Strategic Plan

The Way Forward

2012 – 2017

Approved by Board of Directors on March 21, 2012
“Claims to know with precision how to educate artists for the future are suspect. Therefore, the challenges for the next 50 years in arts education will be met by an institution which is flexible enough to accommodate rapid changes, while at the same time adhering to a small set of principles which will influence all of what the institution does.”

—President David Rhodes, 1996

A. MISSION
To educate future generations of artists, designers, and creative professionals.

B. VISION
“To be the best art and design school in the world.” - Milton Glaser
We believe that best is a continually moving target, and that we must always collectively be moving toward it.

C. CORE VALUES
- Freedom of Expression: The freedom to take risks is vital to art-making and arts education. We celebrate divergent opinions as participants in the world’s largest community of creative professionals.
- Diversity: We value our differences. An SVA education is informed by multiple approaches to learning and making; and by the presence of diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences.
- Integrity: We believe in accountability. As we adapt and innovate, our institutional commitment to ethical conduct, community service and outreach, and financial responsibility remains steadfast.
- Accessibility: We recognize that communication is the cornerstone of community. Accessible leadership and minimal hierarchy breed a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation.

D. RECOGNIZED STRENGTHS
- We are a CITY SCHOOL, and benefit from all that flows from that - experienced and engaged faculty and staff, and the ability to provide access for our students to a wide range of educational and professional opportunities.
- Chairs and faculty are influential and talented PROFESSIONALS respected in their fields.
• The professional rigor and context of the FACULTY is passed on directly to students.
• FORWARD-THINKING leadership with entrepreneurial vision and follow through.
• Ability to evolve, innovate and adapt quickly; NIMBLENESS, very little hierarchy.

E. CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE
• To educate for WHAT’S NEXT in a dynamic environment.
• The cost of education and the burden of STUDENT DEBT on graduates in the current economy.
• New York REAL ESTATE and the evolution of the physical campus.
• Reconfiguring the college for leadership CONTINUITY.
• ALIGNING diverse programs and populations within the school.

F. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
The lofty goal set forth by our vision statement demands above all that we attract the best students and faculty. We will do so by further improving upon our robust course offerings and reinforcing the administrative systems that support our instructors, allowing the institution as a whole to better serve the needs of our students. We see the following as the fundamental strategic elements leading to our ultimate goal:

I. STRENGTHEN CAMPUS & COMMUNITY
II. BUILD OUTREACH STRATEGY
III. DRIVE ACHIEVEMENT & ADVANTAGE
IV. ENSURE CONTINUITY OF GOVERNANCE & PROGRAMS
V. EXPAND GLOBAL REACH
I. STRENGTHEN CAMPUS & COMMUNITY

The educational experience extends beyond the classroom. We aim to encourage a culture of curiosity and invention by providing spaces both physical and virtual for students and faculty to continue the creative dialogue.

The ‘silo’ effect is a byproduct of what distinguishes SVA and makes us great. Each Chair—from inception or over time—creates for their department a distinct universe with a particular point of view, often reflecting SVA’s entrepreneurial spirit. While the differences between our degree programs are understood and respected, there is also an increasing convergence in the creative professions they comprise. It is clearly to the mutual benefit of our departments and our students to cultivate commonalities. As professional practice flows, so does the identity and practice of our academic departments, often necessitating increased interdepartmental cooperation as well as interaction between departments and administrative offices.

- Assess Location and Capacity of Current Facilities
- Conceive and Develop Physical and Virtual Communal Spaces
- Create, Foster, and Support Movement Between ‘Silos’
  i) Dialogue and exchange between degree programs
  ii) Interactions between academic and administrative staff

OPERATIONAL GOALS

1) Physical Space
   a) Review, update, and begin implementation of a comprehensive space utilization plan to maximize existing space and to direct the acquisition and development of new facilities
      i) Secure new space to replace 380 2nd Ave facilities (Humanities & Sciences; BFA Illustration & Cartooning; BFA Animation; MFA Design; Visual Arts Library; and all business operations for the school)
   b) Initiate planning to create more community venues for students, faculty, and staff
      i) Multidisciplinary spaces
      ii) Campus Dining
c) Initiate planning for physical reorganization of our campus, making contiguous like departments in a manner that develops community and facilitates sharing of resources
   i) Library
   ii) Consolidation of housing

2) Sustainability
   a) Appraise functionality of our current spaces
   b) Consider contiguity of campus and efficiency of operations

3) Virtual Community
   a) Through strategic development of the SVA website and social media outlets, continue to engage students, alumni, faculty, and staff in enhanced online community
   b) Through broad utilization of learning technologies, create additional online communal spaces for academic interaction, exhibition, feedback, and assessment

4) Create, Foster, and Support Movement Between ‘Silos’
   a) Review curricula and departmental structure
   b) Consider possibilities for new alignment of graduate programs
   c) Increase interdisciplinary programming
   d) Encourage greater access and ease for cross-departmental course registration

5) Developing Administrative Community
   a) Strengthen orientation, training and introduction of new hires
   b) Form committee of administrative, studio and academic representatives to assess needs and interactions, and make recommendations to encourage greater comity of like departments
   c) Improve communication between staff of degree programs and administrative offices. Create ongoing forum (both live and virtual) for community members—academic and administrative—to improve interaction, productivity
   d) Develop and pursue strategies to better integrate and harmonize IT support services across the College, commensurate with our current capabilities and responsibilities
II. BUILD OUTREACH STRATEGY

The reputation of SVA and the quality of our student body are inextricably linked. To improve upon one necessarily advances the other. Therefore we strive to build upon the strength of both by enhancing recognition of SVA and continuing to secure increased numbers of quality applicants.

- **Conceive and implement a unified school-wide strategy for reputation advancement, recruiting, alumni outreach, and enhanced recognition of SVA that integrates the College’s diverse constituencies**

**OPERATIONAL GOALS**

1) Marketing
   a) Consider a consultant to assess the strength and brand impact of our name regionally, nationally, and internationally, and make recommendations
   b) Assess need for Director of Marketing & Research

2) Admission & Retention
   a) Attracting and retaining quality applicants
      i) Review our attractiveness to top prospects and the growth of our institutional aid commitments
      ii) Convene committee to review academic and social environment that new students choose to enter and leave; consider what changes and adjustments might have a positive impact on attrition
      iii) Continue efforts to constrain costs and reduce student debt
      iv) Consider Enrollment & Retention Manager, i.e. more directly connecting the two
   b) Digital strategy
      i) Online application and portfolio review, registration and degree audit access for all levels of the student body
   c) Continue to build alumni engagement
III. DRIVE ACHIEVEMENT AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Students graduate from SVA with exceptional preparation to embark on careers as creative professionals. However, as an institution of higher education that aspires to be the best, we must believe that we can always do more. After a period of swift expansion, we direct our focus toward continuous improvement.

- **Consistent evaluation and advancement of curricula, faculty, and programs to ensure that we evolve to serve the changing needs of future generations of art and design students**

**OPERATIONAL GOALS**

1) **Interdisciplinary Opportunities**
   a) Greater access for students to offerings in other departments
   b) Consider formal interdisciplinary course offerings
   c) Consider faculty-directed clinics, to provide students with opportunities to work with actual clients

2) **Learning Technologies**
   a) Review, benchmark and pursue best practices in extending LT across our undergraduate and graduate programs
   b) Develop proactive programs for faculty and administrative participation

3) **Culture of Assessment and Quality Assurance**
   a) Expand formal assessment plans to new graduate programs, evaluating student work and faculty efficacy
   b) Refocus and expand assessment plans for Humanities & Sciences, Art History, and Honors

4) **Sustainability**
   a) Appraise existing programs for size and scope, efficiency, footprint

5) **Undergraduate Departments**
   a) Periodic review and renewal of undergraduate programs to regenerate departments, keep them current
6) Graduate Programs
   a) Periodic review and renewal of graduate programs to regenerate departments, keep them current
   b) Form special committee to review and compare the current programs and consider possibility of new alignments of the graduate programs

7) Continuing Education
   a) Form special committee to assess CE program and make recommendations for the future

8) Consider Additional Program Offerings
   a) Consider new graduate programs, including possibility of doctoral studies and urban planning and design
IV. ENSURE CONTINUITY OF GOVERNANCE AND PROGRAMS

As the educational landscape becomes increasingly dynamic, our stability, strength and ability to adapt quickly to the changing needs of our students are predicated on the reliability and continuity of our core leadership structure.

- Define organizational models and options with the assistance and expertise of outside consultant
- Develop transition plans for ownership, executive leadership and program chairpersons

OPERATIONAL GOALS

1) Succession plan
   a) Bring in outside consultant to advise, assess options
   b) Create succession plan that ensures continued vitality of the institution for future generations

2) Engage senior academic and administrative leadership in planning for succession
V. EXPAND GLOBAL REACH

The creative community that our students enter is no longer defined by national borders. An SVA education must continue to evolve to reflect this and prepare our students appropriately.

- RECRUIT AND INTEGRATE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
- PREPARE OUR STUDENTS FOR CREATIVE LIVES IN THE GLOBAL MARKETPLACE
- CONSIDER POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL SEASONAL PROGRAMS AND PERMANENT INTERNATIONAL FACILITIES

OPERATIONAL GOALS

1) Prepare students for creative lives in a global context
   a) Further develop curricula to reflect the evolving nature of creative careers in global markets
   b) Provide multi-cultural experiences for faculty, including opportunities to teach special programs at our international partner institutions
   c) Consider international faculty recruitment strategy

2) Admission and Retention
   a) Establish global strategy and benchmarks for international student enrollment
   b) Recruit and integrate international students
   c) Assess if the programs and services in place to integrate and educate international students appropriately meet the needs of growing population
   d) Determine the need for a dedicated office or team

3) Programs and Facilities abroad

4) Engage international strategic partnerships
G. NEXT STEPS

• Identify Program Tasks
• Assess and prioritize goals to align with financial plan
• Develop collaborative online tracking across the College