



GUSTAVUS  
**Acts**  
Strategic Plan 2.0

# 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.



# REFLECTING ON OUR SUCCESS, BUILDING TOWARD 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.

In 2016, the Gustavus community launched the ambitious *Gustavus Acts* Strategic Plan. Built on the foundation of the College's unwavering mission and developed through an inclusive model of shared governance, *Gustavus Acts* has moved us forward together in pursuit of a new 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.**

### CORE VALUES

Excellence

Community

Justice

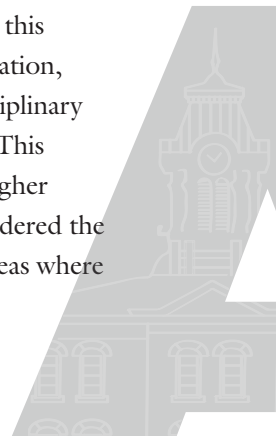
Service

Faith

In alignment with our mission and core values, this bold vision has energized and focused our work. For over three years, members of the Gustavus community—from students to trustees to professors to alumni—have united under the banner of this vision and in support of the goals of the strategic plan to advance the College in diversity, equity and inclusion; grow in academic and co-curricular excellence; and achieve financial, institutional, and environmental sustainability.

Together, we have increased the representation of historically underrepresented groups among our student body to over 20 percent of incoming students, stabilized the College's enrollment, and grown the endowment to an all-time high of \$200 million as of December 2019. The Nobel Hall of Science expansion and renovation project will be completed on time and on budget, providing students and faculty with cutting-edge learning spaces that celebrate the interdisciplinary nature of the liberal arts by physically connecting the sciences and the arts. We are finalizing the development of a new general education curriculum and preparing to launch the College's first-ever master's degree program in athletic training. We announced our intention to reduce campus energy use by 25 percent in the next five years and work toward becoming a zero-waste institution. Gustavus has received transformative gifts in support of need- and merit-based aid for students, endowed professorships, capital projects, and the Center for Career Development in addition to enjoying increased alumni participation and engagement. We recently launched *Show the World*, the most ambitious comprehensive campaign in the College's history, which seeks \$225 million in commitments that will fuel our good work as we continue to execute the strategic plan and turn our vision to the future of Gustavus Adolphus College.

While we celebrate these accomplishments and the positive changes that have shaped our community, we are already reaching to ever-greater heights. This fall and winter, the College hosted listening sessions with faculty, students, and staff to solicit feedback on the next steps we should take together as an institution. These productive conversations led to a period of discernment for the President's Cabinet and the Gustavus Board of Trustees. As a liberal arts institution, this is what we do. We act, then evaluate and consider new sources of information, discuss the context of various issues, explore challenges from an interdisciplinary lens, and use that information to inform our approach moving forward. This period of analysis took into account the dynamics of an ever-changing higher education landscape and the needs of our various constituencies. It considered the College's aspirations in the marketplace and its ongoing strengths and areas where



we can strategically grow and change as we continue to build an exceptional 21st-century liberal arts experience. All of this work has resulted in the development of *Gustavus Acts 2.0*, the next three-year phase of our strategic plan.

Gustavus Adolphus College has tremendous momentum. The passion of our alumni and friends is tangible, the energy and enthusiasm of our community is apparent. We are growing our endowment, transforming our facilities, and providing innovative curricular and co-curricular opportunities to our students. Our commitment to our mission remains steadfast, our core values strong, and our vision clear.

In 2016, I concluded the launch of the *Gustavus Acts* Strategic Plan with these words, which remain as true today as they were when we began this journey together:

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.

2019 marked the end of a decade that saw Gustavus Adolphus College grow and change in remarkable ways. 2020 is the beginning of our next chapter. What blessings does the future hold for Gustavus? Let us dream and build them together.



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:

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 evermore 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.**

#### **Goal 1A (Diversity 1.1/1.3)**

Create and maintain an inclusive and equitable campus. Identify, recruit, retain, and support students and employees currently underrepresented at the College.

- 1A.1** Design and implement institutional policies, procedures, and practices that support diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- 1A.2** Create efficiencies of scale when designing and implementing strategies and services for historically underrepresented students.

#### **Goal 1B (Financial Need 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.



## 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.**

##### **Goal 2A (Curricular and Co-Curricular 2.1/1.4)**

Design, implement, evaluate, and maintain initiatives that further the curricular and co-curricular dimensions of the *Gustavus Acts* plan.

- 2A.1** Emphasize student initiative and intellectual risk-taking in academic discovery and exploration and the development of accurate self-knowledge.
- 2A.2** Create a campus culture of intellectual engagement by developing, expanding, and supporting greater opportunities for research, scholarship, creativity, and dialogue.
- 2A.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.
- 2A.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.



- 2A.5 Systematically and thoughtfully explore new or expanded undergraduate and/or post-baccalaureate programs that align with the priorities of the *Gustavus Acts* plan and assess the contributions and costs of existing programs.
- 2A.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.

### **Goal 2B (Career Center/Vocation/Mentoring 2.2/2.3)**

Integrate vocational exploration and career development and embed them into the four-year experience of every student. Expand the mentoring program.

- 2B.1 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; and thrive in life beyond Gustavus.
- 2B.2 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.

### **Goal 2C (Great Challenges 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.



## 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.**

##### **Goal 3A (Financial Model and Resource Allocation 3.1/3.2)**

Develop a financial model that ensures resource allocations reflect the strategic priorities and financial realities of the College to enable it to thrive into the future.

- Investigate alternative revenue sources and establish transparent criteria to redirect resources towards programs essential to the mission/strategy of the institution. Refocus, modify, or phase-out programs as appropriate.

##### **Goal 3B (Human Resources 3.3/3.4/2.5)**

Recruit, retain, and support employees of the highest caliber. Ensure that the College's organizational structure, policies, and procedures effectively facilitate the achievement of College priorities. Align incentives across the Gustavus community to support the mission and vision of the College

**3B.1** 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.

**3B.2** Develop additional criteria for faculty tenure and promotion and staff performance management systems that value and reward contributions to the achievement of the Gustavus Acts Vision.

### **Goal 3C (Advancement 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.

### **Goal 3D (Branding 3.6)**

Distinguish Gustavus in the marketplace through continued growth of the brand and overall reputation.

- Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing plan; develop and expand high profile conferences, events, and meetings; and encourage members of the Gustavus community to hold leadership roles and participate in community and professional groups.

### **Goal 3E (Facilities 2.6)**

Renew the Campus Infrastructure.

- Establish priorities and complete facility upgrades that support excellence in the curricular and co-curricular programs.

### **Goal 3F (Technology)**

Develop a robust and sustainable technology infrastructure.

- Collaborate with the Gustavus community to offer services, innovations, and solutions that advance teaching and learning, enrich the student experience, and empower daily work and activities across campus.

### **Goal 3G (Environmental Sustainability 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 represented a community-wide planning effort that modeled shared governance and engaged many constituents. The Planning Leadership Team, Strategic Action Team, Crown Council, and 13 External Advisory Groups, involving hundreds of alumni, staff, faculty, students and friends of the College, worked together to create the plan in 2015. The first three years of focused implementation, 2016–2019, have resulted in many accomplishments and positive changes.

*Gustavus Acts 2.0* represents the second phase of implementation of the 10-year plan. A shared governance approach was again employed to update the original plan through focus groups from both inside and outside the campus community. Again, feedback from all College constituencies helped determine the important next steps we must take to move forward as an institution. The results of this data collection will serve as a refreshed roadmap for the next three years, 2020–2023.

The Strategic Planning Update and Reflection (SPUR) Leadership Team monitors the progress of the plan on a monthly basis by reviewing Key Performance Indicators via a Gantt Chart. We will continue to use this approach to regularly track the status of projects and initiatives associated with *Gustavus Acts 2.0* goals.

The strength of this plan is that it provides alignment of our work on a daily basis. Our commitment to a shared governance approach and our bias toward action have been keys to our success to date. Our vision is compelling and it requires that we continue to stretch our thinking and efforts to fully realize the goals of this plan. With great enthusiasm, we officially launch the next phase of our strategic plan!

Kathi Tunheim, PhD  
Vice President for Mission, Strategy, and Innovation







GUSTAVUS   
GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE

**Make your life count.<sup>®</sup>**