

Augustana 2020: Our Path Forward

Augustana Board of Trustees Meeting

October 3, 2013

Supporting Materials for Plenary Session
on Potential Strategic Directions

Contents

1. Possible New Strategic Directions Overview
2. Strategic Direction One Executive Summary
3. Strategic Direction Two Executive Summary
4. Strategic Direction Three Executive Summary
5. Strategic Direction Four Executive Summary
6. Strategic Direction Five Executive Summary

Augustana College

Augustana 2020: Enhancing student success, before and after graduation

1. Earn recognition as a liberal arts college with an extraordinarily high graduate school admission rate and timely placement of students in quality first jobs and subsequent jobs.

Evidence of success:

- Strong admissions rates in graduate/professional schools, compared to peer schools.
- 90% of those graduates not going to graduate school finding full-time positions that require a college degree within six months after graduation.
- Significantly higher levels than peer schools of alumni satisfaction, five years out and 10 years out, with how Augustana prepares its graduates for careers.
- Internships for 95% of our students.

2. Strengthen student accomplishments during college and success after college by fully integrating academic life, residential life, athletics, and co- and extracurricular activities.

Evidence of success:

- Full integration of each area of the college with an intentional focus on how each advances student learning and success after college.
- Student achievement portfolios for 95% of students and co-curricular transcripts for all.
- Improve retention rates by 5 percentage points after the first year and at graduation, due in part to the greater sense of belonging to a community.

3. Address affordability and increase Augustana's value for families.

Evidence of success:

- Develop a new price/cost structure connected to the strategic direction outlined above.
- Increase the yield for families at or near the median of family income and for new populations that can pay for an appropriate part of their education.
- Implement partnerships with similar institutions to reduce costs/increase opportunities.

Possible alternatives (#4 was discussed, but not considered a top 3 priority; #5 was rejected)

4. Build capacity in our workforce to utilize new technologies and pedagogies to effectively compete with new providers of higher education. Become a campus where the physical borders of our campus do not limit students' educational experiences.
5. Improve quality by reducing the size of the college, programs and services for a total enrollment of 2,000; or, to maintain our enrollment, improve affordability by eliminating the tuition gap. Each of these options would require a 20% expense reduction.

Strategic Direction #1: Earn recognition as a liberal arts college with a high (90%) graduate school admission rate and timely placement of students in quality first jobs and subsequent jobs.

Small colleges that are mission-centered and focused on outcomes for their students will thrive. Liberal arts colleges must better emphasize the success of their graduates through advising and focusing on career outcomes, in addition to the active life of the mind.

- According to the Pew Research Center, 47% of Americans say the main purpose of college should be to acquire specific skills and knowledge that can be used in the workplace, while only 39% say it should be to help students grow personally and intellectually.
- “This school’s graduates get good jobs” was cited by 53.3% of first-year students in 2010 as a reason for choosing their college. (CIRP Freshman Survey)
- 84.7% of first-year students say that getting a better job is a very important reason to go to college. (CIRP Freshmen Survey)

Augustana career statistics for its graduates, according to our career development consultant, are good, but could use improvement.

- Most Recent Survey of Students Graduating in 2012 (six months after graduation): 79% of those not enrolled in graduate school have full-time employment, with 20% seeking employment. Thirty percent of our students are in graduate or professional school six months after graduation. Eighty-nine percent of our students in graduate school say they were accepted into the first or second choice of graduate/professional school programs. Most students say that their Augustana experience prepared them to succeed in their graduate/professional program either “somewhat more than my peers” or “a lot more than my peers.”
- Most Recent Survey of Recent Graduates: Augustana retained GDA Integrated Services in 2011 to survey graduates from the last 15 years. Sixty-six percent of those graduates have earned or were earning an advanced degree. Fifty-seven percent of the surveyed alumni group with advanced degrees “strongly agreed” that Augustana contributed greatly to their readiness for graduate school. More than two out of three believe they were “better prepared” for graduate school than their peers.
- Thirty-eight percent of those not attending graduate school had their first job offer at graduation or in the summer after graduation. Over half of recent graduates say their first job was related to their major.

Barriers to more effective career placement and possible solutions

Sheila Curran, the college’s external reviewer for career and internship services, holds up the efforts of Wake Forest University, and encourages us to take the following actions:

- A mandate from the board, president, faculty leadership and strategic plan that career outcomes are one of the college’s top priorities.
- Change the culture to view career development as not simply the responsibility of a career development office, but also an “ecosystem” including “faculty, alumni, parents, advisors and the students themselves.” Faculty members and others be better prepared and supported to give student better career advice.

- Provide earlier (and less threatening) engagement of students. University of Chicago has been successful in developing meaningful engagement of roughly 80% of its freshman class last year.
- Career development offices must be in the center of campus, not tucked away in a corner of campus.
- Establish advisory boards for each academic area, including faculty, alumni and parents, to work with students to build the strategies and contacts for successful careers.
- Career support should not be siloed—perhaps combining career services, general graduate school advising, vocational reflection, internships, and on-campus employment into one office.
- Career services offices must move from a facilitation model (we will facilitate for students, but only when they are motivated) to an outcomes model (we will motivate our students and track our success by jobs obtained, not résumés reviewed or students counseled).
- Fund-raising efforts should go to support internships and career services professionals.

Many of the discussions this past year and at the all-campus retreat included emphasis on how to better prepare and facilitate Augustana’s students for post-graduate options, to prepare for a lifetime of achievement. Importantly, it is clear that the culture of campus already has made a significant shift toward developing a more comprehensive strategy to prepare students for their lives after college.

Some strategies and tactics to capitalize on that shift in mindset to move Augustana forward in this vitally important direction include:

1. Build a comprehensive career exploration and advising program, engaging stakeholders from across campus, and dramatically increasing access to career and further education opportunities.
2. Identify career success factors for students, and use those to guide planning.
3. Change the role of career staff to being “orchestrators of opportunity.”

More specifically:

- Increase coordination and improve communication of career opportunities;
- Increase the profile and move the location of the Internships and Careers Office to one more central on campus;
- Revisit staffing and resources of the Internships and Careers Office, to better meet the goals of the campus;
- Leverage Augustana’s relationships with alumni and parents as career experts and advisors to students;
- Involve all campus resources through integration with advising, involving faculty, staff and students;
- Develop more internship opportunities, including campus internships;
- Develop appropriate, cutting-edge communication and search tools to facilitate student/employer matching.

All of these efforts need to be—and can be—connected to Augustana’s mission and our vision for our students.

Evidence of Success:

- Strong admissions rates in graduate/professional schools, compared to peer schools.
- Internships or research projects with faculty for 95% of our students while at Augustana.
- 90% of those graduates not going to graduate school finding full-time positions that require a college degree within six months after graduation.
- Significantly higher levels than peer schools of alumni satisfaction with how Augustana prepares its graduates for careers, five years out and 10 years out.



Strategic Direction #2: Strengthen student accomplishments during college, and success after college, by fully integrating academics, residential life, athletics and co- and extracurricular activities.

Our second strategic direction centers on our students while they live and learn at Augustana College. It focuses on creating an integrated residential liberal arts experience that incorporates all aspects of students' lives on campus. We call it the **Augustana Integrated Residential Liberal Arts Advantage**.

At the core of Augustana's mission is to provide our students a holistic education. More than simply providing knowledge or content, Augustana is committed to offering a challenging education that develops the qualities of mind, spirit and body necessary for a rewarding life of leadership and service in a diverse and changing world. A small, selective, residential campus can provide the means for carrying out that mission.

A residential campus can promote growth, learning and leadership beyond what is gained from any course or text. But many colleges fail to fully take advantage of the fact that they have access to students 24/7 and could intentionally and programmatically engage the entire campus community in a collaborative effort to educate the whole person, and Augustana has been no exception. In our discussions during the past months, we have acknowledged that some of our offices and programs are "silos"—sealed off from the work of other programs and offices. Our campus community recognizes the value of integrated learning experiences, and we have taken many steps in the last five to six years to work across programs to provide excellent opportunities for our students through internships, leadership opportunities and research experiences, among others—but we are still missing many valuable opportunities to collaborate and connect these individual experiences.

Where Augustana does better, however, is in the recognition of the value of student experiences and activities that span disciplines and programs. Our location in the Quad Cities along the Mississippi River—a metropolitan region of 400,000 residents, home to a few Fortune 500 and many mid-sized businesses—offers the students tremendous opportunities for experiential learning and internships. Augustana is poised to take what is already a strength and to develop it into what truly will be an advantage for our students and for the college.

The value of holistic learning across programs and disciplines is reflected in our college-wide Student Learning Outcomes. Adopted by Augustana faculty on November 12, 2012, the Student Learning Outcomes themselves are not content-based or classroom-based outcomes, but instead take into account the broad types of learning that occur on our residential campus. The nine Student Learning Outcomes fall into three broader, overlapping outcome areas: Intellectual Sophistication, Interpersonal Maturity and Intrapersonal Conviction. We also acknowledge explicit methods for developing, processing and meeting these outcomes. As a residential liberal arts college, Augustana offers opportunities inside and outside the classroom that promote these learning outcomes.

But there's work to do. Too frequently our efforts are compartmentalized by program, department or activity, and we work toward providing exceptional student experiences in isolation. The result is a lack of clear, strong connections between our learning outcomes and the various experiences that help facilitate their achievement. Part of learning is metacognitive—recognizing the value of the skills developed throughout an education. By matching opportunities to students' skills and interests, and helping them recognize and integrate the learning that happens in the classroom, during an internship, through a service-learning project or from volunteering, we will challenge them to go further. We want our students to deliberately develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to succeed after graduation, and clearly articulate how each experience contributed to their development and prepared them for a successful future that is productive and meaningful to them. Our goal is to build upon the strong infrastructure we have in place to foster holistic learning and a robust intellectual community.

Student success, especially as measured by retention and graduation rates, depends on availability of necessary services and the effective integration of all learning activities. As noted in the Student Success session at the all-campus retreat in August 2013, students need to see themselves holistically—not only as a football player, a musician, a business major or any other limited role. Finding and exploring common threads across experiences and interests helps foster student success. Through the strategic direction outlined here, Augustana becomes the college that can facilitate holistic growth connecting students to a successful and meaningful future.

During this summer's discussions and at the all-campus retreat, members of the Augustana community identified the following strategic opportunities for improvement:

- Intentional community-building among residential life, academic, athletic and other aspects of college life, an effort based in clear integration and articulation of Student Learning Outcomes in every phase of student life. Possible tactics include:
 - Integrating programming between residential life, student life, athletics and academics;
 - Capitalizing on our strong student leadership programs to develop student leaders who can facilitate student learning in their roles as community advisors, peer mentors, peer career mentors, tutors and academic coaches—while building their own professional skills at the same time;
 - Connecting the work of residence hall student community advisors (CAs) with academic peer mentors to reinforce academic goals within residence halls, and to make academic support more accessible and viewed as the norm of our culture;
 - Naming liaisons to act as “bridges” between units. Liaisons can help identify connections between units and facilitate integration of efforts to improve student learning;
 - Documenting students' academic and non-academic experiences, including student employment on campus as a means of professional development, and teaching students how to communicate that advantage to employers. These may include course-based, independent or mentored research, volunteering, athletic leadership, study abroad, student life, internship experiences or some combination of these;

- Certifying outstanding interdisciplinary and practical experiences consistent with our mission;
- Providing sufficient and appropriately appointed physical space in the residence halls to support integrated student learning.
- Recognizing the connection between retention and graduation rates and academic, social and emotional support, we must identify and fill current service gaps by:
 - Expanding the academic support services available for students to include professional support for math and science, English as a second language, and disability services;
 - Offering comprehensive support for all students to build skills necessary for success in college and beyond (students in transition to a new environment, underprepared, at-risk, unmotivated, or successful and in need of additional challenges);
 - Adopting best practices in peer tutoring, and training peer mentors and/or CAs to be academic coaches for struggling students;
 - Strengthening advising by providing professional development for faculty and expanding the role of student mentors in advising;
 - Adopting a team-based approach to advising by developing teams of faculty, staff and peer career mentors to ensure all students have multiple support systems in place;
 - Ensuring all first-year students have an integrated and high-quality first-year experience;
 - Using technology to identify struggling students and help connect such students with necessary resources;
 - Bolstering employee engagement and rewarding innovation so that employees become stronger proponents of the college and create stronger ties between the students and the institution.
- More intentionally connecting Augustana students to opportunities in the Quad Cities and elsewhere by:
 - Continuing to provide meaningful development over the four years, helping students to connect skills, insights, discoveries and opportunities;
 - Using peer and faculty mentoring to engage students in volunteer efforts, research and creative scholarship, and internships early in their college experience so that these students can contribute effectively to the community as scholars and interns throughout their four years here.

An added benefit to an integrated approach that capitalizes on student engagement is the likely impact on retention and graduation rates. It has long been recognized that engaged students are more committed to their institution and recognize the value of their education. However, a disconnected and unstructured experience can compete with holistic development and success. The plan proposed here provides a philosophical and functional architecture to connect the myriad forms of learning experiences available to our students through our Student Learning Outcomes. While many colleges “talk the talk” of integrated student learning, very few can demonstrate the outcomes effectively. Augustana is uniquely poised to take this step and connect these outcomes to successful careers for our current and future students.

Evidence of success:

- Ensure that all members of the Augustana College community, especially those who interact with students directly, foster learning and help students to 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 percentage increase.

Strategic Direction #3: Address affordability and increase Augustana's value for families

Addressing affordability and increasing value require challenging and changing perceptions. While there are a number of factors that can and will challenge and change perception, there is no simple formula for addressing affordability and increasing value.

Addressing Affordability

There basically are two ways to address affordability: lower the sticker price, or lower the actual cost to attend by increasing financial aid.

The easiest way to illustrate this is to offer the following example:

For the academic year 2013-14, Augustana College has one price (\$35,835 tuition and fees) and 1,142 different costs paid by the 2,509 students who attend.

The reason for the great variation in cost is a result of the impact of merit- and need-based financial assistance programs on what a student pays to attend Augustana.

There are many critics who suggest the price for higher education is too high, resulting in the perception that education is unaffordable. Their main argument is to reduce the price so more students who otherwise would eliminate a college because of price will consider it more seriously. However, there is no data suggesting what that price should be in order to get a look and serious consideration. Furthermore, recent experiences in higher education and corporate America (JC Penney) offer cautionary tales about reducing price. Roger Williams University hired Maguire Associates to conduct a survey about dramatically reducing its price, and discovered that 2 to 1, parents and students preferred higher tuition and large financial aid, compared to a lower price. (Rivard, Ry, "Paper (Tuition) Cuts," *Inside Higher Ed*)

There are others who argue that price is largely irrelevant and that cost (cost after financial aid) is the more important factor to address. The argument for addressing cost is more relevant to colleges in a strong position, but with declining yields and increasing gaps. Many advocates for addressing the cost measure of affordability also make compelling arguments about the positive psychological impact of a family believing they've received a "great deal." Albright College in Reading, Penn., recently was recognized for meeting 100% of demonstrated financial need eliminating the gap between aid and family resources. This is an example of addressing the cost end of affordability. (Weaver, Stephanie, "Albright managing record enrollment," readingeagle.com)

It is very likely that both price and cost need to be addressed over the long term and probably during the duration of the current strategic planning process. But, it is probably not possible to address both simultaneously.

How should Augustana College address affordability in the short term?

At this time it is most prudent for Augustana to address affordability by reducing costs through offering larger merit-based scholarships and increasing the proportion of financial need we meet when offering a financial aid package. Meeting more need and offering more competitive merit-based scholarships will positively impact enrollment and directly impact the perception of affordability at the individual level as a

student and family evaluate the scholarship or financial assistance offer. Because demand is high and we have a qualified admit pool, we are in a good position to address affordability through offering more financial aid. Below are two examples that reinforce this case:

In our effort to slow the growth in discount rate, we've slowed the growth in our merit-scholarship program and our highest scholarship lost real value (67% to 60%) when compared with the proportion of financial need the top award meets. In addition, the average "gap" between the expected family contribution (EFC) and the amount we charge a family has grown from \$6,267 in 2009 to \$8,151 in 2013. Both of these circumstances have occurred during a time when we've seen flat growth in family income and EFC, but an increase in price of about 15%.

Straightforward efforts like restoring the value of our merit-based scholarships and reducing the gap in a targeted way will have a significant impact on affordability and enrollment.

Below are pros and cons to addressing affordability by increasing merit-scholarship assistance and increasing the proportion of financial need we meet:

- +increase enrollment; reduce "gap"; real increase in financial assistance.
- increase in discount rate; lower net revenue per student; does not address price.

How will this short-term strategy impact revenue?

There is no question that a plan that increases financial assistance, even if unfunded, to fill the gap between the resources a family has and what Augustana College traditionally has offered will have an impact on revenue. This plan is not without risk. Restoring the value of our merit-scholarship program and increasing aid to address the growing gap will impact net revenue per student, which has been an important measure especially when we've enjoyed full enrollment. However, addressing the value of our merit-based scholarship program and the gap is estimated to result in a positive gain in enrollment, enabling us to enroll students from groups who in the past have not been able to afford us because of the game, or have been unwilling to pay what we ask because of larger merit awards elsewhere. In some cases an investment of \$3,000 to \$5,000 in financial assistance will have a positive revenue impact of \$18,000 to \$23,000 per student because of increased enrollment. However, this plan is dependent upon meeting recruitment goals. The plan developed by Noel Levitz estimates an increase in enrollment of 50 to 70 students because of the increased financial aid. The estimated increase in revenue is \$1.2 to \$1.5 million, based almost exclusively on student volume increases made possible by shrinking the gap and restoring the value of our merit-based awards. The potential impact on discount rate is modest (.5% to 1%) because we've often had to offer awards at similar levels to actually enroll students in certain bands.

New first-year students	Revenue
2013 – 631	2013 – \$10,634,580
2014 – 705	2014 – \$12,170,501 (increase of \$1,535,921)
Financial aid for first-year students	Net tuition revenue per student increase over 2013 – \$410
2013 – \$11,977,305	.5% increase in NACUBO discount rate over 2013 53.5% v. 53%
2014 – \$13,977,244 (increase of \$1,999,939)	

How should Augustana College increase value and address affordability in the long term?

Because value is based on perception and the values of a student and family, increasing value is a far different calculation for Augustana College and requires a coordinated program- and outcome-driven approach that aligns with the price/cost model.

The strategic plan must focus on increasing the perception of the value of the education offered, so we do not have to offer it at increasing discounts over the long haul. However, until there are clear and distinguishing results and improved outcomes resulting in students choosing to pay more, it will be difficult to notice meaningful increases in value.

Phase 1: Address affordability by restoring competitive merit-based scholarships and targeting a higher proportion of financial need met within high and extreme need cells (2013-14).

Phase 2: Study the possibility of a price change to rule the possibility in or out (2013-14).

Phase 3: Study the feasibility of predictable price/cost increases for sophomore, junior and senior years, resulting in sustained revenue (2013-14).

Phase 4: Introduce a price/cost model that aligns outcome-focused, plan-driven programming that results in sustainable revenue and increased value (2014-15).

Evidence of success:

- Develop a new price/cost structure connected to the strategic direction outlined above.
- Increase the yield for families at or near the median of family income and for new populations that can pay for an appropriate part of their education.
- Implement partnerships with similar institutions to reduce costs/increase opportunities.

Appendix:

What might an outcome-focused, plan-driven price plan look like? What if a college told everyone that the comprehensive fee would increase by \$2,000 in the sophomore year—increasing total price to attend by an additional \$2,000?

And, they went on to say, here's what you get:

- You will declare a major;
- You will choose a mentor/advisor in your chosen major field, and this advisor/mentor is going to meet with you at least three times each term to discuss your progress toward your academic and personal goals and make sure you are on track to meet those goals;
- You will be assigned a career counselor who is familiar with the field you'd like to pursue and the career opportunities it presents.

Could what is described above change operational behavior and be adequately valued at \$2,000? What if a college told everyone that the comprehensive fee would increase by an additional \$2,000 in the junior year—increasing total price by an additional \$2,000?

And, they went on to say, here's what you get:

- You are well into your major with full-time faculty teaching your courses;
- You are really getting to know your advisor and mentor, and this year you will identify your senior capstone project that will open the doors to your post-graduation goals;
- You likely will take advantage of one of our high-impact and life-changing experiences like study abroad, and internship or research;
- You will be meeting or communicating regularly with your assigned career counselor to discuss life after college;
- You will be living in premium apartment-style housing.

Could what is described above change operational behavior and be adequately valued at \$2,000?

What if a college told everyone that the comprehensive fee would increase by an additional \$2,000 in the senior year—increasing total price by an additional \$2,000?

And, they went on to say, here's what you get:

- You will complete a capstone project in an area about which you are passionate, and during this project you will work one-on-one with your advisor;
- You will work one-on-one with your assigned career counselor to explore graduate school or career options;
- You will be able to take a one-credit personal finance course to prepare you for life beyond college;
- You will be inducted into the alumni career network;

Could what is described above change operational behavior and be adequately valued at \$2,000?

- What if a college offered a predictable price increase annually that was tied to specific meaningful experiences?
- Is it possible for a college to establish a "base price" for the first year and increase costs based on experiences for the subsequent years?
- Could colleges be successful in meeting enrollment and revenue targets with this kind of a model?

Strategic Direction #4: Build broader partnerships and opportunities 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.

In our campus discussions, the following ideas emerged as examples of extending Augustana beyond the physical borders of our campus:

1. 100% of students completing internships or study abroad, or undertaking research projects with faculty. These opportunities need not be specifically led or overseen by Augustana faculty.

While we have already made great strides in increasing student engagement in these areas, making this a priority in the strategic plan would ensure that each and every Augustana student participates in at least one of these high-impact learning experiences during his or her college career. By partnering with consortium schools we may be able to expand the opportunities we offer our students.

2. Greater use of asynchronous learning.

Asynchronous learning uses online resources so that classes are not bound by time or place; students can complete much of their coursework anywhere and at any time. Blended learning and flipped classrooms involve students learning a portion of the material outside of the classroom (e.g., through recorded lectures) so that class time can be spent on discussion, application and other active learning methods. Augustana already has adopted this latter model.

3. Greater use of partnerships and consortia with similarly situated colleges to enhance student opportunities, including through online course offerings.

Partnering with similar schools (e.g. those in our Midwestern Alliance for Learning in the Liberal Arts, or MALLA, consortium) would allow us to share resources and multiply opportunities for our students. For example, we might envision seamless enrollment in each other's summer course offerings.

4. Greater use of one or more off-campus locations with consortium schools.

Again, partnering with our consortia schools might allow us to pursue enhanced opportunities for our students: for example, jointly offered study-away domestic programs (e.g. Chicago or Washington, D.C.) or study-abroad programs, taking advantage of faculty expertise and student demand across institutions.

5. Easier educational transitions between community colleges, high schools, other colleges and graduate schools (e.g. 3-2 coordinated-degree programs).

Making this a strategic priority acknowledges the multiple paths that students are now taking to earn college credit, and eventually their degree(s).

Possible Strategic Direction #5: Improve quality by reducing the size of the college, programs and services for a total enrollment of 2,000; or, to maintain our enrollment, improve affordability by eliminating the tuition gap. Each of these options would require a 20% expense reduction.

Maintaining our current price structure (without reducing price) could result in a decrease in the number of students by 20%. Alternatively, if we reduce our price by 20%, it is reasonable to think we could maintain enrollment of 2,500 and perhaps build enrollment. In either case, the college would likely need to reduce its expenses in the range of 20%.

Consider the following:

- Maintaining enrollment of 2,500 students requires an entering class of between 660 and 670 first-year students, plus 50 transfer students. The most recent entering class was 5% short of the break-even goal, notwithstanding an increase in applications of nearly 50%.
- The number of high school graduates in Illinois is projected to decline by 9% between 2012 and 2025 (WICHE). There will be greater reduction in the number of high school graduates from families with substantial means than from families with lesser means.
- Parents and students are increasingly unwilling to borrow significant sums for college.
- The gap between our cost per student and the estimated financial contribution of families is about 20% of our cost per student. Reduction of costs to families by 20% would enable many more families to afford an Augustana education. Albright College recently reduced their gap in this way, with good enrollment results, though with significant net revenue issues. Albright had excess capacity and a lower cost structure.

The strategic planning steering committee rejected both suggestions as not strengthening Augustana. Following either of these strategies would have the following consequences:

- Reduction of costs by 20% likely would entail significant reduction of the student/faculty ratio, significant reductions in student services, elimination of Augie Choice and an alarming build-up of deferred maintenance, materially impacting the quality of the Augustana experience.
- Reduction of many of Augustana's distinctive advantages would diminish the reputation that Augustana has worked so hard to build.
- Competing as an average college commodifies Augustana, which is a losing strategy. Without our advantages, we might need to enter into a cost-cutting war with other colleges, in a sort of race to the bottom.

This alternative—the alternative of adding or building upon nothing—is included as an alternative for discussion, not because it is recommended. It is far better to increase the value of an Augustana College education to continue to justify families' investments in Augustana.