

2016

| Gustavus Adolphus College |

2026



GUSTAVUS
Acts
Strategic Plan

MISSION

Gustavus Adolphus College is a church-related, residential liberal arts college firmly rooted in its Swedish and Lutheran heritage.

The College offers students of high aspiration and promise a liberal arts education of recognized excellence provided by faculty who embody the highest standards of teaching and scholarship. The Gustavus curriculum is designed to bring students to mastery of a particular area of study within a general framework that is both interdisciplinary and international in perspective.

The College strives to balance educational tradition with innovation and to foster the development of values as an integral part of intellectual growth. It seeks to promote the open exchange of ideas and the independent pursuit of learning.

The College aspires to be a community of persons from diverse backgrounds who respect and affirm the dignity of all people. It is a community where a mature understanding of the Christian faith and lives of service are nurtured and students are encouraged to work toward a just and peaceful world.

The purpose of a Gustavus education is to help its students attain their full potential as persons, to develop in them a capacity and passion for lifelong learning, and to prepare them for fulfilling lives of leadership and service in society.

ENVISIONING OUR FUTURE WITH PRESIDENT REBECCA BERGMAN



For more than 150 years, Gustavus Adolphus College has educated students to lead fulfilling lives of leadership and service. The people of Gustavus are academics and artists, scientists and stewards, learners and landscapers. We are designers and dancers, cooks and coaches, theologians and teachers. We are authors and administrators, researchers and residents, philosophers and philanthropists. We are a diverse community of people passionate about the power of the liberal arts to transform lives and improve our world.

Gustavus stands on a strong foundation of tradition and heritage that has shaped who we are today. Our Swedish roots, our relationship to the Lutheran Church, and our commitment to academic excellence and a liberal arts education remain a vital part of our College persona. At the same time, we have evolved to be a nationally recognized institution with a wide array of departments and programs, and a student body that comes from a variety of backgrounds.

Embracing our living connection to the Lutheran tradition, the College is actively dedicated to the longstanding principles of Lutheran higher education, including education explicitly aimed at developing the whole person and contributing to the common good, a love for and openness to the world in its complexity and diversity, and critical questioning in the ongoing search for truth and the advancement of knowledge.

Gustavus challenges students to develop openness and curiosity toward the world and helps them discern their unique gifts and talents so they can use them wisely to contribute to the common good. As an institution committed to vocation, Gustavus encourages students to identify and explore their deepest commitments.

It is with these distinctive strengths and attributes that we tackle the current challenges facing higher education generally, and liberal arts colleges specifically. Economic pressures have resulted in increased

CORE VALUES

- Excellence
- Community
- Justice
- Service
- Faith

demand for institutional aid for students and their families. Ongoing dependence on tuition revenue coincides with heightened competition for students. Demographic changes necessitate new recruiting strategies. Limited revenue streams clash with expectations for more extensive services. These realities exist within a cultural context in which the value of a liberal arts education is both extolled and questioned.

These challenges present us with opportunities to be courageous and innovative, and we have seized those opportunities in the Gustavus Acts Strategic Plan.

For more than a year, the Gustavus community has been looking forward, dreaming big, and thinking strategically. Our overall aim has always been clear—to preserve and advance the excellence of the educational experience we offer our students. We seek to provide Gustavus students with a liberal arts education that develops global citizens.

We started with a renewed commitment to fully live out our mission, which illuminates our purpose and guides our decisions. We are all stewards of this mission—faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends of the College. It shapes the core values that guide our institutional work: Excellence, Community, Justice, Service, and Faith.

In alignment with our mission and core values, we have identified a bold, 10-year vision to energize and focus our work. We seek to ensure the excellence of our students' comprehensive educational experience and to prepare them fully for postgraduate success. We do this knowing that our students are entering a world of rapid technological advances, increased global connections, and a growing diversity of people and perspectives. We are excited for the challenge of preparing students to think critically and creatively for a future of change and possibility. As champions of the liberal arts, we are well positioned to push forward in new directions. Together, we strive to create an even more promising future for this great institution and for all members of the Gustavus community. We look to the future with optimism and confidence, compelled by an ambitious goal that sparks our collective imagination and focuses our work. Here is our vision:

**Gustavus equips students to lead purposeful lives
and to act on the great challenges of our time
through an innovative liberal arts education
of recognized excellence.**

A Gustavus liberal arts education equips students for purposeful lives. Faculty and staff actively work with students throughout their time at Gustavus—inside and outside the classroom—to help them learn about themselves and the world, discover their own interests and talents, discern their vocation, think deeply and critically, and ignite their passion and capacity for lifelong learning.

In order to prepare students to act on the great challenges of our time, we must ask fundamental and enduring questions. We must seek to understand complex issues in our world from a variety of perspectives. We must think deeply about root causes of these great challenges and the implications and consequences of possible solutions. In fact, we do not presume to know what the great challenges are or will be. Defining those challenges is, itself, part of the inquiry. A defining value of an excellent liberal arts education is considering how things are and how they could be.

Addressing the great challenges of our time demands more than critical thinking. It demands that we care. A Gustavus liberal arts education strengthens a student’s capacity to do so by providing spaces and opportunities to contemplate and deliberate. It inspires students to ask themselves how they will become people who continue to care, even when challenges cannot be solved in their lifetimes.

Great institutions thrive by leaning on their strengths, and, at the same time, responding to the needs of their stakeholders and the challenges of their time. Great institutions set bold goals, successfully achieve them, and stay true to their values and principles.

As we move boldly forward, we recommit to our mission, rise to our new vision, and in doing so, send out into the world leaders passionate about acting on the great challenges of our time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rebecca M. Bergman". The signature is written in a cursive style and is followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends to the right.

Rebecca M. Bergman
President

GUSTAVUS ACTS VISION

***Gustavus equips students
to lead purposeful lives and
to act on the great challenges
of our time through an
innovative liberal arts education
of recognized excellence.***

In order to achieve this vision, the College commits to pursuing three equally important institutional goals over the next 10 years:

1. Diversify and expand the Gustavus community.
2. Deliver a distinctive and integrated liberal arts education.
3. Achieve financial, institutional, and environmental sustainability.

GOAL 1

Diversify and expand the Gustavus community.

The College recognizes that the “who” of the Gustavus community must reflect the diversity of the world from which our students come and to which they will return, while the “what” of its academic offerings must prepare students for life and work in an ever more complex and interdependent world.

➔ **OVERARCHING STRATEGY 1**

Build programs that reach and support more people while furthering the Gustavus mission and the Gustavus Acts vision.

- Strategy 1.1 Create and maintain an inclusive and equitable campus.
Design and implement institutional policies, procedures, and practices that support diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Strategy 1.2 Work toward fully meeting students’ demonstrated financial need.
Procure additional endowed scholarship funds to improve financial aid for high ability/high economic need students, and explore additional revenue sources to support more students at Gustavus from diverse economic backgrounds.
- Strategy 1.3 Identify, recruit, retain, and support cohorts of students currently underrepresented at the College.
Create efficiencies of scale when designing and implementing strategies and services for targeted cohorts of students.
- Strategy 1.4 Identify, develop, and deliver post-baccalaureate programs.
Explore certificate, continuing education, and master’s degree programs in areas that draw on our strengths and meet market needs.

GOAL 2

Deliver a distinctive and integrated liberal arts education.

Through a rigorous academic program of recognized excellence, the College will produce global citizens equipped with intellectual curiosity, analytical and problem-solving skills, and well-developed ethical sensibilities to address the great challenges of professional and civic life.

➔ OVERARCHING STRATEGY 2

Create the Gustavus Acts learning environment.

- Strategy 2.1 Design, implement, evaluate, and maintain initiatives that further the curricular and co-curricular dimensions of the Gustavus Acts plan.
 - 2.1.1 Emphasize student initiative and intellectual risk-taking in academic discovery and exploration and the development of accurate self-knowledge.
 - 2.1.2 Create a campus culture of intellectual engagement by developing, expanding, and supporting greater opportunities for research, scholarship, creativity, and dialogue.
 - 2.1.3 Support and facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration to address complex problems through innovative approaches, application of diverse and even divergent theoretical concepts and models, and global perspectives.
 - 2.1.4 Implement initiatives that emphasize the personal and academic value of ethically engaging the world in its diversity, and provide students with abundant opportunities to cross the borders of language and culture.
 - 2.1.5 Systematically and thoughtfully explore new or expanded undergraduate programs that align with the priorities of the Gustavus Acts plan and assess the contributions and costs of existing programs.
 - 2.1.6 Initiate and support collaborative, mutually beneficial, and reciprocal relationships between members of the College community and external partners who are addressing the great challenges of our time.

- Strategy 2.2 Integrate vocational exploration and career development and embed them into the four-year experience of every student.
- Design and implement sequenced opportunities for students to: identify their talents, interests, and passions; connect their liberal arts learning to career exploration; develop practical, tactical, and relevant approaches to career planning; graduate fully prepared to take their next step after college; thrive in life beyond Gustavus.
- Strategy 2.3 Expand the mentoring program.
- Build upon the success of the existing mentoring program by expanding access to more students, providing greater training and tools for mentors and mentees, and strengthening the program impact for students.
- Strategy 2.4 Strengthen the integration of curricular and co-curricular learning experiences.
- Purposefully and programmatically integrate academic and co-curricular experiences to foster and enhance substantial academic and personal development.
- Strategy 2.5 Align incentives across the Gustavus community to support the mission and vision of the College.
- Develop additional criteria for faculty tenure and promotion and administrator and support staff performance management systems that value and reward contributions to the achievement of the Gustavus Acts Vision.
- Strategy 2.6 Reimagine the Campus Framework Plan
- Establish priorities and complete facilities upgrades that support excellence in the curricular and co-curricular programs.

GOAL 3

Achieve financial, institutional, and environmental sustainability.

Providing a Gustavus education in the future demands that we act in the present to strengthen our financial, institutional, and environmental efforts.

➔ **OVERARCHING STRATEGY 3**

Implement systems and structures designed to maximize long-term success and viability.

- Strategy 3.1 Research and develop a financial model that enables Gustavus to thrive into the future.
- Strategy 3.2 Ensure that resource allocation reflects the strategic priorities and financial realities of the College.

Establish transparent criteria to direct resources towards programs essential to the institution and to refocus, modify, or eliminate programs less essential to the institution.
- Strategy 3.3 Recruit, retain, and support employees of the highest caliber.

Establish and maintain competitive salaries and benefits for all employees. Create a culture and system for personal and professional development for all members of the Gustavus community.
- Strategy 3.4 Ensure that the College’s organizational structure, policies, and procedures effectively facilitate the achievement of College priorities.

- Strategy 3.5 Increase the engagement and giving of alumni and friends.
Expand targeted outreach efforts to alumni and friends through partnerships with academic departments, the student life division, and other units with strong connections to alumni.
- Strategy 3.6 Strengthen the College’s reputation with external constituencies.
Encourage members of the Gustavus community to hold leadership roles and participate in community and professional groups; invite in-residence regional leaders and practitioners; and develop and expand high profile conferences, events, and meetings. Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing plan.
- Strategy 3.7 Implement environmental stewardship and sustainability principles and practices across the College.
Engage the campus community in increasing environmental sustainability by emphasizing the connections between campus infrastructure, operations, and student learning.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS AND TEAMS

The Gustavus Acts Strategic Plan is the result of a process that models and celebrates the College's values and demonstrates its commitment to transparency and shared governance. It is the product of hard work, investment of time, and dedication to innovation by a broad representation of internal and external members of the Gustavus community. Two planning teams drove the effort:

- **The Planning Leadership Team (PLT)**, chaired by President Bergman and staffed by Jolene Christensen, was comprised of 16 members in addition to the chair and committee assistant: five board members, six cabinet members, and five faculty members. Reflecting the College's commitment to shared governance, the PLT developed the guidelines for the process, created the foundation for the plan's discussion, established preliminary decision-making parameters, and endorsed the final version of the plan to be submitted to the Board of Trustees in June 2016.
- **The Strategic Action Team (SAT)**, co-chaired by a faculty member, Alisa Rosenthal, and a member of the administration, Siri Erickson, and staffed by Shanon Nowell and Linda Steinhaus, was comprised of 14 members in addition to the co-chairs and committee assistants: two board members, four administrators, four faculty members, two staff members, and two students. Providing fuel and facilitation for the plan's development, the SAT managed the time frame; convened and facilitated working groups; produced, collected, and reviewed all the materials, ideas, and final proposals for the plan; convened campus-wide and small group discussions; and reported regularly to the

PLT about the plan’s progress and recommendations. The SAT created five working groups, each tasked with exploration of an area of focus for the strategic plan:

- Academics Working Group
- Transitions Working Group
- Footprint Working Group
- Financial Model Working Group
- Traditions Definition Group

Members of the SAT co-chaired these working groups and recruited members of the College community—trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, students, and alumni—to participate in the work of the groups. The strategies in this document emerged from the research, deliberation, creativity, and commitment of these groups.

- **External Advisory Groups (EAG):** the Gustavus Crown Council served as a key advisory group for testing strategic planning concepts and assisted in facilitating working sessions with the National Advisory Boards. Additionally, President Bergman sought input and feedback from alumni at various gatherings during winter and spring of 2016.

In sum, the Gustavus Acts Strategic Plan represents a community-wide effort characterized by boldness, distinction, scalability, action orientation, and a commitment to ongoing review and revision.

Planning Leadership Team

Rebecca Bergman, *Chair*
 Warren Beck '67
 Mark Braun
 Jolene Christensen, *Assistant*
to the PLT
 Tom Crady
 John Hallberg '79
 Lisa Heldke '82
 George Hicks '75
 John Hogenson '81
 Linda Huett '66
 Tim Kennedy '82
 Richard Leitch
 Ruth Lin
 Chuck Niederriter
 Debra Pitton
 JoNes VanHecke '88
 Ken Westphal
 Tom Young '88

Strategic Action Team

Rich Aune '81
 Julie Bartley
 Steve Bennett
 Grayce Belvedere-Young
 Kyle Chambers
 Dan Currell '94
 Siri Erickson, *Co-Chair*
 Nicole Goebel
 Brenda Kelly
 Rob Kendrick
 Steve Kjellgren '86
 Dana Lamb
 Paula O'Loughlin
 Shanon Nowell, *Assistant*
to the SAT
 Sam Panzer '16
 Herchran Singh '17
 Alisa Rosenthal, *Co-Chair*
 Michele Rusinko
 Barbara Zust '76

Academics Working Group

Roger Adkins
 Grayce Belvedere-Young
 Betsy Byers
 Kyle E. Chambers, *Co-Chair*

Jill Fischer
 Jacob Johnson '17
 Tom LoFaro
 Clay Mickelson '16
 Dan Mollner
 Amanda Nienow
 Paula O'Loughlin, *Co-Chair*
 Alisa Rosenthal
 Sarah Ruble
 Herchran Singh '17
 Kristi Westphal

Financial Model Working Group

Kirk Carlson
 Dan Currell '94
 Heather Dale
 Neal Hagberg '81
 Jeff Heggedahl '87
 Steve Kjellgren '86, *Co-Chair*
 Jeff Owen '92
 Chris Rasmussen '88
 Michele Rusinko, *Co-Chair*
 Kelly Waldron

Footprint Working Group

Rich Aune '81, *Co-Chair*
 Nicole Goebel, *Co-Chair*
 Susie Heim '83
 Rob Kendrick, *Co-Chair*
 Maddalena Marinari
 Carlos Mejia
 Jerry Nowell
 Patty Reeder

Traditions Definition Group

Jessica Braun '96
 Marcia Bunge
 John Cha
 Siri Erickson
 Mary Gaebler
 Glenn Kranking '98
 Dana Lamb, *Co-Chair*
 Pearl Leonard-Rock
 Jace Riggan '16
 Barbara Zust '76, *Co-Chair*

Transitions Working Group

Julie Bartley
 Steve Bennett, *Co-Chair*
 Josh Brown
 Chris Captain '18
 Andrea Fannemel '95
 Cynthia Favre
 Scott Gilyard '83
 Margaret Kelliher '90
 Brenda Kelly, *Co-Chair*
 Meghan Krause '00
 Robert J. LaBombard
 Kasey Linde
 Tom McHugh '99
 Gisel Murillo '18
 Sam Panzer '16
 Amy Pehrson '91
 Kathi Tunheim
 Tommy Valentini '02

Crown Council

James Gale '83, *Chair*
 Al Annexstad
 Scott Dee '81
 Scott Gilyard '83
 John Hasselberg '74
 David Hendrickson '75
 Rollie Hirman '58
 Rick Hjelm '83
 Jim Hunter '71
 David Johnson '84
 Steve Linder '72
 Lynn McGinty '84
 Cheryl Olson '78
 Lee Petersen '68
 Robert A. Peterson '74
 Tim Peterson '83
 Michael Senescall '81
 Bill Soderlund
 Mark Tipps '82
 George Torrey '55
 Jim Vos '84
 Buster West '71
 Trish Wheaton '72
 Anita Young '77

**Arboretum National
Advisory Board**

John Chamberlain
Connie Fortin '82
Bruce Gray '61
Dan Knight
Harriet Mason
Scott Moeller
Bob Moline
Krisan Osterby '79
Bill Pedersen
Nancy Sizer '85
Kim Sogaard
Chuck Syverson
Buster West '71, *Chair*
Gary Wyatt

**Athletics National
Advisory Board**

Brenda Abraham '83
Sue Breckner '83
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Brad Burley
Tim Butorac '75
Julie Castellano '80
Brian Deschneau '70
Kari Eckheart
Del Ehrich '79
Ken Ericson '84
Derek Hansen '94
Brad Hanson '76
Rick Hjelm '83, *Chair*
Nicole LaVoi '91
Len Lundquist
Dan Myers '04
Richard Olson '82
John Otteson '73
Randall Stuckey '83

**Economics and Management
Department National
Advisory Board**

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Steve Andres '10
Suzanne Boda '82
Steven Carlson
Jared Chester '99
Krista Cook '98

Jan Dick '78
Karen Dye '89
Bruce Ensrud '90
Brent Harms '82
Brian Holcomb '79
Hailey Hollenhorst '07
Randy Lee '84
Patrick Lutter '90
Francis Nketia '83
Caroline Nelson '13
Jeff Owen '92
Julie Quello '02
Patrick Riordan '08
Ed Rudberg '01
Paul Schiminsky '93
Ari Silkey '99
Kent Stuart '87
Adam Toppin '10
Laura Vannelli '08
Jim Vos '84, *Chair*
Scott Ziegler '98

**Friends of Music National
Advisory Board**

Greg Aune
Brit Barkholtz '12
Al Behrends '77
Cindy Bittner
Kate Challeen '82
Jim Gale '83
Sam Grace '11
Steve Hogberg '69
Bruce Johnson '71
Michael Jorgensen
Jon Kietzer
Connie Landreville
Michael Landreville
Ruth Lin
Karrin Meffert-Nelson
Scott Moore
Megan Myhre '11
Doug Nimmo
Jackie Peterson '77
Randy Schreiner '78
Tim Strand '82
Jennifer Vickerman '97
Anita Young '77, *Chair*
Jon Young '77

**Nursing National
Advisory Board**

Ana Bartz '07
Logan Becker '12
Cindy Gustafson '77
Trisha Haapoja '97
Rose Jost '63
Gordon Mansergh '84
Karen Mathias '82
Paula Mesken
Joyce Miller
Jamie Newland '72
Cheryl Olson '78, *Chair*
Kasey Paulus '03
Claudia Stickman
Ann Yolitz
Barb Zust '76

Scandinavia Advisory Board

Mark Anderson '66
Linnea Asp '81
Chelsea Bowen '11
Matthew Cadwell '95
Chris Carlson '86
John Clemedtson '84
Craig Engwall '86
Kristen Gray '83
John Hasselberg '74, *Chair*
Glenn Kranking '98
Henrik Nordstrom '88
Elise Peters '91
Jenn Stromberg '05
Linda Wallenberg '75
Aaron Zierdt '10

**Wellbeing National Advisory
Board**

Steve Bennett
Robert Christenson '58
Scott Gilyard '83, *Chair*
Christine Grotjohn '09
Meghan Krause '00
Bill Manahan
Mara Melum
Joel Wiberg '60

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