



Muhlenberg Opens Doors

**Strategic Plan
Muhlenberg College
2017 – 2022**



Muhlenberg College Strategic Plan 2017-2022

VISION

Dating back to its establishment in the mid-nineteenth century, Muhlenberg College has developed a vision of the liberal arts that embraces both the intellect and the heart. Muhlenberg aims not only to expand the possible and question the expected, but also to encourage and nurture the aspirational and serendipitous.

As Fredrick Augustus Muhlenberg said in his inaugural address in 1867 as the first president of the newly-renamed Muhlenberg College:

“The object at which the College shall aim, and toward which it shall constantly reach, shall be the securing of the broadest literary and scientific education of the best collegiate institutions, so as to give a thorough general culture and the preparation for all the professions and occupations to which learning is useful.

“We do not regard an education as complete that aims only at improving the intellect... No education is complete unless it prepares [students] to discharge all [their] duties properly in this world, and qualifies [them] for the rewards and employments of eternity. This kind of education contemplates the education of [the] conscience and the cultivation of [the] heart...”

Muhlenberg College was founded on and remains committed to guiding and supporting students of extraordinary promise to grow personally and intellectually. Our challenge now is to preserve the essential elements of our legacy that have endured and combined to make our College great while, at the same time, reinventing residential liberal arts education for a new generation of students who will go on to leadership roles within a rapidly changing, increasingly diverse and interconnected world.

Building on our rich history and deep commitment to our students, Muhlenberg College aims to realize more fully our potential to be recognized broadly as one of the nation’s finest liberal arts colleges. This plan affirms our ethos of care and attention to the potential of each student and defines our strategic intent for the college in the years ahead. It will guide our decisions going forward and while we must be willing and able to adapt to a rapidly changing and uncertain environment, our strategic imperatives will remain constant. We will strengthen our value and distinctiveness and fortify our operating model to ensure Muhlenberg’s future success. We plan to invest in developing ever more academic excellence, the vibrancy of the student experience, our diverse and inclusive community, and the powerful outcomes that we help our students achieve. Above all, Muhlenberg will be recognized increasingly for bringing out our students’ full intellectual and personal potential and for opening doors to their future possibilities in whatever pathways they choose to pursue.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building on the outstanding accomplishments of the 169 years since Muhlenberg's founding, this strategic plan will guide the College as it makes choices that advance our academic excellence, the vibrancy of the student experience, our diverse and inclusive community, and the powerful outcomes that we help our students achieve. In serving our students' full intellectual and personal potential, we will enhance our competitiveness and strengthen our sustainability, advancing the College's value and reputation and leaving it even stronger and more respected.

The planning process to build this strategy has been broadly consultative, and articulates a vision of our future shared by trustees, faculty, staff, students, alumni, parents, and other Muhlenberg stakeholders.

The plan holds as a foundational obligation our commitment to be fiscally responsible. Toward that commitment, the plan uses the budget model that has proved instrumental in the success of previous College strategic plans. This plan will focus on Muhlenberg's value proposition by furthering the College's appeal to talented prospective students and strengthening the quality and benefits of the Muhlenberg educational experience.

The plan focuses on initiatives that will:

Strengthen the College's value proposition by:

- Deepening Engaged Liberal Arts Learning and Scholarship to Foreground Our Academic Distinctiveness
- Prioritizing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as Central to Our Academic Strength
- Supporting an Increasingly Vibrant Residential Life
- Enabling Our Students to Achieve Powerful Outcomes
- Engaging the Muhlenberg Network to Open Doors for Members of Our Community

Strengthen the College's operating model, financial resources and sustainability by:

- Optimizing Our Physical Resources in Support of our Mission
- Investing to Strengthen Enrollment Management
- Broadening and Deepening Alumni Engagement and Support
- Expanding and Growing the Wescoe School
- Innovating New Revenue Sources

We believe the course charted in the pages that follow will lead Muhlenberg to an even stronger competitive position in the years ahead. Through the strategy defined here, Muhlenberg will become more compelling for prospective students and their families across the United States and the world, more broadly recognized as distinctive, and an institution in which the entire Muhlenberg community – including students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents and friends – can take even greater pride.

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INTRODUCTION

This strategic plan has been developed with substantial input from many members of the Muhlenberg community.

The new plan shares a number of dimensions of the College's two most-recent strategic plans, *The Talents Entrusted to Our Care ("TETOC")* and *Momentum*:

- A continued commitment to Muhlenberg's traditional mission and values as a private, residential, coeducational liberal arts college
- A broadly inclusive planning process involving faculty, staff, students, trustees, alumni, and parents
- An emphasis on enhancing Muhlenberg's value proposition in an increasingly competitive admissions market
- Insistence on a balanced budget, including regular reviews of the budget model underlying the plan's investments

The plan confronts the market and competitive realities of today's higher education landscape. The plan is not merely a statement of our values, though we believe it remains true to them. This plan focuses on achieving competitive advantage and distinctiveness in the years ahead while also fortifying the College's operating model.

As the world of higher education grows more and more intensely competitive, this plan focuses on strengthening Muhlenberg's value and distinctiveness. Today, only two- to three-percent of undergraduate students in the U.S. attend small, liberal arts colleges such as Muhlenberg. In the northeast U.S., the population of graduating high school seniors is declining as the result of migration southward and westward, making recruiting new students from Muhlenberg's traditional back yard of New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York more difficult. At the same time, as the cost of attendance at Muhlenberg and similar colleges has continued to increase, students have needed to borrow more to finance their educations. Greater proportions of students have elected less expensive alternatives, including large, public universities. As state funding for higher education has declined, those public universities have bolstered their recruiting efforts aimed at academically-strong students from out-of-state. Also, particularly in the wake of the Great Recession of 2008-2009 and the resulting spike in unemployment, more and more families have grown skeptical about the value of a liberal arts education.

The plan steps into this breach and lays out a path forward that addresses straight-on the question of value and that will strengthen the College's appeal to a much broader set of potential students, from near and far. Since we need additional resources to execute this plan, it defines initiatives that also will put the College in a position to attract greater resources.

The plan is an exciting one; it is bold and aspirational. Yet, it builds on a foundation that has been laid by generations who have preceded us and toiled tirelessly to put Muhlenberg in its current position of strength.

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MISSION

Muhlenberg College aims to develop independent critical thinkers who are intellectually agile, characterized by a zest for reasoned and civil debate, committed to understanding the diversity of the human experience, able to express ideas with clarity and grace, committed to life-long learning, equipped with ethical and civic values, and prepared for lives of leadership and service. The College is committed to providing an intellectually rigorous undergraduate education within the context of an inclusive and diverse campus; we strongly believe that diversity is essential to learning and to our success as a pluralistic community. Our curriculum integrates the traditional liberal arts with selected pre-professional studies. Our faculty are passionate about teaching, value close relationships with students, and are committed to the pedagogical and intellectual importance of research. All members of our community are committed to educating the whole person through experiences within and beyond the classroom. Honoring its historical heritage from the Lutheran Church and its continuing connection with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Muhlenberg encourages, welcomes, and celebrates a variety of faith traditions and spiritual perspectives.

VALUES

Inextricably linked to the College's mission are the values that guide us in its pursuit. These values, articulated at length in Appendix 1, derive from our conviction that education is best accomplished through academic challenge and rigor within a deeply caring community that is diverse and inclusive and that embraces a global community of students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents and friends. Both as an institution of higher learning and as a global community, Muhlenberg opens doors.

The plan will strengthen the Muhlenberg model of residential liberal arts education. Here, we strengthen students' intellectual abilities by linking theory and practice and advance students' understanding of others and of the civic, ethical, and vocational implications of ideas and values. The plan also emphasizes the College community's responsibility to our neighbors and to future generations by encouraging sustainable practices.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The strategic planning process led from the College's comprehensive self-study developed as part of the College's decennial Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) reaccreditation. In August 2016, President Williams appointed a Planning Group consisting of six faculty, eight administrators, and two students. The committee was co-chaired by the President and the Vice President and Dean of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning who also served as the Interim Provost at the time. To provide meaningful connection to the self-study work, several faculty and staff members on the Planning Group had served on the Middle States Steering Committee or on a Self-Study Working Group. The membership also included a representative from the Academic Policy Committee (APC) and the Faculty Personnel and Policies Committee (FPPC) to ensure that relevant faculty committees were involved and informed of the planning work. The Planning Group membership can be found in Appendix 2.

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The Planning Group began meeting regularly in early September to review the Middle States recommendations and prior strategic plans. In addition, an outside strategic planning firm, Huron Consulting, provided an overview of best practices in higher education strategic planning and offered advice as the group began their work.

Committed to an inclusive planning process, the Strategic Planning Group involved faculty, staff, students, and alumni in the development of a comprehensive exercise to identify Muhlenberg's strengths weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). During September 2016, 63 departments, committees, student groups, and the alumni board completed individual SWOT analyses that were summarized by the Planning Group. The self-study recommendations, SWOT information, and institutional data informed the development of a draft of emerging themes and initiatives. As part of the October 2016 Board meetings, the Trustee Strategic Planning Committee provided feedback on this draft.

In November, we held our first community planning event where President Williams outlined the vision and process that guided our strategic planning. Participants also gained an understanding of strategic planning principles and learned about the key patterns identified in the SWOT analyses. During the interactive planning exercise, small groups of faculty, staff and students vetted the draft priorities and provided targeted feedback to inform revisions.

In a special session at the January 2017 Trustee meeting, President Williams presented the revised institutional priorities and initiatives to the full board. He outlined the planning process and time-line that would lead to a final draft going to the group at the April 2017 meeting.

The second Community Planning event occurred in February with over 90 faculty, staff, and students in attendance. Since campus space and facilities are a clear strategic priority, we invited participants to provide ideas and strategies that would improve our campus setting, academic spaces, residential facilities, and student study and social spaces. Our campus master plan consultants from WRT facilitated the session which informed the next steps in their work.

The February meeting of the Parents Council provided an opportunity to engage this segment of our college community in the planning process. We shared the most recent priorities and initiatives with the group who then worked in small groups to provide feedback.

In March 2017, a draft of the Strategic Plan was vetted by the Strategic Planning Group and by President's Senior Staff. Their feedback led to final revisions of a document shared with faculty, staff and students via the planning website for comments and feedback. The final draft of the Strategic Plan: Muhlenberg Opens Doors was presented to the Board of Trustees at the April 2017 meeting.

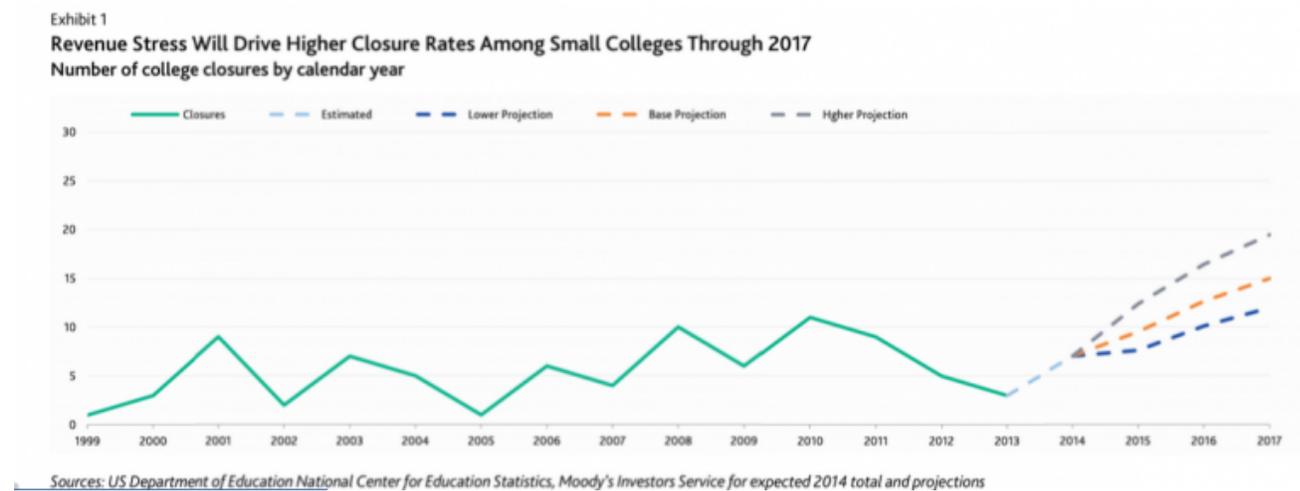
MUHLENBERG AND THE COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT

The competitive environment within higher education continues to intensify and grow more complex. Increasingly, Muhlenberg competes not only with similar small, liberal arts colleges, but also with large, public and private universities. In particular, in the wake of substantial

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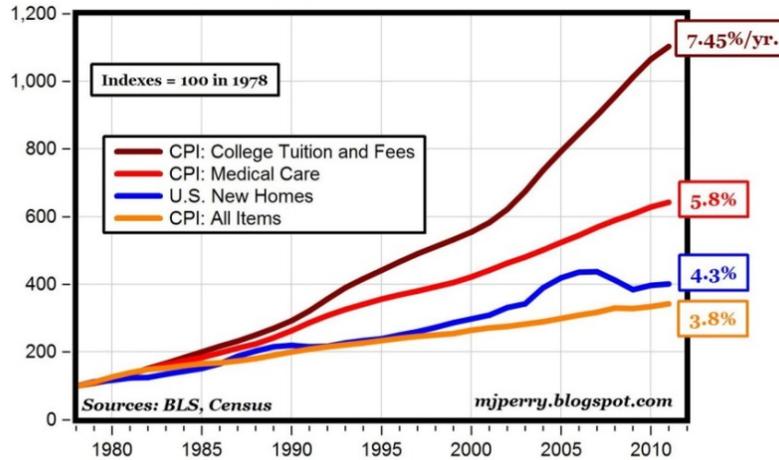
reductions in state funding, many public universities compete more aggressively for students, including those from out-of-state who are interested in liberal arts college experiences.

The share of U.S. undergraduates attending small, liberal arts colleges similar to Muhlenberg has shrunk from approximately 10-12% during the 1970's to only 2-3% today. The factors underlying this decrease in market share – the higher costs of small, private, liberal arts colleges relative to larger, publicly-subsidized universities – continue and show no signs of change in the future. It is therefore reasonable to expect that the share erosion will continue and that fewer and fewer small, liberal arts colleges will continue to be able to generate enough student enrollment and the associated net tuition and fee revenue to remain viable. As a result of such conditions amid increased competitive intensity, Moody's has predicted, in fact, a marked increase in the number of closures of small colleges in the future.



As illustrated in the graph on the following page, the tuition and fees for a quality college education at highly-regarded, selective residential institutions – whether private or public – have risen rapidly over the past 30 years; far faster than median family income, home prices, and health care.

College Tuition vs. Medical Care vs. Home Prices vs. CPI: All Items 1978 to 2011

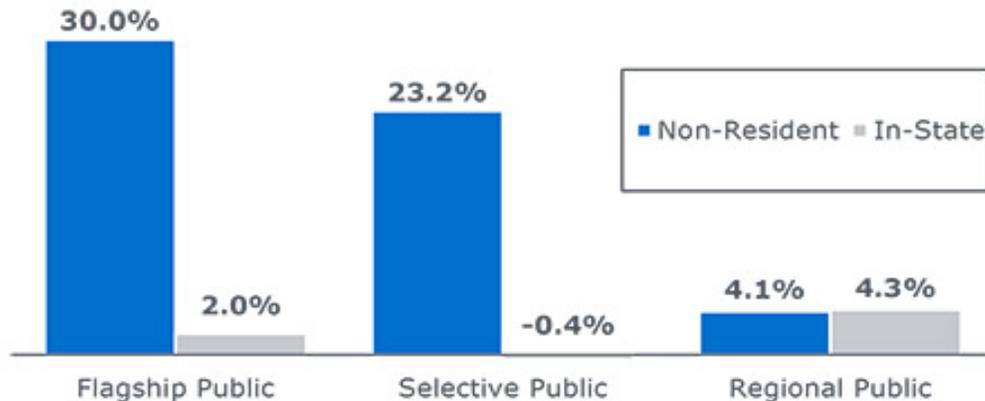


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census

In response to marked declines in state funding, public universities have begun recruiting higher-paying, out-of-state students much more aggressively since 2007. Driven by the difference in cost of attendance between private and public institutions, an increasing share of out-of-state full-time, first-time students are enrolling in public universities, particularly so-called “flagships” (e.g., University of Texas at Austin, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor) and selective public university programs such as “honors colleges.” The Education Advisory Board Enrollment Management Forum has tracked this growth, as shown below:

Non-Resident Students Gravitating Toward Flagship and Selective Public Universities

Growth in FT-FT Students from 2007-2012



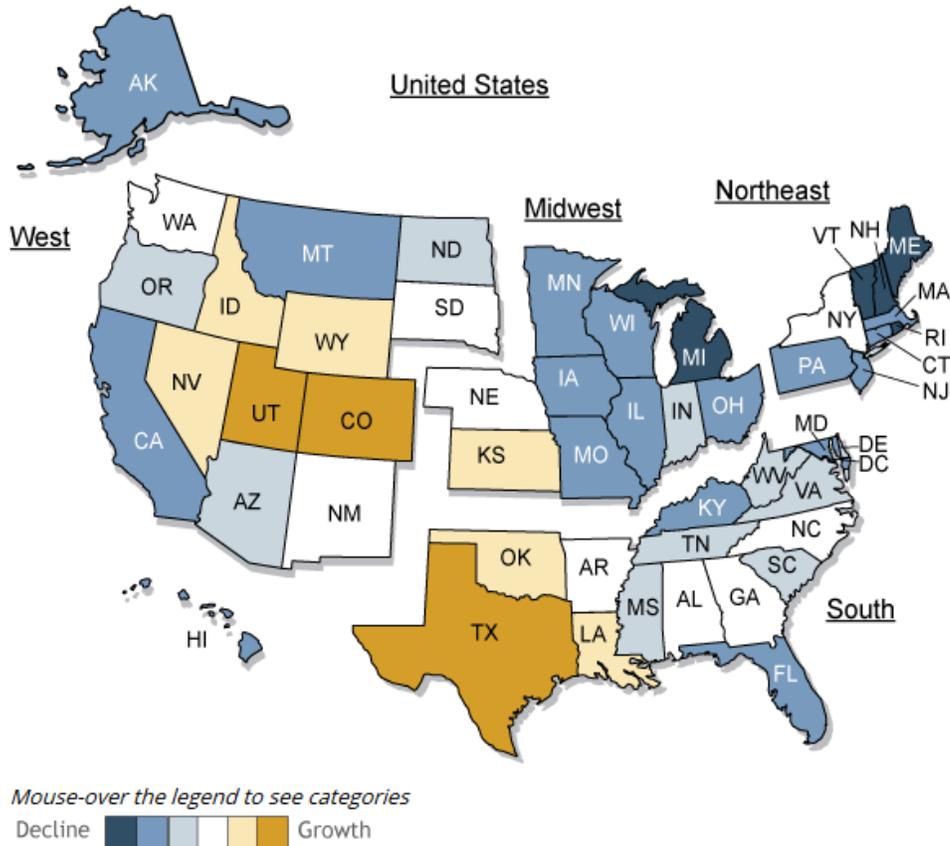
Source: Education Advisory Board (EAB)

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DEMOGRAPHICS

Muhlenberg competes for the best high school graduates in its efforts to increase the College's selectivity, academic quality, and reputation. The number of high school graduates is an essential factor in this competition, especially in the northeast U.S. (from which we have traditionally drawn the preponderance of our students). The total number of new high school graduates in the northeast U.S. has been declining since 2008 and is expected to continue declining until at least 2022.

Percent Change Between 2008-09 and 2019-20 in Total High School Graduates, by State



Source: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

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In addition, the racial and ethnic composition of new high school graduates is changing dramatically. In fact, according to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education: Nationally, between 2008-09 and 2019-20, the nation's public high schools will produce:

- 228,000 fewer White non-Hispanic graduates (a decline of 12 percent)
- 41,000 fewer Black non-Hispanic graduates (a decline of 9 percent)
- 49,000 more Asian graduates (an increase of 30 percent)
- 197,000 more Hispanic graduates (an increase of 41 percent)

Source: WICHE "Knocking at the College Door" Projections of High School Graduates

Such demographic and competitive forces suggest that the only small, private residential liberal arts colleges that will continue to survive and thrive will be those that offer the educational value and have the reputation necessary to attract sufficiently large applicant pools and enroll sufficient students across the full spectrum of outstanding high school prospects. In an increasingly competitive environment, Muhlenberg must offer a truly compelling value proposition rooted, first and foremost, in academic quality. More than that, though, it must convey its differentiated value in a manner distinct enough to attract, enroll and inspire tomorrow's students.

BENCHMARK INSTITUTIONS

The eleven institutions with which Muhlenberg has the most significant admissions overlap (i.e. with which we compete for students) are listed below.

- Bucknell University
- Dickinson College
- Fordham University
- Franklin & Marshall College
- Gettysburg College
- Ithaca College
- Lafayette College
- Lehigh University
- Skidmore College
- Ursinus College
- Villanova University

In the past, many of these institutions have tended to act in ways that cause them to be perceived as essentially similar to one another. Indeed, there are many forces that tend to reinforce conformity to a common set of structures and approaches. Accrediting agencies, academic disciplines, and foundations have all encouraged colleges to arrange themselves similarly to one another. In the future, Muhlenberg must look, instead, for distinctiveness. To prevail, Muhlenberg must – both in public perception and in reality – offer an educational experience of exceptional quality and value and in a manner that sets Muhlenberg apart from

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peer institutions. Muhlenberg must, in essence, dare to be different and meanwhile project its excellence as a traditional liberal arts college more effectively and assertively.

MAJOR COMPETITIVE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

As part of the planning process, we reviewed data from a variety of sources to identify Muhlenberg's competitive strengths and weaknesses:

- The 2016 Admitted Student Questionnaire (ASQ), which offers comparative data on Muhlenberg matriculants and students admitted to Muhlenberg who chose to attend competitor institutions
- The 2016 Higher Education Data Sharing (HEDS) Senior Survey
- The 2015 College Senior Survey (CSS) from the Higher Education Research Institute
- The 2014 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which provides comparative student evaluations of First Year and Senior students' academic experience
- The Community planning analysis

Muhlenberg's most definitive strengths -- as currently perceived by prospective and current students, faculty, staff and alumni -- include our strong sense of community, close faculty-student relationships, and supportive educational atmosphere. Students identify the emphasis on campus community, commitment to undergraduate teaching, and supportive atmosphere as characteristics that set us apart from our peers. Both first year students and seniors report more positive interactions with peers, faculty, and staff compared to students at peer institutions. In particular, first year students note the strong support available to propel their academic success.

Of particular note, Muhlenberg's academic reputation, surroundings, and student social life are not viewed as strong by admitted students who choose not to enroll at the College. Although all students now complete a Culminating Undergraduate Experience (CUE) in their major, seniors still report somewhat lower perceptions of academic challenge in their educational experience relative to students at peer institutions. Meaningful engagement with others who are different continues to be a challenge. While students' ratings on diversity measures have improved over the past five years as we have targeted diversity and inclusion initiatives through the Diversity Strategic Plan, we still lag behind benchmark peers in providing opportunities for students to develop cross-cultural capacity according to students' self-reports.

Participation in high-impact educational experiences such as First Year seminars, study abroad, internships, and faculty-student research collaborations is a hallmark of a Muhlenberg education. Students who engage in these activities report them as playing a significant role in advancing their educational and personal development. All students complete a First Year Seminar. Survey results show that Muhlenberg students are more likely to complete an internship compared to students at aspirant institutions, but somewhat less likely to study abroad or conduct undergraduate research.

The Community planning data support the survey results, identifying our strong community climate, support for individual student needs, and faculty-student relationships as key components of the Muhlenberg experience. The integration of traditional liberal arts education

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with selected pre-professional programs and the focus on innovative pedagogy – including online and blended learning – are distinguishing strengths for the College. Faculty, staff, and students identified challenges related to our academic reputation, human and physical resources, and the need for a more intentional focus on student life, health, and well-being.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND IMPERATIVES

Our goals in strategic planning are to strengthen both our competitive advantage and our operating sustainability. Consequently, our plan focuses on two broad strategic imperatives that frame our institutional priorities. To support and strengthen our mission, we must:

- Strengthen Our Value and Distinctiveness
- Fortify our Operating Model

We support each of these imperatives with five key initiatives, as illustrated below:



The essential elements of the plan are set forth and developed at greater length below.

Imperative 1: Strengthen our Value and Distinctiveness

In the years ahead, we must strengthen Muhlenberg's value and distinctiveness to ensure Muhlenberg thrives as a top-tier, residential liberal arts college even as other less highly regarded institutions falter in the face of intensifying competition. Muhlenberg opens doors—to

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ideas, discoveries and a world of intellectual, personal, cultural and professional opportunity. We plan to advance this strategic imperative by pursuing the following five initiatives.

1) Deepen Engaged Liberal Arts Learning and Scholarship to Foreground our Academic Distinctiveness

Muhlenberg's academic impact is built on the excellence of our teaching, learning and scholarship. These, in turn, are driven by the academic accomplishments of our faculty and students, the rigor of our academic programs, and transformative educational experiences. The Muhlenberg curriculum challenges students to apply multiple, interdisciplinary perspectives to complex problems and to develop sophisticated integrative learning skills. These experiences prepare Muhlenberg students for careers and lives of leadership and service.

Student engagement within a diverse and inclusive campus community helps them develop the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in our globally connected society. High impact educational activities such as undergraduate research, internships, service-learning, community-based projects, and study abroad contribute to students' intellectual and personal growth and cultivate deep learning, student agency, and 21st century digital literacies. Time-intensive faculty mentorship and innovative pedagogies engage students in and beyond the classroom.

To strengthen Muhlenberg's reputation for learning and scholarship, we will invest in curricular and pedagogical development and support faculty and student scholarly production and interests. To achieve this aim, the College will focus on the following priorities:

- a. Review and revise graduation requirements to support academic rigor, student agency, engagement, and reflection.
- b. Explore and implement multiple pathways to increase support for faculty scholarship and innovative pedagogy, including endowed professorships.
- c. Strengthen, expand and apply our digital learning capacity and expertise
- d. Expand and grow Wescoe School programs.
- e. Strengthen and empower pedagogical innovation and scholarship through establishing a nationally-recognized, interdisciplinary center or institute that serves as an incubator for developing solutions to society's most pressing problems.

2) Prioritize Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as Central to our Academic Strength

As an academic institution, we are committed to the advancement of knowledge and learning through the free and unfettered exchange of the broadest possible set of ideas and perspective. We believe Muhlenberg cannot achieve excellence across the institution without prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion in our campus community, in our curriculum and co-curriculum, and in our connections with local and global societies. We recognize that it is vital for the College to actively attract and support community members from historically underrepresented groups. To achieve this aim, the College will focus on the following priorities:

- a. Attract, support, and retain an increasingly diverse and academically gifted student body through purposeful, robustly-funded initiatives.

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- b. Recruit, support, and retain an increasingly diverse and talented faculty and staff through purposeful, robustly funded initiatives.
- c. Identify, develop, and support curricular and co-curricular initiatives that build community members' capacity for productive and equitable intercultural interactions as a core learning goal across all programs.
- d. Identify, develop, and support programs that nurture fruitful, mutually beneficial relations from the scale of local communities to global partners.
- e. Expand and support celebrations and rituals that strengthen our community and reinforce our commitment to the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

3) Support an Increasingly Vibrant Residential Life

From an undergraduate student learning perspective, we aspire to offer a residential environment that sparks curiosity, enhances students' ability to explore and grow stronger in their individual identities, assists students in gaining a deep appreciation for connecting in meaningful ways with others, promotes both academic and experiential learning, encourages inclusive leadership, and builds a sense of community for all. These qualities will be evident in the ways our facilities are designed and constructed and will underpin all of the educational and social offerings and living options at Muhlenberg.

We will be innovative in the construction and re-imagining of student living options to include traditional residence halls, exciting special interest communities, faculty-led residential initiatives, and fraternities and sororities. Across campus, students and student groups can expect that, as part of their living experience, they will live alongside and interact actively with others from diverse backgrounds. Our primary goals will be to promote the cross-pollination of thoughts and actions among these living groups and to create greater equity across the various living options.

Muhlenberg will also provide facilities, policies, and infrastructure that support vibrant and safe social opportunities for students and student affinity groups to interact and socialize with one another on campus. It is essential that these opportunities promote community engagement, leadership development and student agency. We will be intentional in expanding upon our health and wellness prevention efforts while still encouraging appropriate intellectual and personal challenge and risk-taking opportunities. To achieve this aim, the College will focus on the following priorities:

- a. Renovate existing first year residence halls in ways that encourage the cross-pollination of ideas, create equity across living options, and allow for students to build and sustain social connections.
- b. Increase the capacity for upper-class students to live on campus in an attractive residential village setting that combines living and retail spaces.
- c. Foster new opportunities for meaningful faculty-student interaction in residential settings.
- d. Strengthen social and co-curricular opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, explore diverse interests and identities, and build a sense of excitement and social connection with one another.

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- e. Adopt a health promotions model for campus life that is both preventative and restorative in nature and supports students' physical health, personal safety and overall sense of well-being even more strongly while living in community with others.

4) Enable Students to Achieve More Powerful Outcomes

By strengthening our career services and expanding our global network of institutional partnerships, we will enable even more of our students to achieve powerful outcomes. Strategic partnerships with institutions, organizations, and consortia allow our students to translate learning into powerful outcomes during and after their undergraduate experience. Unlike the vast majority of selective liberal arts colleges, Muhlenberg integrates the traditional liberal arts with selected pre-professional disciplines, such as accounting, business administration, finance, innovation and entrepreneurship, public health, and media and communication. Students in these programs benefit from high-quality professional training while experiencing the intellectual discovery and growth of our full liberal arts curriculum. To achieve this aim, the College will focus on the following priorities:

- a. Strengthen and expand the Career Center to support career and professional development for students and alumni across all disciplines.
- b. Further integrate our Liberal Arts and Pre-Professional disciplines and programs.
- c. Expand opportunities for faculty-student research collaboration across all disciplines.
- d. More deeply engage faculty in overseeing pre-career programs (e.g., pre-health, pre-law, pre-finance) supported by alumni/parent advisory boards.
- e. Broaden our partnerships with research universities, graduate, and professional schools to provide enhanced opportunities for undergraduate experiences and post-graduate outcomes.
- f. Develop local, national, and global partnerships to provide academic and career opportunities.

5) Engage the Muhlenberg Network to Open Doors for Members of our Community

We aim to expand the Muhlenberg Network, all members of the global community of people connected to the College, including alumni, students, parents, faculty, staff, and friends, in ways that will deliver powerful outcomes. The Muhlenberg Network provides mentoring, career development, professional advancement, and life-long engagement for all members.

As key constituents, our alumni are a valuable resource in support of our strategic goals. Going forward, we will devote targeted resources to engage with special groups (e.g., President's Advisory Council, Alumni Board, and Parents Council) in ways that allow the College to benefit from their leadership and expertise. Similarly, alumni and parent advisory boards will partner with faculty and staff to deepen mentoring and career development for students in select pre-professional programs. The Network also provides a lifelong community of mutual support leading to increased opportunities for all and exemplifies the value of a Muhlenberg education characterized by experiences, relationships, and long-term impact. We will advance our Network through expansion of our powerful digital platform, TheMuhlenbergNetwork.com, which supports community and engagement globally across all constituents. To achieve this aim, the College will focus on the following priorities:

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- a. Increase alumni support, engagement, and connection to match or surpass that of high admissions-overlap competitors.
- b. Engage President's Advisory Council, Alumni Board, and Parents Council to provide input, advice, and leadership.
- c. Establish alumni and parent advisory boards for pre-professional programs.
- d. Build and strengthen our digital platform, TheMuhlenbergNetwork.com as a source of mentors, job shadowing, networking, and other supports for all members globally.

Imperative 2: Fortify our Operating Model

We need to strengthen our financial, physical, and human resources to support new opportunities for advancing our mission. We will only be in a position to truly open doors to Muhlenberg's own potential and its value to students if we ensure sufficient financial resources to advance our institutional mission and strengthen our competitive position. While Muhlenberg's budget relies primarily on student charges, careful planning and disciplined fiscal management have enabled the College to remain financially sound even as peer institutions have experienced layoffs and budget cuts. Committed to the success of all students, our faculty and staff continue to be the College's most valuable resource. In order to elevate the excellence of the work they do and support and advance the initiatives outlined in this plan, the College must establish a stronger and more robust operating model.

1) Optimize Muhlenberg's Physical Resources in Support of our Mission

The College is recognized for its beautiful campus setting; however, as a landlocked institution our increasing demand for facilities and flexible space to support current and future needs requires innovative solutions. We must be creative in how we design and allocate new teaching and learning spaces and be flexible in our designation of on-campus office space. Innovative pedagogies that engage students in and outside the classroom require flexible learning spaces that support collaboration and advance digital literacy and global learning. As part of our campus master planning process, we will rethink the use of campus space and explore off-campus opportunities that expand our facilities. Our space and facility renovations will be guided by our commitment to campus sustainability policies and practices. To achieve this aim, the College will focus on the following priorities:

- a. Make room for more faculty offices and learning spaces by reimagining our uses of on-campus and off-campus spaces.
- b. Create flexible, multi-mode teaching, learning, faculty development and scholarship spaces that support collaboration, student agency, global learning, and digital literacy.
- c. Re-design the spaces for services that support student learning to enable them to enhance their ability to ensure student success.
- d. Ensure that the spaces we provide for the performing, visual and media arts support the current and future needs of these programs.
- e. Establish an urban campus in downtown Allentown to support expanded and innovative educational programming.

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- f. Continue to pursue environmentally-sensitive policies, practices, and capital investments to maximize our campus sustainability.
- g. Redesign campus parking to provide adequate capacity and further beautify the campus.

2) Invest to Strengthen Enrollment Management

In view of the shifting competitive landscape, we must re-position Muhlenberg in ways that strengthen our market position and heighten our attractiveness to a broader range of students and parents. The market conditions in which Muhlenberg competes are becoming more challenging each year. The number of new high-school graduates continues to contract in the Northeast and college costs continue to outpace family incomes. Moreover, as the cost of attendance continues to increase, the percentage of students who can afford (and are willing) to pay for this kind of education—which is inherently labor intensive and not subject to scale- or technology-based economies—is shrinking. Finally, a current narrative that questions the value of liberal arts education creates new challenges as Muhlenberg seeks to identify, recruit, and retain the most talented students. To achieve this aim, the College will focus on the following priorities:

- a. Broaden and deepen our applicant pool by reaching out both more expansively and selectively to recruit talented students from across the nation and around the world.
- b. Make Muhlenberg the college of choice to a greater proportion of applicants by conveying our messages regarding the College's value and distinction to prospective students and families more effectively.
- c. Retain an even greater percentage of our students by understanding better and acting upon the key drivers of student success and satisfaction.

3) Broaden and Deepen Alumni Engagement and Support

Competition for philanthropic dollars continues to intensify given the increasing number of critical charitable organizations. To sustain Muhlenberg's competitiveness in future years, we must increase substantially the engagement and support of our alumni. Our levels of alumni participation and financial support compare unfavorably with those of other highly-selective, private liberal arts colleges with which we compete. Alumni must increasingly join our friends, parents, and foundations in becoming strong Muhlenberg advocates to assure the College ascends and remains in the top tier of liberal arts colleges in the nation. To achieve its mission, Muhlenberg must take several steps to broaden and deepen alumni engagement and support of the College. To achieve this aim, the College will focus on the following priorities:

- a. Increase annual alumni participation and fundraising totals to compare favorably with peer and competitor institutions, while improving leadership-level support to address College priorities.
- b. Develop strategic partnerships between faculty and alumni to achieve compelling outcomes for students, alumni, and faculty.
- c. Create and support professional/career and interest-based alumni/parent/student affinity groups in order to engage alumni and parents more effectively.

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- d. Increase membership in TheMuhlenbergNetwork.com at a robust rate each year to increase the quantity and quality of connections between and among all constituents of the Muhlenberg community.
- e. Upgrade and support Muhlenberg's volunteer network to bring more vibrancy and sustainability to our alumni outreach.

4) Expand and Grow the Wescoe School Aggressively

The Wescoe School of Continuing Education has provided adult education for over 100 years. Dedicated to life-long learning within the framework of a liberal arts education, the School has been an incubator for innovative pedagogy and alternative methods of course delivery. Given the growing need for new skills and knowledge to support workforce change, we plan to expand the College's continuing education programs to expand service to new communities of learners. To achieve this aim, the College will focus on the following priorities:

- a. Develop new, online and blended, accelerated degree, and certificate programs serving adult learners seeking to advance their careers.
- b. Explore opportunities to develop and offer select, career-advancing master's programs tailored to the needs of working adult learners.
- c. Build on our academic strengths to explore offering additional pre-college academic summer academies designed to support high school students with promise who are seeking to increase the likelihood of success in college.
- d. Achieve a substantial expansion of Wescoe School revenues and strong positive contribution to the operating budget.

5) Innovate New Revenue Sources

In order to add to our financial resources, it is essential we pursue new sources of revenue, supplementing the traditional trio of: tuition and fees; gifts and grants; and endowment distributions. Even as we strengthen the value of the Muhlenberg experience, we must add to these traditional sources of revenue by pursuing new avenues and build the infrastructure to support these new operations. To achieve this aim, the College will focus on the following priorities:

- a. Convert selected administrative cost centers into profit centers by extending those services beyond the Muhlenberg campus so the College can become an outsourced provider of selected services to smaller less resourced colleges and universities, both in PA and beyond.
- b. Expand summer conferences and corporate workshops/retreats to generate revenue.

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FUNDAMENTAL INSTITUTIONAL VALUES

Revision, March 2010

A Muhlenberg education develops each individual's capacity for a life of leadership and service by challenging and strengthening mind, spirit, character, and community. We believe the College's faculty, students, staff, trustees, and alumni share and contribute to the following values. Accordingly, these values should guide and inform those engaged in the College's strategic planning process as we identify goals, develop strategic initiatives, and set priorities.

I. Commitment to the Life of the Mind

- We believe that liberal education integrates experiences both within and beyond the classroom, and provides students with the passion and tools for self-initiated and self-directed life-long learning.
- Muhlenberg demonstrates an unusually strong dedication to teaching. This is reflected in the faculty's rigorous intellectual standards, pedagogical expertise, and close relationships with students, and in the balance of academic challenge and personal support that we offer our students.
- We value vigorous and open-minded debate within the context of civility.
- We insist upon intellectual integrity and personal accountability.
- We value critical independent thinking and challenge intellectual orthodoxy.
- We believe in the fundamental importance of research and the creation of new knowledge for the intellectual vitality of both faculty and students.
- We believe that the life of the mind embraces both analytical and creative effort.
- We believe that liberal education should nurture both the capacity for independence and the ability to work collaboratively with others.

II. Commitment to Spirit and Character

- We acknowledge the value and power of spiritual life, as well as our individual limitations in achieving absolute understanding of truth. Accordingly, we respect and show active interest in and concern for both our own and other faith traditions, and we respect the views of those who do not identify with any faith.
- We believe that honesty, integrity, and truthfulness should characterize both our public and private behavior, and that the development of ethical standards is an important component of liberal education.
- We value the physical well-being of ourselves and others, as well as the important life lessons that can be learned from healthful physical activity.
- We are committed to self-improvement and strive openly and actively for ever higher standards of excellence in all areas of endeavor.
- We realize that pushing ourselves to stretch our personal limits of knowledge and understanding will sometimes result in failure and that failure provides opportunities for personal growth.

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III. Commitment to the Life of the Community - On Campus and Beyond

- We treasure a distinctive campus climate characterized by warmth, friendliness, a strong sense of community, and close relationships among students, faculty, and staff.
- We demonstrate mutual respect for differing ideas, perspectives, experiences, and personal identities.
- We strive to function as a caring community, demonstrating concern for and offering support to each other, while challenging each other to excel.
- We reject as unacceptable behavior characterized by violence, malice, disrespect, indecency, or contempt for others.
- We are committed to developing a campus culture in which fairness, equality, human diversity, and justice are successfully integrated with the healthy clash of ideas and beliefs.
- We acknowledge our obligation to be good neighbors and good citizens, particularly in the Lehigh Valley, and to improve the lives of those inside and outside our community who have less access to education and political power, fewer privileges and resources, and who bear the burden of discrimination.
- We are committed to being good citizens of the Earth, and to making institutional decisions that are mindful of our complex relations with the ecosystem.

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PARTICIPANTS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Mr. John Williams, President (Co-Chair)

Mr. Christian Balodis '17, Student Body President

Ms. Rebekkah Brown, Vice President of Advancement

Mr. Allan Chen, Chief Information Officer

Mr. Curtis Dretsch, Professor, Theatre & Dance; Academic Policies Committee representative

Mr. Kent Dyer, Chief Business Officer and Treasurer

Dr. Marten Edwards, Professor, Biology; Faculty Policies & Procedures Committee representative

Ms. Melissa Falk, Associate Dean, Admission & Financial Aid

Ms. Ashley Gerhart '17, President's Diversity Advisory Council representative

Ms. Allison Gulati, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

Mr. Chris Hooker-Haring, Vice President for Enrollment Management

Dr. Kathleen Haring, Vice President and Dean of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning;
Interim Provost (Co-Chair)

Dr. Christine Ingersoll, Professor, Chemistry

Ms. Deborah Kipp, Senior Associate Vice President for Development, Advancement

Dr. James Peck, Professor, Theatre & Dance; Associate Dean for Diversity Initiatives

Dr. Mark Stein, Associate Professor, History

Dr. Lora Taub-Pervizpour, Professor, Media & Communication; Associate Dean for Digital
Learning

Mr. Ken Butler, Executive Assistant to the President and the Board of Trustees (process
assistant)

Ms. Debra Sweeney, Administrative Assistant, Provost's Office (administrative assistant)