

INNOVATE 2022

Strategic Plan 2017-2022





 **BENNETT** COLLEGE
FOR
WOMEN



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Bennett College Community,

Imagine a college in five years where a vibrant community of nearly 650 young women studies to become leaders in STEM, health sciences, communications, education, politics and other fields. A four-year, liberal arts institution that fosters personal growth, civic engagement, social justice and leadership. Envision a college that produces confident, competent women who graduate, return to their communities and transform lives. That is our aim for Bennett College.

In five years, the Bennett Board of Trustees, my Leadership Team and I plan to develop Bennett into a preeminent institution. “Innovate 2022,” a five-year strategic plan, is an ambitious document that promotes growth and innovation through four strategic goals: 1) Strengthening the quality and rigor of the educational experience to promote student success; 2) Achieving and maintaining financial stability; 3) Growing a culture of organizational excellence and efficiency; and 4) Promoting and expanding strategic partnerships to create a premier learning experience and to cultivate global leaders.

With bold leadership driven by a desire to become a destination institution, Bennett prides itself on producing students like Shani McMichael, who entered with a 2.3 GPA but graduated as valedictorian and began graduate school at Columbia University in Fall 2018. Bennett is special place that allows students to work closely with professors, while giving them the opportunity to study abroad, conduct research and participate in workshops throughout the country so they can become global citizens. Bennett College transforms students’ lives and produces phenomenal women leaders.

If effectively carried out, Innovate 2022 will transform Bennett, which was founded in 1873 and became women’s only in 1926, into a place where young women vie to enroll. As you read the new plan, imagine ways you can help bring to life the blueprint my team and I have worked diligently to set forth. Moreover, as you peruse Innovate 2022, know I am grateful for your support and look forward to working with you as we Build a Better Bennett!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Phyllis Worthy Dawkins'.

Phyllis Worthy Dawkins, Ph.D.
President

MISSION

Bennett College prepares women of color through a transformative liberal arts education to lead with purpose, integrity, and a strong sense of self-worth. Bennett provides educational access to students while promoting inquiry, civic engagement, social justice, lifelong learning, and equity for all.

FOCI AREAS

Leadership
Civic Engagement
Global Citizenship
Innovation/ Entrepreneurship
Communications

VISION

Bennett College is renowned for its intimate, engaging learning community that produces phenomenal women scholars and global leaders.

BENNETT'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Bennett College:

1. Cultivate confident women leaders who are fiscally and socially responsible and civically engaged.
2. Offer unique culture where faculty, staff, and alumnae build rapport with our students and participate in their development.
3. Meets our students where they are academically and offers comprehensive support services.
4. Provides a broad-based, liberal arts education that helps students flourish in a global, ever changing economy.
5. Emphasizes the leadership development of women of color.

HISTORY OF BENNETT COLLEGE

In 1873, Bennett College had its beginning in the basement of the Warnersville Methodist Episcopal Church (now known as St. Matthew's Methodist Church). Seventy young men and women started elementary and secondary level studies. In 1874, the Freedmen's Aid Society took over the school which remained under its auspices for 50 years. In 1878, a group of emancipated slaves purchased the present site for the school. College-level courses and permanent facilities were added. In 1926, the Women's Home Missionary Society joined with the Board of Education of the church to make Bennett College in Greensboro, NC, formerly co-educational, a college for women. The challenges that were overcome to establish Bennett in the early century demand that today's challenges be met and overcome to ensure her survival.

Today, Bennett College is a private four-year liberal arts institution for women. Centrally located in Greensboro, Bennett is the only historically African-American college for women in the state of North Carolina and is one of two in the country. For more than 145 years, Bennett has cultivated socially responsible and civically engaged women leaders. As a United Methodist Church-affiliated institution, Bennett College promotes morally-grounded maturation, intellectual honesty, purposeful public service, and responsible civic action. Bennett is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Bennett College welcomes students, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds recognizing that the educational experience is enriched and strengthened when multiple voices are represented and heard.

Operating in an interdisciplinary, learning-centered environment, students, working with faculty and staff, will learn to use sophisticated intellectual skills, think analytically, and solve problems in ways that respect a variety of viewpoints and deepen their understanding of different cultures.

PHILOSOPHY

Bennett College's undergirding philosophy is that a high-quality college experience should provide its students with strong academic and co-curricular programs that encourage their personal development, endorse life-long learning, and prepare them to meet the needs of an ever-changing society. Bennett College values and respects every member of its community. As a United Methodist Church-related institution, the College believes that education should be related to humanitarian ends.

At Bennett College, education takes place in an environment of open inquiry where teachers and students are immersed in educational processes that build community, foster authentic research, contribute knowledge, and advance scholarship and personal empowerment. Students will leave Bennett College prepared for success in the world of work and further studies, possessing a greater appreciation of the history and culture of Africa and the African Diaspora, the struggles and accomplishments of women, and a realization of their own ability and the possibilities to help change the world.

CORE VALUES

The College embraces the following seven core values and ideals as our guiding principles and core beliefs:

Integrity
Accountability
Professionalism
Excellence
Leadership
Teamwork
Social and Economic Justice

The goal of Bennett College is not only to develop our students intellectually, but also to ensure their post-graduation development, either through graduate and professional school opportunities or through employment. Bennett students will be known for their intellectual acumen, activism, community service, leadership skills, and excellence. Employers will seek out Bennett graduates to work for them.

STRATEGIC PLAN OVERARCHING GOALS

GOAL 1: Strengthen the quality and rigor of the educational experience to promote student success.

GOAL 2: Achieve and maintain financial stability.

GOAL 3: Grow a culture of organizational excellence and efficiency.

GOAL 4: Promote and expand strategic partnerships to create a premier learning experience and to cultivate global leaders.

STRATEGIC PLANNING OVERARCHING GOALS

GOAL 1: Strengthen the quality and rigor of the educational experience to promote student success.

Objective 1.1: Clearly define and promote Bennett's signature programs and offerings (e.g. STEM).

Strategies

- Update the core values for the student experience.
- Implement comprehensive branding effort.
- Promote signature programs and areas of distinction.
- Promote Civic Engagement/Service Learning activities, capstones, and projects.
- Expand Global Studies (e.g. Study Abroad program, National Student Exchange, etc).

Objective 1.2: Provide students with competitive and transferable skills.

Strategies

- Prepare students for careers and/or graduate school.
- Improve/expand internship program.
- Integrate mobile/digital technology into the curriculum.

Objective 1.3: Recruit, retain, and promote high-quality faculty and staff.

Strategies

- Conduct wage and salary study for current employees.
- Provide professional development for faculty to promote excellence in teaching and learning.
- Develop plan to reinstate tenure.
- Assess and improve benefits package.

Objective 1.4: Implement comprehensive Student Success Plan and Programs.

Strategies

- Assess and program educational needs for students.
- Assess and program physical and mental health needs for students.
- Implement programs to address academic and personal needs.
- Create innovative academic and student services. Potential examples include Leadership Development and Certification, High-quality orientation program, Living/learning communities, Speaker Series, ESL, High-Quality Mentoring program, Purposeful First-Year Experience (FYE), and program to address students with children.
- Develop priority plan to restore student activities including sports, programs, clubs, and classes.

Objective 1.5: Create and promote new academic programs and continuing education.

Strategies

- Develop market-driven, workforce programs.
- Offer more certificates and certifications to help students be workforce ready.
- Offer more institutes on Bennett's signature programs (including Institute on Civically Engaged Teaching and Learning).
- Offer recertification opportunities to community (including Teacher recertification credits, computer training, and CPR training).

Objective 1.6: Implement college-wide student leadership development and civic-engagement programming.



Freshwomen entering the Bearden Gate during one of Bennett's traditions, Convocatum Est, where they are formally introduced to and welcomed by the College Community

GOAL 2: Achieve and maintain financial stability.

Objective 2.1 (short-term): Grow and sustain enrollment.

Strategies

- Utilize best practices to grow and sustain student body.
- Activate Alumnae network to help accepted students confirm acceptance.
- Improve retention and graduation rates.
- Expand articulation and transfer agreements. Actively recruit regional community college graduates.
- Leverage Early/Middle College as a recruitment tool.

Objective 2.2 (short-term): Create new funding streams.

Strategies

- Communicate the fundraising needs and plan.
- Capital Campaign with targets for capital improvement, scholarships, faculty and staff professional development, and endowed faculty chairs.
- Expand auxiliary services.
- Create summer enrichment programs.
- Reactivate the Board of Visitors with access to funding streams.
- Expand grant writing activities.

Objective 2.3 (short-term): Achieve and maintain a balanced budget annually.

Strategies

- Develop and maintain an annual operating budget with a surplus of 2-4%.
- Manage cost containment.
- Pursue legislation regarding HBCU Capital Loan deferment.

Objective 2.4 (long-term): Strategically invest in revitalizing infrastructure and value-added services.

Strategies

- Continue to secure funds to implement the Master Plan 2020.
- Invest in Campus and Community Safety initiatives.
- Improve and update technology on campus.



In order of appearance (L-R): UNCF President/CEO Dr. Michael L. Lomax; N.C. Senator Gladys A. Robinson '71; Congresswoman Alma S. Adams (D-District 13); Bennett College President Dr. Phyllis Worthy Dawkins; Congressman Ted Budd (R-District 12); Congressman Anthony Brown (MD-04); and Lodriguez Murray, UNCF's vice president of public policy & government affairs

GOAL 3: Grow a culture of organizational excellence and efficiency.

Objective 3.1: Standardize and innovate operational processes for simplification and efficiency.

Strategies

- Provide student-centered services.
- Update online application process.
- Implement online enrollment/registration process.
- Create online job application process.
- Fully implement the administrative software.
- Develop, implement, and institutionalize procedures to sign documents electronically.
- Develop, implement, and institutionalize procedures to scan and link student records with a digital scanning software.
- Redesign and streamline Leadership Team Meeting.
- Improve culture of inquiry, assessment, and evaluation.

Objective 3.2: Provide professional development opportunities to improve efficiency.

Strategies

- Offer training that will help employees streamline and simplify administrative processes.
- Provide coaching/training to utilize data in decision-making.
- Improve feedback and performance evaluation processes.
- Provide management training.
- Provide extensive, college-wide Jenzabar training.

Objective 3.3: Expand operational capacity and excel in service, quality, and execution.

Strategies

- Develop priority plan to fill all faculty and staff positions with involvement from President and Leadership Team.
- Integrate digital technology in the workplace.

GOAL 4: Promote and expand strategic partnerships to create a premier learning experience.

Objective 4.1: Cultivate and maintain external partnerships to enhance student success and the College advancement.

Strategies

- Research and partner with private organizations, corporations, foundations and philanthropists.
- Increase state and federal grants and contracts.
- Optimize relationship with United Methodist Church (UMC).
- Maximize scholarship funds and relationship with United Negro College Fund (UNCF) to support student and program initiatives.
- Increase engagement in Greater Greensboro.
- Enhance relationships with Alumnae.
- Develop at least one service learning/ civic engagement course in each major.

Objective 4.2: Expand visibility in region, state, and nation.

Strategies

- Cultivate relationships with key state and national legislators.
- Increase opportunities for student civic engagement.
- Expand global studies partnerships.
- Seek appointments on local and state boards and commissions.
- Expand presence on social media, in news media, and advertisements/promotion to share more stories that are positive.

Objective 4.3: Enhance the intellectual environment by creating innovative leadership and engagement opportunities.

*Belles in
Johannesburg,
South Africa with
Dr. Dawkins and
administrators*



STRATEGIC PLAN SCORECARD

GOAL 1: Strengthen the quality and rigor of the educational experience to promote student success.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	CURRENT 2017 - 2018	TARGET 2021 - 2022	DIVISION RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Graduation rates	37% (IPEDS 2017, 6 Year)	45%	Student Success & Retention/IR	
Retention rates	44% (Fall 2016 to Fall 2017)	54% (Fall 20 to Fall 21)	Student Success & Retention	
Internships/ Clinical experience/ Student Teaching	Baseline	100% of graduates will have completed at least 1 internship	Academic Affairs	
Increase number of students participating in undergraduate research	Baseline	20% of graduates will complete an internship	Academic Affairs	
Improve student satisfaction survey results by 15%	-Student Satisfaction Inventory -Senior Exit Survey -NSSE	Increase student satisfaction across all instruments by 10%	Academic Affairs	
Develop at least five new academic majors focused in health sciences and STEM	3 proposed new majors, 3 new minors	5 new majors	Academic Affairs	
Increase student engagement	Baseline	75% of students will be engaged in 5 or more activities	Student Affairs	

GOAL 2: Achieve and maintain financial stability.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	CURRENT 2017 - 2018	TARGET 2021 - 2022	DIVISION RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Enrollment (Headcount)	409 (Fall 2017)	637 (Fall 2021)	Enrollment Management	
Endowment	\$12.6 million	\$20 million	Institutional Advancement	
Grants/contracts	\$5.6 million	\$15 million	Sponsored Programs/ Academic Affairs	
Private gifts/grants	\$3.4 million	\$12.5 million	Institutional Advancement	
Financial Stability	\$1.1 million Deficit	Surplus of at least 2-4%	Business and Finance	

GOAL 3: Grow a culture of organizational excellence and efficiency.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	CURRENT 2017 - 2018	TARGET 2021 - 2022	DIVISION RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Enhance professional development opportunities for faculty/staff	Baseline for Faculty and Staff	80% of faculty will attend 1 or more professional development opportunities	Vice Presidents	
Improve student satisfaction survey results by 15%	-Student Satisfaction Inventory -Senior Exit Survey	Increase student satisfaction across all instruments by 10%	IR	
Improve employee satisfaction survey results by 15%	Baseline data Spring 2019 (Great Colleges to Work For)	-Initiate participation -Increase employee satisfaction overall by 10%	Human Resources and IR	

GOAL 4: Promote and expand strategic partnerships to create a premier learning experience.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	CURRENT 2017 - 2018	TARGET 2021 - 2022	DIVISION RESPONSIBLE	STATUS
Increase the number of MOUs related to international studies	Reviewing 5 MOUs	10	Academic Affairs	
Increase the number of MOUs related to programs	MOU with Pfeiffer University graduate programs	10	Civic Engagement/ Leadership	
Increase the number of MOUs related to transfer agreements	Baseline	10	Academic Affairs	
Expand the number of partner organizations where students participate in civic engagement	Baseline	20	Student Affairs and Academic Affairs	
Expand number of partner organizations for student life/activities	Signed agreement with N.C. A&T	7 new partners	Student Affairs	

Bennett College's Strategic Planning Process Timeline

- May 2017** Dr. Sonya Ricks, Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Strategic Planning and Assessment, and Andrena Coleman established a Strategic Planning Committee. Department Heads and Faculty were asked to provide data to close out Strategic Planning Objectives from 2012-17.
- October 7, 2017** Dr. Ricks led a **day-long college-wide Strategic Planning meeting** open to administrative staff and faculty. Each Department Head presented report out data regarding the closing out of the 2012-17 Strategic Plan. Collectively reviewed environmental scan data including Bouvier-Kelly Marketing Strategic Plan (11/2014), Schoolhouse Partners Strategic Direction (12/2016), and Retention Plan (3/2017). SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis was conducted and discussed.
- February 12, 2018** Dr. Sonya Ricks and Dr. Anne Hayes met with Ralph Mitchell and Calvin Riley of Nehemiah Leadership to begin environmental scan, review of data, and review of SWOT Analysis.
- February 21, 2018** Dr. Sonya Ricks and Dr. Anne Hayes met with Ralph Mitchell and Calvin Riley of Nehemiah Leadership to continue the sketch of Bennett's Competitive Advantage, Mission Statement, and Vision Statement. Ms. Kimberly Drye, Ms. Andrena Coleman, and Dr. Lorraine Acker also participate.
- February 23, 2018** Dr. Hayes distributed a **college-wide online survey** to students, faculty, staff, and administrators asking for feedback on Bennett's 2012-2017 strategic plan, the College's strengths, areas that need improvement, opportunities for growth. Seventy-six participated.
- February 28, 2018** **All-Day Strategic Planning Summit** held at the Greensboro Cultural Center with full Strategic Planning Committee including:
Dr. Sonya Ricks (co-chair) Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Strategic Planning and Assessment; Dr. Anne Hayes (co-chair), Senior Advisor; Dr. Phyllis Worthy Dawkins, President; Dr. Dorothy Browne, Provost; LeRoy Summers, VP of Business and Finance; LaTonya Flamer, AVP for Business and Finance; Gisele Abron, AVP for Enrollment Management; Evelyn Leathers, AVP for Institutional Advancement; Dr. Lorraine Acker, AVP for Student Affairs; Steve Willis, Dean of Arts and Sciences; Kimberly Drye, Program Manager of Leadership Development Institute for Women; Keonte Coleman, Dean of Professional Studies; Andrena Coleman, Steele Art Gallery; Joan Williams, Director of the Holgate Library; Audrey Franklin, Executive Director of Alumnae Relations; Karen James, Director of Institutional Research and Testing; Martha Haigler, Director of the Honors Program; Arielle Cobb, Director of Student Success and Retention; Dr. Santiba Campbell, faculty; William Morris, Associate Director of IT; Paige Matthews, SGA President; Rachel Pridgen, Director of Campus Life and Student Activities; Laurie Willis, Chief Communications and Marketing Officer; Dr. Sara Wrenn, Faculty Senate President; Keifer Bradshaw, Director of Campus Safety; Kelly Mallari, Associate Director of Global Studies; and Rev. Dr. Natalie McLean, College Chaplain.
Not in attendance: Penny Speas and Dr. Althea Truesdale

Facilitators: Calvin Riley and Ralph Mitchell, Nehemiah Leadership Strategic Planning Subgroup members (who volunteered in this meeting: Sonya Ricks (co-chair, Anne Hayes (co-chair, Lorraine Acker, Kimberly Drye, Andrena Coleman, Joan Williams, and Audrey Franklin.

- March 8, 2018** Strategic Planning Subcommittee met with Ralph Mitchell and Calvin Riley to integrate feedback and information from full Strategic Planning Committee.
- March 14, 2018** Strategic Planning Subcommittee met with Ralph Mitchell and Calvin Riley to integrate feedback and information from full Strategic Planning Committee.
- March 27, 2018** Draft of Strategic Plan **presented to the Leadership Team** for feedback and revisions. Approved with revisions.
- April 3, 2018** President Dawkins and Dr. Ricks presented the revised Strategic Plan at the **Faculty Senate Meeting**. Dr. Sara Wrenn requested that feedback, suggestions, and edits be emailed to her; these suggestions were given to Dr. Hayes and Dr. Ricks.
- April 19, 2018** Dr. Hayes and Dr. Ricks presented the revised Strategic Plan at the **Staff Council Meeting**. Staff offered feedback.
- May 4, 2018** Dr. Hayes presented the revised Strategic Plan to the **Alumnae** during Commencement Weekend. The Alumnae provided feedback.
- June 13, 2018** The revised Strategic Plan was reviewed and discussed again at the **Leadership Team Retreat**, facilitated by Calvin Riley and Ralph Mitchell. A scorecard with measurable key performance indicators was debated and developed. Frank Parker led discussion about how the Leadership Team will utilize the Strategic Plan to collaboratively write strategic planning goals for their units/departments and SACSCOC compliance.
- June 29, 2018** Ralph Mitchell and Calvin Riley presented the Strategic Plan to the Board of Trustees.
- July 20, 2018** Leadership Team led units in Annual Unit Planning, with initiatives, goals, and performance measures that will support the Strategic Plan.
- August 30, 2018** Leadership Team finalized plans in four key areas: Academic Plan, Enrollment Management Plan, Business and Finance Plan, and Institutional Advancement Plan. These plans were discussed in Leadership Team Meetings and approved by President Dawkins.
- September 15, 2018** Chief Communications and Marketing Officer produced a printed booklet regarding Bennett's Strategic Plan.

Approved by the Board of Trustees

