



January 17, 2017

The Board of Directors of Wittenberg University,

On behalf of the University Planning Commission (UPC), we are submitting to you Wittenberg University Strategic Plan 2022: Renewing the Promise. You will recall that the strategic planning process began with a vote by the Board in February 2016 and a charge from then Board Chair Tom Murray and Interim President Helton to form a Commission consisting of representative stakeholders from across the Wittenberg community to develop and present to the Board a strategic plan for the University at its February 2017 meeting. In the nearly yearlong process that ensued, the 28 members of the University Planning Commission engaged hundreds of members of Wittenberg's various constituencies, assessed the University's current state across a range of measures, reviewed strategic plans from dozens of peer institutions, and drafted, shared, revised, and honed the document that would become the enclosed strategic plan.

The plan is borne out of the confluence of two shaping imperatives: the need for strategic direction for the University in challenging times, and the limitations imposed by significant transitions in University leadership at the presidential and Board levels. With the anticipated arrival of a visit team from our regional accrediting body, the Higher Learning Commission, in December, 2016, and the fact that our last strategic plan, *Distinctively Wittenberg: A Vision for Excellence*, had effectively sunsetted in 2013, waiting to begin the planning process was not a realistic option.

What emerged from our work (Board members Jonathan Eilert and Eric Rusnak both served as members of the UPC) was, in the words of the charge, a "dynamic and focused strategic plan," one that UPC members began to refer to affectionately as Wittenberg's "get well" plan. The plan has been carefully calibrated to make progress on key University initiatives and priorities within its five year horizon, while also preserving a role for the exercise of leadership by the University's new president. (To cite a specific and important example: the strategic plan calls for the launch of a comprehensive campaign but does not prescribe priorities or themes for that campaign.) The strategic plan approved by the Board 12 years ago included 8 goals and 42 objectives; the plan you have before you has only 3 goals and 10 strategies/objectives.

The plan calls for growth in several key areas and continued improvement in operational efficiency; in this way, it is positioned as the logical complement to the difficult work of the past five years in cutting expenses and improving the University's bottom line. The plan will, if executed properly, achieve the Board's three-year vision statement approved at our October meeting, will focus the University on our mission and core business, and will lead us to a significantly improved financial position as we confront uncertain times in higher education.

In addition to Renewing the Promise, the UPC also has prepared an "Operational Agenda" which identifies campus processes and procedures that need to be improved for the University to be successful in achieving its mission and also for the achievement of the goals in the strategic plan. The items included in the Operational Agenda are not strategic per se, but they are crucial to the well-functioning of the University. A draft of the Operational Agenda, currently in the final stages of revision, will be shared with the Board at the February meeting for

information. Finally, President Helton will ask a subset of the UPC to continue the work of planning for the implementation and monitoring of the plan in the time period from February 15 to August 15, and to do so in consultation with our new campus leader.

We are grateful to everyone who has contributed to the planning process, the members of the University Planning Commission, and especially those who provided leadership to the UPC: Vice President for Strategic Initiatives Ty Buckman, Chemistry Professor Pete Hanson, and our process consultant Jane Dockery of Wright State University's Applied Policy Research Institute. We look forward to a discussion of the plan and its priorities at the first plenary of our Board meeting in two weeks.

With kind regards,

Richard Helton, Ph.D.

Interim President

Reverend Jonathan Eibert

Chair, Board of Directors

Wittenberg University Strategic Plan 2022: Renewing the Promise

February 2017

Prepared by the University Planning Commission



Mission: Wittenberg University provides a liberal arts education dedicated to intellectual inquiry and wholeness of person within a diverse residential community. Reflecting its Lutheran heritage, Wittenberg challenges students to become responsible global citizens, to discover their callings, and to lead personal, professional, and civic lives of creativity, service, compassion, and integrity.

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The Mission and Values of Wittenberg University

Wittenberg University provides a liberal arts education dedicated to intellectual inquiry and wholeness of person within a diverse residential community. Reflecting its Lutheran heritage, Wittenberg challenges students to become responsible global citizens, to discover their callings, and to lead personal, professional, and civic lives of creativity, service, compassion, and integrity.

Liberal Arts

Since its founding in 1845, Wittenberg's curriculum has centered on the liberal arts as an education that develops the individual's capacity to think, read, and communicate with precision, understanding, and imagination. We are dedicated to education in the core disciplines of the arts and sciences and in pre-professional education grounded in the liberal arts.

Intellectual Inquiry

Wittenberg embraces the life of the mind. We promote high standards of artistic, scholarly, and scientific inquiry among our students and faculty. Teaching and research at Wittenberg emphasize the discovery of new knowledge as well as the learning of received wisdom. Intellectual inquiry is enhanced by the thoughtful participation of diverse peoples with diverse perspectives. We are committed to bringing to the lives of our students an enduring passion for learning, which requires risk-taking, persistence, reflection, and high ethical standards.

Wholeness of Person

Members of the Wittenberg community support each other in the personal search for balance that characterizes wholeness of person. To promote leadership, confidence, and community engagement, we help every student develop in harmony intellectual capabilities, aesthetic sense, physical well-being, spiritual identity, and social relationships.

Community of Learners

A purposeful and intentionally diverse community, centered on a residential campus, sustains education in the liberal arts and the exploration of complex and competing ideas within an ethos of accountability and support. From this community, we serve and engage our urban home of Springfield and the broader communities around the globe. By affirming the dignity of every person and fostering a spirit of respect, we create and expand opportunities to pursue knowledge in and out of the classroom.

Lutheran Heritage

Wittenberg expresses its Lutheran heritage through its continuing relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, its welcome to people of all beliefs and backgrounds, its commitment to academic freedom and excellence, its exploration of the relationship between faith and learning, its promotion of campus worship life, its encouragement of reflection upon religious views and values, and its commitment to service to the community and the world.

Global Citizenship

A Wittenberg education prepares students for the challenge and responsibility of global citizenship. Through our curriculum, study-abroad opportunities, and the enriching presence of international

students, we engage the complexity of the human experience, learning about and from cultures around the world. We are committed to providing opportunities for students to interact with others of widely different backgrounds, seeking common solutions to problems facing our world.

Calling

Wittenberg values the unique contributions each individual can make in responding to the needs of neighbors both near and far. We encourage all students to discern their vocations and to understand the meaningful connection between self-fulfillment and service to the world.

Creativity

Creativity is central to the study of the arts and sciences and to problem solving in all areas of inquiry. Creativity requires the free and open exchange of ideas, the ability to value and imagine different perspectives, and the intellectual tools necessary to make personal contributions in any area of study. We are committed to providing opportunities for students to explore new areas of knowledge and to form the intellectual associations supportive of the creative life.

Service

Service provides an intentional opportunity to give back to the world and to promote social justice. Service requires us to learn about community needs, about who we are, and about what we can contribute. We are dedicated as faculty, staff, and students to advancing the common good as local citizens and as members of the global community.

Compassion

Compassion requires a broad knowledge of ourselves and of others, and of all our joys and ills. It combines an awareness of suffering with a desire to respond. At Wittenberg, we educate the mind to understand and we educate the heart to care.

Integrity

Integrity means honesty and fidelity to the highest ethical standards, which are fundamental to teaching, learning, and personal growth. We encourage our students to pursue knowledge and truth with moral courage and reflection, and so to live their lives.

[Available at: <http://www5.wittenberg.edu/about/mission.html>]

Charge to the University Planning Commission from President Richard Helton and Chair of the Board of Directors Thomas Murray:

At an important time in the life of our historic University, the University Planning Commission will lead the entire campus community in an open and consultative process to gather input and generate ideas; will assess the University's current human, financial, curricular, co-curricular, and other resources and challenges and review the demographic, cultural, and economic conditions external to the University likely to shape its future; will draft and share with the community for feedback a dynamic and focused strategic plan that will position the University for success and will include ongoing monitoring and updating based on identified metrics and benchmarks.

The University Planning Commission will at all times consider the larger good of the University in its process and deliberations, will hold bi-monthly meetings with the University President to update him on its progress, will provide reports to the Board of Directors at its May and October Board meetings, and the Commission will bring to the Board of Directors at its February 2017 meeting a final recommendation for a strategic plan. *[25 February 2016]*

University Planning Commission Roster

Co-Chairs:

Dr. Ty Buckman
Vice President for Strategic Initiatives

Dr. Peter Hanson
Faculty Executive Board Chair

Members:

Mr. Philip Buford '17
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The Rev. Jonathan Eilert
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Ms. Casey Gill
Dean of Students

Mr. Randy Freebourn
Vice President for Finance and Administration

Ms. Karen Gerboth
Vice President for Marketing and Communications

Dr. Margaret Goodman
Faculty Executive Board member

Ms. Karen Hunt
Executive Director of Admission

Dr. Tom Kaplan
Dean of the School of Community Education

Ms. Wendy Kobler
Vice President for Advancement

Ms. Jessica Nazareth '18

Mr. Crispin Prebys
Faculty member, at-large

Dr. Cynthia Richards
Faculty Executive Board member

Mr. Eric Rusnak '00
Board of Directors, Alumni Board

Ms. Allison Scaia '09
Alumni Board

Mr. Doug Schantz
Director, Office of Student Accounts

Mr. Marty Uhle
Board of Directors

Dr. Gary Williams
Director of Athletics and Recreation

Dr. Nancy Woehrle
Faculty member, at-large

Dr. Brian Yontz
Faculty Executive Board Member

Dr. Mary Jo Zembar
Interim Provost

Consulting Members:

Dr. Ed Hasecke
Director of General Education

Mr. Rick Mickool
Chief Information Officer

The Rev. Anders Tune
Campus Pastor

The Rev. Rachel Tune
Campus Pastor

Ex-Officio Member:

Dr. Darby Hiller
Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs and Institutional Research

Process Consultant:

Ms. Jane Dockery, Applied Policy Research Institute, Wright State University

Wittenberg University Strategic Plan 2022: Renewing the Promise

In February 2016, ten years after the official adoption of “Distinctively Wittenberg,” the Board of Directors called for the formation of a University Planning Commission (UPC) to bring back in one year’s time “a dynamic and focused strategic plan,” which would guide the University for the next five years and beyond. The UPC set about engaging the Wittenberg community in the planning process, holding Open Space sessions to gather ideas and feedback from all major University constituencies. By the end of July, the UPC had engaged hundreds of Wittenberg stakeholders and friends in facilitated conversations, on and off campus, asking them to reflect on Wittenberg’s future and bringing their questions and ideas into the planning process. From June to August, seven Thematic Groups with more than 80 total participants were formed around key themes that emerged from the earlier Open Space sessions. The Thematic Groups toured campus, held focus group meetings, and drew upon an array of University data sources to generate current state reports and desired future state reports in their respective areas of focus.

From late summer through the fall semester of 2016, the UPC synthesized its research and feedback and shared the results with the campus. In September and October, a draft of eight strategic and operational priorities were displayed in Thomas Library for open responses followed by a distribution of the draft in survey form. In November, a second revision of the plan, now divided into a strategic plan and a separate operational agenda, was introduced at a series of facilitated open forums, along with another campus-wide survey that included the full text of both documents. In December, the UPC continued the revision process and also began to outline implementation and monitoring strategies for the plan.

The new strategic plan does not seek to capture all of the ideas and suggestions uncovered by the process up to this point; rather, it focuses on the most promising initiatives and areas of development that align with Wittenberg’s vision, mission, and our historical moment. Given the current challenges confronting higher education and the ongoing need to ensure Wittenberg’s financial equilibrium, the plan defines three key areas of focus.

First, Wittenberg needs to grow steadily to reach the right size for its campus and its aspirations, with total undergraduate enrollment of 2100 students envisioned in the fall semester after the fifth year of the plan. The world needs more graduates with the vision, skills, and experience that Wittenberg provides, and more students means a greater ability to offer the academic programs, co-curricular opportunities, and campus experience that families and students expect from a contemporary liberal arts university. With a re-imagined School of Community Education, we also believe that there is a real opportunity in providing state-of-the-art graduate education in high-demand fields. These graduate programs will, in the best tradition of the liberal arts, empower non-traditional students to think for themselves as they confront modern problems and advance in their fields.

Second, as a diverse residential community dedicated to intellectual inquiry and wholeness of person, Wittenberg will enhance the student experience so that more of our graduates benefit from all that the University has to offer. The fully realized Wittenberg Commitment, with its emphasis on advising, engaged learning, alumni networking, and creating pathways to graduation for all of our students, will address many of these facets of campus life. A new wellness plan and a state-of-the-art center for career and vocational development that combines campus services with the knowledge and commitment of our tens of thousands of alumni will also transform the student experience in the next five years.

Third, as a liberal arts university, Wittenberg depends more than most institutions on the strength of its community, both in the bonds that unite the campus, and its deep connection to alumni and friends in Springfield and around the world. Preparing for and launching an overdue comprehensive campaign will be an indispensable part of bringing this community together and elevating the University's engagement with its key constituencies in the next five years.

Finally, we see this narrowly focused strategic plan as setting the stage for more ambitious efforts in the years to come. It will take hard work, perseverance, and careful execution to reach our goals, but Wittenberg has shown itself to be nothing if not resilient in the face of many challenges in its 172 years. We are honored by the example of those who built and sustained this institution across many previous generations, and we call upon our community now to come together and work together toward renewing the promise of our great University.

Wittenberg University Strategic Plan 2022: Renewing the Promise

University Mission: *Wittenberg University provides a liberal arts education dedicated to intellectual inquiry and wholeness of person within a diverse residential community. Reflecting its Lutheran heritage, Wittenberg challenges students to become responsible global citizens, to discover their callings, and to lead personal, professional, and civic lives of creativity, service, compassion, and integrity.*

Board of Directors' Three-Year Vision Statement: *Wittenberg University will become a two-thousand student residential campus in the Lutheran tradition that provides an elite, engaged, financially accessible liberal arts education to a diverse student body. (Oct 2016)*

Goal 1: Graduate more students who exemplify Wittenberg's mission

Strategy 1.1: Recruit and retain larger, more diverse classes to experience a Wittenberg education, reaching **2000 students at the end of plan year 3 (Fall 2020)**, consistent with the Board vision statement, and **2100 students after plan year 5 (Fall 2022)**.

1.1.1: Diversify and **expand traditional undergraduate recruitment markets while maintaining the academic quality of incoming classes**

1.1.2: Implement a comprehensive **international recruitment strategy**

1.1.3: Expand **academic program outreach and recruitment**, including department-specific endowed scholarships, first year research fellowship opportunities and special interest awards

1.1.4: Develop and implement a plan to **increase the number of transfer students**

1.1.5: **Increase athletic recruitment in targeted sports** and add new athletic teams and co-curricular programs co-curricular programs to attract students

1.1.6 Develop and implement a comprehensive retention plan **to achieve at least 80% first-to- second-year retention and a comparable improvement in four-year graduation rates**

Strategy 1.2: Enhance the academic program for 21st century learning

1.2.1: Propose **two to four new academic programs in high-demand areas** (e.g., allied health, sustainability, and digital media)

1.2.2 Invest in established high-demand programs to sustain and expand growth

1.2.3: Expand the **general education program** to integrate learning goals of intellectual inquiry, global citizenship, communication, vocation and quantitative reasoning, throughout the curriculum at the program, department, and University level

1.2.4: Develop professional experiential learning/shadowing opportunities modeled on the C.A.B.L.E. program for relevant academic programs in two years

1.2.5: Redesign the Honors Program to make the University more attractive to academically talented students

Strategy 1.3: Transition the School of Community Education into a **new school of graduate and professional studies** that is an incubator for market-ready, mission-aligned graduate programs, **achieving \$3M in additional net revenue in plan year 5**

1.3.1 Transfer **M.A. in Education** and new **M.A. in Coaching** to re-imagined SCE to join current **M.S. in Analytics** program and to centralize operations

1.3.2 Develop **additional master's degree programs** aligned with market demand and growth potential, and stage their launch appropriately over the next five years

Goal 2: Enhance Wittenberg's mission-driven, whole-person-focused, exceptional student experience

Strategy 2.1: Establish a leading and innovative **center for career and vocation** that engages students and alumni and enables them to thrive in their post-graduate employment, studies, and service

2.1.1 Create seamless and **integrated coordination between the new center, alumni relations, and the Hagen Center** for Civic and Urban Engagement to expand significantly the number of internships, externships, and vocational exploration opportunities for our students

2.1.2 Secure funding to **endow a center for career and vocation** and provide leading high impact experiences for our students

2.1.3 Develop a unified approach to programming initiatives and materials that **draw upon the Lutheran understanding of vocation**

2.1.4 **Expand opportunities for alumni** to utilize areas of expertise to help mentor students, identify internship and employment opportunities, and to network with each other

Strategy 2.2: Broaden and improve the student experience with campus-wide and cohort-based programming and initiatives

2.2.1 Develop a **comprehensive plan to achieve new levels of student health and well-being** with an emphasis on prevention that combines an evidence-based public health approach with innovative engagement strategies

2.2.2 Provide programming, support, and resources to **develop scholar-athletes who will compete on a national level and model the Division III philosophy** by: discovering their true callings; developing life, leadership, and academic skills; and dedicating themselves to a life of serving others

2.2.3 Develop **student experience and satisfaction metrics, dashboard, and annual goals** that aggregate National Survey of Student Engagement data, co-curricular learning outcomes assessment, campus housing satisfaction surveys, and related measures

Strategy 2.3: Fully implement and market our value proposition, the **Wittenberg Commitment**, to explain the advantages of a Wittenberg education to prospective students and donors

2.3.1 Assess and enhance the **First-Year Full-Year Seminar**, expanding its connections to the new general education program

2.3.2 Develop agreed-upon standards, professional development, ongoing support, and assessment strategies for **Comprehensive Advising**

2.3.3 Significantly expand **Engaged Learning** opportunities across all programs and across the academic calendar, both as high-impact practices within courses, as well as co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences

2.3.4 Fully deploy the **WittFolio** to provide state-of-the-art electronic portfolio functionality to all students, not just entering classes

2.3.5 Expand the **Wittenberg Network** to include all academic departments and units on campus and implement a regular assessment/satisfaction measure and continuous improvement plan

2.3.6 Complete four-year degree pathways for all majors and programs in support of our **Graduation Guarantee**

Goal 3: Expand, deepen Wittenberg's relationships with its community and constituencies

Strategy 3.1: Prepare and launch a **comprehensive campaign**

3.1.1 Plan feasibility study and silent phase to take best advantage of fundraising efforts for Health, Wellness, and Athletic facility

Strategy 3.2: Expand **alumni engagement using multi-channel approach** through a new center for career and vocation and Wittenberg Network initiatives

3.2.1 Expand **alumni mentorship pilot** for first generation first year students

3.2.2 Define and develop a **reliable measure for alumni involvement** across campus as a complement to the alumni giving rate, establish a baseline, and set goals for annual incremental improvement

Strategy 3.3: Leverage the new Health, Wellness, and Athletic facility and related campus resources to reach new students and forge new ties with local and regional communities

3.3.1 Develop data collection and long term **outreach strategy for participants in youth sports programs** and community events held at all athletic facilities

Strategy 3.4: Develop a plan to become a nationally recognized **“Great College to Work For”** as named by *The Chronicle of Higher Education* with key criteria that include trust, respect, pride, achievement of organizational objectives, and teamwork

Strategic Plan Overview: Renewing the Promise

