



The Strategic Plan of BEACON COLLEGE ~ 2021 – 2025 ~

The Centrality of Beacon’s Strategic Plan [2021-2025]

The well-governed and effectively operated college continues to distinguish itself by exhibiting two features: first, by its ability to identify the **needs and demands of the academic marketplace**, and second, by sound judgment in **determining which of those needs and demands it should endeavor to meet**. The institution that tries to be all things to everyone ends by being not much to anyone. This reality served as the very foundation of Beacon’s *Strategic Plan [2016-2020]* and is the bedrock of its successor institutional guide, the *Strategic Plan of Beacon College [2021-2025]*.

The Beacon community is critically aware that, even for our specialized niche, higher education is in the midst of unprecedented change, marked by robust competition, compelling innovations in instruction and course delivery, and volatile economic, financial, and political forces, combined with escalating public expectations and scrutiny. The pandemic of 2020 exemplified further that Beacon and our higher education colleagues can be vulnerable to massive societal and life disruptions, pressures so abrupt and consequential that only nimble and well-executed institutional responses can weather the storm.

Beacon’s future and institutional goals, as envisioned for the 2021-2025 era, remain securely moored to Beacon’s distinct “sense of self” as portrayed in four Board-adopted and publicly shared statements: Mission, Vision, Identity, and Strategy. Collectively, these texts unite to define the purpose and essence of the Institution. The *Strategic Plan of Beacon College [2021-2025]* envisions Beacon’s progression as an ever-improving, dynamic, and durable institution of higher learning devoted to the unique mission of educating and serving students with learning and attention issues.

In its essence, the Board-adopted *Strategic Plan [2021-2025]* is animated by three overarching **Strategic Goals** – each of which, with closely aligned, prominent **Strategic Actions**, is summarized in the following pages:

The Strategic Goals and Actions of Beacon College [2021-2025]

The post-COVID world that the College must negotiate will pose unforeseen market hazards. And yet, Beacon's well-being as an institution of higher learning must rely on a well-conceived and deliberate pathway forward with a focused *Strategic Plan* that possesses the capacity to accommodate changing circumstances.

The *Strategic Goals* and associated measurable *Actions* of Beacon College, Inc. adopted by the Board of Trustees for the calendar years 2021 through 2025 are:

1. ***A DEDICATION TO PROVIDING A SUPERIOR UNDERGRADUATE, RESIDENTIAL EXPERIENCE FOR COLLEGIANS WITH LEARNING AND ATTENTION ISSUES:*** Beacon College will produce exceptional, nation-leading student outcomes while at the same time continuously improving upon the Institution's academic program and "holistically-oriented" wrap-around, co-curricular, extra-curricular, and post-degree life and career offerings. The measurable actions that the College will pursue in the successful attainment of this *Strategic Goal* are:

- a. **Academics and Engagement:** At the core of the College's purpose and mission is the engagement and development of undergraduates through the availability of a curriculum, quality instruction, and essential developmental and supportive services. Beacon College has prioritized the following key *Objectives* in this arena:
 - i. Commission a third-party market survey/analysis of: (a) disciplinary (major/minor), service, and extracurricular preferences/expectations of entering students and families, and (b) existing and evolving job (employment) categories and career tracks that align with the College's current curricular offerings and potential future areas of major/minor concentration;
 - ii. Based upon the results of these two third-party analyses, the College shall guide a process that weighs and introduces necessary reforms that: a) establishes the appropriate academic mix of disciplines (majors/minors) that are best suited to existing and evolving job categories and Beacon curriculum (this shall inform the College's future admissions/enrollment focus and related strategies); and
 - iii. Continue assessing and strengthening the coordination and management of an explicit and unified program of Student Engagement and Success that effectively aligns with Beacon's holistic educational mission and developmental priorities.
- b. **Spaces and Places:** Beacon's people and programs must be afforded a campus that reflects seriousness of academic purpose and a pervasive environment welcoming and accessible to all. The following campus projects represent the Institution's most immediate priorities through 2025:

- i. The construction of a **Core Academic Center** addresses the most dominant of space needs of the College. Utilizing \$8M of Capital Campaign funding, this 28,000 square foot facility will provide essential classroom and academic and support offices as well as an open meeting venue to accommodate audiences of 250 patrons;
 - ii. Completion of Beacon's new **Dining Commons** will provide much-needed amenities and space for the community to gather for communal meals and off-hour socialization/food. This project is funded under the auspices of \$2.2M in bond financing; funds have also been designated for the conversion of First Street into an attractive pedestrian walking park;
 - iii. The Creation of the **Jones Family Career Center**: The ability to achieve a secure first career upon graduation is an essential outcome/expectation for Beacon students and their families. With a combination of Jones Family and Fogg Foundation resources, the College will purchase this currently leased property and renovate it with an appropriate technology-enhanced classroom, professional office, and interviewing space;
 - iv. **Resolving all deferred maintenance issues by 2025** will be a prominent emphasis of the College during the entire *Strategic Plan*: At the time that this *Plan* was adopted, Beacon has made significant progress in addressing the most challenging of campus renovation concerns. Four items remain that require attention: a) the continued improvement and modernization of Beacon Commons; (b) the repair, renewal, and utility upgrading of the Stoer Building, (c) the reconstruction of the Palmetto House Admissions Office (or creation of a Beacon Welcome Center), and (d) replacing/updating, on a priority basis, outdated furnishings (including furniture) across the campus; and
 - v. Employing the **20/25 Expedition** strategy, Beacon will endeavor to finance additional campus development initiatives as these funds may be solicited – with the intention being to supplement the Capital Campaign, not to detract from this priority.
- c. **Information Technology:** In FY 2020, the College commenced the comprehensive upgrading and reconfiguration of Beacon's technology and communications infrastructure, intended to strengthen the IT capacity across all organizational domains: instructional, service, administrative, and financial. Over the course of the 2021-2025 era, Beacon will continue the conversion and strategic implementation of the following platforms:
- i. The College's **Learning Management System (LMS)** – Canvas;

- ii. Support for the Admissions’ Outreach and Marketing Functions through the Implementation of a Robust **Customer Relationship Management (CRM)** – Salesforce;
- iii. The Full Conversion of Beacon’s **Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)** from SONIS to Jenzabar One; and
- iv. **Access to High-speed, Robust Technology** – In the spring of 2021, Beacon will link to Florida’s LambdaRail (FLR), the State’s much lauded research and education fiber optic network. This initiative allows the College sustained access to an electronic highway that is more efficient, accessible, flexible, and less costly. Furthermore, with the consultation and support of Veytec, Beacon will continuously upgrade all IT access and data distribution systems on campus, endeavoring to modernize current institutional networks by taking full advantage of “Cloud-based” solutions.

2. **A FOCUS ON ESTABLISHING A SUSTAINED HEALTHY BALANCE OF REVENUE SOURCES FOR COLLEGE OPERATIONS AND INVESTMENTS:** Beacon College will prudently manage its financial and campus resources to achieve consistently improving (year-over-year) fiscal and asset strength. The goal will be to balance core operating realities with the need for entrepreneurial and capital investments, thus securing the Institution and our mission in perpetuity.

- a. **Relaunching and Successfully Completing a \$10M Capital Campaign:** As the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic abates, Beacon will relaunch the Public Phase of its \$10M Capital Campaign, *Continuing the Journey*, commencing on August 15, 2021. It is the College’s goal to conclude this fund-raising drive by the end of the 2024 calendar year; and
- b. **Vigilance in Financial Management:** The College shall remain in good standing (achieving target thresholds or above) with respect to three key financial measures: *i)* the U.S. Department of Education’s Financial Responsibility Act Score, *ii)* the SACSCOC Core UNAEP Ratio incorporated in the Commission’s Standards on Finance, and *iii)* all tax-exempt bond covenants. In its efforts to achieve a healthy balance of revenue sources, it is Beacon’s goal to reduce its present tuition reliance of 86% to 80% by the conclusion of the *Strategic Plan* in 2025.

3. **A COMMITMENT TO REMAINING ALERT, ENTREPRENEURIAL, STRATEGIC, AND FLEXIBLE IN THE FACE OF CHANGING MARKET FORCES:** Beacon College will examine, weigh, and, where and when appropriate, take advantage of opportunities and innovations that allow the community to better reach and serve expanded student and professional audiences — existing and new.

- a. **Creating a Meaningful Program and Structure to Fulfill the Promise of a Growing Focus on Transition:** Beacon will plan and organize a Center that

will serve as an incubator for pre-college offerings like the existing *Navigator Prep*, *Jump Start*, and *Summer for Success*. Extending beyond the pre-college market, the Transition Center will explore the concept of “transition” over a more extended period, including struggling collegians not enrolled at Beacon and post-degree graduates with LAI profiles; and

- b.* **Evaluating and Acting on “Manageable” Institutional Options after the College Achieves its Projected Upper Limit of 500 FTE on the Leesburg Campus:** As the traditional Leesburg campus approaches a pre-planned “upper limit” for traditional undergraduate FTE, what innovations beyond a Transition Center should the College examine to protect the vitality, relevance, and financial health of Beacon College?

Strategic Planning at Beacon College

The *Strategic Plan of Beacon College [2021-2025]* is the fourth in a sequence of communal and comprehensive efforts by the College since 2011 to envision Beacon's progression as an ever-improving, stable, and durable institution of higher learning devoted to the unique mission of educating and serving students with learning and attention issues. The three "visioning" efforts preceding the *Strategic Plan* summarized in this brochure comprise:

- (1) **Beacon on the Rise (2011-2013)** – this inaugural strategic planning effort was initiated subsequent to a change in presidential leadership and was inspired by a "Future Pull Exercise" conducted by the College's Board of Trustees;
- (2) **The Credo Study and Master Plan [2014-2015]** – This focused strategic planning initiative was commissioned by the Board of Trustees through a respected national counsel with significant private higher education expertise, the firm *Credo* (inaugurated in the summer of 2014). The institutional "roadmap" that evolved from this collaboration envisioned:
 - a. the "right-sizing" of the College to a student FTE of 450-500 undergraduates over the period of a decade;
 - b. the conceptualization of the defining features of the Beacon physical campus in 10 years' time, and
 - c. the essence and expectations of the Student Experience that uniquely distinguish Beacon College and its leading-edge outcomes for collegians with learning and attention issues;
- (3) **The College's Strategic Plan [2016-2020]** – Informed by *Credo's* work and the expertise and vision resident on the Beacon campus, the College pursued the creation of a strategic course of action that would comprehensively guide the community's development as a residential, liberal arts-based institution throughout the period 2016-2020. Adopted by the Board of Trustees in the spring of 2016, this *Strategic Plan* was anchored to five (5) priorities (*Strategic Goals*):
 - (a) Accreditation – decennial reaffirmation by *SACSCOC*,
 - (b) Investment in a superior undergraduate program and student experience,
 - (c) Commitment to the creation of a flourishing, leading-edge residential campus,
 - (d) Care in fashioning and building upon the institutional priorities of financial security and strength, and
 - (e) Innovation – securing Beacon's future by strategically extending the College's mission and influence to previously unserved/underserved audiences of students, parents, and professionals.