

**SUSTAINING THE MISSION**  
**The Strategic Plan for St. Olaf College**

**June 1, 2004-2009**

*December 5, 2003*

**MISSION**

St. Olaf is called to live out a most important and timely educational mission.

- We are committed to the liberal arts, rooted in the Christian Gospel, incorporating a global perspective.
- Our students are seekers of truth, leading lives of unselfish service to others.
- Our students represent responsible global citizenship and leadership.

**FOUNDING VALUES**

St. Olaf College values the God-given gifts of men and women and the great potential for life that these gifts represent.

- We value the life of faith, curiosity, creative expression and intelligent global citizenship.
- St. Olaf is an inclusive community with a global perspective, believing that differences enhance learning and understanding.
- We value students and faculty who are excellent teachers, scholars, performers, and servants.
- We value administrators, staff, alumni, parents, and friends who support the St. Olaf mission and liberal arts tradition.
- We love to see the life of thought and the life of faith come together for the sake of intelligent and responsible citizenship.

**STRENGTHS**

St. Olaf College has many strengths.

- Commitment to the liberal arts.
- Nationally recognized programs in music, the sciences, and international studies.
- A dynamic and vital relationship to the life of faith.

- Outstanding students, faculty, staff, administrators, regents, and volunteers.
- A beautiful campus representing the college's many gifts.
- Proximity to the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.
- Alumni who live out the mission and values of the college.

## **CHALLENGES**

St. Olaf is not immune from the significant challenges facing higher education.

- We must rethink the content and methods of instruction for our academic and artistic offerings.
- Students and parents come to campus with broader perspectives than ever before and heightened expectations, especially regarding student services.
- Demographic shifts challenge our ability to recruit and retain students, faculty, and staff.
- Compensation costs, especially health care, continue to rise.
- The global economy is volatile.
- We face daunting costs of maintenance, renewal, and modernization of our facilities.
- We face economic and moral challenges in creating an academic program and a campus that are environmentally sustainable.
- St Olaf must meet these challenges, grow and prosper.

## **VISION FOR THE FUTURE**

**St. Olaf College will be the best liberal arts college of the Church.**

- We will maintain and strengthen an excellent academic program.
- We will continue our commitment to exemplary programs of responsible, global citizenship.
- We will be a national center for committed, thoughtful exploration and celebration of the life of faith.
- We will reflect the rich diversity of all God's people.
- We will foster economic and ecological sustainability.
- We will nurture a deep sense of worth, meaning, and purpose in the lives of our students.

- We will compensate the men and women who work at the college commensurate with their contributions.
- We will honor our Norwegian heritage.
- St. Olaf will be an excellent example of what it means to be a great Church related residential liberal arts college.

## STRATEGIES

### **A. The college will strengthen its nationally recognized academic program of teaching and learning by enhancing its distinguished programs in mathematics and the natural sciences.**

- The unique vision for this strategy includes teaching and learning of the natural sciences and mathematics in a way that is interdisciplinary (including ethical inquiry), investigative, and interactive.
- A new building, built on the Flaten Hall site, will connect with renovated space in the Old Music Hall and the science library of the current Science Center.
- The cost of this project will be \$56 million for the design and build phase of the project and \$1.2 million for interim financing, and \$22 million for endowment of support operations.
- A fund raising effort will be organized and implemented.
- The Faculty Shepherd, the Director of Facilities, and the Vice President for Advancement will be responsible for the implementation of this strategy.

### **B. The college will create an inclusive community that welcomes and embraces men and women of potential and ability, regardless of their background. The college will strengthen its work in cross-cultural education.**

- The college will enable the Provost to fund the appointment of at least one Scholar in Residence each year over the next five years through our active participation in the Consortium for a Strong Minority Presence at Liberal Arts Colleges (CSMP).
- The range of expenditure for this strategy will be between \$192,500 and \$212,000 over five years, assuming one appointment each year.
- The college will recruit, retain, and graduate an inclusive student body. The college will develop a recruitment effort that targets new immigrant populations in Minnesota to complement our current diversity outreach programs. We will develop specific academic/enrollment partnerships focused on recruiting Hispanic/Latino and African American students in the Upper Midwest. The college will work closely with statewide TRIO and other pre-college programs to

increase the pool of low-income and first-generation students, and we will continue to develop programs to support such students when they enroll at St. Olaf.

- The college will commit institutional resources to increase the number of international students.
- The estimated cost of these efforts over five years is \$1.7 million.
- The profile of the student body follows in Appendix A.
- The Dean for Community Life and Diversity, the Provost, and the Vice President for Enrollment will be responsible for the implementation of this strategy.

**C. The college will plan for a sustainable economic future so that the resources needed to support the college are in line with the college's revenues.**

- The college will increase revenues through the strategic use of financial aid and the recruitment of students.
- The college will grow the Partners in Annual Giving Program at a rate of 8-10% annually.
- The college will reduce and control the costs of operating the college.
- The college will make progress toward achieving its compensation goals for faculty, staff and administrators.
- At a minimum, the college will maintain its current relative position in compensation. But, we fully expect to do better, reaching the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile of the AAUP rankings for all faculty positions and achieving our compensation goals for staff and administration.
- The estimated costs of reaching these goals are \$491,000 per year for faculty and \$436,000 per year for the administration and staff.
- The Vice President and Treasurer, the Provost, and the Vice President for Advancement will have responsibility for implementing this strategy.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The members of the President's Cabinet will be responsible for the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

- The president will supervise the work of the cabinet and report to the community about the progress being made on a regular basis.
- The college will reinvigorate its efforts to assess student learning in general education curriculum, in departmental and interdisciplinary majors, and in other

academic programs. The Director of the Office of Academic Research and Planning will provide leadership for this program of assessing student learning.

- The college will establish a peer group of colleges to assess its progress. The Director of the Office of Institutional Research and Planning will be responsible for this initiative.
- The Strategic Plan calls upon all of us, faculty, staff, administrators, regents, students, alumni and friends of the college, to recommit ourselves to the mission of the college.