



Claiming Our Future 2007-2012 Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

Introduction

The strategic plan for Mount Mary College builds upon the College's historically demonstrated ability to transform lives through education. The plan calls for Mount Mary to continue to offer career preparation with a strong foundation in the liberal arts in a context that emphasizes leadership for social justice and value-based decision making. This strategic plan effectively positions Mount Mary to recruit an increasing number of undergraduate and graduate students and to create an overall experience that supports their success and satisfaction. Through this plan, Mount Mary will increase its visibility and enhance a diverse learning environment. Finally, the plan addresses the financial stability and growth of resources that are essential to the achievement of all goals.

Philosophical Background

Drawing on the guiding philosophy of the College's founding order, the School Sisters of Notre Dame, the strategic plan reflects an institutional commitment to effect social change through education. In keeping with this philosophical approach, and in support of the SSND mission, the strategic plan was formulated with the following guiding principles:

Mount Mary College will

- Remain a Catholic college,
- Remain a women's college and offer post baccalaureate opportunities for men and women,*
- Continue to be a mission driven institution,
- Secure financial stability,
- Remain focused on and responsive to the individual needs of each student,
- Increase diversity on all levels,
- Retain and build upon the liberal arts tradition.

Marketplace Trends

In order to develop a plan that was comprehensive and achievable, attention was paid to the external factors existing in the educational environment. The following circumstances were seen as important considerations as the planning process was undertaken.

- A high level of competition exists in higher education, including “for-profit” institutions, on-line courses, and corporate training programs. Milwaukee and southeastern Wisconsin also offer a wide range of educational opportunities.
- Changing demographics reveal a projected decline in traditional aged students in the Midwest, but growth in the South and Southwest.
- Technology is a critical component of the current learning environment.
- Institutions increasingly serve a more diverse student body.
- Students have and will continue to have greater financial need.
- Growth is expected in non-traditional student and graduate student populations.
- Greater accountability is demanded of higher education institutions in terms of measuring outcomes of student learning.

Planning Process

The 2007-2012 Strategic Plan is the result of a nine month process that began in December, 2006. A previously selected group of faculty and administrative staff members, serving as task area chairs, met at that time to discuss the planning process and appropriate timeline. Discussion also took place about the specific task areas that would be addressed in the plan. The process then moved forward in the following manner:

January 2007

- All-College Workshop during which results of the President’s “Listening Tour” were discussed and the strategic planning process was introduced
- All-day workshop for the Strategic Planning Committee during which relevant data were shared, an environmental scan was presented and a process for identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) was introduced

February – March 2007

- SWOT analysis was conducted with all constituencies (internal and external) providing feedback in relation to the various task force areas:
 - Academic programs
 - Student life
 - Physical plant
 - Enrollment and retention
 - Advancement and marketing
 - Technology
- Half-day workshop for strategic planning committee chairs to analyze and synthesize SWOT data, along with initial discussion about the plan’s initiatives and goals

April 2007

- Half-day workshop with full strategic planning committee to discuss and refine agreed upon initiatives and begin to develop goals associated with those initiatives
- Ongoing meetings among the essential task area groups to facilitate a first draft of objectives

June 2007

- Presentation of initiatives and goals to the Mount Mary College Board of Trustees

July 2007

- President's Council Retreat to refine plan
- Final revisions of Strategic Plan with full planning committee

August 2007

- Presentation of plan at All College Workshop

October 2007

- Presentation of plan at Board of Trustees/Corporate Member Annual Meeting

Initiatives and Goals

Initiative A: Ensure academic programs of integrity and distinction

- Goal 1: Develop new academic programs
- Goal 2: Enhance current academic programs

Initiative B: Ensure long term viability of College

- Goal 1: Cultivate financial resources that will allow the College to fulfill its mission
- Goal 2: Address space issues, including adequacy, repair and upkeep of buildings
- Goal 3: Address technology issues
- Goal 4: Develop and implement a campus-wide crisis management plan

Initiative C: Refine and implement an integrated enrollment management system

- Goal 1: Recruit effectively
- Goal 2: Provide adequate financial aid to attract and support students
- Goal 3: Strengthen ongoing communication and involvement between academic departments and admission

Initiative D: Improve student success as defined by retention and graduation rates

Note: The following objectives are designed to increase fall to fall retention by 3 percentage points and to improve the 6-year graduation rate by 2 percentage points.

- Goal 1: Assess data and disaggregate appropriately to better understand retention patterns
- Goal 2: Strengthen meaningful connections between academic and student affairs
- Goal 3: Expand student life and services to meet the needs of all students
- Goal 4: Enhance and coordinate academic and other student services

Initiative E: Strengthen the College's identity, visibility, and reputation

- Goal 1: Focus on mission, including women's leadership
- Goal 2: Increase visibility of Mount Mary community at the local, regional, national and international levels
- Goal 3: Revise website

Initiative F: Enhance and support a diverse environment for the Mount Mary community

Goal 1: Attract, retain and support a diverse, highly qualified faculty, administration and staff

Goal 2: Continually seek to extend outreach in the community

Goal 3: Attract, retain and support a diverse student body

Conclusion

The Strategic Plan for Mount Mary College 2007-2012 represents a collaborative effort among all members of the College community. The strategic initiatives that have been identified are seen as essential to the continued growth and viability of the institution and have provided the framework from which all the goals and objectives flow.

The plan was developed to anticipate, evaluate, and take advantage of opportunities that will lead Mount Mary to claim its future. Innovative thinking and risk taking are the hallmarks upon which Mount Mary was founded. The next five years will undoubtedly offer further examples of those qualities as the College continues to redefine the ways in which it can serve its students, serve its community and serve the world.

* Mount Mary College and Columbia College of Nursing jointly offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing to women and men.

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