



New York  
School  
of Interior  
Design

# Strategic Plan

2020-21

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**The New York School of Interior Design's singular focus is to provide the most innovative, immersive, and transformative interior design education in the world.**

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## Background and Summary

Since its founding in 1916, the New York School of Interior Design has enhanced the vision of its founder, Architect Sherrill Whitton, by focusing exclusively on interior design and its related disciplines. Its immersive curricula, faculty expertise, dedicated students, solid industry collaborations and respect from the design community have earned the college consistent placement among the top five interior design programs in the country by Design Intelligence over the past five years.

The program has grown from a handful of students in a single course of study to more than 500 students from around the world enrolled in nine programs culminating in certificates, undergraduate, and graduate degrees in Interior Design, Healthcare Interior Design, Sustainable Interior Environments and Lighting Design. A wide range of additional classes and learning experiences is offered through the college's Summer Pre-college program, Institute for Continuing and Professional Studies, and public programs in both in-person and on-line platforms to serve students of interior design around the globe in all stages of learning.

The New York School of Interior Design has earned accreditation from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and is an accredited institutional member of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD). Additionally, the school's BFA and MFA-1 programs are accredited by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA). The private, nonprofit college is housed in three buildings in Manhattan, two on the Upper East Side and one in the Flatiron District. NYSID offers students an in-depth learning experience and access to a wealth of industry relationships in a city that is a global magnet for designers.

NYSID's guiding principle is that the interior environment is a vital element in human wellbeing, and the College is committed to actively improving the quality of life for all segments of humanity through interior design. This ideal is put into practice by a dedicated faculty of designers, architects, art historians, and authorities in the field of design.

## Strategic Planning

The planning process for the 2020-2021 academic year was initiated with the parameters of building on the achievements of the previous strategic plan, drawing upon an even wider representation of stakeholders to inform the plan, and aligning the MSCHE self-study process with this strategic planning process to capitalize on institutional resources. After the strategic planning process began, the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic caused such rapid changes to the school's operations that the customary three-year plan was shortened to a one-year plan to acknowledge the climate of uncertainty, the rate of change, and to facilitate as much institutional agility as possible. The implementation or work plan for the strategic plan will be reviewed quarterly during 2020-2021, and the strategic plan will be revisited for revisions once a year until 2022.

It is unlikely that the four goals of the strategic plan will change over the course of the next three years; however, the strategies and tactics outlined in the implementation plan most probably will. The goals outlined in this plan are intended to serve as the institutional rudder while the college charts its course for the future.

# Mission / Vision / Values

## **Mission Statement**

New York School of Interior Design's singular focus is to provide the most innovative, immersive, and transformative interior design education in the world.

## **Vision Statement**

The most beautiful, inspiring, and human-centered spaces that enable all people to flourish are designed by those who have studied at the New York School of Interior Design.

## **Values Statement**

Building on its rich history and New York City location, tradition of looking forward, and commitment to inclusiveness and equity, the New York School of Interior Design values its:

*Learners* from diverse backgrounds and experiences who are driven to create beautiful spaces and are focused on improving the quality of life in the built environment;

*Faculty* of professional designers, artists, and scholars dedicated to innovative teaching, conceptual and applied design, and empowering students to fulfill their creative potential;

*Community* of educators and professionals known for collaboration, creative thinking, and excellence; and

*Alumni* who contribute to the growth of the students, the college, the interior design profession, and the global community.

# Goals and Strategies

## **GOAL: Attract and retain a broad and diverse community of interior design students, practitioners, and lifelong learners reflective of society**

- Strategy 1: Identify potential students and lifelong learners
- Strategy 2: Cultivate prospective students and lifelong learners
- Strategy 3: Connect aspiring designers to their best individual learning experience
- Strategy 4: Engage and support current students and lifelong learners to achieve their educational goals
- Strategy 5: Coordinate cross college efforts to strengthen diversity and inclusion

## **GOAL: Provide exceptional learning experiences to all who engage with the New York School of Interior Design**

- Strategy 1: Determine current needs for academic and community education
- Strategy 2: Create and implement new or expanded academic and community offerings
- Strategy 3: Broaden accessibility to academic and community offerings
- Strategy 4: Continually assess academic and community offerings to ensure excellence and relevancy

## **GOAL: Ensure appropriate resources to support academic and institutional development**

- Strategy 1: Diversify the base of contributed income
- Strategy 2: Increase contributed revenue from new and current supporters
- Strategy 3: Engage and support members of the New York School of Interior Design Board of Trustees, Advisory Board, Alumni Council, and volunteers in fundraising and institutional advancement
- Strategy 4: Develop opportunities to increase earned revenue
- Strategy 5: Ensure sufficient expert staff and faculty to support institutional development, academic planning, and program development

## **GOAL: Maintain a culture of informed planning and assessment**

- Strategy 1: Review and update existing institutional master plans in light of current circumstances
- Strategy 2: Develop additional plans to support institutional effectiveness
- Strategy 3: Facilitate communications and participation in a variety of working conditions
- Strategy 4: Evaluate the need for appropriate associations, consortia, certifications, and accreditations

## Methodology

When the 2019-2021 New York School of Interior Design strategic planning process was initiated, it was designed with two overarching objectives in mind:

1. to include as many and as diverse stakeholder voices as possible to inform the plan
2. to coordinate with the requirements of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) accreditation process to eliminate duplication of institutional resources.

To address inclusivity, efforts were made to engage a wider representation of participants in the strategic planning process. This was accomplished by several methods. Beginning in June 2019, college employees, faculty, students, alumni, supporters, volunteers, and trustees were invited to participate in a series of ten focus groups, respectively. Seven additional individual interviews were conducted by the consultant with NYSID administrators. Participants in the seventeen meetings were guided through a SWOT analysis. Their anonymous comments were captured, organized to identify recurring themes, and shared

with the strategic planning group. Additionally, two open invitation, college-wide gatherings were held. The first was to inform stakeholders of the planning process, present an environmental scan prepared by the consultant and review the college's existing mission, vision, and values statements. The second meeting included a scenario planning session. Three scenarios presented in October 2019 for discussion among the session attendees were as follows:

- What would be the likely consequences if the international student population were to drop to less than 10 percent of the current enrollment?
- If an on-line learning format increased to 75 percent or more of all educational classes, what effect would that have on student experience and the identity, culture, and finances of the institution?
- Should NYSID remain a single focus institution?

The first two scenarios were based on the consultant's research of trends she identified as likely to affect higher education in the future. The question about NYSID remaining a single focus college was born

## Tactical Implementation Plan

A tactical implementation plan is an internal document that identifies the means by which the strategic plan will be executed. The New York School of Interior Design's Tactical Implementation Plan outlining strategies and tactics was developed by the Strategic Plan Committee members and facilitated by the consultant during eight subsequent remote sessions. Resources such as time, personnel and costs were assigned to the tactics supporting the strategies identified in the strategic plan. Metrics for success and those responsible for the tactics were identified and included to provide a means to assess the effectiveness of the plan. The implementation plan serves as a useful tool to facilitate the quarterly review of the plan.

from a recurring topic of conversation from previous engagements with the college that deserved a deeper and wider discussion. Holding these sessions enabled a broader range of opinions and ideas about the college's future to be expressed and captured to inform the deliberations of the smaller strategic planning group. This same group also served on the steering committee of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) Self Study Process.

The strategic planning process was designed to be intertwined with an institutional priorities' assessment-based self-study as required by the MSCHE in order to deepen the outcomes and make best use of the small college's limited resources. Overlapping these two processes influenced the extension of the strategic planning process beyond its historical four-month time frame to nearly one year and allowed a deeper focus on institutional goals.

Members of three working groups were identified for the MSCHE Self-Study and were given the filter of using existing institutional strategic goals to evaluate the college's strengths and challenges in addition to complying with the portions of the MSCHE standards assigned to each working group.

The MSCHE working groups were organized as follows:

- Working Group 1: Strategic Goal 1 – Create an exceptional learning experience for all who engage with New York School of Interior Design
- Working Group 2: Strategic Goal 2 – Attract a broad community of interior design students and professionals
- Working Group 3: Strategic Goal 3 – Ensure appropriate resources to support academic and institutional development; and Strategic Goal 4 – Strengthen our culture of planning and assessment

The MSCHE Steering Committee is composed of the following:

Co-Chair: Dr. Christopher Vinger, Director of Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment

Co-Chair: Dr. Ellen Fisher, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean

Chair, Working Group 1: Barbara Lowenthal, Faculty and Associate Dean

Chair, Working Group 2: Karen Higginbotham, Dean of Students

Chair, Working Group 3: Yvonne Moray, Assistant Vice President of Administration

Members of the Strategic Planning Committee in addition to those named above were identified as follows:

Jane Chen, Vice President of Finance & Administration

Brett Cione, Director of Admissions & Recruitment

Joy Cooper, Director of Development

Joe Fantozzi, Bursar

Zeke Kolenovic, Director of Facilities

Billy Kwan, Director of Library

David Owens-Hill, Director of External Affairs/Chief of Staff

David Sprouls, President

The MSCHE Working Group reports were prepared by the respective chairs and distributed to the Strategic Planning Committee as further background information for the strategic planning process.

As strategic planning sessions addressing the college's mission, vision, values, and goals were to be scheduled, the COVID-19 pandemic erupted. The school closed its doors to students, faculty and most staff and instruction rapidly transitioned to online. It became clear as the situation evolved that the

strategic planning process needed to be amended to address the rapidly changing and unpredictable environment.

The planning meetings were rescheduled to an increased number of shorter sessions due to the necessity of having to conduct them online and the urgency of many of the issues to be addressed. In preparation for the meetings, a brief questionnaire was distributed to all unit heads in the college asking them to identify the biggest challenge they were facing and what opportunities, if any, had arisen. The original number of strategic planning group participants was reduced to accelerate the idea exchange, facilitate remote communications and in deference to the anticipated sensitive nature of the discussions.

A new methodology for the planning process was proposed by the consultant to create a foundation for the discussions. She recommended that the plan be organized on a one-year projection with quarterly reviews at which time a refreshed environmental scan would be prepared to inform the second and third years of the plan. To begin the revised process, she prepared an updated environmental scan for the participants and facilitated another abbreviated SWOT analysis which focused on opportunities and threats identified after the pandemic struck. It was recommended that the college officers prepare three financial models to create a basis for planning in such uncertain times. The models illustrated a best case, worse case and middle case scenario which were based on enrollment and revenue projections, and a rapidly prepared and distributed student intention survey. After evaluating the scenarios and identifying a most likely projection, the group used the middle case scenario as the basis for their planning.

The final strategic planning group consisted of:

Jane Chen, Vice President of Finance and Administration

Brett Cione, Director of Admissions and Recruitment

Joy Cooper, Director of Development

Ellen Fisher, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean

Karen Higginbotham, Dean of Students

David Owens-Hill, Director of External Relations/Chief of Staff

David Sprouls, President

Christopher Vinger, Director, Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment

Remote meetings from one to two-hour duration were held according to the following schedule:

- Thursday, April 23, 2020 (Planning Process)
- Monday, April 27, 2020 (Environmental Scan, Opportunities and Threats)
- Thursday, April 30, 2020 (Introduce models and review Best Case Scenario)
- Thursday, May 7, 2020 (Review implications of Worse Case Scenario)
- Monday, May 11, 2020 (Review Middle Case Scenario)
- Thursday, May 14, 2020 (Establish Mission, Vision, Values)
- Monday, May 18, 2020 (Finalize Mission, Vision, Values and Begin Goals)
- Thursday, May 28, 2020 (Finalize Goals, Begin Strategies)
- Monday, June 1, 2020 (Solidify Strategies)
- Thursday, June 4, 2020 (Finalize Goals and Strategies)

The outcomes of the meetings were incorporated into a draft of the New York School of Interior Design Strategic Plan 2020-21. The draft was presented to the larger strategic planning group for review and comment. With their revisions included, the plan was presented the NYSID Board of Trustees for review and approval at their June board meeting.

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*founded 1916*



