



## Pursuit of Excellence Plan

January 11, 2018

As part of the overall “stabilize, invest, and grow” approach, ESF leadership will continue its plan to grow out of the College’s fiscal challenges rather than cut an already lean set of programs. The guiding principles are that ESF will:

- Support the College as a doctoral granting, high-level research institution focused on science (natural and social), technology and engineering (STEM) disciplines, and professional design and management programs;
- Implement a growth-oriented framework that does not identify reductions in the workforce;
- Extend beyond the elimination of the structural budget gap to build the resources needed across the institution; and
- Support the College’s eight goals as described in the *Vision 2020 Update*.

President Quentin Wheeler, working with the leadership of ESF Board of Trustees, is instituting the following initiatives and changes in personnel, duties and organization, which are intended to strengthen ESF's pursuit of excellence.

### **Academic Department Leadership**

Provost Nosa Egiebor has announced a system of rotation for department chairs. Going forward, chairs will be appointed to three-year terms, renewable once. It is in the interest of the institution to periodically have new academic leadership and fresh ideas, and continually motivate workforce diversification and institutional strength. Changes in EFB, FNRM and PBE will become effective as soon as replacements are named. All three individuals currently in the chair roles will retain their faculty member positions, and will have the opportunity to contribute to College leadership in other ways.

Chairs of all academic departments will work with ESF leadership and the College community throughout 2018 to identify optimum structures for a potential reorganization of academic departments to allow for increased transdisciplinary engagements in the College-approved *Vision 2020 Update* areas of:

- Biodiversity, natural history, and biomimicry
- Earth, air, water and life
- Ecological design and engineering
- Environmental and natural resource planning and management
- Environmental communications, values, equity and justice
- Environment, human health and quality of life
- Natural products and sustainable energy and materials

- Social, economic and ecological systems.

Information developed by the 2014-15 strategic planning process working groups will be considered, as will information from a new strategic planning effort to start in 2018.

### **Visibility, Communication, Development and Marketing**

#### **Office of Visibility and Marketing:**

Building on a recent SUNY grant, a new Office of Visibility and Marketing reporting to the President will focus on ESF's regional, national and international visibility, including increased promotion of faculty, staff and student research accomplishments. This office will measure its success, in part, by meeting out-of-state student enrollment targets and expanding the number of private and foundation philanthropic connections and gifts, statewide, nationally and internationally. Erin Craig will be the Interim Executive Director of this office until that position is filled permanently, and she will oversee the day-to-day responsibilities of the staff. She will remain as Associate Provost for Enrollment Management. Duties and functions of the previous Office of Communications will comprise the new office, including athletic promotion and reporting, brand management, publications, social media interactions, website administration and others. The new Executive Director will focus on meeting marketing and visibility goals set by an inter-office advisory group chaired by VP for Government and External Relations Maureen Fellows, and will include representatives from Admissions, Alumni Affairs, Enrollment, Development and the President's Office. The group will meet bi-weekly to adopt and track priorities. It will implement a market experiment on the West Coast in 2018.

#### **Director of News Services:**

Claire Dunn (current Director of the Office of Communications) has been named Director of News Services for the College. Her duties include strengthening communications from the President's Office and the College's executive team to both internal and external audiences, as well as engaging the media on behalf of the College. This will include a weekly internal update to the College community, collaboration with Alumni Affairs and others, daily and weekly web homepage updates, preparation of press releases, promotion of the College to the media, and management of requests from the press. This also includes helping to implement monthly Town Hall meetings to improve communication between the executive team and larger College community. She will continue to report to VP Maureen Fellows in her new role.

#### **Development Team:**

A College development team including the President, Provost, Chief of Staff, Chief Financial Officer, VP for Government and External Relations, Associate VP for Development, Offices of Visibility & Marketing and Alumni Affairs, and the entire Development Office team will meet monthly to continually refine and realign development goals with needs and opportunities. The team will place emphasis over the coming year on: (a) national prospects and cultivating donors outside of New York; (b) selling an inspiring vision of ESF at the institutional level, in addition to selected faculty and project-level priorities; (c) attaining annual fund-raising targets; (d) better aligning College Foundation activities with College goals and needs; and (e) developing a capital campaign to begin in 2019.

## **Sustainable Facilities, Properties and Operations**

### **Physical Plant and Facilities:**

The existing Physical Plant and Facilities unit is being reorganized into two separate entities: the Department of Facilities Planning, Design and Construction; and the Department of Facility Operations and Services. The purpose of the change include:

- Accelerate multiple construction and renovation projects at College properties;
- More effectively meet needs surrounding accessibility, inclusivity, equity, safety, labs and teaching facilities, and do so in a timely manner;
- Align functions and leadership of the two units more efficiently;
- Better recognize the value of employees in both areas;
- Create related research and scholarship opportunities for faculty and staff; and
- Enhance customer service to the College community.

The Facilities Planning, Design and Construction portfolio will include existing capital projects, major critical maintenance projects, College master planning coordination and development, campus expansion potential, liaison with forest property management and related capital improvement efforts, and re-activating and re-constituting the College Capital Planning Committee.

The Facility Operations and Services portfolio includes minor critical maintenance projects, cleaning/janitorial, mechanical efforts, trades, grounds, mailroom, and energy projects and energy management.

Gary Peden (current Director of Physical Plant and Facilities) is being named as Director of Facilities Planning, Design and Construction. A new Director of the Department of Facility Operations and Services will be hired after an internal/external search. This person will have expertise and training in the area of facilities operations, work to increase the recognition and quality of work-life for the employees in the unit, and focus on excellent customer service. An interim director will be appointed while the permanent search is underway. A detailed review of need for front-line staff (custodians, janitors, grounds, trades workers, etc.) and working conditions will immediately take place in partnership with CSEA.

### **Energy Conservation, Development and Controls (ECDC) Division:**

ECDC will be a new, focused division led by Energy Manager Josh Arnold reporting to the new Director of the Department of Facility Operations and Services. The intent is to create a nimble group that will increase attention to energy efficiency, conservation, management, and the development of renewable sources for 100% of the College's energy needs. The current College Sustainability Committee Energy Working Group, led by FNRM Sustainable Energy Management faculty members (and staff and students) will become the ECDC Advisory Committee.

A deliberate evaluation process will take place resulting in a realignment of other current staff within Physical Plant & Facilities into the two redefined departments and new Energy Division.

### **Sustainability Coordination:**

A new Sustainability Coordinator full-time position will be created to accelerate movement toward a more sustainable campus (including remote properties), and achievement of Platinum status in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS). This includes the ability to more effectively apply for grant funding, identify cost savings, manage sustainability projects, coordinate the College Sustainability Committee and its working groups, create associated research and scholarship opportunities, help position ESF as the sustainability flagship institution for SUNY and assist SUNY with development of its first sustainability goals. This person will report to Chief Sustainability Officer Mark Lichtenstein.

### **Forest Properties Management:**

A new "Other Related Entity" (ORE), to administer the College's forest lands is being considered. It would be a separate 501(c)3 organization affiliated with the College and would have as its objective to better enable our properties to become financially self-sufficient while strengthening our ability to advance their core mission of research, demonstration and instructional use. The Forest Properties Department will continue to exist and most of its employees will be unaffected by this move. Forest Properties Director Bob Davis has been working with the College Attorney, Chief Sustainability Officer and faculty from FNRM regarding creation of this new organization. Its formation will enable a number of things, including ensuring their long-term financial sustainability through participation in a variety of markets for ecosystem services such as conservation easements, carbon offset trading, wetlands mitigation banking and forest certification services. It will be guided by a Board of Directors, including ESF faculty members.

### **Financial Sustainability**

General strategies being employed include:

- Increase undergraduate and graduate enrollment (to a sustainable size, and focus on increasing diversity and inclusion), both residential and online
- Strive for out-of-state students to reach 40% of overall enrollment
- Work toward tuition/fees being consistent with other university centers
- Review distribution of merit- vs. need-based financial aid
- Continued reduction of energy use
- Reduce the cost of accessory instruction
- Pursue a Passport program (with Le Moyne and SU)
- Offer general education courses (including physics)
- Increase fund-raising activities
- Accelerate government relations and advocacy at state and federal levels
- Enhance research portfolio and cost recovery
- Build external partnerships

In addition, a joint College leadership / Academic Governance College budget committee will be formed in the coming month.

## **Infrastructure**

Capital investments will be targeted with a goal of the College being a sustainability flagship, and to provide the quality of laboratories and classrooms appropriate to a leading science campus. Priorities are accessibility, inclusivity, equity, safety, labs and teaching facilities. Major components of a five-year plan include (2018 tasks noted):

- Retrofit Marshall Hall (design and schematics for total retrofit)
- Retrofit Illick Hall (program study for total retrofit)
- Improve Cranberry Lake, Newcomb and Wanakena campuses (a number of retrofits)
- Build a residence/dining hall (College Foundation to start planning)
- Construct a soccer field in Tully (start work)
- Launch the Onondaga Lake Science Center (site identification, program study and design)
- Build a multi-use facility for recreation, athletics and commencement (look at options)
- Acquire new property (review options to expand Syracuse campus footprint)
- Rehabilitate spaces (focus on labs, teaching spaces and gender equity)
- Increase maintenance and repair activities (roofs, elevators, etc.)
- Effectively utilize space (implement new policy)
- Improve vehicle fleet
- Implement Banner system
- Develop robust IT platform

## **Other Personnel and Organizational Initiatives**

### **Salaries:**

The Leadership Council has formed a working group to look at the salaries of administrators, faculty, graduate assistants and other staff, as well as options to address salary needs. It is chaired by CFO Joe Rufo, and includes Don Artz, Marcia Barber, David Dzwonkowski, Maureen Fellows, Melissa Fierke, Sophie Gublo-Jantzen, and Alex Poisson. The working group has met once, and is starting by targeting issues like better defining the processes leading to the various types of potential compensation increases for all employees. They will keep the College community informed.

### **Additional Faculty:**

Faculty hires planned for 2018 will include the following:

- Five positions (backfills) to be distributed to Chemistry, EFB and FNRM.
- Five positions (new) to be distributed to EFB, ERE and FNRM.
- Six positions (new) to support general education in physics, the social sciences and the humanities. This will initially be a mixture of full-time and visiting professors.
- One position (new) to support English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

The new positions will provide additional capacity to accommodate increased enrollment and be funded by that growth.

**Additional Staff:**

Additional staff may be hired to support growth.

**Experiential Learning:**

ESF needs to evolve some of its applied educational programs in the face of two major factors:

1. A changing and more competitive job market; and
2. A new type of undergraduate with different needs and expectations.

To address these factors, a new Office for Experiential Learning and Outreach (OELO) within Academic Affairs is being created. This new office will be led by Interim Director Rick Beal, who will report to Dean Scott Shannon. OELO will partner with The Open Academy and Division of Student Affairs to create applied, service and experiential internships and research opportunities for students. OELO will oversee several existing and potentially new academic opportunities that will not only properly prepare students to integrate real-world experiences at the community level, but will also successfully guide them through these experiences by supporting student growth and engagement activities that will provide the very skills employers are looking for, using proven service learning educational techniques. At the same time, OELO will be able to expand and extend ESF's outreach to the community by leveraging the talent and energy of ESF students to meet the immense environmental and educational needs of the community and regional partners. The goal is not only to serve thousands of ESF students in gaining critical workforce skills needed to succeed in this competitive job market, but to galvanize the collective engagement of tens of thousands of citizens in ESF partnered programs. It is also a goal to actively seek and implement student engagement with underserved populations to form new bridges of understanding and two-way pipelines of collaboration between ESF and these new allies. While working closely with The Open Academy, structurally and functionally, OELO will absorb the current outreach activities of The Open Academy and coordinate the following functions:

- ESF pre-college outreach (e.g., ESF in the High School);
- Develop and nurture ESF corporate/nonprofit/government partnerships for applied, experiential and related research opportunities;
- Collaborate with the Division of Student Affairs in expanding a centralized database of opportunities; and
- Assist with tracking students who transverse the continuum of pre-college outreach, ESF student intern/research opportunities and post-graduate activity.

OELO's responsibilities include the development and coordination of multiple new projects, as well as the maintenance of many large established projects. In order to increase capacity, Ann Moore of the Division of Environmental Science will be reassigned to OELO to help coordinate its activities. Her new assignment will include her current student research experience and internships responsibilities for the Division of Environment Science but will also include new outreach responsibilities. As such, College Administration is working with Environmental Science Director, Russ Briggs, to be sure that Environmental Science will not be negatively affected in any way. The Division of Student Affairs and appropriate Academic Governance committees, will be consulted before the office is fully launched, a faculty advisory committee will be formed, and staff leadership will be finalized.

**Other Strategic Initiatives:**

We will be accelerating identification of unique transdisciplinary scholarship and research areas jointly pursued with SU, through Chancellor Syverud's appointed liaison to ESF, Dean Catherine Newton. Also, the Center for A New American Environmentalism initiative will be moving forward this semester. I've asked Professor and Senior Advisor to the President Valerie Luzadis to lead the Syracuse University and New American Environmentalism efforts in the coming months. This is in addition to her work leading critical engagements with a multi-party effort involving the Onondaga Nation and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, Skä•noñh – Great Law of Peace Center, ESF's Center for Native People and the Environment, Syracuse University, Le Moyne College, OCC and others. She will continue to develop and enhance important partnerships she has been working on with the University of Puerto Rico and the Universidad Autónoma Occidente in Cali, Columbia, and help lead other international academic partnerships. She'll also continue supporting the College as Senior Scholar with the National Council for Science and the Environment, increasing national and international visibility for ESF. Faculty and others from the College have been, and will continue to be involved in these important efforts.

**Policy Infrastructure:**

VP for Administration and CFO, Joe Rufo is strengthening and establishing a refined policy infrastructure. This includes developing templates and associated guidelines in partnership with ESF shared governance authorities. A Policy Advisory Group (PAG) will be formed. This will be a standing committee with broad representation, appointed by VP Rufo, and populated in participation with Academic Governance. This group will be charged with assisting in the formulation of new policies, the revisions of existing policies, and recommending review and endorsement to the College's Executive Cabinet.

**Leadership Groups****Academic Council:**

*Purpose: Serves in an advisory role to the Provost and is the senior academic body of Academic Affairs.*

Chaired by Provost Nosa Egiebor and includes all Academic Department Chairs, Academic Governance Executive Chair, direct reports to Provost Egiebor and other invited administrators. Meeting frequency will now be every other month.

**Council of Chairs:**

*Purpose: Exchange information and ideas between the Provost and Academic Chairs, and to focus on critical academic issues that affect academics and the management of academic departments.*

Chaired by Provost Nosa Egiebor and includes all academic department chairs including the Library Director. Meets every two weeks.

**Executive Cabinet:**

*Purpose: Focuses on the refinement and implementation of College priorities.*

Chaired by President Quentin Wheeler and includes Provost Nosa Egiebor, Chief of Staff and Chief Sustainability Officer Mark Lichtenstein; VP for Research Chris Nomura, CFO and VP for Administration Joe Rufo, VP for Government Relations Maureen Fellows, Chief Diversity Officer Malika Carter, Assistant to the President Ragan Squier, College Attorney Kevin Hayden, Associate VP for Development Brenda Greenfield, and Vice Provost and Dean for Student Affairs Anne Lombard. Meets every two weeks.

**Full Cabinet becomes Administrative Cabinet:**

*Purpose: Discuss campus operations and to directly support implementation of College priorities through administrative units.*

Chaired by President Quentin Wheeler and includes all Administrative Unit Heads and the new addition of all Academic Chairs and Academic Governance Executive Chair. Meets three times per year (once in each semester and once during the summer).

**Leadership Council:**

*Purpose: Improve communication surrounding issues of College leadership, and to increase opportunities for shared governance.*

Chaired by President Quentin Wheeler, facilitated by Chief of Staff Mark Lichtenstein (ex-officio), and includes representatives of Academic Governance (Executive Chair Klaus Doelle), Board of Trustees (Matt Marko and Leslie Talbot), College Executive Leadership (President Quentin Wheeler, Provost Nosa Egiebor, and Chief Financial Officer Joe Rufo), Council of Chairs, Faculty and Staff (Scott Blair, Melissa Fierke and Mark Poupore), and Student Governance (Richard Monaco, Alex Poisson, Ryan Scheel and Ben Taylor). Meeting frequency will now be twice per month alternating from Wednesday to Thursday at 8:00 AM in 408 Baker. All meetings are open to the College community.

**Presidential Advisory Council on Clarifying Roles and Responsibilities:**

*Purpose: Make recommendations on when and how faculty should be consulted by administration, and ways in which communication may be improved between the two groups (as part of this, clarify the roles of management and governance).*

Faculty and administrators have been invited to participate in the group, which is co-chaired by President Quentin Wheeler and Academic Governance Executive Chair Klaus Doelle. It is expected to complete its work by the end of the spring 2018 semester.