

MESSIAH COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES BOARD SESSION I

DRAFT OF STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2020

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 2016-20 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 2016-20 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 One:** Messiah College will effectively and hospitably advocate for religious freedom and institutional autonomy.
 - 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.
 - Engage in a continuous review of religious freedom challenges and proactively prepare effective institutional responses to potential legislative, regulatory and/or accreditation challenges.
 - 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 Two:** Messiah College will successfully promote the outcomes of its positive economic and social impact on the mid-Atlantic region (and beyond).

- 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.
 - 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.
 - Design and launch a webpage and other resources to share the narrative of the positive economic and social impact of Messiah College.
 - Institute a campus-wide theme of "Promoting the Common Good" for 2017-2018 – keynote lecturers will be invited to address this theme, focus on theme at Community Day, in the fall issue of the Bridge, etc.
- **Goal Three:** Messiah College will determine whether to apply for university status in response to the needs of student recruitment and the changing academic program.
 - Appoint a presidentially led task force to 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 One:** Messiah College will effectively recruit and retain a diverse student population that includes an increased number of domestic and international students.
 - Develop multicultural recruitment strategies related to building relationships with key schools, churches, and community leaders.
 - Increase retention of multicultural students.
- **Goal Two:** Messiah College will enhance its efforts to recruit, retain, and graduate transfer students.
 - Expand online undergraduate programming to meet enhanced recruitment goals in transfer enrollment.
 - Complete program to program articulation agreements with regional community colleges.
 - Revise transfer credit politics and procedures to facilitate timely completion of degrees.
 - Implement strategies to increase retention of transfer students.
- **Goal Three:** Messiah College will enhance its efforts to recruit high school students through dual enrollment and summer academic programming.
 - Expand online undergraduate programming to meet enhanced recruitment goals for dual enrollment.
 - Develop an integrated summer academic camp program.

- **Goal Four:** Messiah College will successfully expand and support new graduate programs by 2020.
 - Fully implement a School of Graduate Studies.
 - Launch graduate programming in occupational therapy, physical therapy and nursing practice.
 - Develop additional graduate programming with particular attention to athletic training.

Theme 3: Promoting Educational Excellence for a Changing Student Body

Focus

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

- **Goal One:** Messiah College will hire, develop and support an engaged workforce and ensure that all employees are fully equipped to deliver educational programming to our 21st century student body.
 - Nurture a stronger multicultural community by developing multicultural competencies for faculty and staff as informed by a campus climate survey.
 - Conduct a campus-wide employee assessment to identify institutional strengths and concerns and align appropriate resources with strategic plan priorities.
- **Goal Two:** Messiah College will more effectively recruit and retain a diverse faculty and staff.
 - Designate resources to support improved hiring processes to identify, cultivate and recruit a diverse employee base.
 - Provide systematic support for mentoring and facilitating social connections for diverse faculty and staff.
- **Goal Three:** Messiah College will foster the use of high-impact teaching and learning strategies to support the success of a changing student body.
 - Align existing resources for faculty to pursue professional development focused on student learning in the context of our changing demographics and on educational technology.
 - Fully implement the Teaching and Learning Initiative.
 - Review College-wide educational objectives critical to the success of our changing student body with a particular focus on digital proficiency.
- **Goal Four:** Messiah College will increase available opportunities for mentored undergraduate student research.
 - Develop a structure to promote and support undergraduate research.
 - Raise funds to support undergraduate research across disciplines.
- **Goal Five:** Messiah College will offer the necessary facilities to support the educational experience of our students.
 - Action steps will be coordinated with the College's facilities master plan, and will include residence hall renovations, finance lab, etc.

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

- **Goal Two:** Messiah College will increase its financial resource base by \$45 million.
 - Increase the institutional endowment to \$150 million.
 - Reduce endowment spending from 5.1 percent to 4.9 percent.
 - Employ investment strategies designed to achieve growth of 8.5 percent annually.
 - Raise \$5-\$7 million in new endowment funds.
 - Raise \$15 million in annual restricted funds.
 - Generate cash flow operating surpluses that equal 1-2 percent of annual operating revenue.

- **Goal Three:** Messiah College will implement strategies to make efficient use of existing human, operational and programming resources.
 - 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.
 - Review divisional policies, processes, and programs to increase efficiency and productivity.

- **Goal Four:** Develop and implement strategies to decrease the debt burden for all undergraduate students.
 - Action steps will be coordinated with the College's enrollment management plan.