

## *Conclusion: Closing Statement*

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As Roosevelt looks to the future, it is mindful of its past and the pioneering role it played in opening the doors of educational opportunity to all qualified students, regardless of race, gender, or ethnicity. Roosevelt has carried its heritage into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, guided by the 2003 Strategic Plan—a document that embodies the collective efforts of all University constituencies. Student success and academic excellence are two of the University's core values that are featured prominently in the 2003 Strategic Plan. To measure progress in these areas, the University has focused in recent years on measuring retention and graduation rates, assessing learning outcomes, and increasing the number of credit hours taught by full-time faculty.

Roosevelt's growing faculty is dedicated to helping students reach their intellectual and professional goals. Teaching is paramount for the faculty, and they have embraced the new Center for Teaching and Learning as a venue for cross-disciplinary dialogue and sharing best classroom practices. The University supports a focus on pedagogy and promotes faculty research as well. Support for research comes directly through research leaves and summer grants and indirectly through the 2004 reduction of the expected teaching load to six courses per academic year. Roosevelt faculty are active contributors to their disciplines and many have been recognized for their fine intellectual, professional, and creative work.

Roosevelt serves a wide array of constituencies by offering programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, through day and evening courses, in academic and professional areas, on urban and suburban campuses, and in classrooms and online. The University has achieved stability over time through this balanced portfolio. As part of its ongoing planning, the University reviews and adjusts the balance of its offerings to ensure that the right mix of programs is available to students at the right time and in the right place.

An active member of the Chicago and northwestern suburban communities, Roosevelt has forged partnerships with community colleges, social service agencies, and cultural institutions to enrich the lives of students and contribute to the life of the community. Service-learning is one of the ways that Roosevelt partners with social service agencies and, at the same time, builds awareness of social issues into the curriculum. The focus on social justice has resulted in a new interdisciplinary major in the College of Arts and Sciences and a new requirement for many undergraduates entitled Writing Social Justice in the Academy.

To create environments amenable to learning, the University has invested continuously in improved physical space and upgrades to academic technology. Efforts on these fronts never rest; they are ongoing features of Roosevelt life and planning. The constant upgrading of physical facilities and technology require a

vigorous pursuit of outside sources of funding for special projects, scholarships, and the endowment.

Diversifying the faculty and senior administration is another ongoing challenge for Roosevelt and many other institutions across academia. This objective is especially important at Roosevelt where the student body is richly diverse. To build on its strengths and meet its challenges, Roosevelt is guided, but not ruled, by the 2003 Strategic Plan. When unforeseen opportunities that may benefit the long-term future of the institution have arisen, the University has evaluated the opportunities even though they lay outside the parameters of the Strategic Plan. What is most important at such moments is the University's adherence to the core values and institutional aspirations to which the framers of the Plan were committed.

Roosevelt is well positioned to meet the challenges of the future. A history of solid financial management, a committed Board of Trustees, a growing corps of loyal alumni, a richly diverse student body, and a talented faculty promise to carry the University forward to fulfill its mission and enrich the communities of the Chicago metropolitan area in the decades ahead.