



STRATEGIC PLAN

Lighting the Way



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VISION

“Wittenberg will be the model of a liberal arts university in the 21st century, creating sparks that will light the world.”

MISSION

Wittenberg University provides a liberal arts education dedicated to intellectual inquiry and wholeness of person within a diverse residential community. Reflecting its Lutheran heritage, Wittenberg challenges students to become responsible global citizens, to discover their callings, and to lead personal, professional, and civic lives of creativity, service, compassion, and integrity.

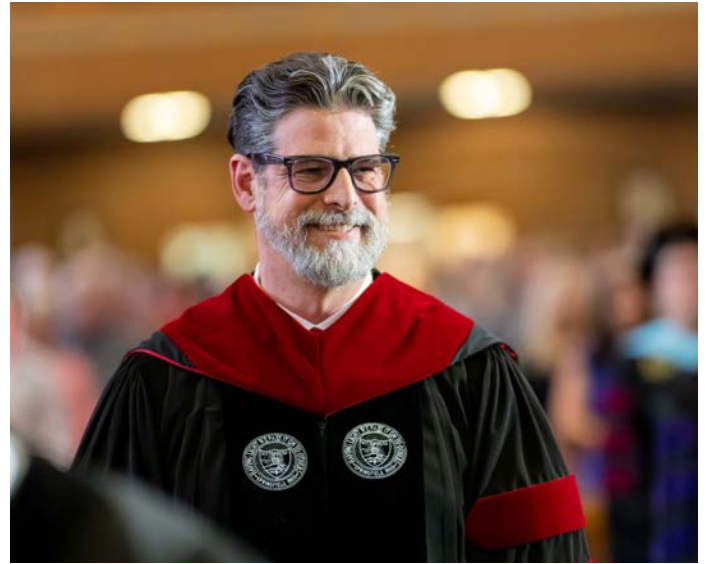


NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

New beginnings always have their share of challenges, but, as our first president and founder, the Rev. Dr. Ezra Keller, noted with confidence in his diary: “the more toil, the more grace.” From my first days to the present, I have treasured that grace and have encouraged our community to do the same, especially as we embrace a new vision and renewed direction for Wittenberg as outlined in the following strategic plan.

The development of this strategic plan reflects the engagement of the entire Wittenberg community – students, faculty, staff, Board members, alumni, and Springfield leaders. To each of them, I offer my sincere gratitude. Implementing this plan will now require an openness of mind and a strength of spirit from all these constituents, which, thankfully, we have in abundance at Wittenberg. The plan will also necessitate a renewed commitment to who and what we are at Wittenberg.

We are and remain a liberal arts university, and that will never change under my leadership. The world desperately needs the education we provide, and at the heart of a Wittenberg education is critical thinking, self-reflection, creativity, and compassion. Through our liberal arts education, which is rooted in the Lutheran tradition, our students learn, lead, and live with light in addition to developing the knowledge and skills needed for a career. Then, as life and the world changes, our students are able to adapt, pivot, and develop in new ways with honesty and integrity.



This plan also contains a bold vision and several BHAGs – big, hairy, audacious goals – the kind that often make people think “we cannot possibly do that,” and yet, we will. As a member of one of our working groups commented during this process, “Watered down goals bring watered down results,” and that can never be our goal, let alone our end result. Achieving this plan’s goals will move the University forward and elevate Wittenberg to the level it deserves.

Additionally, our vision as expressed in this plan is aspirational, inspirational, and short – three components that I believe should be present in any vision statement for it to be memorable and actionable. More than 180 years ago and a year into implementing his own vision for Wittenberg, the Rev. Dr. Keller reported on his work to date, sharing that he had traveled 3,200 miles, preached 172 sermons, founded one congregation and readied two churches for construction, raised \$6,000 for Wittenberg, and taught four theological students two hours each day

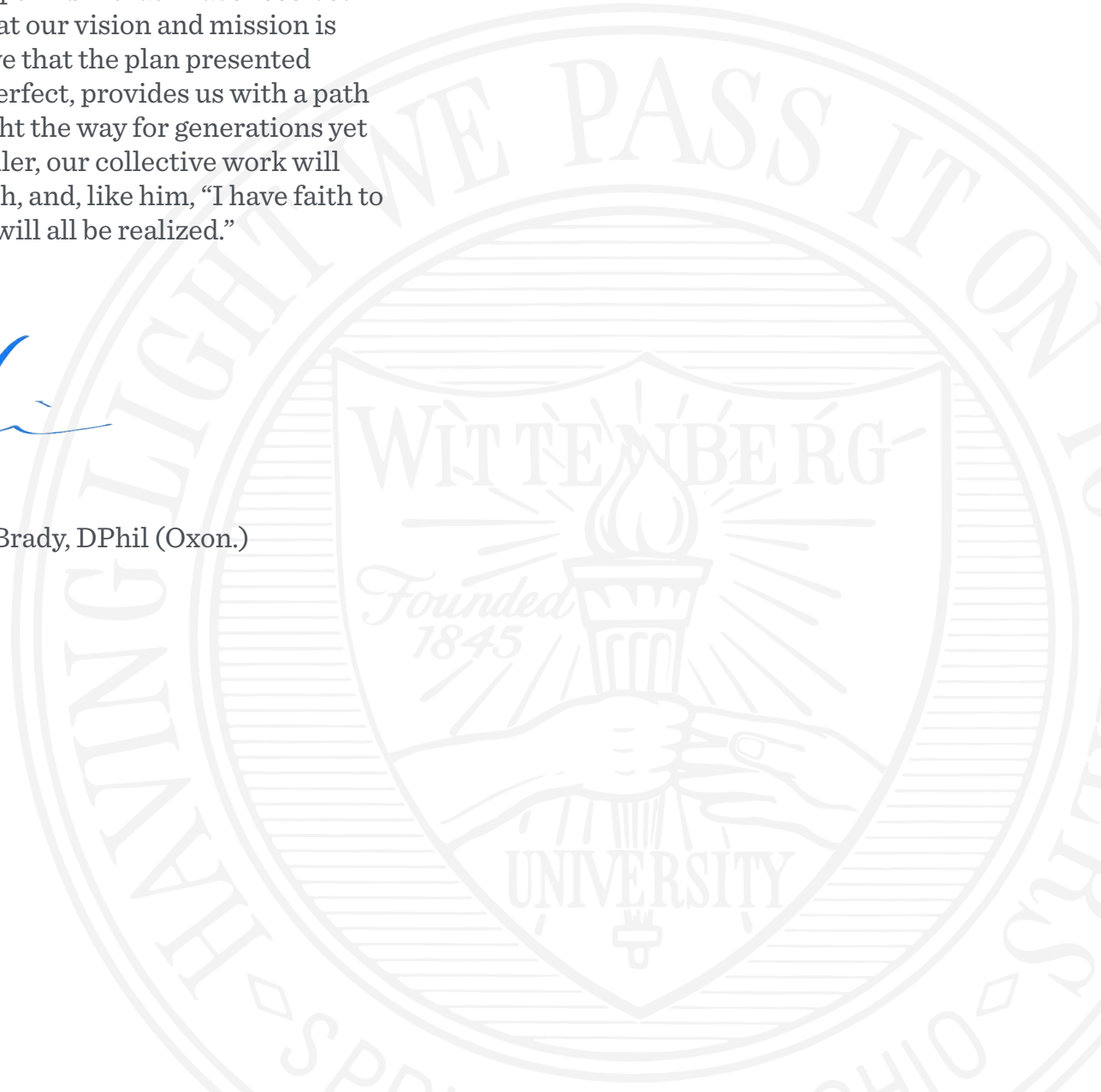
throughout a hot summer in Ohio. He did all of that with the belief and conviction that such a school as envisioned in Wittenberg College was needed for the success of the country. That commitment to our community, country, and the world remains and is needed now as much as it was nearly 200 years ago.

I did not travel by horseback, but I did put in more than 16,000 miles this year, traveling around the country to hear from alumni, parents, students, and friends of Wittenberg. The energy and optimism that I have received affirms for me that our vision and mission is vital. I also believe that the plan presented here, while not perfect, provides us with a path forward as we light the way for generations yet to come. Like Keller, our collective work will require some faith, and, like him, “I have faith to believe that this will all be realized.”

Yours,



Christian M. M. Brady, DPhil (Oxon.)
President



PREFACE

In his introduction to his history of Wittenberg, Harold Lentz observed: “The world owes much to its dreamers. Were it not for them we would ever be mired in the clay of yesterday’s commonplaces. No progress which keeps us up to date is possible except as someone looks ahead into tomorrow’s possibilities and then takes what is at hand to bring them to reality.” Drafting, revising, and implementing a strategic plan aligns well with Lentz’s words as the Wittenberg community now looks to embrace a new vision and works collectively to turn ideas into action and possibilities into reality on its way to becoming the model for liberal arts education in the 21st century.

To accomplish this vision, which will in turn create the sparks that will light the world, the Wittenberg community has worked diligently to define its future in this challenging time for the liberal arts especially and for higher education in general. Facilitated by Mike Diamond and Mark Robison of Academic Leadership Associates (ALA), LLC, the planning process began in earnest this fall with the development of a document detailing Wittenberg’s Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (S.O.A.R.). Following the completion of the S.O.A.R. document, a strategic planning team was established to generate an initial set of objectives and goals. Faculty, staff, and student open forums were then hosted to gain stakeholder feedback and adjust the language as needed. The result of this collaborative effort is four objectives and accompanying goals for each.

Fundamentally, Wittenberg must deliver an extraordinary education for its students and be recognized for its **academic excellence**. This is Objective 1, and to accomplish it, the University will build academic excellence across all disciplines, increase the academic standing of admitted students, and provide each Wittenberg student with an education defined by **rigorous inquiry** in and beyond the classroom. Through this experience, Wittenberg graduates will emerge resilient, adaptable, and confident in their preparation for fulfilling personal and professional lives.

Concurrently, Wittenberg must also develop its students into **confident, ethical leaders** who are empowered for a lifetime of meaning and purpose as outlined in Objective 2. The University will achieve this by enhancing the timeless and transformative strengths of the Wittenberg experience so that every student will graduate well prepared to navigate complexity, apply knowledge with discernment, and lead with ethical judgment, wisdom, and integrity in a rapidly changing world.

Our students must be able to experience a vibrant residential community where civic engagement, athletics, and spiritual exploration cultivate curiosity and self-discovery. Grounded in a Lutheran tradition that values vocation and service and anchored in its rigorous liberal arts education, Wittenberg will also **empower students to discern their calling** and develop their gifts. Additionally, through intentional career and civic exploration, mentoring, and leadership development, the University will prepare

graduates for lives of purpose, fulfillment, and meaningful contributions to their communities and the world.

Objective 3 seeks to recognize the significant role alumni, friends, and the Springfield community play in the life of the University. With that in mind, Wittenberg aims to cultivate a **dynamic, intergenerational cadre of students, faculty, staff, alumni, families, and community partners** who carry forward the light of learning. Alumni will serve as essential partners in Wittenberg's educational mission through **intentional, high-impact engagement** with students and the University. Rooted in Springfield and extending across the region and beyond, Wittenberg will also continue to build and steward the relationships, infrastructure, and partnerships that connect our campus, alumni, and our community so as to deepen learning and advance the common good. Moreover, Wittenberg is committed to a rich reciprocal relationship in which the Springfield area and the Wittenberg community strengthen one another.

Lastly, Objective 4 looks to support a flourishing campus and University culture. To accomplish this, Wittenberg will **steward its campus and grow its resources** through philanthropy, increased enrollment, and disciplined

management. Facilities, operations, and investments will additionally align to meet the evolving needs of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Guided by a **culture of operational excellence, best practices, and hospitality**, the University will also create a welcoming, high-quality environment that reflects the Wittenberg Way and fosters learning and belonging for everyone.

Moving forward and to ensure each objective is met, the University will create Implementation Teams (IT) to develop and add strategies and metrics to all the goals as shown in the following pages. Wittenberg will also begin planning for a comprehensive campaign, which will eventually help fund components of the strategic plan. Once the plan is fully enacted, a quarterly report will be sent to the Wittenberg community, and an annual assessment to review, remove, or add strategies when necessary will occur. Over time, the University will also develop a website to assist the campus and extended community in tracking Wittenberg's progress toward achieving the plan's objectives and goals.

Questions regarding this plan and/or its implementation can be directed to the president's office email at officeofthepresident@wittenberg.edu or directly to Dr. Christian M. M. Brady, Wittenberg's 16th president.



OBJECTIVE 1

DELIVER AN EXTRAORDINARY EDUCATION FOR OUR STUDENTS AND BE RECOGNIZED FOR OUR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE.

GOALS

- Join the Top 100 National Liberal Arts Colleges in *U.S. News & World Report*.
- Increase the academic standing of admitted students.
- Support the academic development of students.
- Support faculty research and pedagogy.
- Recruit outstanding faculty.



OBJECTIVE 2

DEVELOP OUR STUDENTS INTO CONFIDENT, ETHICAL LEADERS WHO ARE EMPOWERED FOR A LIFETIME OF MEANING AND PURPOSE.

GOALS

- Ensure that the collegiate community experience is the centerpiece of student life, enhancing individual learning and belonging for each student, as well as enhancing extra-curricular offerings.
- Develop a constellation of opportunities for all Wittenberg students to develop leadership skills and understand and engage deeply in civic responsibilities as citizen-leaders.
- Enhance and further develop career services for students, coordinated with mentoring, internship, and discernment programming.
- Provide effective training and support as well as robust recognition for advisors, counselors, and mentors.
- Establish an Office of Campus Ministries, led by the Pastor and working in close partnership with other units across campus and in the community, particularly on developing an exemplar program for supporting student discernment.



OBJECTIVE 3

ENGAGE ALUMNI, FRIENDS, AND OUR COMMUNITY IN THE LIFE OF THE UNIVERSITY.

GOALS

- Create opportunities for alumni to support our educational mission as guest lecturers and thought partners in developing and implementing internship and other experiential learning opportunities.
- Create an Alumni Mentoring Program available for all Wittenberg students.
- Start SWIFT – Springfield-Wittenberg Initiative for Transformation – sustaining and creating opportunities to involve the Springfield community and our region in the intellectual, athletic, and cultural life of the University.
- Create a Parents and Family Council that will help support our students, promote the value of the Wittenberg Way, and promote philanthropy for Wittenberg.
- Develop best-in-practice stewardship of our alumni and the community.



OBJECTIVE 4

SUPPORT A FLOURISHING CAMPUS AND UNIVERSITY CULTURE.

GOALS

- Be recognized in the list of “Great Colleges to Work For.”
- Establish best-in-practice standards for all business operations.
- Develop a Facilities Master Plan focused on the educational needs of tomorrow’s students and other key stakeholders.
- Increase revenue from University resources.
- Create systematic ways for students, faculty, staff, and visitors to easily find answers to their questions and solutions to the challenges they face or opportunities they wish to pursue.



