

Strategic Plan for
GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY
Adopted by the George Fox University Board of Trustees
October 19, 2002

Introduction

Effective planning documents put into words what the institution should already know in its head and its heart. This document seeks to articulate the following:

- 1) A dream for the long-term future.
- 2) A preamble stating characteristics of George Fox University that affirm the University's history and heritage, and which give direction for the future.
- 3) A vision for the University in the next five years.
- 4) Issues currently facing the University due to internal as well as external factors.
- 5) Strategic Goals for 2002 - 2005

A Dream:

This plan focuses on the next 3 years. Institutions are "long-term" places that will be here long after this plan and this generation of people is gone. This section intends to communicate, in today's language, what we would like to see for those who follow us.

Both Christians and non-Christians will generally recognize George Fox University as one of the finest Christ-centered universities in the Pacific Northwest. Graduates will leave the University prepared intellectually, physically, and spiritually to impact the world for Christ.

We will be a teaching institution that prepares students both for careers and for further education. All faculty members will be outstanding teachers, current in their disciplines, and active in the discipline's conversations. At least a quarter of the faculty will produce first-rate scholarship supported by released time for research. The scholarship produced will include applications of truth for the Christian community and for society in general. At least one third of our graduates will regularly enter the finest professional and graduate schools. The University will be concerned to educate all aspects of a student's life, with spiritual formation being of primary importance. The heart of George Fox University will be outstanding classroom teaching and mentoring students receive from the faculty.

Graduate programs will be known for educating outstanding practitioners who will be the finest teachers, businesspersons, and counselors in the Pacific Northwest. The seminary

will be the school of choice for students intending to be effective ministers of the Christian gospel in our region.

The Newberg campus will focus on traditional undergraduate education. The physical plant will be of high quality to meet academic and co-curricular needs. George Fox University will provide an education that is complete with integration of Christian faith and learning at the core of all activity. All University employees will bring their faith commitments and their work into coherence.

Campuses in Portland, Boise, and Salem will continue to grow and serve students with graduate and non-traditional undergraduate programs. The University will develop more sites to bring these programs to people we do not currently serve.

The University will have achieved improved financial strength. The physical plant will be attractive and serve students effectively. The endowment fund will be such that George Fox will function in every way like a high-quality university.

The rest of this document proposes the next steps in the University's journey toward this dream.

Preamble:

Since the late 1980's George Fox University has experienced rapid growth and increasing complexity. Enrollment has more than quadrupled due largely to acquisitions and new non-traditional programs. The traditional undergraduate program has expanded only just over two times its size when rapid growth began. Currently approximately 45% of George Fox students are enrolled in programs other than traditional undergraduate programs. Approximately one-third of the non-traditional students are in programs obtained from other institutions (Psy.D., seminary, and counseling.) The other two-thirds are primarily the degree completion programs, and graduate programs in Education and Business. The non-traditional programs are more directly market driven than the traditional programs and therefore more subject to the whims of the market and competition.

The University's growth has resulted in increasing institutional complexity. We now have programs of many different kinds while still being a "small" institution. Our program complexity is not much less than that of much larger universities. Our academic offerings range from baccalaureate to doctorate and from traditional liberal arts to professional. We serve multiple campuses, with one being almost 500 miles away. The Portland Center houses most, but not all of our graduate programs.

In preparing this plan, many stakeholders were consulted. No message was more clear or pervasive than the message that George Fox University is mission driven and must remain true to its mission to "demonstrate the meaning of Jesus Christ by offering a caring educational community in which each individual may achieve the highest intellectual and personal growth." This plan must not only preserve the Christ-

centeredness of the University, it must continue to keep this concept “front and center” and seek to enhance its implementation. The University must know how it is Christ-centered in all programs at all times. This principle will be overtly stated many times in this plan. No part of this document is written outside the assumption that all aspects of the University operate within the historic George Fox mission.

George Fox University, founded in 1885 by Friends (Quakers) from the Newberg area as Friends Pacific Academy, soon became Pacific College (1891), then George Fox College (1949) and, since 1996, George Fox University. The relationship with the Friends has continued throughout the University’s history. Currently, the Board of Trustees has at least 4/7 of its members who are members of Friends churches and the Northwest Yearly Meeting of Friends approves all Board members. It is important that this relationship be nurtured and reviewed regularly to assure its maximum effectiveness for the University and the Yearly Meeting.

The University’s heritage has established characteristics that are highly valued at George Fox and at times distinct from characteristics at other Christ-centered institutions. We are deeply committed to education that goes far beyond academic preparation. The formation of Christian character is central at George Fox University. While evidence of such formation is sometimes difficult to quantify, the University emphasizes service to others in numerous ways. Issues of integrity, honesty, and justice are discussed and promoted in classroom and co-curricular settings. George Fox graduates are known as people who care for others and contribute to the communities where they live.

We seek to provide opportunities and mentors that encourage leadership development in students. A George Fox education intends to prepare students to be persons of influence wherever they are called by God to serve. George Fox alumni must look for ways to influence and lead wherever they are. Spiritual formation, service, and leadership are part of what it means at George Fox to integrate faith with learning. Learning takes place across the University in various ways and places.

It has been through program additions that the University has strengthened its financial position during the past 15 years. Non-traditional programs have been very cost effective over the years. Some have become less so recently, while others continue to be a significant financial resource to the whole University. George Fox continues to generate a large part of its operational income from charges to students. The endowment fund is small, and unrestricted gifts to the operational budget have remained steady over a significant period of time. Thus, neither of these sources is significant in supporting annual operations.

A Vision for George Fox University:

Reality is such that dreams and even well laid plans have a way of not turning out exactly like they were written. Without dreams and plans, however, institutions have a tendency

to exist without energy and direction. This section is an attempt to articulate broad goals for the direction of George Fox University as we enter a new millennium.

What does it mean that George Fox University is Christ-centered and how will we know that we are? Christ-centeredness is the process, for those who follow Jesus, to bring coherence to life. The culture of the United States at the beginning of the 21st century emphasizes specialization and individuality. George Fox University claims that the Gospel of Jesus Christ intends that people's lives make sense - that work, family, worship, and leisure time fit together to form a "whole cloth." At the heart of the University is the on-going, never completed effort to coordinate all parts of one's life.

Employees will deliberately seek coherence in their own lives and will then work to help students be whole persons. The faculty will teach all disciplines from the perspective of a Christian framework for life and will seek all truth as God's truth. Employees who supervise student workers will seek to share with students how their faith commitments affect their vocation. Administrators will manage the University according to principles consistent with a Christian world-view. Such behaviors will help students develop their own non-compartmentalized, coherent life style.

Many persons in our culture wonder about the meaning of life. What is life all about and how should we live? To combat rampant individualism, George Fox University will seek to foster community among all of us – students and employees. The challenge we face is how to obtain community when the number of persons involved becomes large and increasingly diverse. We have the potential to be a community because we have at least one thing in common - our faith commitment to Christ. It is unlikely that our community will come through governance that depends on the "community as a whole." We need to seek other ways to be joined to each other. Each vice president will work in his or her area to generate new ideas for what it means for George Fox University to be a community.

A major goal of all universities is to prepare students for careers. The Friends (Quaker) heritage of George Fox University has always considered career to be a vocation – a calling from God. All employees of the University will deliberately support and help students to find their call to life's work. Work is divinely ordained and worthy of careful choice. All persons at George Fox University should be called to serve God through their work. Calling is not only for those who enter "ministry" careers; it is for all those who follow Jesus.

Ultimately, the University is about spiritual formation. We exist as an arm of the church. (Church is intended here to mean all those who are Christians and who form Christ's church in the world. It does not refer to any particular Christian denomination or meeting.) George Fox University will carefully evaluate existing structures and systems intended to help students to spiritual maturity. If these are not effective, we will change our systems and try new ways to enable both students and employees to become spiritually mature so we can all be effective servants of Christ in the world.

These goals are not entirely new to George Fox University, and some of them are addressed regularly. This statement is written to provide clear direction for the whole University at the start of the 21st century. We face challenges of many kinds – educational, cultural, and financial – but we will address issues of coherence, community, service to church, and preparation for vocation in a deliberately Christian way.

The following section will address some important issues facing George Fox University at this time. The University will give immediate attention to the strategies proposed in the final section of this document. The president and vice presidents will develop responses to the issues raised in the following section and time-lines for the proposed strategies not later than December 31, 2002.

Issues for George Fox University:

I. Identity and positioning:

A major issue for George Fox might be put in the form of a question, “Do we want to be who we already are?” We are Christ-centered, Quaker, complex, and relatively small.

It is easy for long-time stakeholders and constituents to think of the University as primarily a traditional undergraduate, Christ-centered, liberal arts college. Planning discussions turn quickly to discussions of the current youth culture and the Newberg campus ethos. It is more difficult to discuss how we serve non-traditional students in programs that pursue integration of faith and learning with different methodology than in the traditional programs.

The University intends that the traditional undergraduate college will always be the core of the institution. It is common for universities to take their primary identity from the traditional undergraduate college, and George Fox will also continue to shape its primary identity by the traditional undergraduate college.

If we want to be who we already are, we need to establish goals for how best to serve all programs and all students with the best possible George Fox education. This will, in turn, affect our marketing and how we position ourselves in the world of higher education. The outside world has already formally accepted us for what we are with the repositioning within the last year into the Comprehensive II category by the Carnegie Foundation. (Significant graduate programs, but not a large number of doctoral degrees.)

II. Definition of quality:

All institutions of higher education seek to provide excellent education for students, and marketing material indicates that excellence has been achieved.

We know, of course, that not all institutions are alike. What will it mean for George Fox University to provide excellent education for students? Whatever definition we choose, it must take into account our mission and basic identity. George Fox exists to further the cause of Christ through providing Christ-centered higher education. Whatever limits this may seem to impose on our definition of quality, we embrace such limits with joy.

The test scores and grades of incoming undergraduate students, the number of refereed publications by the faculty, the size of the endowment, and the number of volumes in the library have historically measured quality. Such measures have validity. Institutions with such credentials are almost certain to produce “successful” graduates. It would seem that such results could be independent of what the institution “does” to its students. George Fox University has improved such measures significantly over the past decades and intends to continue this improvement. At the core of all discussions of quality, however, must be the people who constitute the institution.

Quality for the next decade will not mean that we get more than our share of traditional students with very high grades and test scores on entrance to the University. The higher education environment is such today that these students are in high demand and are being “bought” by universities and colleges. George Fox is not in a financial position to “purchase” a lot of these students. In recent years the University has become attractive enough that such students are selecting George Fox when we provide large enough financial aid incentives. We are not in a position to expend proportionately more funds for this purpose.

Increasingly the George Fox faculty is producing good scholarship. However, quality at George Fox will not mean that we will soon be a large producer of world-class scholarship. Scholarship of this kind requires facilities, which we don’t have and will not have in the near future. It also requires a campus climate in which faculty members spend at least as much time on research and writing as they do on teaching. The faculty and administration continues to believe that teaching must be the central activity at the University. Scholarship and research are being encouraged in new ways, but for the foreseeable future will be secondary to classroom teaching. Our commitment to all employees endorsing the George Fox Statement of Faith may prevent us from pursuing the most highly regarded scholars independent of compatibility with the University.

George Fox University needs to have a clear statement on its definition of quality.

III. Size, new sites, and physical plant

Current enrollment on the Newberg campus already requires more and better facilities than are now available. Most significant recent growth has been at sites away from Newberg.

Among our current facilities, only the Boise campus could support significant growth. The Portland Center is handling current programs well, but would need more space if additional programs moved from Newberg or if there is significant growth in existing programs. We anticipate growth in graduate programs in education and business, and the undergraduate degree completion programs. A complication at the Portland Center is that those programs are conducted primarily during evening hours. The problem is that the Portland Center could house more programs during normal business hours, but not during times when these non-traditional programs are offered. We need to find additional ways to use the Portland Center during normal business hours and weekends.

The addition of the Stevens Center has added new classroom space. Academic administrators will continue working with academic departments to assure the effective use of existing classroom space during available time periods. With the anticipated renovation of WoodMar Hall, there would be sufficient academic and support space for the current undergraduate enrollment. Needs on the Newberg campus are in co-curricular areas, such as residence halls, dining space, athletic and recreational facilities. The University would be greatly enhanced by the addition of a “wellness” or fitness center. Such facilities would greatly enhance our attractiveness to traditional students. Today’s traditional undergraduate students expect high-quality living and educational facilities. Any growth would exacerbate these needs.

Growth through programs at new locations is possible with little capital expense. Such growth further complicates the institution, but should generate significant new net revenues for the University. The revised academic governance structure should be designed to handle such additions.

IV. Racial/ethnic diversity:

George Fox University continues to seek appropriate racial and ethnic diversity. Our current situation is unacceptable when the world is rapidly becoming “smaller” and the “real world” is increasingly heterogeneous. More important, however, is the “driver” provided by our Christ-centered mission. We are committed to serve all racial and ethnic groups, and affirm that all humans are created in God’s image and have great value.

The University has recently adopted a “Blueprint for Diversity.” The document addresses racial and ethnic diversity, not diversity in general. As a

Christ-centered institution, we intend to pursue such biblical diversity aggressively.

V. Lifestyle requirements for University employees and students:

George Fox University has throughout its history asked employees and students to adhere to lifestyle standards commonly accepted by the evangelical Christian community in the United States.

Students and employees increasingly challenge these traditional George Fox lifestyle standards. Various offices accumulate evidence of such challenges anecdotally. Parents came to see me to let me know that their daughter was not involved, but her friends use alcohol routinely and in public. It is not unusual when interviewing potential employees that the conversation turns to “clarification” of certain aspects of our lifestyle expectations. Almost always this relates to the University’s policy on consumption of alcoholic beverages. Alcohol continues to be a significant problem in our society and on university campuses across the country. The different perspectives brought to it by different parts of the University complicate this issue. Traditional undergraduates are segmented because this group includes students who are legally underage for consumption of alcoholic beverages and those who are not. None of our graduate and non-traditional undergraduate students live in George Fox housing. Employees form another group with its own distinctive. They work at the University, do not live in our housing, and are of legal age to consume alcohol.

Recently, pornography has become easily and privately available through access to the Internet. Pornography can be highly addictive and is no respecter of age or position. Access to and use of pornography is of such a magnitude that the University has established a task force to consider the issue and how best to deal with it. There is hesitation to become prescriptive by adding “blocking” software to the University servers so pornographic web sites become more difficult to access, but such software is helpful to those who need some encouragement to resist the temptation to pornography.

Issues of lifestyle are important for Christians. We clearly state what George Fox lifestyle expectations are to students and employees. Our contemporary culture and wide differences among Christians make this an increasingly important and sensitive area to discuss and enforce. This may be the time for a careful review of the University’s lifestyle requirements.

It was not unnoticed by administration that at the Board meeting in February 2001, the session attended by most Board members was the one dealing with University lifestyle. We must be clear to all parts of the George Fox community about our lifestyle expectations.

VI. Financial well-being of the University:

George Fox University has a long history of balanced budgets and operational surpluses. The budget has been extremely “tight” the past several years and will continue to be so for the next 2-3 years. Operational deficits have been incurred the past 3 years. Several specific reasons for continuing difficulty include implementation of expensive new administrative computer software and ongoing expense of bond obligations. Significant payments on the bond obligations will be complete in the near future. Variations in enrollment are often not known until late in the summer when it becomes difficult to make budget adjustments before the beginning of the academic year.

The University has for the past 15 years operated on the principle of “high tuition – high financial aid.” This practice has brought us to the point where we now subsidize traditional undergraduate tuition at approximately 40%. For many years this was a viable practice because of growth in traditional enrollments as well as other net income-generating programs. We have now reached a point where our tuition is high among schools with which we compete, e.g. Seattle Pacific University and Whitworth College, and the percentage of aid returned to students cannot continue to be increased and expect it to have the effect of returning a gain to net income.

The University budget has no obvious areas for reduction of expense. Our salaries are much better than a decade ago, but still rank just below the median among schools in the Christian College Consortium. This is especially significant when seen in light of the relatively high cost of living in the Portland area. Our facilities, equipment, and technology are vastly improved, but are not at the “cutting edge.”

A central issue for George Fox University is to enhance the financial well being of the University. We have lived off of growth in the past decade. To become an outstanding university, we must strengthen the financial profile and growth must be controlled and limited to programs that will produce net income. Issues that must be addressed, include the (sometimes) competing roles of enhancing the operational budget and enlarging the endowment fund. We cannot jeopardize the present to ensure the future, but we cannot ignore the future.

The University must find ways to provide funds to enhance quality in the near future as well as to enlarge the endowment fund to stabilize the institution and provide for another level of excellence in the future.

Strategic Goals for 2002 - 2005

George Fox University is currently poised to implement a new set of initiatives to bring the University to a new level of significance. These initiatives seek both to address current problem areas and to grow qualitatively and quantitatively. This list of items is in priority order.

- I. Establish and improve the financial health of the University.
In recent years the University has experienced operating deficits due to several factors. This item will focus on the most important of these strategic factors.
 - A. Stabilize the traditional undergraduate enrollment.
 1. The size of entering classes has been erratic and unpredictable.
 2. Institutional financial aid to these students has been unpredictable.
 3. This issue will have the highest priority for the next three years at George Fox University.
 4. We will admit 465 new students in fall 2003 and increase to 485 new students by fall 2005. This will result in a traditional undergraduate student body of approximately 1500. Growth beyond this will depend on new programs. We will adjust staffing and facilities to efficiently serve this number.
 - B. Learn how to best market George Fox University.
 1. Marketing efforts have been decentralized and often without “buy-in” from the programs being marketed.
 2. Marketing will be very important to the University and will be directly related to our advertising.
 3. The Director of Marketing will develop marketing and advertising to reach enrollment goals for traditional undergraduate programs as well as degree completion and graduate programs.
 - C. Major donor development
 1. George Fox University needs to follow up gains made with the Legacy Campaign. There are some significant and potentially significant donors who are relatively new to the University. We will work with these donors to bring them closer to GFU.
 2. Long-term financial stability requires continued cultivation of new major donors to the University.
 - a. We must find new, large sources for capital improvements
 - b. We must work to dramatically increase endowment funds. This requires cultivation of donors with long-term commitments to George Fox University.

3. Discovery and cultivation of new major donors is essential preparation for the next capital campaign.
- II. Develop an operational definition of quality.
- A. The words “quality” and “excellence” are used pervasively throughout higher education. Everyone wants it. What does it mean?
 - B. Traditionally, quality is defined in terms of “inputs,” e.g. class rank of incoming students and SAT scores.
 1. George Fox University has made great improvements in these areas in the past decade.
 2. Undergraduate students with high credentials are very expensive. There is a school somewhere who will pay such students to attend.
 3. There are very few such students in existence.
 4. George Fox University cannot afford more than its share of such students.
 - C. We will develop a definition of quality that will primarily describe the University, not its students.
 1. An institution with outstanding people, facilities, and equipment will preferentially attract highly capable students.
 2. We will determine our goals for people, facilities, and equipment during 2002-2003.
 - D. Implementation of the Blueprint for Diversity will be a specific measure of institutional quality.
 1. Higher education must reflect the realities of the world in which we live.
 2. We must follow the biblical mandate to value all humans and model Christ’s teachings when we provide high quality education for our students.
 - E. We will provide facilities and personnel to provide high-quality education to all our students.
 1. All programs, curricular and co-curricular, will be reviewed and analyzed to determine what they need to serve students effectively.
 2. We will consider discontinuing programs we are not able to support adequately, or find the means to provide support.
- III. Complete several important current initiatives.
- A. Outdoor athletic complex at the intersection of Crestview and Villa.
 1. Twenty acres of land is available.
 2. Current playing fields do not meet NCAA standards for post-season play.
 - B. Science Education Center
 1. Current staffing is conducive to successful launch of this project.

2. Local school district is eager to cooperate with the University in this effort.
- IV. Bring health care programs to George Fox University.
 - A. Our mission statement not only allows for, but also begs us to offer programs in health care to students. Jesus was a healer when he lived on earth. For us to “demonstrate the meaning of Jesus Christ” to the world, invites us to prepare healers of various kinds.
 - B. Our nation and the world are in desperate need of health professionals.
 - C. Begin immediate investigation into the feasibility of programs in
 1. Nursing
 2. Pharmacy
 - V. Acquire the property currently belonging to Providence Newberg Hospital.
 - A. PNH will begin construction of a new hospital in Newberg at a new site in the fall of 2003. The new hospital will be ready for occupancy early in 2005.
 - B. PNH will be selling the current facility.
 - C. PNH is very interested in cooperative agreements with Universities that prepare health care professionals, especially nurses and pharmacists.
 1. We are in conversation with the local CEO about what kind of arrangements would be attractive to the Providence Health System that would make the current PNH facility available to GFU at the most reasonable cost.
 2. It is likely that George Fox University can reach an advantageous agreement with the Providence Health System for this facility, especially if we produce nurses and pharmacists.
 - D. This property is important to George Fox University even if we don’t move into health care programs. We must purchase this property for the long-term well being of the University.
 - VI. Prepare a new campus plan.
 - A. GFU has become a complex institution that needs to have a comprehensive view of where it is going with physical plant.
 1. We have more than one campus and need a plan that takes all our locations into account.
 2. Changes in the streets of Newberg have precipitated change that needs to be included in the University’s thinking.

George Fox University has many more needs than are reflected in this document. This is not intended to be inclusive or complete, but I believe these to be the most urgent and most important issues currently facing the University. Funding opportunities and changes in the environment could change my mind, but right now, we need to move as fast as possible in these directions.

This plan is a “stretch” for George Fox University, but this is God’s institution and we will depend on his presence and direction throughout the implementation of these goals. I encourage all the University’s friends to pray for us as we seek to do God’s will at George Fox University.