



BENEDICTINE 2020

A VISION FOR GREATNESS

BENEDICTINE COLLEGE'S STRATEGIC PLAN, *March 21, 2012*

OVERVIEW

Benedictine 2020 is Benedictine College's plan to build one of the great Catholic colleges in America. For more than 150 years, Benedictine College has been educating men and women for the glory of God and the service of the common good. Now is the time to face the challenges of a new generation and rise once again to meet them.

Benedictine 2020 focuses on achieving academic excellence. The college's mission statement commits us to "the education of men and women within a community of faith and scholarship." This means that at Benedictine College, academic excellence necessarily goes beyond the classroom. To be one of the great Catholic colleges in America, Benedictine College must achieve a leadership position in each aspect of its mission: dynamic community, thriving faith life and inspiring scholarship.

Extensive community reflection, analysis, and discussion of this goal have led to the identification of the key strategic priorities that will guide the college on the path to greatness.

- Recruit, retain and develop one of the great Catholic college faculties in America.
- Enroll, engage and educate students capable of transforming the world through intellectual, personal and spiritual greatness.
- Build, maintain and beautify the facilities and technological infrastructure needed to serve our mission with excellence.
- Secure, sustain and steward the human and financial resources necessary for one of the great Catholic colleges in America.

Recruit, retain, and develop one of the great Catholic college **faculties** in America.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

We believe that Benedictine College's educational experience is enhanced by all aspects of our mission: community, faith and scholarship.

COMMUNITY: The first step to achieving academic excellence in a community of faith and scholarship is the ongoing development of one of the great Catholic college faculties in America. We will provide the conditions that support intensive preparation for teaching, ongoing pedagogical improvement, significant engagement with students both inside and outside the classroom, and active professional scholarship. We will provide the tools—both traditional and advanced—that enable faculty to stay current in their fields, to engage their students in substantial and significant projects, and to keep abreast of changes and developments that will impact their areas. We will recruit for greatness and reward excellence until we have achieved distinction.

FAITH: Benedictine College is committed to sharing with all members of our community the beauty and mystery of the Catholic faith as revealed in the person of Jesus Christ and handed down through the teachings of the Church. As a Catholic college, we consider faith and reason as “two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of the truth.” [John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*] Benedictine 2020 is aimed at fostering this understanding of the distinctive benefit of a Catholic education. Our distinctive Benedictine approach to education culminates in graduates who are committed to living their lives “so that in all things God may be glorified.” [Rule of St. Benedict] The College welcomes people of all faith, while it seeks in its members a personal commitment to the ideals and principles of the Catholic tradition and expression of these in action. We will foster an authentically Catholic commitment to academic freedom for all members of our community, based on the honest pursuit of the truth, fearless in the knowledge that all truth comes from God. We will recruit faculty who understand and endorse this vision of the integral unity of the truth.

SCHOLARSHIP: The love of learning is a crucial Benedictine value. Academic excellence at Benedictine College is driven by faculty who exhibit strong commitment in their teaching and scholarship to provide an environment that prepares students with the best that has been thought and written. Faculty will develop graduates who are critical thinkers who read, speak, and write well, and are personally and professionally prepared for life's challenges on a local and global scale. As faculty at a Catholic college, we embrace the distinctive challenge of Catholic education articulated by Pope Benedict XVI: to form the will, as well as the mind, of the students within our care.

Recruit, retain, and develop one of the great Catholic college **faculties** in America.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

INITIATIVES

A) Achieve a student/faculty ratio, with an appropriate percentage of faculty being full-time, that allows for sufficient faculty attention to the academic needs of the students of the college.

B) Ensure that faculty has adequate time to prepare for their classes, respond to student work, engage students outside the classroom, and remain professionally active in their fields.

C) Implement and support practices that maximize student learning, including policies that ensure sufficient rigor in the academic program. Support a college-wide focus on developing students' writing and communication skills. Enhance the library as a significant resource for the entire academic program. Use ongoing program and general education assessments to provide the basis for systematic and regular curricular review.

D) Evaluate the criteria for tenure and promotion to assure that the criteria and reward structure align with and support the practices associated with academic excellence. Incorporate rigorous and systematic review of teaching into the promotion and tenure process. Provide faculty incentives to write, publish, and present at academic conferences to increase scholarly activity.

E) Expand mission training, spiritual formation, and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.

Enroll, engage and educate **students** capable of transforming the world through intellectual, personal, and spiritual greatness.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

As a reflection of our Benedictine charism, we believe that our student life and residential nature are integral to our mission of community, faith and scholarship.

COMMUNITY: To continually improve our dynamic community, we need to provide students with opportunities and guidance to grow personally; to develop deep and lasting friendships; and to develop their leadership skills in service to others. We will provide ample opportunities for students to work collegially with a wide variety of others; opportunities for students to develop relationships with staff members; and both formal and informal opportunities for extensive student-faculty engagement outside the classroom. We will help our students form their consciences and develop personal ethical standards to live by. We will provide the facilities that support a vibrant community life, including appropriate recreation and leisure accommodations.

FAITH: We need to provide students with opportunities and guidance to grow spiritually. As an academic community rooted in Christian charity, Benedictine College seeks to promote the welfare and dignity of all of its constituents. Our community is enhanced by our student life programs, outreach beyond the campus, and participation in international experiences that enrich their Catholic identity. We will support students as they discern their vocations in life. We will also provide them with guidance as we encourage them to link the lessons they learn in the classroom with their plans for the future. We will structure our student life programming to prepare students to effectively carry out their Christian responsibilities after they graduate.

SCHOLARSHIP: We need to provide students with opportunities and guidance to grow intellectually. It is important that we attract and retain a student body who will benefit from a Benedictine education, and that we provide them with a challenging and enriching academic experience. We will recruit students who are interested in and capable of benefitting from a rigorous and relevant education, and surround them with peers who will enhance their experience. We will ensure that students are engaged in significant educational endeavors throughout their course of study, and we will provide the support necessary for motivated students to meet the challenges that we present to them.

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STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

INITIATIVES

A) Develop targeted recruiting initiatives that focus on academic talent, leadership ability, faith and character activities, and other attributes that will contribute to a vibrant and engaged student body.

B) Provide a broad range of international programs and experiential and service learning options. Foster student-faculty collaboration through the Discovery program and other collaborative learning opportunities. Regularly evaluate and assess the effectiveness of these programs.

C) Implement the Benedictine Family Model to provide a framework for student life programming. Regularly assess and evaluate campus programming to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the student body and fostering campus unity. Provide multiple venues for leadership development that attract students from a wide range of backgrounds and interests.

D) Support the athletic department in initiatives designed to build character and sportsmanship in student-athletes and fans, including programs that foster the integration of faith and athletics.

E) Institute programs that train students to be disciples in the modern world and advance the mission of the Church in the world through the study and implementation of the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the call for a New Evangelization. Train students to effectively develop and lead projects that advance Gospel values.

F) Provide effective career, graduate school, and fellowship/scholarship preparation and counseling to place Benedictine graduates into leadership positions where they can transform the world.

Build, maintain and beautify the **facilities and technological infrastructure needed to serve our mission with class, professionalism and excellence.**

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Benedictine College's facilities are places that enable, encourage and encapsulate our mission of community, faith and scholarship. The Benedictine values of community and stewardship are encapsulated in the very structures of the college.

COMMUNITY: The beautification of the campus went hand in hand with the renewal of the Benedictine spirit at the turn of the 21st century. The construction of the student union, the refurbishment of the grounds and the renovations of Elizabeth Hall and the Raven Roost in the Haverty Center inspired us to develop one of the nation's top student-life programs.

FAITH: The faith renewal on campus is also reflected in its art and architecture: The construction of Mary's Grotto, the St. Scholastica Plaza statuary, the opening of the Mother Teresa Center for Nursing and Health Education, the public display of Frederick Hart's religious statuary and the original statue of St. Benedict in the center of campus were each a part of the campus's embrace of its Catholic identity.

SCHOLARSHIP: The construction of the Ferrell Academic Center, the school's largest structure and signature building, along with the refurbishment of all of our classrooms, the creation of new classroom space in the Mother Teresa Nursing Center and Cray Seaberg Hall, and ongoing academic renovations should serve as the inspiration to pursue academic greatness in the future of Benedictine College.

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STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

INITIATIVES

A) Regularly review housing availability to ensure that between 70-85% of our students can be housed on campus. When approximately 350 students are living off campus in non-college-provided housing in any given year, review the feasibility of a new residence hall.

B) Analyze facilities across campus to ensure that adequate and appropriate space is available to support the needs of the various programs and departments of the college.

C) Support the residential nature of the college by ensuring that there are adequate and appropriate athletic, fitness and recreational facilities.

D) Ensure that the library can adequately support the academic program and provide appropriate study and work space for students.

E) Develop and implement an overall campus beautification plan including a schedule of regular refreshment and refurbishment of facilities on campus.

F) Regularly assess technology needs to provide robust support for the academic and business needs of the college and the personal technology needs of the students.

Secure, sustain and steward the human and financial **resources** necessary for one the great Catholic colleges in America.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

Following St. Benedict's principles of wise leadership, the administrative functions at Benedictine College are also guided by our mission of community, faith, and scholarship.

COMMUNITY: The richest form of community is a group of people so committed to a common enterprise that they work as one to achieve the same goals. To build one of the great Catholic colleges in America, all members of the extended Benedictine College community must contribute their talents, pool their resources, share the sacrifice, and work hard in order to experience the joy of achieving greatness.

FAITH: The seeking and securing of resources for an authentic religious mission is a profound expression of our faith. Scripture and the Rule of St. Benedict praise the wise stewardship of resources. As a Catholic institution the College will commit to obtain and steward financial resources in a manner that is consistent with Catholic social principles.

SCHOLARSHIP: The academic nature of our mission should be at the center of our financial concerns. The school exists to enrich the lives of students, and our financial goals exist to provide the resources, personnel, and future prosperity necessary to serve the students. Growing our academic endowment is a key objective of Benedictine 2020.

Secure, sustain and steward the human and financial **resources** necessary for one the great Catholic colleges in America.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

INITIATIVES

A) Engage benefactors who will significantly increase the corpus of the College's endowment to provide a sound financial foundation for academic excellence, to fund academic chairs and professorships, and to help make possible all dimensions of Benedictine 2020.

B) Develop stewardship, advancement, budgeting, and investment strategies that ensure the ongoing financial viability of Benedictine 2020 in accordance with the principles of Catholic social thought.

C) Implement effective marketing and communication strategies that increase the visibility and attractiveness of the college and communicate the value of a Benedictine College education to audiences with an affinity to the mission of the college.

D) Analyze staffing levels in all areas of the college to ensure that adequate staff is in place to effectively carry out the programs of the college.

E) Examine hiring and promotion policies across campus to ensure that faculty and staff in all areas of the campus are supportive of the mission and responsive to student needs. Provide regular venues for students, faculty, and staff to have ongoing education about the mission and values of the college and its relevance to their role in the community.



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