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Choices for Bates, May 2010

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CHOICES

CHOICES FOR
Bates

A PLAN FOR BATES
College

New Pathways for the Learning Century at BATES

A Letter from President Hansen

Dear Colleagues,

At a meeting held earlier this month, the Trustees reviewed the 2010 update of our Campus Facilities Master Plan. At that time, I shared my thinking about how we will use this new work and other planning initiatives to achieve our highest aims for Bates. Based on collaborative work begun seven years ago, the ideas this plan presents are not only right for Bates now, but also underscore the power of our emerging approach to shaping the future of the College.

It is my privilege to introduce the document that explains the Facilities Update, which will be distributed to the campus in the very near future. In that opening letter, I draw some parallels between this new plan and the ideas that compose *Choices for Bates*. Because both plans will shape our future in powerful ways, I am including many of those points in this newsletter, which also gives current news about projects we are using to execute *Choices for Bates* and major components of the Facilities Update.

In addition to imagining some very exciting continuing improvements to the physical campus, members of the facilities planning committee, along with architect Steve Cecil, developed insights that Steve explains in a new prologue to the plan. More of a strategy than a blueprint, this plan offers a “choreography” of projects that all express consistent guiding principles: promoting a multidisciplinary, multifaceted culture; expanding opportunities for interaction and exchange; preserving our unique balance of traditional and contemporary spaces; and reflecting the sustainable mission of Bates.

A choreography of planning initiatives

Before you read about the components of the Facilities Update, I'd like to borrow Steve's provocative use of *choreography* to describe not just the facilities plan, but also the larger choreography of planning initiatives that are engaging the College and how they are strengthening the next phase of Bates' academic, fiscal, and physical development. Taken together, this Facilities Update, along with *Choices for Bates* and the very successful restructuring of some administrative functions, create a well-orchestrated piece that implements the key ideas affirmed by our community. Our position is further supported and strengthened today by recent work on so many vital fronts, including the major curricular revision that led to our new General Education requirements, the revision of our mission statement, the early creative efforts of groups setting the stage for the Arts Collaborative and the Learning Commons, and the increasing diversity of our student body.

In addition, the parallels and synergy between the committee's approach to improved facilities and the strategic thinking that led to *Choices* have much to reveal about the methods we are using to move

forward. While the new facilities plan choreographs space, *Choices* choreographs academic and co-curricular programs and initiatives. For example, our facilities plan suggests that the campus should be a place of constant circulation and flow between well-related places, each varied in texture, and yet well-designed, functional, inspiring, and with an integrity of its own.

Similarly, *Choices* presupposes that students on their journey through their undergraduate years should move easily among many different but equally well-designed and useful modes of learning and branches of knowledge. Before they eventually find their way to the intellectual spaces that most inspire them, the plan also assumes they will stop along the way to inquire, observe, and connect with other people and other ideas. To navigate successfully between physical places and spaces, pathways must be clear and inviting; so too in our intellectual journeys, networking and collaboration—the underlying principles of *Choices for Bates*—must be strengthened in ways that respect Bates’ traditions and guide its evolution.

The parallel between the Facilities Update and *Choices* is also reflected in the notion of phasing. In Phase 1 of the former, we strengthened core networking spaces like the new Commons, began the much-needed update of housing, and moved departments—including those that will be displaced by future projects and those that strengthen curricular coherence—into two historic buildings, connecting these varied and well-designed new spaces with a vibrant pedestrian corridor that eases movement, interaction, and integration. In Phase 2 we will take the next logical steps, building more housing and vibrant campus center functions, and bringing key departments together in the new science and math center.

In *Choices*, the initiatives taken as a whole comprise the next phase of building the intellectual campus in analogous ways. That process, which involved random groups in year one and working groups and initiative teams in year two, reflects the complexity of our aims and the decisions we made along the way.

In each process, we sought to bring out already strong elements, leverage existing incremental projects, and shape a more coherent pattern. The underlying principles (articulated on page 15 of *Choices* and throughout that document) reveal both core values—diversity, community, intellectual ambition, relevance—and processes—collaboration, communication, networking, seeing and using more intellectual parallels and intersections. These principles and processes are designed to guide our work now and help those who shape Bates in the future.

A focus on our shared goals

Several broad, strategic goals flow from the convergence of all this work. The first is to do an even more excellent job of educating our students, who are becoming more diverse in more ways. Meeting this challenge will include constructing and supporting both programs and spaces that make the most of our distinctive educational qualities and take full advantage of our residential learning community. Creating interest and applications from ever more academically talented prospective students is one primary driver of our shared work on Bates’ future strength.

A second core aim is to think in new ways about the significant faculty turnover due to retirements we will experience soon, and ask how new hires might offer new direction for what and how we teach. Even more immediately, we must also ask how we should think about faculty governance in light of the committee restructuring that the faculty has just approved.

A third core aim is to launch the fund-raising efforts that will carry us through the next decade and beyond. Many ambitious, exciting ideas are before us—and most of them need significant new funding. This process will require the full support of our trustees plus the energy of many of you. We are using the Mellon Presidential Discretionary grant to demonstrate just how much we can achieve with a relatively modest investment in our ideas. A next step is to leverage this gift into broader support for the complete vision of *Choices for Bates* from each of our constituencies.

On the way to achieving these aims, we will also strengthen our admissions, financial aid, career development, and communication offices, policies, and practices to reveal Bates' virtues more clearly to prospective students, faculty, donors, and the global higher education community.

This is a very exciting time for Bates and for all who make up our community. Let me encourage each of you to read the latest plan for our facilities and join me in thanking the members of our community who worked hard to complete this important project. I am grateful that we have achieved another example of successful strategic thinking about our future and used a process of collaborative leadership and broad consultation to move forward.

Even as this second round of our facilities planning work draws to a close, we see how it sets the stage and guides our next steps on a thoughtfully sequenced journey toward larger goals. These goals themselves are always in motion; our planning keeps us focused on original intentions yet open to new interpretation. I look forward to working with many of you in the coming months and years as other future-shaping projects like this one emerge and unfold.

With warm regards,



Elaine Tuttle Hansen
President

Choreographing Space The 2010 Campus Facilities Master Plan Update

Very soon the Facilities Master Planning Steering Committee will release its update of the 2004 Campus Master Plan. Using the 2004 plan as a framework, the committee worked with a professional team and consulted with our community, the surrounding neighborhood, and the city of Lewiston to provide clarity and direction for the next phase of campus development. Their update responds to our emerging priorities and identifies drivers that will continue to influence decision-making over the next 25 years, with emphasis on action steps for the next decade.

By accounting for facilities that directly support Bates' student life and academic mission, incorporating utility master planning and sustainability planning components, and further integrating Bates with the surrounding neighborhood and city, the update continues our focus on the campus as a whole. As a reflective "prologue" to the plan will further explain, we reveal, appreciate, and foster an interesting complexity at Bates, supporting our diverse intellectual and social environment while at the same time

rendering the campus more legible for visitors. The updated plan upholds and extends our principles of sustainability and adaptability as well. The following projects are major components of the plan.

Student Housing

The renewal and expansion of high quality student housing continues to be a top priority for the update. The new housing projects support institutional goals by promoting community and enhancing engagement and collaboration. Three housing initiatives designed to replace beds in wood-frame houses over the course of the next decade reinforce the strength of the variety and choices in housing at Bates:

New Housing at Garcelon Quad

This project includes new student residences designed to coordinate with the existing cluster of residential buildings, including the Village, Smith, and Wentworth-Adams. This additional housing will do more to connect and define this area of campus by framing portions of the open spaces at Garcelon Field, North Bardwell Street, and the Alumni Walk with new buildings.

New Housing on Campus Avenue

As in the original Master Plan, the integration of housing and campus center functions, now planned for both sides of Campus Avenue, will enhance the “Main Street” atmosphere and provide additional pedestrian activity along Campus Avenue.

Frye Street Housing Renovations and Additions

Both students and alumni/ae regard the existing housing on Frye Street as a special place. To preserve this desirable housing choice, the Frye Street houses will be renovated and improved with strategic additions that fit within the context of this historic neighborhood, while improving capacity and adding amenities.

Campus Avenue Project

Planned as a mixed-use center of campus activities, this project creates a two-sided street along Campus Avenue adjacent to and integrated with Chase Hall. The new buildings and Chase Hall will form active street edges for an enhanced Campus Avenue that is envisioned as a campus “Main Street.” The major components include an information kiosk and security desk, a café/pub, copy and mail center, college store, student organizations and activities lounges and meeting rooms, and creation and game rooms.

Integrated Science and Math Center

The new Integrated Science and Math Center will strengthen existing links and foster new collaborations in the natural sciences and mathematics, bringing together several departments that have been separated and poorly defined on campus. By adding a building at its southern edge, the center will complete the original Quad. This addition will do much to promote faculty research, faculty-student research, and the College’s leadership in the teaching and practice of sciences and mathematics in the liberal arts. The building and associated open spaces will enhance pedestrian connections and improve amenities for Frye Street and the neighborhood south of Campus Avenue.

Please watch for the release of the update, which contains project details and much more about the ideals and priorities they advance. In the fall, the community will offer official thanks to the committee members. The contribution of the following people to the future of Bates is indeed immense.

Jim Bauer – Director, Network and Infrastructure Services
Terry Beckmann – Vice President for Administration and Finance and Treasurer
Nancy Cable – Vice President and Dean of Enrollment and External Affairs
Steve Fuller '82, P'13 - Trustee
Doug Ginevan – Assistant Vice President for Financial Planning and Analysis
Tedd Goundie – Dean of Students
Elaine Hansen – President
Margaret Imber – Associate Professor of Classical and Medieval Studies
Kelly Kerner – Vice President for College Advancement
Kathy Low – Professor of Psychology
Jim Parakilas – James L. Moody, Jr. Family Professor of Performing Arts
Jill Reich – Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty
Chip Ross – Associate Professor of Mathematics
David Scobey – Director, Harvard Center for Community Partnerships
Pam Wichroski – Director, Capital Planning and Construction
Gene Wiemers – Vice President for Information and Library Services and Librarian

Choices for Bates ***Executing the Initiatives***

In early 2010, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded a Presidential Discretionary Grant to Bates College to support initial activities of each major component of *Choices for Bates*. At that time, President Hansen appointed teams of faculty and administrators to lead the work and plan next steps for each major component of the plan. Each team is comprised of members of the community who are committed to advancing the ideas affirmed in *Choices* and to establishing and sustaining a collaborative approach to leadership.

Following preparatory work in Short Term 2010, each team will meet on a regular basis throughout the next academic year. In spring 2011, the teams will evaluate progress and make recommendations for the next phase of work. The following summaries explain President Hansen's charge to each team.

Arts Initiative

The first step in the Arts Initiative is to form an Arts Collaborative, which is an interdisciplinary team that will work across disciplines and campus/community borders to enhance and coordinate the vitality and visibility of the arts. Attuned to our liberal arts mission, the Arts Collaborative will work to ensure that practice, pedagogy, advocacy, and leadership for the arts are coordinated; to infuse the residential learning community with arts awareness and opportunities; to extend the reach of the arts more fully across the entire campus and community; and to guide future efforts to improve facilities.

In its pilot year, an eight-person interdisciplinary leadership team led by Professor Kirk Read will implement three projects supported by a Mellon grant:

- Advance an Arts Collaborative as a leadership team.
- Tailor three to four existing arts-related first-year seminars to introduce the arts at Bates as an integrated course of study and a stimulating collaborative experience.
- Develop an effective communications strategy for the arts at Bates.

Science and Math Initiative

The Natural Sciences and Math Initiative is designed to improve the quality, coherence and reach of the curriculum. In the longer term, the plan will allow Bates to provide technologically advanced facilities and more resources for faculty and undergraduate research to ensure that students take full advantage of close interaction with faculty. One aim is to become a model among top liberal arts programs and math.

Co-chairs Matt Côté and Hong Lin will lead the pilot year with funds from the Mellon Presidential Discretionary Grant. The next steps are to take forward two goals articulated in *Choices for Bates*:

- Accelerate the faculty's design of an integrated four-semester science and math sequence;
- Implement a pilot project to expand and deepen a defining aspect of Bates—close, long-term contact between faculty and students working on real-world problems.

Due in part to generous existing support from The Mellon Foundation, curriculum redesign is underway. Now faculty need to develop modules that allow the initiative to pilot and assess ideas about how math and science can do more to prepare majors for lead roles in their fields and promote scientific and quantitative literacy for all students.

Learning Initiative

This initiative is composed of three projects—the Learning Commons, the Residential Life project, and the Diversity in Excellence project.

The Learning Commons

The Learning Commons is charged with supporting the quality of learning and enhancing the learning experience by building and fostering an intellectual community around the values of excellence, innovation, diversity, and collaboration. In its first year, Hillory Oakes will lead the team to implement a Mellon grant to support two specific projects—new activities that integrate the ideas of the Learning Commons in the community, and the engagement of a space planner to reconfigure existing space into a serviceable, inviting home for the Learning Commons. Specific objectives include the following:

- Coordinate programs that offer academic support for students, including various elements of the new writing program, the math workshop, academic counseling and tutoring, and other

services provided by the Dean of Students Office, the Imaging Center, and other ILS services to build students' technology and information-management skills.

- Encourage new activities that integrate the ideas of the Learning Commons in the community, in the curriculum, and in the life of the College.

Residential Life

One aim of the Residential Life Initiative is to cast residential life as an experiential educational opportunity, a link that is helping colleges and universities across the country broaden the concept of learning. Led by Dean of Students Tedd Goundie, this team will create a partnership of faculty, students, and staff to advise the Dean of Students Office about ways to continue to develop learning opportunities in the residential environment. First steps include engaging students with faculty-directed theme houses to intensify academic influence.

Currently, student residents determine the ideas behind theme-houses and how to implement related ideas. With support from The Mellon Foundation, faculty who advise theme houses will also work with the Dean of Students Office to help guide planning and decision-making for how theme-house living is best implemented and test ways to integrate theme house living with other initiatives. For example, the Arts Collaborative might use this opportunity to increase arts-related activity in residential spaces. Guided by faculty in the arts, theme houses might pilot specific ideas and explore factors for success. This request will support modest stipends for up to three faculty members and small budgets to fund activities they design.

Diversity in Excellence

The Diversity in Excellence project will support learning and teaching about difference and diversity issues, identify useful educational practices, and help the community cultivate a more inclusive climate. Led by Professor Leslie Hill, the team will begin its work with a Mellon grant to support a year-long pilot seminar on the transitions and social identities our students face in college. The seminar will include 12 to 15 faculty members.

In its pilot year, the faculty learning community will participate in a seminar that focuses on the transitions, learning engagements, and social identities our students face in college. Strategic objectives of the seminar are to:

- Increase knowledge about difference and diversity issues, identify useful educational practices, and help faculty, staff, and students use diversity as a resource for learning.
- Increase the number of faculty members who recognize that Bates' progress on diversity and inclusion is one important factor in determining the quality and direction of Bates' future. A key aim is to identify and develop faculty who will lead ongoing efforts to build capacity for and enhance practices in the academic program and in campus life that enrich intercultural learning, communication, and inclusion, thus strengthening Bates.
- Recruit new members to the leadership team to achieve Bates' highest aspiration with respect to diversity and inclusion.

Team leaders are working now to complete the rosters for the teams and take their first steps. The teams look forward to sharing news of their early progress in the fall and receiving further input from the community about their important work.