

# **GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY**

**Building Bridges to the Future: Connecting Christ and Culture**

**Strategic Plan 2015**

**March 17, 2009**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

For a Christ-centered institution like George Fox University, the creation of a strategic plan is an exercise of faith. We trust that God has a purpose for the institution and as a community of faith and we seek to understand, articulate and accomplish that purpose. In seeking the mind of Christ, we both acknowledge our own limitations and listen for Christ's voice as we are attentive to the voices across the university.

The strategic planning process for us, then, began not with the appointment of the typical committee of VPs and trustees, but with hearing from the various communities that make up the university. Our consultant, Ian Symmonds, participated in five meetings with groups from the university, in locations from Cannon Beach to Boise, from Newberg to Portland. The meetings were to hear what these groups believed about what makes George Fox unique, and what strategic priorities should shape our future. The Board of Trustees of the university devoted significant time to these issues in its October meeting in 2007.

Beginning with our first meeting in October of 2007, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, consisting of Board members, faculty, and staff, reviewed the information garnered from those meetings. We sought to determine which of the numerous strategies proposed were the right ones for us; consistent with the university's heritage and aimed at accomplishing our current mission and vision.

By January, it was evident how important it was to have undertaken the strategic planning process at this time, in that we were able to have a tremendous dialog with our new president, Robin Baker. From that dialog, we identified ten "pillars" upon which we intended to base our strategic objectives. Twelve working groups comprised of 76 persons from our committee and others from the university then met separately to develop strategic initiatives from the pillars we had identified. Approximately 20 percent of the university's employees were involved in this process. These groups met over the next several months to identify what we were already doing well in specific areas, what we needed to improve, specific actions that we could take, how much these actions would cost, and the order in which they should be accomplished.

At its spring meeting, the Board of Trustees again reviewed the visioning process and heard reports from the working groups. Comments from the Board were reviewed by the Strategic Planning Committee and incorporated into the work archived online.

By June, the working groups had created a template that organized the strategic initiatives, proposed tactics, established timelines, identified resources required and established measures of success. We also considered a revision to the university's mission statement and a new vision statement. Over the summer, the template was converted to a strategic plan document. The faculty and staff went through another review process with more input from the president and the Strategic Plan Steering Committee. It was at this time that the original "pillars" became a

combination of missional values, strategic goals, and the bridge image. The bridge imagery illustrated our desire to move from our present reality to a more intentional future.

I began by saying that the strategic planning process is an exercise in faith. Of course, faith without works is dead. The next step in the faith process is to execute the plan. In so doing, we continue to depend upon the faithfulness of God to encourage, correct, and lead us.

In Christ,

Don Carter

Chair, Strategic Planning Steering Committee

## OUR UNIQUE CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

Every age and human community has faced significant challenges and new opportunities. The beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is proving to be a particularly interesting and demanding time for American colleges and universities. As a Christian university committed to the person and mission of Jesus Christ, these times compel us to become even more intentional about our future and our responsibility to provide Christ-centered education.

The challenge of increasing costs for higher education is an opportunity for innovation in how education is delivered whether it is academics, spiritual formation, or professional development. The challenges of globalization compel us to help students understand the complexities of their own culture in a non-Christian Western environment, and then learn to fairly engage and collaborate with people of other cultures. The challenges facing our environment are opportunities for us to take more seriously God's mandate to steward the earth's resources for the benefit of all. It compels us to live more simply and to prepare students as stewards not only of their personal lives, but of the physical world around them. The impact of the ever-changing technology challenges us to continually adapt while also providing a remarkable opportunity for engaging our world in new and innovative ways.

Our Strategic Plan addresses these and other unique challenges and opportunities for George Fox University. We have worked tirelessly over the past two years to develop a plan that is relevant and that integrates critical initiatives that prepare students for the future. In the plan we have focused consistently on connecting our Christian values to our learning experiences: being globally engaged to impact the world for Jesus Christ; creating unique teaching, learning, and research opportunities through technology and educational innovation; and reshaping our infrastructure and resources for future sustainability and growth. We see these areas as critical to creating the most relevant learning experience possible today and in the future.

Although the challenges facing us are significant, we believe that George Fox University will meet these challenges by claiming its history, clarifying its vision, and living out its consuming passion. We believe God is guiding our vision for the future, and we are excited to set it into motion with this Strategic Plan.

Strategic Planning Committee

## OUR VISION

**Our vision is to become one of the most innovative and engaging universities in the western United States known for academic excellence and for connecting the message of Jesus Christ to the global challenges and opportunities of the future.**

The world is increasingly divided between people who have passionate religious commitments and those who do not. George Fox University is in the unique position to build bridges between the world of Christian faith and the broader local and global communities also facing the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is our primary goal to develop a powerful and compelling model for Christian higher education – a model that treasures academic inquiry and broad-based learning, values its partnership with the Church, and grounds all discussions in the truth found in Scripture and revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. We believe that God empowers us to discover and uncover new insights into the natural world and the workings of the human condition. We do not fear what we will find. For if God is the creator of all things, then what we discover about nature and humanity will tell us more about its creator. As a Christian university, we believe we are free: free to question, free to learn, free to love God more fully with our hearts and minds, and to love our neighbors no matter who they may be.

In his essay, “The Theology of Poetry,” C.S. Lewis wrote: “I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.” Like Lewis, we see our world through the lens of the living Christ. In our pursuit of truth, we seek the wisdom to know how best to serve humanity in the light of Christ and his Kingdom. We believe the future of the world rests in the minds, the hearts, the plans and the purposes of thoughtful, spiritually motivated Christians. Therefore, George Fox University faces the challenges of our changing society by preparing students to meet them with deeply held convictions and with the knowledge and skills to make a difference. We prepare them also to be gracious, humble people who love to learn and who know how to love others. Whether graduate or undergraduate students, traditional or nontraditional students, the dedicated faculty and staff of George Fox University are committed to empowering students spiritually, academically, and professionally to become global agents of renewal.

We do not wish to be arrogant in our claims and we recognize that there are many people who do not share our understanding of Jesus and the Christian faith, but we believe the message we carry is good news to the world. It is our conviction that in the resurrection of Jesus all things gain new possibilities. And it is in the hope we find in the resurrection that we speak our promise and commitment boldly to our culture. By constructing new “bridges,” George Fox University will become a place where faith and culture meet in dynamic dialogue.

In the following Strategic Plan, we outline seven primary goals that represent the transition of the university from our past history and identity to our future hope. They include:

1. Ensure that all curriculum and co-curricular programs incorporate, model, and assess the university's values by fall 2010.
2. Expand the university's enrollment from the current 3,400 to 4,000 by 2014.
3. Expand our donor base in sufficient size and capacity in order to achieve strategic and master plan financial goals.
4. Expand the present university effort to build an institution that reflects the diversity of God's kingdom throughout its academic programs and among its faculty and staff.
5. Embrace digital learning as an essential element of a university preparing students for today's world.
6. Develop leadership models for men and women committed to fulfilling the missional calling of Christ.
7. Strengthen the university's commitment to global engagement, peace and justice, and care of the earth.
8. Develop and monitor key financial indicators at all levels of the university to promote fiscal responsibility and accountability.

The planning process resulted in a commitment to best operating practices so that our university remains strong, effective, and focused on our purpose and people. As a result, our plan includes five "Institutional Commitments," including:

- Develop an infrastructure that manages complexity
- Attract and maintain high-quality faculty and staff
- Develop a culture of innovation university-wide
- Increase academic quality
- Enhance fiscal responsibility and accountability

It is with great enthusiasm, faith, and humility that we submit to you this strategic plan, and we invite you to join us in our collective pursuit of a visionary future for George Fox University.

Robin Baker

President

## **OUR VALUES**

### **Living like Christ as Agents of Love and Reconciliation**

We are a Christ-centered university rooted in the Friends tradition. We take seriously the challenge of Jesus Christ to be God's agents of love and reconciliation in the world.

### **Creating a Transformational Learning Community**

We maintain the highest standards for serving our community's academic and spiritual needs. We will continue to attract and nurture an authentic wisdom community of faculty and staff dedicated to providing a dynamic, diverse, and holistic spiritual and educational experience.

### **Engaging Globally and Connecting Culturally**

We value worldwide experiential learning aimed at understanding and improving the human condition. We desire to connect genuinely with people from diverse cultures both locally and globally through relationships and reciprocal teaching and learning.

### **Reflecting the Diversity of God's People**

All people are created in God's image. Therefore, George Fox University represents the ethnic, socio-economic, cultural, and gender diversity of the broader Kingdom of God. We provide opportunities for students to dialogue about issues of diversity and to live and study in diverse communities.

### **Preparing Innovators and Risk Takers in Pursuit of God's Kingdom**

Our community inspires and equips students and employees to take responsible risks in pursuit of God's kingdom and to discover creative ways to fulfill Christ's purposes in our university life and the world around us.

### **Serving and Leading in Communities of Trust**

We strive to be a community of trust, camaraderie, and respect where we practice collaborative leadership. We value the contributions of students, faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees and find unity through serving one another.

### **Promoting Peace, Justice, and Care of the Earth**

Jesus Christ calls us to be peacemakers, to serve the poor, and to engage our world responsibly. We are a community that actively creates peace, promotes justice, and cares for the earth.

## **Our Strategic Goals for Building Bridges to the Future**

### **1. Ensure that all curriculum and co-curricular programs incorporate, model, and assess the university's values by fall 2010.**

- A. Adopt Common Goals for the core curriculum that reflect the values of the university and that are developed and assessed by 2010.
  - a. Develop measureable objectives for the undergraduate religion curriculum that emphasizes such elements as biblical literacy, the message of Christ, spiritual formation, and our commitment to diversity, peace and social justice by fall 2011.
  - b. Develop curriculum objectives for students to discover their unique purpose in every major or degree in order for students to be servant leaders in their work and professions by fall 2011.
- B. Reinforce Learning Objectives in the Co-curriculum Programs with measurable outcomes by spring 2011.
- C. Develop Measurable Objectives for all University Employees that demonstrate intentional efforts to instill university values in the workplace by 2010.

### **2. Expand the university's enrollment from the current 3,400 to 4,000 by 2014.**

- A. Traditional Undergraduate Enrollment Target – 1,900. Current enrollment is 1,650.
  - a. Develop enrollment targets for each major with special focus on some majors.
    - i. Establish Civil Engineering major by fall 2010 with an enrollment target of 50 students by fall 2014.
    - ii. Increase overall engineering enrollment to from current 110 to 175 by 2014.
    - iii. Increase enrollment in Computer Science from current 25 to 50 by 2014.
  - b. Increase enrollment through specialized programs.
    - i. Develop an honors program in the College of Arts and Sciences for the students with exceptional academic potential by fall 2012.
    - ii. Develop an extended summer program by summer 2010 with online options to give undergraduate students opportunities to complete their degrees earlier.
    - iii. Increase recruitment for international students beginning with the China and East Asia Studies program. By fall 2010 increase enrollment from 60 to 120. Assess the impact of international students on the undergraduate campus by fall 2010 and develop effective services for them.
  - c. Expand the intercollegiate athletics program to include new athletic teams and increase athletic participation on the Newberg campus by 150 students by 2012. The athletic programs under discussion include women's lacrosse, men's and women's swimming, and football.

- B. Graduate and Degree Completion Enrollment Target – 2,100. Current enrollment is 1,750.
  - a. Increase enrollment in current programs.
    - i. Establish a full-time MBA program by fall 2010 with an enrollment target of 25 students annually. Investigate establishing an MBA program for Chinese students in Newberg and China by 2010.
    - ii. Develop a strategy for the expansion of graduate signature programs in new areas by 2012.
    - iii. Create new online and hybrid options for current programs by 2010. SPS will have a cohort-hybrid delivery system by fall 2009. The seminary will have a cohort-hybrid delivery option for the MDIV and MASF by spring 2010.
  - b. Increase enrollment in new program areas.
    - i. Create four or more new programs in health sciences areas by 2014. Proposals developed include the MSW, PT, RN to BSN, and MSN in education.
    - ii. Develop an international DMIN program on the model of the Leadership and Emerging Culture DMIN for various international sites by fall 2009.
- C. Increase the University's Presence in the West by developing a clear and compelling brand message and plan by winter 2009.

### **3. Expand our donor base in sufficient size and capacity each year in order to achieve strategic and master plan financial goals.**

- A. Increase Donor Base to achieve our endowment goal of \$36 million by fall 2015.
- B. Identify and Recruit New Board Members who will expand the university giving base.
- C. Establish a Capital Campaign to further the Newberg Campus Master Plan – The next steps in the Master Plan include:
  - a. Construct a new Student Center & Bridge – The current dining hall, which seats 500 students, is inadequate for a projected undergraduate student population of 1900. An immediate need exists to create a larger facility for student gatherings and meals. The plan also includes the construction of a bridge across the canyon connecting the proposed Student Center with residential dorms.
  - b. Complete the Athletic Fields Project – Ken and Joan Austin pledged 24 acres for athletic fields in partnership with the Chehelem Park & Recreation Services and Newberg High School by fall 2012.

### **4. Expand the present university effort to build an institution that reflects the diversity of God's kingdom throughout its academic programs and among its faculty and staff.**

- A. Modify and Reframe the Blueprint for Diversity by fall 2010 identifying realistic goals and measurable outcomes with hiring benchmarks, strategies to increase the presence of diverse communities university-wide and proposals to develop a more diverse curriculum. (See Blueprint for Diversity for specific details.)
- B. Establish an External Board for the president to help plan and assess institutional efforts in diversity by the end of fall 2008.

## **5. Embrace digital learning as an essential element of a university's efforts to prepare students for today's world.**

- A. Provide New Tools for Learning and Communicating by developing hardware and software support systems to enhance digital interaction between teacher and learner both in the classroom and online for undergraduate and graduate students by summer 2011.
- B. Develop Support to Encourage Adoption of Hybrid Teaching strategies and digitally enhanced learning experiences in a cooperative effort with the Center of Teaching and Learning, Hybrid Learning Programs and Institutional Technology by 2011.
- C. Pursue Web-Centric Communication to offer collaboration via communication and data sharing for the enhancement of the learning process by 2010. This includes social networking strategies and video-based web communication and the hire of a Video Production person for spring 2009.
- D. Evolve the "Computers across the Curriculum" program to incorporate university digital learning strategy with university computer hardware resources by fall 2010.

## **6. Develop leadership models for men and women committed to fulfilling the missional calling of Christ.**

- A. Develop a Focus on Missional Ministry by 2012 in order to connect students' profession and calling with the needs of the church and community for the Christian message.
- B. Develop a Friends Leadership Program by 2009 on the undergraduate campus in collaboration with the Northwest Yearly Meeting and the university. A director will be hired by fall 2009 to work half-time in admissions and half-time in Friends leadership.
- C. Develop Women Leaders among students, faculty and staff with a women's center, a women's advisory board, mentoring programs, and partnerships with women leaders in the community by January 2010.

## **7. Strengthen the university's commitment to global engagement, peace and justice, and care of the earth.**

- A. Expand the Center for Global Studies at the undergraduate and graduate levels and coordinate study abroad and international opportunities by Jan. 2011. This includes the hire of full-time director.
  - a. Develop three new academic opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to study and serve in cultures across the world by fall 2012.
  - b. Encourage the full participation of undergraduates in a variety of cross-cultural experiences.
- B. Expand the Center for Peace and Justice by providing new opportunities for service and dialogue within our university body, our local community, and our greater global world by Jan. 2010.
- C. Establish a Creation Care Committee with the primary goals of identifying tactics which will reduce the carbon footprint of the university by 10 percent and of educating the community in creation care by 2015.

**8. Develop and monitor key financial indicators at all levels of the university to promote fiscal responsibility and accountability.**

- A. Employ effective financial management practices to ensure the fiscal health of the university on a multi-year budget cycle.
- B. Continue to develop financial analyses of the entire institution aimed at setting standards for on-going program needs and future programmatic directions.
- C. Confirm and monitor key performance indicators at all levels for mutual accountability such as benchmarks for faculty-student ratios, degree program benchmarks, class size goals, a process for reviewing small majors and unsuccessful programs, staff benchmarks, co-curricular benchmarks, and quality benchmarks.
- D. Enhance faculty and staff compensation by setting benchmarks for faculty and staff compensation by 2009 and by developing a realistic financial plan to meet the benchmarks.

## INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS

**I. Develop an Infrastructure that Manages Complexity** – George Fox will reorganize its infrastructure to reflect our commitment to become a top Christian university and to produce a healthy, robust, and efficient governance system for all degree programs and campus sites.

- A. Reorganize the academic structure using a “schools and colleges” model for approval by fall 2011.
- B. Develop a governing and working structure for the multiple sites to improve their ability to function effectively in a centralized-decentralized environment by fall 2011.
- C. Develop core curriculum competencies for the General Education requirements of undergraduates by fall 2011.
- D. Develop benchmarks to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of our academic programs by fall 2011.

### **II. Attract and Maintain High-Quality Faculty and Staff**

- A. Fully develop and fund the Center for Teaching and Learning in order to coordinate services that enhance faculty development in pedagogical methods by 2011.
- B. Identify and institute at least one best workplace practice to promote an environment of care that increases employee satisfaction on the job annually through 2015.
- C. Develop innovative ways to support staff and faculty who have extra challenges as full-time employees with special family responsibilities by 2010. This includes employees with small children, chronically ill spouses or children, or employees who care for disabled or elderly family members in their homes.

**III. Develop a culture of innovation university-wide**, focusing on ideas that generate income for the university and uniquely position it in the marketplace.

- A. Establish methods to ensure hiring, evaluating, and rewarding innovative employees.
- B. Develop new relational tactics to increase student recruitment and improved retention rates.

### **IV. Increase Academic Quality**

- A. Embed the academic assessment program in every curricular and co-curricular program.
- B. Maintain current accreditations by including annual reviews and initiate professional accreditation in programs such as business and counseling.
- C. Continue to assess teaching, scholarly work, and service of all full-time faculty members and assess the teaching of all part-time faculty members to ensure increasing quality for all students annually.
- D. Continue to develop funding to support teaching and scholarship efforts.
- E. Continue to develop funding to support the learning infrastructure including the library, equipment, labs, and the replacing of computers and technology equipment.

## **V. Enhance Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability**

- A. Create the Institutional Assessment Committee as a university-wide driver for institutional effectiveness. This committee will require institutional effectiveness plans for each operational unit and academic program.
- B. Expand the institutional planning and research office to provide effective data collection and analyses for university decision-making processes and ensure that accreditation commitments through program planning are centralized.
- C. Develop a strategy for evaluating the relationship of the university with Tilikum, especially as it relates to the camp's purpose and future.
- D. Continue to implement facility improvements that include the siting and orientation of buildings, landscape and circulation, building materials and massing, and stewardship and sustainability for the Newberg and campus sites.