



# Strategic Plan 2016 - 2021



ACADEMY *of* ART UNIVERSITY®

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# Ability to Meet the Mission

Acknowledging the accomplishments and agility of Academy of Art University since its founding in 1929, the Strategic Plan envisions where we will take art and design education in the next five years. The Plan articulates the steps we must take to ensure the very best experience for our students, who are at the heart of the institution in the short, medium and long term.

## Origins

President Stephens launched the Strategic Planning Initiative in spring 2015. Throughout the academic year, input was solicited from constituent groups across campus.

- » Academic Department Directors
- » Faculty
- » Board of Directors
- » Senior Management Team
- » Students

The recommendations in Academy of Art University's Strategic Plan 2016 – 2021 represent the culmination of feedback from these constituencies.

The Strategic Plan was crafted in late fall 2015 by the Strategic Planning Task Force, led by President Elisa Stephens and Chairman of the Board of Directors Dr. Nancy Houston. Key Academy of Art University leaders in the areas of education, finance, operations and technology participated on the Task Force.

## Implementation and Review

The Strategic Plan will be shared with the constituent groups at Academy of Art University that created it, and with the WASC Senior College & University Commission (WSCUC) and Academy of Art University's other institutional and programmatic accreditors.

Individual strategic goals will be assigned to managers and existing or ad hoc work teams, as appropriate to best execute individual strategic goals.

Progress on implementing the plan will be reviewed quarterly as part of the President's Report to the Board of Directors and also as part of Senior Management Team Meetings and Academic Department Director Meetings.

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary by the Strategic Planning Task Force and the Board of Directors.



# Vision, Mission and Focus Areas

The Strategic Planning Initiative was guided by Academy of Art University's Vision and Mission.

*It is the Vision of Academy of Art University to be the first choice for students seeking a world-class education in the arts and the first choice for those seeking to employ artists globally.*

*Our Mission permeates everything that we do: Academy of Art University prepares aspiring professionals in the fields of design, communication and the arts by delivering excellent undergraduate and graduate degrees and certificate and portfolio programs.*

All strategic planning activities were grounded in four Focus Areas.

- » Institutional Effectiveness
- » Students and Faculty
- » Organization and Facilities
- » Finance and Regulatory Compliance

The four Focus Areas reflect the Core Commitments of our regional accreditor, WSCUC.

- » Student Learning and Success
- » Quality and Improvement
- » Institutional Integrity, Sustainability and Accountability

Each Focus Area includes Critical Success Factors (*see graphic on next page*) that drive Academy of Art University toward continual innovation in academic programs, both onsite and online, supported by advances in technology and facilities.

The framework of Critical Success Factors ensures that the Strategic Plan focuses on continued academic excellence, as instructors and staff lead the institution in tandem towards Academy of Art University's 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.



School of Graphic Design

# Vision and Mission

## Vision

To be the first choice for students seeking a world-class education in the arts and the first choice for those seeking to employ artists globally.

## Mission

Academy of Art University prepares aspiring professionals in the fields of design, communication and the arts by delivering excellent undergraduate and graduate degrees and certificate and portfolio programs.

## Focus Areas

Critical Success Factors

### Institutional Effectiveness

#### Curriculum

Enhance and expand with advice from industry, employers, advisory boards, directors, faculty & students.

#### Student Success

Analyze and use assessment results, track and enhance persistence and graduation rates and employment results.

#### Reputation

Increase the Academy's standing locally, nationally and internationally.

#### Enrollment Growth

Attract and enroll students; effectively manage growth.

### Students & Faculty

#### Student Experience

Deliver innovative student-centered learning experiences and support services that enhance student satisfaction fostering student health, wellness and fitness.

#### Faculty

Recruit professionals in their field and develop as instructors to effectively instruct, coach and mentor students.

### Organization & Facilities

#### Business Practices

Implement processes to deliver world-class programs and student services.

#### Art/Academic Department Management

Develop effective organizational model.

#### Talent Management

Select, train, develop, assess (morale and performance), and retain operational staff.

#### Facilities & Technology

Manage and expand to meet student needs.

#### Campus Security

Ensure campus safety, security and emergency preparedness.

### Finance & Regulatory Compliance

#### Legal

Meet applicable federal and state standards.

#### Accreditation

Maintain institutional and programmatic accreditations; achieve new accreditations as needed.

#### Financial Stability

Manage departments to meet budget goals.

## To Achieve Its Mission, Academy of Art University:

- a. maintains an inclusive admissions policy for all persons who meet basic requirements for admission and instruction and who want to obtain higher learning in a wide spectrum of disciplines in art and design;
- b. teaches a disciplined approach to the study of art and design that encourages students to develop their own styles that blend their talents, technical skills and creative aspirations with professional knowledge;
- c. enlists a dedicated and very able full-time and part-time faculty of career artists and designers who are professionals and whose success as educators comes from their ability to teach students through the wisdom and skill they have amassed through years of practical experience;
- d. operates in an urban context so that academic programs can draw upon and contribute to the cultural wealth of those communities that are served;
- e. provides an inspiring environment that is at once supportive, challenging, and underpinned by excellent personalized instruction, coaching and support services that address the needs of students of diverse ages and backgrounds;
- f. offers liberal arts classes in support of our art and design majors designed to stimulate development of critical thinking and communications skills and to encourage emerging artists to draw upon a variety of disciplines, to look at issues from multiple perspectives and to cultivate the ability to contribute as educated global artists;
- g. manages in an ethical and efficient manner; administers the finances in a prudent fashion; and
- h. fosters optimum quality in all aspects of programs and services.



*School of Graphic Design*

## Focus Area 1: Institutional Effectiveness



*School of Photography*



Academy of Art University has effectively prepared students for the realities of the art and design industries for nearly 90 years. This means creating an inspiring and challenging learning environment while students are with us: supporting the needs of a broad population of learners simultaneously on campus and online, domestic and international, traditional and nontraditional, focused solely on school and balancing their education with a multitude of other responsibilities in their lives.

A continuing focus on our effectiveness includes strategies for delivering a cutting-edge learning experience, preparing students to meet industry needs and innovating both today and in the future while anticipating the changing landscape of both education and the workplace.

Meeting these challenges will ensure that aspiring artists and designers will seek us out in growing numbers and that their achievements, both while they are with us and as successful alumni, will continually raise the profile and prestige of an Academy of Art University education.

The more students we graduate and successfully prepare to compete in the global marketplace, the more our philosophy of hands-on, industry-driven education “by artists, for artists” will speak for itself.

The key to our success will continue to be the robust real-world partnerships and feedback loops that come from working professional instructors/coaches and frequent contact with and evaluation by industry representatives.

We seek to both benefit from and contribute to the communities we serve as an institution of higher education and learning in the arts.

## A. Curriculum

Enhance and expand with advice from industry, employers, advisory boards, directors, faculty and students

1. Develop new programs, tracks and short skills-based courses of study to prepare students for work in the industry
2. Ensure excellence in academic programs through rigorous and relevant curricula that prepares students effectively to develop portfolios to meet industry standards for employment
3. Create a highly engaging academic experience that reflects the intersection of art and technology that is responsive to the ways in which students in the 21st century learn, access information and collaborate
4. Improve on the cohesion between online and onsite programs to ensure relevance of course content in meeting course learning outcomes



*Erina Yamada, Architecture*

## B. Student Success

*Analyze and use assessment results, track and enhance persistence and graduation rates and employment results*

1. Commit sufficient resources to make sure that students are consistently advised and mentored to be successful
2. Ensure proper training/development of instructors to deliver curriculum effectively
3. Provide greater support for learning, teaching and curriculum designed for English for Art Purposes (EAP) students

## C. Reputation

*Increase Academy of Art University's standing locally, nationally and internationally*

1. Improve visibility of the breadth and depth of our curricular offerings both nationally and internationally
2. Optimize faculty, student, and alumni achievements and success, both domestic and international, to enhance Academy of Art University's reputation
3. Support ongoing industry-on-campus and alumni events from all departments
4. Increase partnership between academic directors and marketing to ensure accuracy of information

## D. Enrollment Growth

*Attract and enroll students; effectively manage growth*

1. Market and recruit effectively to attract prospective students who can successfully complete our programs
2. Develop and create content (primarily student/alumni stories and industry validation/co-branding) to support innovative multichannel marketing campaigns that directly support one another and have the ability to target specific audiences with custom messages directed at area of interest



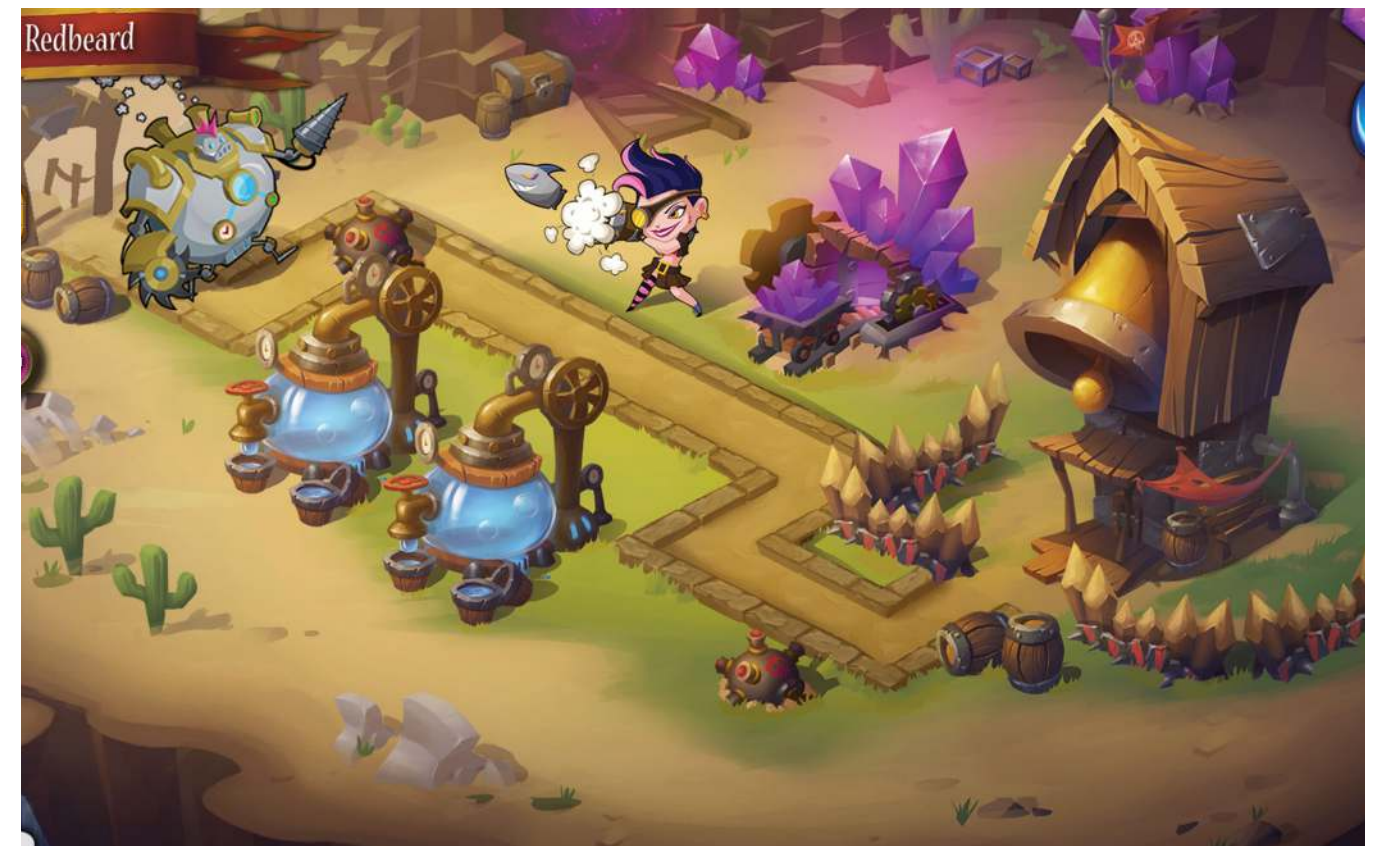
## Focus Area 2: Students and Faculty



Delivering an inspiring and highly-relevant learning experience is at the heart of what we do. We aspire to bring the industry's high level of expectations and drive toward innovation into our classrooms and associated learning opportunities.

This experience is driven by the industry wisdom and years of experience represented by our instructors. Our instructors challenge students with a disciplined and objective approach to creativity that will help them develop as aspiring professionals and persevere through obstacles along the road to achieving their dreams.

Academy of Art University aims to support and inspire our students and instructors as they engage in this life-transforming effort. We recognize that teaching is more than a job, and learning is more than simply passing a class.



*School of Game Development*

Within an inclusive admissions environment, our instructors work to connect students who may not have had artistic learning opportunities in the past with the professional opportunities they are working to achieve in the future. We believe that everyone deserves an opportunity to pursue their dream of obtaining higher learning in art and design.

We aim to create a culture of collaboration and teamwork in our university's arts education. Both the curricular and co-curricular offerings, e.g. student organizations and team sports (intramural and NCAA Division II), are designed to foster effective communication through collaboration and teamwork.

We believe that our graduates will impact the future of companies and consumers of art and design worldwide. Meeting student and instructor expectations today will allow our graduates to set the expectations of tomorrow.



## A. Student Experience

*Deliver innovative student-centered learning experiences and support services that enhance student satisfaction fostering student health, wellness, and fitness*

1. Create an environment and opportunities to increase students' interaction with industry
2. Develop support services and experiences that meet student needs to encourage retention
3. Continue to develop intramural and NCAA Division II athletic programs and expand opportunities for student engagement
4. Ensure that intramural and NCAA Division II programs foster teamwork and development of competitive skills, grace under pressure and student wellness and fitness

## B. Faculty

*Recruit professionals in their field and develop as instructors who effectively instruct, coach and mentor students*

1. Ensure a process for review of the compensation structure for all employees
2. Ensure instructors' engagement in curriculum changes and improvements
3. Provide instructors with support services as needed to be successful in the classroom



## Focus Area 3: Organization and Facilities

*Schools of Motion Pictures & Television and Writing for Film,  
Television & Digital Media*





A world-class learning experience is dependent on the work of hundreds of people working outside the classroom to deliver the conditions necessary for inspiration to occur.

The right people in the right place at the right time will drive the future of Academy of Art University and help us deliver the optimal experience for our students. Scouting, training and developing our employees at every level is key.

Frequent and consistent communication to all constituents must be at the heart of all we do. Effective communication underpins organizational success in the design, construction and maintenance of the learning environment. Communication will support efficient and insightful business and operational planning and research.

Facilities and technology provide the inspiring, cutting-edge environment that enables Academy of Art University to constantly remain at the forefront of preparing students to develop portfolios that are relevant to meet all levels of the global marketplace.



## A. Business Practices

*Implement processes to deliver world-class programs and student services*

1. Streamline business processes to deliver better services
2. Improve communication among staff, instructors and students
3. Continue to refine and optimize organizational structure

## B. Art/Academic Department Management

*Develop effective organizational model*

1. Assess art departments individually for operational effectiveness and their ability to meet organizational goals

## C. Talent Management

*Select, train, develop, assess (morale and performance), and retain operational staff*

1. Develop strategies for retention of key staff
2. Formalize talent identification and succession planning processes
3. Provide training for new staff on Academy of Art University's vision, mission, values and culture

## D. Facilities and Technology

*Manage and expand to meet student needs*

1. Develop a plan with consideration of monetary availability for facility upgrades/classroom use
2. Develop a plan with consideration of monetary availability for technology upgrades/classroom use

## E. Campus Security

*Ensure campus safety, security and emergency preparedness*

1. Leverage new technologies that drive student safety
2. Have best-in-class emergency preparedness plans





## Focus Area 4: Finance & Regulatory Compliance

This focus area keeps Academy of Art University in sync with expectations of consistent quality, integrity and responsibility that engender the trust necessary to operate as an institution of higher learning.

Meeting high standards both internally and externally will keep Academy of Art University in a position of trust and transparency.

### A. Legal

*Meet applicable federal and state standards*

1. Meet financial ratios per Department of Education (DOE) requirements
2. Meet and maintain all Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE) requirements
3. Prepare for new gainful employment (GE) regulations for late 2016/early 2017
4. Work collaboratively with the San Francisco City Planning Commission to assure compliance with all applicable San Francisco Codes and to engage the City as a “trusted partner”
5. Continue to ensure Cleary Act and Title IX compliance with trainings and communications throughout the Academy of Art University community; work with city officials on Title IX response and reporting tactics

### B. Accreditation

*Maintain institutional and programmatic accreditations; achieve new accreditations as needed*

1. Maintain regional accreditation with WSCUC
2. Maintain national accreditation with the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD)
3. Maintain programmatic accreditation where applicable

### C. Financial Stability

*Manage departments to meet budget goals*

1. Ensure effective fiscal management to ensure institutional stability





## Thank You

Imagining the future of art and design education requires skilled people with vivid imagination. Fortunately, Academy of Art University is richly endowed with both.

We tapped the expertise of our University community – faculty, staff, Board of Directors, and students – to develop the Strategic Plan 2016 – 2021. The Plan envisions the future and articulates the steps we must take to ensure the very best experience for our students who are the heart of the University.

I thank all who participated in this pivotal effort. I commend your commitment and eagerness to participate in achieving the Academy vision -- to be the first choice for students seeking a world class education in the arts and the first choice for those seeking to employ artists globally.

Now we must work to turn our aspirations into reality. The Plan represents one step in our ongoing quest for excellence in the fields of art and design. It should not be viewed as a static document but rather as the foundation for a living, dynamic strategy that will be adapted as our world rapidly evolves and opportunities emerge.

With the talent and imagination of extraordinary people, we approach the 90th anniversary of Academy of Art University with great anticipation. I am confident that we will continue to lead in shaping the future of art and design throughout the world. —*Dr. Elisa Stephens*



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BY ARTISTS FOR ARTISTS

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\*Acting degree program is currently not offering online courses.

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