



STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2020
“EMBRACING CHANGE AS OPPORTUNITY”

Endorsed by Community of Educators Senate
April 11, 2016

Approved by College Council
April 21, 2016

Approved by Board of Trustees
May 6, 2016

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Preamble:

In 2012, Messiah College committed to the following vision: “By 2020, Messiah College will be the first choice among undergraduate and graduate students from the eastern United States who desire a Christian higher education characterized by educational excellence and a commitment to gracious Christianity.” The proposed 2016-2020 institutional strategic plan builds on the successful strides of the previous strategic plan toward achieving that shared institutional vision. This new plan for our future, “Embracing Change as Opportunity,” recognizes that the pace of change in higher education and in our nation in the past four years has rapidly increased. Change in our circumstances requires innovative action as we continue to affirm our foundational values and commitments while advancing our educational mission and live out our Christian identity.

Change is always challenging. But this plan welcomes and embraces change as an opportunity. We are convinced, as an institution of Christ-centered higher education, that God has not given us a spirit of fear but a spirit of active hope and confidence as we successfully prepare undergraduate and graduate students to lead and serve as they participate in God’s reconciling work in the world. Building new educational programs, recruiting new constituencies and supporting and developing new professional abilities are actions through which we serve our students and equip them for the 21st Century. To pursue this end, the community of Messiah College commits itself to achieving the goals of the 2016-2020 strategic plan outlined below.

Theme 1 - Advancing Mission and Identity in a Changing Culture**Focus**

Building on Theme 1 of the previous strategic plan (2012-2016), we seek to nurture improved institutional self-understanding and external messaging as we endeavor to communicate our educational mission and the desire to promote the common good.

- **Goal 1:** Messiah College will effectively and graciously advocate for institutional self-determination within a religiously pluralistic society.
 1. Participate in CCCU collaborative efforts with Christian institutions and interfaith organizations concerning religious freedom, work alongside the College’s legal counsel, and report outcomes to the campus community via the president’s update.
 2. Engage in a continuous review of religious freedom challenges and proactively prepare effective institutional responses to potential legislative, regulatory and/or accreditation challenges.
 3. Continue educational focus groups for employees and student leaders regarding the College’s mission, values and behavioral codes of conduct and these sessions will be integrated into established campus programming.
- **Goal 2:** Messiah College will nurture a campus community ethos characterized by hospitality rooted in Christian conviction as informed by the College’s founding theological traditions.
 1. Conduct a climate survey of the campus environment for all employees and students to identify institutional strengths and concerns.
 2. Develop employee and student programs, protocols and policies to leverage opportunities and address concerns identified by the survey results.
- **Goal 3:** Messiah College will successfully promote the outcomes of its positive economic and social impact on the mid-Atlantic region and beyond.
 1. Appoint a task force to compile a report of economic and social contributions of the Messiah community to the mid-Atlantic region to serve as an integrated source for communicating positive impact.

2. Review and implement changes based on the recently completed Community Engagement Committee's summary report and publish an account of the College's ongoing efforts to serve the mid-Atlantic region as an intellectual, economic, artistic and community service resource.
 3. Design and launch a webpage and other resources to share the narrative of the positive economic and social impact of Messiah College.
 4. Institute a campus-wide theme of "Promoting the Common Good" for 2018-2019 – keynote lecturers will be invited to address this theme, focus on theme at Community Day, in the fall issue of the Bridge, etc.
- **Goal 4:** Messiah College will determine whether to apply for university status in response to the needs of student recruitment and the changing academic program.
 1. Appoint a presidentially led task force to conduct a review and make a recommendation to the board of trustees and campus governance groups for discussion and deliberation in the 2018-2019 academic year.

Theme 2 – Expanding Enrollment and Retention of a Changing Constituency

Focus

Higher education is well into a shift that takes us beyond our common sense of a four-year residential college experience. This Theme is focused on programming designed to recruit and retain students in this challenging environment defined by changing demographics.

- **Goal 1:** Messiah College will effectively recruit and retain a more diverse student population with no less than 20% of the total undergraduate student body being a combination of domestic underrepresented students and international students.
 1. Develop intercultural recruitment strategies related to building relationships with key schools, churches, and community leaders, with an emphasis on recruiting and retaining more Hispanic/Latino students.
 2. Develop and implement recruitment and retention strategies for students from domestic underrepresented populations outside of the Martin and Amigo scholarship programs.
 3. Expand our global engagement through strategic recruitment of international students by building partnerships with key schools, churches and organizations in new markets (e.g., China and Indonesia).
- **Goal 2:** Messiah College will increase its number of transfer students through recruitment and retention.
 1. Expand online undergraduate programming to meet enhanced recruitment goals in transfer enrollment.
 2. Complete program to program articulation agreements with regional community colleges where general transfer agreements currently exist.
 3. Revise transfer credit policies and procedures to facilitate timely completion of degrees.
 4. Implement strategies to increase retention of transfer students.
- **Goal 3:** Messiah College will enhance its efforts to recruit high school students through dual enrollment and summer academic programming.
 1. Expand online undergraduate programming to meet enhanced recruitment goals for dual enrollment.
 2. Develop an integrated summer academic camp program.
- **Goal 4:** Messiah College will successfully expand and support new graduate programs, and other programs for non-traditional adult students.
 1. Fully implement a School of Graduate Studies.

2. Launch graduate programming in occupational therapy, physical therapy and a doctorate in nursing practice.
3. Develop additional graduate programming with particular attention to athletic training.
4. Develop internal accelerated undergraduate to graduate degree programs.
5. Expand stand-alone certificate and other non-degree programs.

Theme 3: Promoting Educational Excellence for a Changing Student Body

Focus

Consistent with the shift in instructional venues and demographics introduced in Theme 2, this Theme provides strategies to support student success, develop our entire workforce, foster our use of high-impact educational practices and plan wisely for the optimum use of facilities.

- **Goal 1:** Messiah College will provide programs and services that promote student success for a changing student body.
 1. Create or enhance programs and services designed to assist students to succeed in a college learning environment based upon ongoing research and assessment data.
- **Goal 2:** Messiah College will develop engaged employees who will be prepared to mentor and educate our 21st century student body.
 1. Design and deliver professional development opportunities which promote employee success at supporting the priorities of the strategic plan.
 2. Implement the recently adopted new standards for ranked faculty term tenure and promotion.
 3. Review the current employee orientation and performance appraisal process to enhance a strong connection between expectations and the College's mission, values and priorities.
- **Goal 3:** Messiah College will prepare educators to cultivate appropriate teaching and learning outcomes that meet the needs of a changing student body.
 1. Design and implement a development plan for faculty that is supportive of the revised Term-tenure and Promotion expectations and include strategies for nurturing intercultural competencies.
 2. Fully implement the Teaching and Learning Initiative.
 3. Review and revise the College Wide Educational Objectives in light of the changing environment with attention to digital proficiency and intercultural competencies.
- **Goal 4:** Messiah College will more effectively recruit and retain a diverse employee base.
 1. Improve hiring processes to identify, cultivate, and successfully recruit employees from diverse populations.
 2. Identify and implement contextually-appropriate best practices for retention of employees from diverse populations.
- **Goal 5:** Messiah College will increase available opportunities for mentored undergraduate student research.
 1. Develop a structure to promote and support undergraduate research.
 2. Raise funds to support undergraduate research across disciplines.
- **Goal 6:** Messiah College will offer the necessary equipment and facilities to support the educational experience of our students.
 1. Action steps will be coordinated with the College's facilities master plan, and will address needs including the commuter lounge, residence hall renovations, finance lab and others.
 2. Review capital equipment replacement protocols and update deferred maintenance backlog reporting.

Theme 4 – Investing Resources for a Flourishing Financial Future**Focus**

The College has flourished in these challenging times as a result of its sound financial resource base, and this theme provides strategies to grow its balance sheet via fundraising and investment strategies designed to achieve returns in excess of spending and to make more efficient use of existing human, operational and programming resources.

- **Goal 1:** Messiah College will pursue new revenue streams to diversify and create long-term stability for our financial portfolio.
 1. Support the Rider-Musser Development, LLC as it initiates the residential and commercial development of the properties.
 2. Offer meeting spaces and catering for an increased number of external constituents.

- **Goal 2:** Messiah College will increase its financial resource base by \$45 million.
 1. Increase the institutional endowment to \$140 million.
 - Employ investment strategies designed to achieve growth of 8.5 percent annually.
 - Raise \$5-\$7 million in new endowment funds.
 2. Raise \$15 million in annual restricted funds.
 3. Generate cash flow operating surpluses that equal 1-2 percent of annual operating revenue.

- **Goal 3:** Messiah College will implement strategies to make effective use of existing operational and programming resources.
 1. Develop and implement a process to review undergraduate educational programs and their contribution to the College's mission and financial margin in order to better guide strategic investments.
 2. Review divisional policies, processes, and programs to increase efficiency and productivity.

- **Goal 4:** Messiah College will offer an excellent and affordable educational experience to its students.
 1. Provide financial aid options designed to minimize student loan debt.
 2. Develop and enhance strategies for our students to maintain our historically low loan default rates.
 3. Implement additional action steps that will be developed by the Financial Aid Strategy Team and spelled out in the College's strategic enrollment plan.