

# Developing the Lake Forest College Strategic Framework

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion  
Town Hall Meetings

Fall 2022



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# Agenda

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- Review the planning group process
- Goals of today's session
- Developing a strategic framework
- Review leadership recommendations
- Discussion questions



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**5 planning groups  
(2021-22)**

**Reports and  
recommendations**

**Intended to lay a  
foundation**

**Reviewed by BOT**

**Shared with  
campus**

**Academic**

**Strategic  
Partnerships**

**Enrollment**

**Residential**

**Diversity,  
Equity &  
Inclusion**

# Goals



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- Position Lake Forest College for success as a leading, liberal arts institution with a pragmatic, modern approach to education
- Clear road map for the College
- Clear guidance document for setting annual strategic priorities which guide decision-making, activities, investment and planning
  - What do we say "yes" to and what do we say "no" to
- Clear identity and brand
  - Who we are and who we are not
- High degree of alignment, connected to 3 unifying themes
  - Mitigates the effect of pulling levers in the opposite directions
- "Something in it for everyone"
  - Can I see myself and my role at the College reflected in the plan?
  - We can't be all things to all people

# Why framework and not a plan?

- Iterative, dynamic, ongoing process
- Assessed annually with specific goals and performance indicators
- Resource needs and capacity are fluid
- Support for the framework
  - Facilities condition assessment
  - Fundraising campaign
- External forces at play
  - Higher education landscape and trends
  - Population, migration, demographics
  - Financial outlook



# Unifying themes

## Building

### **Building an inclusive, thriving community**

Our commitment to inclusive excellence through diversity remains a priority and one in which we will work hard to do better and to be better. Inclusivity—providing equitable access to opportunities and resources for all members of the community—is foremost in our minds and necessary for strengthening our Forester Family.

## Stewarding and promoting

### **Stewarding and promoting the unique Lake Forest College brand**

We offer a rare combination of a rigorous, yet innovative, flexible curriculum paired with an intentional, early, and consistent focus on career preparation so that our students can balance their academic experiences at the College with their aspirations of what they want to be. This is what sets Lake Forest College apart.

## Investing

### **Investing in and securing our future as a leading residential liberal arts campus**

Our beautiful campus serves as an intellectual hub and a cultural beacon for the city of Lake Forest and surrounding communities. This lies at the heart of collectively imagining what our campus will look like in the future and how we will get there together. Whatever paths we choose to secure our future, we have put a stake in the ground to retain our prominence as a leader among liberal arts colleges across the country.



Recommendations from the  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
Planning Group



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# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Planning Group

## Co-chairs:

Anish Abeysiriwardena	Class of 2023 (fall semester)
Claudia Ramirez Islas	Director of the OIR [former]
Anna Jones	Professor of History; Associate Dean of the Faculty [former]

## Student Members of the Committee:

Carlson Ayanlaja	Class of 2022
Blythe May	Class of 2022
Uche Okeke	Class of 2021
Wiktorina Pedryc	Class of 2024 (fall)
Kaihan Rahimi	Class of 2022
Ajit Sharma	Class of 2023

## Faculty and Staff Members of the Committee:

Ajar Chekirova	Assistant Professor of Politics
André Meeks,	Assistant Director of Outreach and Engagement for Advancement
Ed Neumann	Assistant Director of Counseling Services and Coordinator of Wellness
Alondra Olvera	Residence Director
DeJuran Richardson	Ernest H. Volwiler Professor of Mathematics, Senior Advisor to the President
Holly Swyers	Professor of Anthropology
Marianinna Villavicencio	Associate Director of the OIR (spring semester)



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Developing the Lake Forest College Strategic Framework



# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Committee size and composition
- Committee charge and the scope/nature of the report
- Process of discussions and proposals
- Priority recommendations
  - Process of identifying these priorities
  - Sorting priorities: those requiring significant funding and those not
- Other recommendations
  - Envisioning implementation



# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Priority Recommendations

- Increase staffing in key student support offices on campus including Disability Services, Health and Wellness, and the Center for Academic Success.
- Reorganize the reporting structure of staff involved in DEI work to a more centralized unit
- Hire a Chief Diversity Officer



# The Work of the DEI Planning Group

- Highly structured report with prioritized recommendations
- Highly referenced and benchmarked
- Divided by those that require financial resources and those that do not
- Highly substantive



# Systemic Change

- ❑ Requires both a willingness to examine existing structures (enabling and inhibiting) and the courage to change them
- ❑ Investing the change process in one or a few individuals will not produce lasting results
- ❑ Recruiting a CDO or VP level position without laying the groundwork often results in a failed search or premature departure from an institution
- ❑ Massive competition for these roles; difficult to recruit



# DEI Consultant Selection Process

- Three names solicited from trusted referral sources
- Screening calls with the President
- Invited to submit proposals by the end of October; one proposal already received
- Working with Associate Dean in Office of Faculty Development
  - Members of DEI planning group and DEI summit planning group will review proposals, interview potential consultants, and rank choices
- Engagement letter, scope of work and deliverables



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# DEI Consultant Deliverables

## Phase 1:

- Work with a cross section of members of the DEI planning group and the DEI summit planning committee to develop goals and objectives for the summit as well as an agenda
- Conduct several planning sessions with the members of this group (remotely)
- Serve as the facilitator at the summit (likely in February/March of 2023)
- Facilitate discussion on possible structural reorganization of equity, inclusion, and diversity initiatives at Lake Forest College in preparation for the possible hiring of a chief diversity officer or similar position

## Phase 2:

- Facilitate possible early steps of structural reorganization (help the faculty/staff to deploy some of the initiatives and recommendations that appear in the report)
- Assist in developing a job description and scope of responsibilities for a chief diversity officer or similar VP level position at Lake Forest College



Questions,  
Feedback,  
or Insights

# Deciding on annual strategic priorities

- ❑ Begins in late winter, finalized in spring
  - Implement for the following academic year
  
- ❑ Facilities condition assessment will play a major role
  - State of academic buildings
  
- ❑ The work of these committees should be used to facilitate the setting of annual priorities





# How might things be different?

- Different way of thinking about the College as a whole
- Promote better alignment and allocation of resources that reflect the values and mission of the College
- We should be prepared for change by using a more active and strategic approach
- We are more prepared for adverse conditions and have the resilience to respond effectively

