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Exploring the Transition to University Status

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Introduction

Siena College stands at a critical crossroads in its history. Since its founding in 1937, the institution has embodied Franciscan values, delivering a transformative education that has prepared ethical leaders to build a more just and humane world. Now, as Siena expands its academic offerings, deepens its graduate portfolio, and seeks to maintain a competitive edge in a rapidly evolving higher education landscape, the potential transition to university status presents a strategic opportunity to reflect the institution's growth and position it for the future.

This discussion is particularly timely in light of recent changes to New York State's higher education policies. In January 2022, New York approved an amendment updating its definition of a university, removing the requirement for professional and doctoral programs. Under the updated definition, universities are now classified as institutions that include graduate programs registered in at least three of the following discipline areas: agriculture, biological sciences, business, education, engineering, fine arts, health professions, humanities, physical sciences, and social sciences. Siena will qualify under this revised definition with the launch of its Master of Social Work program, further solidifying its position as an emerging leader in graduate education.

While a name change from "college" to "university" may seem largely symbolic, research suggests it carries significant implications for institutional growth. According to a widely cited study by Riley K. Acton (2022), institutions that adopt a university designation experience, an estimated 5.2% (±2.3%) increase in first-time student enrollment within five years and a 7.2% (±3.3%) increase after six years (± = standard errors; n = 122 schools). In contrast, non-converting institutions in the same markets over the same time period tended to see declines in enrollment and other revenue sources. Additionally, converting institutions have benefited from a boost in overall demand which, depending on the institution's priorities, can manifest in several ways (from undergraduate enrollment growth to higher revenue or a reduced discount rate). A name change is often one action to a larger institutional strategy, so in most cases, other factors are also essential enrollment and revenue drivers. For Siena, the specific action of rebranding, coupled with recent strategic initiatives, could strengthen its ability to attract diverse student populations, particularly international students who often associate "college" with secondary education, and bolster its brand perception in both domestic and global markets.

However, the transition to university status is not without challenges. Colleges are often celebrated for their intimate class sizes, close faculty-student relationships, and tight-knit communities—qualities that Siena's stakeholders, particularly alumni, cherish deeply. A

name change risks alienating these groups and must be handled with care. Additionally, while many institutions experience enrollment and revenue growth after transitioning, Siena may not benefit from the same first-mover advantage as early adopters in its market. Competitor institutions in New York, such as Marist, Iona, and Manhattan, have already transitioned, potentially diminishing the perceived differentiation of Siena's shift.

Another concern is the financial investment required to implement the transition effectively. Rebranding efforts, marketing campaigns, and updated signage, along with associated operational adjustments, can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. Moreover, if the name change is not paired with substantive improvements—such as new programs, facilities, or enhanced academic experiences—stakeholders may perceive it as superficial, undermining credibility and trust. It is also worth noting, two universities already bear the Siena name: Siena Heights University in Adrian, Michigan and the University of Siena in Siena Italy, though the latter is considered a sister institution as it shares the same eponymic origin with us.

This white paper evaluates both the opportunities and the challenges associated with transitioning to university status. It begins by examining how the change aligns with Siena's mission and vision, followed by an analysis of brand perception and market positioning. The paper then explores enrollment trends, the financial implications of a potential transition, and the importance of stakeholder engagement in ensuring a smooth and successful process.

Section 1: Aligning the Decision with Mission and Vision

The potential transition to university status must align with Siena's mission, values, and long-term vision. According to the recently updated New York State regulations, an institution must offer graduate programs in at least three disciplines to qualify as a university (New York Codes, Rules, and Regulations, 2023). Beyond this requirement, there are no additional criteria—such as enrollment size or institutional structure—that divide universities from colleges. While a name change does not inherently alter an institution's mission or academic priorities, the perception of university status often carries significant implications for prospective students, alumni, and other stakeholders. An institution's name is deeply personal to its community, and rebranding decisions are often met with emotional responses, making it essential to align the change with institutional goals and values.

Universities often feature a broader range of academic programs and advanced degree offerings than colleges. This includes master's and doctoral programs, enhanced research opportunities, and accelerated pathways for earning both bachelor's and master's

degrees—hallmarks of university-level institutions (BestColleges, 2024). Siena offered its first graduate programs in the fall of 1950 following an amendment to the College's charter in the spring of that year to authorize the conferral of MA, MS, MS.Ed., and MBA degrees. Graduate level courses were taught, at various intervals, from 1950 through 1969 in education, English, history, sociology, accounting, economics, biology, chemistry, mathematics, physics, philosophy, business administration, and inter-institutional program (the precursor to political science). From that era, approximately 80 master's theses can be found in the Siena archives.

In the late 1960s, Siena phased out its graduate offerings entirely. Chemistry, biology, and physics were eliminated first. Declining enrollment, possibly attributed to competition from RPI and SUNY Albany, may have been the primary driver, but this is speculative. Siena's archivist also uncovered references to the Vietnam War Draft in the College archives and its potential influence on graduate education. However, there is no concrete explanation as to why the remaining graduate programs were shuttered by 1970. Regardless, at that point in the College's history, Siena re-committed to its undergraduate roots. Siena would not offer another master's program for nearly 40 years, until the College launched an M.S. in Accounting in 2009, followed by an MBA a decade later. Recent developments, including an M.S. in Business Analytics, the introduction of a Master's in Social Work, the acquisition of a Master of Arts in Teaching program, and several graduate certificates in in-demand business fields demonstrate a growing graduate portfolio and an institutional commitment to offering mission-aligned advanced degrees.

This growth is guided by *Leading the Way: The Strategic Plan 2022–2027*, which explicitly prioritizes expanding graduate programs. The plan's Education pillar calls for Siena to "develop and expand upon mission-aligned graduate degrees and advanced non-degree programs" and to "become a leader in the health care and education field" (Siena College, 2022). These priorities, coupled with recent programmatic developments, position Siena as a comprehensive institution with the academic portfolio and vision of a modern university.

Institutions that benefit most from a name change often view the transition as a reflection of their growth and evolving identity rather than an aspirational goal. When Canisius became a university in 2023, President Steve Stoute explained, "We're pleased that our name will more closely reflect how we view ourselves—as a comprehensive university with a breadth of excellent academic programs" (Canisius University, 2023). Similarly, Iona transitioned to university status in 2022 after establishing a health sciences school on Concordia College's former campus in Bronxville, describing the move as part of a "new vision for collaborative health care education" (Lohud, 2022). Within three years, Iona's enrollment increased by 35%, driven by expanded graduate offerings, enhanced market

presence, and growth among international students (more detailed information can be found in Section 3: Trends, Demographics, and Enrollment).

For Siena, the university designation aligns with the Strategic Plan's Reputation pillar, which envisions Siena as "in high demand and nationally recognized for the dynamic and extraordinary experiences that define our *Education for a Lifetime*" (Siena College, 2022). The name change would underscore this vision and could further differentiate Siena in a competitive market. The designation also opens doors to international and non-traditional students, whose perceptions of "university" align more closely with their academic and career aspirations (BestColleges, 2024; Jaquette, 2013).

Despite its advantages, transitioning to university status carries potential risks, particularly regarding institutional identity. Colleges are often valued for their small class sizes, close faculty-student relationships, a balanced emphasis on teaching and scholarship that prioritizes student growth, and tight-knit communities—qualities deeply cherished by Siena's faculty, staff, alumni and students. Institutions such as Marist and Manhattan have recognized and addressed similar concerns during their own transitions. Marist framed its university designation as an "and, not or" approach, emphasizing that the change reflects expanded academic offerings without compromising its personalized education or core values (Marist, 2025). Similarly, Manhattan highlighted the marketing advantages of the university label in attracting international students while maintaining its Catholic mission and community-centered identity (Barron, 2024).

Siena's Franciscan heritage and liberal arts foundation and approach to student-centered education must remain central to its mission, regardless of the name change. As demonstrated by programs such as the MBA's *Responsible Global Leadership* course, Siena intentionally infuses its values into both undergraduate and graduate curricula, ensuring the institution's identity remains rooted in ethical leadership and community engagement. This integration of values reflects a growing trend among religiously affiliated institutions like Canisius and Manhattan, which view university status as a means to expand their mission rather than depart from it.

Finally, Siena's approach to a university designation aligns with examples set by peer institutions. Manhattan and Iona have demonstrated that transitioning to university status can be effectively paired with thoughtful messaging, balancing marketable branding with a curated identity. For Siena, the transition to university could offer an opportunity to cast a wider net in new markets without sacrificing its mission to educate ethical leaders who will build a more just and humane world.

Section 2: Brand Perception and Image

Branding in higher education plays a pivotal role in influencing the perceptions of students, parents, alumni, and employers. Research by Dennis et al. (2016) highlights that factors such as brand image, trust, satisfaction, and meaning significantly shape an institution's brand equity from the student perspective. Moreover, branding is not merely aesthetic; it directly impacts students' decisions about where to enroll and how they perceive institutional quality (Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2006; Joseph et al., 2012; Pampaloni, 2010; Wilkins & Huisman, 2015). The institution's name, as a cornerstone of its brand identity, serves as a shorthand for its reputation, academic offerings, and values (Tolbert, 2014). For Siena, rebranding as a university may offer an opportunity to enhance its image and align its identity with its evolving structure and mission.

From a market perspective, the name "university" often conveys prestige, a broad array of academic programs, and a stronger commitment to research and graduate education. This distinction is particularly impactful for prospective students and families who may have limited access to deeper institutional insights. Research by Eble and Hu (2025) demonstrates that institutional names significantly influence initial impressions and decision-making processes, especially among international students, who often associate the term "college" with secondary education. Transitioning to a university designation would align Siena with global expectations, facilitating increased appeal to international markets and supporting the Strategic Plan's goal to expand graduate programs and enroll a more diverse student body.

Liberal arts colleges have historically been positioned as distinct from universities, not necessarily inferior to them. However, given shifting student priorities, institutions must consider whether fighting public perception is worth the effort—or whether a rebrand aligns with modern expectations (Oakely, 2009).

Today's students are prioritizing career outcomes, financial aid, and hands-on learning experiences in their college choices (Rogers & Barber, 2022). Financial success and career outcomes are the top motivators for students in their college search (Advance Education, 2025). Student attitudes toward career have shifted significantly, with more students and families prioritizing career outcomes over a traditional liberal arts education. Declining enrollment in liberal arts colleges has been partially driven by the perception that liberal arts degrees lack direct career applications (Hu, 2017). Prospective students and families often assume that universities, rather than liberal arts colleges, provide a more direct path to employment despite studies that show employers value problem-solving, communication, and adaptability—skills cultivated in liberal arts education. (Hill, 2019). A

major consideration is whether a university designation would help address this misconception.

Liberal arts colleges are also experiencing increasing competition from comprehensive universities, which have started replicating elements of the liberal arts experience (such as honors programs and small seminar-style classes) while still offering career-focused degrees. Many students now choose these universities over standalone liberal arts colleges for this as a result (Hu, 2017).

Institutions adopting a university designation often see improvements in enrollment and revenue growth over time. Acton's (2022) analysis found that transitions to university status resulted in enrollment increases of 5.2% within five years and 7.2% after six years, with corresponding gains in revenue from tuition and auxiliary services. While Siena's lack of first-mover advantage may temper these gains, the rebranding supports broader strategic goals, such as attracting graduate, non-traditional, and international students and reinforcing Siena's position as a leader in providing high-impact, career-focused education.

Rebranding as a university also signals legitimacy and prestige. For institutions like Siena, which already emphasize transformative education, faculty mentorship, and community engagement, the university designation could attract higher-caliber students and faculty. Studies suggest that such transitions often lead to improvements in applicant quality, with students perceiving degrees from universities as more prestigious than those from colleges (Eble & Hu, 2025; Morphew, 2002). By aligning its branding with its academic offerings and mission, Siena can ensure the transition enhances its reputation without diluting its identity.

Despite the potential advantages, transitioning to a university is not without risks. One primary concern is the potential loss of institutional identity. For colleges with strong traditions or a focused liberal arts mission, rebranding as a university may dilute their core values and alienate alumni, donors, and other stakeholders (Jaquette, 2013; Morphew, 2002). "Academic drift," where institutions move away from their liberal arts roots in an attempt to compete with larger universities, can occur. It's imperative that liberal arts colleges maintain their foundations even as they enhance graduate and professional offerings (Baker & Baldwin, 2015). A shift to University may attract more students in the short term, it can also dilute the institution's identity over time (Oakley, 2009). Without strong internal buy-in and alignment with the institution's redefined identity, rebranding efforts are unlikely to achieve the desired external perception (Joseph, 2021).

Liberal arts is also linked to a prestigious reputation. The Mellon Report (2020) showed that institutions like Amherst, Williams, and Swarthmore enjoy a prestige advantage due to their historical reputation, endowments, alumni networks and selective admissions processes. In contrast, many regional liberal arts colleges do not benefit from the same level of public regard and often face more challenges in recruitment and financial sustainability. Research from Poliakoff & Alacbay (2014) suggests that perception, not quality, often dictates reputation among liberal arts colleges. Many top-tier liberal arts colleges promote their commitment to intellectual growth and critical thinking, yet employers increasingly report that graduates lack key job-ready skills. This suggests that perception and branding play a larger role in institutional prestige than actual educational outcomes. Meanwhile, high-quality regional liberal arts colleges struggle simply because they are not in the elite tier.

For Siena, while outcomes and experiential learning could be further strengthened by the university designation—aligning with its focus on preparing students for meaningful careers and leadership roles—its hallmark approach to teaching, centered on faculty mentorship and the power of community, could be perceived as conflicting with the broader and sometimes less personal associations of traditional universities. Maintaining the college designation may better resonate with students seeking a more personalized, relationship-driven educational experience. When an institution chooses to keep their "college" distinction and not change to "university" when qualified, there is a possibility to leverage it as a unique selling point rather than a limitation. On the other hand, the College's Strategic Plan emphasizes the integration of its Franciscan, liberal arts mission into every aspect of campus life, ensuring its core values remain firmly embedded even as the institution evolves. Siena would need to emphasize what makes it distinct—whether it's small class sizes, faculty mentorship, Franciscan values, or experiential learning—to ensure that the shift to university status enhances rather than dilutes its brand identity.

Transitioning to a university often has corresponded with significant investments in faculty, infrastructure, and administrative capacity to support expanded offerings (Vogtman, 2019) suggesting that this decision is part of a larger strategic repositioning of the institutions. Without concurrent quality improvements, a name change could be perceived as superficial, undermining credibility and trust among students and employers (Acton, 2022). The increasing emphasis on accountability in higher education, as mentioned in the study, suggests that Siena must not only change its designation but also ensure that student learning outcomes, graduation rates, and resource allocation remain competitive (Eckels, 2010). As a study by Dennis et al indicated, brand amounts to much more than

communication, and strategies related to the lived experience of the institution can be more impactful than messaging intended to convey prestige (2016).

Institutions that pair a name change and announcement with substantive enhancements, such as new programs or facilities, are more likely to sustain the perceived value of the transition (Acton, 2022). The timing and positioning of the change can significantly impact its success. First-mover institutions within their market often experience greater benefits, while late adopters may struggle to differentiate themselves (Acton, 2022). A first-mover advantage does not exist for Siena, however there is an opportunity to align the announcement of the university designation with the enhancements and growth already achieved through the Strategic Plan as well as its goals. This includes growth in graduate programs to 20% by 2028-2029, the opening of Nobel Hall, and increased investments in marketing and brand refinement. Rather than assuming that "university" automatically conveys stronger career outcomes and a wider range of academic offerings, this decision must consider: Would a new designation align with Siena's mission, or risk diluting its distinct identity as a liberal arts institution? Would adopting a university name distract from Siena's core identity, or could it be done in a way that still preserves the strengths of a liberal arts foundation? Should Siena work to reshape public perception of liberal arts colleges by emphasizing career outcomes, or would it be more effective to adapt to existing perceptions by adopting a university identity? Where does Siena fit within the reputation hierarchy of liberal arts colleges, and would transitioning to a university improve its competitive positioning?

Section 3: Trends, Demographics, and Enrollment

Research by Acton (2022) analyzed enrollment trends for institutions transitioning from colleges to universities and the findings highlight clear patterns of growth and competition. On average, institutions experience a 5.2% increase in first-time student enrollment within the first five years of transitioning and a 7.2% rise after six years. Total undergraduate enrollment and degree production also show steady gains, with a 5.4% increase in total undergraduates and a 5.5% growth in bachelor's degrees conferred after six years. Growth in graduate programs and enrollment is even more notable in institutions that transitioned to university status.

However, Acton noted that the benefits of a name change are often more pronounced for institutions that are the first movers in their markets. These first movers not only experience enrollment growth but also indirectly reduce enrollment at non-converting peer institutions. Siena would not be considered a first mover in its market, as several institutions in New York have already adopted the university designation.

Colleges in New York State

The chart below highlights institutions in New York that still hold the college distinction. This data emphasizes Siena's position within a pool of institutions that largely differ significantly in mission, size, and focus. Among these institutions, only one other college—*St. Thomas Aquinas College*— shares Siena's Carnegie Classification of "Master's Colleges and Universities: Smaller Programs" (Carnegie Classification, 2021). There are eight New York institutions in our Carnegie Classification, the other seven are universities.

New York's colleges mostly fall into four categories: public colleges (e.g. CUNYs), schools with specialized academic focus (e.g. Paul Smith's), few to no graduate programs (e.g. Hartwick), and high national demand as indicated by admit rate (e.g. Vassar). The remaining colleges include Russell Sage, Siena, Le Moyne, St. Thomas Aquinas, Sarah Lawrence, Ithaca, Hobart & William Smith and St. Francis (which has an open admissions policy). As Siena considers its future, it must grapple with whether it still belongs among this group or if its current market position and trajectory is leading Siena toward a different peer set.

There are 148 officially recognized colleges and universities in New York State. Out of these, 48 institutions have the word "College" in their official names.

New York Colleges

Institution	FTE UG	FTE GRAD	Grad Degree Programs (excluding doctoral programs)	Admit Rates	Notes
Hunter College	14660	4411	87	54%	CUNY
John Jay College of Criminal Justice	10536	1327	14	57%	CUNY
Lehman College	9072	1195	40	55%	CUNY
Medgar Evers College	2865	0	N/A	83%	CUNY
New York City College of Technology	9561	0	N/A	81%	CUNY
Russell Sage College	1016	840	20	76%	Other
Union College	2076	0	N/A	44%	National Demand
Berkeley College	1772	90	2	open	CUNY

				admission policy	
St. Thomas Aquinas College	1159	138	5	82%	Other
Lemoyne College	2326	681	8	75%	Other
Brooklyn College	9946	1811	54	54%	CUNY
St. Joseph's Seminary and College				Not reported	Specialized academic focus
Queens College	12361	1653	26	69%	CUNY
York College	3234	292	6	59%	CUNY
Bank Street College of Education	0	586	34	Not reported	Specialized academic focus
Bard College	2503	446	7	52%	National Demand
Barnard College	3160	0	0	8%	National Demand
Boricua College	462	122	2	open admission policy	Little to No Grad Programs
Elmira College	663	35	2	91%	Little to No Grad Programs
Sarah Lawrence College	1462	239	8	59%	Other
Vassar College	2487	0	0	18%	National Demand
LIM College	1157	298	11	99%	Specialized academic focus
Hilbert College	1038	21	3	98%	Little to No Grad Programs
Maria College	536	63	1	61%	Little to No Grad Programs
Mount Saint Mary College	1288	225	4	82%	Little to No Grad Programs
Hamilton College	2110	0	0	12%	National Demand
Hartwick College	1114	6	0	69%	Little to No Grad Programs
Hobart & William Smith Colleges	1512	44	3	57%	Little to No Grad Programs

Ithaca College	4523	726	12	70%	Other
Keuka College	909	219	4	94%	Little to No Grad Programs
Marymount Manhattan College	1491	0	0	79%	Little to No Grad Programs
Metropolitan College of NY	421	252	8	77%	Specialized academic focus
Paul Smith's College	728	12	2	91%	Little to No Grad Programs
Skidmore College	2818	0	0	23%	National Demand
Vaughn College	1160	9	1	open admission policy	Little to No Grad Programs
Plaza College	1387	0	0	30%	National Demand
St. Francis College	2324	477	17	open admission policy	Other
Trocaire College	713	0	0	83%	Little to No Grad Programs
Baruch College	14124	2622	14	50%	CUNY
College of Staten Island	8022	589	14	open admission policy	CUNY
Villa Maria College	415	0	0	87%	Little to No Grad Programs
Siena College	3397	118	7	71%	

Closures of New York Institutions

From 2016 to 2025, 12 colleges and universities in New York ceased educational operations, including *Wells College*, *The King's College*, *Medaille University*, *Cazenovia College, and the College of Saint Rose*. Of these 12 institutions, 10 retained the "college" distinction at the time of closure, while only two had adopted the "university" designation.

Catholic Institutions in the Northeast

The data below outlines the university transitions of top Catholic institutions in the Northeast, revealing waves of adoption over time. Early transitions include *Niagara University* (1883), while more recent transitions include *Manhattan University* (2024) and *Marist University* (2025).

Top Catholic Institutions in the Northeast[1]:

Institution	Year Named University	FTE UG	FTE GRAD	Grad Degree Programs (excluding doctoral programs)
Niagara University	1883	2747	956	19
Duquesne University	1911	5420	2576	25
St. John's University, NY	1933	11380	3241	83
University of Scranton	1938	3655	937	20
Seton Hall University	1950	6494	2787	58
St. Bonaventure University	1950	1827	837	22
Villanova University	1953	7554	2419	22
St. Joseph's University	1978	3288	524	47
Gannon University	1979	2826	1494	30
La Salle University	1984	2447	1274	28
Salve Regina University	1991	2319	459	10
Marywood University	1997	1851	909	33
DeSales University	2000	2318	892	13
Saint Francis University	2001	1854	455	7
Fordham University	2002	10741	5937	55
Immaculata University	2002	1319	721	9
Holy Family University	2002	2055	534	17
Carlow University	2004	1063	696	44
Georgian Court University	2004	1200	345	12
Misericordia University	2007	1582	432	6

[1] https://catholic-colleges.com/northeast

Alvernia University	2008	2010	388	12
University of St. Joseph	2012	828	940	30
Mercyhurst University	2012	2193	342	13
St. Peter's University	2012	1988	1315	18
Gwynedd Mercy University	2013	1243	514	10
Caldwell University	2014	1507	203	13
Assumption University	2020	1707	433	2
St. Elizabeth University	2020	643	324	14
Iona University	2022	2764	567	19
Canisius University	2023	1757	620	35
Manhattan University	2024	2991	378	18
Boston College	N/A	9635	3881	44
Providence College	N/A	4151	390	15
Regis College	N/A	1062	1577	20
Le Moyne College	N/A	2326	681	8
St. Vincent College	N/A	1396	186	7
College of Holy Cross	N/A	3253	0	0
Stonehill College	N/A	2416	40	3
Saint Michael’s College	N/A	1367	155	3
Saint Anslem College	N/A	2118	26	4
College of our Lady of the Elms	N/A	902	205	13
Merrimack College	N/A	4354	1289	32
Siena College	N/A	3397	118	7
Fairfield University	N/A - Always University	4847	1027	40
Sacred Heart University	N/A - Always University	7048	3880	43
King's College	N/A - closed			

The prevalence of Catholic universities in Siena's peer group underscores the momentum of this trend. Siena's transition would align it with peers who have leveraged the university label to attract broader student populations and reinforce their reputational standing.

Franciscan Institutions

A significant number of Franciscan colleges have adopted the university title. While there is no recent trend of Franciscan institutions adopting university status, the alignment suggests that Siena's transition would position it favorably among its Franciscan peers, such as *St. Bonaventure University* and *Quincy University*.

Franciscan Institutions:
Institution members from the Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities (AFCU)

Institution	Year Named University	FTE UG	FTE GRAD	Grad Degree Programs (excluding doctoral programs)
St. Bonaventure University	1950	1827	837	22
Franciscan University of Steubenville	1980	2720	557	10
Madonna University	1991	1626	195	19
Quincy University	1993	1035	116	3
Cardinal Stritch University	1997	Closed	Closed	Closed
University of St. Francis	1998	N/A	N/A	14
University of Saint Francis	1998	1481	313	6
Viterbo University	2000	1245	751	8
Briar Cliff University	2001	601	172	5
Saint Francis University	2001	1854	455	7
Alvernia University	2008	2010	388	12
Marian University	2009	2865	1078	10
Neumann University	2009	1389	363	9
Lourdes University	2011	685	158	6
Felician University	2015	1726	264	14

Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University	2016 (changed full name)	628	426	5
Alverno College	N/A	670	830	6
Franciscan School of Theology	N/A	0	50	3
Hilbert College	N/A	1038	21	3
The Franciscan Institute	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Siena College	N/A	3397	118	7
St. Francis College	N/A	2324	477	17
Villa Maria College	N/A	415	0	0

Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Institutions

Within the MAAC, a majority of member institutions have already transitioned to university status. Recent transitions include *Iona University (2022), Canisius University* (2023), *Manhattan University* (2024), and *Marist University* (2025). All of these are New York institutions who have changed to "university" since the 2022 State amendment. Only *Merrimack College* and Siena remain as colleges.

MAAC Institutions

Institution	Year Named University	FTE UG	FTE GRAD	Grad Degree Programs (excluding doctoral programs)
Niagara University	1883	2747	956	19
Rider University	1994	3057	651	26
Quinnipiac University	2000	6595	2724	35
Mount St. Mary's University	2004	1912	538	12
Saint Peter's University	2012	1988	1315	18
Iona University	2022	2764	567	19
Canisius University	2023	1757	620	35
Manhattan University	2024	2991	378	18
Marist University	2025	5150	932	14

Merrimack College	N/A	4354	1289	32
Fairfield University	N/A - Always University	4847	1027	40
Sacred Heart University	N/A - Always University	7048	3880	43
Siena College	N/A	3397	118	7

Enrollment Comparisons:

Below is a comparison of enrollment figures for four select Universities that have made the name change within the last 12 years from the comparison sets identified above. Two of these universities (St. Peter's University and Mercyhurst University) have been selected as representations of institutions who made the distinction change about 10 years ago. This provides us the ability to look at the impact on undergraduate enrollment over a longer period of time. Assumption University and Iona University were chosen as examples of more recent changes which in turn results in less data.

The first-time undergraduate enrollment was recorded, as well as application and acceptance information when accessible. In addition, the total enrollment during the year the name change was made, as well as the current year was also recorded.

It is important to note the unaccounted for additional factors likely also influenced an institution's yearly or first time enrollment.

Saint Peter's University **Name change applied August 17, 2012*
2012:
First-Time Undergraduates Enrolled: 390
Total (2011-2012) Enrolled: 2,843

2013:
First-Time Undergraduates Enrolled: 607

2014:
First-Time Undergraduates Enrolled: 582

2023:

Applied: 4,381
Admitted: 3,966
First-Time Undergraduates Enrolled (full-time): 451
Total (2022-2023) Enrolled: 3,673

Enrollment trends after the 2012 name change showed an initial surge in first-time enrollments from 390 to 607 by 2013 (the first enrollment cycle after the change). However, these gains were not sustained, as first-time enrollment stabilized around 451 by 2023.

Saint Peter's grew in total enrollment from 2012 to 2023. Notably, Saint Peter's had 1,572 students enrolled in graduate programs in 2023. This data may indicate that while the name change can create an initial enrollment boost, long-term gains depend on other factors like expanded academic offerings, marketing efforts, and reputation.

Iona **Name change applied July 1, 2022*
2021
Applied: 6,625
Admitted: 6,132
First-Time Undergraduates Enrolled (full-time): 697

2022
Applied: 6,228
Admitted: 6,004
First-Time Undergraduates Enrolled (full-time): 809

2023
Applied: 7,289
Admitted: 6,643
First-Time Undergraduates Enrolled (full-time): 802
Total Enrolled: 3,958

Iona's experienced a 17% increase in applications following the transition to university status in July of 2022 although first-time enrollment remained constant for the 2023 cycle. While the number of full-time enrollees rose from 697 in 2021 to 809 in 2022 and remained strong in 2023 (802), this likely reflects sustained growth as part of a larger institutional strategy prior to the name change. Total enrollment of the institution jumped significantly in the past several years, before and after the name change. The institution reported a record 952 first time freshman students in the Fall of 2024.

Iona opened a second campus in 2023, housing its school of health sciences, made substantial renovations to its dining facilities and student union and launched a new global campus in Ireland in 2024. At the time of the name change in 2022, Iona already had 576 students enrolled in graduate programs.

Mercyhurst University **Name change applied January 25, 2012*

2012
First-Time Enrolled (full-time): 669
Total (2011-2012) Enrolled: 3,458

2013
First-Time Enrolled (full-time): 596

2023:
Applied: 3,500
Admitted: 2,913
First-Time Enrolled (full-time): 571
Total (2022-2023) Enrolled: 2,535

We can see a decline in first-time full-time undergraduate enrollment following its transition to university status in 2012, from 669 students in 2012 to 596 in 2013. Over the longer term, total enrollment also decreased, dropping from 3,458 in 2011-2012 to 2,535 in 2022-2023. Despite a robust number of applications in 2023 (3,500) and a high admission rate (83.2%), first-time enrollment further declined to 571. Mercyhurst had 12% (361) of students enrolled in its 20 graduate programs in 2023.

Assumption University **Name change applied on June 10, 2020*

2020
Applied: 4,968
Admitted: 4,020
First-Time Enrolled (full-time): 572
Total (2019-2020) Enrolled: 1,962

2021
Applied: 4,018

Admitted: 3,475
First-Time Enrolled (full-time): 415

2022
Applied: 4,035
Admitted: 3,321
First-Time Enrolled (full-time): 369

2023
Applied: 4,694
Admitted: 4,062
First-Time Enrolled (full-time): 478
Total (2022-2023) Enrolled: 1,699

**Enrollment information gathered is from IPEDS Database*

Applications initially dropped after 2020 but rebounded in 2023 to near pre-name-change levels (4,694). However, first-time full-time enrollment decreased significantly from 572 in 2020 to 369 in 2022 before recovering slightly to 478 in 2023. Despite this recent improvement, total enrollment has steadily declined, dropping from 1,962 in 2019-2020 to 1,699 in 2022-2023. Assumption had 358 students enrolled in graduate programs in 2023, representing 17% of its student body. It is important to note the timing of this name change and the decreases aligning with the COVID pandemic.

The data reinforces the thesis that rebranding an institution as a university, without corresponding strategic changes and investments leading up to and following the transition, is unlikely to yield a sustained impact.

Section 4: Financial Implications of Siena College Transitioning to University Status

Costs of Transition

The transition to university status comes with direct and indirect costs that must be carefully weighed before making a decision, requiring strategic investment. In an analysis of more than 100 institutions transitioning between 2001 and 2016, estimating rebranding expenses were $200,000 to $500,000, covering signage, marketing, and legal adjustments (Acton, 2022). Adjusted for inflation, these costs now range from $260,000 to $650,000 based on a cumulative inflation rate of approximately 30%.

For Siena, recent branding efforts emphasizing "Siena" rather than "Siena College" significantly reduce these costs. One exception to this is the Siena College Research Institute (SCRI), previously known as the Siena Research Institute (SRI) until its 2016 renaming, which aimed to clarify its connection to Siena College for external audiences. This change was implemented at little to no cost and did not cause market confusion. Given the Institute's global reach and visibility, transitioning to a "University" Research Institute is unlikely to incur significant costs or weaken the brand. On the contrary, aligning the name with "University" could enhance recognition, strengthen perceptions of both the Institute and Siena, and improve visibility among global audiences and those less familiar with the institution. Updated signage, materials, and trademarks are estimated to cost $75,000–$100,000, with primary expenses attributed to revisions on the front of Siena Hall, two brick campus entryway signs, the Route 9 campus message board and the large sign on the side of the UHY Center.

The most significant costs will likely stem from a comprehensive marketing campaign to reintroduce "Siena University" and enhance its market position. Contextual insights from similar marketing efforts can guide projections:

- *Cleveland State University's Rebranding*: In 2023, Cleveland State's "We are CSU" campaign, aimed at reshaping its public image and boosting enrollment, incurred costs of $1.4 million (Carey, 2023). Although this investment was not triggered by a name change, it demonstrates the substantial costs that can accompany broad institutional rebranding efforts. Meanwhile, the university is cutting 20 programs, suspending 21 others, and laying off staff as part of a cost-cutting effort to address a growing deficit, with faculty and unions criticizing the administration for prioritizing academic cuts over alternative savings measures (Witcher, 2024).
- *General Marketing Budgets in Higher Education*: A 2021 survey of Chief Marketing Officers revealed mean annual marketing budgets of $1.98 million for master's programs (Navarro, 2023). While these figures pertain to ongoing marketing for graduate education, they provide a benchmark for the resources needed to effectively promote program growth and brand prestige.
- According to the ADV market research study conducted for Siena in 2023-24, advertising spend by our private competitors showed a stark contrast between universities and colleges. Over the most recent five-year period (2018-2022), spending by universities like Sacred Heart and Fairfield more than doubled, while advertising budgets for colleges like Siena, Marist, and Le Moyne remained constant or declined (ADV, 2024). Siena's increase in advertising investments over the past

two years positions it more competitively, especially in light of a potential name change.

Though these examples are not specific to university transitions, they reflect the financial commitment typically associated with elevating institutional reputation and visibility.

While Siena has invested in increased marketing campaigns in recent years and may not require the higher end of these expenditures, a robust multi-channel approach will remain essential. A realistic brand building budget could range from $300,000–$500,000 annually for 2–3 years, depending on the scope of outreach. Much of this investment can align with existing campaigns, minimizing incremental costs. The current 2025-26 financial projections include a substantial incremental increase for undergraduate marketing, along with significant new investments in graduate marketing. If Siena commits to this level of investment, the institution can optimize its transition to university status through a comprehensive marketing campaign designed to maximize impact, enhance awareness, and strengthen positioning in target markets.

A "University" campaign could reintroduce Siena in key markets as a dynamic institution with a growing portfolio of in-demand programs and graduate education while highlighting its exceptional career outcomes. This approach would focus awareness and reputation marketing on Siena's ability to prepare graduates for meaningful success, emphasizing how its programs provide the skills and connections needed to thrive in competitive industries. In this scenario, the transition to university status would serve as a force multiplier, amplifying and refining these efforts without requiring additional investment.

To maximize impact, Siena would incorporate strategies to grow graduate programs, recruit international students, and diversify enrollment sources, ensuring that costs align with a broader, sustainable growth strategy.

Potential Financial Benefits

1. **Enrollment and Revenue Growth**
    - Institutions that converted to universities saw a 135% increase in graduate FTE enrollment between 2001 and 2016, compared to just 31% growth among non-converting institutions. Additionally, the percentage of total enrollment from graduate students nearly doubled from 9.7% to 18.5% at converting institutions, while non-converting colleges saw only a modest increase from 6.5% to 8.5%, highlighting the significant role of university branding in graduate program expansion

- Institutions that converted from a college to a university saw a 5.2% increase in first-time undergraduate enrollment in the first five years after conversion and a 7.2% increase after six years, compared to those that did not convert. Additionally, undergraduate full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment rose by 3.1% in the first five years and 5.4% after six years, suggesting sustained growth in student numbers (Acton, 2022).
- Following conversion, total non-investment revenues increased by 8.5% after six years, driven primarily by a 7.8% rise in net tuition and fees revenue and a 13.3% increase in auxiliary revenues from housing and dining. Growth in revenue out-paced additional expenses, with institutions that transitioned to university status spending 7.3% more overall, including a 6.5% increase in instructional expenditures and a 14.4% rise in academic support services, reflecting expanded operations and student services (Acton, 2022).
- Research suggests that Siena's lack of first-mover advantage would temper these gains (Acton, 2022). However, a conservative estimate of enrollment growth could still yield meaningful tuition revenue and auxiliary income. For example, a 3% total enrollment increase could generate millions annually in additional revenue. Any enrollment growth should be considered holistically, as the university delegation is more likely to strengthen Siena's position among graduate, non-traditional and international audiences.
- It is also worth considering the potential cost of not transitioning. Given the change in the New York State regulations, several peer institutions have already achieved university status. A Marist survey of U.S. and international high school students found that more students were interested in applying to a university than a college (Marist, 2024).

2. **Strategic Alignment with Broader Goals**
    - The rebranding aligns with Siena's strategic goals to diversify enrollment, grow graduate programs, and increase net revenue per student in a declining undergraduate market. Even tempered gains will strengthen Siena's ability to maintain strong enrollment while advancing its mission and financial stability.
3. **Increased Brand Prestige and Alumni Engagement**
    - The university designation enhances Siena's reputation among international students, families, and donors (Steele, 2022).
    - In the vast majority of cases we examined, the transition from college to university has been positively received by faculty, students, and alumni. Key stakeholders celebrated the move and expressed confidence that the institution's identity would remain intact. However, not all name changes are

universally welcomed. In at least one case, Loyola University of Maryland, some alumni initially resisted renaming efforts due to concerns about losing their school's legacy and tradition (Steele 2002).
    - Research also found that employers perceive degrees from universities as higher quality than degrees from colleges (Acton, 2022).

Potential Downsides

1. **Muted Financial Returns**
    - Siena's entry into a saturated market without first-mover advantage means the enrollment and revenue gains observed in earlier transitions may not fully materialize. Peer institutions have already captured this competitive advantage.
    - Without additional investment, it would be difficult to model the impact of a name-change. There is no evidence, however, that suggests a university designation would hinder Siena from achieving its goals.
2. **Inflation-Adjusted Costs and Resource Allocation**
    - Rising costs in materials, labor, and advertising may push total expenses higher than anticipated. Marketing expenditures could divert resources from other initiatives or campaigns during a period of financial constraint unless carefully managed. Conversely, if appropriate investments aren't made, the full benefits of a transition would likely not be realized.
3. **Rebranding Risks and Market Confusion**
    - Without substantive academic and infrastructure improvements, the transition may face skepticism from stakeholders, including alumni and faculty. Additionally, some stakeholders may initially struggle to reconcile Siena's new identity with its traditional "college" image. However, Siena's significant investments in recent years lay a strong foundation for this shift.

Strategic Positioning: A Long-Term Growth Play

Despite these challenges, a transition to university status appears to align with Siena's vision of sustainable growth:

- **Reinforcing Enrollment Stability:** With a shrinking pool of traditional undergraduates, diversifying enrollment through graduate programs and international recruitment is essential. A university designation supports these efforts.

- **Competitive Differentiation:** In a crowded market, rebranding brings added prestige, attracting a broader audience and ensuring Siena remains competitive with peers who have already transitioned.
- **Building Long-Term Revenue Streams:** Although immediate gains may be modest, graduate program growth and auxiliary income provide a sustainable path to financial stability.
- **Timing:** The opening of Nobel Hall and a dedicated graduate program office, along with upgrades to residential facilities, paired with investments in the MacDonnell Career and Internship Center and strategic marketing initiatives, position the name change as a meaningful evolution rather than a superficial rebranding.

Conclusion

As more peer institutions in New York and across the country adopt the university designation, Siena has an important choice to make. Remaining a "college" upholds a strong, well-established identity that resonates with many stakeholders, while transitioning to "university" presents an opportunity to signal growth and expand Siena's reach. Either path requires careful planning to ensure alignment with Siena's mission, values, and long-term goals. With strategic timing, robust stakeholder engagement, and clear communication, a potential transition to university status could reinforce Siena's evolution while preserving its Franciscan heritage, liberal arts foundation, and commitment to graduate program expansion. If pursued thoughtfully, rebranding could serve as a catalyst for institutional growth, enhanced prestige, and long-term competitiveness.

Addendum

Section 5: Communicating with Key Stakeholders on the Transition to University Status

Since its founding in 1937 as St. Bernardine of Siena College, our institution has proudly borne "College" in its name. However, with the expansion of Siena's graduate curriculum and changes to New York State Education Department guidelines, Siena is now eligible to adopt the designation of "University." This change has the potential to signal growth in enrollment and curriculum, enhance prestige, and solidify the institution's reputation for stability.

However, such a transition requires careful planning and thoughtful engagement. The name "Siena College" holds emotional and historical significance for many alumni, faculty, and other stakeholders, making their involvement in this process vital.

The Importance of Stakeholder Engagement

While the decision ultimately rests with the Board of Trustees, successfully transitioning to "University" status depends on broad participation and fostering a sense of shared ownership among stakeholders. Engaging key groups ensures the transition reflects Siena's mission, values, and vision while mitigating potential concerns.

The Value of Faculty Involvement

Faculty engagement is essential for alignment with institutional goals and fostering a sense of shared purpose. Cleamon Moorer's research in the *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* highlights two contrasting examples of faculty involvement in name changes:

1. **University A**, which engaged faculty minimally and informed them only shortly before the announcement. This lack of inclusion led to confusion, mixed emotions, and diminished buy-in.
2. **University B**, which established a task force involving faculty, staff, students, and alumni. This inclusive approach fostered a sense of shared ownership and resulted in increased enrollment and a unified campus community following the name change (Moorer, 2020).

Siena can take inspiration from these cases by ensuring faculty and other key stakeholders are meaningfully engaged throughout the process.

Proposed Stakeholder Groups and Engagement Strategies

1. **Board of Trustees:**
    - Begin with the Strategic Growth Committee and involve the Institutional Identity/Branding committee. Introduce the topic at the March 2025 Board of Trustees meeting.
    - Utilize the Governance Committee in subsequent discussions as necessary leading up to the June Board meeting.
2. **Faculty, Staff and Administration**
    - Use the General Faculty Committee (GFC) as a primary forum for collecting faculty input.
    - Provide a campus-wide survey to capture diverse perspectives.
    - Hold a faculty meeting with President Seifert to provide context and address questions following the March Board meeting.
    - Dedicate a significant portion of the April 2025 Faculty, Staff, and Administration (FSA) Community Town Hall to discussing the transition.
3. **Students:**
    - Student representatives on Board Committees will serve as the primary channel for student feedback, aligning with their roles in shared governance.
4. **Friars:**
    - As the founding order of Siena College and the heart and soul of our institution to this day, it will be critical to engage and consult with friars as part of this process.
    - Director of Strategic Partnerships Fr. Greg Gebbia has authored an essay on the relationship between Franciscanism and a potential name change. To inform his perspective, he consulted with former Siena President and current Guardian of the Friary Fr. Kevin Mullen, as well as Vice President for Mission Fr. Mark Reamer.
5. **Alumni and Donors:**
    - Consult the Board of Advisors (BOA) and gather feedback from engaged alumni through focus groups or targeted surveys.
    - Provide targeted outreach to major donors, ensuring they feel included and informed.

If the decision is made to transition to Siena University.

6. **External Community:**
    - Inform local government officials, community leaders, and Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) member institutions through direct communication and press releases.

7. **Prospective Students and Families:**
    - Highlight the benefits of the university designation in admissions materials, emphasizing Siena's enhanced academic reputation and expanded opportunities.

Communication and Marketing Plan

A comprehensive communication plan is essential to optimize the announcement and align it with Siena's mission, values, and long-term goals.

Timeline (see Appendix A) and Phases:

1. **Phase 1:** Research and stakeholder engagement (current stage).
2. **Phase 2:** Board decision and preparation.
3. **Phase 3:** Public announcement.
4. **Phase 4:** Post-announcement evaluation.

Messaging:

- Reassure stakeholders that Siena's traditions, values, and identity will remain unchanged.
- Emphasize the tangible benefits of university status, such as increased prestige and a broader appeal to prospective students.
- A change in name would reflect the strides Siena has made in terms of reputation and reach, but would not impact the community and campus family feel that are a special hallmark of Siena.

Media Strategy:

- Leverage earned, owned, and paid media to amplify the announcement.
- Create a press release, video messages, and testimonials from faculty, alumni, and students.
- Highlight Siena's Franciscan values and liberal arts foundation in all messaging.

Celebratory Events:

- Launch with an on-campus celebration featuring a historical retrospective, community celebrations, and student showcases.

Stakeholder-Specific Communication:

- **Alumni:** Personalized emails and updates through Siena's alumni network.
- **Students:** Information sessions through student government and campus organizations.
- **Faculty, Staff and Administration:** Regular updates at FSA meetings and email communications from leadership.

Conclusion

As more peer institutions in New York and across the country adopt the university designation, Siena faces a pivotal challenge and opportunity. Remaining a "college" risks being perceived as outdated in a highly competitive higher education market, while transitioning to "university" requires careful planning to preserve Siena's identity and ensure the change resonates with stakeholders. With strategic timing, robust stakeholder engagement, and clear communication, this transition can reflect Siena's evolution and position it for sustainable growth. By aligning the change with Siena's Franciscan mission, liberal arts tradition, and our desired expansion in graduate programs and net tuition revenue, the rebranding can serve as a catalyst for meaningful institutional growth, enhanced prestige, and long-term competitiveness.

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Appendix A
University Transition Timeline

Date	Milestone
Jan. 26, 2022	New York State Board of Regents approves an amendment updating its definition of a university, removing the requirement for professional and doctoral programs. Universities are now classified as institutions that include graduate programs registered in at least three of the following discipline areas: agriculture, biological sciences, business, education, engineering, fine arts, health professions, humanities, physical sciences, and social sciences
June 3, 2022	Siena's Board of Trustees approved *Leading the Way*: *Siena's Strategic Plan 2022-2027.* The first tactic in the plan calls for the development and expansion of mission-aligned graduate degree and advanced non-degree programs with high market and workforce demand.
March 22, 2024	ADV Market Research completes a year-long comprehensive market research study with presentation of findings to the Siena community and trustees. The research included benefits and drawbacks of a potential name change. The authors concluded *"By adopting a holistic approach, the institution can ensure that the name change is not merely cosmetic but reflects a deep and enduring transformation into a comprehensive, dynamic, and respected university. If this characterizes Siena's vision for itself and its future, a change from "college" to "university" may be appropriate."*
April 24, 2024	The College holds a community Town Hall and introduces 4 "Big Ideas" developed by leadership to focus our strategy. The initiatives are grounded in the findings of a comprehensive market research study completed by ADV Market Research & Consulting. One of the big ideas focuses on the expansion and strengthening of the Siena brand and marketing efforts to expand our reach among targeted audiences, and another on a strengthened commitment to expand our graduate student population. Specific targets are established, including an increase from 2.8% (99 of 3,483 in Fall 2023) of our student population in graduate programs to 20% by 2028
Spring 2024	The College adopts Clarkson's MAT program inclusive of an entire suite of graduate offerings in education. Siena also acquired the early childhood/childhood education (birth - grade 6) bachelor of science (B.S.) and master of science in education (M.S.Ed.) programs from the

	College of St. Rose. These programs complement recent developments in the School of Business including the launch of a M.S. in Business Analytics and several graduate certificates in in-demand fields.
Dec 10, 2024	New York State Department of Education approves the College's request for a charter amendment, paving the way for the launch of a Master's of Social Work (MSW) program. Siena qualifies for university status.
Dec 2024	The College actively begins its research and fact gathering in exploration of the pros and cons of a potential transition to university status. President Seifert asks for the preparation of a draft White Paper.
Jan 24, 2025	The draft White Paper is shared with the Cabinet, the General Faculty Committee, the Board Chair, the Chair of the Strategic Growth Committee and the Guardian of the Friary.
Jan. 27, 2025	President Seifert meets with the General Faculty Committee to advise the group the College is exploring the possibility of a name change and receives preliminary feedback.
Jan. 28, 2025	The Cabinet has a preliminary discussion on the topic.
Jan 2025- Feb 2025	Using feedback on the draft from these key stakeholders, additional research is conducted.
Feb 17-21, 2025	Updated draft will be shared with faculty and friars, Board Strategic Growth, and Institutional Identity & Branding Committees, COAS Executive Committee.
Feb 26, 2025	Strategic Growth Committee of the Board of Trustees will discuss the possible transition to university status, focusing on the positioning, cost, ROI and growth potential.
March 3, 2025	Institutional Identity and Branding Committee of the Board will discuss possible transition to university status, focusing on the impacts on Mission, identity and brand.
March 13, 2025	Council of Administrators and Staff meeting will include notice that Siena is considering a transition to university status at their March meeting. These groups will be encouraged to review the White Paper and requested to provide feedback

March 18, 2025	White Paper will be shared with the Siena community along with invitation to April 2 Town Hall and opportunity to ask questions in advance.
March 20, 2025	Board of Advisors will discuss the possible transition after reviewing the research in their meeting preparation
March 21, 2025	Board of Trustees will discuss the possible transition after reviewing the research in their meeting preparation
March 26, 2025	President Seifert will attend meeting of the Faculty to discuss possible transition
April 2, 2025	The name change will be a central topic at the Spring Community Town Hall
April 2025	A survey will be shared with the Siena community to collect feedback on the possible transition
April 2025	A survey will be shared with the President's Circle to collect feedback on the possible transition
April 2025	A web page will be launched that outlines the decision points and the research, discussion, process. Community is kept informed of any development and the webpage is updated.
April - May 2025	Feedback is compiled and final report/recommendation is prepared and shared with the Board
June 6, 2025	Board of Trustees votes on renaming Siena College
June-July 2025	***If*** the Board votes to change the name, NYS Office of Counsel to complete its review of an application for a charter amendment (last review took two months)
July 14, 15 or September 8,9	New York State Board of Regents to vote on change to charter amendment, officially approving name change
September 18	If name change is approved, a major campus event will be held to celebrate name change (note: This would align with traditional Welcome Back Reception, September Board of Trustees meeting and "Founders Day" which is Monday, September 22)