

Background and context:

President Bahls announced the strategic planning initiative in winter of 2013 and four taskforces were formed soon thereafter. We started our work in March 2013, using data and information collected from previous academic planning sessions and other campus-wide efforts, including the competitive positioning report put together by taskforce one. To engage the campus in ranking their strategic priorities, taskforce two sent a campus-wide survey, which garnered significant participation from the campus community.

Based on the priorities identified via survey results and academic planning efforts, six specific broad themes emerged. We then held six campus-wide discussion sessions on each of these themes throughout June, July and August 2013. Finally, we engaged in a one-day campus retreat in August 2013, during which we hosted several concurrent sessions on specific themes to engage the campus in further refining our strategic priorities.

This draft prepared by the strategic planning steering committee is the outcome of a seven-month-long process that reflects our collective priorities as we offer our students a transformative educational experience that will prepare them for positions of relevance and leadership in tomorrow's world.

The draft addresses our proposed strategic directions and measurement for assessing our performance:

- Our first strategic direction focuses on how we prepare our graduates for rewarding and productive lives after they graduate from Augustana.
- Our second strategic direction centers on our current Augustana students, as it focuses on creating an integrated residential liberal arts experience that incorporates all aspects of students' lives while they are on campus.
- Our third strategic direction focuses on future Augustana students and emphasizes affordability and access.

To successfully embark on a new strategic plan that meets these goals and to thrive as a residential undergraduate liberal arts college, Augustana needs to build a healthier, more effective community, balance reinvestment and growth of resources to produce a larger financial base, and appropriately invest in our physical and technological infrastructure. These basic premises undergird the directions set forth in the plan.

This draft is only a portion of the final strategic plan, which will include action plans and tactics that will build off the work accomplished at the community meetings and campus-wide retreat.

Augustana 2020

Delivering the Augustana Advantage: Exceptional Education and Successful Outcomes

Vision for the College

By 2020, Augustana will enhance its position as an institution that offers integrated learning experiences through active engagement, both within and outside the classroom. Our students will make greater gains in the skills, dispositions and interpersonal sensibilities needed to achieve their career goals and secure a successful future that is productive and meaningful to them. We will offer more intentionally designed and fully integrated learning experiences that recognize the holistic nature of student learning and development and take full advantage of the comprehensive learning resources of a residential liberal arts and sciences college. We will intentionally connect the knowledge, skills, dispositions and interpersonal sensibilities that are the hallmark of a liberal arts education to our student's post-graduate career plans

By 2020, Augustana College will offer this high-quality education to the top 50% of college-bound high school seniors in a way that is financially accessible to students from middle-income families. We will support all of our students so that they can succeed beyond their predicted level of achievement. Furthermore, the Augustana community—students, faculty and staff—will more closely represent the racial and ethnic diversity of the United States and the globally interconnected world in which our students will live and work.

The Augustana workforce will be an active, innovative and engaged community where each member will take shared and personal responsibility for the education of our students and their post-graduate success.

Ground rules for successful strategic planning:

- Respect the mission of the college and core strengths as a residential liberal arts college.
- Finance these efforts using both new and reallocated resources.
- Remain student-focused.
- Focus on **achieving** the outcomes that are necessary to attract and retain strong students who will benefit from the college's mission and not simply on maintaining the status quo. Successful liberal arts colleges will be those colleges that understand how students and parents perceive value and are able to deliver that value within the colleges' liberal arts mission.
- Focus on outcomes, not solely on inputs.
- Focus on building capacity within the institution to meet economic and demographic realities.
- Focus on a shared-responsibility model of governance.
- Recognize that resources are scarce and that our scarce resources must be invested in a fairly limited number of creative strategies.

Premises underlying possible strategic directions:

To embark on a new strategic plan that allows us to thrive as a residential undergraduate liberal arts college, it is essential that we build:

- *A healthier, more effective community* that takes shared and personal responsibility to advance the mission and vitality of the college. We are committed to improving the effectiveness and transparency in our communication, creating an environment of trust where employees are empowered and valued.
- *A larger financial resource base*, balancing reinvestment with growth of resources, in endowment and annual revenues, to support the mission and create flexibility to invest in new opportunities as they arise.
- Sustainability by *reducing the deferred maintenance backlog*, as well as *investing in infrastructure and technological capabilities* to support student learning and the mission of the college.

To achieve each of the strategic directions identified below, it is critical that we build capacity in our workforce to be an innovative and a vibrant place of learning. We must commit to developing and investing in a workforce of passionate, innovative and entrepreneurial employees who identify and seize opportunities, and who are strong advocates for the Augustana residential liberal arts experience.

Our Three Strategic Directions:

1. The Augustana Career and Life Advantage: Cultivate a broader culture of professional and career development that incorporates Augustana faculty, students, alumni, parents and supporters to help secure a successful future for our graduates. **Intentionally connect the knowledge, skills, dispositions and interpersonal sensibilities that are the hallmark of a liberal arts education to our student's post-graduate career plans.** Redefine the Augustana community to include a focus on creating and maintaining a network of resources and opportunities that support our students' long-term post-graduate success.

Evidence of success:

- Stronger admissions rates in graduate/professional schools, compared to peer schools
- Strong placement rates into jobs that use our students' skills, with 90% of those not going to graduate school placed in a full-time position requiring a college degree within six months of graduation
- Internship and research opportunities for 95% of our students
- Strong response scores to the Recent Graduate Survey on questions related to connection between one's current position and long-term goals and job satisfaction scale

- Follow-up surveys five years and 10 years after graduation—focusing on current position, goals and overall satisfaction with the Augustana experience—that reflect continual improvement
2. The Augustana Integrated Residential Liberal Arts Advantage: We plan to implement a fully integrated model of learning and student preparation. This educational framework will be distinguished by the intentional linking of all student experiences offered by a residential liberal arts college—in class and outside class, on campus and off campus—with what best exemplifies a residential liberal learning experience and creating intentional spaces to do so.

This educational framework will effectively achieve our student learning outcomes by “starting with the end in mind,” crafting each student’s pathway through an individualized combination of learning experiences **so that they develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to succeed after graduation, and can clearly articulate how each experience contributed to their development.** We will provide support (academic, personal, social and emotional) for all students to be successful in this environment while preparing them to lead meaningful and productive lives.

Evidence of success:

- Each part of Augustana that directly interacts with our student lives identifies, understands and implements programs that foster learning and help students achieve the college-wide student learning outcomes
 - Improve Augustana's integrated residential liberal arts experience as a continual process assessed through Senior Survey results, student portfolios, co-curricular transcripts, Senior Inquiry reflection papers, and Recent Graduate Survey results
 - Improve retention rates to 90% (three year average) after the first year and graduation rate to 80% (three year average), a 5% point increase.
3. The Augustana Accessibility and Affordability Advantage: Address affordability and accessibility to for families who want to send their students to Augustana College. **Recruit a growing share** of prospects from the top half of college-bound high school students. Within this population, focus on emerging populations (including international students), by narrowing the financial aid gap with an enhanced endowment. Become **more affordable**, without sacrificing quality. Break the current price/cost model to offer a more affordable and accessible, high-quality residential liberal arts college experience.

Evidence of success:

- Develop a new price/cost structure connected to the strategic directions identified above
- Substantially increased numbers of multicultural and international students
- Increase the yield for families at or near the median of family income

The following goals were discussed but were not considered as a top 3 priority as they were not seen as a strategic direction by the steering committee

- ✓ **Build broader partnerships and opportunities (new technologies and pedagogies) beyond our campus** to improve our value to students. Become a college where the physical borders of our campus do not limit education. Create more accessibility to those learning experiences that lead to greater learning outcomes.
- ✓ To fulfill our mission as a high-quality, undergraduate, residential liberal arts college, either: reduce the size of the college, programs and services for a total enrollment of 2,000; or, to maintain our enrollment at 2,500, eliminate the tuition gap. Each of these options would reduce our expenses by 20 percent.

Timetable:

Early October 2013 – Present a list of three possible strategic directions to the board and the internal community, as well as selected alumni groups. Seek reaction and input.

Late October 2013 – Begin discussion of tactics and action plans.

Early November 2013 – Complete first draft of strategic plan (including possible tactics) for review by Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

Late November 2013 – Vet first draft of plan with internal community, as well as selected alumni and community groups.

December 2013 – Prepare second draft of the strategic plan.

January 2014 – Present second draft of the strategic plan to the board, internal communities, select alumni groups and community groups.

January through April 2014 – Further refine possible tactics and develop budget implications for draft plan.

May – Seek board **approval** of a fully developed strategic plan.