

Preamble to *VISION 2020: Bridging 2019 to the Future*

Annually at Bay Path University we undertake an assessment of our multi-year strategic plan to evaluate our progress and to test the plan's ongoing relevance in the context of internal and external factors, asking the question, "Is this plan continuing to serve as our roadmap for the immediate future?"

For example, in 2010, our evaluation of *Vision 2011* caused us to conclude that the turbulence of the ongoing economic downturn, the escalation of new and aggressive competition, and the wildly burgeoning role of technology on higher education, needed to be addressed in new strategic ways. Our response was to "retire" *Vision 2011* and embark on *Vision 2013: "A New Women's College for the 21st Century."*

Our evaluation of *Vision 2019*, two years into its implementation, has led us to a similar conclusion: we must rethink our plans and potentially adopt new strategies that will better enable us to act on immediate opportunities while also better positioning us for the future. When we launched the *Vision 2019* planning process, we thought we were setting "the stage for the next twenty years in our evolution." We gazed optimistically at that twenty-year horizon, believing that innovation, nimbleness, our shared commitment to Bay Path's mission, and time, were all on our side.

We were right. Except for time. What we, and most colleges and universities across the nation, not long ago regarded as *seismic* shifts, have turned out in many ways to be *cataclysmic*. The rate of change in our industry has accelerated to a staggering pace and the pressures only continue to mount: cost, technology, changing demographics, competition, and the value proposition of higher education, to name a few.

In addition to the pressures of the ecosystem within which we operate, issues specific to Bay Path also cause us to reconsider our immediate and long-term strategies. Most notably: in fall of 2017 enrollment in **each** of our program areas (traditional undergraduate, adult women undergraduates, and graduate) failed to meet expectations for the first time in the last decade. Secondly, our FIPSE grant and the operating funds it produced was finalized.

We must act now to greet a future that will likely be vastly different than what we anticipated just two years ago. *Vision 2020: Bridging 2019 to the Future* extends and builds upon *Vision 2019* strategic priorities and also presents plans to initiate new ways of serving students and of doing business, not only through internal synergies, but through the development of innovative external partnerships as well, while also ensuring financial equilibrium. Along the way we will consider new models of education, in essence setting the course for *Vision 2023*.

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