Introduction

The Strategic Priorities Group (SPG), which was appointed in September 2013, 1 was charged with recommending specific activities the Steinhardt School should undertake to implement its Strategic Plan. In carrying out this charge, SPG carefully reviewed approximately 1,300 activities suggested by Steinhardt faculty and administrators in a survey administered in May 2013, and considered the ways in which those activities support the six goals that are the foundation of the Strategic Plan. As part of the same survey, faculty also ranked the six goals in order of importance: (1) Research and artistic creation; (2) Community partnerships; (3) Technology; (4) Health and human potential; (5) Signature pedagogy; and (6) Global initiatives.

The SPG met several times over the Fall semester 2013. The process of generating an action plan began with the decision to divide the SPG members into three break-out groups; each group was charged with reviewing the suggested activities for 2 of the 6 goals. The charge to the break-out groups was to reduce redundancy among the activities, classify select activities under a streamlined number of bigger ideas, and recommend broad timeframes for implementation of those ideas. The sub-groups met separately several times, interspersed with full-group meetings where they reviewed their discussions (and written meeting notes) with the larger SPG membership.

Although the six goals were at the heart of the SPG sub-group discussions, the larger group recognized that the majority of recommended activities cut across the six goals. Therefore, SPG decided to create an Action Plan that was not organized in a goal-by-goal format, but instead emphasizes the integrative and synergistic nature of the six goals by grouping activities under five cross-cutting themes: (1) Research and Artistic Creation; (2) Curriculum and Teaching; (3) Facilities; (4) Technology Support; and (5) Outreach and Dissemination.

Activities within the Action Plan are categorized by time frame: long-term, visionary activities that would take five or more years to launch; and activities that could be stepping stones to realizing the long-term activities. These stepping stone activities are further divided into those that could be implemented immediately or are actionable within two years.

1 Three committees worked on the draft strategic plan before it was delivered to the final Strategic Priorities Group: Strategic Planning Steering Committee, first Strategic Priorities Group, and Implementation Planning Group.
The following guiding principles governed SPG’s categorization of activities:

- All activities are assumed to be ongoing. If an activity starts immediately, the assumption is that it will continue and grow over time, and therefore continue to exist over the long-term.

- To the extent possible, activities are presented in discipline-agnostic [inclusive] language. In recognition of Steinhardt’s remarkable diversity, every effort was made to list activities that are applicable to a broad range of Steinhardt research and teaching interests.

- The Action Plan will be delivered to an Implementation Group (IG) comprised of administrators and staff, and charged with generating a spreadsheet that specifies (in detail): (a) timelines; (b) responsibilities; (c) estimated budgets/costs; (d) persons responsible for implementation; and (e) metrics for assessment of the activities. The SPG felt it was beyond the scope of their jurisdiction and capacities to make detailed recommendations about responsibilities and budgets/costs of the listed activities.

- The School Planning Committee will review the work of the IG and provide faculty consultation throughout the implementation process; membership on the School Planning Committee may be expanded as necessary for this purpose.

- The implementation process will represent a long-term, collaboration among the key stakeholders of the School Planning Committee, Deans, Department Chairs, and faculty representatives who were a part of the SPG activities, and will include ongoing assessment of the progress as it relates to the Strategic Plan.

In making decisions regarding the allocation of resources, the IG will be mindful of (1) the faculty’s rankings of the six goals, and (2) areas that are the purview of NYU broadly rather than Steinhardt specifically. For example, since Research and Artistic Creation was ranked first and Global was ranked last, funds should be allocated to activities associated with the former over the latter. Moreover, various recommended activities fall under the purview of NYU broadly, and should not be prioritized by the Steinhardt IG. In such cases, the IG is asked to take into account faculty input and advocating on those issues (for example, the technology needs for NYU classrooms, or certain activities relevant to global initiatives, such as funds for student travel out of the global office).
**Action Plan**

**FIVE YEARS AND BEYOND**

Many long-term activities suggested in the faculty survey call for the development of one or more new centers at Steinhardt; however, it is premature to specify which activities should lead to new centers and which should be housed within Steinhardt’s existing departments and centers. Therefore, the activities listed below emphasize the types of initiatives to pursue, with the idea that the physical location of the work and participants in the work would evolve over time.

Examples of potential centers include the following:

- A research initiative on health inequality and disparities. This might include a school or clinic/center for the health programs at NYU Steinhardt (OT, PT, CSD, Nutrition & Public Health, Applied Psych, and music/drama and art therapy) that offers services to the community and trains students in a real-life context. It would include systematic work in impoverished communities, for example, teaching about factors that influence the development and progress of the children within those communities.

- An initiative for education and research on community partnerships, potentially including service learning courses, that might involve a school; such an initiative would work on research and issues of teaching, health, community, and the arts, with a defining "theory in action."

- A school media lab space to be shared by all departments for cross-disciplinary student and faculty research projects related to digital media.

- A high-tech performing arts space as part of the NYU expansion.

In contrast to the creation of centers and/or extension of centers -- which is considered to be a long-term goal that will naturally evolve over time -- the SPG identified a set of actionable long-term initiatives that should frame the IG’s deliberations on resources and timelines:

**Research and Artistic Creation**

- Add 10 endowed chairs across the school in strategic areas. This could include positions in education and technology and digital humanities, with
other strategic areas to be determined by a faculty task force. Some of these positions could be cross-departmental and interdisciplinary.

- Increase funding for doctoral students by 50%. This could include full five year packages, summer funding, and an increase in the number of doctoral students in each cohort.

- Establish a central office with a team to facilitate community partnerships and work with community agencies for research and teaching. Partners could include, among others, hospitals, schools, head start programs, and museums. This office would facilitate teaching and research initiatives at Steinhardt by creating necessary community liaisons that facilitate faculty entry into and work with communities.

**Curriculum and Teaching**

- Hire new faculty who specialize in multi-modal learning.

- Create frameworks for more intentional cross-disciplinary course work for all students within Steinhardt so that they are directed to, able to, and supported in taking courses in other departments.

- Create a global integrative curriculum. For programs in the School that require residency, practicum, internships, and fieldwork, support and develop opportunities for students to participate in these activities through the Global Networked University.

**Facilities**

- Create spaces for faculty to convene, collaborate, and conduct research as part of the capital renovation plan and plans for future building renovations.

**Technology Support**

- Create an infrastructure for widespread development and use of technology for teaching and research/artistic creation.
• Upgrade and technologically innovate classrooms, course support, and faculty research support across the school with centralized facilities and staff support. [Note: In line with points raised in the preamble to this document, it will be important to distinguish between technological innovation of classrooms under the purview of NYU broadly vs. Steinhardt specifically.]

• Undertake a digitization project for faculty, student and department intellectual capital – archives, projects, student portfolios – related to signature pedagogies.

Outreach and Dissemination

• Increase recognition of the School for research and artistic creation as well as pedagogy locally, nationally, and globally. Create materials, websites, and publications to communicate our research and artistic creations, our departments, and our programs to local, national and international audiences.

• Strengthen infrastructures for communicating the flow of information among faculty and students.
ACTIONABLE ACTIVITIES – IMMEDIATE AND TWO-YEAR ACTIVITIES

As stepping stones to the long-term initiatives above, the activities below can be implemented either immediately or over the next 2 years.

Research and Artistic Creation

Immediate:

- Create cross-departmental faculty task forces to establish priority areas for faculty research funding parameters (including immediate innovation funds and two-year challenge grants). Faculty course release for research should be considered as part of this activity.

- Provide a fund for innovation for faculty projects that engage with and utilize technology in relation to research methodology, artistic creation, and clinical practice.

- Increase IDA funding for faculty across the school to enable widespread dissemination of our work at national and international conferences, as well as to enable faculty to participate in learning opportunities at conferences and workshops. IDA funding increases should be on par with the substantially larger pools of support available to faculty at other schools.

- Integrate pre- and post-award grant administration.

- Inventory existing partnership work at Steinhardt, and disseminate such information to faculty.

- Begin discussions of the creation of a Steinhardt Central Community Outreach office that builds on and adds to the partnership work at Steinhardt. Identify the charge to this office in terms of reaching out and fostering viable and continuous community partnerships that would serve the basis for research and teaching purposes.

- Establish multi-disciplinary, cross-department task forces to identify one to three big health issues about which Steinhardt faculty are experts (these
would become the priority areas to be modeled and extended to other health areas in future).  

**Two-year**

- Establish challenge grants (that include faculty release time), building on the fund for innovation.  

- Create a database of faculty projects that is searchable by project or by interests and accessible to students as well as faculty who might be interested in finding partners for collaboration.  

- Broaden the scope of activities supported with school-based funding, to include meetings and workshops that foster collaboration and promote the generation of new ideas.

**Curriculum and Teaching**

**Immediate:**

- Create a conference or lecture series centered on signature pedagogies.  

- Provide funding for faculty to develop courses that integrate technology and teaching in innovative way.  

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2 These multi-disciplinary groups would provide ideas on specific health issues, from different perspectives. Potential areas: diabetes, obesity, substance use, and disabilities. These should be areas that are “doable” in terms of integration across foci of promotion and prevention. Identify intersections that address health areas across at least 2 big areas of the School (e.g., arts initiatives and their impact on health and learning). Develop suggestions for an integrative model for the identified health issues on how we can teach, research, do community outreach (from educational initiatives to arts organizations and education). The task forces exploring the identified issues would be then be charged with a plan that focuses on activities to support the integration of a lifespan approach in: prevention and promotion; evidence based research; signature pedagogy; outreach (local and global public health), such as screening and service; dissemination (and exploring media platforms for communication); identifying benchmarks of progress and a timetable.  

3 The health-related topic areas that are generated by the task forces mentioned above (e.g., funds for integrated health initiatives around obesity/diabetes); research in the use of Alternative and Augmentative Communication (low-tech and high-tech devices) in different populations; research for the study of factors related to relative wellness in individuals with disabilities; innovative field practice in health professions and the arts; artistic creation.
• Assess existing models of globally integrated curricula and share examples of best practices across departments.

• Generate a status report on the School’s global courses, initiatives, and current opportunities for students and faculty.

• Establish a list of globally-focused courses that are located in NYC, not abroad, on Steinhardt’s Global Study website.

• Charge the existing Steinhardt Global Faculty Advisory Committee to identify and prioritize activities.

• Identify departments and programs in which issues of disability are addressed.

**Two-year**

• Develop funding streams/mechanisms for supporting the development of pedagogical models for global teaching with technological enhancement.

• Increase focus on global content in initial online orientation and in new student seminars.

• Explore scheduling options to make study abroad more viable for faculty and students. For example, allow faculty to sequence/schedule courses to free up a month or more for international projects.

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4 Online components; multi-modal learning; technology enhancement and flipping courses; co-teaching with global sites; partnering with gaming program; measurement and evaluation of online learning; partnering of tech savvy doctoral students with faculty for teaching; problem-based learning; interdepartmental courses.
• Create curriculum around interdisciplinary topics that are team taught across NYU Steinhardt.\(^5\) Create courses that weave interdisciplinary interests across departments, are team taught inter-professional courses, and/or have scenario-based/problem-based profiles.

• Facilitate the production of digital portfolios for students.

• Create a Master Class series with focused forums of field-specific or interdisciplinary distinguished practitioners.

• Create more active or experiential learning courses.

• Fund undergraduates to be research assistants on faculty research projects and grants.

• Create entrepreneurial fellowships for students.

• Track inter-professional additions to curricula and review the results of this model to enhance professional curricula.

• Reach out to international alumni for potential assistance in creating international partnerships and or internships.

Facilities

Immediate:

• Identify existing spaces that could be better used to promote collaboration.

• Establish a faculty task force on goals for strategic use of space and technology, including for collaboration, in the Steinhardt School.

Technology Support

Immediate:

- Provide in-person technology support to faculty.
- Increase the use of technology to promote virtual collaboration.
- Have a technology expert visit all large lecture classes and offer suggestions.
- Prepare a report of existing Steinhardt resources and university-wide resources on technology for research and teaching.

Two-Year:

- Fund a program for faculty training in workshop formats, software programming, technologies for innovative teaching, research, and artistic creation.
- Encourage and support the collaboration of technology experts in MCC, ECT, Music, Art and T&L.
- Use technology, such as digital mapping, to better track partnerships and collaborative work on an ongoing basis.

Outreach and Dissemination

Immediate:

- Create interdisciplinary [media] groups of Steinhart faculty and graduate students that contribute varied perspectives and ideas about specific health issues.
- Inventory current activities that promote faculty and student research achievements and consider ways to make these efforts more effective.
• Develop better internal and external communications around signature pedagogies and teaching innovations at the School.

• Charge the global office at Steinhardt to identify ongoing activities and develop a strategic communications plan.

Two-year:

• Mount public exhibitions to highlight innovation in technology, performance, and the arts.

• Assist departments with the development of a "global mission statement" that complements their departmental missions.

• Produce a publication for scholars in the health and artistic disciplines modeled on the AERA booklet produced by NYU Steinhardt each year.