



Purpose and Passion: Furthering Our Mission

BERRY COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN

APRIL 2008

From its inception, Berry College has pursued an unusual path. Berry's educational plan combines challenging academic programs with meaningful work experience to foster in students a sense of direction and seriousness of purpose. It fosters personal confidence and personal responsibility. The Berry Plan guides students to acquire a rich variety of experiences relevant to their interests and strengths. It also calls them to consider how to live a life that is of lasting value.

Berry's Comprehensive Educational Plan

To augment the quality of its Comprehensive Education Plan, Berry will:

A. Invest in academic programs that inspire and challenge students intellectually.

Goal 1: Cultivate and create academic programs that are essential to understanding, appreciating, and revitalizing our world.

- a) renew and reform the general education curriculum, rooting its focus in Berry's distinctive educational plan;
- b) strengthen Berry's Arts programs through fine arts scholarships, faculty and program expansion, and updated facilities;
- c) identify areas of significant student interest and potential expansion; including areas that draw on Berry's unique resources;
- d) emphasize connections across disciplines.

Goal 2: Increase student participation and achievement in exceptional academic experiences:

- a) expand the number of students participating in early "immersion" experiences that promote deep engagement and high aspirations;
- b) expand our successful Berry scholar programs (Richards, Kirby, and George) and foster student preparation for competition for national and international fellowships and grants
- c) expand international study programs and enrollments
- d) expand internships, on-campus and off-campus; expand and deepen immersion opportunities through co-curricular and extra-curricular areas
- e) provide appropriate facilities for individual and group study, research and learning activities.

Goal 3: Support the faculty model of teacher-scholar-mentor:

- a) increase funding for ongoing professional development opportunities, including support for teaching and advising/mentoring
- b) increase operational and equipment support for teaching and research activities
- c) honor sustained contributions to the college's mission through improved compensation packages (relative to appropriate comparison institutions)

B. Grow in size and diversity to improve the educational quality and critical mass in targeted academic areas.

Goal 4: Increase student enrollment to 2,400 (growth of approximately one-third) by 2014.

- a) allocate financial aid resources to optimize yield rates and retention rates for targeted students
- b) improve the retention and graduation rates of students (to 85 percent between first and second year with a 72 percent graduate rate within five years of entry)
- c) increase the percent of students in each of the following categories: minority groups (to 10%), out-of-state (to 25%), international (to 10%) and men (to 40%).

Goal 5: Increase the size of the faculty and staff consistent with growth in student enrollment.

- a) maintain faculty-student ratios through proportional growth of the faculty, consistent with the faculty staffing plan;
- b) develop and maintain staff -student ratios through appropriate levels of staffing in key support areas, especially as needed to guide students developmentally toward maturation;
- c) increase the percent of faculty and staff who represent racial and ethnic minority groups.

C. Build the nation's premier four-year work experience program

Goal 6: Re-design the work program to emphasize its centrality and significance to the Berry educational experience:

- a) create developmental pathways and increase the number of students assuming positions of significant responsibility
- b) increase the variety of meaningful and creative work opportunities as well as the number of student-managed enterprises and projects
- c) increase the percent of students working in jobs with significant responsibility:
- d) implement a performance-based system of compensation and promotion for students.

Goal 7: Support the staff as educator-mentors:

- a) increase funding for ongoing professional development opportunities, including support for mentoring and supervising students
- b) honor sustained contributions to the college's mission through improved compensation packages (relative to appropriate comparison institutions);

D. Foster initiative, intentionality and integration in students and encourage them toward lives of lasting value and purpose.

Goal 8: Focus the Berry educational experience on questions of personal responsibility and service to others:

- a) refine the focus of the liberal education curriculum so that students recognize and grapple with the enduring questions inherent in our social and natural world;
- b) require entering students to develop and explore an individualized path for making the most of their Berry experience;
- c) require seniors to describe a path into the world that reflects their interests and strengths.
- d) support advisors, work supervisors and mentors in their work as they foster student planning and achievement.

Goal 9: Emphasizing the importance of faith as it informs (and forms) conviction, compassion, and courage and leads to committed service.

- a) ask seniors to reflect on how they will balance what they seek to get with what they will seek to give;
- b) challenge students to engage in meaningful service in both individual and group settings; use the Bonner Center for Community Service to increase the range of opportunities available and depth of understanding;
- c) provide structured opportunities for students to study how faith relates to practical action in the Christian tradition as well as from other faith perspectives.

Berry's Incomparable Learning Environment

The educational experience at Berry is woven into the fabric of the place itself. Berry developed as a self-sustaining residential community and offers first-rate learning opportunities for students inside and outside of the classroom. The campus offers unmatched opportunities for work experience, recreation and exploration, and nurturing one's spirit.

To enhance its reputation as one of America's premier campuses and learning environments, Berry will:

E. Enhance the vibrancy of the campus-life experience.

Goal 10: Increase residential capacity to eighty-five percent.

- a) Develop opportunities for students to participate in living/learning communities that will support their educational and personal growth

Goal 11: Increase programs, events, and spaces that support a vibrant student culture.

- a) increase opportunities for leadership education and civic engagement
- b) increase the number of major events and students on campus on the weekends
- c) increase the number of students participating in fitness and wellness activities,
- d) increase recreational opportunities, making Berry a showcase for outdoor recreation

Goal 12: Expand and enhance varsity athletics.

- a) determine the athletic conference that best supports Berry's student-athletes, its educational philosophy, and the campus culture.
- b) grow the number of varsity athletic sports

F. Make the most of Berry's campus as an incomparable asset.

Goal 13: Increase the number of land-related enterprises that provide an educational and/or financial return for the college:

Goal 14: Enhance the beauty and heritage of Berry's campus to ensure that it remains a place of wonder and delight; promote environmental stewardship.

- a) establish a comprehensive plan for environmental stewardship.

Berry's Infrastructure

The continuing improvement of Berry's plan and place requires continuing improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of campus systems along with the enhanced resources needed to achieve its aspirations.

To ensure that the college offers high quality opportunities while remaining accessible to deserving students, Berry will:

G. Promote financial health, good stewardship, and the Berry story.

Goal 15: Establish deliberate cycles of investment in key capital areas (such as educational and campus life facilities, technology, landscaping and historic Berry):

- a) maintain rolling multi-year business plans;
- b) maintain updated master plans for campus construction, facilities renewal, and technology,

Goal 16: Diversify the college's income streams as well as its endowment holdings:

- a) optimize growth and annual income of the endowment while minimizing volatility
- b) increase the rate of return from various land uses through analysis, management, and new opportunities

Goal 17: Cultivate renewed support for and engagement with Berry's distinctive story:

- a) improve the college's visibility and the clarity of its message to core audiences through a targeted marketing campaign
- b) increase alumni engagement and support
- c) prepare the needs analysis and background information for the next capital campaign.