulated to the campus community, with regular updates on the process. Town hall meetings were held each semester to discuss different sections of the plan. Conversations were also held with the Staff Council and undergraduate and graduate Student Alliances. Past plans and notes from the town hall meetings and other forums were posted on the strategic planning section of the President's website.

Prior to the development of a multi-year financial plan in winter 2011, further work on the strategic plan was put on hold when a majority of faculty members chose not to endorse the plan due to concerns about proposed academic initiatives. The planning process was revived in the summer under the leadership of the Deans and Interim Associate Provost, working with the President's Cabinet, to refine the academic and operational goals and objectives presented in the draft plan. The intention of the renewed process was to arrive at a broad, long-range institutional vision that responded to external factors and was related to the mission elements of teaching and learning, research and discovery, and engagement.

In fall 2011, the Deans presented drafts of the academic initiatives to their divisional faculty and to the faculty leadership groups (Department Heads, Graduate Program Directors, and Executive Committees of the full-time and the part-time faculty unions) in order to broaden community participation and offer more opportunities for input. The Faculty Steering Committee also held a half-day congress to discuss and clarify the academic initiatives. Additionally, a survey was developed by Deans and the Director of Institutional Research and distributed to faculty and students for feedback and prioritization of academic initiatives. Open forums were held for faculty and staff to discuss the final strategic initiatives. The President's Cabinet, with the Director of Budget, developed scenarios for a multi-year financial plan based on key revenue and expense drivers. One-time and ongoing costs for each action in the plan were identified, and then

prioritized for phased implementation based on the annual budget, projected net income, and fundraising projections. The faculty endorsed the strategic plan at its December 2011 meeting.

The multi-year financial plan was presented to the Executive Committee and the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees in January 2012. *Critical Making/Making Critical: Strategic Plan 2012–2017* and the multi-year financial plan were presented and approved by the full Board at its February 2012 meeting. A summary version of the plan is available on http://www.risd.edu/About/History_Mission_Governance/Strategic_Plan/

As a next phase, key performance indicators and measures of success will be developed and presented to the Board at the May 2012 meeting. These will include tracking of progress to goals each plan year, monitoring the impact of the successful implementation of plan initiatives aligned to institutional key performance indicators and other external indicators.

Appraisal

The recently concluded strategic planning process engaged a broad cross-section of the RISD community. Multiple vehicles for communicating to the larger community were employed at every stage of the process, leading to greater awareness, investment, and strong endorsement of the plan by constituent groups. The alignment and integration of the academic and operational goals with a multi-year financial plan has brought both coordination and clarity to the plan's priorities and five-year implementation.

Projection

RISD now has robust processes in place to develop, communicate, and continuously assess its strategic plan. There is greater understanding of the importance of ongoing planning and assessment that will ensure better implementation of the initiatives developed for 2012–2017. Future planning will build off the integrated processes established to complete this plan.

Area of Emphasis Two

Assuring sufficient financial resources are available to sustain and enhance RISD's academic program, taking into account debt, fundraising, space needs, deferred maintenance, and financial aid.

Description

Short- and Long-Term Planning

In fall 2010, President Maeda formed three multi-constituency committees: Budget Planning Council, Enrollment Planning Council, and Facilities Planning Council. The councils include faculty, administrative staff, and student members. In particular, the Budget Planning and Facility Planning Councils work in concert to advise on the development of an integrated multi-year planning model for the operating and capital budget.

Working with all structural areas across campus, a financial planning model has been developed to align and allocate resources with the goals in the new strategic plan. Included in the plan is the objective to implement a campus master planning process that reviews buildings and facilities as well as educational media resources and integrative technologies.

Debt Service

Debt was taken out in 2006–2007 primarily to finance two strategically important projects. The college purchased and refurbished a historic building, 15 Westminster, as a new site for the library. The building also houses a dining facility on the ground floor and ten additional floors of residential space above for more than 400 students. The Chace Center, designed by renowned architect Jose Rafael Moneo, added studio, instructional, exhibition, and gallery space for students, as well as the Metcalf Auditorium and other public gathering spaces (See Standard Eight: Physical and Technological Resources).

It is suggested in *Strategic Financial Analysis for Higher Education* (NACUBO, 2010) that a rate of 7% should be an upper limit for debt service. It also notes that institutions with very low ratios may be deferring necessary investment in facilities, which, over time, may have a negative impact on their competitive profiles.

In academic year 2004–2005 RISD's debt burden ratio was 6.9%. The additional debt taken out in 2006–2007 for these strategic capital needs increased the ratio to 7.5% in 2008–2009. For 2009–2010, the rate was 7.1%, dropping to 6.9% for 2010–2011. There are no plans to take on more debt, and the ratio is expected to drop further (See Standard Nine: Financial Resources).

Fundraising

In fall 2010, RISD appointed a new Vice President for Institutional Engagement. This division has developed new systems and databases for identifying prospective donors among alumni and cultural leaders, and has worked closely with President Maeda to bring in significant gifts for

student scholarships, the renovation of the historic Illustration Studies Building, and other key institutional priorities.

Enrollment and Financial Aid

In fall 2010, RISD created a new position of Senior Vice President for Students + Enrollment. In a short period of time, an enrollment goal to broaden RISD's national and international geographic diversity has increased student representation to more than 30 countries of origin. In fall 2011, a college admissions envoy traveled to Turkey, India, China, Singapore, and Taiwan to actively recruit students and explore the possibility of expanding pre-college and developing new international exchange programs.

Since the 2006 NEASC/NASAD accreditation, there have been significant changes in the Financial Aid Office. In 2008, the technology supporting financial aid processes was upgraded to integrate admissions information for awarding purposes. In 2009, a new Director of Financial Aid was hired, and new financial aid modeling processes enabled RISD to maximize use of limited financial aid resources. The college became a direct direct-lending school, streamlining loan application and disbursement for students on financial aid. In fall 2011, an Associate Director of Financial Aid was hired to focus on computer functionality. The office continues to expand its outside scholarship brochure and has increased external scholarship assistance by 29% in the past nine years.

Deferred Maintenance

The college has an annual allocation in its budget for capital needs. It remains a challenge to balance all the competing priorities in the budget in order to dedicate sufficient resources to make a significant impact on deferred maintenance. As part of a campus master planning process proposed in the strategic plan, the college will do a full assessment of its deferred maintenance needs. A long-range facilities master plan will include a financial plan to address and stage improvements over time (referred to in Standard 8: Physical and Technological Resources).

Appraisal

The strategic plan is heavily focused on academic goals and the corresponding academic budget to fund them. Among other initiatives, the plan proposes to increase the number of full-time faculty by ten and to maintain current enrollments that support RISD's commitment to a low student-to-faculty ratio. In order to fund the plan's academic priorities, existing resources will be reviewed and reallocated. Greater collaboration with Institutional Engagement will support the identification of appropriate giving opportunities for presentation to potential corporate, foundation and individual funders.

Finance + Administration has added key staff to develop the areas of institutional research and budget analysis. A search currently is underway for a new Director of Purchasing and Procurement. This appointment will help to streamline procurement processes and produce

significant savings and efficiencies. Additionally, a new Director of Budget and Facilities Planning in Academic Affairs will be appointed in March 2012. This person will work closely with the college's central budget office to ensure the coordination of operating and capital budget processes, the effective use of facilities and shared technologies, and the budgetary support of academic needs and priorities of the institution.

Projection

With dynamic new coordinated executive leadership, the strategic planning process aligns priorities, roles, and responsibilities so that academic goals and objectives are developed jointly with financial models.

Area of Emphasis Three

Developing and implementing institutional effectiveness measures for all areas of the institution, as well as the systematic assessment of student learning outcomes.

Description

Like many colleges of art and design, RISD's major departments and studio programs have developed a strong culture of critique, as well as creative portfolios to represent and evaluate the growth and development of students' work over an extended period of time. In fact, many other colleges and disciplines have adopted and adapted the portfolio as an effective tool or resource to assess student learning objectives, student progress, and learning outcomes over three to four years. Colleges of art and design routinely and publicly demonstrate and perform assessment during mid-term and end-of-semester critiques, in which questions of knowledge, intellectual and artistic skills, methods of inquiry, critical thinking, and synthesis are discussed and evaluated both directly and indirectly. A criticism of this foundational process of critique is that it is not necessarily—or always—a consistent, systematic assessment of student learning outcomes.

A review of RISD's E-Series, prepared by 22 department heads in both studio-based and liberal arts areas, bears evidence of an institutional commitment to assessment that is applied and systemic, yet neither consistently systematic nor continuous. Visiting committees that have participated in the Academic Program Review process have cited an insufficiently developed culture of institutional assessment at RISD. Many faculty members reasonably articulate and understandably defend that assessment is ongoing and intrinsic to art and design teaching and pedagogy. Evidence suggests that critique and evaluation are ongoing and embedded in studio programs, although student learning objectives and outcomes need to become more consistently developed and utilized, and made increasingly transparent and accessible across art, design, and liberal studies. Clearly, the success of RISD current students (portfolios, degree projects, internships, scholarships and awards, competitions, and juried exhibitions) and alumni (professional appointments, cultural leadership, major awards, recognition, exhibitions, inventions, and commissions) is compelling confirmation of the rigorous education they have encountered as undergraduate or graduate students. RISD regularly participates in national surveys on student success and alumni progress. Internal surveys are a more frequently used measure of success or satisfaction. However illuminating or confirming, they do not retroactively perform the assessment of currently matriculated students and the clarity of learning goals and outcomes that lead to their continued successful development.

The Division of Liberal Arts provides RISD students with an outstanding general education, focused liberal arts study and research, and opportunities to enrich and deepen their studio practice. It prepares RISD students to be active and knowledgeable citizens of the world through encounters with a broad spectrum of courses in the humanities and social sciences as well as selected courses in the sciences and mathematics. Student learning goals include thinking critically and creatively, communicating effectively in both verbal and written forms, gaining greater knowledge from a global perspective, fostering lifelong enthusiasm for learning, and providing social, political, historical, cultural, and critical perspectives on art and design practices. Students typically are evaluated through papers, presentations, examinations, and participation in class, although there is no systematic process of outcomes assessment.

Currently, course evaluations do not provide consistent data on student learning objectives and outcomes. There is, however, discussion of redesigning evaluations so that they might become more effective assessment tools.

Appraisal

RISD embraces what can be learned in the assessment of student work and is pursuing opportunities to develop cycles of review and curriculum planning. In January 2012, Foundation Studies used its Triennial Exhibition of first-year student work as a platform for the faculty to look inclusively and comprehensively at what creative work indicates about the curriculum in place and the achievement of student learning goals. It was a forum to identify consistent areas of proficiency, competency, and development, as well as learning objectives where work may indicate less consistent or clear outcomes. Other departments and divisions will be encouraged to use forthcoming exhibitions and alternative venues to consider useful, responsible, and distinctive methods of assessment. We expect that additional opportunities, including workshops, outside experts, and the Academic Program Review process will develop and support the work of faculty and Department Heads in the area of student learning outcomes and program assessment. The five academic Deans will help to guide this process.

Projection

It is important that RISD continue to develop a generative culture of assessment that represents its distinctive institutional character. By the next self-study and NEASC/NASAD accreditation review in 2016, RISD seeks to endorse and publicize clear and assessable learning outcomes for all students and to have a college-wide process in place to determine that they are being satisfactorily met. The process will begin with the identification of individual course- and program-level outcomes, and eventually expanding to the institutional level. In conjunction with departmental review and analysis, RISD will identify broad-based college-wide outcomes for both undergraduate and graduate levels that represent all departments. Common objectives, such as the facility and agility to work collaboratively or across disciplines, and the capacity to connect constructively and creatively participate within a changing and culturally diverse contemporary world, also need to be determined. Student learning outcomes should reflect an immersive, discipline-based focus. They should also reflect “lateral” skills, knowledge, and competencies (such as critical analysis, technological knowledge, ethical reasoning, communication, and expression) frequently developed through formal curriculum and informal experiences. RISD increasingly develops and diversifies ideas of what artists and designers—its graduates and alumni—can do as creative agents and public intellectuals who work with impact and consequence in a wide range of fields, contexts, and situations in different fields and parts of the world (See information on Career Center in Standard Six).

A spectrum of qualitative and quantitative, direct and indirect ways to assess student learning from individual students and courses to commonly held mission-based objectives will create and support a vibrant and directed approach to curriculum and program development. An ongoing spiral of outcome identification, assessment and evaluation, and implementation and innovation will support and actualize the academic objectives represented in the strategic plan.

Area of Emphasis Four

Meeting the institution's diversity goals.

Description

Between 1994 and 2003, several cross-institutional diversity councils were formed to review RISD's diversity practices, policies, and programs, and to recommend areas of initiative and improvement. Some of the specific recommendations that have been implemented since 2006 include:

- International student orientations and specialized workshops through Student Affairs, Graduate Studies, the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA), and the Office of International Programs (OIP)
- More than 50 distinct programs/workshops for students offered in 2010–2011 through OMA
- Community-based portfolio development and college access programs, such as Project Open Door
- Increased hiring of higher-level administrators from underrepresented backgrounds (percentages for full-time faculty and staff are currently 11.5% and 11.4%, respectively) Increased enrollment of students from underrepresented backgrounds in fall 2011, representing 26.7% of the total student population
- Annual diversity training for administrative and faculty leadership as well as annual distribution to all faculty and staff of policies related to the recognition and prevention of sexual and other forms of harassment on campus
- Addition of a diversity support dimension to all staff performance reviews
- New programming in Liberal Arts on global perspectives and cross-cultural and LGBTQQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning) subject matter

In 2010, President Maeda charged a Diversity Task Force (DTF) to propose a short-term plan to acknowledge, support, and celebrate the differences of faculty, staff, and current and prospective students. The DTF was asked to consider formulating institutional practices, policies, and projects that foster diversity, equity, and inclusion, to promote these initiatives campus-wide, and to conduct research to identify best practices applicable to RISD.

In spring 2011, faculty, staff, and students participated in a campus climate survey to gather data that would help the college to understand its current environment of diversity and inclusion as a benchmark for ongoing annual assessment. The results of the survey were presented and discussed in student, staff, and faculty forums in winter 2012.

A recommendation of the DTF was to replace the Task Force with a more permanent Diversity Steering Committee. Composed of the Interim Dean of Student Affairs (Chair), Vice President of Human Resources, and the Interim Associate Provost, the committee regularly updates the President and Cabinet, works with faculty and staff to implement policies and practices, resolves difficulties and mediates conflicts, sponsors training, and serves as a campus-wide resource on diversity.

General recommendations from the Diversity Task Force that have been integrated in the strategic include:

- Provide diversity training and educational programming to students, staff, and faculty
- Integrate diversity in the curriculum by developing diversity methodologies for studio pedagogy in art and design
- Expand opportunities for local/global service learning and civic engagement in the curriculum and programming
- Develop meaningful evaluation activities to improve or initiate conditions related to diversity

In addition to oversight provided by the Diversity Steering Committee, the implementation of these initiatives by responsible parties throughout the institution will also be annually reviewed.

Appraisal

With the appointment of a Senior Vice President for Students + Enrollment (See Standard Six: Students and other sections of the report), RISD has introduced a comprehensive recruitment strategy that sets enrollment targets for geographic, racial, and socioeconomic diversity. Outcomes are reviewed annually. In 2010, RISD recruited the most diverse incoming class in the past several years, with students of color representing 32% of the total. Since 2006, students from South Korea annually represent nearly 50% of RISD international degree program students. With recent recruitment efforts, RISD has increased enrollments from China and India. Fundraising for scholarships continues to be a priority of the current President and his administration. Regulating tuition and increasing financial aid also support socioeconomic diversity.

RISD developed faculty search guidelines to actively recruit and appoint the most outstanding and best-qualified candidates through its commitment to policies on fairness, integrity, and equal opportunity. We ensure diversity in our hiring practices by:

- Including an Equal Employment Opportunity statement in every position advertisement and, as applicable, a statement encouraging inquiries from candidates who will enrich and contribute to the cultural and ethnic diversity of our college
- Creating a broad marketing plan which includes a set of diverse publications, web sites, and minority and other appropriate national and professional journals; marketing plans often include international advertisement(s) when appropriate
- Requiring the search chair to submit a search plan, which includes, among other things, an outline of the methodology for recruiting a diverse pool of candidates

Projection

With the development of comprehensive recruitment strategies and targets that include goals for increasing the diversity of the RISD student body, we project that the college will see significant improvement in the next five years. Additionally, increased funding for scholarships will contribute to greater socioeconomic diversity at RISD. The college is committed to improving policies and practices to enhance the diversity of the faculty and staff.

Standard One: Mission and Purposes

Description

Critical Making/Making Critical: Strategic Plan 2012–2017 seeks to honor the past and legacy of RISD while setting clear, unambiguous pathways to the future. The process of developing the strategic plan engaged RISD’s faculty, staff, students, and trustees in the thoughtful consideration of the role the college plays in the world of art, design, and innovation. A number of questions guided this process.

- *What is the role of art and design education in the 21st century?*
- *How does RISD lead this inquiry in a manner that reflects what it is as an institution?*
- *Drawing from its rich past, what core values define the institution, and what initiatives will advance the college’s academic excellence?*
- *How can RISD best educate, support and cultivate creative agents in a changing world?*

The planning process has been a critical examination and confirmation of RISD’s current mission:

The mission of Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), through its college and museum, is to educate students and the public in the creation and appreciation of works of art and design, to discover and transmit knowledge, and to make lasting contributions to a global society through critical thinking, scholarship, and innovation.

Today, the college’s mission expresses a vision characterized by:

- Exceptional education grounded in deep, disciplinary learning that cultivates critical thinking and making, creativity and innovation, and continually evolves the practice and understanding of art and design
- Pedagogical innovation and integrated use of traditional and emerging technologies
- An open, enriching, and immersive curriculum in which students may construct individualized paths of learning with greater flexibility
- Research and discovery that celebrates and encourages myriad forms of art and design studies and scholarship, engages with society in responsible and consequential ways, and encourages new hybrid forms
- Exemplary service in support of students, from enrollment to entry into professional life
- Quality and excellence in all aspects of the college’s operations

Appraisal

RISD’s strategic plan is guided by the core values articulated in its mission. The plan endorses and expands on the college’s central commitment to teaching and learning, as a conserving and generative exchange. It focuses on immersive curriculum planning and enrichment, with enhanced opportunities for flexibility through a range of learning opportunities, including interdisciplinary, collaborative, and independent work for both undergraduate and graduate students. Vigorous support for both existing and prospective academic programs is enhanced by faculty development opportunities that support teaching excellence and innovation in art and design education. The strategic plan calls for a dynamic culture of research at RISD that develops and deepens art and

design studies and scholarship, and connects these to the world in meaningful ways. With its abiding commitment to critical making and innovation, RISD will continue to develop progressive ways to integrate and advance the use of traditional methods with new technologies.

Projection

Our strategic plan will be a resource and a tool to demonstrate how our mission is activated during the next five years. Building on its foundation of strong teaching, the college will create up to ten new full-time faculty positions/lines to support current programs and curriculum development, including discipline-based and interdisciplinary courses, an integration of public and socially engaged practice in the curriculum, collaboration with other local, national, and international partners and institutions, and a continued commitment to strengthen connections between academic initiatives and RISD Museum programs.

Through a more vigorous culture of research, RISD will increase opportunities for faculty members to pursue research in their fields, across disciplines, and with peers and partners from other universities and organizations. A key objective is to make the development of research processes, methodologies, and innovative applications a fundamental characteristic of a RISD education at the graduate level, as well as an increased feature for undergraduates. Externally, these objectives and actions will enhance the visibility and impact of the college's leading role in the discourse on art and design research and production in the world. It is anticipated that an enhanced articulation of RISD's distinct culture of research with its integration in art and design pedagogy will stimulate new opportunities for external grants, partnerships, and projects.

RISD's core strength, developed over its 135-year history, is its concentrated and expansive expertise in critical making. Continuing to build and develop new expertise that utilizes integrated technologies and connects knowledge around art and design production and innovation is key to our mission. Critical making—and critical thinking—is a central commitment and persistent pursuit that connects all academic programs and affirms the college mission.

Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation

Description

Planning

From 2009 to 2011, RISD conducted its most ambitious strategic planning cycle. The plan articulates and confirms institutional goals, objectives, areas of focus, and programmatic initiatives for the next five years. It also describes the scope, funding sources, action steps, and outcomes that will be measured to evaluate its success.

To support critical aspects and more constructive use of data in the planning process, a Director of Institutional Research was appointed in December 2010, and a part-time Institutional Research Analyst was hired in June 2011. The college is reimplementing Datatel, its current student information system, and has acquired additional tools to improve the analysis of institutional data. The Office of Institutional Research (IR) publishes a Fact Book each year that includes trend data on key variables, and a Dashboard of Key Performance Indicators has been developed for our the Board of Trustees. The IR office also provides data for academic program reviews and many *ad hoc* reports that assist the college in planning and assessment.

Evaluation

The E-series forms highlight the college's educational and learning objectives. Work will continue in the next few years to clarify student learning objectives and assess outcomes. In addition to critiques, the following information and data help to develop a more synthetic, developmental, and expansive assessment process:

- Exhibitions
- Portfolio reviews
- Job placements
- Graduate school admissions
- Feedback from external experts in the field
- Publications
- Internship supervisor/employer feedback
- Sponsored projects
- Student surveys/focus groups
- Thesis evaluations
- Receipt of local, regional, and national awards
- Alumni advancement and leadership in their respective fields
- Competitions

RISD has a high retention and graduation rate. Nearly 90% of first-time students graduate within six years of entering RISD. The success of graduated students is an institutional assessment resource that is collected and measured by several instruments. As students are about to graduate, the Career Center conducts a survey to determine their immediate plans. The following year, a subsequent survey reveals their actual employment or educational status. RISD also participates in

the College Senior Survey (conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA) and a companion instrument, the CIRP Freshman Survey. This survey compares student responses from freshman through senior year to identify changes that have taken place as a consequence of their RISD education. Additionally, RISD participates in a survey by the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP) to collect data about graduates' career paths.

External indicators of graduates' success can be seen in the number of juried and peer-reviewed awards, including Emmys and Oscars, Caldecott Medals, and National Design Awards; prestigious honors, including Fulbright grants and Guggenheim and Macarthur fellowships; and invitations to participate in major international competitive exhibitions such as the Venice Biennale and Whitney Biennial.

Academic Program Review

As part of an overall commitment to assure, maintain, and further develop the quality of academic programs at RISD, the Board of Trustees has established a cyclical process of academic program review and assessment. Academic program review is a critical process for the periodic evaluation of academic programs. Its purpose is to provide a regular opportunity for systematic reflection on curriculum, pedagogy, current status and new developments of the field, and other matters that affect the development of programs, departments, and divisions. Conducted every six years, this review includes the preparation of a department or division self-study with identification of key issues, a campus visit by an external review committee, receipt and review of the external review committee's report, department or division response to the external report, and the response and planning documents presented to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees. The process is coordinated and directed by the faculty and their academic leadership, monitored by the Office of the Provost and the Academic Affairs Committee.

Since its establishment by the Board of Trustees in 1985, the Visiting Committee Program has served as the primary method for the review of academic programs at RISD. A visiting committee is a team of professionals selected to visit and review an academic unit (division, department, or program) of the institution and to prepare a written evaluation of that unit. The purpose of the visiting committee is to provide an objective reference point and external perspective on questions of educational quality, changes in the fields or professions, and opportunities for improving or altering areas in need of change.

During academic year 2009–2010, the Visiting Committee Program was placed on hiatus so that the Academic Affairs Council and the Provost's Office could review its structure and operations in order to introduce reforms to the program. At the center of this review was the observation that visiting committees have not been fully integrated with other institutional processes for curriculum development and approval, facilities planning, resource allocation, or institutional strategic planning. The new guidelines retain the visiting committee as a central element of academic program review, and locate this external review within a larger, more inclusive, and more discursive process of self-study, evaluation, planning, and development.

Appraisal

The two-year development of the strategic plan has presented a number of opportunities to pilot and refine broad-based institutional planning and more effective forms of communication with the entire college community. The college has become more strategic and intentional in its orchestration of small focused working groups and subcommittees (there were at least eight convened during different stages of planning) with large, inclusive public forums for discussion and debate with RISD's different constituencies. As the plan has evolved, different trajectories of planning (academic, administrative, financial, facilities, and student services) moved from parallel paths to a more intricately braided series of coordinated conversations. Increasingly, what were once "siloes" deliberations have become more contextualized and integrated within an institutional perspective.

Projection

In spring 2011, a new academic program review process was introduced to provide more frequent reviews within an ongoing annual cycle of program assessment and planning. In the next five years, the college's growing facility and commitment to use data to inform decisions and future planning will support the management, development, and annual assessment of progress as related to strategic plan goals, objectives, and initiatives, and ultimately develop and support a stronger culture of continuous assessment and coordinated planning at RISD.

Standard Three: Organization and Governance

Description

The Board of Trustees of the Rhode Island School of Design routinely reviews and approves the annual audit, operating and capital budgets, annual and long-term institutional goals, tuition, room and board, faculty reappointments and promotions, and performs the annual evaluation of the President. The Board's Executive Committee—comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair/s, Secretary and Treasurer, and with the Chairs of the eight standing Board Committees—meets monthly with the President and Executive Cabinet. The Board Chairperson confers with the President weekly.

The Board is comprised of 29 term, 34 honorary, and 3 *ex-officio* trustees. In addition to the Executive Committee, there are eight standing committees: Academic Affairs (AAC), Audit, Committee on Trustees and Governance, Finance, Institutional Engagement, Investment, Student Affairs, and Museum Board of Governors (BoG). All committees meet at the full board meetings in October, February, and May. Several committees meet more frequently: Finance meets four times a year, Investment meets nine times a year, Committee on Trustees and Governance meets 11 times a year, and AAC meets 10 times a year or as necessary.

Since the 2006 NEASC/NASAD accreditation, the Board of Trustees formed a task force to undertake a comprehensive governance study that led to the broadened responsibility of the Committee on Trustees to include governance. The work of the task force has resulted in revision of the bylaws, new committee charters for eight committees, and the formation of two subcommittees: Compensation and Real Estate and Facilities. The Board has also engaged in proactive succession planning, as the chair of the Board will step down in May 2012.

In 2009, the Museum Study Group was formed to clarify the relationship, governance oversight, management reporting and financing of the Museum. The Museum Board of Governors is a committee with expanded authority within the RISD Board of Trustees. The Museum Director no longer reports to the President, but instead to the Chair of the BoG. The recommendations of the Museum Study Group were completed and presented to the full BoT in 2010. With the new reporting structure, the Museum Director is no longer a member of the President's Cabinet.

RISD is organized into the following administrative areas: Academic Affairs, Finance + Administration, Students + Enrollment, Institutional Engagement, Media, and Human Resources. Each area is lead by a Vice President reporting directly to the President and constituting the President's Cabinet. The President's Executive Cabinet includes the Provost, Executive Vice President for Finance + Administration, and Senior Vice President for Students + Enrollment. Both the Executive Cabinet and President's Cabinet meet weekly to discuss issues related to the college. In January 2012, President Maeda and Provost Somerson inaugurated an expanded Cabinet that includes Deans and the Associate Provost, and which meets monthly.

The President and Cabinet employ numerous vehicles for consultation and communication with different campus constituencies. Town hall meetings are scheduled when there are significant issues to share with the RISD community and where broad discussion is desired. The President also hosts monthly office hours for faculty, staff, and students.

The Human Resources group, together with the President's Cabinet, hosts a meeting for Administrative Managers two or three times each semester. The goal for the meetings is to provide updates, discuss initiatives and events across the community, build greater understanding of each area's priorities, and solicit feedback on new policies and procedures before they are implemented. In 2010, the President and Cabinet launched three Presidential Councils: the Budget Planning Council, Enrollment Council, and Facilities Planning Council. Chaired by a member of the Executive Cabinet, the Presidential Councils engage faculty, staff, and students in core operational aspects of the institution in monthly meetings.

The Academic Affairs Council (Provost, Associate Provost, and divisional Deans) meets weekly, and the extended Provost's Council (which includes the Dean of Continuing Education, Director of Library Services, Director of Academic Administration, Dean of Students, and Registrar) meets monthly. In order to promote greater communication, the Provost hosts two meetings each semester for Faculty Leadership Groups, including Deans, Department Heads, Graduate Directors, Executive Officers of the full-time and part-time faculty unions and the Faculty Meeting Steering Committee.

Governance and responsibilities are articulated in the full-time faculty and part-time faculty Collective Bargaining Contracts. At the time of the last accreditation visit, the four bargaining units were Public Safety Officers, and Museum Guards, and the two faculty groups. Since then, two more groups have organized into bargaining units: Technicians (2008) and Stationary Engineers (2010). In 2011 RISD moved from across-the-board salary increases to merit increases based on performance for all non-bargaining unit staff. This followed two years of successful reinvigoration and implementation of a performance review process.

Appraisal

The Cabinet structure allows for regular and direct discussion and decision-making related to matters of broad institutional concern. Staffing in administrative areas, particularly student services and information technology, has increased to keep up with the different needs and changing expectations of the student population. Since the last accreditation, the President has implemented broader structures for governance and communication that include RISD's constituent groups. The use of technology and e-systems to communicate across the campus has also increased.

Projection

RISD administration will continue to employ and expand on the processes and systems developed over the past three years to ensure broad and consistent communication and two-way flow of information between the administration and all campus constituencies.

Standard Four: Academic Programs

Description

RISD's academic programs remain consistently strong and vibrant. The paradigm of well-established, independent department cultures and immersive education remains a central feature of a RISD education; however, there are increased opportunities for students to pursue independent or collateral pathways to complement discipline-based education in art and design. For example, sponsored studios with external partners are often organized within or across academic divisions, co-taught by faculty members from different fields, and attract students from different majors. The Division of Graduate Studies continues to offer a rotating selection of trans-disciplinary seminars and studios open to all graduate students, as well as to undergraduates receiving permission of the instructor. Graduate studies courses are a common "horizontal" curriculum in RISD's predominantly "vertical" culture. A small number of undergraduate students pursue concentrations in one of the three departments (History of Art + Visual Culture, English, and History, Philosophy, + Social Sciences) in the Division of Liberal Arts or, less commonly, pursue double-majors in studio areas. RISD is examining potential flexible and permeable space in students' schedules and degree requirements to identify or create pathways and "way-finding" for self-structured or self-guided alternatives that support and complement the college's immersive, discipline-based education.

There have been several notable changes in RISD's academic programs. In fall 2008, the Brown/RISD Dual Degree Program accepted its first 15 students. Now in its fourth year, there are 60 undergraduates in the program, which requires separate acceptance at RISD and Brown as well as review and acceptance by an additional inter-institutional admissions committee. During the five-year program, students pursue a BFA degree at RISD and a concentration at Brown that leads to a BA (or occasionally a BS). While the program has attracted a remarkable and intrepid group of students, a number of obstacles create persistent challenges, including incompatible academic calendars, contrasting social and intellectual cultures, a lack of coordination of student services, and inter-institutional financial challenges, particularly for RISD. An interim review of the program was conducted in its third year (summer 2011), with a comprehensive five-year review scheduled for fall 2013.

In spring 2011, the Department of Interior Architecture revamped its graduate degrees. A two-year plus one summer Master of Design program was inaugurated for students without a professional degree in architecture. A one-year plus one summer Master of Arts in Interior Studies was developed for students with a Bachelor of Architecture degree. The Department of Architecture has developed an advanced-standing option for students who have completed non-professional undergraduate architecture degrees and who typically have completed the requirements of the first year of a three-year Master of Architecture program. The Master of Arts in Art Education has been reconfigured from a two-year program (one year at RISD and a second year off-campus completing a thesis) to a one-year intensive with a capstone degree project. In fall 2009, the Department of Industrial Design inaugurated a new 2.5-year Master of Industrial Design program that includes Wintersession and a spring semester prior to the established two-year program for selected students. In fall 2011, NASAD approved a new post-baccalaureate program in the Department of Jewelry + Metalsmithing.

RISD European Honors Program (EHP) in Rome celebrated its 50th year in 2011. Prior to this anniversary, EHP transitioned from a one-year program for 25 students to two independent 18-week sessions (12 weeks of coursework followed by 6 weeks of independent study), each of which enrolls 25 to 26 students. With this change, twice as many students now study in Rome, with two different faculty members serving as Chief Critic each year. With a growing commitment to global engagement and the development of an institutional strategy for “internationalizing” RISD, attention in the next few years will be directed to international studies, exchange programs and partnerships, and student and faculty projects, as well as academic support for RISD’s increased number of international students. Searches for a new Director of International Programs/Global Initiatives and an International Student Services Coordinator will begin in spring 2012.

With the appointment of a new director in fall 2010, the RISD Writing Center has become an increasingly effective resource for students and faculty in all disciplines who appreciate the significance of writing as a central feature of an art and design education. The center supports undergraduate and graduate students in the process of writing through one-to-one peer tutoring and non-credit workshops, provides resources for students and faculty about learning and teaching writing, and advocates for writing as a method and record of critical thinking and expression across all disciplines. In fall 2011, with a commitment to develop English for Speakers of Other languages (ESOL) capacity and function, the Writing Center hired a part-time ESL (English as a Second Language) writing specialist to support RISD’s international students. In fall 2009, the Division of Graduate Studies published *The Master’s Written Thesis Handbook*. This 85-page publication is given to all graduate students and Graduate Program Directors to support the process of thesis preparation, research, and writing.

In spring 2011, RISD reorganized its area of public engagement to coordinate and expand opportunities for students and faculty to pursue curricular and co-curricular projects with communities, private, and non-governmental organizations. Currently overseen by the Interim Associate Provost, public engagement opportunities help develop RISD’s role of responsible innovation, and ethical involvement in the public sphere, and its commitment to the idea of art and design as catalysts for social justice.

Appraisal

RISD has standing committees that review and adjudicate academic programs and policies. These faculty committees include: Academic Policy, Academic Standing, Curriculum, Wintersession, and Instruction. An inactive International Studies Committee recently was reinstated with a new charge. In addition to these committees, RISD recently revised its academic program review process (See Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation), which ensures that all departments and divisions undergo an academic program review every six years in addition to institutional accreditations (NEASC and NASAD) and professional program accreditations (NAAB, LAAB, and RIDE).

Projection

At this time, no new undergraduate programs are under consideration. There is, however, growing interest in the development of new graduate programs and new forms of providing art and design education for prospective students. There has been significant growth in the number of graduate students in the past 10 years, from 274 in 2001 to 424 in 2011. Increased attention is being directed to the summer session as a site for program experimentation, international courses and programs, selected topics and partnered studios, low-residency programs, teacher institutes, and independent and clustered research for faculty and graduate students. In addition to the summer, there is consideration of potential collaborations with other degree-granting programs and RISD Continuing Education as a flexible platform for innovative teaching and learning opportunities.

As it has done a number of times in the past, RISD will review its academic year schedule template for the fall and spring semesters with the goal of eliminating obstructions and conflicts between studio and liberal arts courses and identifying flexible space and designated times for cross-disciplinary electives that support students' strongly expressed desire for more academic permeability. Concurrently, the Wintersession Committee is reviewing the annual six-week session and considering models to diminish the compression between Wintersession, spring semester, and Commencement.

Standard Five: Faculty

Description

The RISD faculty, both full-time and part-time, participate extensively in the educational mission of the college through various roles, primarily teaching. Currently, the faculty includes 148 full-time and approximately 360 part-time members whose terms of employment are determined by two Collective Bargaining Units. Salaries for both full-time and part-time faculty are at or near the top tier of AICAD (Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design) schools and other peer institutions.

The standing committees (noted in Standard Four: Academic Programs) of the full-time faculty organization have an advisory role in developing and conducting academic programs and maintaining the standards and conditions that pertain directly to teaching, research, and student learning. Faculty members also serve in an advisory role on Presidential Councils, search committees, the RISD Research Initiative, and *ad hoc* committees or task forces appointed by the Provost. Faculty members participate in department and divisional meetings, offering ideas and input on academic issues to Deans, Department Heads, and Graduate Program Directors.

All full-time faculty members' performance is evaluated in three areas: teaching; professional activity including creative work, research, and/or scholarship; and service to the college (and frequently other professional organizations and community service). There is no formal review of part-time faculty.

RISD's strategic plan identifies a commitment to increase support for areas of faculty development, including teaching, pedagogy, instructional technology, and curriculum planning; research and dissemination of this work nationally and internationally; and other opportunities for innovation and collaboration across disciplines. The plan also recognizes that there will be a significant shift in faculty demographics in the next ten years as an increasing number of retirements are expected with a requisite increase in new junior faculty. Currently, all new full-time faculty members are assigned senior faculty mentors, however additional mentoring processes will be put into practice to ensure support and success for all new faculty. Additionally, efforts will be made to "capture" the knowledge, experience, and expertise of retiring faculty members to ensure smooth and productive transitions in departments and divisions.

Research

In spring 2011, a Director of Grants and Research was appointed, and a new part-time budget position to administer pre-grant, ongoing, and post-grant award budgets and compliance issues was created and filled. In fall 2011, RISD Research Initiative (RRI), a reconstituted research committee chaired by the Associate Provost, was convened with a charge to review all proposals for externally partnered studios as well as reports, information, and other recommendations regarding partnered research projects, including corporate, non-profit, foundation and granted research. Additionally, RRI proactively proposes, pursues, and advances opportunities for sited and international research, independent and collaborative faculty research that receives institutional support, and student research. A particular objective of the committee is to identify mission-based forms and content of research, including scholarly and theoretical, materials and

technology, and art and design pedagogy. RISD has made progress in establishing a more dynamic environment and supportive infrastructure for faculty research, but this will present new challenges and questions regarding faculty work, reassigned time from teaching, and the potential role and engagement of part-time faculty in research initiatives. Questions and concerns have been expressed about the role of research at RISD, and if, why, and how it eventually might be mandated. At this point, strengthening the culture of research at RISD is a way to enhance faculty development avenues and resources, to create opportunities for faculty members who seek to conduct research relevant to their interests, to reach across and engage other fields, and to participate in inter-institutional research with Brown University and other academic partners.

In 2010 RISD was identified as a partner institution for a National Science Foundation/EPSCoR (Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research) five-year, \$20 million grant titled “Infrastructure to Advance Life Sciences in the Ocean State.” This ambitious initiative aims to enhance research and development, competitiveness, and innovation in historically underfunded state jurisdictions. RISD’s particular role and focus is to increase capabilities in the visualization of science and new approaches for public understanding of science. RISD is developing nine research and innovation studios that are taught collaboratively and address challenges and opportunities at the intersection of science, art, and design. This has provided a platform for RISD to actively participate in research with partner institutions and scholars from other fields, as well as to pilot new studios and courses.

In spring 2011, with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Pioneer Portfolio, RISD organized a major national and international symposium. *Make It Better: A Symposium on Art, Design, and the Future of Healthcare* brought together a diverse group of artists, designers, public health leaders, healthcare providers, entrepreneurs, and innovators for two days of presentations and discussion on the intersection of art, design, and health. The relationship of public health, wellness, and art and design is a growing area of interest across a number of departments at RISD.

Advising

There is an Academic Advising Coordinator, generally a member of the faculty, as well as an Administrative Advisor, and an International Student Advisor in Student Affairs. The work of these individuals is coordinated to provide both functional advising on credits and progress to degree as well as proactive support for high-need students, including those on academic probation, returning from leave, or leaving RISD temporarily for personal, medical, or academic reasons. The International Student Advisor also manages all SEVIS compliance, I-20 endorsements, optional practical training applications, and procurement of social security cards and driver licenses, to help students manage living and working in Providence.

Many institutions of higher education accept academic advising as part of the teaching mission and faculty responsibility. Others envision advising as a form of institutional service. RISD seeks to cultivate and sustain a more accountable and dynamic commitment to academic advising on the part of all full-time faculty. An enhanced environment of academic advising and mentoring in creative, intellectual, and professional preparation areas connects in consequential ways to academic program development as well as student learning. Currently, part-time faculty members

do not advise students; however, this is something to be examined and considered in a larger evaluation of academic advising and adaptive learning at RISD.

Appraisal

With the leadership of Academic Affairs, there is a developing culture of support and accountability for faculty. Increased attention is being given to issues of faculty development, external and internal support (grants, sabbaticals, etc.) for research and creative work, opportunities to refresh, deepen, and develop new approaches to teaching, insights on innovative pedagogy and uses of educational technologies, and opportunities to participate in sponsored studios and other creative partnerships for publicly engaged teaching and scholarship.

Projection

In addition to adding 10 full-time faculty positions in the next five years, it is anticipated that increased attention will be directed to the part-time faculty. RISD has a remarkable community of part-time faculty who bring dedication and distinctive expertise to its curriculum and students. As noted in the 2006 NEASC/NASAD Joint Visitors' Report, part-time faculty members undergo no required formal review. Given the strong dependence of the RISD educational experience upon the performance of part-time faculty, the absence of a periodic review process should be examined. A more comprehensive institutional understanding of the existing and potential role and contributions of part-time faculty is a realistic and achievable goal for the future. It will be useful to examine this in conjunction with the released/reassigned time currently assigned to full-time faculty members.

Standard Six: Students

Description

With the establishment of a Division of Students + Enrollment and the appointment of a Senior Vice President in 2010, there have been significant changes in culture and support for students at RISD. Academic quality remains high, the diversity of the student body is richer, and the coordination, communication, and level of student services from point of inquiry to graduation have been improved. Services that support the out-of-classroom and studio experiences have been enhanced; others have been added to support students who need help with disabilities, and sexual orientation and gender support issues, as well as health and counseling needs.

Admissions

RISD has transitioned to an enrollment management model, and the Director of Admissions now reports to the Senior Vice President of Students + Enrollment. To ensure an applicant pool that reflects the college's diversity goals, the admissions office began using enrollment planning services and other research vehicles to direct its outreach for prospective applicants. A wide variety of recruitment activities continue to be used to ensure a sufficient number of high-quality applicants. Most recently, new recruitment practices have been initiated, including e-mail campaigns and social media (Facebook, Twitter, and blogs) to complement the print and electronic publications.

In 2010, the Enrollment Planning Council—whose membership includes faculty, staff, and administration—was established to provide strategic insight on enrollment issues. A new position to oversee systems was added to the Admissions Office. An early decision option was added in the 2011–2012 admissions cycle that allows students to complete the admissions process earlier. Deadlines for regular admission were set earlier to allow for increased folder review time. Reading protocols for admission have been adjusted to consider new factors in a holistic review of an applicant's file. Not only are academic transcripts, portfolios, drawing and writing samples considered—geographic, racial, and gender diversity are also used to evaluate and accept a well-balanced and diverse entering class.

Retention and Graduation

Retention and graduation rates are monitored by the Office of Institutional Research and distributed in the annual Fact Book (referred to in Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation.) RISD continues to have consistently high retention and graduation rates. Initiatives cited in the strategic plan will continue to enhance student services, as well as the experiences of students outside the studio and classroom.

Student Services

The creation of the Division of Students + Enrollment represents a new philosophy to guide student services at RISD. The Dean of Students oversees the following offices and positions: Advising, the Community Service Coordinator, Health Services, Residence Life, Student Development & Counseling Services, Multicultural Affairs, and the Center for Student Involvement.

Since 2008, staffing for student services has been reconfigured and increased. New positions include two Assistant Deans, Administrative Advisor, International Student Advisor, Community Service Coordinator, Clinical Counselor, part-time psychiatric intern for Psychiatric Care, Residence Life Assistant, Director of Housing Operations, three Graduate Assistantships in Residence Life, and administrative support for various offices. Searches are ongoing for several additional positions: Nurse Practitioner, Diversity Coordinator, and Disability Support Services Coordinator.

Recently, the Office of Student Life was reorganized as the Center for Student Involvement (CSI) to reflect its central role in campus life. The center advises 53 clubs, organizations, and athletic teams, undergraduate and graduate student government, and *The All-Nighter*. Last year the center hosted 202 events with more than 17,000 students in attendance. CSI, the Office of Residence Life, and the Office of Multicultural Affairs form a nexus of campus life, providing structure and support systems for students, clubs, and organizations outside the classroom. By working together, these offices uphold values of community, leadership, and cultural inclusivity. Undergraduate and graduate student alliances have important roles in student governance and are involved with campus committees, presidential councils, and academic departments.

Two other important aspects of campus life are a Community Service Office and Carr House. Remodeled in the summer of 2010, Carr House is a communal and student-centered one-stop shop for students wanting help with general college questions, how to get involved in campus life, or how to serve in the greater Providence community. The first floor has a student lounge, gallery, meeting space, and the Carr Haus café, a student-managed coffee shop. The second floor houses the Center for Student Involvement, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Community Service Coordinator, office space for Student Alliance representatives, the staff of *The All-Nighter* (an online student publication), and other clubs and organizations. The third floor serves as the central student services space. A newly redesigned fitness center in the first-year quad, along with numerous club sport teams, provides physical exercise opportunities on campus.

In 2010 Career Services was renamed the Career Center. The mission of the center expanded to include a greater focus on helping RISD students explore opportunities outside typical art and design fields and to increase their awareness about the transferability of their skills. A new director was hired in fall 2011 to support this focus. The Career Center also has a new advisor for Fulbright applicants and other prestigious scholarships and residencies. New programs have been created to focus on entrepreneurship, along with grants and residencies. *Artworks*, a robust database of jobs and internships, offers a user-friendly tool for employers and students to post and apply for positions.

In 2010 RISD participated in the Healthy Minds study sponsored by the University of Michigan's School of Public Health. The Student Development + Counseling Office moved to a location more suited to supporting a complete wellness experience. The staff consists of a director, two clinical counselors, and an administrative assistant. The office has expanded its clinical services and has partnered with Brown University Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior and Butler Hospital to provide a part-time psychiatric resident. The counseling staff also provides programming in the areas of meditation, yoga, and other contemplative practices. Health Services includes a director, secretary, a part-time physician, and part-time nurses. The area has expanded its hours and services, which include primary care, laboratory services through a local medical center, prescription pick-up and delivery, and referrals for Eastern and holistic medical needs.

Appraisal

The college consistently meets its goals for overall enrollment and incoming students. The quality of new freshmen has improved each year, as judged by academic measures such as GPA and SAT and ACT scores. Racial and ethnic diversity has improved, and gender balance is improving. An ambitious scope of student services that support the out-of-classroom experience have been developed and enriched under the new division.

Projection

Over the past five years, RISD has invested considerable energy and resources to enhance students' out-of-classroom experiences. New strategic planning goals build upon and consolidate these investments. The critical goals include expanded racial, economic, geographic, and gender diversity within the student body, a financial aid strategy to promote student diversity, increased levels of services in all areas that support student life, and admissions recruitment programs that ensure that a dynamic mix of student populations see RISD as their college of choice.

Standard Seven: Library and Other Information Resources

Description

The most significant change since the last accreditation is the 2006 relocation of the RISD library to the former banking hall at 15 Westminister Street. The design of a new, larger space has helped the library meet and often exceed its program goals. For example, with two new classrooms and the special-collections reading room, the number of classes has increased from 94 (1,292 students) before the move to 163 classes (2,919 students) in fiscal year 2010. In addition to the new physical space of the library, the virtual space of the library website (<http://library.risd.edu/>) has also increased, offering access to a wide range of resources and services, thus extending access to the library beyond traditional open hours. New staff positions include a reference and instruction librarian during evenings and on Sundays, an assistant in the Special Collections reading room, and a technical-support position shared with the museum and reporting to the Office of Information Technology.

Each of the librarians is assigned as liaison to three departments, providing a personal contact and conduit for library information and questions. The library website is promoted as the first place to look for information, and it includes links to a wide variety of research guides through the LibGuides software (<http://risd.libguides.com/index.php>). Librarians attend faculty meetings and serve on faculty committees, thus providing increased opportunities for outreach. Finally, a staff committee is currently developing a communications strategy for the library.

The addition of three new collections is one example of how the library is reimagining itself in the 21st century. These new collections are growing under the umbrella of the Visual Resources area. The RISD Digital Imaging Database (RDID) includes images scanned locally for teaching, as well as other digital collections created at RISD. This collection augments the 3 million images made available through subscriptions. Another collection is the Material Resource Center, a collection of more than 5,000 samples useful to a wide variety of disciplines on campus. This collection is developing in collaboration with faculty to provide hands-on experience with actual material samples as well as an informational database of new and emerging materials with an emphasis on sustainability. A recent initiative with the Graduate School of Design at Harvard could result in a shared database and a model for developing and managing such collections. Finally, architectural models comprise the third new collection. As a result of a recent gift from the Guggenheim Museum, two museum-quality architectural models of significant 20th-century buildings are now housed in our Picture Collection.

Appraisal

The library absorbed an 8% budget cut for fiscal year 2010 as the college responded to the economic climate and its impact on the endowment. This resulted in the layoff of one staff member, reduced hours for three other positions, and a 25% cut in the materials budget. The non-salary/non-materials budget was also reduced. Some of those funds have been reinstated, and the library has been fortunate to be the recipient of a significant number of gifts in recent years.

The library provides a good range of electronic resources, and over the past five years has made an effort to provide general databases as well as specialized art resources. The state of Rhode Island is also providing access to a number of databases. However, as is typical of libraries at art and design schools, the research and teaching needs of the liberal arts faculty cannot be met fully in the Fleet Library at RISD, and reliance on other resources (for instance, at Brown University) is still necessary. RISD is located close to the Brown libraries and recent agreements between the colleges have resulted in increased access for RISD students and faculty. The nearby Providence Athenaeum (an independent lending library) and the public library system are also available to faculty and students.

The library has not yet made an investment in e-books; those recorded on the Data First forms reflect full-text reference books available through subscriptions to CREDO (an online reference database) and Oxford Reference Online. When the book budget was cut to \$90,000 per year, it did not seem prudent to begin to experiment with this new format. Additionally, print serial subscriptions have declined, and an effort has been made to publicize the library's offering of e-journals.

The transition from analog to digital images for teaching is nearly complete. A robust and responsive system has been developed in the Visual Resource Center to help faculty with this transition; staff members identify or make digital images and train faculty in management and presentation software.

Since the last accreditation, there has been a significant growth in the role of librarians as teachers. In addition to the increased number of formal classes, the type of reference interaction has grown into richer discussions and tutorials to give students the resources they need to complete research. To support this work, investment has been made in additional software tools such as LibGuides, for research guides on specific subjects, and GoldRush, to help manage access points to electronic and print journals. We have also enhanced some of the software available through our primary vendor, Innovative Interfaces, most recently adding AirPac, their software application for a mobile interface for the library catalog.

The RISD Library teaches information literacy skills in a wide variety of class subjects to students, staff, and faculty. Teaching librarians work with faculty to integrate their instruction with library resources. The librarians incorporate the shared information with information literacy standards from the Association of College and Research Libraries and Art Libraries Society of North America, to develop instruction that teaches students the skills to conduct research in their field. The librarians generally deliver this instruction in standard classroom settings with a laptop and projector, or in studio settings. Instruction is evaluated through surveys given to faculty and students.

Projection

It is anticipated that the librarians' role as "knowledge navigators" will become even more critical; research work with both classes and individual students will increase. Librarians are exploring new ways to deliver instruction, such as online research guides, blogging, iPads, and mobile apps. The archivists will provide leadership on campus for the retention and preservation of digital

institutional records. The library will continue to collect print materials, but will expand holdings of digital collections through both acquisition and creation. The Material Resource Center will be established as a key collection supporting research and teaching. Students' attitudes toward library services will continue to be evaluated through biennial library surveys and class evaluations, as well as student involvement on the Library Committee.

Standard Eight: Physical and Technological Resources

Description

Physical and Technological Resources

Rhode Island School of Design continues to provide appropriate physical resources to fulfill the institutional needs and the mission of the college. Detailed planning and proper maintenance of all physical resources serve to provide an environment where the facilities enhance the learning process and reflect RISD's leadership in the art and design education. The campus is comprised of 53 academic, administrative, and residential facilities located on the historic east side and downtown areas of Providence. One additional property is located in Barrington, RI. The total gross square footage is 1.66 million. The average age of RISD's buildings is 112 years, with 85% listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The urban location and age of our buildings present recognized challenges. Since the last NEASC report, RISD has gained building square footage. Eight buildings located on South Main Street, which were purchased in 2000 as investment properties, are now the maintenance responsibilities of the Facilities staff. This operational change began as of July 2010.

Classrooms and Other Facilities

Space utilization, in relation to academic needs and program requirements, is monitored continuously and reviewed annually through the capital budgeting process. Strategic, mission-supported projects since the last accreditation include:

- The Fleet Library at RISD, located at 15 Westminster, opened in 2006 (See Standard 7: Library and Other Informational Resources)
- The Chace Center, RISD's first new construction since 1985, opened in September 2008, and provides museum and student exhibition space, additional classroom space for RISD's first-year Foundation Studies program, a 200-seat auditorium, and a retail showroom space open to the public
- Memorial Hall, renovated in 2007 as part of the Chace Center plan in support of the Painting Department. State-of-the-art ventilation systems were installed as well as a code-compliant fire safety system and ADA-accessibility accommodations
- The Bank Building, home of the Furniture Design Department, was renovated in 2009; circulation and basic building systems were upgraded and an internal fire egress stair was installed
- Renovations to the Carr House were completed in the summer of 2011; heating and cooling systems were modernized and code-compliant fire systems and an elevator were installed

Future plans to improve facilities include renovations to the Illustration Studies Building beginning in summer 2012. The project will add new space and improve the quality of existing space while addressing code compliancy. The college also plans to continue re-developing the admissions space to enhance the experience of visiting students.

Safety

Safety on the Rhode School of Design's campus is the responsibility of the combined efforts of the departments of the Office of Risk Management and Compliance, Public Safety, Environmental Health and Safety, and Facilities. The departments meet monthly to address issues and discuss concerns. Public Safety provides security to the college campus 24 hours a day, seven days a week, patrolling grounds and campus buildings. All buildings are secured with exterior card-access systems. Emergency telephones are available in all buildings, and code-blue telephones are strategically located across the campus. An online software system that manages locks in student rooms has been updated. To improve safety and security in the student accounts area of the business office, a new door with card access, a panic button, and security windows were installed in 2011.

The Department of Environmental Health and Safety develops and implements programs that ensure RISD's compliance with all state and federal regulations. Department and studio inspections are scheduled regularly, and results are reported to all vested parties. Shop training programs are held in cooperation with department technicians for the safe handling of tools and materials.

Facilities Planning

The Facilities Planning Council is responsible for making recommendations regarding the planning, evaluation, and prioritization of facilities development and space planning initiatives at RISD, in accordance with institutional priorities. The council currently is developing a planning process for a new campus master plan. RISD's first comprehensive campus master plan was completed in 1996 and updated in 2005. Elements of the new plan will include an analysis of physical inventory and space utilization; an updated facility condition analysis and a utility infrastructure analysis are now in progress. A housing master plan was recently completed by Brailsford & Dunlavey and will be incorporated into long-term planning. Other elements of the master plan will include historical preservation and neighborhood and community interaction.

Information Systems

RISD provides built-in service resiliency through a network architecture leveraging a fully redundant network core. The Office of Information Technology (OIT) has developed a private cloud strategy utilizing virtual server technology that reduces downtime and enables faster system deployment. OIT will be extending its virtual server farm to a secondary on-campus data center to support critical services failover. To safeguard the integrity of the college's computing and electronic communication resources, OIT monitors data traffic for unusual network activity, violation of applicable college policy, and violation of criminal law. Violations are reported to the Technology Incident Response Team.

Physical and Electronic Environments

Wireless network and Internet connectivity is available in most academic and administrative buildings. In 2009, RISD completed a campus e-mail migration from Novell GroupWise to Google Apps for Education (GAE). GAE brings the RISD community together through ubiquitous web-based mobile accessibility and the integration of tools for effective communication and collaborative working, sharing, and learning. More than 30 departmental, specialty, and public computing facilities provide the RISD community with 390 computers for academic use. A core set of design and media software applications is available in all computing facilities. In addition to this core software suite for the campus, discipline-specific specialty software is made available in various departmental computing facilities.

The RISD Laptop Program now includes eight participating academic departments and more than 1,200 students college-wide. This integrated technology program is designed to support the individual curricula and educational objectives of each participating department (Industrial Design, Graphic Design, Furniture Design, Interior Architecture, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Photography, and Digital + Media). Black-and-white and/or color laser printing is provided in computer labs and in various academic departments. Large-format printers and plotters are located in departments where appropriate to the discipline. All faculty members have access to computing, including the use of RISD's Murphy Faculty Research Computer Lab, located in the Fleet Library at RISD.

Information Technology

RISD identified that the number of OIT staff in the applications area was inadequate to support the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system and the numerous ancillary systems in use at the college. Additional operating funds were allocated to OIT, resulting in the addition of several new positions including: Director, Enterprise Systems and Services Database Administrator, Web/SharePoint Administrator, two Lead Applications Analysts, a Senior Business Intelligence Analyst, and a Project Manager. Additionally, RISD has initiated a multi-year, multi-million dollar capital program with Datatel. The scope of this program includes training, improvement, and expansion initiatives for Finance, Human Resources, and Student Information Systems, as well as changes and improvements to the underlying technology supporting the ERP.

In an effort to align OIT with institutional objectives while balancing limited resources and competing needs, two governance bodies have been formed. The first is the ITSC, or Information Technology Steering Committee, and the second is the DTSC, or Datatel Steering Committee. The ITSC has been charged with providing oversight and prioritization of OIT requests and initiatives. The DTSC assists with implementation and removal of barriers as they relate to the Datatel Improvement Program. Both committees are comprised of users representing various areas within the college.

Appraisal

Facilities operations has worked diligently to maintain and upgrade fire and life safety systems on campus, rigorously implementing timely preventative maintenance, in-house testing, and quarterly testing as required by Rhode Island state code. Deficiencies are prioritized and contracted to licensed and insured vendors. Building renovations are scoped to include fire system and accessibility code requirements and upgrades.

RISD ensures appropriate indoor air quality while respecting the historical character and preservation guidelines of its buildings. Air quality concerns are addressed immediately, with appropriate testing, air quality studies when necessary, and repairs to systems. Major renovations and new construction provide opportunities for upgrades and revisions in ventilation design, keeping systems sufficient for the program and suitable for the building in which it exists.

Considering the age of RISD's buildings, concerns about deferred maintenance and modernization are persistent. An updated building condition analysis is planned as part of the campus master planning process to quantify and prioritize deficiencies in preparation for capital budget planning.

In order to evaluate our physical resources and performance against similar colleges, RISD participated in the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers (APFA) Facilities Performance Indicators (FPI) survey for fiscal year 2009–2010. The survey confirmed that its Facilities Department is understaffed and underfunded. Guided by the college's strategic plan, facility master planning will incorporate ongoing survey results for sustainability into the future.

Projection

The following objectives align with the strategic plan and include considerations of historic preservation, and community and city planning:

- Examine and improve on the three-year evergreen capital budget process in order to adequately address deferred maintenance
- Develop a facility master plan that aligns with the college's strategic plan
- Develop a space analysis database to measure program growth and facilities needs in line with national guidelines and academic programs
- Commission an update to the facility condition (deferred maintenance) analysis
- Develop the housing master plan
- Continue with the utility infrastructure analysis

Standard Nine: Financial Resources

The information in Standard Nine highlights and complements information provided in Area of Emphasis Two.

Description

Revenue

Four main financial drivers of college revenue are tuition, enrollment, endowment draw, and annual giving. In response to national concerns about college affordability, RISD has steadily slowed the growth of its tuition increases from 5.9% for academic year 2006–2007 to 3.9% for 2011–2012. The averaged annualized enrollment has remained steady, at about 2,310 students. Enrollment increased to 2,340 in 2010–2011, but this was not sustainable in terms of infrastructure and instructional capacity, and the college returned to 2,310 for 2011–2012 to maintain academic quality.

RISD's endowment was significantly affected by the economic downturn. The quarterly highpoint was December 2007, when the value was \$373.9 million. The low point was March 2009, when it dropped to \$254.3 million. It has since rebounded, and the June 2011 value was \$304.5 million. In response to the downturn, the trustees suspended the 12-quarter 5% formula and reduced the draw by about \$5.8 million for 2009–2010. The college froze salaries, eliminated positions, and reduced expenses to focus on core mission. Making these significant reductions at once allowed the college to reposition itself at this new base without requiring significant cuts over several years. The draw amount was increased for 2010–2011 and 2011–2012. The goal is to return to a formula distribution for the 2012–2013 budget that balances the long-term need to maintain the purchasing power of the endowment with the need to appropriately support the operating budget. In July 2011, the college engaged a new investment firm, Summit Rock, with the goal of attaining a higher return on a well-diversified portfolio balanced with the appropriate amount of risk. The new Vice President for Institutional Engagement is developing fundraising strategies to increase gifts to RISD's endowment as well as annual giving to augment the operating budget.

Expenses

While expenses needed to be reduced due to the economic crisis, RISD has protected its core academic programs. Instruction as a percent of total operating expenditures was 36.1% in 2006–2007 and 36.3% in 2010–2011. Increasing our financial aid discount rate is a strategic goal; our rate increased from 13.9% in 2006–2007 to 16.3% in 2010–2011.

Salaries and fringe benefits constitute about 55% of the college's unrestricted budget. Salaries were frozen for 2009–2010, and since then pool increases have been about 3%. Fringe benefit costs are driven primarily by national health care and pension costs. Human Resources is actively engaged in negotiating with our healthcare provider and reviewing the plan design to control costs. The pension contribution for administrative non-bargaining unit staff was reduced from 10% to 8%.

Non-personnel budgets were increased 2% annually for 2010–2011 and 2011–2012. These increases were not applied across the board, but rather were held at the Cabinet level for distribution for strategic purposes.

The capital allocation was reduced from \$6.14 million in 2008–2009 to \$5.7 million in 2009–2010. The budget was restored to \$6.475 million in 2010–2011 and \$6.5 million in 2011–2012. This still does not adequately cover depreciation, which is currently \$9.9 million, thus there is accumulated deferred maintenance.

The Budget Planning Council and Facilities Planning Council review the key revenue and expense drivers and advise on strategies to balance the competing priorities.

Financial Position

In 2010–2011, the college's total assets increased by \$30.9 million, representing a 5.8% increase from 2009–2010. Total liabilities decreased by \$5.6 million, or 2.5%. Total net assets increased by \$36.4 million, or 11.7%, from \$311.9 million to \$348.3 million. The statement of activities reflects \$3.7 million in operating income. Operating income for recent years was \$756 million in 2006–2007, \$521 million in 2007–2008, \$1.8 million in 2008–2009, and \$5.3 million in 2009–2010. The college's Moody's bond rating is A1. In each of the past six years, there have been audits without findings of significant deficiencies or material weaknesses.

Appraisal

The world economy has changed markedly since the last accreditation. The impact has been felt at RISD, but the trustees and the administration responded prudently to ensure the long-term financial health of the institution while staying true to the college's mission. The college uses five main ratio measures to monitor financial health in relation to our strategic goals.

- **Net Tuition Dependency:** In 2004–2005, RISD was 69.3% tuition dependent. In 2008–2009, due to growth in the support from the endowment, the ratio dropped to 63.9%. Because of the economic crisis and its effect on the market value of the endowment and the resulting reduction in the draw, the ratio for 2009–2010 increased to 66.9% and stayed at that ratio for 2010–2011. Growth in the market value of the endowment and a return to a spending formula may positively affect this ratio.
- **Financial Aid Discount:** In 2004–2005, RISD's rate was 12.2%. As a result of intentionally increasing the financial aid discount rate to promote socioeconomic diversity and better leverage financial aid to meet enrollment goals, our rate was 14.4% in 2008–2009, 15.4% for 2009–2010, and 16.3% for 2010–2011. RISD's President is actively engaged in fundraising for financial aid, and he also directed the allocation of \$1 million of 2009–2010 operating net income into the endowment for financial aid.
- **Debt Burden Ratio:** In 2004–2005 RISD's debt burden ratio was 6.9%. Additional debt was taken out in 2006–2007 for strategic capital needs, so by 2008–2009 the ratio was 7.5%.

For 2009–2010, the rate was 7.1% and was down to 6.9% for 2010–2011. There are no plans to take on more debt, so the ratio is expected to drop further.

- **Primary Reserve Ratio:** This ratio measures the financial strength of the institution by comparing expendable net assets to total expenses. A generally accepted guideline is to be at least at .40. In 2004–2005, RISD’s ratio was 4.1. In 2008–2009, it was 2.2, for 2009–2010 it was 2.4, and for 2010–2011 it was 2.6. These ratios are much higher than the suggested .40 because of the large proportion of our endowment that is unrestricted or temporarily restricted, which provides RISD with important financial flexibility.
- **Viability Ratio:** This ratio measures one of the most basic determinants of financial health—the availability of expendable net assets to cover debt should the institution need to settle its obligations immediately. A ratio of 1 indicates sufficient expendable net assets to pay off all long-term debt. In 2004–2005 RISD’s ratio was 2.3. Because new debt was taken on in 2006–2007 and the market value of the endowment dropped, the ratio dropped to 1.4 for 2008–2009. For 2009–2010, it was 1.5, and for 2010–2011 it was 1.6. These ratios are above 1 because of the large proportion of the endowment that is unrestricted or temporarily restricted.

Although these measures indicate that the college is in sound financial condition, RISD, like most institutions, faces challenges in meeting competing strategic needs. RISD will need to continue to recruit and retain excellent students, faculty, and staff while maintaining and modernizing our facilities and equipment. Additionally, it will be important to maintain the balance of the college’s endowment. With national attention on the rising costs of higher education and institutional accountability, the strategic plan will provide guidance in important decision-making for the college’s financial future.

Projection

The strategic plan will focus on both academic and support operations. The Budget Office has developed a preliminary multi-year financial plan to quantify the initiatives and identify funding sources. The college is increasingly focused on using data and measures to assess its financial position. As mentioned previously in this report, a dashboard of key performance indicators has been developed to monitor academic excellence, student and enrollment data, and fundraising metrics, as well as the financial ratios noted above. These data are reported to the trustees and used by senior management to measure areas for improvement or progress towards ensuring that RISD remains the premier school of art and design. Many of the college’s financial issues that need to be addressed, such as increasing the financial aid discount rate and adequately meeting capital needs, will not be resolved in one or two years. The college has a sustained commitment to achieve these goals over time.

Standard Ten: Public Disclosure

Description

Like other institutions of higher education, RISD has eliminated a large proportion of paper publications in favor of online versions. Paper versions of course catalogs are still published, in addition to admissions, financial aid, and orientation materials. Many RISD offices retain paper versions of online materials. A printed campus telephone directory is still distributed, and the *RISDxyz* alumni magazine is a print publication.

Information about RISD is easily accessible to anyone with a connection to the Internet. Issues relating to public disclosure are adequately addressed on the college's website, www.risd.edu. General information, admissions requirements, academic programs, continuing education programs, and museum information is available through links on the home page. Choices on the main page cater to specific audiences (students, parents, and alumni) to more efficiently direct people to the information they need.

In the case of prospective students and their parents, the website provides all of the information needed to make an informed decision about pursuing a RISD education. To get information regarding the application process, the requirements for admission, the costs of attendance, students and parents can click on the Admissions link on the main page or go directly there via <http://www.risd.edu/Admissions/>. Information about financial aid is housed under the admissions page and includes current tuition and fee information. A Request Information link allows individuals to request a hard copy of our catalogs or to access pdf versions on that page. Information about visiting the campus is also under the Admissions link.

The Parents link on the main page (<http://www.risd.edu/parents/>) leads to most of the information found under Admissions, and includes direct contact information for key RISD personnel, frequently asked questions (FAQs), and links for billing and the Career Center.

RISD has created a web page that addresses the disclosures required by the Higher Education Opportunity Act. The information (<http://www.risd.edu/Students/Policies/Disclosures/>) appears in the form of a FAQs page.

RISD's audited financial statements are available on the website at:
http://www.risd.edu/About/History_Mission_Governance/Governance_Documents/.

The undergraduate and graduate catalogues can be found at:
http://www.risd.edu/Admissions/View_Catalogue/. Both catalogues describe the full range of academic programs, facilities, faculty and student highlights, and admissions information. Only classes that will be taught are listed on the website. Past versions of the catalog are available on the Registrar's web pages. Hard copies of catalogs going back to the earliest years of the college are located in the Library Archives.

Information about the faculty can be found on the web pages associated with each department. Information about the administration and RISD Board of Trustees is also located on the website http://www.risd.edu/About/History_Mission_Governance/Leadership/.

Documentation regarding alumni awards, survey results, and other data that supports graduates' achievements are available through the Institutional Research office. Faculty achievements and credentials are available through Academic Affairs.

Appraisal

In 2010, RISD Media launched a major redesign of the institutional website and presence. The process was developed and revised through a consultative process with campus constituencies. The goal was to create a more broadly representative and navigable site for people to locate information. The result has been a more dimensional, informative, and active representation of the college. During this time, many campus departments and organizations, in consultation with Media, have developed Wordpress sites that link to the homepage.

Projection

RISD Media will continue to serve as a centralized site for external communication about the college. The work of the area includes representation management, public relations, publications, and online information and content. The continued coordination of these responsibilities will help to ensure consistency, accuracy, and the quality and character of college communications. Media will continue to develop policies and protocols regarding social media while thinking innovatively about how to best use these tools and resources in the future for prospective and current students, faculty, staff, and members of the public.

Standard Eleven: Integrity

Description

Through a regular process of review, revision, and communication, and through consistent application of its policies and practices, RISD strives to maintain and encourage high ethical standards in its dealings with its students, faculty, staff, trustees, and external constituencies. Policies related to integrity are collected and communicated primarily in RISD's Faculty Handbook, Staff Handbook, and Student Handbook, each of which has undergone substantial revision and updating since the last accreditation.

Among the new features are:

- A completely new Code of Student Conduct, redesigned and rewritten from the ground up to move away from what had become an overly “legalistic” approach to student discipline and to refocus on and reemphasize an educational and developmental approach
- A substantially revised Academic Code of Conduct, including a clearer articulation of the various forms of academic misconduct and set of new procedures for implementing them. The academic code also ties in to the new Code of Student Conduct procedures. For the first time, the new Academic Code specifically addresses the unique academic misconduct issues that can arise with respect to studio work
- A new Standard of Conduct for all employees. Like the new Code of Student Conduct, the Standard of Conduct takes an aspirational approach. The standard specifically addresses the issues of conflict of interest and conflict of commitment; provides various avenues for reporting suspected illegal or unethical behavior, including anonymously; and prohibits retaliation against those who make such reports
- A revised and updated Policy on Discriminatory Harassment. As part of a “risk reduction initiative” undertaken with the assistance and support of our primary insurer, United Educators, RISD has broadened its former sexual-harassment policy into a policy covering all forms of discriminatory harassment, has recently disseminated it to all employees, and is about to embark on a two-year process of training all employees on it
- A revised staff problem resolution process, which provides non-bargaining unit employees with a method of resolving matters concerning dissatisfaction with work-related issues at the college
- New policies and procedures concerning fire safety, missing students, and other matters as called for by new Clery Act and HEOA requirements

At the same time, RISD has been working to strengthen its governance and oversight (See Standard Three) while also increasing transparency by the establishment of a new public website for the disclosure and dissemination of key governance and financial documents to both the RISD community and the general public (See Standard Ten: Public Disclosure). Further, as noted in Standard Five, the Office of Grants and Research was recently established to assist the college in tracking, understanding, and complying with general legal reporting and assurance requirements.

Appraisal

Given the rapid pace of new compliance requirements and constantly evolving standards of care and best practices, “integrity” is more a target that is never quite reached, rather than an accomplishment that can be checked off and forgotten. RISD has a solid record with respect to integrity, but, like all institutions, must constantly strive to keep up and improve, and it is committed to doing so.

Projection

RISD will continue to review and strengthen its integrity-related policies as needed. Current and anticipated projects include:

- A review and revision of the Trustee Conflict of Interest Policy and related disclosure forms, including their likely expansion to cover senior staff.
- The implementation of a new Whistleblower Policy and establishment of a new anonymous reporting hotline through an independent outside vendor. Already drafted, the new policy is moving through institutional approval processes
- A review, revision, and coordination into one central handbook of RISD’s key financial and administrative policies
- The development of a “policy on policies” to better outline the process for institutional approval of new and revised policies
- Continued attention to compliance efforts, particularly in the area of data and other privacy policies

Plans

The newly adopted *Critical Making/Making Critical: Strategic Plan 2012-2017* presents an institutional vision of how RISD can best educate and support artists and designers for a changing world in ways that respect the college's founding ideals, mission, and current roles locally and globally.

RISD's planning process involved careful consideration of the dynamics of the changing landscape, including a weak economy, intense competition for strong undergraduate and graduate students, and emerging conditions and technologies that encourage new ways of teaching and learning. The process widely engaged all campus groups in setting a direction for the course of the plan. The plan represents and articulates strategic priorities and outlines clear goals and how they will be assessed. Setting priorities, in turn, has helped to guide choices and will direct efforts and financial resources over the life of the plan.

The highest priority is to enhance RISD's education model, one that nurtures critical making, thinking, and innovation through immersive disciplinary learning and engagement in the practices of art and design. Along with an emphasis on teaching and educational excellence, the plan ranks research, critical making and innovation, student engagement, and diversity among its priorities. To support its mission, RISD will strengthen its support infrastructure, focused on clearly defined objectives. The plan proposes the following strategic goals between 2012 and 2017:

- Dynamic, innovative academic programs through faculty renewal, enriched and flexible curriculum, and a culture of teaching excellence and innovation
- A distinctive culture of research that supports art and design studies and scholarship, connects to society in meaningful ways, and makes visible RISD's leading role in this realm
- Exceptional critical making and innovation through the development and integrated use of traditional methods and new technologies
- Responsive academic resources and student services that recruit, retain, and prepare top students for success
- An inclusive, diverse learning culture in support of educational and organizational excellence
- Effective, efficient information technology and administrative systems
- Effectively maintained and upgraded institutional facilities to support the work of RISD
- Additional resources generated to support RISD's academic goals

Successful implementation of the plan will prepare students to be thinkers, makers, and innovators in a world of increasing volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. It will expand RISD's leadership role of cultural influence in the greater Providence community, across the nation, and around the globe. Finally, it will honor the college's rich past while building its capacity to shape a future with confidence, creativity, and passion for excellence in art and design education.

Critical Making/Making Critical, is both affirmational and aspirational. It reaffirms and builds on time-honored disciplinary and pedagogical strengths of the institution; it explores the role of art and design education in the 21st century; and presents a vision of how RISD can lead this inquiry in a manner that best represents its mission.