

Augustana 2020: Enhancing Student Success, Before and After Graduation—A Strategic Plan

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I am very pleased to share a draft of *Augustana 2020*, a strategic plan that will shape the college's direction for years to come. *Augustana 2020* will strengthen our mission to educate students for a changing world, developing and promoting skills and values more crucial than ever in the 21st century. As a residential college of the liberal arts and sciences, Augustana is in a strong position to do so. This strategic plan will advance the success of our students, our graduates and our mission.

Augustana 2020 is student-centered, focusing on four strategic directions:

1. Enhanced Preparation, to ensure students have distinguished career and graduate school successes

We will develop new relationships and resources so all students will have the knowledge, confidence and specific tools to connect their education with immediate goals after graduation and changing goals throughout their lives. Our graduates will find professions that honor their aspirations and investment, and vocations through which they will effect positive change in the world.

2. Integrated Experiences, to facilitate transformative learning

We reaffirm our focus as a residential liberal arts college that provides a values-laden, intentionally designed holistic education, and we will expand the impact of this integrated living and learning experience for all our students. The curriculum and co-curricular experiences will take full advantage of our comprehensive learning resources as a residential campus in the 21st century.

3. Affordability and Value, to increase access and expand opportunities

This strategic plan will expand our reach to provide more students an Augustana education. By 2020, Augustana College will offer this high-quality education to an academically qualified student body drawn from across the nation and around the world. We will improve our value by addressing affordability as we advance student-learning outcomes through greater success on campus and after graduation.

4. Diversity and Inclusion, to ensure that Augustana is welcoming to all, and all graduates are prepared for a diverse and changing world

Being a diverse and inclusive community, welcoming to all, is central to the college's mission, reflects a core community principle of inclusion, and advances the identified learning outcome of developing students' intercultural competence. We will ensure inclusion at all levels of the college, student body, faculty, staff, administration and the Board of Trustees. Augustana will work to achieve equity in the experience of all students with the goal that students of all backgrounds can achieve high levels of learning, graduation and success.

Achieving our goals will require active participation of the campus community and partners in the broader community. Foundational to the plan is a commitment to invest in a workforce of passionate, innovative and entrepreneurial employees who are strong advocates for Augustana. Similarly, by strengthening connections and partnerships in the community, our students will develop skills and experiences they can apply to their passions and new opportunities in a changing world.

We are excited and confident these strategic directions will enhance the Augustana experience and preparation for our students. Changes and improvements in each area of college operations are anticipated, and actions will be accomplished in an incremental and integrated fashion. For each strategy, progress against the plan will be reported as part of the President's Annual Report.

This draft reflects input from many stakeholders and countless hours of discussion, drafting and review. I thank the faculty, staff, students and alumni who have worked so hard to develop this plan. As we proceed, I welcome your feedback and comments about these three core strategies. I solicit your engagement and commitment as we work together to strengthen Augustana's mission through implementation of *Augustana 2020*.

Steven C. Bahls
President, Augustana College

Preamble: Augustana 2020 – A Strategic Plan

VISION FOR THE COLLEGE

Augustana 2020 will strengthen our distinctive value as a residential liberal arts and sciences college located in the Quad Cities that fully prepares its students for post graduate success. Our students will make greater gains in the skills, dispositions and interpersonal sensibilities needed to achieve their career goals and secure meaningful lives of accomplishment and contribution. Augustana will offer intentionally designed curriculum and integrated learning experiences through active engagement, both within and outside the classroom, that recognize the holistic nature of student learning and development. This curriculum and these experiences will take full advantage of the comprehensive learning resources of a residential liberal arts and sciences college. We will purposefully connect the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are the hallmark of a liberal arts education to our students' post-graduate career plans.

Augustana 2020 will offer this high-quality education to a student body drawn from across the nation and the world; we will improve our value by addressing affordability and reducing the financial aid gap for students who have high need.

Augustana 2020 will strengthen our mission to educate students for a changing world, developing and promoting skills and values more crucial than ever in the 21st century.

Augustana 2020 consists of four student-centered strategies—with sets of metrics and actions identified for each. Actions are intended to be accomplished in an incremental and integrated fashion. Changes and improvements in each area of college operations are anticipated. Progress against plan for each strategy will be reported annually as part of the President's Annual Report. This plan will ensure mission effectiveness and sustainability.

The guiding principle in developing our four strategic directions has been to first focus on competitive strategies, asking about major, achievable directions that advance Augustana's mission. Strategies are identified within the context of **who** we are and **what** we are trying to accomplish. Competitive strategies and related action plans make the institution distinctive. Tactics, then, are **how** the institution will achieve its strategic directions. We have resisted the temptation to include tactics, and have focused instead on what we believe are both excellent and viable strategies for Augustana College.

Focusing on the strategic directions identified in *Augustana 2020* does not mean that other important things we do at Augustana (our commitment to diversity, international programs, or scholarship) or who we are as a college are no longer imperative. To the contrary, Augustana College is in a position of strength because of what we have done and who we are, and that is central to ensuring that the strategic directions that make up *Augustana 2020* lead us to strengthen our mission and achieve our vision for the college.

FOUR STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCED STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND SUCCESS

Strategy I: Enhanced Preparation. Explicitly focus the Augustana experience to better assist students in taking the next step in their vocational journeys through high graduate school admission rates and timely placement in rewarding and meaningful jobs and careers.

Action plan: Place career preparation and post-graduate planning as essential parts of fulfilling our mission.

1. Implement Augustana CareerConnections as a signature program of the college that better integrates advising with career and professional development and campus-wide student internship opportunities (implement in 2014-2015, unless otherwise stated).
 - a. Develop a Career Community of alumni, parents and friends to expand career opportunities and potential sources of useful career-related information.
 - b. Relocate the services currently provided by the Community Engagement Center and Advising

- b. Relocate the services currently provided by the Community Engagement Center and Advising Office to the heart of campus. Expand and reorganize the Internships and Careers Office into the Office of Career and Professional Development.
 - c. Expand career development services to recent alumni. (2015-2016)
 - d. Develop more comprehensive, dynamic online resources for internship and job opportunities, skills training and the like for career preparation and growth.
 - e. Further develop research and creative scholarship opportunities for students that will lead to high-profile presentations, publications, scholarships, and awards.
 - f. Focus on internships and applied opportunities, particularly in the Quad Cities, that facilitate both career and graduate school preparation and opportunities (including grad school application and other supports).
 - g. Target employers and universities with graduate and professional programs to develop pipelines for our graduates.
 - h. Help students develop professional ePortfolios or a graduate school statement of purpose with the goal of 90% of all graduating students developing either an ePortfolio or a graduate or professional school statement of purpose. (2015-2016)
 - i. Include vocational discernment and career and professional development in the first-year orientation, with related structured activities for 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year students.
2. Ensure that campus-wide events, such as the three campus-wide Symposia, highlight and integrate advising and career development. (2013-2014)
 3. Ensure students develop professional competencies that enable them to pursue a successful and meaningful career path.
 - a. Pilot programs with a limited number of similar institutions to deliver blended or online learning in ways that add depth to majors, offer new areas of learning, and enhance student learning outcomes and access. (over the next 5 years as opportunities arise)
 - b. Work with faculty to develop certificate programs (and other competency-based education programs) that will provide students with additional credentials to distinguish themselves upon graduation. (over the next two years)
 - c. Experiment with online and other third party resources for our students to achieve certain competencies when such resources can best meet the needs of our students (such as certification from Lynda.com and ALEKS). (2014-2015)
 - d. Establish on-campus internships in such areas as leadership, civic engagement, entrepreneurship, social justice, sustainability, and intercultural understanding. (2015-2016)

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS:

- I-1 For graduate school applicants, acceptance rate of 95% to their first or second graduate/professional school of choice
- I-2 For non-graduate school applicants, full-time employment rates of 90% within 6 months of graduation in positions requiring a college degree
- I-3 80% of recent alumni in the workforce indicating that Augustana prepared them well to succeed in their current positions
- I-4 90% of recent alumni in graduate school indicating that Augustana prepared them well to succeed in their current program
- I-5 90% of students provided with internships (or similar intensive practical training experiences) or intensive/significant research projects

Strategy II—Integrated Experiences. Connect the distinctive aspects and outcomes of an integrated residential college experience to what is most valuable for success in life after college by ensuring that all students combine an individualized set of curricular, co- and extra-curricular experiences that maximizes their educational development and success in college and provides superior preparation for life after college.

Action plan: Reimagine the relationship between academic and co- and extra-curricular activities to more effectively prepare students for post-graduate achievement.

1. Ensure all academic and co- and extra-curricular programs are rigorous, meet the college's expected student learning outcomes and demonstrably prepare students to undertake self-authorship of their education to meet the demands of the workplace and graduate and professional schools. (ongoing)
2. Create intentional co- and extra-curricular programs designed by faculty and student life professionals that capitalize on and place value in the experiential learning taking place outside of the classroom. (2014-2015)
 - a. Fully develop the conceptual Augustana ARCH program (Academics, Residential life, Co-curricular/ extra-curricular activities, and Hands-on learning) to design experience-laden learning that leverages our location and results in Augustana outcomes including but not limited to collaborative leadership, intercultural competence and ethical citizenship.
 - b. Assign an associate dean to work with all stakeholders in integrating student learning outcomes throughout the curriculum, co- and extra-curricular activities, and student life.
 - c. Work with faculty and staff to develop reporting measures that clearly demonstrate integrated learning.
 - d. Develop a meaningful co-curricular transcript and establish effective ways to help students successfully use this tool to obtain employment or graduate and professional school admission in their field.
3. Develop an advising system focused on holistic student development including academic, co-curricular, social, and career goal achievement. Advise each student using a team including a faculty member, student life and/or CareerConnections staff, and upper-class students. (2014-2015)
4. Build on the success of the Reading/ Writing Center to incorporate academic support for students for whom English is a second language and for students with learning disabilities. Increase success-oriented student programming and support in traditional and non-traditional venues. (ongoing)
5. Implement best practices in retention strategies. (2014-2015)
 - a. Develop a robust year-long First Year Experience sequence creating an environment for every student to identify multiple niches that fit their passions and gifts.
 - b. Replace our early alert retention system with a more robust program to proactively identify students at risk.
 - c. Socially integrate students into the college community through first-year neighborhoods, interest groups, theme areas for older students, and living/learning communities.
 - d. Provide adequate support for mental health services.
6. Develop a program in digital innovation through the Center for Faculty Enrichment to support faculty in using available technology to improve student learning outcomes and to facilitate integration of in- and out-of-class learning. (2015-2016).
7. Involve our students, faculty, staff, and administration in efforts to ensure that the Quad Cities is a culturally rich community that inspires innovation and lifelong learning (ongoing).

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS:

- II-1 Intentional integration of academic experiences and pedagogy, residential life experiences, co- and extra-curricular activities and hands-on learning made possible only at a residential college, with every area of the college able to articulate how it supports and advances student learning and student success. This will be demonstrated by connecting all curricular, co- and extra-curricular, and hands-on experiences to the college-wide student learning outcomes.
- II-2 Co-curricular transcripts available to all students.
- II-3 Improvement of retention rates to 90% (3 year average) after the first year and improve four-year graduation rates to 75% (3 year average).
- II-4 Evidence of students taking ownership of their education and future careers, as measured by improvement in Student Survey results and Graduate Survey results in areas of student engagement.

Strategy III–Affordability and Value. Address affordability and increase Augustana’s value to students in order to sustain enrollment.

Action plan: Reduce core costs where possible, reduce unmet financial need and maintain a competitive recruiting program designed to achieve enrollment targets.

1. Reduce the financial aid gap for high-need students, particularly those who are high performers. (2013-2014)
2. Demonstrate the benefits of Augustana’s high value programs (e.g., Augie Choice) in order to progressively decrease merit aid that is in excess of demonstrated financial need. (2016-2017)
3. Develop a plan of predictable, guaranteed comprehensive fee control. (2015-2016)
4. Streamline matriculation for transfer students and develop agreements with community colleges that provide a formalized and accessible pathway for student transfer to Augustana. (2015-2016)
5. Ensure Augustana has a national presence by increasing out-of-region enrollment from 17% of the student body to 22% within five years while maintaining comparable net revenue per student. (2018-2019)
6. Ensure Augustana has an international presence by increasing international student enrollment from 3% to 8% within five years while maintaining comparable net revenues per student. (2018-2019)
7. Create a culture where all internal constituencies continually examine key processes to improve outcomes for our students and minimize unnecessary expenditures. (2014-2016)

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS:

- III-1 Increased perceptions of affordability based on a new price/cost structure model.
- III-2 Net revenue consistently sufficient to support the human, physical, technology and financial resources necessary to deliver the high value programs to students contemplated by this plan, at a cost families can afford.
- III-3 Implementation of multiple mutually beneficial partnerships with similar institutions that result in expanded opportunities to improve affordability.

Strategy IV – Diversity, Inclusion and Equity. Ensure that Augustana is a community committed to cherishing diversity, promoting inclusion and welcoming all.

Action Plan: Strengthen diversity, inclusion and equity across campus, and create pathways that advance our diversity at all levels. Conduct programming, operations and the campus culture with equity as a goal, so that all students have the particular tools and resources they need to succeed.

1. Develop the resources to offer additional funded financial aid with goal of increasing enrollment of students from historically underrepresented communities. (ongoing)
 - a. Create new scholarships through the capital campaign.
 - b. Develop financial capacity to replace MAP grants, if not funded by the State.
2. Take positive steps to engender among all students a similar sense of belonging at Augustana by inventorying new practices and developing a set of best practices to improve diversity and inclusion. (2016-2017)
 - a. Hire Chief Diversity Officers to assess, coordinate, leverage and improve current diversity initiatives across campus.
 - b. Maintain diversity inventory, update semiannually and share with the community to enable awareness and promotion of all efforts toward greater diversity and inclusion.
 - c. Require diversity and inclusion training for faculty, staff, administration and board members.
 - d. Increase diversity of Augustana's workforce (see IV.3).
 - e. Develop an Equity Scorecard to track outcomes and evidence of success.
 - f. Review policies and procedures toward greater equity.
3. Take positive steps to increase the diversity of our trustees, faculty and staff. (2016-2017 and ongoing)
 - a. Trusteeship committee to continue to recruit diverse candidates for board service.
 - b. The provost will engage in discussions with faculty hiring committees about achieving the goals set forth in President Bahls' diversity statement issued March 2016, and will develop a set of best practices for faculty hiring. The provost will review all hires, consistent with the law, to achieve the goals set forth herein.
 - c. The director of human resources will engage in discussions with hiring managers to develop best practices in hiring to ensure that administrative and staff hiring achieves the goals set forth in President Bahls' diversity statement issued March 2016. The director of human resources will review all hires, consistent with the law, to achieve the goals set forth herein.
4. Embrace dialogues about race, diversity, equity and social justice. (2016-2017 and ongoing)
 - a. Challenge faculty to develop a more robust diversity requirement for general education, to focus on diversity, inclusion and privilege as outlined below.
 - b. Provost will develop a signature celebration of community diversity.
 - c. Continue to promote and participate in Sustained Dialogues program.
 - d. Introduce training programs for all community members and students in Fall 2016.
5. Prepare for greater numbers of historically underrepresented students, international students and transfer students. (2016-2017)
 - a. Evaluate program and staffing models and resource constraints.
6. Continue to strengthen systems and programs that help historically underrepresented students, international students and transfer students thrive. (2016-2017 and ongoing)

- a. Continue to make mentors available to diverse student populations; develop programming to help retain students and identify new mentors.
 - b. Continue promotion and exploration, through CORE, of internship opportunities for international students.
 - c. Periodically survey experiential learning and post-graduate outcomes for underrepresented students and international students.
 - d. Charge chief diversity officer and leadership of CORE to develop plans and programs to ensure post-graduate outcomes are equal for the various demographic groups.
7. Implement a robust program of bystander intervention to encourage all to address and challenge bias-related incidents. (2016)
- a. Continue existing bystander training.
 - b. Explore opportunities for bystander programs that will allow greater participation.
 - c. Encourage employees to model and enable interventions of inappropriate behaviors.
8. As part of the college's curricular revision with respect to semester conversion, work with faculty to develop curricula and programming that reflect a more diverse student body. (Fall 2019)
- a. Challenge faculty, as part of the review of courses for semester conversation, to develop these changes.
 - b. Charge chief diversity officer with supporting faculty in making these changes.
9. Board of Trustees to annually review campus climate issues and progress toward resolution of concerns. (2017 and ongoing)
- a. Employee and Student Engagement Committee of the board to monitor campus climate and report to full board on periodic basis.
10. Exercise leadership within the Quad-Cities community as it endeavors to promote diversity, advance inclusion and be welcoming to all. (2017 and ongoing)
- a. Support and encourage community leadership among employees
 - b. Create inventory of employees involved in community leadership roles to promote diversity and advance inclusion.
 - c. The college president and the director of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion will help lead Q2030 efforts for a more diverse community.

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS:

- IV-1 Continued increase in diversity of student body.
- IV-2 Survey data indicate a more equal sense of belonging at Augustana for all demographic groups.
- IV-3 Equal retention and graduation rates for all demographic groups.
- IV-4 Similar participation rates in experiential learning among all demographic groups.
- IV-5 Survey data indicate similar post-graduate outcomes (e.g., employment and educational attainment)
- IV-6 Continued increase in the diversity of faculty, staff and administrators, particularly racial diversity.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS OF *AUGUSTANA 2020*

- RI-1 Double the principal amount of our endowment to \$250 million within the next decade (not considering market growth).
- RI-2 Examine all operations and support areas for process improvements and other options that might free funds for strategic plan implementation.
- RI-3 Work with faculty leadership to develop a plan, within our current resources, to free up time for the advising necessary to implement these strategies by accomplishing supporting action plans.
- RI-4 Maintain and strengthen a healthy institutional culture that values shared and personal responsibility and collaboration in support of student learning.
- RI-5 Invest in faculty, administration, and staff development by establishing programs that foster and support the development of skills needed to accomplish *Augustana 2020*.
- RI-6 Assess and provide IT resources necessary to support the plan.
- RI-7 Renovate and repurpose Olin, College Center, Bergendoff and the older residence halls in ways that explicitly advance student learning.
- RI-8 Maintain transparency in our communication and invest in a workforce of employees who are valued for their passion, innovation and entrepreneurship, who are committed to student learning and improving it wherever possible, and who are empowered and trusted to implement this plan.
- RI-9 Establish an *Augustana 2020* implementation team, with responsibility to oversee implementation of the plan and provide periodic reports on our progress.

Augustana 2020 cannot be implemented without the consistent effort of our faculty, staff and Board of Trustees. Implementation of this plan will involve hard work and difficult choices, to which we are committed. Critical to the strategic plan also are the efforts of our alumni and friends to support the college in providing the best possible education to the next generation of Augustana students.

Augustana 2020 will strengthen Augustana financially and ensure the college remains focused on its mission throughout the 21st century. *Augustana 2020* will provide greater value for our students and sustain a demand for an Augustana education during these challenging times for liberal arts colleges. In this age of entrepreneurship and multiple careers, Augustana's liberally educated graduates have a great opportunity to impact the changing world as citizens and leaders. By accomplishing our strategic goals together, we will ensure their success.