

Renewing Our Mission

Berry College Strategic Plan

2002-2012



BERRY
COLLEGE
A foundation for life

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Endorsed December 2001 by the Berry College Board of Trustees and
in November 2001 by the Berry College Faculty Assembly and Planning Council.

Renewing our Mission ---

Vision: Berry College will achieve national distinction for a balanced and integrated education of the head, the heart, and the hands that provides students a solid foundation for life and the inspiration to serve others.

The Berry Mission: Berry College is a comprehensive liberal-arts college with Christian values. The college furthers our students' intellectual, moral and spiritual growth; proffers lessons that are gained from worthwhile work done well; and challenges them to devote their learning to community and civic betterment. Berry emphasizes an educational program committed to high academic standards, values based on Christian principles, practical work experience and community service in a distinctive environment of natural beauty. It is Berry's goal to make an excellent private liberal-arts education accessible to talented students from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds.

Purpose: Our first responsibility is to provide an education in the liberal arts and selected professional programs while meeting the intellectual, moral and material needs of our students. We dedicate ourselves and our academic programs toward fulfilling this responsibility.

Research, publication, and other scholarly activities are valued and are expected to contribute to good teaching by the faculty. In keeping with this expectation, our faculty and staff dedicate themselves to teaching that is grounded in scholarship and to inspiring students to academic excellence.

An essential part of a sound education is the opportunity to explore religious faith and to relate faith with learning responsibly and intelligently, and we commit ourselves to providing these opportunities. The college remains dedicated to the interdenominational Christian values on which it was founded and welcomes individuals of diverse backgrounds into the campus community.

Worthwhile work complements knowledge and faith in building character. We dedicate ourselves to providing this opportunity.

An important part of higher education is the opportunity to participate in the internal affairs and governance of the college. We dedicate ourselves to providing this opportunity for faculty and students.

These dedications guide Berry's faculty, staff, trustees and students toward a balanced and integrated educational program that fulfills our institutional mission. The ultimate aim of a Berry education is service to humanity through persons who find here both inspiration and preparation as best expressed in Berry's motto, "Not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

Values: As a community with values based on Christian principles, Berry College is committed to:

- the inseparability of teaching, learning and scholarship.
- the centrality of the liberal arts in all education.
- the essential place of the spiritual dimension in each individual's life.
- the idea of service as a foundation for one's personal and professional life.
- the dignity and importance of worthwhile work well done.
- the importance of community and civic engagement as a goal of a Berry education.
- the value of a diverse student body, faculty and staff.



Educational Excellence

Goal One: Foster educational excellence through strong support of faculty and student learning in the curriculum, instruction and scholarship across the institution.

Objective A: Ensure that all three elements of our mission, the education of the head, hearts and hands, are actively pursued in educational programs, academic advising and in students' learning.

Objective B: Promote moral and ethical reasoning, a commitment to service and an awareness of the intellectual and spiritual meaning of work throughout the educational program.

Objective C: Strengthen individual schools, departments and academic resources, and enhance teaching and learning through general-education and major programs.

Objective D: Diversify and internationalize the curriculum, ensuring that academic programs support a diverse student body, and continue the focus on developing the communicating and critical-thinking skills of all students.

Objective E: Improve connections/collaborations/partnerships both on and off campus.

Objective F: Recruit and retain faculty of the highest caliber who are committed to Berry's mission and to achieving excellence in teaching, scholarship and service, and support the faculty members throughout their careers as they develop professionally.

Objective G: Establish the target of 500 freshmen and 75 transfer students who meet selective standards for admission each year, while expanding the size of the undergraduate enrollment to no more than 2,200 students through improved student retention.

Objective H: Continue to develop, serve and support the distinctive nature of the graduate programs at Berry College.

Goal Two: Broaden the scope of opportunities for students to experience spiritual growth.

Objective A: Sustain and promote Religion-in-Life groups that reflect an increasingly diverse student body.

Objective B: Publicize and promote a variety of religious opportunities both on and off campus to students.

Objective C: Ensure that the Mount Berry Church adapts to and reflects the spiritual needs and worship styles of the diverse traditions of Christian students at Berry.

Goal Three: Provide the Berry community with increased opportunities for meaningful service to others.

Objective A: Provide reflective experiences within academic programs that are linked to appropriate service activities.

Objective B: Encourage the campus community to participate in curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities for service.

Goal Four: Offer improved opportunities that will allow all students to learn from an increasing variety of hands-on experiences and to learn about the roles of work for self and society through study, reflection and experience.

Objective A: Sustain and promote meaningful work experiences on campus.

Objective B: Seek and promote a variety of off-campus work opportunities, and encourage and support additional internships and applied work experiences.

Objective C: Expand formal and informal experiential learning in the curriculum, where appropriate.

Objective D: Equip supervisors to become better teachers in the workplace, in the departments meeting basic needs of the college and in work directly related to academic areas.

Goal Five: Maintain the historic mission of work as a source of financial aid and campus operations while establishing and upholding high standards for student work performance.

Objective A: Provide work opportunities appropriate to quality learning experiences throughout the campus.

Objective B: Whenever appropriate, offer work positions related to academic majors and concentrations.

Objective C: Explore alternative compensation models for student workers.

Objective D: Provide regular feedback to students through performance appraisals.



Student-Centered Culture

Goal Six: Inspire a student-centered culture that encourages personal and intellectual growth.

Objective A: Strengthen co-curricular and extracurricular student activities that support the threefold mission.

Objective B: Pursue 85 percent retention of students between the freshman and sophomore years and 70 percent graduation rate within six years of college entry.

Objective C: Develop and maintain appropriate campus-housing requirements for all students.

Objective D: Improve and maintain the residence halls and the athletic/recreation facilities so that they meet the changing needs of the Berry community.

Objective E: Pursue membership in NCAA Division II.

Objective F: Retain, recruit and support the highest caliber of staff committed to Berry's mission and to providing highly satisfactory student services.



Diversity

Goal Seven: Foster a culture that is open, friendly and inviting to all members of the campus community and that welcomes and values diversity, encourages interaction and negotiates the differences among us.

Objective A: Review and revise diversity practices as needed, and clarify and communicate college policies regarding diversity.

Objective B: Promote dialogue among students, faculty, staff, administrators and alumni about ways to help Berry move to a culture that more values diversity.

Objective C: Create an interfaith council charged with raising levels of awareness and understanding of the variety of beliefs and religious traditions represented on campus and in the surrounding communities.

Objective D: Publicize and promote to the campus community a variety of religious opportunities both on and off campus.

Objective E: Achieve broad understanding among internal and external constituencies of the mission of the religion-in-life program.

Goal Eight: Increase diversity in geographic and ethnic representation among the students, faculty and staff.

Objective A: Increase representation of undergraduate students from other states to 25 percent (from 13.8 percent).

Objective B: Increase representation of undergraduate students from other countries to 10 percent (from 2.4 percent).

Objective C: Increase representation of total student enrollment representing minority groups to 10 percent (from 5.0 percent).

Objective D: Increase representation of faculty who are members of minority groups to 10 percent (from 7.0 percent) and those who are international to 10 percent (from 7.8 percent).

Objective E: Increase representation of staff who are members of minority groups to 10 percent (from 3.52 percent) and those who are international to 1 percent (from 0.3 percent).

Internationalism

Goal Nine: Encourage faculty and student participation in international study, learning, work and service.

Objective A: Communicate with all Berry students about international opportunities for study, work and service throughout their undergraduate and graduate experiences.

Objective B: Increase percentage of Berry students who complete academic study abroad to 10 percent (from 4.1 percent).

Objective C: Increase percentage of Berry students who complete an international experience to 50 percent (benchmark to be determined).

Objective D: Provide increasing opportunities for Berry faculty to complete international study, learning, work and service experiences (benchmark to be determined).



Technology

Goal Ten: Ensure that technology meets the current and future needs of the Berry community and remains competitive with peer and aspirant colleges and universities.

Objective A: Provide all members of the Berry community with campus-wide access to current, reliable, secure and easy-to-use technology-based programs that meet approved instructional and administrative needs.

Objective B: Recruit, retain and develop the highest quality computing and technology staff who are committed to the Berry mission.

Objective C: Configure and equip instructional classrooms as appropriate with access to appropriate digital-technology systems (including multimedia systems) to help meet the educational goals of the college.

Objective D: Implement budget planning and funding-acquisition procedures that will allow the college to acquire and implement new technological developments in a cost-effective manner.

Objective E: Provide faculty and staff with ongoing professional development opportunities for acquiring skills needed to effectively integrate and to use technology-based systems in instructional and for student-administration services.

Objective F: Help provide and support appropriate adaptive technology for individuals with documented special needs as required.

Resources

Goal Eleven: Conduct successful fund-raising campaigns in support of college priorities and strategic objectives.

Objective A: Expand the base of major-gift, planned-gift and annual-fund prospects.

Objective B: Strengthen alumni and other constituent relationships in order to communicate excitement, vision, challenges and needs.

Objective C: Refine and enhance Berry's image through a focused and targeted public relations effort, and clearly communicate the college's case for support.

Objective D: Build the infrastructure to support continuous campaign activity.

Objective E: Involve and engage highly effective campaign leaders.

Objective F: Complete a successful comprehensive campaign based on the strategic goals identified in the 2002-2012 strategic plan by 2006.

Goal Twelve: Manage physical and financial assets to meet long-term and current operating needs.

Objective A: Develop and maintain a sustainable land-use and management policy that will enable the college to make the best use of its land resources to support the education of Berry students.

Objective B: Pursue investment policies that will allow Berry to employ returns at higher levels than in the past to support scholarship assistance and educational programs.

Objective C: Maintain tuition rates at approximately 75 to 80 percent of the average private-college tuition nationally.

Objective D: Develop and maintain a long-term plan for capital improvements and maintenance of existing college facilities.