



Strategic planning is a way of life at Valparaiso University. It became an ongoing part of campus life during the administration of President Alan Harre and is continuing under the leadership of his successor, Mark A. Heckler.

Work on the first Strategic Plan during Dr. Harre's tenure began soon after he assumed presidency of the University in 1988 and led to adoption of a Strategic Plan covering the period from 1988 to 1990. Additional multi-year plans subsequently have been adopted to help inform decisions affecting current operations and provide a blueprint for strategies to achieve long-range goals. The Strategic Plan is reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect environmental changes.

The first step in preparing the Strategic Plan 2004-2009 was to reaffirm the University's mission, which was adopted soon after purchase of the University by the Lutheran University Association in 1925. This mission was further defined by identification of six Enduring Commitments that form the framework for the Strategic Plan, which will guide the University through its sesquicentennial anniversary celebration in 2008-2009.

The Strategic Plan 2004-2009 is a document that builds on the strengths of Valparaiso University today and provides the vision and strategies to build an even stronger and more vital Valparaiso University for tomorrow.

Valparaiso University Strategic Plan 2004-2009

Mission Statement

Valparaiso University, a community of learning dedicated to excellence and grounded in the Lutheran tradition of scholarship, freedom, and faith, prepares students to lead and serve in both church and society.

Enduring Commitments

I. Foster a dynamic intellectual environment...

...marked by students engaged in learning both inside and outside the classroom, by faculty dedicated to excellence in teaching, mentoring, and professional achievement, and by a rich blend of rigorous undergraduate programs complemented by select graduate and non-traditional programs.

1. Recruit and retain excellent faculty from diverse backgrounds who support the University's mission, who are dedicated to mentoring students through close interaction, and who will make significant contributions as teachers and scholars.
2. Recruit and retain staff members from diverse backgrounds who support the University's mission and who are dedicated to mentoring students. Provide a supportive environment that ensures continuous learning, enhanced skills, and innovation, and that promotes physical, mental, and spiritual health of all employees.
3. Recruit and retain students from diverse backgrounds who will develop to their full potential at a Lutheran university with a tradition for academic excellence, leadership development, and commitment to service.
4. Strengthen faculty support to ensure that faculty continue to develop their knowledge and skills as teachers and scholars. Foster a climate of innovation and continuous learning, and facilitate the integration of technology for improved teaching and increased productivity.
5. Strengthen programs with the potential to achieve special distinction and attract students. Maintain rigorous degree programs and majors in which students have the opportunity to reach a level of excellence that enables them to compete with the best in their fields.
6. Constantly review all programs (both academic and non-academic) for their quality, vitality, productivity, financial viability, and relevance to the University's mission. Create appropriate mechanisms to undertake such assessments.
7. Respond effectively to changing educational needs and new educational opportunities, and pursue those that have the potential to enhance mission, strengthen programs, extend outreach, and increase revenue.

II. Deliver a distinctive education...

...that integrates fields of study, connects theory to practice, combines liberal with professional education, and promotes interaction between campus life and classroom learning, in order to form men and women who will flourish in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world.

1. Continue to integrate liberal and professional study. Ensure a strong liberal arts foundation in all academic areas while challenging faculties in all colleges to contribute their expertise towards creating

an environment where all students learn to transform knowledge into informed judgment, service, and ethical practice.

2. Create new opportunities for interdisciplinary study and increase participation in current programs.
3. Expand opportunities for experiential learning, including undergraduate and graduate research.
4. Continue to enhance opportunities for learning outside the classroom and linkages between academic learning and other kinds of learning.
5. Provide a curriculum that prepares students to understand, thrive in, and contribute to a culturally and racially diverse world.
6. Provide a strong international education through curricular and co-curricular opportunities, and encourage participation and exchange through a variety of international programs.

III. Provide an enriching student experience...

...with programs and facilities that enhance students' capacity to lead socially, culturally, and physically satisfying lives, and that develop leaders, promote service, and build community.

1. Retain the characteristics that make the distinctive "Valpo experience" even as the University adapts to changing circumstances.
2. Maintain the primarily residential character of the Valpo campus and find ways to create strong loyalty to the campus culture among commuter students.
3. Provide a rich and varied co-curricular program by continuing to offer opportunities for student growth, leadership development, and community building.
4. Continue to provide opportunities for volunteer activities and other outreach activities.
5. Enhance the depth and breadth of the students' social and recreational experience on campus and in the neighboring regions.
6. Continue to support the arts in order to build upon the strengths of programs already present in the Valparaiso University Center for the Arts.
7. Provide facilities and technology to stimulate the continued growth of programs and activities that are central to the Valpo experience.

IV. Model the best in church-related higher education...

... by continually discovering new ways to connect faith and reason in the lives of students, thereby enabling them to become ethical and responsible citizens, and by continuing to lead the national conversation about the vital importance of church-related higher education.

1. Help students achieve an understanding of how faith interacts with learning, how work can be a vocation, and how principles of religion and morality find expression in an ethical life.
2. Affirm and build upon the independent and inclusive Lutheran character of Valparaiso University.

3. Continue to exercise leadership in the discussion about the nature, role, and future of church-related higher education in the United States.
4. Continue to enhance and promote programs that provide students who might consider or are considering a career in church work with courses, counseling, and mentoring.
5. Publicize and vigorously promote among relevant VU constituents the several substantial University programs that regularly serve to enrich the daily lives of Christian lay people.

V. Pursue Valparaiso University's historic commitment to the public good through equal opportunity in education for all segments of society....

1. Enhance strategies to recruit and retain a diverse student body that is both multicultural and international, so as to ensure that Valparaiso University is proactive in meeting the educational needs of a changing American society.
2. Enhance strategies to recruit and retain diverse faculty and staff.
3. Provide educational programs to faculty, students, and staff that ensure that Valparaiso becomes increasingly appreciative of diversity.

VI. Configure campus spaces thoughtfully and aesthetically...

...so as to enhance learning, build community, and radiate hospitality.

1. Strategically implement components of the Campus Master Plan, while capitalizing on opportunities not in the current plan.
2. Implement comprehensive institutional strategies to welcome visitors to campus, and to assure that their experiences on campus are positive.
3. Provide well-designed learning environments, including classrooms and technology, that promote learning in an effective, efficient, and innovative manner.
4. Continue the renovation and improvement of existing campus units.
5. Address deferred maintenance and ADA issues campus-wide.
6. Continue to address the full range of safety issues campus-wide.

VII. Increase Resources and Strategic Investments...

...through increased operational revenue, comprehensive fundraising, and improved productivity.

1. Increase net revenue by managing in tandem the goals of increased number of students and effective management of financial aid.
2. Increase both current and deferred fundraising.
3. Create comprehensive communication strategies that promote public recognition and connect the University to influencers and stakeholders.
4. Improve productivity while maintaining quality.

About Valpo - Valparaiso University
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