

Executive Summary

Authentically Augustana—Part 2: Affirm our Mission, Assure our Future and Assess our Results was formed during a nine-month planning process authorized by the President of the College. The report is divided into three sections: *Affirm our Mission*, which describes achievements of the 2005 *Authentically Augustana* strategic plan and establishes the context for a new plan; *Assure our Future*, which outlines eight strategic imperatives for the college and strategies we will undertake to strengthen our position; and *Assess our Results*, the final section that outlines tactics for measuring and monitoring our effectiveness as an organization.

Affirm, Assure and Assess represents an existing, responsive and realistic direction for the college—with full consideration of challenges and opportunities for contemporary higher education—that will strengthen our tradition of preparing students for successful, meaningful lives as servant leaders.

Three defining characteristics of *Affirm, Assure and Assess* include:

- An emphasis on results and using new ways to assess our effectiveness in fulfilling our mission
- An emphasis on the realities and risks we face as a private liberal arts college
- Prioritization of realistic strategies to respond to and minimize our risks

Affirm, Assure and Assess establishes the following strategic priorities:

Prepare our students to stand out

- Improve mentoring and advising to ensure all students participate in high-impact learning experiences
- To support this tactic:
 - Ensure Augie Choice planning, experience and reflection focus on high-impact learning practices
 - Develop a reflective e-portfolio system documenting high-impact learning experiences

Innovate recruitment and retention

- Increase outreach to, enrollment of and graduation of multicultural students consistent with population trends in core markets
- Sustain market share in primary market by increasing multicultural recruitment efforts and strengthening our presence and reputation in the Chicago area

Enhance our campus

- Fund and finish renovation and restoration of Old Main
- Fund and build a Center for Student Life
- Reserve resources in operating budget to help fund capital enhancements
- Finalize and implement a Five-year Capital Improvement Plan

Optimize, support and diversify our workforce

- Optimize the size and structure of our workforce to balance educational goals with financial resources
- Build accountability into efforts to improve diversity among our applicant pools and workforce, and improve hiring and retention of multicultural employees

Strengthen shared governance, leadership and communication

- Strengthen communication and shared governance on campus; foster a culture of alignment through which all campus stakeholders are aware of and pursue common goals as defined by an outcome-oriented measure of institutional effectiveness and mission fulfillment
- Create a presidential advisory committee or council responsible for advising the president on matters related to shared governance, and fostering open communications among all college constituencies in furtherance of good shared governance

Celebrate and strengthen our surroundings

- Promote the commercial vitality of our neighborhood

Improve our financial viability

- Fund identified maintenance and contribute to capital projects through operating resources
- Reduce the tuition discount rate for incoming and continuing students by .5% annually

Advance Augustana's reputation

- Pursue high-profile recognition for Augustana students and faculty, and capitalize on existing traditions of success
- Strengthen and integrate our abilities to gather and share information on graduates' successes

In addition to developing a strategic direction for Augustana for the coming years, the Strategic Planning Task Force developed an outcome-oriented dashboard to assess our results and to shift focus from measuring "inputs" exclusively. This is one of the most important and transformative elements of the process. An outcome-oriented dashboard represents a significant step toward a future of holding ourselves accountable, creating a shared sense of accomplishment, proving our results and reinforcing our value within the higher education community.

Affirm, Assure and Assess will require a financial commitment, organizational alignment and shared belief in the fundamental promise of the college's mission. The primary purpose of the plan is to align our work at a time when all stakeholders must be actively engaged in ensuring the college succeeds for another 150 years.