Let Us Dare

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2020 Vision

Champlain College will be the finest small, professionally and globally focused college in the United States. Over the next ten years, Champlain College will accomplish this by:

- Achieving Distinctive Academic Excellence
- Enriching Student Life
- Enhancing Financial Stability
- Exciting, Engaging & Empowering Faculty & Staff
- Fostering an Inclusive & Diverse Community

PREVIOUS PAGE

“The statue of our namesake Samuel de Champlain reminds all of us on campus—students, faculty and staff alike—of the power of exploration in our daily lives.”

—David F. Finney, President of Champlain College

CONTENTS

2020 Vision ................................................................. 1
Champlain College Essence ........................................... 2
Champlain College Manifesto ........................................ 3
Letters from the President ............................................. 4
Values .......................................................................... 6
Mission .......................................................................... 7
College Competencies .................................................. 8
Achieving Distinctive Academic Excellence .................. 10
Enriching Student Life & Career Opportunities .......... 12
Enhancing Financial Stability ...................................... 14
Exciting, Engaging & Empowering Faculty & Staff ........ 15
Fostering an Inclusive & Diverse Community ............... 16
Champlain College Manifesto

THE MANIFESTO

A radically pragmatic education. It's relevant today, and it's years ahead of its time. It fuels initiative. It has purpose. It prepares students in a unique way so they're ready for work, ready for life, ready for anything. Without it you're running in place. With it you're sprinting into the future.

At Champlain College, students come to us with passion and determination. We teach them what they want to know and help them understand what they need to know. We provide unparalleled support and revel in the partnerships we create. We offer tools to think and to act, and the opportunity to immediately put them to use. Because learning how to think without knowing what to do is an education half-done.

At Champlain, both teachers and students stretch. Dreams start coming to life far before the degree is earned. For those who are instinctively ambitious, we provide a springboard for their ideas. We believe our radically pragmatic education is what makes it all possible.

It's what helps put initiative into practice. We could say we prepare students for the real world, but at Champlain they're already there.
October 19, 2012

Letter from the President / 2012

Dear Champlain College Community:

To a significant degree any plan is, by necessity, a reflection of the moment in which it was created. As Champlain continues to strive to more fully realize its mission and to strengthen itself, it is incumbent on us to continue to keep the plan current so that it maintains its relevance to current events and activities. It has been over two years since the College's strategic plan, Champlain 2020, was created. In the intervening time several important changes have occurred that, when taken together, rise to a level of importance sufficient to revise the original plan. Thus I am very happy to present Champlain 2020, Version 1.1.

One of the principal benefits of reconsidering this strategic plan came in realizing the value of the initial version. In review after review the strategic goals and objectives that were put forth two years ago were reaffirmed as valuable and central to Champlain's mission. This process affirmed our fundamental commitment to a plan that has served us well. You will note that the top line goals are, largely, unchanged as are most of the objectives. Nonetheless, this version of the plan addresses shortcomings in the initial version and also better reflects the College's situation and priorities today.

Perhaps the most important event to occur over the past two years was the Champlain College Summit. This event convened a large number of participants from Champlain, Vermont businesses that employ our graduates, state government, and other non-profits. Over two days we debated and discussed how Champlain could better fulfill its role of fostering economic prosperity in Vermont and in the region. Many significant ideas were adopted and they are enclosed in this version of the plan. We believe that fulfillment of this current plan will place Champlain into a prominent leadership position in understanding workplace needs.

Over the past two years the College has come to more deeply realize the need to use technology as a strategic advantage rather than simply a means to an operational end. Given the changing nature of Champlain, this recent realization is not fully integrated into this plan but remains a work in progress. We would expect to see a clearer vision in the next version if this plan.

Perhaps the goal that has received the most attention is our goal to make Champlain a Diverse and Inclusive Community. Most of the objectives have been reworked and made more specific. The metrics we will use to measure our progress on this front have also been made more specific and easy to track. In reworking this goal, we believe that we have improved our chances of success.

Over the past two years the metrics used to mark our progress against Champlain 2020 have been both too detailed and too complicated. We have developed a simpler rubric that will make it easier to assess progress, while still providing information that allows for a critical assessment of progress against the plan.

Overall, we believe that this version of the plan is stronger and clearer than its predecessor. It improves on our ability to strengthen our competitive advantage and, therefore, to continue to face an uncertain future with confidence and daring.

Sincerely,

David F. Finney
President
Dear Champlain College Community:

The creation of this strategic plan occurs at a time of enormous change for Champlain College. Recent history has seen a complete restructuring of the academic enterprise into divisions focused on discrete professional areas. The separation of adult education into its own academic unit occurred, along with the creation of several new graduate programs. A number of global initiatives have been launched, and the size of the full-time faculty has increased by 52% since 2006. The College has tremendous momentum, which bodes well for its next decade.

Champlain College is uniquely poised among American institutions of higher education. The College’s career-focused programs remain squarely at the center of what it means to obtain a Champlain degree. All traditional undergraduate students benefit from the creation of the Core curriculum: a rigorous, interdisciplinary liberal arts experience. Early evidence indicates that student skills in critical thinking and effective communication are on the rise since the Core was implemented. In addition, the Core situates each program in a social and historical context that will produce graduates with a discerning sense of ethics. This academic approach is further enriched by LEAD, the College’s distinctive life-skills program which ensures that traditional undergraduates leave Champlain with real-world understanding of how to manage their lives in important areas.

This educational approach is not found elsewhere in the world. With its focus on educating the whole person for professions in an increasingly complex and changing world, Champlain offers the most complete undergraduate education available. This distinctiveness will serve the College well over the next decade.

This Strategic Plan assumes a continuation of the changing nature of Champlain. Twenty years ago, the College offered two-year degrees to a local audience. The first graduate degree program began in 2002. Champlain currently offers seven graduate programs that enroll over 300 students. These highly focused professional programs, which build on existing strengths, are increasingly important to working adults who already possess a bachelor’s degree. In addition, the College has reinforced its long-term commitment to adult students. The establishment of the Division of Continuing Professional Studies (CPS) created an entity wholly committed to adult education. It is important to Vermont that Champlain provide this opportunity to working adults who can benefit from additional education. CPS is growing and will continue to grow over the next decade.

Competitively, the College finds itself in an arena that is dramatically different from that of twenty years ago. As a private, four-year college in New England, Champlain exists in a highly crowded and competitive marketplace. The College’s ability to innovate and its long-standing career focus have allowed it to flourish in this competitive milieu. With any endeavor, past performance is no guarantee of future prospects. Champlain must continue to earn its place each year.

The next decade in the College’s history will not lack for challenges. Vermont high school graduates will decline by about 20%, and the rest of New England will also experience double-digit declines. Competitors are rushing to offer online programs as well as career-focused graduate degree programs. We must be more creative in these areas if we are to continue to expand, as this plan foresees. And the adult student market, especially the online portion, continues to be more and more competitive—which will force us to be especially innovative if we are to succeed in this marketplace.

Challenges such as these are not new to Champlain. In the past, the College has always crafted innovative responses, one after the other. We expect this tradition to continue over the next decade. None of America’s world-class colleges began their existence with robust endowments and distinguished faculties and programs. They were creative and innovated to survive and thrive. Such is now the case with Champlain. The College is well on its way to staking out a highly distinctive position that will, we are convinced, set it up to craft a new twenty-first-century model of higher learning. The blending of professional and interdisciplinary liberal learning at Champlain occurs nowhere else in higher education. This more “complete” model of education will come to demand greater and greater levels of respect from the markets we serve. As it does, Champlain is well positioned to flourish.

The creation of this unique model of higher education was, and is, driven by a strong sense that our graduates will spend their working lives in a world primarily characterized by constant and accelerating change on all fronts. The pace of technological innovation and change has been well documented. Global warming and severe environmental damage will challenge the capacities of this new generation. This new century will see the emergence of a number of new
economic superpowers (India, China, Brazil) which will, for a time, likely politically destabilize parts of the world. In 2007, for the first time in history, the majority of humans on the planet lived in cities. This, too, shall present unforeseen challenges over upcoming decades. We firmly believe that only those equipped with a combination of professional expertise and the abilities to think creatively and critically and to communicate effectively will be able to adapt in such a world. As is its custom, Champlain has taken this vision of the future and responded creatively to craft a new educational experience; one designed to allow our graduates to thrive and contribute as effective citizens.

Further enhancing our distinctiveness is our creative approach to educating students to be concerned and participatory global citizens. All traditional students, beginning in their first year, participate in global modules. This technology-mediated mode of directed inquiry brings students from around the planet into our classrooms. As Champlain students work and interact with them on projects and discussions, viewpoints and long-held biases begin to change. An appreciation of nuance and shades of gray begins to occur and with it, awareness that the world is complex and not often subject to simple analysis. Our study abroad sites in Montreal and Dublin dramatically expand student horizons in similar ways but even more powerfully due to the cultural immersion that takes place. All the while, our Core complements these initiatives by having students spend their third year investigating aspects of non-western cultures and societies.

The College takes it as an article of faith that all of these initiatives will serve to equip our students to make powerful contributions to the economic and civic life of Vermont. From its beginnings and continuing to the present, Champlain has assumed an active role in educating a talented and skilled workforce for Vermont. From its beginnings and continuing to the present, Champlain has assumed an active role in educating a talented and skilled workforce for Vermont. As Champlain students work and interact with them on projects and discussions, viewpoints and long-held biases begin to change. An appreciation of nuance and shades of gray begins to occur and with it, awareness that the world is complex and not often subject to simple analysis. Our study abroad sites in Montreal and Dublin dramatically expand student horizons in similar ways but even more powerfully due to the cultural immersion that takes place. All the while, our Core complements these initiatives by having students spend their third year investigating aspects of non-western cultures and societies.

The comparative advantage that Champlain brings to bear on this task is our ability to innovate. But even here, in an area of strength, we must become better. We have begun to focus systematically on innovation as a process that can be actively nurtured and encouraged. We must be rigorous in choosing new initiatives, yet simultaneously welcoming and open to encouraging and incubating new ideas. It is through all of this—a unique and rigorous professionally focused education experience must become more robust so that students feel a strong attachment to this community.

It is relatively simple to describe yet the rarity of this type of education makes it readily apparent that it is very difficult to attain.

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All Champlain graduates will have the capacity to attain leadership roles in their various fields due to their professional skills as well as their abilities to think critically and creatively and to communicate effectively.

CHAMPLAIN WILL develop and offer relevant, innovative and challenging undergraduate and graduate curricula.

CHAMPLAIN WILL continuously improve the quality of teaching in all classes and all modalities.

CHAMPLAIN WILL maintain an emphasis on student learning outcomes for each academic program.

CHAMPLAIN WILL institutionalize the value of the Core curriculum in all academic programs for traditional students.
We will enrich student life for all Champlain students by providing experiences that embrace student development, personal responsibility, the application of life skills and career path development, and participation in the larger community.

**CHAMPLAIN WILL** create a deliberate, comprehensive student life plan including robust faculty advising, a variety of housing options and expanded student services, including developmentally appropriate programming for all students.

**CHAMPLAIN WILL** continue to diversify programming and services to appeal to all students and their changing programming interests through student life programming that supports and adds value to both in-person and online undergraduate and graduate programs and that will effect a high degree of satisfaction and engagement among these groups. In planning, the needs of both residential and commuting students will be considered.

**CHAMPLAIN WILL** offer appropriate programs and services that enhance life skills of traditional undergraduates.

**CHAMPLAIN WILL** offer programs and services aimed at Grad, CPS and alumni focused on life-long career management and the development of new career skills.

**CHAMPLAIN WILL** offer programs and services in an attempt to serve the needs of employers in relation to staffing.

**CHAMPLAIN WILL** through the Student Health and Wellness Department provide students with services to address their physical and mental health needs, their accommodation needs, and their wellness and prevention needs.

**CHAMPLAIN WILL** through implementation of the Champlain College Master Plan and maintenance of campus facilities enhance student-support activities and also support the efficiency and effectiveness of other campus operations.

**Enriching Student Life & Career Opportunities**
Champlain College will operate from a position of financial strength. It is only through the careful management of resources that the College will have the resources needed for continuous improvement.

**CHAMPLAIN WILL** increase and stabilize enrollment and revenue as required in the Champlain College financial model.

**CHAMPLAIN WILL** both strengthen and broaden philanthropic support from the College community.

**CHAMPLAIN WILL** through a comprehensive enrollment/revenue plan, refine and attain its financial goals.

**CHAMPLAIN WILL** continue to explore and implement cost containment measures to help lessen the burden of rising College costs.

Enhancing Financial Stability

Engaged and empowered faculty and staff work and teach with passion, drive and innovation and move the College forward in order to achieve our vision. Over the next ten years, we will continually work to ensure that Champlain faculty and staff recognize and honor the Champlain College culture while building a high-performance environment in which staff and faculty excel and will become a leader in our ability to recruit, retain, develop and celebrate staff and faculty crucial to our success.

**CHAMPLAIN WILL** foster a culture of learning, innovation and collaboration.

**CHAMPLAIN WILL** successfully support the growth and transition of a high-performance employee community.

**CHAMPLAIN WILL** utilize mechanisms to know the College’s workforce “pulse” and develop the ability to respond quickly, comprehensively and proactively in addressing organizational needs.

Exciting, Engaging & Empowering Faculty & Staff
Recognizing that diversity is both a reflection of our world and a source of rich education, Champlain will be diverse in ways that reflect the world in which we live and work. All members of the Champlain community will have a sense of being a valued member of the College community.

**Champlain Will** increase the diversity of its student body through deliberate, thoughtful student recruitment practices.

**Champlain Will** increase the diversity of our faculty and staff through deliberate and thoughtful recruitment strategies.

**Champlain Will** through our students realize consistent educational and student success outcomes regardless of race, ethnicity or socioeconomic status.

**Champlain Will** ensure that faculty and staff in historically under-represented groups achieve professional success at the College on par with other employees.

**Champlain Will** be an institution that harnesses the productive power of difference. A strong climate of mutual respect among all members of the Champlain community will be cultivated, with particular emphasis on cultural differences associated with age, ethnicity, gender, physical ability, race and sexual orientation. Employees and students will live and work in an environment where it is safe to take risks and challenge others.

**Champlain Will** as one part of our mission to create graduates who are effective professionals and engaged global citizens, intentionally promote and assess student development of intercultural competence.

**Champlain Will** in order to create an inclusive campus, provide culturally competent services and intentionally and effectively support our students’ intercultural development. Champlain College faculty and staff will engage in their own personal learning about issues of diversity and inclusion.

**Champlain Will** through our senior leaders create an infrastructure and coordinate organizational changes necessary to achieve the diversity and inclusion goals contained within this Strategic Plan.
Thank you.
Even as we look forward, we look back. Our plans for the future will be built on the accomplishments already counted.

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