

Setting the Stage—Lyndon’s Story A Vision Statement

There is a quiet place in the northern reaches of Vermont where big things are happening.

As Lyndon State College embraces the changes coming to higher education, we would like to remind you of what isn’t changing - our response to first-in-family students, our commitment to experiential education and the edge it gives our graduates in the real world, and our responsibility to our community and the natural world of our Northeast Kingdom home. These standards are a tremendous foundation for the building of Lyndon’s future.

Lyndon’s students are recognized as innovators, hard chargers in their fields of study, and passionate lifelong learners. They develop this attitude and ability through interactions with a diverse group of faculty and staff who promote strong cross-instructional programming, intellectual connectivity, and real world applications that Lyndon students are more than enthusiastic to tap into.

Students are drawn to Lyndon not only for the exceptional faculty and staff, but also the rich variety of settings for learning. Juxtaposed with the mountains, rivers, cliffs, and trails of our northern home, our state of the art classrooms and facilities provide broad experiential and professional learning opportunities. As an anchor in the larger community, Lyndon exemplifies core values of individual achievement, social justice, and intellectual curiosity that our students and visitors from around the world feel right from the start. We invite people to discover another kind of classroom and find their best selves.

Our strategy is simple—build on the success that has come before us. Fully draw eagerness to learn from our students. Be a place of recognized academic achievement for our faculty and staff. Be that place where gaining a small-school, liberal arts education is powerful and life-changing.

Strategic Plan Process

At the end of the 2013-2014 academic year, the Strategic Plan Steering Committee issued four specific charges to strategic planning groups. Each planning group was comprised of volunteers from Lyndon’s faculty, staff, and students, and was tasked with one of the following goals:

1. Academic excellence and experiential focus provides students with a relevant and valuable education.
2. A financially thriving Lyndon
3. Systems, services, and facilities are efficient and designed with the end-user in mind.
4. Lyndon is a vital and innovative community dedicated to social justice

The four groups developed priorities to address their assigned goal along with a multi-year timeline to achieve those priorities. These plans were presented to President Joe Bertolino and the Steering Committee on February 10, 2015, with recommendations for Year One - Year Five, starting in the 2015-2016 academic year and extending through the 2019-2020 academic year. After a final review by the President’s Leadership Team, implementation groups will begin to enact the tasks outlined in the combined action plan.

Although the groups worked independently, several overarching themes and key areas of opportunity emerged from their examination of Lyndon’s strengths and challenges.

Overarching Themes

- **Address inconsistencies in student advising.** Professional development, consistent communication between advisors and students, and improved access to data and program information will lead to a more efficient advising system resulting in increased student retention, graduation rates, and satisfaction.
- **Examine general education requirements.** A complete overhaul of the system may be necessary to better serve faculty and students to achieve academic excellence, a pathway to degrees, and a representation of Lyndon's community values, which include social justice. This overhaul may include broadening course selections, rethinking timing and course delivery methods, and examining prerequisites and distribution of required credits.
- **Examine and streamline curriculum.** Examine degree programs with multiple concentrations that may be chronically underenrolled. Analyze student population needs and existing resources. Ask how curriculum is delivered, including time and day, number of weeks held, and instruction delivery method.
- **Improved access to and use of institutional data.** Departments, both academic and administrative, are hungry for data. There is a need for reliable access and support for interpreting departmental and student data and for improved analysis of the unmet needs in our local community. Develop a method to share and communicate data and interpretations across departments for the benefit of all and the school as a whole.
- **Continue and increase professional development opportunities.** Capitalize on strengths and address areas of weakness. With the right support, Lyndon can expand capacity for innovation and ensure an excellent experience for all. Professional development related to shifting demographics in ethnicity, race, gender, and age is especially essential to both attract and retain faculty, staff, and students who may have not have otherwise chosen Lyndon.
- **Establish a uniform system for communication on campus.** Standardize communication protocols, make public information easily accessible, and share relevant information with individuals and departments who would benefit.
- **Form strong partnerships.** Shared goals among internal groups, departments, and outside entities provide opportunities to pool resources and create new avenues for beneficial collaborations.

These overarching themes will guide Lyndon's work as it delves into the Goals, Objectives, and Actions recommended by Strategic Plan working groups.

Goals

- Academic excellence and experiential focus provides students with a relevant and valuable education.
- A financially thriving Lyndon
- Systems, services, and facilities are efficient and designed with the end-user in mind.
- Lyndon is a vital and innovative community dedicated to social justice.

Goal 1

Academic excellence and experiential focus provides students with a relevant and valuable education.

Objectives

- A. Create clear, efficient, and achievable degree program pathways for all students.
- B. Provide a spectrum of professional development opportunities for faculty (full- and part-time) and staff including: mentorship, peer support, leadership, and education and training, especially in pedagogies and practices aligned with the College's mission and vision.
- C. Develop opportunities for faculty and student contributions to academic fields and undergraduate research. Recognize achievements such as publications and presentations in outside forums.
- D. Enrich campus-based and online academic services and resources.

Priority Actions

1. **General Education** - Make General Education offerings relevant, complementary, and easily accessible.
2. **Course Scheduling** - Investigate and apply course-scheduling options, including the "quarter-block" method.
3. **Curriculum** - Use data from existing programs to streamline and focus major programs, acknowledging that as a small college, Lyndon cannot be everything to everyone.
4. **Advising** - Improve navigation of the curriculum with concrete tools like advising templates for each program.
5. **Professional Development** - Develop, promote, and implement professional development opportunities relating to experiential teaching and learning.
6. **Research** - Establish desired outcomes relating to faculty research (both student-involved and personal/professional). Create a system of support for faculty research based on those desired outcomes.
7. **Serving Local Need** - Analyze the needs of local potential students, especially non-traditional, veteran, and transfer populations. Identify barriers and complications and address with systematic improvements at admissions, support, and curricular levels.

Goal 2

A financially thriving Lyndon

Objectives

- A. Increase enrollment and retention.
- B. Enhance fundraising capacity and increase total monies raised.
- C. Develop and maintain a balanced college budget aligned with goals and strategies.
- D. Identify, implement, and market selected entrepreneurial activities to generate non-tuition revenue, e.g., fee-for-service professional development training, summer uses of the campus, etc.

Priority Actions

1. **Early Connections** - Reimagine first-year outreach and experiences to make sure students are well-connected to faculty, staff, and peers by the end of their first term, as this directly relates to persistence and retention of students.
2. **General Education** - Improve accessibility of GEU offerings, both in relation to eliminating pre-requisites and to expanding the offering times, days, and delivery methods.

3. **Advising and Support** - Address inconsistencies in the advising model to ensure all students have a clear path to graduation. Provide support and encouragement to departments to expand their outreach to and support of students in their program
4. **Data Team** - Develop an IR/Data Team with faculty, staff, and administration to improve access to and dissemination of institutional data. Examine retention data beyond first year to address unmet needs that prevent student persistence. Departments share successful practices relating to student persistence and retention in order to capitalize on proven interventions.
5. **Entrepreneurial Ventures** - Develop and expand entrepreneurial ventures that align with Lyndon's mission and fit with our existing resources and environment, including online learning opportunities, workforce development programs, Life Enrichment classes, summer camps, afterschool programs, adventure leadership, and professional development for local employers and their employees.
6. **Joint Ventures** - Pursue joint ventures with VSC schools and other partners to share resources (intellectual, physical, and programmatic) to the benefit of our students and other constituencies, including community partners and alumni.
7. **Conferences Services** - Improve marketing and support for conference services. Explore creative use of existing properties, including McGoff house, the Grange, campus space during off-hours, etc. with an eye to generating revenue.
8. **Intellectual Property and Grants** - License intellectual property (example: iWOW model). Support the identification and applications for grants by individual departments that would help supplement budgets.
9. **Building and Energy Use** - Maximize savings with appropriate adjustments to IT delivery, including physical vs. virtual labs. Improve energy efficiency.
10. **Budget Process** - Continue to examine and improve budgeting process to maximize transparency to and engagement of Lyndon's internal and external constituencies.
11. **Grow the Donor Base** - Engage alumni, parents, and friends in annual giving; maximize endowment giving through matching grants; increase naming opportunities across campus; and embark on targeted campaigns to create successful, highly visible results.
12. **Alumni Resources** - Work with alumni to develop and provide professional development opportunities for alumni. Also, increase alumni outreach and fundraising efforts.

Goal 3

Systems, services, and facilities are efficient and designed with the end-user in mind.

Objectives

- A. Strengthen organizational structures and business practices across the College to achieve greater efficiency, coordination, and ease for users.
- B. Maintain appropriate investments in information technology and better use information technology throughout the College.
- C. Reflect Lyndon's Facilities Master Plan in all capital projects.

Priority Actions

1. **Data** - Make relevant data accessible and available to faculty and staff—both quick reference and more in-depth reports that can drive departmental decision-making.
2. **Communication** - Provide support and training so that standards for clear and consistent communication are well-known and used by all on campus.
3. **Online Systems** - Ensure that web-based information, support, and processes are accurate, straightforward, and fully functional.
4. **Advising** - Clearly communicate and support professional standards for advising on campus.

5. **Transfers** - Support systematic and clearly navigable transfer process for incoming students, staff, and advisors.
6. **Scheduling** - Create course schedules sufficiently in advance to facilitate improved student planning and advising.
7. **Training and Professional Development** - Individual departments and supervisors coordinate ongoing training and professional development (with HR support) to address the specific needs of the faculty, staff, and students within their area.
8. **Accessibility** - Ensure that campus buildings are physically navigable for students, faculty, and staff with disabilities.
9. **Master Plan** - Proceed with the Master Plan in a way that serves the above goals.

Goal 4

Lyndon is a vital and innovative community dedicated to social justice.

Objective

- A. Identify and implement opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to increase their cultural literacy and commitment to social justice principles.

Priority Actions

1. **Campus-wide conversations** - Continue offering both pro- and reactive opportunities for conversation on social justice topics that affect our community.
2. **Training and Professional Development** - Tailor social justice training opportunities for various constituent groups, including faculty, student leaders, and staff members by department.
3. **Partnerships** - Work with both campus and community organizations to support and promote continued development of social justice training, advocacy, and awareness.
4. **Marketing and Materials** - Include representation of our social justice actions and philosophies in public materials to communicate with existing and prospective community members and create a more welcoming atmosphere.
5. **International Resources** - Develop community resources for International students at Lyndon, including written materials like a handbook, and professional and educational resources like cultural competency trainings for faculty, staff, and students. These resources could also serve local students and faculty preparing to study or travel abroad.

Putting It in Action

These strategic priorities and objectives and resulting action items will bring significant, positive change to Lyndon State College. Reflecting our mission and reaching toward a successful future, this Strategic Plan will serve as the day-to-day, week-to-week, and year-to-year road map to guide decisions and priorities for Lyndon in the coming years. A detailed matrix of action items across time and with assigned leadership accompanies this document online. This timeline is a living document and will change as the College moves forward in implementing the plan. The timeline as well as a formal Strategic Planning report may be found at LyndonState.edu/strategic-plan.

Lyndon's dedication to this strategic path will benefit the College as a whole, strengthen the quality of teaching and support of students, and more deeply connect Lyndon with the community at large.