

WESTERN NEW ENGLAND COLLEGE MASTER PLAN UPDATE



Springfield, MA

September 2008



Section 1 – Executive Summary

Section 1

1.1 OVERVIEW

In 1997 Western New England College initiated a comprehensive campus-wide strategic planning process. The Strategic Plan adopted by the Board of Trustees in 1998 set the stage for the several strategic initiatives including undertaking a Facilities Master Plan. Working with the College, Saratoga Associates completed the Western New England College Facilities Master Plan in July 2000.

Many initiatives from the previous Master Plan have been implemented over the past eight years. Some of these include significant new construction projects such as the addition to the Blake Law Center, Evergreen Village Townhouses, the Kevin S. Delbridge Welcome Center, the addition to D'Amour Library, Golden Bear Stadium, Trelease Baseball Park, Commonwealth Hall, and improvements to the softball and soccer fields.

In the fall of 2007 Saratoga Associates was asked to return to campus and perform a Facilities Master Plan Update. Once again, Saratoga Associates had the opportunity to work with members of the Western New England College community throughout this process, including faculty and staff representatives on the Master Planning Committee and members of the Senior Staff on the Master Plan Steering Committee.

Incorporating direction from the 2008 Strategic Plan that was in progress during this Master Plan process, this project has provided an opportunity to reexamine the 2000 Master Plan within the context of the growth and development at Western New England College, the College's Mission Statement, and the revised 2003 Strategic Plan. This Master Plan Update is the culmination of the dedication of all those involved.

Western New England College Senior Administration:

Anthony S. Caprio, President
David Kruger, Vice President of Finance & Administration
Barbara Campanella, Vice President of Marketing and External Affairs
Richard DiRuzza, Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students
Beverly Dwight, Vice President for Advancement
Jerry Hirsch, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
Greg Michael, Executive Director of Human Resources and **Career**Center
Charles Pollock, Vice President for Enrollment Management
Cheryl Smith, General Counsel

Western New England College Master Plan Steering Committee Members:

Scott Berg, Director of Major and Planned Gifts
Sue Bruno, Campus Events Coordinator
Kathy Chambers, Associate Director/Financial Aid Specialist

Mike Duncan, Director of Facilities Management (Chair)
Art Gaudio, Dean of School of Law
Saeed Ghahramani, Dean of School of Arts and Sciences
Eric Haffner, Dean of School of Engineering
Maureen Keizer, Assistant Dean of Students and Leadership Development
Jack Mitchell, Board of Trustees Member
Julie Siciliano, Dean of School of Business
Don Williams, Professor of Political Science

1.2 COLLEGE PROFILE – 2007 - 2008

Western New England College is a private comprehensive coeducational institution. The College was founded in 1919 in downtown Springfield as Springfield-Northeastern.

Total College enrollment for the fall of 2007 was 3,657. This number includes 2,681 full time and part time undergraduate students, 235 graduate students, 637 full-time and part--time students in the School of Law, and 104 off-campus students. Among the School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Business, and the School of Engineering, Western New England College offers 10 advanced degrees. Western New England College School of Law awards the Juris Doctor, LL.M., and dual degree programs.

Recognizing the growing demand for pharmacists in the U.S., the College will introduce a Pre-pharmacy program in 2009 with the professional program starting in 2011. This will be a six-year program consisting of two years of Pre-pharmacy study at the School of Arts and Sciences and four years in the Professional program at the new School of Pharmacy. Students will graduate with a doctoral degree (Pharm.D.).

1.3 PLANNING PROCESS

The Master Plan Process is comprised of three primary phases: Assessment, Concept, and Implementation.

The Assessment Phase involves three tasks: an understanding of site opportunities, constraints and requirements; understanding the current program allocation and distribution; and identifying current and future space program needs. During the information-gathering phase of the project, the campus community—including students, faculty, staff, and administration—engaged in an intensive one-day planning “Charrette” workshop was held in the St. Germain Campus Center. Saratoga Associates sought input on specific issues related to the campus facilities and space use. This information was translated during Committee meetings into “Perceived Needs.”



Planning “Charrette” Fall 2007

The Concept Phase identifies specific solutions to the perceived needs. These solutions are presented as site and space distribution concepts. Several options were presented to the Master Planning Committee and Senior Staff. The options were then refined to a preferred scheme through a series of meetings.

The Implementation Phase involves assigning priorities to the Space Distribution Concepts and placing them onto a schedule. The schedule is organized into projects identified for Short Term (1-3 years), Mid Term (4-8 years), and Long Term (9 years beyond). The concepts were then organized into succinct tracks.

1.4 FACILITIES PLANNING ISSUES AND GOALS

At the start of this Master Plan Update, Western New England College had committed to the ambitious construction of two new buildings, an Academic Building for Pharmacy, Sciences, and Psychology, and new student housing. Saratoga Associates and the Master Plan Committee were charged with exploring the best locations for these two buildings. At issue for the placement of the Academic Building for Pharmacy, Sciences, and Psychology was:

- > The question of adjacency to other academic buildings.
- > The best fit for a relatively large facility within a limited amount of open space.
- > The impact of the new building on parking, pedestrian paths, and informal outdoor student space.
- > How the new building might enhance the physical presence of the campus in the surrounding community.

The issues involved with the location of new student housing were:

- > The type of housing, whether traditional dormitory style or apartment style, and the appropriate locations for each type.
- > Understanding the existing residence zones on the campus, and how the new building(s) could fit with those.
- > The impact on parking.

In addition to the siting of these two new facilities, the Planning Committee members and Senior Staff met to discuss overall planning issues and goals for this study. The following is a summary:

- > Long term vs. short-term space use.
- > Gateway Village, what should it be?
- > Address the need for support space on campus.
- > The need for more recreational/athletic space, not just for varsity teams, but also for intramural teams and informal student activities.
- > How to better meet the needs of the students in the D. J. St. Germain Campus Center.
- > Address the future of Rivers Memorial Hall.
- > The need for a large/medium lecture space.
- > How to encourage flexibility of classroom space.
- > A discussion of the College's open space and how to maintain the character of the Western New England College Campus.
- > Planning for the future of the property south of the campus core (the "Lower 70"): if, when, and how it should be developed.
- > Security and Campus access.
- > The future of Sleith Hall.
- > Student housing: how to address the needs of a variety of types of students.

1.5 SPACE PROGRAM NEEDS

The process of developing the Space Program in this Master Plan Update was undertaken by the Master Planning Committee in a series of working meetings with Saratoga Associates. Periodic progress presentations were made to the Senior Staff, which provided input as well. The Space Needs summary described in Section 4.6 came out of the following steps:

- > Understanding and documenting the existing, nonresidence, programmable space on the campus.
- > Understanding the "perceived needs" expressed during the information-gathering phase of the Master Plan.
- > As a Committee, developing a set of prioritized recommendations based on the above two steps.

During the fall of 2007 Saratoga Associates conducted a series of one-on-one interviews with over 70 representatives of the Western New England College Community. These included faculty from each department, staff members, administrators, and alumni. Prior to the interview each participant was asked to fill out a questionnaire soliciting responses to both campus-wide issues and individual department/school questions. Among the questions addressed were their assessment of the College's greatest facility-related "Assets and Challenges," the most desirable spaces on campus, and their thoughts on the best location for a new Academic Building for Pharmacy, Sciences, and Psychology.

The questionnaire also asked each individual to evaluate his or her department or office's specific "short term" (1-3 years) and "mid/long term" (4-6 years) space needs.

The following lists show the Space Needs developed by the Master Planning Committee. They represent concepts for space distribution among the Western New England College building facilities, but stop short of describing actual projects. Identifying the Space Needs is an important intermediate step that allows the College to prioritize the Perceived Needs and preserve these concepts, before they are tested by the realities of actual building space and budget constraints.

The time frames used to organize the Space Needs, Short term, Mid term and Long term provides framework for the Implementation Plan described in Section 7.

Space Needs: Short Term 2008—2011

- School of Pharmacy and space for Sciences
- Renovation and reallocation of space in Sleith Hall and Herman Hall
- Student Housing: apartment style, approximately 200 beds
- Churchill Hall: School of Business and Information Technology renovation
- Expand dining facilities and student activity space at St. Germain Campus Center

Space Needs: Mid Term 2012–2016

- Space allocation and functionality in Rivers Memorial Hall
- Residence hall student housing: approximately 150 beds
- Graduate student housing
- Relocate offices from Valley Road and Bellamy Road onto main campus
- Space needs for recreation
- Space needs for offices
- Addition and renovation to Deliso Hall
- Relocation of Facilities Management from Campus Utility Building
- Office expansion in Alumni Healthful Living Center

Space Needs: Long Term 2017 +

- Performing Arts Facility
- Replace Plymouth Complex
- Redevelop Gateway Village
- Potential Academic Building
- Potential Student Housing

1.6 BUILDING AND SITE CONCEPTS, AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

The Space Distribution Concepts developed in this Master Plan Update describe specific solutions to the Space Needs presented in the Section 4, Space Program. Space Distribution Concepts recommend major or minor renovation to existing buildings, new construction, and related site work. These concepts are numbered to correspond to the Implementation chart found in Section 7, and represent discrete projects on individual tracks. Graphic representations for some of these tracks appear at the end of this Section.

SHORT TERM 2008 - 2011

Academic Building for Pharmacy, Sciences, and Psychology and Related Site Work. With the College's establishment of the new School of Pharmacy comes the commitment to build a state-of-the-art facility to support this program. At the time of this writing, the programming phase for this building is ongoing. The Implementation Plan shows the building at 100,000 GSF, a number that may change with further discussions between the College and School of Pharmacy. The new building will also house the Psychology Department, the Biology Department, the Physics Department, and the Chemistry Department, thus freeing up space in Sleith and Herman Halls.

Sleith Hall, Herman Hall, and Emerson Hall Renovation. With the new Academic Building for Pharmacy, Sciences, and Psychology, over 11,000 net square feet will become available in Sleith Hall. With the renovation of these spaces, Sleith will become dedicated entirely to the School of Engineering.

Herman Hall will also see the opportunity to renovate approximately 13,900 net square feet formerly occupied by the Chemistry and Physics Departments, providing needed additional classroom and faculty office space.

While not specifically calculated in the Implementation Plan, there is the opportunity to enhance the west-facing façade of Herman Hall, as it faces what has become the main Campus entrance with the completion of the Welcome Center.

The 2000 Master Plan called for the interior renovation of Emerson Hall, with a new façade/lobby and circulation core. These items are still a capital improvement priority. With the site selection of the new Academic Building for Pharmacy, Sciences, and Psychology, the "back" of Emerson will now become a major entrance, making the façade upgrade more important. The new circulation core and lobby would have an elevator, making the building accessible.

Student Housing—Apartment Style. The College is committed to providing apartment-style student residences for approximately 200 students to be located south of the existing baseball field. This housing is intended for upper-class students, including School of Pharmacy students. This work will be in two phases beginning in late 2008 and with completion scheduled for fall of 2010.

Expand Dining in St. Germain Campus Center—Since the 2000 Master Plan, Western New England College completed renovations to the lower level of the Campus Center, updating the décor, improving the space layout, and providing more dining venues for the students. With the expected increase in enrollment and the trend toward a more residential campus, the Campus Center serves even more students every day. This Master Plan Update calls for a Feasibility Study of the existing dining program and services, and an addition to the building by 2011.

Churchill Hall—School of Business and Information Technology Renovation. The School of Business and the IT Department would trade space, bringing IT to the lower level making it more accessible to the campus community. The School of Business would renovate the upper level to provide additional academic program space.

New Equipment Building for Facilities Management. Facilities Management currently owns a prefabricated service building of just over 10,000 GSF. This track calls for the work required to prepare a site and erect the building, provide utilities, and access. The Master Plan shows its location east of the new athletic fields, adjacent to the existing school on Ashland Avenue.

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION & OPEN SPACE

Pedestrian Circulation

Extending the core pedestrian path circulation should be considered in the future development of the campus. Phased extension of the radial axis paths extending out from the center and intersecting pedestrian paths of concentric circles is the primary concept. In this manner, the desirable core campus can be extended outward to other sectors of the campus.

VEHICULAR CIRCULATION & PARKING

Campus Loop Road

Converting the existing segmented campus loop road to a unified and distinct loop road is envisioned. The concept calls for phased realignment and improvement to the existing partial loop road in coordination with the implementation of future development zones.

The campus loop road concept includes a reconditioned roadway, consistent curbing material, maintaining a minimal road lane width to “calm traffic flow,” strategically located pedestrian priority crossing points; campus-wide signage and graphics, parking and path lighting, site amenities, and landscaping.

Parking

With the growth of the Campus has also come the need for additional parking to serve the new and existing facilities. In the short term, planning for the Academic Building for Pharmacy, Sciences and Psychology has included parking adjacent to the building for Faculty and Staff. The new student Townhouses will include parking that may also serve the new recreational fields and softball field. The plan also calls for parking behind the Alumni Healthful Living Center. Looking mid- to long term, there are opportunities for additional parking on the west side of campus near the Law Center, in the other development zones to the south, and a potential parking structure site east of the AHLC.

Campus Access Consolidation

The development of the primary campus entrance off Wilbraham Road to the west of the Welcome Center provides a clear sense of campus arrival.

It is recommended that the primary entry road to the west of Sleith Hall be relocated to the west of Sleith parking lot. This will reduce pedestrian/vehicular conflicts and provide a more defined road corridor that does not bisect numerous parking lots.

A second concept involves the extension of the campus road system to the east of Emerson Hall. This extension would connect to the campus entry near the Plymouth Complex and be relocated adjacent to the property line adjoining the Garden Center property.

Evergreen Road Connection

The Master Plan calls for potential future student housing located in the south portion of the campus. This on-campus housing would connect to the main campus via an improved Evergreen Road. Eventually extending the road south would open an alternative campus access point on Plumtree Road. The Evergreen Road connection will provide additional access to the proposed athletic expansion and maximize future development options for the south property.

The Master Plan Update calls for no net loss from the total existing 2,499 parking spaces including spaces at Gateway Village. The proposed campus road realignment and extension will require the replacement of approximately primary spaces from the various parking lots that will be affected by its construction. Additional parking provisions have been incorporated into the site concept to accommodate this loss. The ultimate campus site plan can accommodate additional spaces. Further enrollment growth or additional event parking needs will necessitate development of additional spaces elsewhere on campus.

ATHLETIC & RECREATION FIELDS EXPANSION

Athletic Fields

The campus has sufficient underdeveloped wooded land to expand the outdoor athletic fields as needed over time. Expansion toward the southern parcel, as recommended in the facilities plan, will

require significant land preparation. Components of this phased expansion would include the following:

Short-Mid Term

- > Relocated softball field
- > Two recreation fields
- > Additional parking for athletic events

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ZONES

The Master Plan has identified areas for the appropriate location of future buildings. These areas were studied on the basis of functionality, aesthetics, use, and their potential connections to existing buildings. The following includes some of the primary, both near and longer term, potential development zones.

Short Term Potential Development Zones

- > Potential underclass student housing site includes the parking lot behind Berkshire, Hampden, and Windham Halls for freshmen beds.
- > Upper level student housing is likely to be developed on the wooded parcel just south of the baseball field.

PREFERRED BUILDING SITE: ACADEMIC BUILDING FOR PHARMACY, SCIENCES, AND PSYCHOLOGY

The Master Plan Steering Committee and Saratoga Associates identified two primary building sites for the proposed Academic Building for Pharmacy, Sciences, and Psychology. Site One was located to the north and west of Sleith Hall and Site Two was selected on the “Tundra” site between the Plymouth Complex and Emerson Hall.

Following extensive analysis of these two development zones, Site Two was selected for the following reasons:

- > Positive visual exposure for the building from Wilbraham Road
- > No loss of “woodland” landscape framework
- > Proximity to academic and campus core
- > Availability of required land area for 100,000 +/- GSF building

Key to the planning and design of this facility is recognition of the following considerations:

- > A strong pedestrian connection from the building to campus core needs to be developed. The existing site is separated from the core area by the parking areas and roadway to the west of the Library and Emerson Hall.
- > Parking will be displaced as a result of this project and therefore will require the development of replacement parking as well as additional new parking. The actual number of spaces should be identified in the programming phase of the project.

- > Planning should consider the future removal of the Plymouth Complex and the proposed campus road extension between Wilbraham Road and the building site.
- > The existing woodlands at the south side of the site should be protected.
- > The east side of Emerson Hall should be architecturally enhanced and the landscape linked to the project site.

PREFERRED BUILDING SITES: STUDENT HOUSING

A wide range of building sites was considered for future student housing. The type of student housing is a key determinant to location. It is recommended that housing for freshmen and sophomores be in close proximity to similar campus housing and the campus core elements such as dining, student services, and library. Upper-class housing on campus is primarily located in the Gateway Apartment Complex and the Evergreen Village Townhouses. Townhouse and apartment style housing is favored for most of the upper-class and professional degree graduate students.

Two sites were recommended for residence hall housing. Site One is located to the north of Commonwealth Hall and Site Two is located to the south of Hampden Hall. Both sites would require the relocation of displaced parking. The development of upper-class housing would reinforce the existing housing precincts in a positive manner.

Locations for townhouse and apartment style housing were located further from the campus core and involved the following sites: redevelopment of the CUB site; redevelopment of Gateway Village in phases; the area to the east of the Law Center along Valley Road; and, sites to be south of the baseball field in undeveloped areas. The site immediately south of the baseball field was selected for the next phase of apartment-style housing for upper-class students.