

Strategic Plan Implementation Document

Revised Discussion Draft – November 28, 2005

These tactics outline a vision to guide Grinnell College's development over the next five years. They provide a framework for implementing six strategies endorsed in the spring of 2005 after intensive discussions by faculty, staff, students, administrators, alums, and trustees of the College. Because of the interlinking nature of these strategies (e.g., efforts to improve "fiscal balance and stability" described under strategy 4 will facilitate accomplishing the other strategies), the timeline for implementing each tactic will be fine-tuned as we monitor implementation of the overall plan.

Strategy #1:

"Increase the emphasis on inquiry-based learning and broaden our liberal arts curriculum"

A, B, & C:

(A) Launch our "Expanding Knowledge Initiative" . . . designed to enrich the reach of the College's curriculum and intellectual focus with the aim that . . . students are exposed to emerging areas of knowledge and human understanding beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries."

(B) Reduce reliance on temporary faculty.

(C) Increase opportunities for integrative, capstone, and rigorous inquiry-based learning, such as the Mentored Advanced Project program, to focus and enhance students' education in the liberal arts.

1. Appoint 3 Interdisciplinary Fellows from among existing faculty members. Fellows of Interdisciplinary Studies will normally serve in this capacity for three years, teaching interdisciplinary courses each year as part of regular teaching loads. They will help identify speakers on interdisciplinary scholarship and liberal education, plan interdisciplinary symposia, and encourage shared-theme tutorials. They will also help design and participate in a retreat for second-year students.
2. Expand the faculty size by at least 12 positions through strategic appointments. These appointments will accomplish one or more of the following
 - a. Allow the College to offer courses in important areas of interdisciplinary scholarship
 - b. Make it possible for existing faculty members to engage more fully in interdisciplinary teaching
 - c. Increase the diversity of the faculty and the curriculum
 - d. Reduce reliance on temporary faculty
3. Establish an Office of Interdisciplinary Studies and an advisory board charged with catalyzing interdisciplinary learning and scholarship. This office will
 - a. Provide a campus-wide forum for discussing and fostering interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching
 - b. Work with departments, individual faculty members, Centers (International Studies, Prairie Studies, and Humanities), and the Executive Council to identify areas where the College's offerings would be strengthened by interdisciplinary courses or faculty appointments

- c. Work with existing departments and concentration committees to re-envision the missions of concentrations, staff interdisciplinary and non-departmental courses (in concentrations, Tutorial, Statistics, and Humanities), and coordinate team-teaching opportunities
- d. Coordinate biennial college-wide symposia on interdisciplinary themes, encourage shared-theme Tutorials, and design and organize the Second Year Retreat (see below)
- e. Develop an assessment model to guide the future development of the initiative
- 4. Establish an annual Second-Year Retreat that will
 - a. Help our students put interdisciplinary courses and concentrations in a liberal arts perspective
 - b. Deepen students' understanding of the liberal arts at a time when they begin thinking about declaring majors
 - c. Encourage students to re-examine their educational and life-time goals
 - d. Strengthen students' relationships with the College, their fellow Tutorial students and their class year
- 5. Support faculty-student research through
 - a. Mentored Advanced Projects
 - b. Further development of appropriate research-related activities for first and second-year students
- 6. Continue to support inquiry-based learning in the classroom and laboratory through
 - a. Faculty development opportunities
 - b. Design of teaching and learning spaces that facilitate this kind of learning
 - c. Small and moderate class sizes
- 7. Support inquiry-based learning outside of Grinnell College classrooms through
 - a. Continued support of summer and academic-year internship opportunities
 - b. Continued support of off-campus study opportunities and commitment to the Grinnell-in-London and Grinnell-in-Washington programs

Performance Indicators

1. National Survey of Student Engagement's "Level of Academic Challenge" and "Active and Collaborative Learning" benchmark data
2. Student-faculty ratio, percent of students who have completed MAPs, percent of students who have studied abroad, percent of students who have completed internships, course size distribution (from *Fact Book*)
3. Number of interdisciplinary courses offered
4. Percentage of courses taught by temporary faculty
5. Learning outcomes assessment of students' development of writing, research, information literacy, and critical thinking-related skills, and global understanding
6. Faculty-reported teaching and scholarship in interdisciplinary areas
7. Number of off-campus student presentations and publications of research

Strategy #2:

“Foster student, faculty, and staff sense of ambition, adventure, and well-being”

A & B:

(A) Strengthen opportunities for, and celebrate, achievement inside and outside of the classroom to encourage the aspirations and leadership potential of students, faculty, and staff.

(B) Enhance programs that connect College life with students' futures (such as increased internships and active alumni networks) to promote the transition from College to a successful, professional life.

1. Increase the involvement of the Dean's office in working with faculty and the Corporate, Foundation, and Government Relations office in gaining outside support and recognition for faculty and student/faculty research
2. Subsidize funds faculty members receive through outside grants and awards to help pay for semester and full-year research leaves at normal salary when the award is less than the faculty member's prorated salary
3. Emphasize academic news under strategy 6
4. Hire a placement officer or reorient existing positions to provide greater support for programs to connect students with potential employers, alumni mentors, and alumni networks
5. Enhance tools for electronic networking among faculty, students, and alums
6. Reinforce, expand, and coordinate the Wilson program, internship and shadowing programs, Grinnell Corps, and other academic and co-curricular opportunities to encourage and support leadership aspirations, entrepreneurship, and public service among students
7. Continue and enhance programs that build student/faculty mentoring relationships and support students in their quests for meaning in their lives and direction and coherence in their studies
8. Consider future scope, direction, partnerships, facilities needs, and assessment of the Grinnell-in-Washington program and its relationship to other programs such as the Wilson program
9. Support leadership training and foster leadership opportunities for faculty and staff
10. Enhance opportunities and support for staff professional development related to College employment

C. Complete current facilities program, including information technology and library services, to ensure that our facilities match our distinctive liberal arts program and to attract and retain the best students and faculty.

1. Create additional alternative housing for students such as apartment-style living, weighing the feasibility, cost, and desirability of converting Cowles dining hall versus embarking on new construction
2. Finish phase two of Science
3. Complete the development of the Burling master plan's vision to better support student and faculty research both in the main floor renovation and in the longer-range plans.
 - a. An important part of this is the closer integration of library and IT services and a more central and visible location for curricular technology support
4. Complete Athletic Center project when resources are available
5. Further environmental stewardship of and by the College and its members including limiting use of fossil fuel energy, increasing native planting program, replacing energy-inefficient facilities, prioritizing efficient use of space and energy in new construction projects, and reducing the amount of waste generated on campus

D. Provide an effective technology infrastructure that supports inquiry-based learning and scholarship in the liberal arts, including such things as technology-rich spaces that promote collaborative learning and research, widespread access to databases and multimedia production facilities, increased portability and transparency of computing, and convergence of library and IT services at a central campus location. We need to update our administrative systems to improve services while reducing our costs.

1. Extend wireless access to the entire campus
2. Enhance availability and knowledge of collaborative tools and spaces for learning, research, and administration (including collaborative Web development, writing, and project management tools)
3. Enhance campus-wide training, visibility, and support for the use of digital images, multimedia (including video and sound), and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for teaching and learning
4. Enhance coordination and support of AV services campus-wide, including more standardized and user-friendly interfaces for AV equipment in classrooms
5. Ensure that ITS's infrastructure and the equipment it provides help employees maximize their productivity and best fulfill their duties (including use of wireless computing, where appropriate)
6. After introducing new technology, conduct follow-up visits and formative assessments to ensure that we are training users adequately and using tools effectively.

E. Strengthen College programs focused on the overall, physical, and emotional well-being of our students, faculty, and staff.

1. Develop programs and policies to enhance interaction between faculty, staff, and students in the Rosenfield campus center and to encourage all members of the campus to use the new facility, including its dining components
2. Revitalize GORP, club sports, and intramural programs to increase student participation
3. Increase substance free programs, living opportunities, and leisure activities in order to reduce substance abuse and stress
4. Develop and enhance campus-wide events that build community cohesion
5. Develop relationships with community and other entities to encourage volunteerism, community engagement, and recreational participation in on- and off-campus activities
6. Develop a publication and website to advertise items students "must see or do" prior to graduation
7. Lengthen walking and running pathway as feasible
8. Create a structure to coordinate campus-wide wellness programs, facilities, and activities and promote balanced lifestyles, including time and space for reflection, exercise, and social interaction
9. Solidify community outreach by promoting town residents' interactions with students, faculty, and staff in service activities and at College lectures, sports events, and arts offerings

Performance Indicators

1. Lists of faculty members nominated for and receiving major grants, fellowships, awards, and scholarly recognition
2. Number of on-campus recruiting visits by major corporations, graduate programs, etc. organized by Career Services

3. Number of alums visiting campus as Alumni Scholars, Alumni Practitioners, and Rosenfield or other guest speakers
4. National Survey of Student Engagement's "Supportive Campus Environment" benchmark data
5. Number of publications and off-campus presentations of student/faculty research
6. Number of students pursuing Teach for America, Grinnell Corps, Peace Corps, and similar programs that give them experience as agents of change
7. Number of students applying for and receiving prestigious national fellowships and awards
8. Lists of staff involvement in and contributions to professional organizations
9. Energy usage per gross square foot of campus building space
10. Percentage of new buildings meeting LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification requirements
11. Number of faculty participating in workshops and curricular development projects related to advanced technologies
12. Use of Rosenfield Center dining facilities by patron type (students, faculty, staff, community)
13. Lower binge drinking rate
14. Supply and demand of substance-free housing and activities
15. Community patronage of campus facilities and programs (e.g., Fitness Center and Gallery)

Strategy #3:

“Advance Grinnell College as a more diverse, robust intellectual community”

- A. *Support robust, tolerant, and respectful campus dialogue across the spectrum of opinions, cultures and races.*
 1. Encourage more interdisciplinary coursework and scholarship that engages the diversity of the world and/or approaches to knowledge
 2. Encourage programming through the Rosenfield program, the Convocation Committee, and the Centers that engages issues of diversity, respect, and difference
 3. Provide funding for cooperative efforts of diverse campus groups to promote civil dialogues about contentious public and ethical issues
- B. *Continue efforts to recruit and retain a diverse student body.*
 1. Continue successful recruitment and support programs such as the Posse program
 2. Continue efforts to recruit a more diverse student body, including greater efforts to recruit more diverse students from Iowa
 3. Increase visibility of the College and strengthen our admission efforts in geographic locales with substantial and growing populations of U.S. students of color
 4. Strengthen programs and policies to improve retention and success of diverse students
 5. Strengthen programs to recruit, retain, and provide access and essential services for students with disabilities
 6. Continue to facilitate economic diversity through our commitment to meeting the full demonstrated need of domestic students

C. *Enhance faculty diversity.*

1. Increase efforts to deepen the diversity of the applicant pool in every faculty search we conduct
2. Increase diversity hiring in coordination with the Expanding Knowledge Initiative

D. *Enhance staff diversity.*

1. Increase diversity of the applicant pool in searches conducted both locally and nationally
2. Participate in or develop job fairs and undertake other initiatives focused on recruiting from diverse employment pools in nearby markets
3. Post open staff positions on appropriate Internet diversity employment sites

Performance Indicators

1. Comparison of student body diversity with student diversity at other national liberal arts colleges (such as Amherst) noted for successful student diversity efforts
2. Diversity of our applicant pools in all faculty and staff searches
3. Diversity of our faculty and staff
4. National Survey of Student Engagement's "Enriching Educational Experiences" benchmark data
5. Faculty-reported teaching and scholarship in areas that engage diversity
6. Retention rates of traditionally underrepresented domestic minority students, faculty, and staff

Strategy #4:

“Improve fiscal balance and stability of the college”

A. *Align financial aid policy more closely with the federal methodology (and consider future adoption of the College Board's profile methodology) and include an accurate estimate of ancillary student expenses, a required work component, and a budgeted loan reduction program to ensure that our awards are attractive to students and families.*

1. A modified financial aid policy closely aligned with federal methodology was used for the entering class this fall (2005). It varies from the federal methodology in ways that reflect our particular circumstances and priorities
 - a. Summer work is required as part of each student's contribution (\$2,000 annually; take into account participation in summer programs such as MAPs, summer research, and internships, and consider the adequacy of stipends for allowing students to reach this level of contribution when they engage in such activities)
 - b. Non-custodial parents are required to contribute to their child's expenses
 - c. Reevaluate estimates for books, supplies, travel, and personal expenses to improve their accuracy
2. Continue loan buy-down program

- a. Funds will go to the most indebted 4th-year students, taking into account how much of this debt is family optional and the amount of summer and academic-year employment the students have taken on while enrolled
 3. Consider further liberalizing the financial aid policy, such as implementing the College Board's profile methodology, if doing so seems consistent with other elements of the Strategic Plan
- B. *Reconfigure international student admission and aid to better reflect the financial needs of international students and to carefully manage costs.*
 1. Provide better support for the neediest international students without changing the overall amount of aid allocated to international students. A need-sensitive admission process will begin in fall of 2005 (for applicants who may enter in the fall of 2006) that will
 - a. Stabilize international aid at FY 2006 levels, adjusted for inflation during subsequent years
 - b. Seek to enroll a total of 40 new international students each year with a range of aid categories scaled according to need
- C. *Continue commitment to meeting the full demonstrated need of domestic students and reduce reliance on non-need based aid while maintaining or enhancing the quality of the student body.*
 1. Over the course of the next five years Grinnell College will hold constant or cautiously reduce the total and per capita amounts of merit aid provided to students by
 - a. Raising the criteria by which students qualify for merit aid
 - b. Continuing to build ethnic diversity through a variety of programs and strategies
 2. Pay competitive student wages
- D. *Implement a comprehensive pricing policy that reflects the quality and cost of our program. This will require a comprehensive fee increase that places our fee in line with those of our Midwestern peers.*
 1. Adopt for new students only at the beginning of the academic year beginning in 2007 a tuition estimated at 100% of our middle western peers (Carleton, Macalester, and Oberlin).
 2. Evaluate tuition stabilization options for easing the transition to a new pricing policy
- E. *Increase over several years the on-campus student population to 1500 to better utilize facilities and programs, stimulate growth in the community, and pay for the initiatives in this plan.*
 1. Increase new student enrollment gradually over the period of the plan, in careful coordination with growth of residence hall capacity and growth of faculty size
 - a. Implement the increase gradually to allow the campus community and the academic program to adjust smoothly and to coordinate with adjustments to the merit aid policy
 2. During the transition period, increases in enrollment will be adjusted in light of current enrollment levels, which may call for slightly lower new student enrollments for a year or two
- F. *Increase the percentage of alumni and friend giving and the size of the average gift in support of the College.*

1. Engage alumni and other key prospects in discussions to involve and vest them in achieving the goals above
2. Work with tactical development throughout the entire strategic plan to involve, engage, and match alumni/friend gift interests to the highest tactical priorities
3. Build elements of the development program
 - a. Priority 1, annual giving (immediate) and final Noyce phase 2 funding
 - b. Priority 2, planned giving (year 1)
 - c. Priority 3, major giving (year 1.5)

Performance Indicators

1. Endowment performance and size
2. Revenue balance: net tuition and fees, gifts and grants, and endowment income as percentages of base budget
3. Use of College facilities (classroom utilization, residence hall occupancy)
4. Quality of student body, as indicated by traditional measures of SAT and ACT scores, rank in high school, diversity
5. Yield of admitted students
6. By 2010, increased net student revenues per student
7. Total annual giving as a percentage of expenditures
8. Increased number of alumni making gifts
9. Size of the average gift
10. On-campus enrollment increases to 1500 and stabilizes semester to semester

Strategy #5:

“Contribute to the Vitality of the City of Grinnell”

A. Invest selectively in community infrastructure, quality of life, and commercial projects to help attract and retain excellent students, faculty, and staff.

1. Continue selective investment in infrastructure and improvement projects to strengthen the quality of life for students, faculty, staff, and community members
 - a. Support will focus on enhancing the economic vitality of the community, health and safety, beautification, and cultural/recreational opportunities
 - b. Primary focus will be on the downtown/campus area with selective secondary emphasis on recreational destinations and access

B. Continue to support and extend excellence in the local school district to help the College attract and retain excellent faculty and staff.

1. Continue selective investment in local PK-12 school projects and initiatives (either directly or via school foundation), focusing on infrastructure enhancements and initiatives aimed at improving educational excellence
2. Review location and adequacy of College Preschool facility in relation to other community offerings

3. Maintain optional high school student enrollment in College courses

C. Match valuable skills and experience represented by faculty/staff spouses and partners to professional needs and opportunities in our community to assist in attracting excellent faculty and staff.

1. Continue to promote the economic vitality of the area and thereby increase local spousal employment opportunities (traditional and entrepreneurial opportunities)
2. Continue partnership with University of Iowa for job search support
3. Consider adding spousal employment services under Career Development Office (related to Strategy 2.AB.4)

Performance Indicators

1. Inventory of college investments in community enhancement activities
2. Inventory of quality and quantity of retail/dining outlets and commercial/industrial enterprises
3. Survey of attitudes toward life in Grinnell, spousal employment opportunities, schools, downtown, shopping, dining, recreation, and public services
4. G-N test scores, college matriculations, and State of Iowa School Profiles data
5. Number of hires lost who cite spousal employment as a primary consideration
6. Types of occupations of employed persons in community (managerial, sales, education, production worker, etc.)

Strategy #6:

“Strengthen the public profile of a) Grinnell College, b) Grinnellians and c) the value of a Grinnell education”

A. Articulate more clearly and prominently our distinctive academic qualities to establish a stronger national profile for the College.

1. Establish a strong, clear, and accurate brand identity positioning statement to bring focus, continuity, and reinforcement to the College’s message
2. Create networking opportunities, mechanisms, and programs to promote mentoring as a hallmark of Grinnell College and to create a more cohesive and symbiotic sense of community on campus and beyond the campus
3. Identify a handful of premiere and distinctive programs, largely from existing programs at the College, that will have particular resonance in the broader world of communication; give priority to communication efforts for these selected features
4. Publicize student and faculty achievements

B. Enhance College communications, including publications and the website, to better promote the College and inform our external audiences.

1. Investigate and advance technology-based communications via Web, email, RSS, etc. as means to increase quality, effectiveness, frequency, and focus of communications

2. Define priorities for whom (audience) we want to know which particular message. Prioritize audience targets for various communication strategies (i.e. alumni, parents, prospective students, Iowa business leaders, Grinnell-area community, national liberal arts leaders, etc.)
3. Broaden distribution of Grinnell Magazine, G-mail, and other College publications or periodicals to include target audiences identified in 6.B.2

C. Improve our presence in key admission markets and in national and regional media to: i) improve our national draw of excellent students, ii) draw prospective faculty, and iii) increase the public recognition of the value of a Grinnell education.

1. Develop and implement a rolling, five-year plan for:
 - a. Paid print and electronic advertising (local, Iowa, regional, national)
 - b. Earned media opportunities (local, Iowa, regional, national)
2. Coincide and orchestrate College activity in key markets by integrating admission, alumni, career services, development, earned media, and paid advertising by market
3. Prioritize celebrating achievements of recent alums and graduating seniors

D. Bring in more high visibility visitors/speakers to better promote intellectual excitement and public awareness of the College.

1. Create biennial College-wide symposia on interdisciplinary themes
2. Seek opportunities via Web, p.r., and other means to broadcast appearances of particularly distinctive or prominent campus visitors
3. Expand budget for paid advertising to leverage earned media placements for particularly distinctive or prominent campus visitors
4. Use advance planning, the Expanding Knowledge Initiative, Convocation and other existing programs to bring continuity and opportunities for packaging of visitors in order to leverage individual appearances through the prominence of the package
5. Develop a prominent display area on campus that lists speakers throughout the years and upcoming major events
6. Make a concerted effort to invite high profile Des Moines leaders to campus for events
7. Increase identification and use of alumni expertise in classroom, campus events, and mentoring through a more focused and organized effort

Performance Indicators

1. Number of favorable stories about the College and the accomplishments of students, faculty, and alums placed in targeted media and admission markets
2. Number of users accessing academic news items on the College's Web site
4. Number and quality of admission applications
5. Number of media inquiries and placements concerning events taking place at the College
6. Click-through rates on electronic prospect campaigns