

Emerson
COLLEGE

**EXTRAORDINARY
EMERSON 2030**

EMERSON COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2030

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STATEMENT FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

In September 2023, the Emerson College Board of Trustees charged President Bernhardt to develop a comprehensive strategic plan to guide the College’s direction and development over the next five years. On February 4, 2025, the Board unanimously approved the College’s new strategic plan, **Extraordinary Emerson 2030**. The plan is informed by extensive input from the Emerson community and faithfully brings to life the strategic direction provided by the Board to President Bernhardt and his administration to elevate Emerson’s standing as a world-class educational institution in communication and the arts.

The Board has complete confidence in President Bernhardt’s leadership and ability to execute this bold plan. We look forward to working closely with the Emerson community as we educate and elevate artists, communicators, scholars, and professionals in the arts and communication for the betterment of humanity.

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FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



Dear Emerson Community,

The strategic plan you are about to read charts an exciting and ambitious course for the future of Emerson College. Through this plan, we reaffirm our College's commitment to harnessing the power of communication and the arts through education and scholarship to enrich our communities and shape a better world.

Through thoughtful articulation of our mission and vision and insightful crafting of four strategic priorities, our president, Dr. Jay Bernhardt, and his team have presented a clear and compelling direction for Emerson's future. This plan reflects a candid assessment of the complex challenges facing Emerson and higher education today and provides a realistic blueprint for strengthening our distinct offerings and ensuring our ongoing viability and future success.

On behalf of the entire Board of Trustees, I share our unequivocal approval and unanimous support for this plan. We are confident in its vision and deeply committed to its success. We look forward to working alongside President Bernhardt and his team in the coming years as he leads Emerson College in fulfilling our bold yet achievable mission, vision, and goals.

Thank you for your dedication, passion, and belief in the future of Emerson College.

Sincerely,

Eric Alexander, BSSp '78
CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Emerson Community,

I am honored and excited to introduce Emerson College's bold new strategic plan, **Extraordinary Emerson 2030**. This visionary roadmap reaffirms our unwavering commitment to the transformative power of education, scholarship, and creative expression in the arts and communication. Rooted in Emerson's rich legacy, this plan is not merely a continuation of our progress—it is a declaration of our ambition to shape a brighter, more innovative, and more inclusive future in an ever-evolving world.

Since our founding in 1880, Emerson College has served as a beacon of excellence in communication and the arts, shaping industries, inspiring change, and amplifying voices that redefine our culture. Through an education grounded in the liberal arts and enhanced by immersive, cutting-edge experiences, we empower our students to become fearless innovators, storytellers, and leaders. With world-class faculty, a dynamic curriculum, and an unyielding spirit of creativity, professionalism, and critical thought, we are transforming lives and making a profound impact on our community and beyond.

This strategic plan is the culmination of a remarkable collective effort. Faculty, staff, students, alumni, parents, supporters, and industry leaders came together, sharing ideas, insights, and aspirations that will guide us forward. Your passion, dedication, and vision have shaped a plan that belongs to all of us—a shared blueprint for an extraordinary future. I extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to this journey.

By the time we realize this ambitious plan in 2030, we will stand on the threshold of our sesquicentennial—a moment to reflect on 150 years of accomplishments and propel ourselves into an even more impactful future. With your collaboration, energy, and belief in what we can achieve together, I have no doubt that **Extraordinary Emerson 2030** will elevate our institution and inspire the world.

Let us embark on this ambitious journey with courage, creativity, and collaboration. Together, we will shape our extraordinary future!

Sincerely,

Jay M. Bernhardt, PhD, MPH
PRESIDENT

EXTRAORDINARY EMERSON 2030

In today's evolving world, the landscapes of communication, the arts, politics, and higher education are undergoing significant and rapid transformation. Technological advancements; shifting societal needs and divisions; and the increasing influence of global perspectives reshape how we teach, learn, study, and engage with the world. At Emerson College, we recognize the urgency of adapting to these changes to continue fulfilling our critical mission of educating and elevating extraordinary artists, communicators, scholars, and professionals with expertise in the arts and communication.

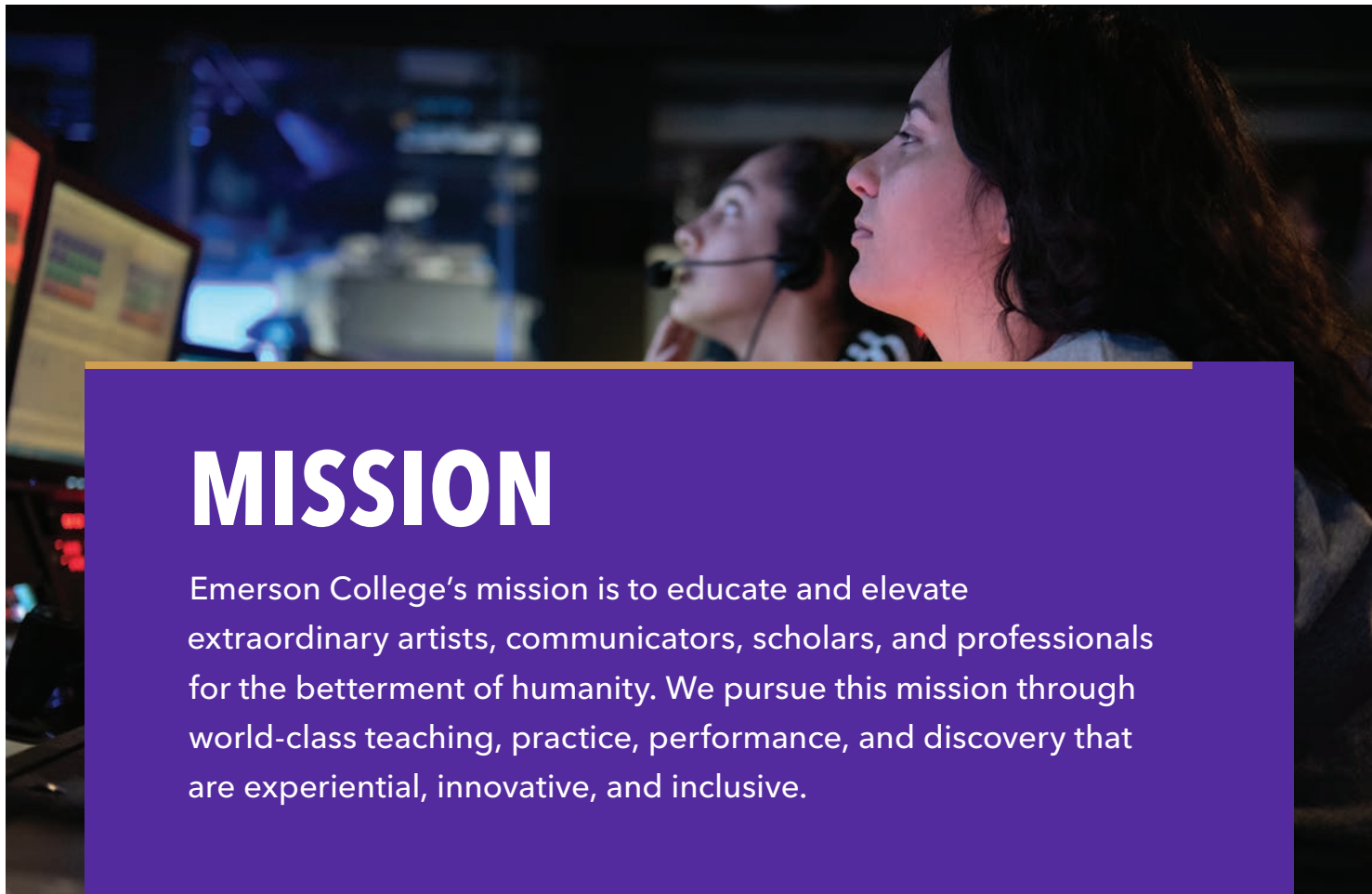
This strategic plan, **Extraordinary Emerson 2030**, is designed to address these trends and seize the many opportunities they present. By focusing on our four strategic priorities, Academic Innovation, Collaborative Connections, Community Engagement, and Operational Excellence, we will ensure Emerson responds to the changing landscape and remains at the forefront of education in our fields. Our four priorities, 16 strategic goals, and supporting initiatives ensure that Emerson remains future-focused in our academic offerings; use of emerging media and technology; recruiting practices; and strong support for our students, faculty, and staff.

As demands for skills and knowledge evolve, Emerson must continue to prepare our students for success in this dynamic environment. We are committed to revitalizing our curriculum, integrating cutting-edge tools, providing hands-on learning, and leveraging emerging media and technologies. We will equip our students with the knowledge and skills to excel and foster a culture of creativity, curiosity, accessibility, and adaptability.

In a world of differences and divisions, the power and potential of the arts and communication to bring people together have never been greater. By expanding external partnerships while strengthening our engaged community, we will enrich our educational experiences, broaden our perspectives, and expand our work's reach and global impact.

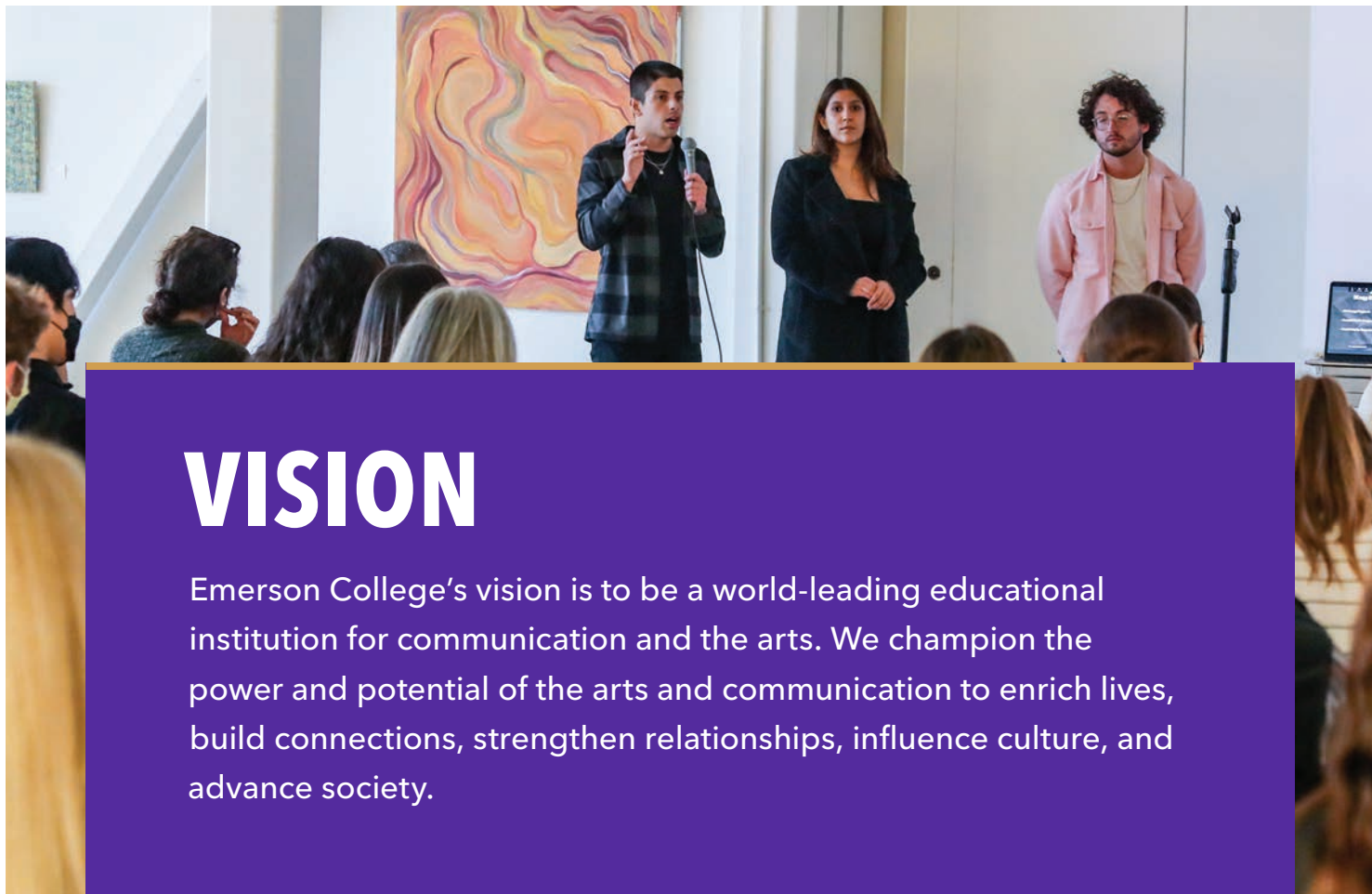
Our people are our greatest strength, and our operations are how we make a difference. By attracting, training, and developing our people and committing to effective, efficient, and financially strong operations, we ensure that Emerson will thrive long into the future with the means to innovate and lead.

Extraordinary Emerson 2030 is a strategic plan that positions Emerson College as a global communication and arts leader in education and scholarship. By leveraging our strengths and focusing on innovation and inclusion, we are well-poised to provide a transformative experience for the betterment of humanity.



MISSION

Emerson College’s mission is to educate and elevate extraordinary artists, communicators, scholars, and professionals for the betterment of humanity. We pursue this mission through world-class teaching, practice, performance, and discovery that are experiential, innovative, and inclusive.



VISION

Emerson College’s vision is to be a world-leading educational institution for communication and the arts. We champion the power and potential of the arts and communication to enrich lives, build connections, strengthen relationships, influence culture, and advance society.

VALUES

Emerson College’s core values are creativity, innovation, inclusion, curiosity, equity, expression, and collaboration.

CREATIVITY

is the driving force behind innovation, expression, and discovery. We foster an environment that celebrates imagination and originality. Creativity involves curiosity, critical thinking, problem-solving, and effectively communicating unique ideas.

INNOVATION

means encouraging our students, faculty, and staff to explore new ideas and stretch boundaries. Innovation is about creating something new above and beyond emerging technologies. It means reimagining the world and finding unique solutions to challenges.

INCLUSION

means actively promoting a welcoming environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and that they belong. We celebrate every community member’s unique contributions and believe that our differences make us stronger.

CURIOSITY

drives us to explore, learn, and grow through the relentless pursuit of knowledge and understanding. It encourages us to ask questions, seek new experiences, think critically, and challenge the status quo. Curiosity nurtures a culture of continuous learning, open-mindedness, new possibilities, and deeper insights.

EQUITY

involves acknowledging and addressing the unique challenges and barriers that individuals in our community may face. Emerson believes everyone should have access to opportunities and support in an environment where all can thrive, regardless of their background or circumstances.

EXPRESSION

has been central to Emerson since our founding. It involves the meaning, portrayal, and impact of words and ideas. We support communication and self-discovery through respectful dialogue that fosters intellectual and emotional connections.

COLLABORATION

involves working together across disciplines, units, interests, and perspectives to produce more positive outcomes. Collaboration requires appreciating diverse viewpoints, developing strong communication skills, and building lasting relationships.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS

EMERSON COLLEGE WILL ACHIEVE ITS VISION BY PURSUING THE FOLLOWING FOUR PRIORITIES:

A. Academic Innovation to Shape the Future of Arts and Communication

B. Collaborative Connections to Develop and Cultivate Stronger Relationships and External Partnerships

C. Community Engagement to Build a Vibrant and Inclusive Campus Experience

D. Operational Excellence to Ensure Effective Performance and Financial Strength

While these priorities represent distinct action areas for our College, their interconnectedness has power. Delivering on these priorities and advancing our mission and vision will require input and collaboration from our entire community of students, faculty, staff, leaders, and partners. Over the next five years, we will execute these four priorities across organizational units and academic disciplines, organizations, communities, and continents.

Concentrating on the four strategic priorities and their corresponding goals and initiatives will position our College to create extraordinary people and impact. These priorities will enable us to foster a culture of innovation, inclusion, and experiential excellence, ultimately achieving our mission to provide transformative education in the arts and communication that prepares our students and communities to make meaningful contributions to the betterment of society.





PRIORITY A: ACADEMIC INNOVATION TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF ARTS AND COMMUNICATION

Build, adapt, and support programs, teaching, and infrastructure to meet the evolving needs of students and society

As the boundaries and limits of arts and communication evolve, Emerson is committed to academic innovation at the forefront of these dynamic fields. We will advance the educational experience and prepare well-rounded students to become leaders in their respective disciplines by fostering a culture of creativity, critical thinking, academic rigor, hands-on experiential learning, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

This strategic priority focuses on integrating emerging media, cutting-edge technologies, research and practice, and diverse perspectives to create a vibrant learning environment that nurtures talent, drives societal progress, and builds on our liberal arts foundation. Through the goals and initiatives, we will empower the next generation of artists, communicators, and scholars to push the limits of their disciplines and make a lasting impact on the world.

At Emerson, being at the forefront of delivering communication and arts education at the highest level has been a core tenet of our mission since 1880. To continue this pursuit of excellence,

we must ensure that our academic portfolio is bold and timely by increasing innovation, technology, interdisciplinary offerings, career readiness, and faculty development. We will revitalize the curricular offerings to align with emerging needs, investing in state-of-the-art resources and faculty training, and providing targeted career support to students.

By fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration, Emerson prepares students for high-demand fields and enhances their career prospects. We also actively support the education of incarcerated students to help increase access and the democratization of higher education. Emerson's innovative faculty members bring creativity and industry experience and are crucial to this effort. The faculty contributes to dynamic curricula, research, and effective mentorship, ultimately driving the College's reputation and success in producing skilled graduates ready to excel in communication and the arts.

PRIORITY A GOALS: ACADEMIC INNOVATION TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF ARTS AND COMMUNICATION



1 Increase innovation, interdisciplinarity, and collaboration throughout the academic enterprise.

Develop forward-thinking and innovative academic programs, including majors, minors, master's programs, and graduate certificates, that capitalize on the strengths of Emerson faculty's scholarly, creative, and professional expertise. Increase curricular and instructional flexibility to widen and deepen experiential learning. Prioritize interdisciplinary opportunities that connect the curricula with co-curricular initiatives and pedagogical innovation to enhance the student experience.

2 Enhance student education and institutional capacity in emerging media and technologies.

Build experiential components within the curriculum focused on emerging innovations such as artificial intelligence, starting in the first year and infused throughout the curricula. These will include the craft skills of the academic programs, relevant business and technological acumen, and exposure to industry partnerships. Regularly invest in updated media and technology to provide our community with cutting-edge resources for teaching and learning.

3 Expand and strengthen career readiness for all students.

Strengthen student career preparation at Emerson to expand career competencies inside every major and at every curriculum level, mapping and connecting those competencies to ensure they build on each other. Reimagine and reorganize the College's career programs and initiatives to be visible, impactful, essential to students, and relevant to employers.

4 Recruit, develop, and support an innovative and inclusive faculty.

Emerson will commit to recruiting, retaining, and supporting a world-class faculty by strengthening the structures that support their research and creative practice and the pedagogical innovations that will enhance the education of the next generation of artists and communicators. We will champion and celebrate faculty achievements internally and externally, bringing attention to the high caliber of the faculty and to the College that supports them.

PRIORITY B: COLLABORATIVE CONNECTIONS TO DEVELOP AND CULTIVATE STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS AND EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

Establish and enhance mutually beneficial relationships with alumni, employers, and community and industry partners locally, regionally, domestically, and globally



In today's interconnected world, the strength of our institution lies in our ability to forge and nurture meaningful relationships beyond our campus. This strategic priority centers on fostering collaborative connections that enhance opportunities for our students, faculty, staff, and alumni. These partnerships drive innovation and contribute to societal well-being and advancement. By engaging with industry leaders and community organizations in the US and around the world, we will create and develop partnerships that support our mission and help fulfill our vision. We will leverage shared resources, expertise, and perspectives to address complex challenges and create transformative experiences for our students, faculty, staff, and partners. Through these collaborative efforts, we will build a resilient and dynamic network that thrives on mutual growth and shared success.

Integrating industry and other external connections into Emerson's academic ecosystem is crucial for providing educational experiences that prepare students for life after graduation. These connections ensure the success of our campuses in Los Angeles and the Netherlands, as well as global partnerships for study abroad and academic exchange programs.

The LA campus, located in the heart of the entertainment industry, offers unparalleled access to internships and networking, enhancing students' career prospects. Expanding Emerson's outreach to additional locations in the US and beyond would further expose students to career opportunities. Developing industry partnerships provides real-world experiences and opportunities, ensuring the curriculum remains relevant and aligned with industry trends. Expanding campus-to-community engagement through arts, media, and civic projects will create meaningful experiences, bridging academic learning with real-world application and preparing students to be socially responsible leaders.

PRIORITY B GOALS: COLLABORATIVE CONNECTIONS TO DEVELOP AND CULTIVATE STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS AND EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS



1 Enhance Emerson Los Angeles and increase engagement and recruitment in targeted US cities and regions.

The College will strategically strengthen and grow all aspects of its operations and engagement at Emerson Los Angeles and in Southern California, a priority market for the College. The College will also explore opportunities to expand its relationships in New England and its footprint in US cities like New York and Washington, DC. Emerson will enhance its well-established student recruitment in these areas and other centers of communication and the arts to strengthen recruitment, alumni relations, and industry partnerships, and increase access to internships, co-ops, and professional networks.

2 Enhance Kasteel Well, global programs and partnerships, and increase international student recruitment from targeted regions.

This goal will expand Emerson College's global presence and reputation by fostering partnerships with international institutions, creating more joint- and dual-degrees, building our exchange opportunities, and enhancing cross-cultural learning and scholarship. A targeted international recruitment strategy will focus on strengthening current markets and developing emerging markets to diversify the student body and promote a globally inclusive campus culture. Enhanced support services for international students will improve retention and contribute to their success. These efforts will reinforce Emerson's position as a global leader in arts and communication education and scholarship.

3 Develop and diversify industry, organizational, and community collaborations and partnerships.

Emerson will develop and expand its strategic partnerships with organizations and companies that share our focus areas, priorities, and values. These relationships will benefit all partners, institutions, and communities surrounding our campuses. Engaging industries will open doors for our students and graduates through internships, job placements, and the sharing of best practices. By working together in a mutually beneficial manner, these partnerships will create richer learning experiences for our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and communities.

4 Expand external engagement and integration with our local communities through arts, media, service, and civic engagement.

Emerson has a robust history of partnering with local and regional government officials, civic organizations, and community-based and neighborhood organizations to support our local communities. We are also a regional provider of professional and student-led arts and media. Expanding these partnerships will contribute meaningfully and reciprocally to our local communities; bolster student experiential learning; and deepen engaged scholarship, coursework, and creative practice.



PRIORITY C: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO BUILD A VIBRANT AND INCLUSIVE CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

Develop and sustain vibrant and inclusive residential and online communities through respectful engagement, communication, and collaboration

Community engagement, collaboration, and relationship-building are at the core of fostering a vibrant and inclusive culture. This strategic priority emphasizes creating a supportive environment in which every community member feels valued and empowered to contribute. We will cultivate a sense of belonging and shared purpose across all Emerson residential and online spaces, from Boston to Los Angeles, Kasteel Well, and MCI-Norfolk, by actively involving students, faculty, staff, and partners in meaningful dialogue and collaborative initiatives. Our focus on community engagement drives us to embrace diverse perspectives, promote inclusion, and encourage critical thinking.

Through the goals of this priority, we will build a campus culture that harnesses our community's strength to address challenges, solve problems, and seize opportunities. We must create a dynamic, inclusive environment that inspires growth, curiosity, creativity, and joy.

Emerson will provide high-quality, equitable guidance and support to students from different backgrounds, experiences, and aspirations to create a strong sense of community and belonging.

By fostering strong connections with alumni, we can build our brand and tap into valuable experience, mentorship, and networking opportunities that benefit current students and recent graduates. Engaged alumni are more likely to promote and contribute to the College's growth through events, giving, and support for new initiatives.

Students thrive academically and personally in an inclusive environment that respects diverse perspectives, enhances collaboration and innovation, and promotes positivity and mental health. In addition, by evaluating our physical spaces, we can intentionally improve how they foster community connection, ensuring long-term success and alignment with institutional objectives.

PRIORITY C GOALS: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO BUILD A VIBRANT AND INCLUSIVE CAMPUS EXPERIENCE



1 Support a vibrant community culture and experience that fosters creativity, curiosity, belonging, accessibility, and well-being.

Our best learning and work happen when we feel supported, respected, and enabled with the knowledge and opportunities to be positive contributors. We will strengthen tools and processes to address barriers and grow and sustain an organizational culture centered on wellness and inclusion. We will connect creativity, belonging, and well-being through shared values and experiences across our classrooms, offices, departments, and residential and co-curricular settings.

2 Strengthen internal communication, engagement, and collaboration among students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

As a College of communication, Emerson is committed to becoming best-in-class in communication and collaboration across our communities. We will work to create opportunities for improved engagement, bridge-building, and shared governance to align the people, processes, and products that allow our College to achieve its mission and goals successfully. Building collaboration and connection has never been more critical, and we will focus on developing and sharing in-person and virtual opportunities to engage across the silos that emerge in higher education environments.

3 Cultivate and strengthen robust alumni relations and engagement and increase campus involvement.

Emerson College is revitalizing its alumni engagement strategy based on feedback from the 2024 Alumni Survey to strengthen alumni relations and engagement. Recognizing the importance of alumni to the College's success, we will demonstrate the ongoing value Emerson provides to alumni's professional lives through a robust alumni engagement program. Efforts will include enhanced networking opportunities, increased interaction with faculty and students, and targeted regional events. A proposed Alumni Center will serve as a physical hub for alumni gatherings on the Boston campus, hosting events such as Alumni Weekend and Alumni Board meetings. These initiatives will foster deeper connections with Emerson, leading to increased philanthropic support, greater alumni participation, and a more substantial pipeline of prospective students.

4 Use facilities strategically and creatively to enhance the Emerson experience.

Emerson will create a culture of flexibility, transparency, and accessibility regarding facility utilization. This work will enable students, faculty, and staff to pursue their creative passions and academic goals and enhance their Emerson experience. It will also ensure that all community members know about the diversity of amenities and resources available at Emerson. We will expand facility access beyond academic programs through strategic space utilization and data-driven decision-making.

PRIORITY D: OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL STRENGTH

Maximize effective and efficient operations to deliver high-quality performance and a strong financial position, ensuring long-term success and sustainability



This strategic priority involves optimizing Emerson's processes, enhancing efficiency, increasing sustainability, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. By implementing leading practices and leveraging innovative solutions, we strive to be known as the premier institution for studying and practicing communication and the arts. We also seek to increase our accessibility to exceptional prospective students regardless of their financial means.

Our commitment to operational excellence involves rigorous performance monitoring, data-driven decision-making, and proactive risk management. Through these efforts, we will build a resilient and financially robust institution that can adapt to changing circumstances and sustain long-term growth. We will empower our community to achieve its highest potential and contribute to Emerson's overall success and sustainability.

This priority will bolster the College's operational and financial health, generating new opportunities and ensuring efficient resource use. This strategic approach, fostering strong philanthropic support and optimizing operations, secures financial stability and enhances the College's reputation and innovative capabilities. Refining and creating Emerson's branding and engagement with priority audiences will strengthen its reputation and expand its influence, attracting top talent and fostering meaningful connections. Finally, investing in our highly valued professional staff will maintain a thriving campus environment; boost morale, productivity, and retention rates; and enhance the overall student experience, driving Emerson's mission and success.

PRIORITY D GOALS: OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL STRENGTH



1 Increase financial strength through innovative academic and programmatic offerings, increased philanthropy, and operational efficiencies.

Emerson relies on revenue from tuition, housing, and dining to operate and must diversify its revenue streams to ensure financial stability and future growth. New academic offerings, services, events, performances, continuing education, and other products and services are needed to grow new revenue streams and become less reliant on tuition. In addition, the College must continue to professionalize Institutional Advancement to increase fundraising productivity and alumni engagement. With the strategic plan comes the impetus to launch a comprehensive philanthropic campaign, which will add significantly to the endowment, enhance our ability to attract exceptional students independent of their financial means, and reduce tuition dependency. Finally, greater financial and operational efficiencies are needed, and we must carefully support Emerson's most essential core programs.

2 Develop coordinated enterprise data systems, analyses, and infrastructure to inform strategic decisions and direction.

The most effective institutions of higher education use data and institutional research to help inform decisions and institutional effectiveness. To better utilize data in policies and decisions, Emerson will work to coalesce a coordinated campus-wide data system and bring people together in an informed manner to generate and support thoughtful, data-based decision-making. This goal will foster a culture of continuous improvement by leveraging robust data analysis to identify opportunities, address challenges, and adapt to emerging trends. Through enhanced coordination, we will ensure data-driven insights inform key initiatives, optimize operational efficiency, and strengthen alignment with evolving needs. Reducing administrative burdens and centralizing analysis will enhance institutional agility and impact, laying a foundation for sustainable growth and excellence.

3 Refine and elevate Emerson's branding, positioning, marketing, media, and engagement with priority audiences.

Emerson is a unique institution with a tremendous opportunity for impact in arts and communication, areas vital to human connection and expression. Still, the College has historically underinvested in sharing that value with the broader world. Through focused research to inform and develop the messages and visual expression of the Emerson brand, we will streamline and bring additional intention to how the College attracts excellent people to study and work at Emerson, as well as how we engage stakeholders in key areas of expertise and in the communities in which we operate, ultimately increasing the value of an Emerson degree in the marketplace.

4 Recruit, develop, support, and retain an innovative and inclusive professional staff.

Emerson is committed to maintaining and retaining a world-class professional staff and leveraging multiple strategies and tactics to support our staff. These include ensuring robust and unbiased hiring practices and providing professional development that considers diverse learning needs, accessibility requirements, and Emerson's strategic needs. We will focus on procuring and curating professional and management development programs that meet the needs of our professional staff, support our commitment to accessibility, and partner to support the diverse needs within the Emerson community.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Prioritized initiatives and programs like those listed on the following pages will guide our time, effort, and resource allocation to achieve our priorities and goals. These initiatives will translate our vision into results and ensure that every step aligns with our priorities.

By focusing on the highest-priority impact areas, we will drive progress, foster innovation, and enhance our operational excellence. Each initiative is a critical component of our strategic roadmap, providing clear direction and measurable outcomes in pursuit of creating the extraordinary.

The following initiatives are not intended to be exhaustive of all initiatives implemented as part of this strategic plan. Additional initiatives will be solicited during the operationalization phase.

The following performance targets, along with these initiatives, illustrate the types and directions of impact that will be tracked and measured. During the operationalization phase, these performance targets will be updated and supplemented.

ACADEMIC REVIEW AND FUTURE VISIONING (GOALS A.1. AND D.1.)

This initiative began in Fall 2024 to create a bold and future-focused academic infrastructure for Emerson’s future. The project involves mapping current educational programs and priorities and analyzing the future direction of arts and communication disciplines to provide recommendations for future growth and investments. This data-driven project engages faculty, staff, and students to review curricula, majors, minors, and interdisciplinary programs and consider programs to create, improve, change, or sunset.

Update undergraduate program offerings so all majors have at least 30 students and all minors have at least 20 students by Fall 2026

Develop and launch at least two new interdisciplinary undergraduate majors and two new interdisciplinary graduate programs by Fall 2028

FACULTY RESEARCH HUB (GOAL A.4.)

Emerson faculty expands the boundaries of research in higher education, advancing knowledge, creating change in the world, investigating complex problems, and creatively bringing ideas to life. The Emerson College Faculty Research Hub initiative launched in Fall 2024 to improve synergies among faculty researchers, fund individual and collaborative research internally, and raise awareness of Emerson faculty research expertise externally.

Launch at least two new interdisciplinary research initiatives, labs, or centers by Fall 2026

Increase overall extramural research funding by at least 20% by Fall 2027

ALUMNI RELATIONS (GOAL C.1.)

The Alumni Relations department and the Alumni Board have re-engaged to rebuild alumni relationships through alumni events and improved communication and engagement. Building and strengthening alumni relationships is paramount to achieving many of the College’s strategic goals and is necessary for many other initiatives to succeed.

Grow active participation of alumni in philanthropy and other areas of engagement by at least 20% by Fall 2027



EMERSONTOGETHER (GOAL C.1.)

EmersonTogether was created in Fall 2024 to help the community come together around solutions and shared values to address institutional silos and tensions. EmersonTogether is a living initiative supporting a spectrum of involvement across the silos that can sometimes form in higher education communities. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni at all of Emerson’s sites can contribute.

Conduct at least two community-building events or programs per month starting in Fall 2025

Develop Emersonians’ overall perceived sense of belonging as measured by Emerson360 starting in Fall 2025

PHASE TWO (PLANNING UNDERWAY)

STUDENT SUCCESS (GOAL C.1.)

The Student Success Initiative fosters a coherent and holistic approach to ensuring student retention, graduation, and overall success. This initiative builds on findings from the 2024 External Review and will create equitable, targeted student outcomes by addressing key barriers, such as financial challenges, curriculum limitations, and broad student concerns and needs, while improving communication and collaboration across campus. These efforts reflect a commitment to inclusion and belonging and developing a vibrant community where all students can be high-achieving scholars, creatives, and communicators.

Increase undergraduate student 4-year graduation rate to at least 80% by Spring 2027

Increase first- and second-year undergraduate student retention to at least 90% by Fall 2028

EMERSON BRANDING INITIATIVE (GOAL D.3.)

Through external and internal research involving deep engagement with Emersonians, the Emerson Branding Initiative will allow the College to evaluate Emerson's position in the marketplace and impact on cultural and prospective student conversations. This initiative will craft an updated expression of the Emerson College brand that authentically represents the College and effectively highlights the unique value of an Emerson education. The process will allow the College to refresh the key messaging and creative expression of the brand, inform all of the College's communication platforms and materials, and provide clear guidelines and tools for Emersonians as brand ambassadors.

Develop and launch the updated branding platform by Spring 2026

Build brand awareness and support among targeted audiences as measured against our baseline by Fall 2027

EMERSON CAREER READINESS INITIATIVE (GOALS A.3. AND B.3.)

The Emerson Career Readiness Initiative will gather, assess, review, and analyze current career development programs to improve and expand career initiatives at Emerson. This initiative will document current programs and resources, curate data on each program, and assess its effectiveness (job placement, salary, internships, etc.). It will also benchmark Emerson's programs against peer institutions. This initiative will develop plans for potential investment, realignment, new programs, program integration, potential staffing, and targets for new comprehensive and coordinated career readiness programs, emphasizing increased alumni involvement and mentoring.

Expand undergraduate first-job placement and satisfaction to at least 90% by Fall 2027

Grow the number of students completing an internship before graduation by at least 20% by Fall 2028

STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT INITIATIVE (GOALS B.1. AND B.2.)

This initiative involves developing a new comprehensive strategic enrollment plan for Emerson College focused on its mission, fostering growth, and ensuring excellence. It emphasizes strategic recruitment in key markets, utilizing data analytics to enhance enrollment, optimizing financial aid, and strengthening Emerson's positioning. Key aspects include promoting inclusive access while boosting success through innovative programming, improved partnerships with high schools and communities, and retention strategies for undergraduate and graduate students. The strategic enrollment plan will attract, enroll, and retain an inclusive student population, supporting Emerson's long-term goals and priorities.

Expand the number of overall applications by 10%, decrease the admission rate by 5%, and increase overall undergraduate enrollment by at least 10% over Fall 2024 numbers by Fall 2026

Expand graduate enrollment by at least 15% over Fall 2024 numbers by Fall 2027



COMMUNITY ARTS AND MEDIA (GOAL B.4.)

Emerson College is endeavoring to advance and shine a spotlight on the professional arts and media that serve, support, and advance our local and campus communities. Through the Community Arts and Media (CAM) Initiative, we will strengthen and coordinate all community-facing, professional arts and media initiatives across the College. While Emerson's core teaching and learning mission is paramount, greater strategic and tactical alignment of the arts and media with that mission will also be a primary goal of CAM, along with increasing Emerson's community visibility and impact while exploring opportunities to increase revenue.

Develop and implement a new organizational structure for CAM by Fall 2025

Ensure all student internships within the arts and media units have formal linkages to academic programs by Fall 2026

CAMPUS ALUMNI CENTER (GOAL C.3.)

Emerson has identified the need for a physical Alumni Center on the Boston campus. The Center will house the Alumni Board meetings and the Alumni Relations staff and be an essential stop on campus tours for prospective students. The Hall of Honor will showcase alumni accomplishments from across industries, demonstrating the power of an Emerson education.

Launch an Alumni Center on the Boston campus by Spring 2026 featuring exhibits on the history of Emerson, an alumni hall of honor, and event space

Grow the number of alumni visiting the Boston campus, measured year-over-year by Alumni Center visits beginning in Spring 2026

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION (GOAL C.2.)

This initiative focuses on how the College fosters communication with and among members of the Emerson community. By developing people, processes, and products to support these efforts, the College will communicate administrative and academic priorities and goals more clearly and foster multidirectional communication with people across our campuses. These efforts will promote organizational alignment and bridge-building, supporting both the elimination of redundancies and the force-multiplication of efforts through shared intelligence. More effective internal communications will empower community members to feel engaged with and champion the Emerson College brand.

Launch a comprehensive plan for campus internal communication leveraging multiple communication channels by Fall 2025

Expand internal communication satisfaction by at least 10% annually from Fall 2026 to Fall 2028 as measured by internal satisfaction surveys

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH AND DATA INITIATIVE (GOAL D.2.)

This initiative will evolve the College's institutional research capacity to holistically track the student journey from admissions to job placement to drive opportunities that improve yield, retention, engagement, and outcomes. It will also assess performance against the strategic plan by measuring outcomes of strategic initiatives, identifying risks or new opportunities based on trends, and performing continuous peer benchmarking and environment scanning to perform mid-term adjustments to the plan. This initiative will perform targeted market analysis to identify opportunities and workforce needs to inform the launch of new programs and identify strategic partners in industry for institutional leaders to pursue. Finally, the goal is to build a team that will serve as the central hub for ongoing analysis of program effectiveness and institutional efficiency, lead accreditation processes and compliance reporting, and reduce the administrative burden of departments College-wide.

Launch a comprehensive plan for campus-wide Institutional Research and recruit a new leader for IR by Summer 2025

Establish and maintain a dashboard for assessing strategic plan progress by Fall 2025

LGBTQIA+ ARTS AND MEDIA INITIATIVE (GOAL A.1.)

This new initiative brings together faculty, staff, students, alumni, and partners who focus on research, creativity, service, and teaching in the arts and media, featuring and focusing on LGBTQIA+ people, concerns, and community. A working group will explore potential focus areas for a new Center, and Institutional Advancement will explore potential partners and supporters for this initiative. We will develop recommendations for the scope, focus, and goals of a new Center, Institute, or program that can bring together Emersonians from across academic units to work together in this vital domain of research, practice, creative works, and instruction.

Develop recommendations from faculty, staff, students, and alumni for a new Center, Institute, or program by Fall 2025

Plan, fundraise, develop, and nationally launch the new Center, Institute, or program by Spring 2026

EMERGING TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE (GOALS A.2. AND A.4.)

This new initiative will help the College rethink how emerging technology interacts with students, faculty, and staff in a forward-thinking manner. It will focus on expanding support for teaching that goes beyond traditional models. This effort will also establish an ongoing assessment process to ensure cutting-edge technologies remain embedded in current facilities, curricula, and organizational structures. This approach will facilitate the seamless integration of emerging technologies such as XR and AI into academic and co-curricular activities, ensuring the continuous strategic and creative use of facilities in Emerson’s unique context.

Increase the role of academic preparation and competencies on emerging media and technology into the curricula beginning in Fall 2025 with full implementation by Fall 2026

Invest in media and technological infrastructure upgrades on all campuses informed by industry best practices and employment trends and opportunities beginning in Fall 2025 with full implementation by Fall 2027

STRATEGIC CITIES INITIATIVE (GOAL B.1.)

This new initiative, based on the successes and opportunities from Emerson Los Angeles (ELA), will focus on New York City; Washington, DC; Atlanta, GA, and/or other cities in the US. The initiative will provide opportunities to think imaginatively about Emerson’s next level of success in terms of partnerships, internships, career and job placement, alumni engagement, student recruitment and retention, innovative degree models, and capacity-building initiatives.

Strengthen the Emerson Los Angeles program with new comprehensive operational plans by Spring 2026

Explore the creation of new Emerson programs and increased student recruitment in cities with significant alumni presences and increased employment opportunities for graduates, such as New York City; Washington, DC; and/or Atlanta, GA, by Fall 2027

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE (GOAL B.2.)

The new Global Engagement Initiative reimagines Emerson College’s approach to internationalization, setting the stage for transformative global impact. This initiative focuses on expanding global partnerships and pathway programs, creating innovative dual-degree models that enhance cross-cultural learning, and attracting an inclusive and talented international student body. By fostering more substantial connections with international alumni, Emerson will build a vibrant global network that supports lifelong engagement. Additionally, the initiative emphasizes institutional capacity building through global collaborations, positioning Emerson as a leader in arts and communication education on the world stage.

Expand student participation and student satisfaction with the Kasteel Well program by Spring 2026

Increase international student enrollment by 25% with an emphasis on students from targeted regions by Fall 2027

PHILANTHROPIC COMPREHENSIVE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN (GOALS C.1. AND D.1.)

A critical piece of the strategic plan is identifying the significant funding needed to accomplish many of our goals. This initiative will provide the scaffolding for Emerson's first comprehensive fundraising campaign. The strategic plan's early launch will align with the planning stages of a fundraising campaign, including a feasibility study and readiness assessment.

Conduct the necessary research and planning to inform a comprehensive campaign by Fall 2025

Develop and launch the quiet phase of a comprehensive campaign, with a public phase launching by 2030

EMERSON EXPERIENCE INITIATIVE (GOAL C.3.)

The new Emerson Experience Initiative will draw upon our communication and arts strengths to create more creative and vibrant campuses and more dynamic and joyful experiences for all Emersonians. This initiative will contribute to our local, national, and global communities; break down barriers; and provide touchpoints for connecting with neighborhood communities in Boston, Los Angeles, and Well. It will also increase meaningful experiential and community-based learning opportunities for Emerson students. Thus, it should bring more laughter, fun, and positivity to all Emersonians.

Establish a comprehensive plan for increasing student, faculty, and staff satisfaction and joy within their respective campus experiences by Spring 2026

Increase year-over-year self-reported well-being and satisfaction across all audiences on all campuses starting in Spring 2026

CAMPUS AND FACILITY MASTER PLANNING (GOAL C.4.)

This campus-wide initiative will create a new Campus Master Plan to optimize space utilization and maximize the efficiency of existing facilities to support faculty, staff, and students while planning for future growth and evolving institutional needs within the existing footprint. It will adjust deferred maintenance to ensure buildings are well maintained; strengthen community collaboration; and create an accessible, vibrant campus that fosters collaboration and engagement and strengthens ties with the City of Boston.

Finally, it will enhance campus sustainability by implementing environmentally sustainable practices to reduce the College's carbon footprint, ensuring long-term operational resilience and preparing the campus for future environmental challenges. This effort will provide sufficient support and planning for regular renewal and support of existing spaces. It will also plan to integrate efforts across multiple campuses, ensuring that resources, facilities, and programs evolve to meet the College's long-term goals.

Plan, implement, and finalize a new comprehensive facilities master plan by Spring 2026 and a 10-year Institutional Master Plan (IMP) as required by the City of Boston by 2027

Fulfill our sustainability commitment to overall carbon neutrality by 2030

EXECUTIVE EDUCATION INITIATIVE (GOAL D.1.)

Building on the initial gains of Professional Studies, Emerson will investigate its potential role in the landscape of executive education, offering non-credit courses and micro-credentials to post-baccalaureate professionals seeking to increase their expertise in specific areas. Offered by existing faculty, accomplished alumni, and high-profile professionals in their fields, these courses and programs will situate Emerson in a new market in Boston, LA, and internationally.

Create a plan for a new executive education program to pilot in Los Angeles, Boston, and/or online by Spring 2026

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE (GOAL D.4.)

Emerson's new Leadership and Management training programs will allow employees to learn from and engage with the College's leadership and professionals. This professional development program will be an excellent opportunity to continue enhancing and reinforcing Emerson's leadership culture and driving collaborative behaviors. It will serve all managers, supervisors, and academic administrators and focus on management and leadership best practices and professional development.

Develop and/or expand opportunities for supporting and training managers and administrators throughout the faculty and staff by Fall 2025

Increase annual staff and faculty retention rates by at least 5% by Fall 2026 based on annual HR data tracking

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: STRATEGIC PLANNING ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The development of the Strategic Plan has included engagement across the College and beyond to capture input from many Emersonians on all campuses and around the globe, including undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, advisory leadership groups, global collaborators, community partners, and the Board of Trustees. Special thanks to the following groups:

Strategic Planning Executive Leadership Team

Carolina Avellaneda
Jay Bernhardt
Rebekah Carmichael
Jon Derek Croteau
Liz Holland
James Merenda
Alexandra Socarides

Strategic Planning Steering Committee

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Shaun Clarke
Paul Dworkis
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Jim Hoppe
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Jennifer Lamy
Jamie Montgomery-Hyde
Ronee Penoi
Anthony Pinder

Shaya Gregory Poku
Jan Roberts-Breslin
Charlize Silvestrino
Brent Smith
Robin Van Impe

Strategic Planning Board of Trustees Working Group

Seth Grahame-Smith
Doug Herzog (Chair)
Cathy Weiss
Peter Zamore
Eric Alexander (ex-officio)

Strategic Planning January Workshop Groups

Alumni Board Executive Team
Board of Advisors Co-Chairs
Emerson Los Angeles, Kasteel Well, and Paris College of Art Leadership
President and Provost Advisory Group
President's Council
President's Staff Advisory Group
President's Student Advisory Group
Presidential Advisory Group for Community and Equity (PAG) Core Leadership Team
Provost's Council
SGA Internal Affairs Team
Strategic Planning Working Groups

President's Council

Christie Anglade
Carolina Avellaneda
Brian Basgen
Matt Boyce
Rob Butler
Rebekah Carmichael
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Allison Dawson
Paul Dworkis
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Shaya Gregory Poku
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Strategic Planning External Market Working Group

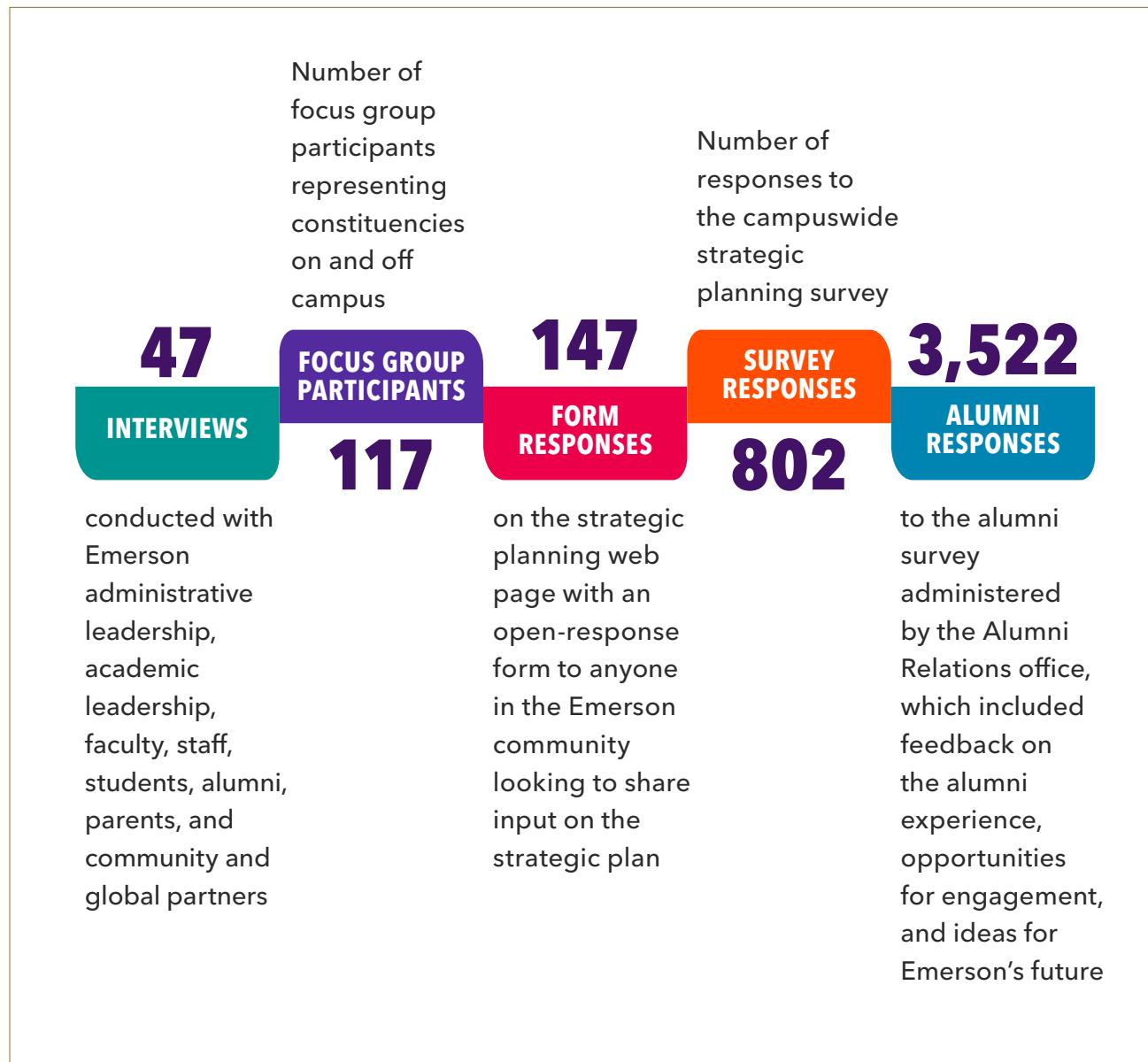
Brian Basgen (Chair)
Matt Boyce
Rebekah Carmichael
Spencer Kimball
Brooke Knight
Jennifer Lamy
Brent Smith

**APPENDIX B:
DOCUMENTS AND REPORTS THAT INFORMED THE STRATEGIC PLAN
IN ADDITION TO STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

2011-2023 Strategic Plan	Emerson College Factbook 2022-2023
2022 NECHE External Reviewers Report	Emerson Los Angeles Center Self-Study for Academic Program Review, Spring-Summer 2021
2022 State of the College	Emerson Space Utilization Study 2021
2023 Kasteel Well, Netherlands, Program Review	EmersonTogether
2023 NECHE Final Team Report	Emerson360 Community Survey
2023 NECHE Commission Recommendations	Facts & Figures about Emerson
2024 Staffing Report-September 2024 (61 pages)	Financial Statements and Forms, 2019-2024
A Culture That Inspires: Initial Roadmap Equity, Access, and Social Justice (EASJ) at Emerson College 2023-2028, Draft, 2024 (32 slides)	Future of Emerson Report
Alumni Relations 2024 All Alumni Survey	Future of Emerson Phase II Final Report (17 pages)
Beyond Racial Equity Strategic Review Report (66 pages)	High-Level Overview from the 2024 Alumni Attitude Study [®] conducted by Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. (40 slides)
Career Development Center Annual Report, 2021-2022	Initial Results from the 2024 Alumni Attitude Study [®] conducted by Performance Enhancement Group, Ltd. (9 slides)
Current and previous academic portfolio	Leadership & Organizational Information
Elevating Faculty Research, Creative Practice & Culture @Emerson (4 pages)	NECHE Report Projections (Fall 2021-Spring 2022)
	NECHE 2022 Self-Study main points

Previous NECHE Recommendations and Emerson Actions, 2013 (4 pages)
ProArts Consortium
Recommendations for removing barriers to faculty research at Emerson (6 pages)
Research Funding Report FY 2021-FY 2024
Strategic Planning Constituent Engagement Working Group Report and Recommendations
Strategic Planning External Market Working Group Report and Recommendations
Strategic Planning Future of Emerson Working Group Report and Recommendations
Sustainability to 2030 Action Plan and summary of recommendations
The Future of Emerson: Results of the AY 2020-2021 Faculty and Staff Envisioning Collaboration (16 pages)

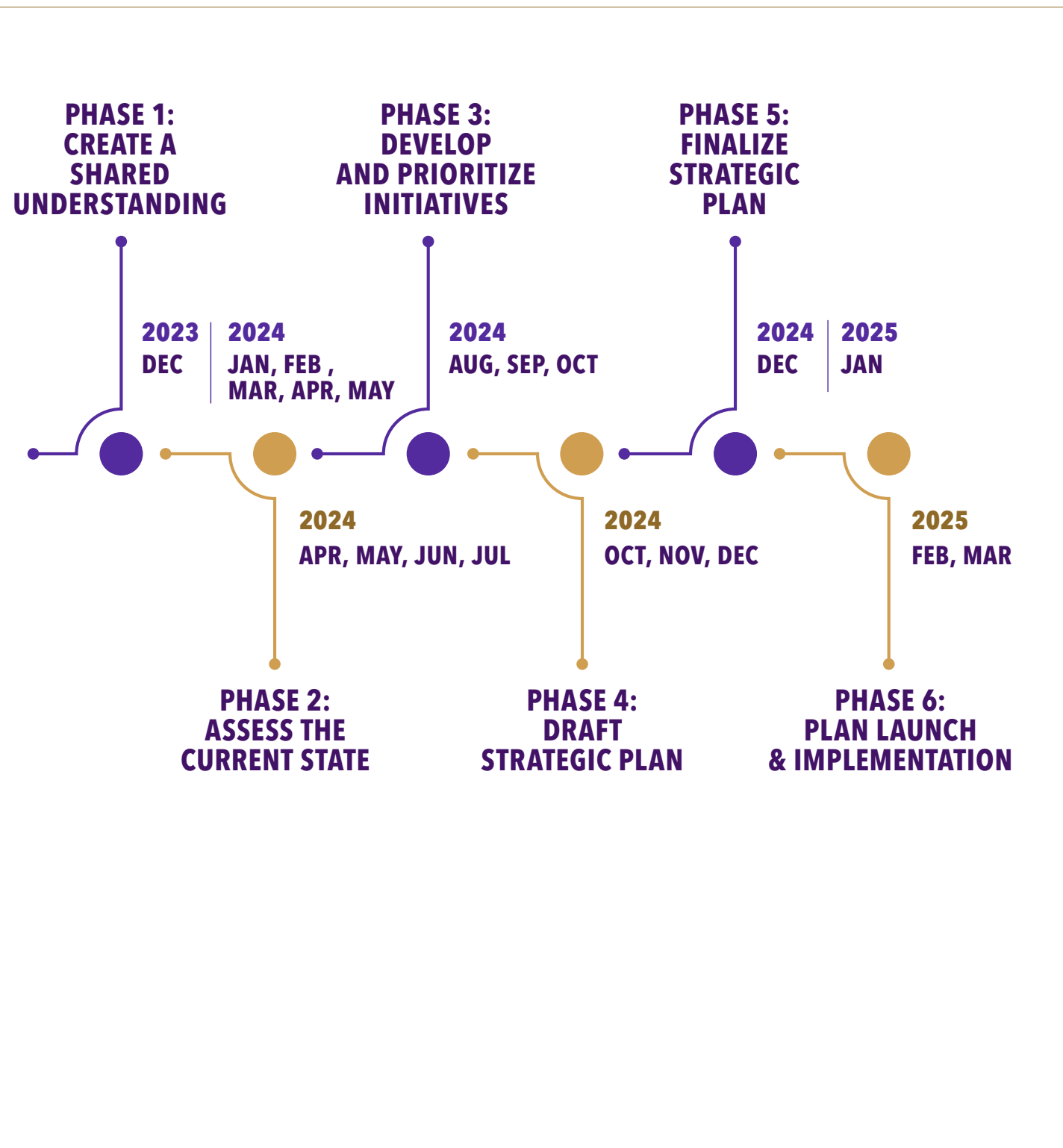
APPENDIX C: SUMMARY OF CONSTITUENT ENGAGEMENT



- ALUMNI BOARD*
- ALUMNI INDUSTRY LEADERS
- BOARD OF ADVISORS*
- BOARD OF TRUSTEES NEW MEMBERS
- CIVIC LEADERS
- DEPARTMENT CHAIRS*
- DISTINGUISHED FACULTY
- EMERSON LA FACULTY
- EMERSON LA STAFF
- FACULTY
- GLOBAL PARTNERS
- KASTEEL WELL COMMUNITY
- PARENTS
- PRESIDENT'S AND PROVOST'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE
- PRESIDENTIAL STAFF ADVISORY COMMITTEE
- PRESIDENTIAL STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
- RESEARCH FACULTY*
- SOCIAL IMPACT GROUP
- STUDENTS
- UNION LEADERSHIP

*Two focus groups were held with different participants for scheduling purposes.

APPENDIX D: STRATEGIC PLANNING PHASES AND TIMELINE



MISSION

To educate and elevate extraordinary artists, communicators, scholars, and professionals for the betterment of humanity. We pursue this mission through world-class teaching, practice, performance, and discovery that are experiential, innovative, and inclusive.

VISION

To be a world-leading educational institution for communication and the arts. We champion the power and potential of the arts and communication to enrich lives, build connections, strengthen relationships, influence culture, and advance society.

A. Academic Innovation to Shape the Future of Arts and Communication	B. Collaborative Connections to Develop and Cultivate Stronger Relationships and External Partnerships	C. Community Engagement to Build a Vibrant and Inclusive Campus Experience	D. Operational Excellence to Ensure Effective Performance and Financial Strength
1. Increase innovation, interdisciplinarity, and collaboration throughout the academic enterprise.	1. Enhance Emerson Los Angeles and increase engagement and recruitment in targeted US cities and regions.	1. Support a vibrant community culture and experience that fosters creativity, curiosity, belonging, accessibility, and well-being.	1. Increase financial strength through innovative academic and programmatic offerings, increased philanthropy, and operational efficiencies.
2. Enhance student education and institutional capacity in emerging media and technologies.	2. Enhance Kasteel Well, global programs and partnerships, and increase international student recruitment from targeted regions.	2. Strengthen internal communication, engagement, and collaboration among students, faculty, staff, and administrators.	2. Develop coordinated enterprise data systems, analyses, and infrastructure to inform strategic decisions and direction.
3. Expand and strengthen career readiness for all students.	3. Develop and diversify industry, organizational, and community collaborations and partnerships.	3. Cultivate and strengthen robust alumni relations and engagement and increase campus involvement.	3. Refine and elevate Emerson's branding, positioning, marketing, media, and engagement with priority audiences.
4. Recruit, develop, and support an innovative and inclusive faculty.	4. Expand external engagement and integration with our local communities through arts, media, service, and civic engagement.	4. Use facilities strategically and creatively to enhance the Emerson experience.	4. Recruit, develop, support, and retain an innovative and inclusive professional staff.

VALUES

CREATIVITY ▪ INNOVATION ▪ INCLUSION ▪ CURIOSITY ▪ EQUITY ▪ EXPRESSION ▪ COLLABORATION

VISIT

EMERSON.EDU/STRATEGIC-PLAN

