

# Wellesley College Strategic Plan 2021



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# **Amplifying Wellesley's Mission for a Changing World**

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Dear members of the Wellesley community,

We are delighted to share with you the Strategic Plan for Wellesley College, which has now been formally approved by the Wellesley College Board of Trustees.

The work of developing this plan was led by the Steering Committee and informed by the working groups—and we want to recognize and thank all the individuals involved for their dedication and leadership. We also want to recognize and thank our students, alumnae, and the many members of our faculty and staff who contributed their thoughts, comments, and critiques throughout this process. This was a true community effort, and that we were able to complete this work during a public health crisis that brought burdens and stress for so many, is testament to our community's extraordinary energy, creativity, and devotion to Wellesley College.

This bold plan draws upon the tremendous strengths of the College to amplify our mission in the future. As the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the deep inequities in our society across race, class, and gender, it also sharpened our commitment to inclusive excellence as a transformative force for our curriculum and our community. It strengthened our belief that Wellesley, as the world's preeminent women's college, is and must continue to be a force for change in the world.

This plan is a call to action. It captures the voices and aspirations of many members of our community and distills a conversation that has stretched spanned two academic years. It presents all of us with an opportunity and a responsibility. We invite you, in the spirit of optimism and possibility, to join together as one Wellesley to realize this bold vision for Wellesley's future.

**Paula A. Johnson**  
President of the College

**Andrew Shennan**  
Provost and  
Lia Gelin Poorvu '56 Dean of the College

# LEADERSHIP AND PROCESS

We began to shape our strategic plan in August 2019, with the goal of completing the work by October 2020. The Steering Committee was appointed that fall and quickly identified four key areas of focus: liberal arts, Wellesley in the world, organization and governance, and community. The committee appointed working groups to explore these areas in greater depth and to engage the community in the plan's development. The working groups had already begun conducting research and interviews, and involving the community in shaping the plan's goals and aspirations at a series of forums and meetings, when the pandemic hit. After taking a short hiatus to focus on COVID-19 and the switch to remote instruction, the Steering Committee and working groups restarted their important work with the goal of completing a plan by the end of the 2020–2021 academic year.

The expanded time frame gave the entire planning team an opportunity to incorporate the lessons we were learning from both COVID-19 and national conversations around racial justice and economic inequality into the plan. It also allowed for a robust community engagement process, which began with a series of more than 20 meetings held in the fall of 2020 by the working groups, and which continued throughout the winter and spring of 2021, as President Paula Johnson and Provost Andrew Shennan discussed the draft plan with the Academic and Administrative Council, department chairs and program directors, College Government, the student advisory group, union staff, groups of faculty, and the Wellesley College Alumnae Association Board of Directors. The Board of Trustees participated actively and considered the plan at several meetings throughout the fall, winter, and spring, including at a three-day board retreat in March 2021 and at its May meeting, when the board unanimously approved the plan.

# STEERING COMMITTEE

## **Paula Johnson**

President of the College

## **Andrew Shennan**

Provost and Lia Gelin Poorvu '56 Dean of the College

## **Carol Bate**

Senior Associate Dean of Students

## **James Battat**

Associate Professor of Physics

## **Mary Casey**

Vice President for Development

## **Ophelia Dahl DS'94**

Trustee

## **Debora de Hoyos '75**

Chair, Board of Trustees

## **Don Elmore**

Professor of Chemistry; Michael and Denise Kellen '68 Chair in the Sciences

## **Sheilah Shaw Horton**

Vice President of Student Life and Dean of Students

## **Michael Jeffries**

Class of 1949 Professor in Ethics; Professor of American Studies; Dean of Academic Affairs

## **Kristina Jones**

Director, Wellesley College Botanic Gardens; Adjunct Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences

## **Erin Konkle**

Program Director, Civic Engagement, Wellesley Career Education

## **Debby Kuenstner '80**

Chief Investment Officer

## **Ellen Marram '68**

Trustee

## **Tara Murphy**

Chief Communications Officer

## **Megan Núñez**

Nan Walsh Schow '54 and Howard B. Schow Professor in the Physical and Natural Sciences; Professor of Chemistry; Dean of Faculty Affairs

## **Piper Orton**

Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer

## **Karen Petrulakis**

General Counsel

## **Jennifer Pollard**

Executive Director and Associate Provost, Wellesley Career Education

## **Anjali Prabhu**

Margaret E. Deffenbaugh and LeRoy T. Carlson Professor in Comparative Literary Studies

## **Smitha Radhakrishnan**

Luella LaMer Professor of Women's Studies; Professor of Sociology

## **Carlos Ramos**

Professor of Spanish

## **Lisa Rodensky '84**

Professor of English

## **Casey Rothschild**

Norma Wilentz Hess Professor of Economics

## **Carolyn Slaboden**

Chief Human Resources Officer

## **Joy St. John**

Dean of Admission and Financial Aid

## **Pamela Taylor**

Assistant Provost, Institutional Planning and Assessment; Director, Institutional Research

## **Heather Woods '97**

Associate Chief Information Officer

# WORKING GROUPS

The Steering Committee created working groups that developed recommendations for each of the four key areas. Led by faculty and staff co-chairs, the groups include faculty, staff, and students whom we selected on the basis of their demonstrated interest in thinking both creatively and strategically about the future of the College. Together, the groups listed below represent an invaluable range of perspectives, skills, and expertise.

## LIBERAL ARTS

### **Michael Jeffries**

Co-chair; Class of 1949  
Professor in Ethics;  
Professor of American  
Studies; Dean of Academic  
Affairs

### **Kristina Jones**

Co-chair; Director, Wellesley  
College Botanic Gardens;  
Adjunct Assistant Professor  
of Biological Sciences

### **Amy Banzaert**

Lecturer in Engineering;  
Director of Engineering  
Studies

### **Tracey Cameron**

Assistant Dean of  
Intercultural Education;  
Director of Harambee  
House

### **Don Elmore**

Professor of Chemistry

### **Corinne Gartner**

Associate Professor of  
Philosophy

### **Melanie Graves '21**

### **Karen Lange**

Associate Professor of  
Mathematics

### **Phung Ninh '20**

### **Jim Noggle**

Marion Butler McLean  
Professor in the History of  
Ideas; Professor of English

### **Jennifer Pollard**

Executive Director and  
Associate Provost,  
Wellesley Career Education

### **Lisa Rodensky '84**

Professor of English

### **Jessica Ricker**

Dean of Admission

### **Sarah Staley**

Director of Talent  
Management and  
Development

## WELLESLEY IN THE WORLD

### **Carol Bate**

Co-chair; Senior Associate  
Dean of Students

### **Anjali Prabhu**

Co-chair; Margaret E.  
Deffenbaugh and LeRoy  
T. Carlson Professor in  
Comparative Literary Studies

### **Laura Adamczyk '87**

Senior Development Officer

### **Pat Berman**

Theodora L. and Stanley H.  
Feldberg Professor of Art

### **Stacie Goddard**

Professor of Political Science;  
Faculty Director, Madeleine  
Korbel Albright Institute for  
Global Affairs

### **Peggy Levitt**

Luella LaMer Slaner Professor  
in Latin American Studies;  
Professor of Sociology

### **Kathryn Mackintosh '03**

Executive Director of the  
Alumnae Association

### **Liz Mandeville '04**

Director of Exploration and  
Experiential Learning, Career  
Education

### **Layli Maparyan**

Executive Director of the  
Wellesley Centers for Women

### **Tara Murphy**

Chief Communications Officer

### **Jenny Musto**

Associate Professor of  
Women's and Gender Studies

### **Vicky Ncube '21**

### **Smitha Radhakrishnan**

Luella LaMer Associate  
Professor of Women's  
Studies; Professor of  
Sociology

### **Esmé Stribling- Hough '20**

### **Jennifer Thomas-Starck**

Director of International  
Studies

## ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

### **Erin Konkle**

Co-chair; Program Director,  
Civic Engagement,  
Wellesley Career Education

### **Casey Rothschild**

Co-chair; Norma Wilentz  
Hess Professor of  
Economics

### **James Battat**

Associate Professor of  
Physics

### **Casey Bayer**

Director of Media Relations

### **Heather Bryant**

Lecturer in the Writing  
Program

### **Jennifer Ellis**

Clerk of the Committee on  
Faculty Appointments

### **Tiffany Garcia '21**

### **Diana Lam '20**

### **Erich Hatala Matthes**

Associate Professor of  
Philosophy; Director, the  
Camilla Chandler Frost '47  
Center for the Environment

### **Ryan Quintana**

Associate Professor of  
History

### **Ravi Ravishanker**

Chief Information Officer  
and Associate Provost

### **Inés Maturana Sendoya**

Associate Dean of  
Students for Inclusion and  
Engagement

### **Andrea Sequeira**

Professor of Biological  
Sciences



## COMMUNITY

### **Carlos Ramos**

Co-chair; Professor of Spanish

### **Heather Woods '97**

Co-chair; Associate Chief Information Officer

### **Caroline Alt '21**

### **Daniel Brabander**

Frost Professor in Environmental Science; Professor of Geosciences

### **Robin Cook-Nobles**

Director of Counseling Services

### **Debra DeVaughn '74**

Director of Gift Planning

### **Bethany Ellis**

Director of Athletics; Chair of the Department of Physical Education, Recreation and Athletics

### **Rebecca Garcia**

Dean of the Class of 2023 (M-Z), WellesleyPlus and Wellesley First

### **Katherine Hall '84**

Distinguished Senior Lecturer in Physics

### **Soo Hong**

Whitehead Associate Professor of Critical Thought; Associate Professor of Education

### **Marisa Jaffe '95**

Assistant Vice President for Development

### **Olivia Massie '22**

### **Megan Núñez**

Nan Walsh Schow '54 and Howard B. Schow Professor in the Physical and Natural Sciences; Professor of Chemistry; Dean of Faculty Affairs

### **Sarah Staley**

Director of Talent Management and Development

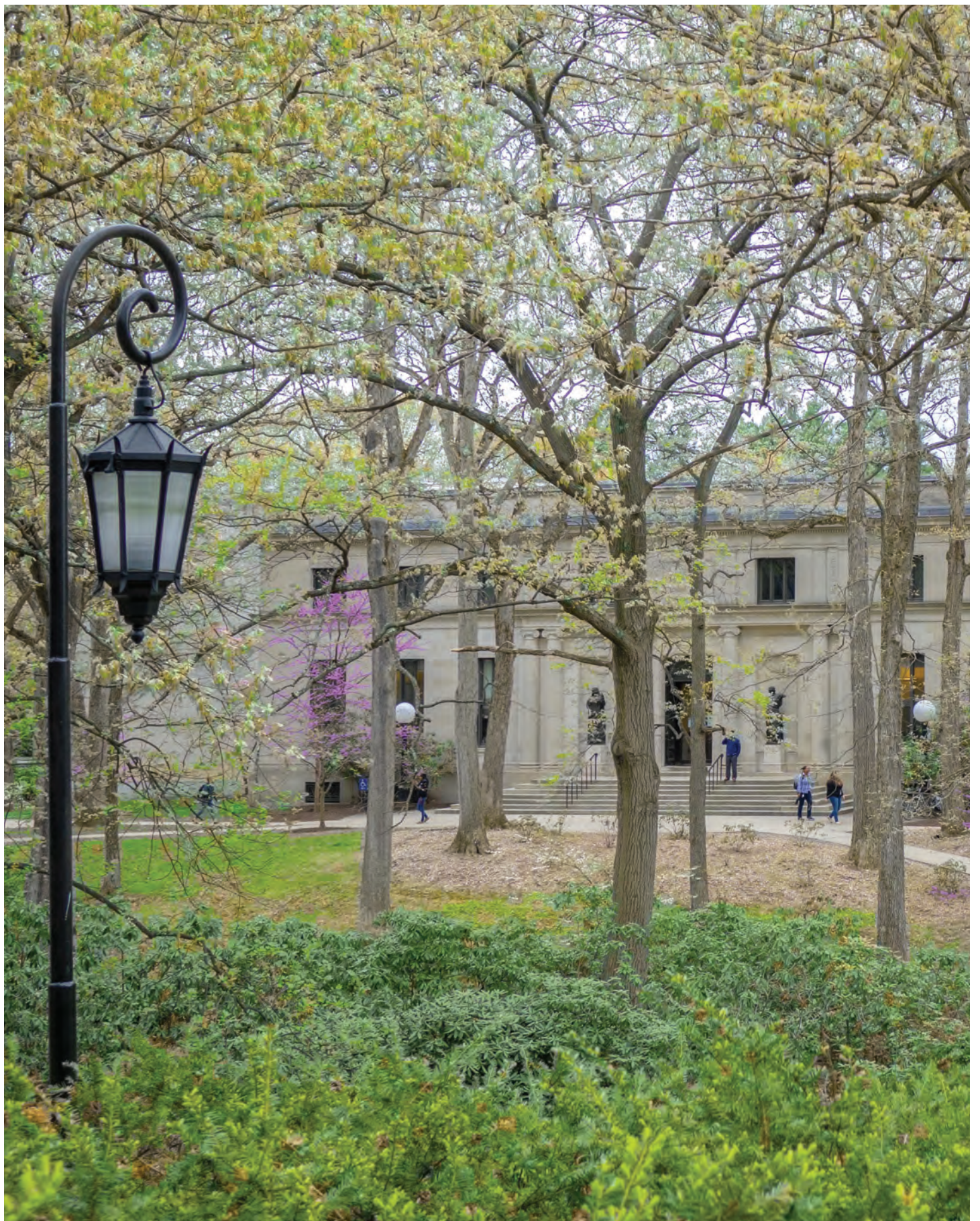
### **Kalau Tanaka-Pesamino '20**

### **Sarah**

### **Wall-Randell '97**

Associate Professor of English

As we approach our sesquicentennial, our community is rapidly evolving, as is the world in which and for which we prepare our students.



# OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

**Wellesley matters to the world because we are more than a college.** A Wellesley education is an experience of intellectual discovery leading to lifelong empowerment. It is also an intervention in the world—a loud statement about the principle of valuing the capacities and concerns of all of our students, and about the potential of women’s education and leadership to unlock brighter futures for everyone. As we approach our sesquicentennial, our community is rapidly evolving, as is the world in which and for which we prepare our students.

We embrace the challenge of reimagining the Wellesley experience for this moment and becoming an institution that defines what an inclusive, globally engaged liberal arts college can look like in the 21st century. Boldly and with purpose, we will amplify our mission “to provide an excellent liberal arts education to women who will make a difference in the world.” Our strategy will be:

- 1. To increase the transformative effect** of the education we offer by elevating inclusive excellence, by renewing our curriculum, and by adopting a consistently holistic educational philosophy.

2. **To redouble our commitment** to women’s empowerment and gender equality, understanding that it is inextricably linked to other dimensions of equality and justice, and to advance those fundamental values through systematic, unapologetic, institution-wide engagement with the world.
3. **To reform our organization and governance** so that we both ensure broad and meaningful participation in the life of the College and enable effective and agile decision-making.
4. **To ensure a residential experience** for our students and a community for our faculty and staff that promote a shared sense of belonging, and to foster a campus culture that is collaborative, respectful, and adaptable.

To realize this vision, all the constituent parts of our community will have to work together as one Wellesley—integrating programs and operations more intentionally and finding new connections in our educational work, so that we can carry the College’s mission into the future.

# **BUILDING ON STRENGTH: THE CASE FOR CHANGE**





Providing the opportunity to live and learn in such a diverse community is one of the powerful ways we prepare our students to make a difference in the world.

We began our strategic planning process in August 2019 with a confident spirit and a strong sense of purpose.

Our reaccreditation report from March 2019 highlighted the strengths of our institution and the distinctive position Wellesley occupies within the landscape of liberal arts education in the United States. The accreditors acknowledged the important work that the College had done to advance the goal of inclusive excellence and to secure our financial future, and encouraged us to ask ourselves how Wellesley's mission reflects the aspirations of today's students and community. They agreed with Wellesley's leadership that developing a strategic plan was an important next step for the College.

Our thinking about Wellesley's future has grown from an appreciation of our strengths.

- **We are** united in our mission to educate women to make a difference in the world, and galvanized by its enduring relevance and importance.
- **We are** known as a college that places intellectual rigor at the center of our students' educational experience, and we are unabashed about viewing academic study and learning as foundational to a life of professional success, fulfillment, and purpose.

- **We have** an impressive global footprint and are known around the world as a leader in women’s and liberal arts education. We also have an extensive network of accomplished alumnae who share our commitment to advancing women’s empowerment and gender equality.
- **Through our** adherence to policies that ensure access and affordability—as well as our dedication to enhancing the diversity and inclusiveness of our community across many domains—we have created an educational environment that is enriched by differences of background and perspective and is more conducive to excellence than ever.
- **We have** inherited both an incomparably beautiful campus that enlivens the experience of Wellesley for all and financial resources that provide a foundation for excellence. As a community, we are committed to acting as good stewards of this inheritance by recognizing the needs of our physical campus and by aligning the scope of our programs and the size of our faculty and administration with our resources.
- **We are** a community of purpose that works to make a difference on issues from environmental sustainability to social justice and racial equity. As evidenced by our actions to address climate change, we have a capacity to come together in a spirit of shared responsibility in order to make positive change on campus and beyond.

These strengths—our unifying mission, intellectual distinction, diversity and inclusivity, sense of place, and assumption of responsibility for the College’s future—have formed the bedrock of our planning. They will be central to any strategies that the College pursues in the years ahead. And yet, as we have pondered that future over these past 18 months, we have come to realize that our existing strengths cannot be sustained unless they are complemented by an institution- and community-wide willingness to embrace change.

We were deep into our planning when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. The pandemic upended nearly every aspect of the Wellesley experience—our curriculum, our teaching methods, our residential model, and the ways we work together as a community—and forced us to change our operations almost overnight. Fundamentally, it brought new urgency to our ongoing efforts to advance on several fronts.

# Inclusive excellence

Wellesley is committed to creating the conditions that make it possible for all students and all members of our community to excel. Inclusive excellence represents the strength of difference and the power this gives us to fulfill Wellesley's mission.

The pandemic laid bare the startling inequalities that our students and their families face, and that exist in our broader society. As some logged into Zoom classes from spacious homes with high-speed internet while others struggled to connect to Wi-Fi from crowded rooms shared with siblings, we recognized that our residential experience acts as an important equalizer for our students.

The disparate impacts of the pandemic and the growing recognition of systemic racism in this country inspired us to redouble our commitment to achieve inclusive excellence by driving change across our educational program, our organization, and our community. Without inclusivity and the bringing together of different perspectives, there is no excellence.

# Financial sustainability and operational effectiveness

The financial pressures on the College are intensifying as we strive to meet the financial aid needs of a much more diverse group of students and families, renew the campus, and sustain the excellence of our educational program. The pandemic has only added to these pressures. We have seen that the future of a residential liberal arts program cannot be taken for granted, and that we must build a resilient organization that is financially and operationally prepared to respond to crises and navigate change.

# The changing world

The pandemic and the growing reckoning over racial injustice have challenged us to question fundamental assumptions and think anew about what it means to educate students to make a difference in the world.

Today's student body is a more diverse group, racially, economically, and geographically, than that of just 10 years ago. In the past decade, society's view of gender has become more fluid, and our students reflect this, too. This rich diversity is one of Wellesley's greatest strengths; indeed, it is essential to the excellence of our educational program, now and in the future. Providing the opportunity to live and learn in such a community is one of the powerful ways we prepare our students to make a difference in the world.

The world that today's students will graduate into is also vastly different. They will switch jobs and careers more frequently than students in previous eras; they will be more global and more mobile. They will navigate an information and social media ecosystem in which facts and realities are

often seen as relative terms, rationality and truth-seeking are under assault, and political and social divisions are reinforced. They will enter a world that continues to be marked by gender, racial, and economic inequality, one in which women's economic security and professional advancement are in danger of being set back by the pandemic. More than ever, the ability to communicate and collaborate across differences of all kinds will be essential.

Knowing all that, how do we adapt and evolve to meet our students where they are, to equip and empower them to thrive in the future? And as an institution, how do we pursue this mission in a manner that is financially sustainable and ensures that we continue to have an outsized impact and influence in the world?

This past year, we have learned an important lesson: In our community's response to the pandemic, we have recognized that we can meet this moment. Wellesley can adapt, innovate, set priorities, and make difficult choices. Inspired by that lesson, and fueled by our deepest aspirations, we have come together to develop a vision for the future.





We will place  
inclusive  
excellence at  
the center of  
the Wellesley  
experience.

# THE STRATEGIC PLAN

## I. Advancing a Transformative Education

Ultimately, the goal of a Wellesley liberal arts education is to transform lives. Our starting point, therefore, is to ask how we can increase the transformative effect of all the educational work that we do at Wellesley. The answer is threefold. First, we must ensure that all members of this student community—notably diverse in many dimensions—have an educational experience that prepares them to succeed and thrive, personally and professionally, and to have a positive impact on the world. Second, we must make the student experience a central consideration in all that we do. Third, we must adopt a more holistic educational philosophy, one that encourages students to connect the different elements of their learning to one another and to the world into which they will graduate.



# ab To-Do List ☀️

- Water (John, LTS ticket)
- LTS tickets
- Submit reimbursement
- Home hood
- Abstract
- Thank set up
- AS



Taken separately, our academic curriculum, student research opportunities, co-curricular program, residential curriculum, and experiential programs serve Wellesley students extremely well. We will magnify their cumulative impact by streamlining and organizing them more intentionally around a set of shared educational objectives. Inherent in that more concerted approach to education is a different understanding of excellence itself—as a quality measured by how well we do what we do, rather than by how much we do.

## **GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **1. We will place inclusive excellence at the center of the Wellesley experience.**

We will be a learning community in which all students understand that they matter. We will be known for valuing and promoting open, expansive thinking, and we will base our instructional program on scientifically grounded knowledge about student learning. Without constraining their diverse teaching styles, we will support every member of our faculty in making their classroom a place where all students can succeed academically. We will also support every department in attracting and engaging the full diversity of Wellesley students in their courses and programs.

**2. All our educational programs will address a shared set of overarching objectives reflecting the strengths of the liberal arts tradition, the diversity of our students, and the nature of the world into which they will graduate.**

To thrive after they leave Wellesley, our students need to know who they are and how they relate to others. A strong sense of identity requires a coordinated and personalized approach to mentoring and advising from faculty and student-facing staff and abundant opportunities for structured reflection on self and identity of all kinds.

To develop a sense of agency, students must learn how to think independently and critically, express themselves effectively using different media, and interpret materials of all kinds (visual, quantitative and scientific, textual and technical). Learning how to apply a liberal arts education in the world also requires experience outside the classroom or lab, experience that gives students insight into the personal, interpersonal, and structural dimensions of making a difference.

To form a clearer sense of the impact they wish to have and the career paths they hope to pursue, students need to experience a curriculum and a co-curriculum that together provide deep understanding of at least one field of academic study, while integrating experiential learning on and off campus and encouraging them to explore the challenges and opportunities they find most compelling. The greater the challenge, the more essential it will be for our students to work collaboratively and to learn from each other.

These three overarching objectives—developing students’ identity, agency, and purpose—will be reflected in all our educational activities.

After five decades without a core curriculum of any kind, we believe this is the moment for our faculty to consider a new kind of common academic experience that reflects the diversity of our students and the nature of the world into which they will graduate. By this we mean a curriculum focusing on the overarching grand challenges that current and future cohorts of students will confront in their lives—such as combating and adapting to climate change, reforming systems of injustice and inequality, and ensuring the persistence of humanistic values in the era of artificial intelligence. Addressing such huge and complex problems requires collaboration—engaging all parts of our community to include perspectives and methods from diverse disciplines, as well as bringing students together to work and learn cooperatively across all types of differences.

The liberal arts tradition at Wellesley is grounded in disciplines and canons that reflect Western-centrism. While embracing the continued value and influence of that tradition, it is essential for us to bring new energy to our long-standing but still incomplete efforts to represent the world more fully in the Wellesley curriculum.

To help students thrive and have an impact, we must also reform the Wellesley degree requirements as a directed

exploration rather than a “box-checking” exercise focused on academic classifications that appear increasingly abstract to our students. That will entail establishing a smaller number of more broadly defined distribution requirements and a curriculum that provides more opportunities to connect across disciplines, both early and late in a student’s Wellesley experience.

**3. We will renew the structure of our academic program and draw the greatest possible value from finite resources by reducing the siloing of our academic departments and prioritizing interdisciplinary collaboration.**

Our practice at Wellesley has been to align academic disciplines with stand-alone departments and to create additional departments and interdisciplinary programs as new fields emerge. For reasons of curricular coherence and financial sustainability, we must move toward thinking of our faculty as a whole, rather than as a set of distinct units. This will require, on the one hand, a more capacious and flexible definition of departments and, on the other, an institutional structure that values and rewards collaboration across departmental lines.

The goal of a more integrated faculty cannot be attained through a single step. In some areas, it may be pursued by embedding smaller programs within larger departments. In other areas, cognate departments that see an interest in combining their programs or faculty resources may cluster together. Across the College, we will create new



opportunities for joint appointments for our faculty and for formalized agreements that allow them to teach in more than one department. We will work toward new opportunities for faculty to participate in external reviews and searches in departments other than their own. More broadly still, we must stop assuming that a stand-alone major is the ultimate test of a discipline's standing. We must make cross-departmental collaboration an integral and consistent feature of our academic program, rather than the exception.

Our purpose will not be to increase the size of departments by simply merging them together, but rather to create structural connections that facilitate pedagogical and research-related collaboration; permit more equitable sharing of resources and responsibilities; and allow us to staff a smaller number of broader majors with less narrowly specialized curricula and fewer under-enrolled courses.

In addition to our academic departments, Wellesley's centers and institutes have a critical role to play in achieving a more integrated faculty. They can act as laboratories of interdisciplinarity, drawing together faculty from many departments and creating interdisciplinary programming for our campus and experimental curricula for our students.

**4. Wellesley’s educational program will be characterized by its holistic design and by its embrace of the world beyond the College as a partner in the work of educating leaders and changemakers.**

We will renew our educational practice to reflect, in a contemporary manner, our founders’ holistic vision of a community of students who are intellectually vital, whose personal wellness is prioritized, and who are supported and encouraged to live the life of value expressed in the College’s motto, *Non Ministrari sed Ministrare*—“Not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” Our educational model will embody a new level of purposeful collaboration among academic departments, student life, residential life, centers and institutes, and career education.

We will strengthen and coordinate our approach to advising and to educational programming across the institution to promote student success and true inclusion. Wellesley will also integrate students’ on-campus education with co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities beyond the campus. We believe that when students wrestle with complex problems in both academic and real-world settings, they develop the moral imagination, collaborative skills, and sense of purpose and responsibility that are essential to succeeding and leading.



Wellesley is  
at its core a  
changemaking  
institution dedicated  
to educating and  
advocating for  
women in ways  
that lead to better  
futures for all.

## II. Elevating Wellesley's Role in the World

Since its founding in 1875, Wellesley has been actively challenging the status quo as an institution and as a community. The College was founded on the then-radical idea that educating women is essential for the advancement of society and democracy. For the last 150 years, the College and its graduates have taken that idea to heights that could not have been imagined when Wellesley first opened its doors.

Our alumnae have broken through barriers in the arts and literature, economics and business, politics and diplomacy, science and medicine, and everything in between. Individually and collectively, they have demonstrated the power of women to thrive, to lead, and to serve, overcoming persistent prejudices and broadening opportunities for women everywhere.

While progress has been made, gender inequality remains a barrier to women's opportunity and achievement globally. And it is inextricably linked to intersectional inequalities, especially for people of color and for the LGBTQ+ community. As the world's preeminent women's college, we have an important responsibility to examine and confront gender inequality in the world while educating and encouraging our students to challenge the status quo as well. We believe that at this

moment, when decades of gains made by women and other marginalized groups are being undermined by the pandemic, we must recommit both to our educational mission and to serving as a powerful voice for women and for gender equality.

## **GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **1. We will use our institutional voice to advance women's empowerment and gender equality—embracing our role as a leader, convener, and catalyst.**

Wellesley is at its core a changemaking institution dedicated to educating and advocating for women in ways that lead to better futures for all.

We will embrace this role by redoubling our efforts to increase the visibility of research and other faculty work that expands the world's understanding of gender and intersectional inequality, in the past or present. We will also encourage and support interdisciplinary collaboration to enable more faculty to apply their scholarship to these areas. And we will lead by strengthening collective efforts to achieve gender equality and justice globally, partnering with our alumnae, and bringing together other educational institutions, NGOs, foundations, and organizations from around the world.

## **2. We will align our centers and institutes to increase Wellesley's impact in the United States and globally.**

Wellesley's centers and institutes are powerful vehicles for engaging with the world through research and education. By connecting centers and institutes more closely to each other, and encouraging their collaboration with academic and other departments, we will strengthen Wellesley's reputation as a thought leader and change maker. Without limiting the variety of important contributions that our centers make to their separate fields and communities, we will make advancing women's equality a central focus of their work—as well as generating and disseminating scholarship about other intersectional characteristics, such as race and class, that compound gender inequalities.

## **3. Partnering with our alumnae and the Wellesley College Alumnae Association, we will strengthen our efforts to empower Wellesley's graduates to be a force for change in the world.**

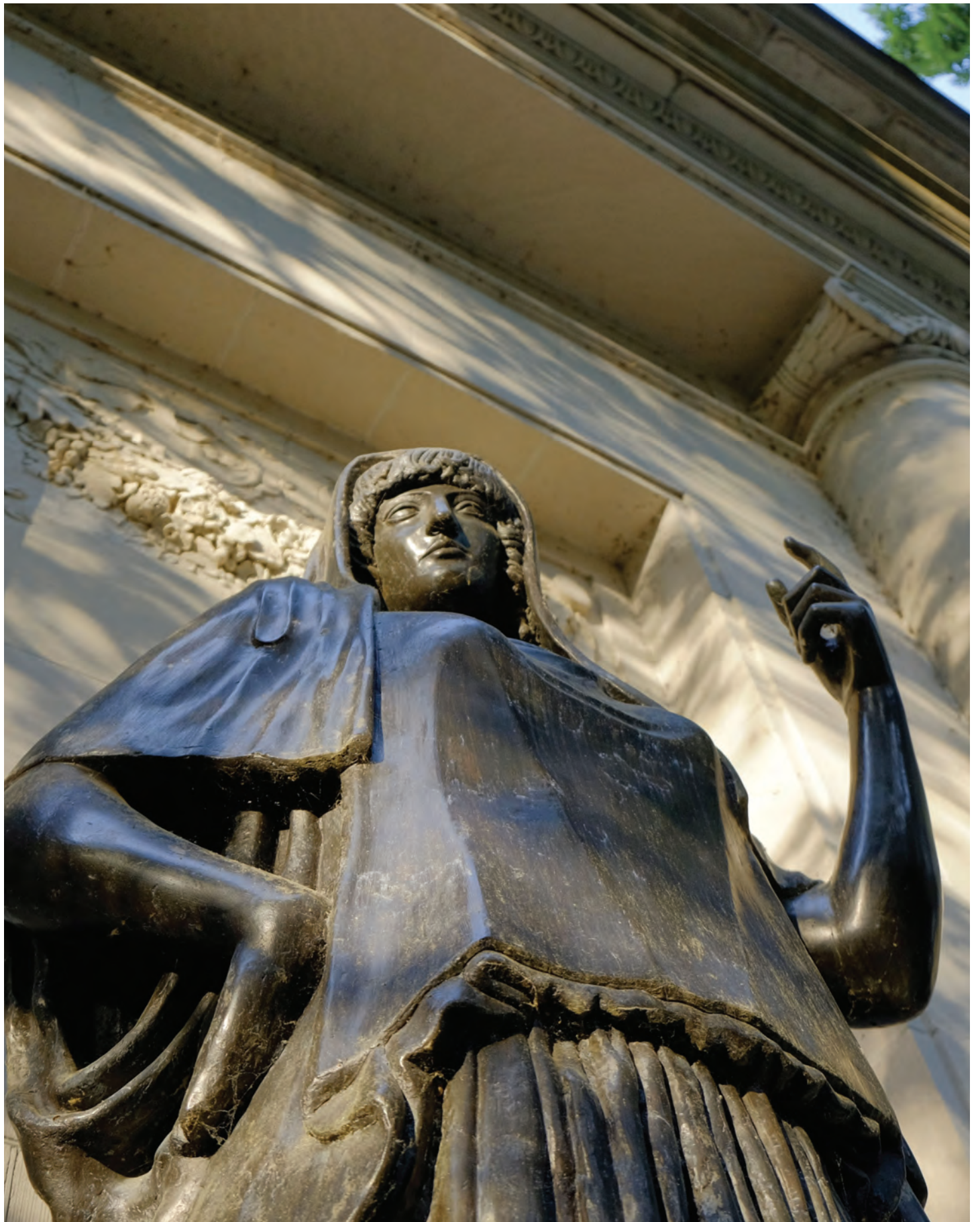
Our alumnae are known for their individual accomplishments, for their support of our students and of each other, and for being changemakers in their professions and in service to their communities. When they break barriers in fields from finance to STEM, from the arts and culture to politics and government, they bring other women with them. When they collaborate with others to make structural change that advances the rights of women and girls—and therefore the rights of all who are marginalized—they create better

futures for all. To build on this strength, we will partner with our alumnae and with the Wellesley College Alumnae Association to ensure that what has been called the world's most powerful women's network can become an equally powerful *movement*—one that connects women of great diversity, with shared passions, professions, and purpose, across generations and geography—so that, together, they can make a difference in the world.

**4. We will amplify the visibility and impact of faculty research and support faculty who use their research to inform conversations in the public square.**

Wellesley faculty members are influential scholars who make important contributions in their fields. When our faculty advance the boundaries of knowledge and gain scholarly distinction, they add to the visibility and impact of Wellesley College. This is also true when, as public intellectuals, they use their research to illuminate the issues of the day. As we continue to provide faculty with the facilities, resources, and opportunities to produce world-class research, we will highlight the significance of that research and continually amplify their expert voices in the public square and in their disciplines and interdisciplines.





# III. Strengthening Organization and Governance

The times in which we live—characterized by the rapid development of technology, growing inequality, climate change, globalization, and uncertain international relationships—are creating a world in which colleges and universities must adapt proactively and act quickly. The COVID-19 pandemic has made clear the advantages of an organizational structure that fosters responsiveness in the short term and systematic, strategic thinking in the longer term.

We have not updated Wellesley’s governance structures in many decades. Rooted in the principle of shared governance, they vest every member of the community with responsibility for stewarding the College’s mission. Our structures should continue to foster inclusion and participation while allowing the College the agility it needs to ensure excellence and financial sustainability in a dynamic world.

We must evolve from an organization that prioritizes open-ended deliberation, sometimes at the expense of apt or timely decision-making, to one that prioritizes representative participation, accountability, and strategic focus.

Together our community will improve its organizational structures and governance processes in ways that promote understanding, build trust, and strengthen the College’s ability to meet the challenges of the future.

## GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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### **1. We will increase transparency regarding the locus of decision-making authority in different domains and allocate that authority to stakeholders with the relevant expertise and accountability.**

We will reform our governance structures in ways that strike the appropriate balance between deliberation and decisiveness. We will ensure that faculty and staff participate meaningfully in shared governance and that all members of our community understand where the accountability for decisions lies.

The boundaries of authority and responsibility within shared governance—particularly between the board of trustees, the president and senior leadership, and Academic Council—will be communicated explicitly and regularly.

Academic Council will be encouraged to adopt changes to its structure to facilitate more effective representative participation for the whole of the faculty in decision-making at the College. The president and senior leadership will look to Administrative Council to become a forum in which staff participate fully and have a meaningful voice in the operations of the College, and to College Government to serve as the representative body for students.

When senior leadership is seeking input from key constituencies—faculty, staff, and students—the input will be

solicited as far as possible through the relevant governance body. Likewise, key constituencies should use these governing structures to initiate feedback or engagement.

## **2. We will focus our organizational structures and work toward clear institutional priorities.**

Our collective progress in the five years ahead will be guided by—and measured against—the institutional priorities articulated by this strategic plan. We will coordinate the work of departments, centers, institutes, programs, and affiliates to support these priorities.

Where we find that aspects of our current organization and governance limit the capacity of individuals or of the institution to achieve our priorities, we will eliminate redundancies in our committee or administrative structures, increasing their effectiveness while reducing the burden they place on faculty or administrative staff. We will also make the same effort to “de-silo” administrative departments that we make with academic departments.

## **3. We will redesign organizational processes to be consistent and non-redundant across the College as well as broadly understandable to key stakeholders.**

As we set policies and design work processes, we will prioritize consistency and clarity. Our goal is to create a work environment in which innovation and responsiveness are achieved through intentional organizational change rather than ad hoc improvisations.

# IV. Building Community

Wellesley is a community of purpose. The College draws smart and ambitious students, diverse in terms of race and ethnicity, socioeconomic and cultural background, and geographic and national origin, united in their ambition to change their world. Our faculty and staff come here to invest their skills and expertise, their hearts and spirits, to advance a mission in which they truly believe. And our alumnae live the College's mission and the motto—*Non Ministrari sed Ministrare*—throughout their lives.

This past year challenged us, and it demonstrated the needs and strengths of our community.

The move to remote instruction revealed the social and economic inequalities among our students and the many ways in which the campus itself—by providing spaces and places where students live and learn together—is essential for inclusive excellence. Nonetheless, our faculty and staff worked together to reimagine the Wellesley experience from the ground up, demonstrating tremendous ingenuity and fortitude as they navigated challenges in their own professional and personal lives. Together they found new ways to work, collaborate, and innovate, while creating an excellent educational experience for our students.



Our alumnae, too, rallied in support of our students, helping them find internships and job opportunities and providing financial and emotional assistance. Many served on the front lines of the pandemic—as physicians, nurses, and researchers; as teachers and caregivers; as policymakers and community leaders.

This year reminded us all of our shared humanity and our desire to be an institution where people can bring their whole and best selves to work. We learned to value, learn from, and depend on each other in new ways. We will take these lessons forward as we strive to become a community that embraces change and that is responsive to our students and the world around us, while remaining deeply rooted by our mission and shared values.

## **GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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### **1. We will strengthen our residential community to promote a sense of belonging, inclusion, and wellness for every student.**

Wellesley provides an opportunity for our students to live and learn in a community unlike any they may experience again in their lives. Many of our students “find” themselves at Wellesley. They make lifelong friendships, develop intellectual passions, and discover who they want to

become. They do this in the company of a wonderfully diverse group of fellow students with whom they live, learn, and experience the many joys of maturing together during their four years at Wellesley.

This journey of discovery happens on the Wellesley campus—in residence and dining halls, teaching and learning spaces, performance and athletic venues, on the shores of Lake Waban, and in gathering spots indoors and out. As we bring this group of accomplished and curious students together, we must create an environment that encourages a shared sense of belonging and enables all students to flourish.

We will prepare to meet the increasing financial aid needs of our students and families so that we can continue to attract a richly diverse and brilliant student body and ensure access to a transformative educational experience.

We will prioritize investments in our residential spaces, understanding that these are the places where students will live, learn, grow, and become the people they aspire to be.

We will strengthen the residential curriculum and its focus on helping students to become their own most authentic selves while learning to value and engage with others across differences, in ways that prepare them for lives of intellectual discovery and purpose.



**2. We will strengthen the workplace, ensuring that inclusive excellence is a lived experience for all faculty and staff.**

We will prioritize diversifying the faculty and staff through hiring and retention efforts, and we will expand programs that enable faculty and staff to develop the skills to work and communicate across differences.

As an institution, we will be more attentive to contributions that have too often gone unseen, such as the intense mentoring work that faculty and staff of color take on, the “silent service” of a dedicated administrative staff working behind the scenes, and the essential contributions that non-tenure-track faculty make to our instructional and advising programs.

**3. We will ensure that Wellesley provides an environment in which faculty and staff are encouraged to achieve their professional goals and to be effective stewards of the College’s mission and priorities.**

Wellesley is committed to being an employer of choice for talented faculty and staff. We will promote dynamic careers for faculty and staff and prioritize professional growth, leadership development, and learning at Wellesley and beyond.

We will develop an institutional culture of mutual respect and collaboration in which we value individual expertise, while prioritizing and incentivizing cooperation among

departments, divisions, and teams across the College. We want all faculty—tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track—and all administrative and union staff to see their work as integral to the mission of the College: “to provide an excellent liberal arts education to women who will make a difference in the world.”

It is in part through the accomplishments of our remarkable students that all of us make a difference, too.

# A CALL TO ACTION

This strategic plan is *a call to action*. Now that it is complete, we embark on the vital work of bringing it to life in the experience of our College and of our community. Realizing this vision presents an opportunity and a responsibility for all of us, not solely a task for a few individuals in leadership positions. We invite each member of our community and each department and office to reflect on how your work can contribute to this plan and its priorities. And then we call on you, in a spirit of optimism and possibility, to join together as one Wellesley to realize this bold vision for Wellesley's future.

