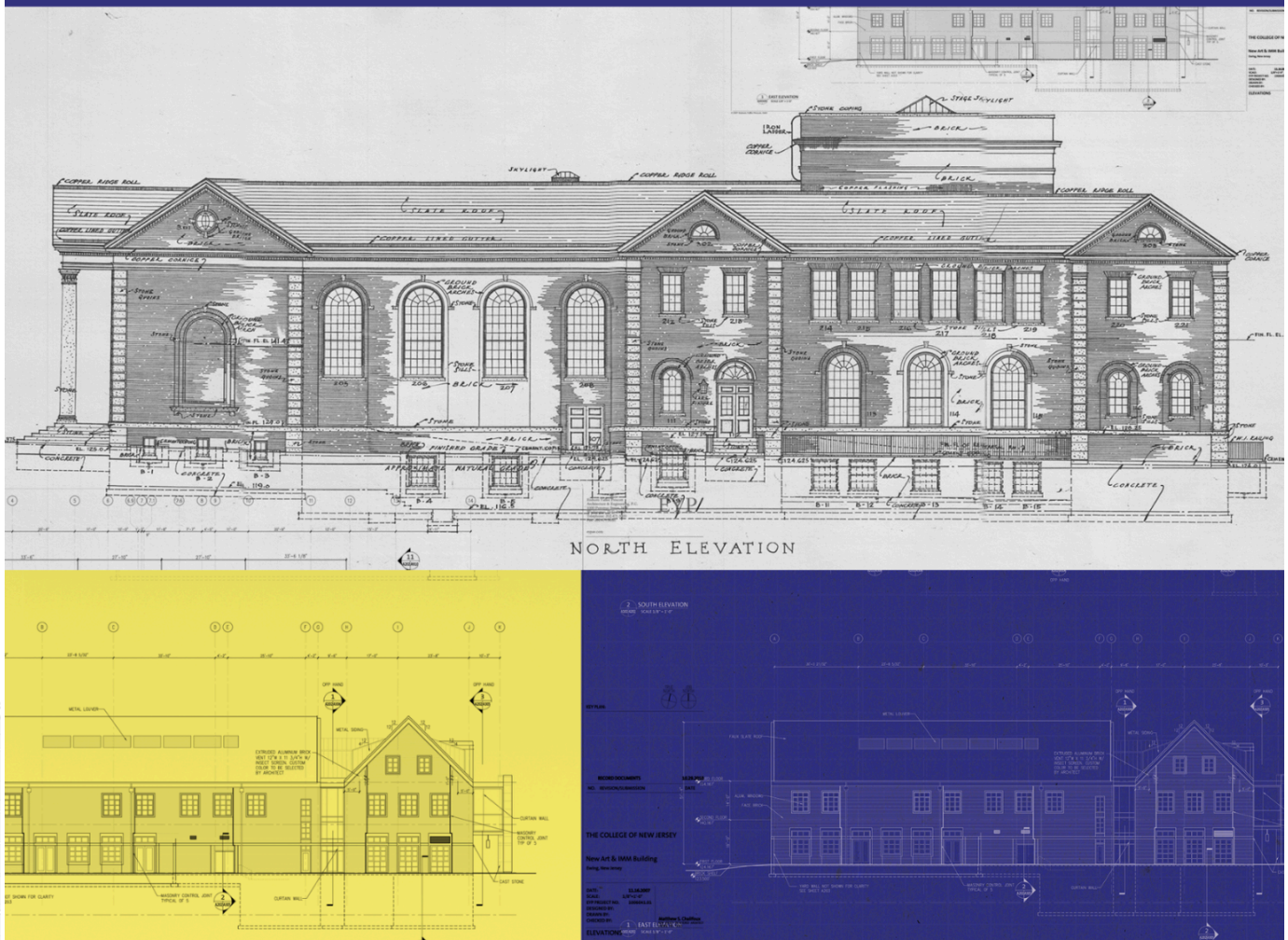THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
SCHOOL OF THE ARTS
AND COMMUNICATION

Blueprint 2028

Cultivating Creativity, Communication, Connections & Careers

NORTH ELEVATION

Blueprint 2028: Cultivating Creativity, Communication, Connections & Careers

The Blueprint for TCNJ's School of the Arts and Communication (ArtsComm) is designed to materialize **our vision** to transform lives and communities by fulfilling **our mission** to foster creativity, communication, connections and careers. The goals we articulate and the actions we take are the architecture for realizing this vision and mission.

The Blueprint aligns with the mission, values and strategic direction of TCNJ, as articulated in *TCNJ 2027: Extending Our Excellence* and *We Are TCNJ: A Strategy for Inclusive Excellence.* TCNJ has committed itself to "the transformative power of education to develop critical thinkers, responsible citizens, and lifelong learners and leaders." We have dedicated faculty and staff, working in state of the art facilities and building strong relationships with students. The results are stellar, ranging from a top 10 four-year graduation rate for public institutions to a high percentage of students who participate in signature academic experiences, such as Mentored Undergraduate Summer Experiences. Per The Blueprint, our school is poised to prototype new approaches and design new initiatives to realize TCNJ excellence in the specific context of arts and communication education.

Our Seven Pillars:

1 Transformative, Personalized Education	**4** Fostering Creativity
2 Community Engagement and Impact	**5** Fostering Communication
3 Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging	**6** Fostering Connections
	7 Fostering Careers

Definitions and Values

Transforming lives: As educators, we intend to develop humans to find their purpose and fulfill their capacities. We are student-centered, but more specifically we are *learning-centered,* promoting growth and transformation in the lives of students and also faculty, staff, alumni and community partners.

Personalized education: Students define academic and co-curricular goals and are taught and mentored by faculty and staff to achieve those goals in their unique way and meeting school standards. Students' educational journey is customized to align with their individual aspirations and the needs within their chosen profession.

Community: The community we seek to impact includes the entire TCNJ College community, including alumni. Given our status as a public institution, we seek to positively impact the State of New Jersey and especially our neighbors in the Greater Trenton region.

Creativity: Faculty and students in all of our school's academic disciplines are empowered to generate freshly original and also interdisciplinary works as artists, designers and musicians, as scholars and writers.

Communication: Students in our disciplines tell stories and effectively convey and exchange ideas and meaning, whether in words, images, designs or music. As important, we develop our students to closely and analytically explore the communication of diverse others.

Connections: We are the school of connections and this word has multiple meanings for us:
1) Connections between students and faculty and staff
2) Connections between our campus and the community
3) Connections between artists and communicators and their audiences
4) Connections between people of diverse knowledge, experience and perspective

Careers: We develop students for successful and rewarding careers, utilizing their individual talents, speaking to their individual passions and using the knowledge and skills built here at TCNJ to positively transform lives and communities.

PILLAR 1: TRANSFORMATIVE, PERSONALIZED EDUCATION

Goal A: Students will experience heads on, hands-on experiential learning, in and outside the classroom

Action Items*[1]

- Host yearly faculty development on active/heads-on, hands-on experiential learning at school meetings
- Every department organizes relevant field trips
- Create a step-by-step "how to plan a field trip" guide for faculty
- Organize yearly on-site professional shadowing experiences
- ArtsComm will submit at least 2 MUSE applications a year. Every department will apply at least once every two years
- Increase student involvement in COSA
- Offer at least one ArtsComm travel study option per year
- Curate list of affordable study abroad options that meet ArtsComm degree requirements

Goal B: Advising enables students to achieve their individual academic and co-curricular aspirations

- Create a peer mentoring program, **ArtsComm Connectors**, for **all first-year** and new **transfer students**

- Host yearly faculty development on advising at school meetings
- Create and share an infographic representing how each student has a multi-tiered system of support for advising and mentorship
- Design a template for a holistic academic and co-curricular roadmap, tied to the new co-curricular record
- Provide department level guidance for graduate studies and admission
- Create and market 4+1 programs, including 4+1 for Art Therapy

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[1] The remainder of this document will follow this format, with each goal followed by a series of bulleted action items.

PILLAR 2: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & IMPACT

Goal A. Arts Comm is rich with collaborative relationships with a diverse group of community partners

- Create the **Greater Trenton Area Arts Collaborative** supporting a diverse array of area Artists and Arts Organizations in Residence (i.e. Passage Theater)

  - Dean and Chairs build and nurture new relationships for collaboration, internships, audience building
  - Regularly monitor, run and encourage Community Engaged Learning courses each semester, including first year options

Goal B: Community engaged and impactful work is a foundational part of TCNJ's Arts Comm identity.
- Agency/Design Studio serves pro bono clients from greater Trenton area (see Pillar 7 "Fostering Careers")
- Showcase community impact stories internally and externally
- Highlight community engagement and impact in all admissions and orientation presentations
- Sponsor and attach our name to local arts programming, such as film festivals, concert series and public art collections or exhibitions

Goal C: Community members view ArtsComm as a destination for personal, professional, and creative experience and development
- Offer subscriptions and paid access to ArtsComm creative facilities
- Provide free or discounted non-matriculating seats to community members
- Create outreach plan for local schools and retirement communities
- Host summer camps for every department

PILLAR 3: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING

Goal A: ArtsComm educational opportunities will be accessible and welcoming to people of all identities

- Establish **Paid Summer Internship Fund**

- One school meeting per year on inclusive teaching
- Share online resources for Universal Design for learning with faculty
- Each major will offer a class that addresses diversity
- Center for the Arts programming will elevate diverse voices and stories
- Incorporate accessibility and/or compliance into relevant courses
- Summer camp scholarships for low-income students
- Expand Dual Enrollment with both High Schools and Community Colleges

Goal B: ArtsComm facilities are accessible and welcoming to people of all identities

- Create gender neutral bathrooms in each building
- Create virtual tours of exhibits and our venues
- Publicize NJ Trans Pass discount for students
- Promote inclusive spaces and activities like DC Tea

Goal C: ArtsComm faculty and staff will be as diverse as our student body

- Submit proposal for two **ArtsComm Faculty Fellows** or **PostDocs** per year whose work **promotes diversity** in the field of study

Goal D: Students will have safe or anonymous ways and to share feedback about DEIB in ArtsComm and departments
- Install anonymous message boxes to invite feedback
- Group and informal meetings with Dean (vs. 1 on 1 office hours)
- ArtsComm Connectors invite feedback on sense of belonging and inclusivity

PILLAR 4: FOSTERING CREATIVITY

Goal A: Every Arts Comm student has an interdisciplinary curricular experience during their 4 years

- Schedule **interdisciplinary team-teaching** every semester with budget support for a relevant campus event

- Schedule a cross-disciplinary senior capstone each year.

GOAL B: ArtsComm curriculum and pedagogy fosters student creativity
- Host faculty development at department level on pedagogies and assessments that foster creativity.
- Department field trips to leading or innovative departments in the region
- Host mini-courses in niche areas we don't currently offer (i.e. jewelry making)

GOAL C: ArtsComm faculty are fresh leaders in their respective fields in terms of scholarly and creative work
- Establish mini-grants for faculty creativity as scholars, artists, musicians.
- Increase conference travel funding with Dean's Strategic Funds

GOAL D: TCNJ faculty and students demonstrate ownership, agency and community in state of the art creative spaces
- Upgrade spaces: TV station, MakerSpace, Audio Recording and Lighting Studios, climate control and other upgrades in Gallery, technology upgrades for Theater of the future
- Retrofit: Ceramics Studio, AR/VR Room
- Fundraise for the Pavilion rehearsal space and outdoor performance venue
- Host annual CFP for beautifying community space, with committee to award

GOAL E: ArtsComm buildings vibrantly showcase and celebrate ArtsComm creativity

- Install visual and digital art on the walls of AIMM, Music and Kendall
- Paint murals for interior and exterior of ArtsComm buildings
- Create a sculpture garden on AIMM oval
- Install audio station in Mayo lobby or hallway
- Install gaming stations for public use in AIMM or Brower
- Create Satellite WTSR studio in Brower
- Play WTSR in MakerSpace and/or on headphones in the Kendall lobby

GOAL F: ArtsComm is the college's arts & culture roundhouse, with all members of the TCNJ community and guests from greater Trenton area passing through

- Create **ARTS PASSPORT** for TCNJ and external community

- Develop a cohesive "season" of performances shared internally and externally
- Design an outreach plan to invite high schools, senior centers and other community groups. Consider discounts and/or transportation incentives
- Expand audience for Arts Comm After Dark and Porch Fest
- Showcase music and other forms of creativity at every single recruitment event
- ArtsComm Pop-Up Performances or "make something" activities

PILLARS 5 & 6: FOSTERING COMMUNICATION & CONNECTION

GOAL A: ArtsComm is the campus leader on promoting and expertly facilitating communication about the issues that divide us

- Create lecture/workshop series, "Communication for the Common Good," featuring Communication Studies scholars and practitioners, and journalists

- Amplify or collaborate on programming by TCNJ's Office of Inclusive Excellence

GOAL B: ArtsComm is the campus leader on promoting intercultural communication and competence
- Create more opportunities for students to complete Intercultural Development Index and receive interpretation of scores
- Include Intercultural Communication as a topic for "Communication for the Common Good" series

GOAL C: Every graduate will be able to identify a faculty or staff member who made a positive difference in their college career
- School discussion about building strong faculty-student relationships
- Program Assistant team creates a "best practices" list for supporting college pathways

GOAL D: Every major will connect with alumni for their expertise and mentoring

- Connect all students to Alumni through monthly alumni chats/panel series and Alumni/Student LinkedIn group

- ArtsComm Connectors are mentored by Advisory Council members
- Create alumni experts database, potential speakers or feedback providers

- Annual networking event corresponding with homecoming and/or alumni weekend

PILLAR 7: FOSTERING CAREERS

Goal A: Students will obtain full-time employment in their chosen field

- Create a **TCNJ Communications Agency/Design Studio**. Students in the agency/studio do professional work for community clients

- Educate all about Handshake for job opportunities and career development
- Connect more ArtsComm friendly employers to Career Fairs
- Offer certificates or digital badges for niche skill building (i.e. operating specialized equipment, safety training. . .)

Goal B: Every Arts Comm student will have an internship or equivalent professional transcripted experience as appropriate to their target career
- Create partnerships with companies and organizations to provide internships
- Educate all about Handshake for posting and searching for internship opportunities
- Establish Dean's Fund for Paid Summer Internships (with application, criteria and selections process)

Goal C: ArtsComm students will have career development by way of curriculum, either at department or school level
- Audit ArtsComm course catalog and existing syllabi for evidence of career development activities.
- Create a professional development module, hosted on website and including relevant materials ranging from sample resumes to professional organizations that host discipline specific job boards
- Faculty include NACE Competencies in their syllabi and assignments
- Promote Career Center opportunities
- Collaborate with Career Center for at least one ArtsComm session per semester