

## INTRODUCTION

*We must never allow our memories—wonderful as they are—to be greater than our dreams for Centre’s future.*<sup>1</sup>

Centre College is no stranger to effective strategic planning. The institution has a rich history of using planning to encourage shared governance and to discover and articulate goals and objectives that have inspired legendary support from alumni and friends. Planning has been pivotal in maintaining the College’s position as Kentucky’s educational point of pride and advancing Centre toward becoming a nationally-recognized undergraduate college. The leadership on the Board, in the administration, and among the faculty and staff has responded each time to produce a plan that has served to “lead” the College toward the successful attainment of its stated goals and objectives. Centre’s most recent plan, approved by the Board of Trustees in October, 1999, generated a capital campaign, *The Campaign for A More Perfect Centre*, that was completed in January, 2008 with total contributions in excess of \$167 million, more than \$47 million over its goal. This success serves as an appropriate foundation for this newest effort. The College continues its tradition of having its plans mark Centre as a place of phenomenal promise—a place with a future brighter than its distinguished past.

The normal approach to college and university strategic planning has been to look “vertically” at each of the institution’s operational areas and develop goals and initiatives for them. This has been Centre’s previous practice, and it has served the College well. In December of 2004, however, an anonymous donor challenged the Centre College community to undertake a planning process that would be of a different sort. With this inspiration and support, Centre chose to work “horizontally”—identifying issues and themes that cut across the College’s operation. Such an approach would have the promise of setting a new standard for strategic planning among national liberal arts colleges, one that would allow us to do our planning in a more determined way; one that would guarantee that we not aim too low. The challenge of engaging in such a planning process was an opportunity not to be missed, but it was not without risk. Nevertheless, the trustees, faculty and staff, and students elected to engage in a process that has been broad-gauged, has involved outside consultants and commentators, has been inclusive from the start, and has challenged all parties to imagine the needs and possibilities of the College a generation in the distance. Centre has been particularly fortunate in being able to work with the STRATUS Group, a highly respected higher education research and consulting firm. The STRATUS team was led by Dr. Sal Rinella, a principal at STRATUS, and included Dr. Tom Longin, executive editor of the journal *Planning for Higher Education*, and Dr. Catherine Augustine, senior research analyst at the RAND Corporation. Centre has also been able to engage as lead commentator Dr. Richard L. Morrill, former Centre president and one of the leading authorities on strategic planning for higher education. This process has produced a more cohesive analysis of Centre’s current place in its own history and the broader environment, a more focused and ambitious vision of Centre’s future, and a more thoughtful sense of how to achieve that vision. We are confident that the process itself will become a model for other liberal arts colleges.

Having spent the 2005-2006 session in what might be considered an exploratory planning phase, in which all participants were encouraged to dream big, the campus community was

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<sup>1</sup> J. David Grissom, Centre’s Board Chair, Centre publication, *On Becoming*

ready in fall of '06 to continue the process of “drawing toward choice.” The 2006-07 session was spent examining what would be best practice for Centre at this point in time, what would be possible for a College that has advanced itself on all fronts in the past 25 years, what might be accomplished in order to better meet the institution’s mission of preparing students for a future that will be global in nature, and how Centre might prepare students to join in and lead our nation in the public conversation about our future, their future. Some nine working groups, involving more than 150 members of the Board, the faculty, the staff and student body, prepared reports that are the foundation pieces for the chapters to follow. Their work was completed in the spring of 2007. The summer months were spent preparing a draft planning document.

The fall of 2007 brought us to that moment when choices must be made. So it is with planning that is consequential and has any real chance of making a difference for good in the life an organization—larger or smaller, public or private, for profit or not. It is crucial that the Centre College community reach farther than it has in its earlier plans. Some of the ideas presented are most ambitious and not all will be accomplished in the next five or even 10 years. Some of them may make many of us uncomfortable, even as we acknowledge that their accomplishment would be good, profoundly so, for the College. This is as it should be.

This plan intends to provide Centre with a compelling direction for the next decade and the foundation for the College’s next 25 years. Centre occupies a distinctive place in American higher education. Its story is one of “disproportion.”<sup>2</sup> The College has unexpected numbers of trustees, faculty and staff members, and alumni who are of remarkable accomplishment and promise. Centre’s strengths are exceeded only by its aspirations; building on its rich tradition for being a place of highest quality, a place that combines high achievement with opportunity, a place that has not lost its character, its essence, its soul—continuing to “embrace the College’s core commitment of liberating young people from narrow, self-centeredness and transforming them into adults dedicated to learning, leadership, and service.”<sup>3</sup>

As stated earlier, the core of strategic planning for any organization is to match strengths and opportunities, while minimizing or eliminating weaknesses and threats. The particular goals and initiatives developed in a planning process provide the material and tools to accomplish this end. These specific recommendations for Centre College are detailed later in this document.

However, these recommendations, in and of themselves, cannot describe the organization’s definition of success—what, at its core, it wishes to *be*. Such a statement should capture the essence of a plan that intends to set a compelling direction for the College for the next decade and beyond. Statements of aspiration are usually cast in the present tense, setting the target for which the organization strives. For Centre College, this definition, this desired state of being, is contained in the following Statement of Aspiration:

**Centre College is the national model of the transformative power of undergraduate education in the liberal arts and sciences. At the core of that transformative effect is realizing the power of possibility—in the work of the faculty and staff, in the continuing**

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<sup>2</sup> Richard L. Morrill Inaugural Address, “This Centre Holds,” April, 1983.

<sup>3</sup> John A. Roush, Opening Conference Address, August, 2006

**development of the College itself, and, most of all, in the lives of the young people whom Centre serves. Essential to this statement of aspiration is Centre's historic and increasingly distinctive commitment to being a place of high achievement and high opportunity, committed to preparing students for successful lives of learning, leadership, and service. As Centre has pursued this aspiration, it has come to be recognized as one of the nation's leading undergraduate colleges.**

## CHAPTER ONE: THE CENTRE SAGA—THE POWER OF POSSIBILITY

When people gather, they usually tell stories. We connect with family and old friends through oft-told stories so familiar that the listeners anticipate every detail, every inflection. We establish new relationships by telling stories that give others glimpses into our characters, our souls.

Since 1819, innumerable stories have been told by, to, and about the people of Centre College. Whether told and retold over coffee in Cowan, in fraternity house basements, at Homecoming reunions, or at places around the globe where Centre people come together, these stories, taken individually, tell us something about particular people, places, and events. Taken together, they describe who we are as a community and how we came to be at this moment. Those stories also remind us—and allow us to tell others—of that which makes us distinctive. They become the place where we stake our claim to that which makes us special. Taken together, they form the Centre Saga.

An old edition of Webster's dictionary defines a saga as "any long story of adventure and heroic deeds." Some tales told around the Centre fire certainly recount somewhat dubious adventures and deeds not quite to the standard of classical mythology. However, the collective story of Centre College is one of adventures pursued and prizes won, of heroic effort and commitment.

The beginning of the Centre Saga is well known. Some of the great figures in early Kentucky and American history came together to establish this college. As a military leader, Isaac Shelby helped to win America's independence. As a statesman, he helped to define the character of the new nation and to lead America's first state west of the mountains. Physician Ephraim McDowell developed new surgical techniques that, on Christmas Day 1809, saved the life of Jane Todd Crawford and opened up an entire new field of medical practice. James Birney was a slaveholder who turned against the institution and argued that as this new nation grew, its frontier should remain free from the sin of human bondage.

Each of these men had the vision to see a future that others could not and the courage to pursue that future in the face of skepticism, hostility, and physical danger. Certainly, Shelby, McDowell, and Birney did not risk life and limb in founding Centre College. However, their willingness to take risks in their own lives gave them the courage to start this new institution at a time of economic, social, and political upheaval.

Throughout its history, Centre has faced times when the ability to act boldly, to choose adventure over safety, proved decisive.

- November 1830 was one of those moments. Centre had struggled in its first 11 years in attracting students, its financial situation was precarious, and, most important, its educational program lacked rigor and focus. The Board of Trustees, rather than following the safe path of hiring an older, more experienced person as president, took a chance on a talented 27 year-old teacher and preacher—John C. Young. Until his death in 1857, President Young led Centre as it increased in strength, size, wealth, and prestige, establishing itself as one of America's strongest liberal arts colleges. The Board could

have followed convention and done the safe thing, but knowing what we know now, who would choose differently?

- In the fall of 1862, forces of the Union and Confederate armies swarmed through Central Kentucky, clashing at the Battle of Perryville, just eight miles west of Danville, on October 8. The Civil War had forced other colleges to close, as students left to join the fight or keep family farms and businesses in operation, and financial support evaporated. However, even as the opposing armies swept through the campus, Centre alumnus and president Lewis Warner Green insisted that Centre College conduct classes. For months following the Battle of Perryville, Union troops used Centre as a base for its occupation of Central Kentucky. President Green died in May 1863 from a sudden illness, likely contracted from one of the hundreds of sick and wounded soldiers for whom he helped care. No one would have thought less of Lewis Green had he followed the path of other presidents and allowed Centre to suspend operations. Through the force of his own will, he kept Centre open. Knowing what we know now, who would choose differently?
- In 1957, the Board of Trustees selected another young man as president of the College. Forty year-old Tom Spragens made it clear from the outset that he was not inclined to leave well enough alone. Even during the interview process, he told the trustees that if he became Centre's president, he intended to integrate the College, a process he led with great sensitivity, courage, and success. He also determined that the final consolidation of the men's and women's campuses should be completed as quickly as possible. President Spragens declared that Centre must re-energize its curriculum and modernize its facilities. The new curriculum, emphasizing interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and learning, became a model for other liberal arts colleges. Much of the current campus was constructed during President Spragens' tenure, most notably the Norton Center for the Arts. Surely some people questioned his judgment when he and trustee Chauncey Newlin '25 talked about building a world-class performing arts center at a college of 750 students in a town of 12,000 people. Tom Spragens could have demanded less of himself and the Centre community. Knowing what we know now—of the richness and depth of the Centre Experience made possible by his confidence—who would have had President Spragens choose differently?
- During the 1980s and 1990s, the presidencies of Richard L. Morrill and Michael F. Adams brought an even greater ambition—to have Centre recognized as one of the nation's best small colleges. President Morrill brought rigorous self-criticism to the College through a formal process of strategic planning. That process articulated Centre's fundamental nature as a place of human empowerment and as a national model for the very small college. President Adams knew that Centre had to do much more to prepare its students to live, work, and serve in an increasingly interconnected global community. In response, he led the creation of Centre's nationally-acclaimed study-abroad program. Some people felt that Centre College should not aspire to play on a national, much less international, stage. Knowing what we know now, who would choose differently?
- In 1999, new president John A. Roush led Centre to apply to host a general election debate in 2000. President Roush knew how staging such an event could raise the confidence and aspiration of Centre's students, faculty and staff, alumni, and friends. Centre's "Thrill in the 'Ville" exceeded all expectations, winning praise from journalists and political operatives alike, and setting the standard for host sites. More important, Centre's performance affirmed President Roush's vision of a broadened sense of possibility and the power that it would have in the lives of Centre's people and the College itself. This success in 2000 set the stage for the academic impact of the \$20

million bequest from Wes and Adele Stodghill, the remarkable success of The Campaign for *A More Perfect Centre*, the creation of Pearl Hall, and, most recently, the Trustee Challenge, which will transform the College's science, mathematics, student life, and performing arts facilities. Knowing what we know now, who would have given up the 2000 general election debate by choosing differently?

These moments have been cited in the context of Centre presidencies, but thousands of other less well-documented moments also comprise the Centre Saga. A student deciding to accept a faculty member's invitation to collaborate in a research project or to live with a local family while studying abroad. A faculty member meeting late into the evening, helping a student to refine her argument and language in a paper. A staff member taking time at the end of an already long day to counsel a student and reassure his parents. An alumna making just a little bigger gift than her budget really allows. All of these moments represent acts, in their way, just as adventurous and heroic as the decisions of presidents and trustees. Knowing what they know now of how those decisions changed their lives and the lives of others, who of them would choose differently?

A set of fundamental beliefs underlies these decisions and, indeed, provides the thread that runs through the Centre Saga. In many ways, these beliefs comprise the soul of Centre College:

- Centre believes that human empowerment is the highest goal of education.
- Centre believes that a challenging education in the liberal arts and sciences is the most effective instrument by which to achieve such empowerment—to prepare young people intellectually, socially, spiritually, and physically for lives of work and service.
- Centre believes that its historic commitment to high achievement must remain coupled with its historic commitment to high opportunity—that this experience be available to talented and determined young people from all backgrounds.
- Centre believes that such an experience best takes place in a highly residential setting, in which teaching and learning are not confined to particular spaces or times of day, but rather form the basis of a true educational community.

During the current process of strategic planning, the people of Centre College reviewed, refined, and reaffirmed these beliefs in a Statement of Core Values and Commitments:

- Centre College affirms its commitment to a rigorous, transformational program in the liberal arts and sciences for undergraduate students, and through it and through relationships of the highest quality and intensity, to the guided growth of individual students through engaging and collaborative experiences in the classroom, laboratory, studio, and practice and performance spaces.
- Centre College affirms its commitment to the whole person through a holistic learning environment in a highly residential community that emphasizes engagement, personal and caring relationships, and purposeful linkages among the academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular experiences.

- Centre College affirms its commitment to appointing and retaining faculty members who: are dedicated to teaching, scholarship, service, and the personal development of students through a singular devotion to them; regard and value themselves as a members of the Centre College community and not only as representatives of particular disciplines, and; seek to promote interdisciplinary approaches to learning.
- Centre College affirms its commitment to appointing and retaining staff members who are dedicated to the mission of the College and who seek to promote and attain excellence in all phases of the College's efforts.
- Centre College affirms its commitment to be a place of opportunity for all bright and motivated students from the Commonwealth, the nation, and, increasingly, the world.
- Centre College affirms its commitment to educating students to be citizens of the world; men and women who are globally engaged and prepared to respond to opportunities from all parts of the world.
- Centre College affirms its commitment to preparing men and women to be life-long learners and leaders in their lives of work and service.
- Centre College affirms its commitment to maintaining relationships that last a lifetime with its alumni and to nurture their support of their alma mater for the benefit of future generations of Centre students.
- Centre College affirms its commitment to be recognized as a community asset to all aspects of Danville, Boyle County, and the region, with specific focus on the areas of education, the arts, and the economy.
- Centre College affirms its commitment to seek continuing refinement and improvement in its mission.

All of these beliefs, all these statements of values and commitments, describe aspects of one fundamental force—the power of possibility. Possibility can invigorate and frighten, challenge and uplift, make us hopeful and anxious—all at the same time. Possibility can be and do many things, but it should never be ignored. Centre College exists to help young people expand the range of possibilities in their lives, to develop the ability and courage to seize those possibilities, and to grow in a grace that will encourage them to use those possibilities in the service of others. Centre College has come to its current position of strength because of this commitment and because Centre people recognized and acted upon possibility in the life of the College itself.

Centre is stronger than it has ever been, yet it remains vulnerable. Our financial resources are not yet so great, our position as a place of first choice for prospective students, faculty, and staff not yet so solid, as to insulate us from the rapid changes occurring in our region, nation, and world.

In the course of this planning process, the Centre community has considered many ideas and opportunities, sparking lively discussions and wide-ranging reactions. Appropriate questions

and cautions have been raised. Consistent through these conversations, however, is the realization that the College stands at yet another decisive moment in its history. Centre can seize this moment to move to even greater heights of effectiveness, innovation, and prestige. Or Centre could give into tentativeness and self-satisfaction. The Centre Saga can continue as a tale of adventures and heroic deeds or it can become a story of diminished aspiration and potential decline.

As made clear by the specific ideas and initiatives contained in this document, the people of Centre have yet again chosen the power of possibility. Knowing what we know of our history, of our present, and of what we owe the future, how could we choose differently?



## **CHAPTER TWO: THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT**

A truly *strategic* planning process assesses strengths and weaknesses internal to the organization or institution, as well as opportunities and threats in the external environment. These assessments then lead to concrete actions to maximize strengths and opportunities while minimizing weaknesses and threats.

With the assistance of the STRATUS Group, a higher-education consulting practice based in Los Angeles, the Centre community conducted an extensive review of these issues over the course of the 2005-06 academic year. The key findings of this strategic research and opportunity assessment are summarized here.

### **INTERNAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

Centre is currently in a stronger condition than at any moment in the Centre Saga. The more easily quantifiable measures of strength certainly confirm this conclusion:

- Centre's endowment now stands in excess of \$225 million.
- The Campaign for *A More Perfect Centre* has generated over \$167 million in commitments, far beyond the goal of \$120 million.
- Centre's alumni remain extraordinarily loyal, giving at a rate that keeps Centre among the top handful of the nation's colleges and universities in alumni giving percentage. The percentage of giving is now matched by the size of those gifts, as Centre now ranks among the top colleges and universities in alumni giving per student.
- Through these new resources and careful fiscal management, Centre has managed to achieve a solid financial equilibrium, as indicated by an endowment spending rate that has been reduced to five percent from a high of over seven percent just five years ago.
- Centre has aggressively addressed deficiencies in its facilities. Prudent fiscal management has enabled the College to commit more than \$1.5 million annually from operating funds to continuing maintenance and replacement. An endowed Capital Improvements Fund, made possible by gifts, supports repayment of debt incurred to finance major capital projects, such as the College Centre Project and the expansion and complete renovation of Sutcliffe and Crounse halls. Centre has also moved on capital projects through dedicated gifts such as the \$15 million gift to construct Pearl Hall, a state-of-the-art residence hall, and significant gifts to improve outdoor athletic facilities.
- The College has become more attractive to prospective students. The number of applications for admission has increased from approximately 1,200 six years ago to nearly 2,200 for the class entering in fall 2007. Centre opened the 2007-08 academic year with nearly 1,190 students, yet another record enrollment.
- These increases have not come at the expense of student quality. As measured by class rank, grade-point average, and test scores, the student body is stronger than at any time in Centre's history.

Some strengths, even though less easily quantifiable, are at least as important as these indicators. Extensive interviews with key representatives of the Centre community articulated these qualities:

- First and foremost, a dedication to students—to providing an experience that is at once intellectually rigorous, personal, and caring, in a small, intimate, collegial setting.
- Excellent teaching, made possible by the combination of students and faculty/staff of high quality.
- A commitment to providing this experience to talented students regardless of their financial circumstances.
- Opportunities for students to be engaged beyond the strict confines of the classroom—through student-faculty research, service, student activities, athletics, and the arts.
- Historically strong leadership from the Board of Trustees, administration, and faculty and staff.
- Status as an institution of first choice, not usually a back-up school.
- Nationally-renowned study-abroad programs.
- The College's commitment to the arts, both in the programs provided through the Norton Center and through the academic programs in the fine and performing arts.
- At 30 percent, a high proportion of students majoring in the sciences for colleges of our size and type.
- Success in student placement in graduate and professional schools and jobs.
- An impact on the local, regional, and national community out of proportion to our size.

However, the community identified a number of important concerns, several of them related to these very strengths:

- Despite its significant increase in quality, strength, and stature in the past 30 years, Centre remains vulnerable. Its applicant pool is not as deep, nor are its financial resources as large, as colleges to which it is compared. A sharp downturn in the economy and/or financial markets, a national or international crisis, or even some more localized event could slow or altogether derail Centre's recent momentum. It is not much of an exaggeration to say that Centre is just three or so tough years away from significant trouble.
- Centre must come to grips with the financial realities associated with being a national liberal arts college, especially given its historic commitment to being a place both of high quality and achievement and high opportunity. The College must establish targets (and strategies for reaching them) for enrollment, comprehensive fee, discount rate, student profile, endowment management, and giving that are commensurate with its current perceived status, much less its ambition.
- Centre does not have a distinctive, overarching, program-driven identity that allows it to tell a compelling story that sets it apart from other institutions that claim to do what Centre does. This assessment was often expressed in statements such as "Centre is doing lots of things very well, but they don't seem to connect to each other."

- Despite recent improvements, most notably the College Centre, the College's facilities are still not up to the standards of a top-flight national liberal arts college. The planning process has identified and already inspired significant financial support for the highest priorities—renovated and expanded science facilities, a campus center, and refurbishment of the Norton Center. However, significant needs remain, including renovation of existing residence halls, renovation and expansion of outdoor athletic facilities, and capital equipment.
- Centre may be too self-satisfied to do what is needed to compete on a national scale.
- Centre's faculty, staff, and students are too homogeneous, given the College's Core Commitments, national and international trends, the competition, and the learning environment necessary to prepare students fully for the emerging world.
- Related to this, Centre's curriculum is too "Western" and needs to be expanded to include other histories, ideas, and cultures. Much of the College's heritage is a blend of Greco-Roman, Judeo-Christian beliefs and traditions of inquiry. Still, the 21<sup>st</sup> century will see Centre demonstrate even greater openness to other traditions and beliefs.
- While Centre students have many options for engaging in activities and leadership, there is a growing perception that the sheer number of student activities, even including academically-related programs such as convocations, and the lack of systematic integration of curricular and co-curricular activities actually detract from the learning experience.
- Some interviewees stated that Centre did not demand enough of its students, both in terms of intellectual challenge and personal responsibility. As one person said, "Because we often take relatively unsophisticated students and help them move so far, we are sometimes too easily satisfied with their and our work. Students need to know that they are terrific overall—not just at Centre—and can grow much more than they think they can."
- Faculty and staff recruitment and development require greater attention and resources. Centre is usually able to attract its top choice for faculty positions, but a significant number of impending retirements and growing competition will make this less certain in the future. A particular concern is that Centre may not be able to attract and retain sufficient numbers of faculty who share the College's core values and a commitment to institutional change as needed. At the same time, staff development and morale need greater attention, through special programs, rewards, and sustained and meaningful recognition that the staff plays a key role in the teaching and learning process. The issue of staff compensation requires particular effort through a clear set of targets and a steady plan of implementation.
- The proper use of information technology as a pedagogical tool also raised concerns. Some members of the community believed that much of the way that information technology is applied today seems antithetical to Centre and its personal modes of teaching and learning. At the same time, they expressed concern that Centre would be left behind by the technological revolution, still only in its early stages.
- The connection between Centre and the local community is complex. From the community's viewpoint, Centre's programs, quality, and openness are important and appreciated, but Centre is still not seen to be truly engaged in the issues facing the community. From Centre's perspective, the local area is both an attraction, as people move to and come to appreciate it, and a limitation when the College tries to brand

itself as a sophisticated, national institution attempting to attract a diverse faculty, staff, and student body.

### **EXTERNAL TRENDS AND ISSUES**

The trends and issues in the external environment describe both opportunities for and threats to Centre's continued development. These issues and trends fall into three broad categories:

- Population and higher education enrollment trends
- Forces and issues affecting higher education
- Institutional resources

### **Population and Higher Education Enrollment Trends**

- **Kentucky's population is projected to grow at a slower rate than that of the region and the nation.** Between 2006 and 2016, the United States is projected to gain 25.7 million new residents.<sup>i</sup> The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) states<sup>ii</sup> will gain 12.8 million people.<sup>iii</sup> Projected population growth between 2006 and 2016 in Kentucky is 3.8 percent or 159,828 new people. The SREB states with the largest projected population growth are Florida (19.5 percent), Texas (14.8 percent), North Carolina (14.6 percent), Georgia (14 percent), and Maryland (11.6 percent).

Projected Population Growth, 2004 – 2014

United States	SREB States	Kentucky
8.6%	11.8%	3.8%

SOURCE: Southern Regional Education Board, "SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, Kentucky Featured Facts," SREB, June 2007.

- **The number of 18-24 year olds is projected to decline slightly in the next 10 years.**<sup>iv</sup> In 2006 the population aged 18-24 years made up 9.8 percent of the population, both in the U.S. and in the SREB states.

Projected Proportions of College Aged Students (18-24), 2016

United States	SREB States	Kentucky	Tennessee	West Virginia	North Carolina
9.1%	9.0%	9.0%	9.2%	7.5%	9.9

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau: state population estimates for the Internet (1998 and 2004); and "Interim State Projections of Population by Single Year of Age: July 1, 2006 to 2030" (2007 — ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov))).

- **Higher education enrollment is expected to increase nationally through 2014.**<sup>v</sup> Total enrollment in degree-granting institutions increased 23 percent between 1989 and 2002. For all institutions, based on a middle projection, total enrollment between 2002 and 2014 is expected to increase 17 percent to 19.5 million. Enrollment is expected to increase for both public (17 percent) and private (19 percent) institutions. Enrollment is expected to increase among undergraduate students (16 percent), graduate students (21 percent), and professional students (32 percent).

- **Kentucky has lower than the national average participation rates in higher education.** In 2004, 39 percent of Kentucky high school graduates enrolled in four-year colleges.<sup>vi</sup> States in the region with higher proportions of enrollees include: Texas at 40 percent, Georgia at 40 percent, Virginia at 43 percent, West Virginia at 43 percent, North Carolina at 43 percent, and Indiana at 50 percent. Kentucky officials are actively working to improve participation rates.<sup>vii</sup>
- **Kentucky attracts more postsecondary students than it loses.** Colleges and universities in Kentucky attract more recent high school graduates from other states as first-time freshmen than Kentucky high school graduates who leave to enroll in other states. Thirteen percent of first-year college students are leaving the state for higher education while 17 percent of Kentucky's total first-year college students are from out of state.<sup>viii</sup> Kentucky's percentage is among the lowest for students leaving the state to go to college. Illinois had the lowest percentage of students entering the state for higher education at 11 percent, while Virginia had the highest at 29 percent. For students leaving the state for higher education, the highest percentage was in Illinois at 21 percent while North Carolina had the lowest percentage at 9 percent.
- **High school students who plan to leave Kentucky to attend college are among the best prepared academically.** According to the most recent Kentucky High School Survey administered in 2000 to a sample of about 1,100 high school students ages 16 and 17, 47 percent of students planning to attend college out-of-state report spending five or more hours on homework while only 28 percent of those planning to attend college in Kentucky report spending this much time on homework.<sup>ix</sup> Factors that were reported to be associated with out-of-state college choice were (in order of strongest to increase likelihood of out-of-state choice): 1) "I will have to move out of state to succeed," 2) student lives in an urban county, 3) "I want to get away from home", 4) at least one parent has a four-year college degree or higher, 5) student spends over 5 hours a week on homework or studying out of class, 6) "the cost of going to college is NOT an obstacle to me going," 7) the student has taken, is taking, or plans to take AP courses, 8) student decided what to do after high school while in elementary school, and 9) student is male.
- **Hispanic population increases in Kentucky have been near the bottom for the region.** Hispanic population growth between 1996 and 2006 was 16.2 million in the United States, 40.8 percent of the U.S. growth in population.<sup>x</sup> This increase is expected to continue. Hispanic population growth between 1996 and 2006 was 58,000 in the state of Kentucky, 13 percent of the Kentucky growth in population.<sup>xi</sup> Hispanic population growth between 1996 and 2006 was 6.6 million in the SREB states, 35 percent of the SREB growth in population.<sup>xii</sup>

Hispanic Population Growth  
as Percentage of Total Population Growth, 1993-2003

United States	SREB States	Kentucky
40.8%	35%	13%

SOURCE: Southern Regional Education Board, "SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, Kentucky Featured Facts," SREB, June 2007.

- Although the current Hispanic population in Kentucky is low, the proportion of Hispanic high school graduates is projected to increase dramatically by 2018.** According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 13 percent of the population is Hispanic. In 2002, 12 percent of the high school graduates in the U.S. were Hispanic. This proportion is projected to increase to 22 percent by 2018. Between now and 2018, Kentucky's Hispanic public high school graduates are projected to increase from 1 percent of the population to 24 percent of the total graduates.<sup>xiii</sup>

Proportions of Minorities in General Population  
and Among High School Graduates for the U.S. and Kentucky, 2000, 2002, and 2018

	Population (Census 2000)		Public H. S. Graduates in 2002		Public High School Graduates in 2018	
	US	KY	US Public H.S.	KY Public H.S.	US Public H.S.	KY Public H. S.
White, Non-Hispanic	69.1%	89.3%	69.0%	90.0%	56.0%	64.0%
Black	12.3%	7.3%	13.0%	9.0%	13.0%	7.0%
Hispanic	12.5%	1.5%	12.0%	1.0%	22.0%	24.0%
Asian	3.6%	0.7%	...	...	...	...
Native American	0.9%	0.2%	...	...	...	...
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	Z	...	...	...	...
Persons reporting some other race	5.5%	0.6%				
Persons reporting two or more races	2.4%	1.1%				

Note: Z indicates that the value is greater than zero but less than half unit of measure shown.

- Although women's participation is increasing in higher education throughout the country, in Kentucky, male participation rates have increased at a higher rate in the last ten years.** In the U.S. the enrollment growth between 1995 and 2005 for women was 26.9 percent and for men 18.8 percent.<sup>xiv</sup> Enrollment in degree-granting institutions is projected to increase 12 percent for men and 21 percent for women by 2014. In Kentucky the enrollment growth between 1995 and 2005 for women was 33.7 percent and for men 41.6 percent.<sup>xv</sup>
- The racial/ethnic groups that are the least educated are the fastest growing.** The income of the United States' workforce is projected to decline if education

doesn't improve. The US workforce is becoming more diverse; growing population sectors tend to have the lowest level of education and thus less income. There is also an impending retirement of baby boomers – the most highly educated generation in U.S. history. Some argue that it is therefore crucial that states improve the education of all racial/ethnic groups in order to improve the skills of the workforce, increase the incomes of U.S. residents, and ultimately to hold on to the nation's tax base.

- **The fastest growing, highest paying jobs will require education beyond high school.** Jobs in the U.S. for people with bachelor's degrees are expected to increase by 21 percent by 2012; jobs for people with associate's degrees are expected to increase by 26 percent. Jobs for people with master's degrees are expected to increase by 22 percent; for professional degrees 18 percent; and for doctoral degrees 36 percent.<sup>xvi</sup> There is a need to convey to high school graduates (and perhaps particularly minority students) the value of higher education in today's society and workplace.
- **Colleges are looking for strategies to enroll more minority students.** A number of colleges have dropped the admission test requirement. Other campuses are establishing recruitment efforts for minority students comparable to the recruitment models for student athletes, including invitations to visit the campus and an open house for minority students.<sup>xvii</sup> Others are establishing a national alumni board to provide advice on and to evaluate diversity efforts. Still others are focusing pre-college programs on students aged three through eight in local school districts and some have committed to raising money for minority-student scholarships through private, non-profit foundations.
- **Demographics such as a rural location can pose challenges to diversity.** Money alone—i.e., large scholarships to minority applicants—is not enough to attract students into predominately white colleges in small towns.<sup>xviii</sup> Fear of isolation and racial unrest can intimidate students. To counter this, colleges are bringing students of color on recruiting trips, recruiting heavily in urban centers, highlighting cultural centers and tutoring in campus materials, hiring full-time counselors of color, and holding campus recruitment events exclusively for black students.<sup>xix</sup>
- **Kentucky student enrollment in grades PK-12 is projected to decline.** In fall 2002, enrollment in grades PK-12 in public schools in Kentucky was 661,000. From 2006-2014, PK-12 enrollment is projected to decline by 4 percent in Kentucky.<sup>xx</sup>
- **K-12 students in Kentucky do not perform as well as students nationwide.** Kentucky's 8th graders perform poorly on national assessments of math and writing, and only fair on national assessments of reading, putting them at a disadvantage when they take college preparatory courses in high school.<sup>xxi</sup> In addition, relatively low proportions of Kentucky's 11th and 12th graders perform well on college entrance exams. Of the 2007 college-bound high school seniors taking the ACT test in Kentucky, 65 percent met or surpassed the English benchmark, compared to 68 percent nationally; 32 percent met the math mark, compared with 41 percent nationally; 48 percent met reading, compared to 51 percent nationally; 22 percent met science, compared to 26 percent nationally.<sup>xxii</sup>

- **There are teacher shortages in rural areas of eastern Kentucky and special education teacher shortages statewide.** The number of teachers in Kentucky classrooms working with emergency certification doubled between 1998 and 2003.<sup>xxiii</sup> Emergency certification has been especially prevalent among science and math teachers where the number working with emergency certification more than quadrupled between 1998 and 2003. Another pressing challenge for Kentucky is preparing enough adequate teachers in the area of special education.<sup>xxiv</sup>
- **Kentucky provides quality preparation for teachers.** Kentucky received a “B+” in “Efforts to Improve Teacher Quality,” according to the 2005 “Quality Counts” report by *Education Week*, giving Kentucky a rank of fifth in the nation for this measure.<sup>xxv</sup> The Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board presents a state report card on educator preparation. The Report Card reflects the quality of teacher and administrator preparation programs throughout the Commonwealth as demonstrated by indicators deemed important by the Governor, the General Assembly, the Kentucky Board of Education, higher education, teachers and administrators, parents, the EPSB, and the public-at-large. Centre College is one of 29 institutions that qualify as providing educator preparation and it received a quality performance index of 3.88 or “excellent performing.”<sup>xxvi</sup>
- **In Kentucky, one in six districts has reduced funding for the arts over the past five years.**<sup>xxvii</sup> One in nine districts has reduced the number of certified arts specialists from 2000-05; on average, across all levels PK-12, one in 17 districts employs qualified dance teachers and one in eight employs qualified drama teachers; and on average, across all grade levels, the largest amount of time per week spent in teaching visual arts and music to students is 30 to 60 minutes for each subject, for dance and drama 1 to 30 minutes for each subject.

### **Implications for Centre College**

Although postsecondary enrollment is projected to increase in the nation as well as in Kentucky, this growth is not expected to be as large as it has been in the past few years. Centre needs to continue to pursue geographic diversification of its student body. Also, as the pool of Kentucky high school graduates shrinks, Centre may want to participate in efforts to improve the performance of K-12 students and increase high school graduates’ college-going rates. Such efforts will be particularly important if Centre remains primarily a Kentucky institution, by virtue of its proportion of in-state students.

A large proportion of growth in 18-24 year olds in the nation and the state will consist of Hispanics. Centre may not only want to develop strategies to increase the enrollment of minority students but also to ensure that Centre College provides these students with an appropriate environment.

Finally, Centre College may want to engage the K-12 community in arts education. Funding for arts education is declining in the state and establishing partnerships with key schools may be a way to familiarize more in-state students with Centre.



## **FORCES AND ISSUES IMPACTING HIGHER EDUCATION: IN GENERAL AND FOR PRIVATE, LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES**

### **Globalization**

- **As a result of technological advances and increased globalization, American higher education is facing increased competition.** Several major international collaborations among universities are underway. Other universities have developed “off-shore” campuses in which universities establish campuses in the developing world and instruction is provided by local faculty who are trained by the founding institution.
- **Globalization has led to attempts to internationalize curricula to better prepare students for trans-national careers.** Advocates of this perspective argue that to educate students to operate in a global context, coursework must be infused with the perspectives of other cultures, and of the new transnational linkages that supersede the nation-state.
- **Fewer science degrees are being awarded in the United States.** In 2000 the U.S. awarded 17 percent of its bachelor’s degrees in science and engineering, compared to 27 percent of the degrees awarded worldwide, and 52 percent of the degrees awarded in China.<sup>xxviii</sup>
- **Security demands of the post 9/11 world will continue to require colleges and universities to function with more intrusive federal restrictions.** The Bush administration wants the USA Patriot Act reauthorized and extended with virtually no revisions and continues to enhance the ability of law enforcement to obtain various records from colleges and universities.<sup>xxix</sup> In general, government regulations on the use of research funds, financial aid, employment practices, and admissions criteria increase annually.

### **Higher Education as a Commodity**

- **Public officials are increasingly interested in the notion that higher education’s mission should be linked to economic development.** Research from the Institute for Higher Education Policy reinforces the benefits of higher education to the economic health of states. During periods of slow job growth and international competition for higher education, policymakers exert more pressure on institutions to serve the public good.<sup>xxx</sup>
- **Adults expect a college education to prepare students for specific careers.** When more than 1,000 adults were asked about the primary purpose of a college education, 64 percent said it was to prepare students for specific careers, 16 percent said it was to prepare students for work in general, and only 19 percent said it was to provide students with general knowledge. An additional 2 percent said they did not know.<sup>xxxi</sup>

- **Tensions exist between the high esteem associated with theoretical disciplines and societal interest in professional education.** Liberal education is declining as students seek greater security of professional and vocational majors.<sup>xxxii</sup> There is a perception that liberal education is disconnected from the skills necessary for successful careers. The “practical arts” are increasingly favored over liberal arts. Furthermore, according to David Kirp, a professor at Berkeley, the label “university” has come to mean “seriousness of institutional purpose” in our imagination as compared to the term “college.”<sup>xxxiii</sup>
- **Although many colleges and universities resist the trend to become more “practical,” trends exist in liberal arts colleges to help students acquire job skills.** A Carnegie-sponsored study concluded that a promising approach for the renewal and transformation of liberal education may be the integration of the liberal arts and professional study, for example in the area of teacher education.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Institutions like Amherst, Colgate, Columbia, and the University of Southern California offer career-oriented courses, usually as “add-ons” bearing no credit or offered for free.<sup>xxxv</sup> Examples of job-related courses include music recording, art appraisal, and real-estate finance. Some professors have begun to devise their own ways to help their students make the transition from the liberal arts to careers, such as introducing a course on book reviewing, to instruct students in a craft.<sup>xxxvi</sup>
- **Most selective liberal arts colleges are still holding their own in the market for students, while those less well known and less affluent are losing ground.**<sup>xxxvii</sup> To stay competitive, colleges are trying to expand their offerings as well as maintain a wide range of academic departments and majors without having the benefits of scale that larger institutions enjoy.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Small colleges may also look toward recruiting non-traditional students for increased enrollments and also think about developing semester, yearlong, and summer programs that would attract students from other colleges and universities.<sup>xxxix</sup> Satellite or professional programs, in addition to the traditional residential campus, may help in “diversifying revenue streams.”<sup>xl</sup> Colleges may want to increase their unrestricted endowments in order to help fund a bigger share of financial aid and enhance academic programs.<sup>xli</sup>
- **Of the 550 independent colleges, most are growing.**<sup>xlii</sup> With increasing financial challenges, increasing enrollments bring higher tuition dollars. More revenue can bring increased opportunities for students—offering a new language or new courses in science, for example. New programs can also offer colleges a competitive edge in attracting students. Colleges that have grown include Dickinson (2,270 students), Eckerd (1,680), and Hampshire (1,350). Washington (1,400) grew by 43 percent in 10 years; Guilford College (2,700) more than doubled in 5 years. Elon University grew from 1,800 in 1973 to 4,584 today, dramatically improving its finances. It also changed from a college to a university. Some voices urge caution regarding an aggressive growth strategy, however. Benefits for staying small include personal connections to faculty members, opportunities to be involved in more activities, and encouraged interdisciplinary study. Colleges that have held firm at their current level of enrollment or even reduced it include Earlham, Smith, and Oberlin. Around 100 institutions with strong finances have chosen to stay small.

## **Technology**

- **There is a broadly shared feeling that institutions do not reward faculty for their efforts to use instructional technology.** Older faculty are more likely than younger faculty to report stress associated with keeping up with information technology.
- **The Top Ten IT Issues for 2007** were as follows:
  - 1: Funding IT
  - 2: Security
  - 3: Administrative/ERP/Information Systems
  - 4: Identity/Access Management
  - 5: Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity
  - 6: Faculty Development, Support, and Training
  - 7: Infrastructure
  - 8: Strategic Planning for IT
  - 9: Course/Learning Management Systems
  - 10: Governance, Organization, and Leadership for IT
- **Course management systems play an increasingly significant role in instruction.**<sup>xliii</sup> Students want to conduct academic transactions online. They prefer to access course materials, class syllabi, and turn in assignments online. The percentage of institutions reporting online course registration, online transcripts, and online course reserves has tripled since 1998.
- **The majority of U.S. colleges and universities have campus codes of conduct related to technology.**<sup>xliv</sup> Over 80 percent of American universities, two-thirds of four-year colleges, and half of community colleges have campus policies intended to stem the unauthorized downloading of commercial content—primarily music and movies—from the Internet. Almost all campuses (92 percent) have policies intended to stem the unauthorized duplication of commercial software; similarly, 87 percent have codes of conduct regarding the fair use of copyrighted content such as books and journal articles.
- **Cellular phone technology is the fastest growing personal computing sector in the world and some believe that it will replace WiFi.** It is described as a wedge technology that is affecting students, teachers, and administrators. Marshall University gives residential students cell phones rather than landlines in dorms.<sup>xlv</sup> Wireless-phone service on the campus might also allow the university to adopt new technology more easily in the future, such as cell phones that are also personal digital assistants.

## **Student Learning Characteristics**

- **Today's students are described as experiential—preferring to learn by doing rather than being told what to do.** They crave interactivity and engagement. They like doing things, not just thinking or talking. They also believe they can make a difference, and have been described as hopeful and determined, liking public

activism. Some believe that a promising approach for the renewal and transformation of liberal education is to establish more opportunities for experiential learning.<sup>xlvi</sup> Such learning would include community service, field study, internships, and research projects to integrate experience and application with academic work.

- **Today's traditional college-age students are also described as gravitating toward group activity—preferring to work in teams.**<sup>xlvi</sup> They are social, gravitating toward social interaction, even when distanced by technology (for example, IM-ing, blogging, web diaries, forwarding joke e-mails, and teaming in an Internet game). Some believe that a promising approach for the renewal and transformation of liberal education is developing learning communities,<sup>xlvi</sup> which bring a group of students and faculty together to work over a sustained period of time, using multiple approaches to explore and develop responses to a major topic or problem. Some have a residential component. Participation in learning communities is positively linked with student academic performance, engagement in educationally fruitful activities, gains associated with college attendance, and overall satisfaction with the college experience.<sup>xlvi</sup>
- **Today's students are busy with extracurricular activities.**<sup>i</sup> Some observers advise liberal arts colleges to combine the two worlds of the academic with the world outside of the classroom. Because of their size and residential character, liberal arts colleges have unparalleled opportunities to combine in-class and co-curricular learning experiences in ways that educate and shape the whole student.<sup>ii</sup>
- **Interdisciplinary approaches are increasingly attractive to students.** Interdisciplinary teaching and learning are often discussed, less frequently attempted, and rarely achieved. Some experts believe that tackling the big, important, societal questions requires interdisciplinary approaches. These have the potential to provide students an opportunity to engage with new areas of study. However, it may be a challenge to change faculty who are respected for the specialties to ones who integrate, synthesize, and unify knowledge for the sake of realizing solutions to social, civic, and ethical problems. Scholars are trained, hired, tenured, and promoted within their disciplines and many look upon interdisciplinary work with skepticism.
- **Students are digitally literate, connected, and fascinated by new technologies.** Most students entering colleges and universities today are more comfortable working on a keyboard than writing in a spiral notebook, and are happier reading from a computer screen than from paper in hand.<sup>lii</sup> To new students, “technology” is not necessarily considered technology at all, rather for them it blends into the background and the more important differentiating factor of technology is instead what a new technological feature might enhance, be it wireless networking or some kind of other new software. Students are blending the physical and virtual worlds and this “hybridizing” of their environments means that “personal” conversations can be online as well as face-to-face. Students will instant message each other sitting only a few feet away and the Internet can be a place where many students share emotions and feelings.

- **Surveys of the students demonstrate that they prefer a mix of technology and traditional face-to-face interaction.** Students appear to prefer a “moderate” amount of IT in their classes. They would *not* prefer a completely online environment.

### **Affordability**

- **Lack of affordability is making state policymakers rethink higher education finance.** Tuition and fees are increasing. For the 2006-07 academic year, annual prices for undergraduate tuition, room, and board were estimated to be \$12,796 at public colleges and \$30,367 at private colleges.<sup>liii</sup> Between 1996-97 and 2006-07, prices at public colleges rose by 34 percent, and prices at private colleges increased by 24 percent, after adjustment for inflation. Centre College’s inflation-adjusted sticker price has increased by 39.6% during the same time period.” While the threat from policymakers will primarily affect public institutions, the distinction between public and private universities is blurring due to the decline of state funding and the prevalence of federal research and financial aid funding throughout higher education.
- **The costs of college are a big challenge for middle- and lower-income students.** In 2004 the costs of one year of college (tuition, fees, room, and board) were 26 percent of income for middle-income households.<sup>liv</sup> This is 10 percentage points more than in 1984. For students in the lowest fifth of households, the cost of one year of college was 113 percent of income. This is 48 percentage points more than in 1984.
- **It is harder for low-income students to exercise a choice to attend private colleges rather than public colleges.** In 2003-04, the average total price of attendance at a public, four-year institution was much lower than at an independent, private, not-for-profit institution. Average prices were \$15,200 and \$28,300, respectively. Additionally, more than 1,000 undergraduate honors programs have been established at large public universities and in many aspects replicate the small college experience within the context of a large university.<sup>lv</sup> Large universities also offer professional and pre-professional programs that many small colleges do not.
- **More students are entering higher education from lower socioeconomic levels.**<sup>lvi</sup> Despite recent periods of prosperity, each year increasing numbers of low-income students graduate from high school academically prepared to enter college.<sup>lvii</sup> They then confront significant financial barriers that may limit their ability to enroll and stay in college.
- **Trends in accountability may make parents and students more likely to ask what they are getting from higher tuition costs.**<sup>lviii</sup> Many small colleges and their accrediting associations are investing in documenting and assessing student learning.
- **Student aid, as a percentage of tuition, is increasing, demonstrating the increasing need for students to subsidize their education.**<sup>lix</sup> Sixty-two percent of

all undergraduates enrolled in 2006-07 received some type of financial aid.<sup>lx</sup> For the average freshman receiving aid, the aid as a percentage of tuition increased from 44 percent in 1990 to 49 percent in 2002 at all institutions. This has changed the least for small colleges with high tuition (1990 – 38 percent to 2002 – 47 percent) and the most for small colleges with low tuition (1990 – 54 percent to 2002 – 56 percent).

- **Students at independent private institutions receive more grants than loans.** Fifty-one percent of all undergraduates received grants while 35 percent took out student loans. However, the average amount that undergraduate students borrowed was higher than the average grant amount received, \$5,800 compared with \$4,000, respectively. At independent, private, not-for-profit institutions this differed. The average amount that full-time/full-year undergraduate students borrowed was \$7,200 compared with the amount of grant received - \$9,400.
- **Tuition discounting rates continue to increase.** Monitors of this trend believe that tuition discounting will most likely grow or at least not decline significantly. In the absence of radical shifts, the prognosis is further marginal refinement in the techniques and amounts of aid.
- **Institutions are increasingly relying on tuition discounting.** The provision of institutional aid crosses economic sectors of the industry, with the well-endowed institutions participating as broadly as those institutions with few resources. The largest percentage increases have occurred at small colleges with lower tuition and large colleges and universities, where the increases have been more than 50 percent from 1990-2002. Small colleges with higher tuition have increased discounting by 35 percent. Ninety percent of freshmen at small colleges with low tuition and 72 percent of freshman at small colleges with high tuition received institutional aid in the fall of 2002.<sup>lxi</sup>
- **In addition to need-based aid, many institutions rely on characteristic-based tuition discounting to attract high-performing students, as well as students with attributes considered desirable.** Colleges and universities use tuition discounting, both to provide access as well as to shape classes and increase enrollments. Characteristic-based aid offers institutions a chance to compete for students who might not otherwise attend. Tuition discounting supports diversity in the classroom, but increasing diversity does not dominate the economic and strategic decisions institutions make in awarding aid.
- **Calls are increasing for greater transparency in cost, price, and subsidy.** Tuition discounting still confuses many students and families, who despite increasing aid sophistication, still overestimate the costs of attending college.
- **Access to college has improved,<sup>lxii</sup> but lower-income students' access to grant aid is decreasing.** The goals of meeting student need and ensuring educational access are increasingly taking a back seat to a more intentional management of financial and enrollment goals. Lower-income students' access to grant aid is decreasing while their cost of education is rising, making it difficult for them to

afford college. The most worrisome outcome of tuition discounting is that it apparently restricts lower-income students' financial access to four-year institutions and reduces their options in terms of college choice. Growing proportion of institutional aid is going to wealthy students, challenging the higher tuition/high aid philosophies of the past.

- **Colleges may be offering larger-than-necessary tuition discounts to students who would have enrolled anyway.** Tuition discounting does not always increase an institution's net tuition revenue. Lower net tuition revenue means fewer resources are available for other academic and student support services that in turn makes colleges less valuable to students. Tuition discounting has the potential to contribute to financial failures of more than a few colleges if they continue to lose net tuition revenue to discounting.

### **Implications for Centre College**

Even with growth in its endowment and its recent successes in fundraising, tuition revenue remains the major source of income for the College. Centre will need to examine to what degree increasing enrollment could help serve the larger educational program of the College and finance new initiatives. At the same time, the College's core commitment to serving low and middle-income students makes the complicated issues of tuition discounting and institutional aid even more acute for Centre.

In terms of its academic programs, Centre may either want to increase opportunities for students to gain professional skills or make a concerted effort to demonstrate its relevancy to parents and potential students through making the link between success at Centre and success on the job, perhaps through surveys and interviews of its graduates. In developing new initiatives, it may be useful to consider students' propensity for extra-curricular activities and their desire to work in teams or groups. Developing learning communities and/or merging the curricular with the co-curricular could be two changes embraced by students. Working in this context may also provide a more coherent and comfortable framework within which to incorporate new technologies into the teaching and learning process. Also, it may be a good time for Centre to streamline and refocus its international curriculum and programming, as the world becomes increasingly more global.

### **Institutional Resources and Responses**

#### **Financial Management**

- **Liberal arts colleges have always had high costs and are facing increased expenses.** Small colleges are facing increased capital expenses to maintain state-of-the-art science labs, fine arts facilities, smart classrooms, wired residence halls, and updated health and recreation centers.<sup>lxiii</sup> Students and parents are coming to expect lavish facilities and technologies. Competition for students compels colleges and universities to construct elaborate residential, dining, academic, and athletic facilities, at great cost. Although many such projects receive support from donors, not all capital gifts include endowed maintenance funds. Costs are also increasing

in salaries and benefits (for example, health care costs rising 20 percent to 30 percent in a single year).<sup>lxiv</sup>

- **While college presidents are typically former provosts, their top priority these days is more akin to that of a chief financial officer.**<sup>lxv</sup> A balanced budget is considered to be the top performance indicator by which four-year college and university presidents measure their success. Four-year college presidents report allocating the majority of their time to fundraising issues and budget and finance matters.
  - More than half of the presidents (53 percent) said they spent part of every day on fundraising, which was also the activity for which they felt least prepared. Forty-four percent of presidents identified budget and finance matters as their most time-consuming activity.
  - Five of the six top concerns that presidents cited related to financial issues: rising health care costs, rising tuition, financial aid, technology costs, and inadequate faculty salaries.
  - Almost half (49 percent) said they met with their chief financial officer daily, while only 18 percent said they talked to their head of student affairs every day.
- **Management of tuition and student aid is a key factor in the finances of liberal arts colleges.** Most colleges have been raising tuition faster than the rate of inflation, but pressures also exist to meet enrollment goals, maintain affordability, and compete with other colleges for outstanding students. Therefore, tuition increases are combined with higher discount rates. Rising tuition has led to more aid for middle-income students.
- **Institutional scholarships and fellowships constitute one of the fastest growing expenditure categories and make up an increasing proportion of total education and general expenditures.** Instruction expenditures continued to constitute the largest portion of total education and general expenditures. Contributing to this was higher costs in institutional aid and average faculty compensation levels.
- **Endowment spending rates have been increasing steadily across all institutional types between the years 1999 and 2003.**<sup>lxvi</sup> The average spending rate for all reporting institutions for the past five fiscal years was exactly 5 percent. Centre has been quite successful over the past few years in reducing its endowment spending rate, from a high of over seven percent to its current five percent.

### **Faculty Characteristics**

- **Across the country, faculty members are generally satisfied with their work.** Faculty express generally positive statements about their careers, their relationships with colleagues, and the congruence between their own values and institutional values.
- **According to the 2004-05 HERI faculty survey, the most prevalent faculty goals for undergraduate education are to develop critical thinking abilities, facilitate mastery in a given discipline, and promote effective writing.**<sup>lxvii</sup> Seventy-three



percent also believe that preparing students for employment is a high priority. More than half endorsed instilling a basic appreciation for the liberal arts as well as attending to students' moral development. Fewer faculty prioritized guiding students' emotional development.

- **Of the total number of faculty in the U.S., 60.6 percent are male.**<sup>lxviii</sup> In 2004-05, 64.5 percent of Centre faculty members were male. Female faculty, in terms of personal aspirations, are more inclined than men to highly value promoting racial understanding, influencing social values, and helping others in difficulty. Men, with respect to professional goals, are more inclined than women to prioritize becoming an authority in their field and being well off financially.
- **In fall 2003, the faculty of the U.S. was 80.2 percent White, non-Hispanic, 5.3 percent Black, 6.5 percent Asian, and 0.5 percent Native American.**<sup>lxix</sup> Much of the projected growth in students will come from women and people of color. The representation of women and people of color in the full-time tenure-track and tenured faculty ranks has not kept pace with the rapidly diversifying student body.<sup>lxx</sup> Some fear that this will lead to a less-than-optimum learning environment. Furthermore, significant numbers of women and faculty of color feel they have to work harder than their colleagues to be perceived as legitimate scholars.
- **A significant number of full-time professors are not on the tenure track.** The drive to enhance productivity has led universities to turn to part-time and temporary employees who are less expensive because they do not carry expensive benefit packages.<sup>lxxi</sup> In fall 2003, of all full-time faculty at Title IV degree-granting institutions, 44.8 percent were with tenure, 20.4 percent were non-tenured on tenure track, and 34.8 percent were not on tenure track.<sup>lxxii</sup> In 2004-05, 67.7 percent of Centre faculty were tenured.
- **Professors are less likely to be involved in administrative activities, with competing explanations.** The liberal arts professors who once actively immersed themselves in college governance now leave that more to professional administrators.<sup>lxxiii</sup> These institutions are at risk of losing the engaged faculty members who have, historically, fundamentally shaped the institutional identity, character, and culture. Liberal arts faculty members are increasingly developing an "independent contractor" mentality that some describe as similar to the role of faculty at large research universities. However, others argue that challenges to retaining tenure-track faculty include limited opportunities to participate in departmental and institutional decision-making, "token" committee assignments, and infrequent opportunities for leadership positions.<sup>lxxiv</sup>
- **There is a looming loss of millions of "baby boomer" faculty.** It is important that administrators define and maintain a balance of junior and senior faculty. A 1999 survey found that 16 percent of full-time higher education faculty members would come of retirement age within the next several years.<sup>lxxv</sup> Forty percent stated they are very likely to retire in the next few years. Twenty-three percent of full-time faculty who do not expect to retire in the next three years stated that they were likely to

accept full-time non-postsecondary jobs in the next three years. Forty percent of the Centre faculty is projected to retire in the next 10 years.

- **There is often a disconnect between the goals of the institution and faculty rewards.** Faculty are often assessed and rewarded based on their number of publications (usually tailored to small audiences). Other incentives need to be developed to make sure that retention, promotion, and tenure criteria and incentives in general are reinforcing what the institution wants to be and how its faculty members need to perform.

### **Creating a Compelling Identity Elevates the Distinctiveness and in Turn Enrollment and Endowment**

- **Institutions are often advised to communicate in a few sentences what they are, what they aspire to be, and what distinguishes them from the other competing colleges and universities.**<sup>lxxvi</sup> Some consider this identity a kind of marketing or advertising, but others consider it imperative branding for students, parents, and the public in general. Honing a niche could boost the value of the institution and of liberal arts colleges in general. Institutional identity can also help to socialize students, faculty, and staff to the core values of the institution. Further, a clear mission can also help colleges define and narrow their efforts and resources—since liberal arts colleges are not able to provide everything to everybody. Creating a strong institutional identity might also help increase endowment if the identity and mission is distinctive and appealing.
- **The institutional identity should highlight the institution’s uniqueness and strengths.** For example, Berea College showcases a work program, full-tuition scholarship to every student, and a set of principles that guide the college called “Great Commitments” they have had for decades. Earlham College celebrates “Engagement with a Changing World” as its motto, which unifies its characteristics of religious tradition as a Quaker institution, commitment to international education, and the high degree of students who continue on to graduate study. Lastly, Colorado College distinguishes itself with its “block plan” academic calendar and its setting at the foot of Pikes Peak. The idea is to present an identity that is distinctive, without being particular, attracting students through unique characteristics without excluding students in general. Such a compelling identity can help to increase enrollment and endowment.

### **Implications for Centre College**

The long-term viability of less selective small private liberal arts colleges is questionable. Parents and potential students are increasingly expecting colleges to provide job training. Costs and competition for students are both increasing. Tuition discounting is a necessary, but perhaps dangerous, trend. Increasing enrollments and donations are both important (and intensely pursued by competitors). It may take the creation of a new, or the communicating of a current, compelling identity to attract new groups of students and donors. If Centre College does decide to embark on new initiatives leading to a new identity, it should

carefully consider how it replaces retiring faculty members. Centre may also want to carefully reflect upon whether its current system of incentives is aligned with desired changes in academic, student life, and administrative arenas.

### **Observations on Top 25 Comparisons**

1. Of the top 25 institutions, nine offer graduate degrees.
2. Except for engineering, few offer professional programs.
3. All have higher proportions of minority students and faculty. While these are not variables upon which rankings are based, they are reflective of an increasingly diverse society.
4. Most of the top 25 institutions also have a higher proportion of international faculty members.
5. Higher ranked schools generally have smaller class sizes, i.e., those under 20; have lower acceptance rates; greater numbers of students in the top 10% of their graduating class; and higher graduation rates.
6. All of the top-25 institutions have more financial resources and budgets, with *considerably* higher endowments.
7. All charge higher comprehensive fees than does Centre.
8. All but two lag behind Centre in terms of alumni giving rate and rank.

### **The Current Environment—Broad Conclusions**

The examination of Centre's particular circumstances and the external trends and forces within which the College exists indicates that the College stands at a critical moment in its history. In many ways, Centre has never been stronger. At the same time, it remains more vulnerable than many of its peers, much less those institutions with which Centre aspires to be compared. The College must address fundamental issues such as:

- Maintaining and enhancing the integrity, viability, and appeal of its liberal arts foundation in the face of changing expectations by parents and prospective students;
- Deciding whether it is comfortable with creating, focusing, and supporting a more sharply defined institutional identity;
- Generating revenue sufficient to solidify the College's current position, much less to fund new initiatives to improve Centre's educational program and to compete more effectively with institutions possessing greater financial resources;
- Attracting and retaining a student body that reflects institutional values and commitments and serves the larger educational and financial goals of the College. Key within this issue is the College's ability to remain a place of high achievement and high opportunity;
- Attracting and retaining a faculty and staff committed to the residential liberal arts and sciences experience, especially the intense version of that experience found at Centre.

It is not so much these forces and trends that will determine Centre's future. Rather, it is how Centre chooses to respond to them that will shape the direction of the Centre Saga.

## **CHAPTER THREE: GOALS AND INITIATIVES**

Specific goals and initiatives define the means by which any organization moves toward its statement of aspiration, as well as providing the means by which it will measure that progress.

Such is the case for Centre College. The strategic research and opportunity assessment conducted during the spring of 2006 identified a number of issues that the College categorized as either themes—opportunities and challenges that cut across Centre’s operation—or enablers—those issues dealing with personnel, enrollment, finance, facilities, and technology that affect and are affected by the themes. The College formed ten committees to investigate those issues more fully and to develop specific recommendations to address the opportunities and challenges contained in the themes and to strengthen the enablers. Those groups were:

### **Themes**

- Engaged and Experiential Learning
- Global Citizenship
- Creative Thinking
- Leadership
- What If?

### **Enablers**

- Faculty and Staff
- Enrollment and Student Body
- Facilities
- Technology
- Finance

In early 2007, these committees presented their reports to the Planning and Priorities (P&P) Committee of the College Council. As the Planning and Priorities Committee was completing its review, it was decided that, in response to a request from the faculty, it would be both appropriate and constructive to identify and have the Committee on Curriculum and Academic Standards (CCAS) examine those recommendations more directly curricular in nature. During the spring of 2007, the CCAS held a series of forums for faculty looking at those recommendations, while the P&P Committee held similar events for faculty and staff to respond to all of the recommendations contained in the reports.

Over the summer, the CCAS met to consider the curricular recommendations noted above. At the same time, work began in the process of shaping the findings and recommendations of the various committees into a more unified document. As the academic year began, the CCAS submitted its work on the curricular recommendations to the faculty. These topics, along with other planning issues, were discussed at the faculty retreat. The faculty held two meetings to discuss, revise, and vote on those recommendations. The result of that work is now reflected in the sections that follow.

Also emerging from this work and other discussions is a set of strategic goals, which describe in more specific language the ambitions contained in the Statement of Aspiration. Those strategic goals are:

- Centre will become widely recognized among the nation's premier undergraduate experience in global studies, through an array of curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular offerings, all including extensive study and work opportunities abroad. Centre should be among the first choices for young people seeking strong undergraduate preparation for graduate study and careers in a global setting.
- Centre College will create a nationally-recognized model for engaged and experiential learning by enabling students to: experience the work of the historian, biologist, or artist, rather than only observing and analyzing the process and results; engage in different forms of collaborative work; apply the power and relevancy of the liberal arts through community-based learning; engage in activities that require and develop creative thinking; combine opportunities from across the College to study and develop effective leadership; engage the academic program with co-curricular and extracurricular programs in a mutually supportive educational experience, and; engage all of these elements together through active and purposeful planning and management of each student's experience.
- Centre College will recruit, retain, reward, and support a faculty and staff that is at once of the highest quality preparation, committed to the College's distinctive mission, and reflective of the diverse communities in which Centre's students will live and work. In doing so, Centre will establish a human resource effort that is judged to be a model for undergraduate colleges.
- Centre College will seek to maintain and enhance its historic and increasingly distinctive commitment to being a place of both high achievement and high opportunity—serving students of ever greater motivation and talent, regardless of their financial circumstances. Centre will seek to increase the number and quality of applicants, allowing it to choose to grow in a manner and pace that it controls and that advances the College's educational and financial goals.
- Centre College will maintain and enhance a holistic learning environment in a highly residential community by creating physical facilities and spaces that support and match the quality of the College's academic and student life programs.
- Centre College will use information technology to enhance, not supplant, the core elements of the Centre Experience—rigorous inquiry, community, collaboration, and creativity. Centre will also develop and maintain the support infrastructure necessary to achieve and sustain this goal. As it does, Centre has the opportunity to make an important contribution to the continuing conversation regarding information technology and higher education.
- Centre College will create a financial base adequate to support the fulfillment of the College's aspirations, through effective management of current resources and the development of new and increased sources of support.
- Centre College will sustain its long-standing tradition for having a dynamic, engaged Board of Trustees that provides balanced policy-level leadership and seeks to advance the College in all ways with its gifts of work, wisdom, and wealth. Centre will also establish a model program for engagement of and communication with its alumni, parents of current students, and friends.

- Centre College will, through the example of its own programs and its leadership in issues of higher education, become a place of greater influence in the American academy. Centre College will also continue to be that place in the Commonwealth of Kentucky—and on an increasingly national and international stage—where conversations on issues of importance to the larger society take place.

The sections that follow provide additional background on these nine strategic goals. Also, focused and detailed initiatives and action steps that more fully define these goals and the path to their achievement are also described there. The initiatives listed throughout the report will be addressed over the next five, ten, even 15 years (the specific timetables will be developed as implementation moves forward). Implementation will obviously include consideration of budget and staffing.

The process generated many interesting initiatives. Even though not all of them can be accomplished in the near term or, perhaps, ever, they may inform other possibilities as we go forward. Thus, we have made the decision to include all of them in this document so as to keep them “on the record.” It is also important to remember that as conditions internal and external to the College change over time, these initiatives, and the goals themselves will evolve as well. The process of implementing the plan will include not only the monitoring of activity, but also re-examining the continued relevancy of the goals and action steps, and will involve the campus community through what has now become a continuing process of strategic planning and management.

## **SECTION ONE—GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP**

### **GOAL—GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP**

*Centre will become widely recognized among the nation's premier undergraduate experience in global studies, through an array of curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular offerings, all including extensive study and work opportunities abroad. Centre should be among the first choices for young people seeking strong undergraduate preparation for graduate study and careers in a global setting.*

Global Citizenship refers broadly to one's active engagement in the life of local, national or transnational communities, recognizing the connections and interdependencies between these areas of cultural, social, ecological, political, and economic activity. These communities have no necessary relationship to legal or juridical conceptions of membership, characterized by national citizenship. Moreover, we recognize that many of the global challenges that will shape our future are anchored in complex scientific and economic and ethical questions. Global citizens, in order to actively engage in effective problem-solving, will require not only a broad understanding of political, cultural, economic and social processes, but also a firm grasp of underlying ecological and other scientific principles as well. Hence, global citizenship is a reflection of one's consciousness and engagement.

The growing connectedness and interdependence of the world's societies and cultures becomes more evident each day, and examples large and small abound. Globalization has become a major, if not the major, driving force in nearly all aspects of human experience—intellectual, religious, social, economic, and political. As the planning research report by the STRATUS Group stated, "It is now imperative that all educated people in the U.S. and around the world be interested in the 'different other,' understand the values and dreams of all human beings, and also understand, appreciate, and celebrate the cultural, social, and political differences. . . that contribute to the richness of humanity but can also cause social tension and political turmoil." However, the STRATUS report also indicated that liberal arts education, while long emphasizing the ability to "live, work, and serve in the 'world,'" has until very recently defined the world as "western civilization rather than a global community."

Other liberal arts institutions have programs that successfully address aspects of this need for "global citizenship"—Middlebury in language instruction and St. Olaf in study-abroad, for example. Few, if any, however, have attempted to create a comprehensive academic and co-curricular global experience. Centre College has the ingredients at hand to do so. Centre has a long tradition of broad-based education—"educating the whole person." Centre has more recently become a national leader in providing study-abroad opportunities for an extraordinary number of its students, in the process creating interest in and comfort with global issues across the campus. Centre also has a strong academic program in international studies. With these elements in place, Centre can create a coherent, integrated, and intentional learning experience that will infuse a global perspective throughout the students' lives at Centre. Centre is, as the STRATUS research stated, "well-positioned to become a leader in global connectedness and international education," thus addressing a growing social need and defining itself more clearly among the nation's colleges and universities.

## **COLLEGE INITIATIVES—GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP**

The Centre community seized this strategic opportunity through exceptionally comprehensive and detailed conversations. Those conversations resulted in a wide array of specific initiatives that address four main areas of opportunity: establishing a Center for Global Studies; bringing a greater global perspective to campus; enhancing study-abroad opportunities, and; creating outreach programs. The initiatives are listed under these categories.

### **1. Center for Global Citizenship**

- **The focal point of efforts to internationalize the curriculum, student experiences, and the larger College community should be the establishment of a new “Center for Global Citizenship.”** The Center’s purpose will be to coordinate existing and create new opportunities for curricular, co- and extra-curricular activities and experiences for students, faculty, and guests.

Responsibilities of the Center might include:

- informing students about existing opportunities and developing new study-abroad opportunities;
- developing and maintaining a database of international internship opportunities for students;
- coordinating a student global citizenship-leadership certificate program focused on developing the knowledge and skills needed for global citizen-leadership. The program would take the form of a multi-year “curricular/co-curricular pathway” that would integrate existing and new courses, community-based learning experiences, internships, and study abroad into a comprehensive program focusing on leadership development and critical reflection on global issues;
- supporting faculty research across all disciplines that encourage student involvement in projects with international emphasis;
- coordinating international guests’ visits, convocations, etc., and;
- developing a coherent procedure for international student recruitment.

The Center will have dedicated staff, including an accomplished director. The Center will have at its disposal sufficient resources to attract high-caliber international visitors and top-quality researchers as fellows/guest teachers.

### **2. Greater Global Perspective on Campus.**

Bringing a greater global perspective to campus includes several initiatives:

- **Establish an interdisciplinary Global Studies Committee** comprised of faculty from all divisions to examine and support the college’s academic commitment to global citizenship. The committee would encourage faculty members to create new and enhance existing academic opportunities (i.e., courses, majors and minors, study-abroad courses) supporting the Global Citizenship theme. The Global Studies



Committee should take the initiative in recommending to the CCAS (for curriculum approval) and to the administration (for necessary funding and other support) the establishment of new majors and minors. The Global Studies Committee would also encourage all programs to situate their courses in a global context where appropriate and feasible. The committee might, for example, sponsor travel abroad or foreign exchange opportunities for faculty members. The Global Studies Committee would foster close communication between all programs involved in its initiatives. To that end, the chair of the International Studies Program and the Director of International Programs would serve as *ex officio* members of the Committee.

- **Establish majors and minors in a series of regional and topical studies.** The Global Studies Committee should investigate and take the initiative in recommending to the CCAS for curricular approval, and to the administration for necessary funding, the establishment of such programs, which might include but are not limited to: Asian Studies; Middle East Studies; Environmental Studies (from minor to major); Global Public Health; Technology and Sustainability; Development; Latin American Studies; and African Studies. Based on the sequence of new programs proposed, the committee would make recommendations on expanding the faculty (for example, adding a teacher of Mandarin or Hindi to implement an Asian Studies major or minor).
- **Establish a global commerce experience.** Such a program might draw upon a variety of academic and co-curricular opportunities to allow students interested in economics and commerce to add a solidly-based global perspective. The exact elements of the program will be developed in conjunction with the faculty, but will likely include, in addition to the obvious contributions of economics and finance, requirements for regional cultural and language studies, ethics, and study-abroad experiences. This initiative may well develop as a minor or major along the lines of those described immediately above or could be an experiential program, providing an array of co-curricular opportunities that would complement a student's academic pursuits.
- **Create new majors and minors where the existing structure of relevant majors or minors is close to being in place** (e.g. Environmental Studies, Latin American Studies, African Studies, Middle East Studies, and European Studies.) The committee would work to establish these programs as soon as possible, bringing relevant faculty members together and assessing the need for additional hiring to complete the curricular offerings.
- **Enhance language offerings.** It is essential to expand the menu of languages at Centre if the College is to be considered a leader in global citizenship and internationalization of the curriculum. The languages that the College develops should be based on forward-looking assessments of those regions of the world where economic, political, and demographic growth is likely to be most significant into the next generation, and will reflect their historical and cultural significance. In addition, any new language program should not stand in isolation but be integrated into the curriculum in several ways. The languages that the committee discussed include Mandarin, Japanese, Hindi, and Arabic. Any new position created should also contribute to the curriculum beyond language instruction. New languages should be implemented one at a time. Finally, the language programs, currently administered separately, should consider forming one Foreign Language Program in order to achieve greater coordination and planning.

- **Establish a sustainability component to Centre's curriculum.** While the particular means to reach this end requires further discussion by the faculty and CCAS, one of the most important contributions to come from the conversation regarding Global Citizenship has been the affirmation of the concept of sustainability. Sustainability includes the basic elements of: understanding the interconnections among economy, society, and environment; living within limits; and recognizing the need for equitable distribution of resources and opportunities. Sustainability includes issues such as development, community and society, business and production, ecology and agriculture, and local and global politics, just to name a few. In particular, sustainability involves the disciplines within the sciences to play their important part in the development of global citizens. One means to infuse the concept of sustainability could be to hire a tenure-track position in the sciences in order to explore and expand this concept in Centre's curriculum, as well as other elements of the College's program. Centre has also joined the President's Climate Commitment program and will incorporate and draw upon that resource in its activities regarding sustainability.
- **Expand global perspectives in the curriculum.** The research supporting the planning process confirmed the sense of many Centre faculty members that Centre's curriculum includes fewer non-Western perspectives than the curricula of many peer institutions. Centre will add a general education requirement that every student must take at least one course that fosters understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures. Courses designated as meeting the cultural diversity requirement would be those with a primary focus on the cultural experience of a group or groups other than the dominant culture of the United States and Europe. The Global Studies Committee would be responsible for designating which courses meet the requirement; these may be courses that already count toward the general education requirement.
- **Explore the creation of summer immersion programs.** Such programs might take the following shape. The course would be an intensive, six-credit class at the advanced level, with the first two weeks of the course taught on campus and the remaining four weeks consisting of a home-stay experience, continued coursework, and full language immersion abroad.
- **Explore intensive international study programs.** Centre should give consideration to developing international experiences that might take students away from the College for up to a year. Such a program might be based on an application process, which has two benefits: it is self-selecting, and the pool of potential candidates can be selected by faculty based on maturity, responsibility, course of study, among other factors. Combining intensive summer language immersion abroad with a long-term (fall term) or academic year abroad in the same location or institution through established exchange relationships is an effective and relatively efficient means to broaden regional and functional studies opportunities without the addition of a significant number of faculty (see Summer Programs above). This would further develop language skills and permit the student to acquire the deep understanding of the specific location and culture in which they are interested.
- **Develop new initiatives for faculty development.** Faculty development programs such as those that follow can strengthen the culture of internationalization among faculty and the campus more generally, enhancing teaching and professional activity: faculty-led seminars; individual or team-taught seminars led by faculty for faculty on topics related to global or international issues and topics; course development related

specifically to international or global courses; faculty exchange with universities abroad.

- **Establish summer research funding.** During the spring semester, students will develop research proposals that they would submit to request Centre-sponsored funding for international projects over the summer months. This would be similar to the procedures that faculty currently follow when soliciting Faculty Development Committee summer grant money, and could be directed to students across disciplines at the College. The process would be highly competitive and dossiers would be reviewed by a committee comprised of faculty and student representatives.
- **Expand campus internationalization.** Situating Centre College among the leaders in international education entails creating a broad culture supporting and institutionalizing this process and culture throughout the campus community. For example, the College will invite guest scholars for a term or year. These scholars would have several responsibilities, such as teaching, leading faculty seminars, and offering public lectures.
- **Expand cultural programs with a global perspective.** Example of expanded cultural programming includes special series such as the World Music Series, an International Film Festival, and discussion/lecture series on contemporary global issues.
- **Increase the number of foreign, degree-seeking students.** While it is not probable that Centre can or should increase its percentage of international students to 10 percent, like a few of the leading, national liberal arts colleges, it is not impossible to imagine the College doubling its percentage of international students—moving over time from three percent to six percent of the student population. (This initiative will be driven in large measure by the College’s capacity to increase financial aid made available for high-achieving, international student prospects.)
- **Pursue new initiatives in student life.** Centre will support student organizations such as the International Students Association as a means to reshape the culture of the campus and attract a more international and diverse student body. The importance of the out-of-classroom experience at Centre necessitates that global citizenship be included in the programming of the student life program.

### 3. Study-Abroad Programs

Building on a current strength, Centre will enhance and expand existing study-abroad programs and add new ones through stand-alone operations, consortial and exchange programs, and other opportunities through the following initiatives:

- **Expand the Merida program to two semesters** (this recommendation has already been implemented).
- **Establish a residential program in China**, either as a stand-alone operation or in collaboration with other institutions.
- **Establish exchange programs** with institutions in India, the Middle East, and other areas.
- **Offer competitive grants to fund specific research and study-abroad projects by students.**

- **Expand study-abroad opportunities for science students** through greater access to the science courses at schools in Merida and Strasbourg, at existing exchange program institutions in Japan and Northern Ireland, and through participation in science-specific exchange programs. The College should also explore the creation of field stations in such locations as Ecuador, creation of more science-specific CentreTerm opportunities, and the establishment of a competitive summer-research abroad program.
- **Participate more actively in study-abroad programs** administered by such organizations as the Associated Colleges of the South and the Center for International Educational Exchange.
- **Create language scholarships.** Language scholarships, similar to those for music and drama students that recognize students' exceptional talent for one or more languages, would help Centre recruit and retain outstanding language students. Although such scholarships would support those who displayed abilities in one of the more established languages at Centre, students who enroll in multiple languages (including some less commonly taught languages) all begin in one of the established modern languages. Because the existing music and drama scholarships amount to repackaging of student aid money that would be offered to such students as part of a general aid offer anyway, such a proposal has no significant budgetary implications. Such language scholarships would be developed with input from faculty from the language programs.
- **Establish a Visiting Language Scholar Program.** Centre can hire a Visiting Professor every year to teach a less commonly taught language. Centre's membership in the Consortium for Faculty Diversity at Liberal Arts Colleges and the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence Program are two possible sources for such hires. In addition to a first-year sequence in the language, the visiting faculty member could teach courses within his or her fields of expertise (culture, philosophy, history, government, etc.), offer convocations and other outreach opportunities, and assist the College in further developing the program in less commonly taught languages and the curriculum more generally (see Campus Internationalization above). Should a language (and its instructor) be particularly successful, adding the language to Centre's regular offerings by hiring the visiting faculty member long term would be a logical next step.
- **Create "Live, Learn, and Intern" programs.** These small "living and learning" centers will include students and an administrator from the home campus or recruited on-site. Students live and attend classes offered by on-site faculty or a local institution, and participate in a local internship, service learning or fieldwork experience. Such a facility can be developed in collaboration with other small liberal arts colleges, with rotating staff.
- **Create a study-abroad honors program.** This program will resemble the current John C. Young Program, with a focus on study abroad. A very small number of students, chosen competitively, would travel to other countries for specific projects that they have designed.

#### 4. Outreach Programs

Outreach programs provide an opportunity for Centre to be an important educational resource and to position itself in front of teachers and prospective students. Centre will develop the following two programs as the first of several possibilities.

- **Kentucky Teacher-Training Institute.** Centre will create an institute for foreign language teachers in Kentucky high schools. All Kentucky teachers are required to complete a certain number of credit hours at the graduate level in order to keep their area certification; many of these teachers attend summer workshops and classes at the University of Kentucky. Even though Centre is not an institution that grants advanced degrees, the College could apply to the Kentucky Department of Education in Frankfort for permission to offer such training courses at the graduate level. It was noted that one way to attract teachers to Centre would be to utilize the abroad facilities in Mérida and Strasbourg for this training. Teachers could benefit from the immersion in the languages, thereby strengthening their own oral and written skills, but they could also learn about creating personalized study-abroad options for group trips with their students in the high schools. Of the various proposals presented, this is the only one that could potentially attract income to Centre rather than require that the College locate funding to support it. Kentucky's state and private schools would likely pay tuition for their participating teachers who are required to complete continuing education credits. These participants will pay tuition to Centre, as well as provide their own travel and housing costs for the period spent abroad.
- **Summer Language Immersion Institute.** A summer language immersion academy that follows the Virginia Governor's model would be open to high school juniors across the nation who are currently enrolled in their third year (or higher) of a foreign language. The students' high school teachers would nominate them for the program and the top 60 candidates would be selected to participate in a four-week intensive course. At the end of successful completion, students would be given an official certificate attesting to their participation in the program. This "academy" would increase Centre's exposure nationally and the College would likely see a rise in the number of high-quality, out-of-state applicants after this program gains increasing recognition with each passing year.

## **SECTION TWO—ENGAGED AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**

### **GOAL—ENGAGED AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**

*Centre College will create a nationally-recognized model for engaged and experiential learning—enabling students to experience the work of the historian, biologist, or artist, rather than only observing and analyzing the process and results; engage in different forms of collaborative work; apply the power and relevancy of the liberal arts through community-based learning; engage in activities that require and develop creative thinking; combine opportunities from across the College’s programs to study and develop effective leadership; engage the academic program with co-curricular and extracurricular programs in a mutually supportive educational experience, and; engage all of these elements together through active and purposeful planning and management of each student’s experience.*

From the outset of the planning process, Centre identified the holistic nature of its educational experience, and the strong connections among faculty, staff, and students that make that experience happen, among the College’s greatest strengths. Believing in that strength, and also believing that such an experience will become even more important to American and global society, the College early on established the following vision of Centre in the future: that **Centre become the national model of the transformative power of the highly residential liberal arts college.**

Two of the major challenges confronting liberal arts colleges like Centre are justifying the difference in “sticker price” compared to public institutions and defending the “relevance” of this kind of education. While proponents of liberal arts education may tire of such challenges, they express legitimate concerns and deserve thoughtful answers.

Over the past few years, American higher education has begun to articulate such answers. In 2002, the American Association of Colleges & Universities issued the report *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College*. The report both affirmed the power and relevance of the liberal arts education and challenged the nation’s colleges and universities to provide “the kind of learning students need to meet the emerging challenges in the workplace, in a diverse democracy, and in an interconnected world.” Also, since 2000, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) has surveyed thousands of students at hundreds of American colleges and universities to assess the level of engagement those students felt, as first-year students and as seniors, in the development and management of their educational experience; in the life of the campus community; with faculty, staff, and other students; with other communities, whether they be local, regional, national, or global; and how their educational experience engaged ideas and issues important in their lives.

The key themes in both *Greater Expectations* and NSSE are “engagement and experience.” The former calls on higher education institutions to create opportunities and abilities that will empower students to engage the real world and to experience rich and gratifying lives of work and service. The latter demonstrates that students who experience such engagement are also those who express the greatest sense of satisfaction and fulfillment as they move forward from their undergraduate years. So, even as the big-box, on-line shopping evolution of

American higher education continues, consumers and society at large still want the value and values that liberal arts institutions can provide.

These themes also provide forceful answers to the questions noted above. With the intimate connections among people and the seamless nature of the experience, residential liberal arts colleges are especially suited to create the kind of engagement described above, and this is particularly so in the case of Centre College. Preparing students for lives of learning, leadership, and service has long been a part of Centre's culture and core commitments. Also, while NSSE firmly resists ranking institutions' performance, Centre has performed at or near the top of most categories since the survey's inception. George Kuh, the developer and director of NSSE, consistently points to Centre as an institution that successfully engages its students. As our society—local, regional, national, and global—calls for young men and women with the qualities, skills, and character that Centre helps to develop, the College has the opportunity to become the national model of the transformative power of the highly residential liberal arts college.

### **COLLEGE INITIATIVES—ENGAGED AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**

The Engaged and Experiential Learning Committee developed the following initiatives. Also included here are initiatives from the Creative Thinking, Leadership, and What If? committees.

- **Strengthen and expand undergraduate research and collaborative learning.** Centre College will become a powerful example of guided undergraduate research and collaborative learning. Centre will need to expand significantly such opportunities across its curriculum. Centre will also need to consider a fresh approach regarding undergraduate research and faculty teaching load. Other necessary changes include: more funding of collaborative/guided research, including travel for conference presentations; funding for student-generated research projects; facilities, particularly in the laboratory sciences that would support and enhance collaborative research; summer exchanges with other Associated Colleges of the South members; summer housing for student researchers (or large enough stipends to cover these costs); and granting academic credit. The College will also find ways to recognize and celebrate undergraduate research more prominently.
- **Emphasize creative thinking/creativity.** In 1999, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation sponsored a study, *Reinventing the Core*, which recommended placing a research or creative experience as a centerpiece of the students' education. This study is generally viewed as the emergence of creative thinking as an essential element of learning on a par with critical thinking. However, despite this work, completed over a half-dozen years ago, and recent emergence of creative thinking into popular culture (see, for example, Richard Florida's *Rise of the Creative Class*), colleges and universities have only just now begun to incorporate creative thinking into their educational programs. Centre, then, has an opportunity to make this increasingly important and attractive mode of thinking and acting a more prominent part of its educational program.

Several general assertions help to define this goal. Creativity is fostered by: collaboration; diversity; interdisciplinary exchange; time for preparation, skill building and reflection; resources of people, equipment, space, and money; toleration for failure; and exposure in an active way to the arts. Creative thinking and activity can develop

sequentially from lower level thought and activity that involve a synthesis of basic skills, actions, and ideas, to high level thought and activity that involve innovation, risk-taking, and public presentation with ever more strenuous peer review. Faculty members spend a disproportionate amount of their credited teaching time at Centre teaching fundamental concepts and skills. Much of the more creative teaching and learning occur in independent studies, collaborative research, and mentoring of projects, which are often carried out without teaching credit or other support.

These specific recommendations will serve to advance the broad goal of emphasizing creative thinking/creativity as a central part of the College's teaching and learning experience:

- Require a capstone course or other activity in every major program, in the junior or senior year that requires creative problem solving or creative expression.
- Support faculty-to-faculty collaborative efforts with funding for materials and teaching credit. These could include such things as team-taught courses—especially cross-disciplinary courses, and collaborative professional development opportunities. One example is a course at the senior level that requires interdisciplinary problem-solving targeted at a particular question, challenge, or topic. Possible topics might include the aging population, public policy and the arts, the family, environmental issues, death and dying, and any number of global questions. The choice of topic might be selected annually to complement a college-wide theme. The course will divide students from different disciplines into teams of four to six students to develop a set of recommendations for solving problems and addressing needs. Such a course will include 30-40 students with two instructors facilitating the course. Flexibility in when the course is offered, how it is structured and credited, and how it is taught would be positive aspects.
- Support faculty-to-student collaboration with funding for materials and teaching credit. These activities will include such things as summer or academic year collaborative research, independent study opportunities that meet a definition of creative work, and mentoring honors projects such as the John C. Young Scholars program. Flexible teaching credit such as accumulating a specified number of such faculty activities for course relief in one term is essential to the success of this effort.
- Support student-to-student collaborative efforts with funding for materials and course credit—specifically, a junior-year research and/or creative project for a team of two students majoring in different fields. Students will present a proposal for their cross-disciplinary project in the spring term of their sophomore year for realization in the fall of the junior year. Two faculty members, one from each discipline, would supervise the project. Students would receive funding for materials and faculty would receive teaching credit as a fraction of a course. A public presentation would conclude the project.
- Examine further and prioritize the creation of a minor in film and digital video.
- Create models for special programs that would foster creative work, engage the campus community, and attract attention from the external community.



- Increase funding to support student attendance and presentation of their work at professional conferences and meetings.
  - Make focused efforts to publicize creative activities that are currently underway and others that will be developed in the future. Efforts should include: a link on the Centre Homepage to a featured creative experience; a feature in each *Centrepiece* on a creative or innovative project; and, broader exposure for creative projects such as selected internships, independent studies, research projects, alumni activities.
  - Provide training for groups of faculty and staff in group dynamics that foster creative thinking.
- **Create an internal teaching and learning “think tank.”** A Center for Teaching, Learning, and Advising will examine and develop new approaches on pedagogy and issues in national higher education, conduct workshops on creativity and service-learning, as well as develop resources for faculty to serve even more effectively as student advisors. Consideration will be given to the CTLA as home for one to three faculty members per year who might be named CentreFellows. During this time they would focus on issues of higher education and new or innovative pedagogy. They might provide programming for the CTLA and develop a mini-workshop for a fall retreat. The establishment of such a focused and sustained program of pedagogical investigation and development would place Centre at the forefront of liberal arts colleges in this area.
- **Strengthen and expand Community-Based Learning (CBL).** As with undergraduate research, the expansion of such opportunities will improve student engagement with academic matter being taught in the traditional classroom, hone observation and research skills, utilize a variety of learning styles, improve retention of learning and understanding, and illustrate the relevancy of liberal arts and sciences education to issues outside the campus. Several courses already offer community-based learning as part of the curriculum. Providing centralized support either through the Dean’s office or the CTLA will assist faculty members in creating and coordinating opportunities for such student engagement outside the classroom. Workshops and other training opportunities can assist faculty members in creating new CBL courses and adding CBL to existing courses. The College should also recognize certain courses as CBL courses in the catalogue and in other materials.
- **Achieve greater coherence among the different elements of the first-year student experience.** Centre currently engages in a number of activities—curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular—that address the transition of first-year students from high school to college. However, those activities need to be coordinated much more effectively to create a unified first-year experience. Such an experience will improve student academic and social performance, support better retention, and create an even more positive and affirming campus environment. Achieving this greater coherence will require joint efforts by many different segments of the campus. Centre’s faculty will discuss and examine the curricular goals for first-year students; all faculty members need an understanding of the goals, objectives and limitations of our first-year courses. The student life office will examine ways to address such topics such as time management, leadership, achieving balance with studies and personal pursuits, reflection, developing a life plan, conflict management, Centre history and culture, etc. Faculty and staff often mention these areas as ones in which our students could improve. The current first-year orientation is obviously an important part of this experience, and faculty and staff will

examine it together. The library and information technology services will also be a part of this effort.

- **Develop a more coordinated and purposeful program of leadership development.**

Centre's success in producing leaders is due, in great part, to the strength of its commitment to the liberal arts approach that emphasizes such skills and traits as mastery of relevant information, the ability to see and critically evaluate the various facets of an issue, the ability to bring others together in a principled and effective solution, and the ability to articulate issues and positions clearly and persuasively. However, Centre can provide more purposeful and coordinated opportunities for leadership development. Several specific actions support this initiative:

- Coordinate leadership development activities through the creation of a coherent program that includes elements drawn from the academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular programs of the College, organized under a Center for Leadership and Service, as described in the sentences that follow. This leadership experience could be enhanced and supported by students completing designated courses that are already a part of the College's curriculum. The co-curricular element might be met by completion of an internship. The extracurricular element of the program will require participants to complete a range of experiences that can include work in a formal or designated leadership position in a campus or other organization, as the organizer and director of another activity, as a participant in another leadership development activity, and as a participant in at least two significant service projects. While overseas study might not be a requirement of the leadership program, Centre's study-abroad programs provide an excellent chance for students to gain a better-informed global perspective and enhance their ability to relate to others and engage in a diversity of situations. The program might culminate in a senior project. The senior project will be a written study of some aspect of leadership, drawing upon the students' experiences in the program as applied to a particular issue or question.
- Consider the adoption on a regular basis of a College-wide leadership or public policy theme that will be integrated into courses (especially the CentreTerm), inform the selection of convocation speakers, and provide a focus for activities of extracurricular organizations.
- Establish an endowment to fund public service grants for students. Establish an endowment to fund internships with public service agencies.

- **Create "The CentrePlan," a program of advising and mentoring that will enable more active and purposeful planning and management of each student's experience.**

Close and supportive relationships between students and faculty are a defining characteristic of Centre. However, continuing and enhancing that tradition cannot be left to chance. In research conducted earlier in the planning process, only 25 percent of Centre faculty reported spending five hours or more each week counseling and advising students, compared to 37 percent at peer institutions. Of course, students must also be active participants in the advising process. The advising and counseling of which Centre is justly proud can and should be made more purposeful and consistent.

Nor should taking full advantage of the rich array of opportunities afforded through the Centre Experience happen only by accident. While most Centre alumni look back on their time as students with a justified sense of accomplishment, it is still common to hear

them say “I wish I had taken this course, studied with that professor, gone overseas to place X, applied for fellowship Y or internship Z, auditioned for this play or tried out for that team.”

The CentrePlan will address both of these issues by providing a more comprehensive basis for the advising conversation and enabling students to be more active in the planning of their educations. Working with the faculty advisor and other members of the faculty and staff, each student will develop a plan that covers the period from the beginning of college to one year beyond graduation. The plan will be updated at the beginning of each long term, or more often if warranted.

- **Quantitative Literacy/”Numeracy.”** We all expect college graduates to understand the printed and spoken word, to assess it critically, and to use it effectively. These are precisely the goals of numeracy or quantitative literacy except that the content involves numbers and data. Achieving numeracy in the computer age where data abound requires that students have both the basic skills needed to deal with quantitative information and the opportunity to practice the application of these skills at an appropriately high level. These basic skills include: facility with arithmetic: creating, using, and interpreting information presented as data, graphs, and charts; using mathematical models; understanding elementary statistical concepts such as inference, correlation, and statistical significance; understanding the role of random samples and evaluating risk from available evidence, and; using logical reasoning. Centre will develop ways to infuse the development of these skills throughout its curriculum in a manner similar to critical thinking and communications skills, both through the general education and major programs.
- **Centre will become a model of excellence for national liberal arts colleges in career development, graduate and professional school exploration and preparation, and post-baccalaureate fellowship advising and placement.** Many of the initiatives contained in this section and throughout the document include opportunities for internships and other career activities, as well as pointing students toward continuing graduate and professional organization. Centre will ensure that its career services efforts are adequately programmed, staffed, and funded to support current activities, as well as the new initiatives contained in the plan.
- **Explore the creation of a Centre-in-America Program.** Just as Centre has opened a rich set of study, work, and service opportunities through its study-abroad programs in Europe and Latin America, it should also create similar opportunities in the United States. Such programs might be based in four to six American cities where students would study, conduct supervised research, or do internships across a wide range of topics and subject areas. Aligning ourselves with other colleges and universities that have established programs in places like New York, Atlanta, Boston, Phoenix, and Los Angeles might permit Centre to accomplish this initiative.
- **Review academic areas.** As Centre moves to implement the recommendations on global citizenship, engaged and experiential learning, and other areas, continued examination of the College’s academic programs and curriculum will naturally occur. A part of that examination should be an objective review of whether and how some programs might be diminished, and whether and how some programs might be strengthened, even to the point of creating “centers of excellence” in the academic program.
- **Consider an overall review of the curriculum.** Many of the initiatives in this and other sections either include or may be supported by elements of the curriculum. The

opportunity may well be at hand for the College, led by the faculty, to consider an overall review of the curriculum.

- **Conduct a thorough review of Centre's athletics and recreation program.** Centre's commitment to educating the whole person includes providing opportunities for and encouraging students to participate in activities that promote a healthful lifestyle. Whether through participation in intercollegiate athletics, intramural sports, or exercise and wellness activities, athletics and recreation are an important part of the Centre Experience for almost all of our students. Thus, the athletics and recreation program should undergo a thorough review to ensure that it is fulfilling its role in the lives of Centre students as effectively as possible. As part of this review, Centre should:
  - Establish Centre as a place of "best practice" for intercollegiate sport at the Division III level by 2012, including a review of the College's conference affiliation by 2010.
  - Explore the addition of sports that would have a positive influence in admission.
  - Explore what sports might be eliminated.
  - Explore the revision or elimination of the Health and Human Performance requirement.
  - Develop means by which students can more effectively integrate their academic and extracurricular activities, including athletics.
  - Explore whether the College should work to establish true regional or even national prominence in one or two intercollegiate sports.
  - Understand that these goals have significant financial, personnel, and facility implications.
- **Centre will seek to establish a variety of partnerships with other educational institutions.** Similar to career development issues, many of the initiatives in the plan call on the College to establish and take advantage of alliances with other colleges, universities, and other educational institutions and organizations. Focusing on these ideas, but also developing other possibilities, the offices of the President and the Dean of the College will coordinate the establishment of such partnerships.
- **Consider the creation and expansion of summer opportunities.** This discussion took two tracks—the establishment of a traditional summer school, in which some courses offered during the regular academic year would also be offered in summer, and special programs. The traditional summer school approach was not as attractive as the possibility of "special" opportunities during the summer—research programs, summer theatre, internships, language immersion courses, and domestic or international study, just to name a few possibilities. The six weeks of a "CentreSummer" would allow greater duration of experience than the CentreTerm and also allow athletes and other students with other scheduling complications the opportunity for travel and other special experiences.
- **Develop theme years.** Theme years allow the College to integrate the educational experience on a particular issue or region. For example, in a "Brazil" year, the first-year student book might focus on Brazil, the College will schedule trips to the area, the economics program will add a section about the aspects of the Brazilian economy, biology and environmental studies can look at health and ecological issues in the Amazon region, drama can do a related production, the Norton Center would schedule related events, and Cowan can regularly introduce foods from the region, among many other possibilities. The same programming can be done around issues as well—poverty, sustainability, etc. Over their time at the College, students would develop an in-depth and well-rounded understanding of

four topics through this program. The theme year might culminate in a regional or national symposium.

- **Consider the establishment of special study programs.** More than one of the planning committees suggested the creation of study programs built around special topics or activities:
  - Public Policy/Polling Institute. Originally proposed by the What If? Committee, an institute or center for public policy would encourage and provide focus for the study of various public policy issues. Academic programs and co-curricular activities could coordinate around these issues and support symposia and conferences involving external resources and audiences. This center could support the idea of “theme years” mentioned by several other committees. The center would also include an on-going polling operation.
  - Bluegrass Regional Studies Center. This center would consolidate research, lectures, seminars, and creative works focusing on the Bluegrass Region. It would be interdisciplinary in nature, involving studies of the politics, sociology, environment, art, economics, and other aspects of the area. It would also house an extensive library on the bluegrass region of Kentucky.
  - Center for Environmental/Sustainability Studies. This Center would be a place where each year the College would invite one or two visiting scholars of national acclaim to campus to lead faculty and student seminars, direct research, and give public talks. The Faculty Seminar would form a research “think tank,” where faculty would both expand their knowledge about an area of environmental studies and would have the opportunity, with the expert, to take on research problems.
- **Encourage and facilitate self-designed majors.** Encouragement of self-designed majors will assist students who tend to “cram in” two full majors. This would allow for more courses outside majors, more internships, and more travel, thus broadening the liberal arts education. Centre College already allows students to create their own majors. However, most students who start the inquiry about independent majors don’t actually complete the process; the number of students applying to do independent majors is relatively low. The following are potential barriers and ways in which they might be eliminated: lack of information regarding the possibility once students are on campus; anecdotes about the difficulty of designing an independent major; and, students’ hesitation to approach the three faculty members required to supervise a self-designed major.
- **Create a co-curricular transcript.** This idea is one that has become quite popular within other colleges and universities around the country. Most have an on-line system where students are able to keep track of co-curricular offices and achievements. This recommendation could be linked with the CentrePlan.
- **Conduct exit interviews.** The College currently interviews only those students who withdraw without completing a degree. Centre should query a random sample of our recent graduating seniors in order to assess the Centre Experience. The items surveyed might include preparedness, course selection, advising (both first-year and major), out-of-class opportunities, writing ability, teaching, knowledge (breadth and depth), student life, residence life, financial aid, study abroad, and the intentionality of making connections.
- **Fifth-Year graduate assistants.** At the present, Centre has a limited number of graduate assistants in art, athletics, and student life. In the past, graduate assistants have also worked in the sciences. These positions provide excellent opportunities for students to extend their expertise in the discipline, prepare themselves for future study and careers, and contribute to the learning of current students. Also, in some cases, our students may need an additional year of “seasoning” before they are prepared to launch careers or further study. These

individuals would have teaching support responsibilities and have opportunity for formal or informal course work. The committee recommends exploring how an expansion of the graduate assistant program could serve the College and our students.

- **Consider the creation of shared community experiences.** Offering an opportunity once a month during the work day for the entire community to come together for a shared experience (lecture, convocation, or musical event) would enhance the cohesiveness of the community and provide a greater sense of Centre culture and values.
- **Consider the creation of more opportunities for true team teaching.** Centre College should investigate the possibility of reviving the Integrated Studies Program, but only for courses that involve team teaching across disciplines. This would require Centre to examine its policies regarding team-teaching. How would credit be awarded? How many courses each year could a faculty mentor gain credit for that included team-teaching. It would also involve faculty workshops to differentiate between true team-teaching and “tag-team-teaching.”

### **SECTION THREE—FACULTY AND STAFF**

#### **GOAL—FACULTY AND STAFF**

*Centre College will recruit, reward, support, and retain a faculty and staff that is at once of the highest quality preparation, committed to the College's distinctive mission, and reflective of the diverse communities in which Centre's students will live and work. In doing so, Centre will establish a human resource effort that is judged to be a model for undergraduate colleges.*

We often speak of Centre as a single entity, with a life of its own, and this is appropriate. However, it is important to remember that Centre's life comes from the faculty and staff. Through their dedication and hard work, these women and men create, sustain, and renew that thing we know as Centre College.

Any college or university that fails to make its faculty and staff a central part of its strategic planning does so at its own risk. This is especially so for Centre, whose culture and identity are largely defined by the fierce commitment of the faculty and staff to the mission of the College, their close and caring relationships with their students, and their collegial and supportive relationships with one another. Centre's continued viability, much less its prospects for growing strength and prominence, depend to a great degree on maintaining and enhancing this vital resource.

However, Centre's ability to do so faces significant challenges. Some of these issues deal more with the faculty, others with the staff, while still others are common to both. These challenges include:

- The impending retirements or transition to other careers of millions of faculty members. The generation of faculty who taught the baby-boomers are reaching retirement age; at Centre, more than 40 percent of the faculty will retire in the next nine years.
- Current faculty and staff do not reflect the current or coming diversity of the student body. In all of American colleges and universities, over 60 percent of faculty members are male and over 80 percent are white, non-Hispanic. Much of the projected growth in students over the next several years will come from women and people of color.
- A growing number of full-time faculty positions are not tenure track. The most recent available national data shows that some 35 percent of full-time faculty are not tenure track. The increased productivity and cost-savings that such positions are designed to achieve come at the risk of diminished commitment to the institutional community, values, and continuity. Centre is fortunate that its percentages of tenured and tenure-track positions remain higher than the national averages; however, Centre should continue to monitor this trend.
- The increase in visiting positions and the growing expectations for professional and scholarly activity have led to a decrease in faculty involvement in the governance of liberal arts colleges. This trend runs the risk of decreased identification with and commitment to larger institutional mission and goals. While the faculty at Centre is still actively involved in campus governance, defining the proper balance and importance in evaluation among teaching, professional activity, and service to the campus community is an increasingly complex issue at Centre.

- A sense of common purpose among faculty and staff is one of Centre's strengths, but sustaining and enhancing it cannot be taken for granted. The faculty has a particular role in the life of the institution, to be sure, but the role and contributions of staff members, both hourly and salaried, must be recognized, valued, and rewarded as vital to Centre's success.
- Providing compensation adequate to attract and retain top-quality faculty and staff has been and remains a challenge for Centre. Some progress has been made in recent years, but overall Centre still lags behind its peers, and certainly behind institutions it aspires to emulate, in faculty and staff compensation.

## COLLEGE INITIATIVES—FACULTY AND STAFF

### **Faculty**

The term “faculty development” usually refers to specific issues of professional activity, and they are certainly an important part of this discussion. However, the College has defined the term more broadly to encompass not only the idea of individual faculty members' development, but also of the nurturing, management, and composition of the faculty as a whole. The following recommendations seek to address that broad conception of faculty development.

- **Effectively manage faculty growth.** As faculty retirements occur over the next several years and as the enrollment increases incrementally but steadily, the College must take a number of steps to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the faculty as the heart of Centre's teaching and learning experience. In order to maintain the intensity and intimacy of the student-faculty connection, the regular teaching faculty should grow at a rate consistent with any growth in the student body. The College may also need to examine and adjust its desired student-faculty ratio. Centre must also affirm and seek to encourage the special quality of student mentoring—in academic matters and beyond—that has long characterized those faculty members choosing to teach here. Centre must also ensure its ability to identify, attract, and retain faculty committed to working in a setting distinguished by devotion to teaching, a desire to engage in the lives of students beyond the classroom, and their own continued scholarly and professional development. Centre should also continue and strengthen its efforts to improve the diversity of the faculty (see recommendation on diversity in the “staff” section).
- **Examine teaching assignment.** Centre is increasingly distinctive, even among the nation's top liberal arts colleges, in its passionate commitment to teaching. However, Centre also prizes scholarship and professional activity, and the expectations for support of such activity are especially high among newer faculty members. Centre must, then, seek appropriate balance among these values and develop creative ways to allow faculty members to achieve that balance in their own careers at the College. A study of the awarding of teaching credit should include team teaching, international study, collaborative research, large classes, lab teaching credit, summer school, enhanced advising, and POSSE credit, to name a few issues—including the ramifications of a five-course teaching load. One suggestion to acknowledge these different teaching venues and to achieve greater flexibility in awarding teaching credit is known as “5+1.” This idea would allow some number of faculty members each year to use the “1” to complete a manuscript, make significant headway on a research project, investigate new pedagogical



methods, engage in collaborative research with students, engage in faculty seminars, or develop a significant external grant proposal. There would be expectation of a “product,” but the definition of that product would be flexible. This program is not about course release, but rather course reassignment. It seeks to create faculty/student development opportunities—ways to enhance our engaged learning and scholarship. Nor does it change College-wide expectations regarding scholarship for all faculty members, but rather puts the responsibility of a product (e.g. papers, presentations at professional meetings, concerts, gallery exhibits, grant proposals, new course design, or the development of pedagogy workshops) for the person receiving course reassignment. Proposals could be judged by a subcommittee of the Faculty Development Committee, on criteria including the viability of the faculty member’s proposal, annual number of students taught, committee assignments, and other unusual factors contributing to work load. This review will be conducted by a special committee appointed by the President, including representation from the Faculty Development Committee and the division chairs.

- **Establish and pursue targets for faculty salaries.** Centre has made significant progress in recent years in bringing salaries for beginning assistant professors closer to the mid-range of the *U.S. News* Top 50 institutions, its target for the past several years. Centre has also begun to address salaries in the full professor range. Centre needs to continue to establish targets for faculty salaries, at all ranks, appropriate to remain competitive with our peers and even to approach that of our aspiration colleges.
- **Create an internal teaching and learning “think tank.”** The initiative to create a Center for Teaching, Learning, and Advising has already been described in the section on Engaged and Experiential Learning, but it is appropriate to include it in the section on faculty development as well.
- **Examine sabbatical policy.** Sabbaticals are an important tool in enabling faculty development. To expand opportunities for sabbatical, the number of sabbaticals awarded every year should be determined by the number of FTEs lost, rather than the percentage of the faculty taking leave. Also, some funds should be allocated to bump half-year sabbaticals up to full year at full pay, in exceptional cases where a specific project may warrant it. These funds would be available on a competitive basis, and should be contingent upon the faculty member also submitting (but not necessarily receiving) an external grant proposal for the same.
- **Increase resources for faculty professional activity.** Among the particular needs are more funds for such things: start-up money for new faculty—especially those in Division III; group and individual travel for course development and research; enhanced funding for summer faculty scholarship; travel funds for faculty presentations, particularly at national and international venues, and; collaborative research with students.
- **Conduct outside reviews of academic programs.** Each academic program will conduct a full outside review every ten years. This could be done on a rotating basis so that only three or four programs would be evaluated in any given year. The program would need to produce a self-review and a plan for the future prior to bringing in an external reviewer. It will help programs to plan for the long term, and to see how they are doing relative to benchmarks and aspiration colleges. It will also help programs think about their own strategic plans rather than always having to react to daily stresses. Implementation of this recommendation is already under way.
- **Provide additional grant-writing and grant-seeking assistance for faculty members.** A position in the Dean’s Office that works collaboratively with the Development Office,

in order to facilitate grant-seeking and submission, will enable faculty members to increase their success with external grants. This person will need to be familiar with the work of the faculty, as well as with the granting organizations and foundations that fund faculty work. Faculty could meet with this person and Vicki Walker, the College's director of corporate and foundation relations, in order to find possible sources of funding for their work. They could also help by reading proposals, helping route the proposal through the appropriate offices, help with reports, and possibly help faculty with awards.

- **Create opportunities for faculty/staff enrichment.** In addition to supporting professional development and education for faculty and staff, Centre should provide opportunities for personal enrichment. Such activities could include a Friday Staff/Faculty Hour social gathering once per month or a "Free School," in which faculty and staff can volunteer to teach short-term classes, community education-type classes such as tax preparation, knitting, ecology of campus, Danville history, ceramics, or a reading club that faculty and staff can attend.

## Staff

One of Centre's core commitments is to "educate the whole person through a holistic learning environment in a highly residential community that emphasizes engagement, personal and caring relationships, and purposeful linkages among academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular experiences." Another core commitment seeks to "create and maintain relationships that last a lifetime, resulting in alumni who remain actively involved with the College for the benefit of current and future Centre students."

Dedicated staff members are essential to providing that kind of experience. The previous strategic plan addressed staff issues, including compensation and a greater role in campus governance, and some good progress has been made. For example:

- Staff has been given a more formal role in College governance through the creation of Staff Congress.
- Wages for hourly staff, especially at the lower ranges of the wage scale, have received particular attention in the last four years.
- The College has been able to hold the line on increases in employee contributions to health insurance.
- Opportunities for continuing education, special training, and lifestyle enrichment have increased.
- The Human Resources Office has done extensive comparisons of wages and salaries and used that information to establish a model for reaching targets at Centre.

However, much work remains to be done if Centre is to attract, reward, and retain women and men committed to the Centre Experience. The following initiatives seek to address this goal.

- **Establish and pursue targets for staff salaries and wages.** Building on a process begun in the previous strategic plan, Centre will continue to examine staff salaries and wages with the goal of establishing appropriate targets and timelines. Possible targets might be to have all full-time staff at the college employed for five (5) years or

longer, at a minimum, be compensated at the midpoint level of the established benchmark, all full-time staff employed for 10 or more continuous years that have consistently earned overall appraisals of meets expectations or higher will, at a minimum, be compensated at the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile of the established benchmark for their position and all full-time staff employed for 15 or more continuous years that have consistently earned overall appraisals of meets expectations or higher, will be compensated at the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile of the established benchmark for their position.. Establishment of target dates will be based on available financial resources.

- **Explore alternative distribution strategies for employee benefits.** Benefits—notably, but not limited to, health insurance—are an increasingly important factor in recruiting, supporting, and retaining staff and faculty. Centre should work to increase resources devoted to benefits, but given limits on those resources, Centre must work creatively to achieve the greatest possible effectiveness in the development and allocation of benefits. A committee appointed by the President from recommendations by the Faculty president and Staff Congress co-presidents will develop proposals and share them with the President and the College Council.
- **Provide support for continuing education.** The College has already begun to make available to each staff employee a minimum of \$900 annually for professional development, job-specific training, or further formal education.
- **Increase staff and faculty diversity.** By fall 2008, specific recruiting strategies and requirements for attracting a diverse applicant pool will be established for all employees at the College (i.e., faculty, salaried staff, and hourly staff). These strategies and requirements will be evaluated and updated at least every three years. Professional consulting services will likely be necessary to research and implement best practices in this area.
- **Develop a more thorough orientation program for new staff.** This new program will take as its model the orientation of new students, with an emphasis on intensive mentoring, acculturation to Centre, and attention to specific skills.
- **Create greater connections between the faculty and staff by developing activities that would bring them together.** Centre currently conducts a limited number of activities that bring faculty and staff together—the meals opening and closing the academic year, the holiday pot-luck dinner, and the staff celebration in the spring. However, such activities need to be more varied and frequent in order to nurture a sense of connection and community among staff and faculty. A committee appointed jointly by the president of the Faculty and the co-presidents of the Staff Congress will develop recommendations.

## **SECTION FOUR—ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT BODY**

### **GOAL—ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT BODY**

*Centre College will seek to maintain and enhance its historic and increasingly distinctive commitment to being a place of both high achievement and high opportunity—serving students of ever greater motivation and talent, regardless of their financial circumstances. Centre will seek to increase the number, quality, and diversity of its applicants, allowing it to choose to grow in a manner and pace that it controls and that advances the College’s educational and financial goals.*

Several essential issues converge in the discussions of enrollment and student body:

- Centre’s place in the higher education market, both regionally and nationally, including issues such as price, perceived quality, and the continued relevance and attractiveness of the educational experience that Centre offers—liberal arts in a “highly residential” setting;
- The characteristics of the student body;
- The size of the College, and;
- Fundamental financial questions, such as Centre’s ability and desire to maintain its dual commitment to high quality and opportunity, student revenue, and resources available to implement programmatic improvements/additions and to improve or construct facilities.

Centre’s Place in the Market. Centre’s place in the higher education market has grown significantly stronger over the past several years, especially in Kentucky and, increasingly, in a six-hour radius of Danville. Applications have increased nearly 90 percent in the last eight years and, in the same period, selectivity has improved from 90 percent of applicants being admitted to 60 percent.

However, some significant challenges to this improving position exist:

- Centre is a relatively expensive institution in a relatively poor state. The College’s comprehensive fee will soon be over \$40,000 per year. Over 60 percent of students require need-based aid and another 30 percent or so must be attracted to enroll with the use of merit scholarships in order for the College to enroll quality students in sufficient numbers.
- The University of Kentucky and several other Kentucky public institutions have announced plans to expand their undergraduate student bodies significantly over the next few years.
- The number of white high school graduates, who have made up the vast majority of Centre’s traditional enrollment, will take a significant downward turn beginning in 2010.

The Characteristics of the Student Body. We like our students very much. Centre faculty and staff describe Centre students’ in these ways:

- “They tend to rise to expectations and there is a joyfulness to them that would not be the case at many colleges and universities.”

- “They are genuinely nice people who are trusting and open to learning.”
- “They buy into our sense of community and have a sense of gratitude for what the College, and especially the faculty, provides for their experience.”
- “They become strong communicators over the course of their time here.”
- “A significant proportion has financial need, and we appreciate what students of diverse economic backgrounds bring to campus.”
- “Relative to our state and region, they are open minded. They are open to more ethnic diversity than they find on campus.”
- “They are eager for and deeply appreciative of creative approaches to teaching and learning.”
- “They are collegial, genteel, and compassionate.”

However, Centre’s student body should also become:

- More diverse in racial/ethnic and geographic background. As a southern college, Centre should logically focus on African-American students in terms of racial and ethnic diversity. However, the College cannot ignore the rapidly growing Hispanic population. The percentage of Kentucky public high school graduates who are Hispanic will increase from its current one percent per year to 24 percent in 2018. Also, an in-state/out-of-state ratio of 40/60 to 50/50 would enhance diversity while maintaining the College’s “responsibility to and flavor of Kentucky.”
- Less “outcomes oriented” and more interested in ideas for ideas’ sake.
- More creative and original in their thinking.

Size of the College. Both possible disadvantages and benefits of growth in the size of the student body exist. Possible disadvantages include:

- Growth may contribute to a loss of a sense of community, an increase in bureaucracy, and a loss of distinctiveness when we are compared to our peers.
- Without a commensurate increase in applications and yield of admitted students, growth would likely mean an increased acceptance rate and enrolling less qualified students.
- Institutional resources—human, physical, and financial—would be stretched thinner without a significant strengthening of the College’s financial base. We would be a larger college without sufficient strength to ensure quality and facilities.

Possible benefits to larger enrollment include:

- Growth could widen and strengthen the College’s financial base.
- Growth would likely create new economies of scale.
- Growth could allow Centre to offer a broader and deeper curriculum with more faculty and broader student interest and allow broader co-curricular and extracurricular offerings.
- Over time, growth would increase the size of the alumni body, offering potentially greater financial support and a broader network.
- A larger student body would require new and expanded campus facilities that would in turn energize the campus in many ways.

- A larger student body would enhance opportunities to bring recognition to the College and energy to the campus. Growth brings an opportunity to change and reinvigorate existing programs by adding new faculty and staff who bring new and different perspectives. The goal of growth will energize the community in a way that just trying to improve what we already have will not.
- Centre would be better positioned to create a broader impact on Kentucky, the region, and the world.

Financial Questions. Centre has become much more stable financially over the past six to eight years, yet the College still walks something of a financial tightrope defined by the following:

- As stated earlier, while Centre is seen as a “best buy” nationally, it is expensive and will become even more so by the standards of its base market. In market terms, Centre, at present, has relatively little price elasticity.
- The committee agreed that the College must maintain the core commitment of being “accessible to high-ability students from modest backgrounds, especially those from Kentucky.”
- Over 60 percent of Centre students require some level of need-based aid and another 30 percent or so must be attracted with the use of merit scholarships in order for Centre to enroll quality students in sufficient numbers. Even with the success of efforts to increase endowment for student aid, a significant portion of this commitment to aid and merit scholarship takes a large portion of the operating budget of the College. While the overall endowment has grown, Centre’s endowment per student is significantly smaller than that of other Top 50 national liberal arts colleges. These facts limit funds available to improve and expand programs, faculty and staff, and facilities.

To increase spendable income to make more than marginal improvements to programs, staffing, and facilities, Centre can either increase price, increase size, take funds from places like salaries and financial aid, increase endowment income through a higher spend rate or by dramatically increasing the size of the endowment, and/or increasing the level of recurring gifts for current operations.

Other than the wise observation that “there is no downside to a larger endowment,” all of these measures present their own challenges and problems. They also speak to the heart of Centre’s mission and sense of ambition. Can we maintain a dual commitment to high quality and opportunity? Can we pursue a bold and ambitious plan of improvement? To what degree can growth in enrollment produce financial growth and at what risk to the quality of the Centre Experience in all its facets? Without dramatic new resources or a dramatic and risky change in mission, has Centre reached a point of stasis, where any improvements will be only on the margins?

Several assumptions shaped the initiatives developed in regard to enrollment and student body issues:

- Growth for growth's sake is not a strategy. Any growth in enrollment size must be program driven and strategy based, and should fit the character, nature and mission of the College. We should not allow unplanned and unsupported "enrollment creep."
- Whatever size is set as a goal, Centre must nurture the climate on campus that makes this place special.
- Facilities must keep pace with growth; even the improvements to Crounse, Sutcliffe, and the addition of Pearl Hall do not support significant on-campus growth.
- Both enrollment "status quo" and enrollment growth will require sacrifices.

### **COLLEGE INITIATIVES—ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT BODY**

Centre will strive to maintain its current position as a nation leading "best value," positioning itself as the least expensive option of its national peer group. In order to remain a viable option for students from all economic backgrounds, Centre will, at the least, double that proportion of endowment that provides financial support for students. Centre will seek to remain a strong competitor for academically able Kentuckians regardless of individual financial circumstances.

- **Increase the size of the College through managed, controlled enrollment growth and continued attention to retention.** Centre will seek to increase its enrollment to somewhere between 1200 and 1500 over the next ten to fifteen years as circumstances and the environment allow. No matter what enrollment targets the College chooses, Centre will make every effort to maintain or enhance its selectivity, quality of the student body, diversity, facilities, and student/faculty ratios to ensure the highest quality academic and residential experience.

With an opening enrollment of 1188 in the fall of 2007, Centre is essentially already a college of 1200 students. Enrollment can increase to 1250 students with relative ease, especially if the College adds another study-abroad option or two that take another 75 to 100 students off campus each year. Centre can grow to this extent with little change in campus culture or facilities, assuming an adequate number of faculty members to cover the teaching responsibilities on and off campus.

Growth beyond 1250 should come primarily from the addition of academic and extracurricular programs that complement Centre's mission, serve to focus attention on global issues and concerns, add value to the Centre experience or attract previously untapped or lightly tapped desirable prospective student segments. From a programmatic perspective, a significant commitment to the Global Citizenship initiatives opportunities would, from a programmatic point of view, justify and support growth well beyond that figure, perhaps to as large as 1500 over the next ten years. Other possible programs that could justify such growth include Global Commerce, Communications, Environmental Studies, Asian Studies, and Asian languages. Non-curricular programs considered to be important and desirable might include a second Posse from Atlanta, offerings in leadership development, and men's and women's lacrosse. These initiatives have been recommended with other purposes in mind, but should also be pursued for their potential ability to support the College's enrollment and student body goals.

Financial concerns should not be the *primary* "driver" for enrollment growth. It is clear, however, that the continued strengthening of the College, regardless of any new initiatives coming from the strategic plan, will require additional revenue. Unless the College is willing to eliminate existing programs, some level of enrollment growth is a necessity. In this light, the committee discussed a financial model that attempted to project a "right size" student enrollment that balanced net tuition revenue, faculty and staff needs, and space needs. It would appear, based on this projection, an optimal size from this financial perspective may be about 1350.

Centre has an important commitment to providing a national quality academic and residential experience to all students. In addition, Centre has a special obligation, philosophically and practically, to provide this kind of education and experience for Kentuckians from all backgrounds. Becoming more selective, national, and diverse helps provide that experience to Kentuckians and out-of-state students, and should be important strategic goals for the College. While there is no recommendation for a specific proportion of the enrollment to be set aside for Kentuckians, it is recommended that Centre remain especially open and encouraging in admission and financial aid to those Kentuckians who are academically able.

- **Maintain the College's commitment to being a place both of high achievement and high opportunity.** Centre's rising cost of education, the impact of institutional aid on the College budget, and the ability of families to choose this kind of education in the future are issues of significant concern. So far, Centre's rising costs have not hurt enrollment. In fact, applications have increased annually for the last eight years, the size of the student body has increased as a result of somewhat larger freshmen classes and improved retention, and the number of Kentuckians, minorities, and international students served has never been larger. The annual net tuition revenue has grown in recent years, allowing the College to behave in a way that generally provides a very good and productive experience for students, faculty, and staff. However, most of this increase in net tuition revenue has resulted from moderate enrollment growth and stable financial aid discounts provided in the form of carefully managed merit scholarships and need based grants.

This is not a long term solution to the question, however. We fear in the future that more and more families will exclude from consideration all but the highest national profile and wealthiest liberal arts colleges. Centre stands on the periphery of such a group. Even modest 5.5 percent cost increases over the next few years will bring the College's comprehensive fee to over \$40,000 at a time when middle class wages are relatively stable. In the context of a relatively poor and aging state population with relatively few pockets of wealth, this should cause significant concern for the future, in spite of recent enrollment success. Clearly, a more sufficient endowment that provides for the future financial needs of the desired student body is the best hope for the long-term health of the College. Centre should commit to at least a doubling of current endowment for financial aid and scholarships as its top fundraising objective.

- **Establish a premier scholarship program.** Such a scholarship program can attract students of extraordinary talent and potential to the College, strengthening the intellectual and social environment of the entire campus. It can also encourage increased applications and matriculations from those students who apply for but do



not receive the scholarship. These scholarships would include not only the standard full coverage of the comprehensive fee, but would also include such elements as support for study abroad, internships, and post-baccalaureate study, research, and travel. Such a program should be supported by a substantial endowment, one that assures the program is of national stature—a scholarship program that provides a commanding reason for the best and brightest students from Kentucky and the nation to choose Centre College.

- **Increase the number and percentage of foreign students.** While it is not probable that Centre can or should increase its percentage of international students to 10 percent, like a very few of the leading, national liberal arts colleges, it is not impossible to imagine the College doubling its percentage of international students—moving over time from three percent to six percent of the student population. (This initiative will be driven in large measure by the College’s capacity to increase financial aid made available for high-achieving, international student prospects.)
- **Expand the Centre Commitment.** The Centre Commitment has served as a strong statement of essential College values to the campus community and to prospective students and their families. Centre should expand the Centre Commitment in ways that are judged to be beneficial students and of strategic benefit to the College.

## SECTION FIVE—FACILITIES

### GOAL—FACILITIES

*Centre College will maintain and enhance a holistic learning environment in a highly residential community by creating physical facilities and spaces that support and match the quality of the College's academic and student life programs, and are judged to be friendly to the physical environment.*

The College Centre project was, and the now-underway Pearl Hall is, a major improvements to the College's facilities. Still, one of the primary concerns that emerged from the preliminary research was that "Centre facilities are not up to the standards of a national liberal arts institution in several areas." The College conducted a comprehensive assessment of current physical facilities, looking at athletic and recreational spaces, the Norton Center, instructional technology, residential spaces, science facilities, and a student center.

That process identified new and renovated science facilities, a true campus center, and refurbishment of the Norton Center as the top three facilities priorities. Centre is extremely fortunate that a small group of trustees, inspired by the clear benefits of these facilities, have provided financial resources that will allow the College to complete these projects by 2010. The direct advantages to the College of bringing these facilities into use so quickly are unmistakably positive. Having financing in place for what are by far the most expensive initiatives in the plan will also allow Centre to concentrate on funding the other recommendations, including those dealing with other physical plant needs. Committees to plan the science building, the campus center, and the Norton Center refurbishment have been appointed and begun their work.

### COLLEGE INITIATIVES—FACILITIES

- **Renovate and expand science facilities.** The College's facilities in the sciences are inadequate for current enrollments and also limit innovations in teaching and learning in the sciences. If Centre's enrollment continues to grow even modestly, new laboratory and other instructional space will be needed. Also, more such space is necessary to support an expanded program of undergraduate research. A more detailed description of the new space needs includes:
  - Additional classrooms, each holding at least 30 students.
  - One classroom for 40-50 students with U-shape table configuration or "business school" arrangement of tiered tables.
  - An additional computer lab classroom, with space for at least 30 students.
  - Up to five additional labs.
  - Up to five additional faculty/staff offices.
  - Additional storage space.
  - Additional research space.

As planning for the science facility proceeds, the following ideas and issues should also be considered:

- New and renovated facilities should encourage collaborative research.
- Lab and office space should be positioned to encourage student/faculty interaction.

- Lab and classroom combinations should support new pedagogies.
- Multi-purpose/multi-size spaces should be included.
- The facility should provide flexibility for dealing with growth or change in science offerings.
- It should include display space for research projects.
- The need for another large auditorium should also be considered.
- The project should upgrade Young Hall lighting for better visibility and energy efficiency. The project should achieve LEED certification.
- **Construct a true campus center.** The current Combs Center (“the Warehouse”), attractive as it is, is inadequate to support current needs, much less Centre’s ambition to become the national model of highly residential liberal arts colleges. A new campus center will be the “living room” of the campus, serving as a social, cultural, educational, and recreational center. The facility will be built on the space currently occupied by Cowan Dining Commons. This location makes an important statement about the role of student life in the Centre Experience and, in proximity to the College Centre and the Norton Center, will make a dramatic impact on prospective students. Its outer facades should be appealing on all four sides. The delivery and waste disposal areas for food services should be below street level so as to be out of sight as much as possible. Its windows should afford pleasing views of the rest of campus, especially on the sides looking toward Sutcliffe/Crounse and across the green toward Old Centre. The main entrance should have a fireplace and comfortable seating, as well as a reception desk. It should have artwork, murals, and photographs that relate to the College’s identity and story. The new center might include:
  - Dining facilities that would retain the best of the “Cowan experience,” while providing a more comfortable setting.
  - Offices for Student Life, Career Services, Public Safety, and the Admission Welcome Center.
  - The post office.
  - Offices, meeting spaces, and storage areas for student organizations.
  - Study spaces and lounge areas.
  - A sacred space to serve students of various faith commitments and traditions.
  - Computer kiosks and a tech service center for student computers.
  - Medium to large multipurpose spaces.

Understanding the commitment to downtown Danville, moving the bookstore to the campus center should also be considered.

- **Refurbish the Norton Center.** Centre College is uniquely blessed to have a facility of this caliber on our campus, a rarity among small liberal arts institutions. Completed in 1973 and redecorated in 1993, this facility now requires some serious attention. Most, if not all, of the infrastructure consists of original equipment. Not only has this equipment reached the end of its useful lifetime, but all components have been replaced by better technology and more efficient models. We must soon replace many major components of the infrastructure in the Norton Center for the Arts building. Among the priorities for the Norton Center are:
  - Renovating Weisiger Theatre.
  - Replacing seats in Newlin Hall, all of which are original equipment.
  - Upgrading the stage house (the vertical area above the stage) in Newlin Hall, including raising it from its current height of 60 feet to 75 feet.
  - Upgrade HVAC and hot water systems.

- **Address additional athletic and recreational space needs.** The newly-renovated and expanded Sutcliffe Hall represents a dramatic improvement in the College's athletic and recreational facilities. However, some significant needs remain. Centre should:
  - Develop more athletic fields, including turfing and lighting the game football field to allow multipurpose use, construct a College-owned softball facility, and create more intramural and recreational spaces. These needs can be addressed through the use of space on campus, the Sigwald property, and/or space acquired through purchase of the tobacco warehouse and stockyards south of campus, and;
  - Examine replacing Boles Natatorium with a new eight-lane competitive swimming pool.
- **Renovate existing residence halls and consider the construction of new residential facilities.** Research conducted in relation to the reaffirmation process, the planning of Pearl Hall, and the planning process has found that today's students have a set of expectations about residence hall life that were not identified even a mere ten years ago. Colleges and universities across the country are striving to fill many of these requests, and Centre must join the fray if it is to continue to compete successfully for new students. Some of the expectations include:
  - Apartment-style living with kitchen, common areas, and bathrooms rather than traditional double-loaded corridors and shared community bathrooms;
  - Mix of singles and doubles within suites;
  - Larger rooms and closets;
  - Sufficient number of electrical outlets for personal appliances;
  - Computer networking capability, wireless access, phone lines, and cable TV;
  - Better and more versatile lighting and adjustable thermostats;
  - Abundant study spaces and small seminar rooms for individual and small group study;
  - Outdoor patios and eating areas, grills and recreation space;
  - Vending machine (swipe card access) areas with ice machines, and;
  - Laundry facilities with swipe card access.

Pearl Hall will answer many of these needs, but existing housing options do not adequately meet these expectations. Centre should begin now to plan for retrofitting existing residence halls in an orderly way. Successfully revamping older buildings to meet these needs will be a complex and costly exercise. None of these dormitory rehabilitation projects can be completed in a summer. We will need to have a plan for taking residence halls off-line for two summers and an entire academic year in order to successfully complete the required construction. As this process moves forward, Centre should also determine if new residential facilities are necessary to meet these needs.

- **Examine the need for a new classroom/academic office building.** Both classroom and faculty office space are already tight. Even minimal growth in the enrollment and faculty will put greater strain on these spaces. Additional students, new faculty to serve new or expanded programs, and the growing technological needs in instructional spaces will all make the need for additional and office space even greater. The College should soon consider if and when such a facility might be needed.

## SECTION SIX—TECHNOLOGY

### GOAL—TECHNOLOGY

*Centre College will use information technology to enhance, not supplant, the core elements of the Centre Experience—rigorous inquiry, community, collaboration, and creativity. Centre will also develop and maintain the support infrastructure necessary to achieve and sustain this goal. As it does, Centre has the opportunity to make an important contribution to the continuing conversation regarding information technology and higher education.*

As any enterprise attempts to keep up with and incorporate the possibilities offered by advances in information technology, it faces two seemingly conflicting conceptions of IT.

- Information technology has fostered creativity, collaboration, and connectedness in extraordinary ways, representing a true revolution in many aspects of human activity. However, like most revolutions, IT has received a mixed reaction: welcomed by some, half-heartedly accepted or resisted by others.
- However, information technology has become so engrained in daily life that we have come to regard it as a utility, like electricity or water, with the same expectation that it will be there and work when we want it.

Higher education institutions are sensitive to these two attitudes toward IT. The ability to access, analyze, manipulate, and deliver information in all its forms and sources is the heart of the information technology revolution and is clearly an important part of the process of education. Colleges and universities must embrace the ways in which IT can help them to fulfill their fundamental missions. At the same time, they must also acknowledge and deal with the high levels of experience and expectation that their stakeholders—students, parents, faculty and staff (especially younger members), graduate and professional schools, and employers—have regarding information technology.

Weaving the possibilities that information technology offers more fully and creatively into the Centre Experience can enrich that experience in extraordinary ways. It can also help the College to address two strategic challenges.

- Liberal arts institutions are seen as bastions of tradition. When those traditions are positive—high standards of achievement and conduct, intellectual rigor, personal relationships and close community, and a commitment to educating the whole person—those traditions are a strength. However, when tradition becomes close-minded to new ideas and innovative methods, it plays to a perception of liberal arts colleges as out-of-step and irrelevant.
- A particular weakness of Centre's, among prospective students and others, is its perceived isolation. The College has taken steps to address this idea—the study-abroad program and the Vice Presidential Debate being just two of the more prominent examples. However, Centre remains a smaller college in a smaller town in a smaller state.

Centre is not alone among institutions of higher education in its efforts to deal with the revolution in information technology. As part of the research conducted earlier in the planning

process, the College consulted with some of the leading thinkers on IT and higher education. These individuals said that no liberal arts college had fully exploited the possibilities of IT. Centre, thus, has the chance not only to enhance dramatically the experience that it offers to its students; it also has the opportunity to contribute in a prominent way to this important conversation in American higher education.

### **COLLEGE INITIATIVES—TECHNOLOGY**

Technology initiatives must encompass not only the software and hardware requirements, but also the programmatic and, indeed, cultural factors that are just as essential if Centre is to seize the possibilities that IT offers. This applies especially to faculty. The goal is to have them become as comfortable in using videoconferencing as they are in playing a DVD, or to be as likely to assign a project in the form of a web-based presentation as they are to assign a ten-page paper. As the College pursues these goals, it should keep in mind that growth in terms of students, faculty, and staff, should be closely tied to increased funding for support budgets, including the library, information technology, and the Center for Teaching and Learning.

As a result, there is an “if you build it, will they come?” gamble implicit within these recommendations. Several of the initiatives have significant costs attached to them. One would like to be sure that faculty and students were ready to take full advantage of those initiatives before incurring those expenses. However, those capabilities will need to be in place before faculty and students can fully appreciate them and be trained in their use. This chicken-and-egg challenge will need to be addressed carefully as the process moves forward.

- **Develop a “Learning Matrix.”** The Learning Matrix is a multimedia information commons, to be located on the main floor of the Grace Doherty Library. The commons will bring a wide variety of IT assets together in a comfortable, inviting setting conducive to group and individual work. Eight stations will provide services and resources including: reference and research; web and graphic design; video editing; presentation development, and; video screening. Staff and trained student assistants will be available at all times to train and support students and faculty in the use of the Learning Matrix’s capabilities. The Learning Matrix has great potential to encourage creative and collaborative work by students and faculty, to enhance their IT abilities, and to attract students, faculty, and staff. Located in the heart of the Doherty Library, the Learning Matrix can also allow Centre to become an important example of the evolution of the college library.
- **Make better use of opportunities for distance learning.** Centre should investigate ways in which it can take advantage of the best, most rigorous elements of high-tech distance education to enrich our students’ experiences and to reach out to alumni, friends, and other constituencies.
  - Recognizing the central role of the faculty in determining the acceptance of course work done elsewhere, Centre students should examine ways in which its students could complement or even replace Centre credit for course work from other outstanding institutions. Centre students should also be able to blend their undergraduate course work with graduate-level courses as appropriate. As part of this effort, Centre should establish alliances with top-flight research universities such as Duke, Columbia, Vanderbilt, and Stanford, as well as with other strong liberal arts colleges. Centre students could take advantage of distance-learning opportunities at these institutions during the summer or even during the academic year.

- Centre should also explore how it can export its “best of class” courses, lectures, and special events to the wider world—our students studying abroad, alumni and friends, students at other institutions, prospective students, elementary and secondary teachers and students, and other constituencies. This initiative helps the College to tell its story of transformative teaching and learning to important audiences.
- **Explore the development of a multimedia player/recorder program.** Technology to record and retrieve audio and video is becoming more powerful, more portable, and less expensive. The College should explore the possibilities of this technology for teaching and learning by providing all students and faculty members with a common multimedia player/recorder, which would deliver text, computer documents, audio and video, as well as record audio and video. An extensive plan to implement the program thoughtfully in terms of pedagogy, training and support, and incentives for participation is an essential part of this initiative. Content produced by the program could also be used by the alumni and development program and the admission office as appropriate.
- **Incorporate an “information fluency proficiency” into the curriculum.** The College will explore the development of a proficiency requirement in information fluency to match current proficiency requirements in writing, mathematics, and foreign language. Achieving such a proficiency would enable a student to:
  - to identify best resources in the discovery of appropriate information;
  - to discern good quality information from mediocre and to travel among inter-related sources to pursue the fundamental facts concerning any topic;
  - to assimilate quality information into a comprehensive collection of ideas that enable the development of a treatise of a given topic;
  - to master the tools of information access, not only those associated with technology, but also the more standard processes as well, and;
  - to prepare and deliver a scholarly presentation that represents the findings and conclusions of the study in a form that adds to our collective body of knowledge.

Major programs will be required to address the development of information fluency skills in their curriculums such that every graduate receives instruction and practice in appropriate information fluency skills at different levels of instruction, integrated throughout the program curriculum so it builds upon itself. In addition, programs are encouraged to include library staff in their instruction plans for information fluency.

- **Significantly expand videoconferencing capability.** A strong capability in videoconferencing has nearly limitless possibilities to bring the world to Centre and Centre to the world, contributing to almost every aspect of the Centre Experience.
- **Expand collaborative classroom technology.** Collaborative teaching and learning makes students active and direct participants in the process, as well as encouraging teachers and students alike to share the richness of their experiences and perspectives. However, classrooms at Centre do not, for the most part, reflect the recent trend in classroom design that promotes collaborative learning. They currently support lecture-based style instruction with very little support for student-to-student interaction. Centre should create classrooms designed to promote collaborative, problem-solving, and multi-sensory styles of learning.
- **Add Computer Classrooms.** Centre currently has four classrooms that allow students to sit at their own computers; the largest of these spaces serves 28 students. Demand for such facilities far exceeds current capacities. Centre should create two additional computer classrooms, one a PC-equipped space that can accommodate 40 or more students, the other a Mac-equipped room that can accommodate 15 students.

- **Examine policies for providing computer/information technology equipment to faculty and staff.** Many businesses have adopted policies that allow employees greater flexibility in selecting and purchasing computers and other equipment through the use of vouchers or credits. While issues regarding maintenance and service, campus networking, and software applications would need to be considered, many of the organizations have achieved considerable savings and increased employee satisfaction through such programs.
- **Explore the creation of a sound studio.** Music performance, whether within the formal structure of the music program or as an informal recreational and social activity, is an important part of the life on campus of many Centre students, faculty, and staff. The creation of a professional quality, 32-track recording studio can enhance that experience and engage students, faculty, and staff in music in a new way.



## SECTION SEVEN—FINANCE AND RESOURCES

### GOALS—FINANCE AND RESOURCES

*Centre College will create a financial base adequate to support the fulfillment of the College's aspirations, through effective management of current resources and the development of new and increased sources of support.*

*Centre College will sustain its longstanding tradition for having a dynamic, engaged Board of Trustees that provides balanced policy-level leadership and seeks to advance the College in all ways with its gifts of work, wisdom, and wealth. Centre will also establish a model program for engagement of and communication with its alumni, parents of current students, and friends.*

*Centre College will, through the example of its own programs and its leadership in issues of higher education, become a place of greater influence in the American academy. Centre College will also continue to be that place in the Commonwealth of Kentucky—and on an increasingly national and international stage—where conversations on issues of importance to the larger society take place.*

Centre has been fortunate to see its financial resources and grow significantly over the past several years. While effective financial management has certainly been an important part of that growth, the base of Centre's institutional and financial strength is the devotion of its trustees, alumni, parents, and friends. Still, for many years, Centre has offered an educational experience comparable to that of much wealthier institutions, and to a student body more in need of financial assistance than found at those colleges. As noted in the section on enrollment and student body, Centre must continue to manage its current financial resources both prudently and creatively and develop significant new sources of revenue if it is to maintain its current progress, much less seize the opportunities identified by the planning process. Centre must also continue to develop and nurture the relationships from which that financial support springs.

The Finance Committee of the planning process was asked to work with the other committees to develop rough estimates of the costs of the initiatives developed to that point. Those estimates will be revised to reflect the refinement of the initiatives. It is encouraging, however, that even including all the possible new programs and personnel, new recurring expenses totaled slightly less than \$4 million per year—a substantial sum, to be sure, but not out of reach.

### COLLEGE INITIATIVES—FINANCE AND RESOURCES

To develop the base of support necessary to the implementation of the strategic plan, Centre will:

- **Maintain and enhance its extraordinarily effective Board of Trustees.** Centre will sustain the Board of Trustees' recognized strength and commitment to shared governance. The Board will also sustain its commitment to greater diversity among its ranks, working to better reflect the institution it holds in trust. The Board will also challenge its members—present and future—to envision and invest in a Centre College that has and will continue to have a measurable impact among nationally recognized liberal arts institutions.

- **Create and maintain a model program of alumni and friend relations.** In fulfillment of this initiative, Centre will develop a model program of engagement and communication with and among its alumni and friends. Part of this effort will be a series of distance and on-campus learning opportunities. Centre will also establish a new board for alumni and friends of the College.
- **Create and maintain a model program of communications, media relations, and marketing.** While Centre's growing strength has resulted in a wider and more positive reputation, that widening reputation also adds to the College's strength. That reputation has not expanded by accident. Centre should become more purposeful, systematic, and assertive in telling its story, especially in those areas and among those groups that can enable the College to attract a larger and stronger group of prospective students and greater financial support for current and prospective donors.
- **Establish and achieve the following financial goals**—having an endowment of at least \$325 million by 2010 and \$750 million by 2020; maintaining the College's leadership position in alumni giving while also increasing the overall giving and average size of gifts from alumni, parents, and friends, and; growing the Capital Improvements Fund to at least \$25 million by 2012.
- **Endowment, and especially endowment per student, being a key measure of institutional strength, Centre will review its endowment management policies and procedures.** In this process, the Board and administrative leadership will seek to establish Centre as a place of best practice in all areas related to endowment administration.
- **Review policies related to the acquisition, use, management, and sale of College properties.** The College has acquired an array of properties, primarily adjacent to the campus, that together represent considerable opportunity and responsibility. It is important to establish a policy that is fiscally sound regarding the use of additional properties.
- **Review of the resources required for full funding of current needs and activities.** Even as we launch Centre into a new plan—one replete with goals and initiatives that will require considerable new resources, the College needs to re-examine its current commitments to be sure that we are meeting the goals and obligations of the current program.

## Notes from Chapter Two—The Current Environment

<sup>i</sup> Southern Regional Education Board, “SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, Kentucky Featured Facts,” SREB, June 2005.

<sup>ii</sup> Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

<sup>iii</sup> Southern Regional Education Board, “SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, Kentucky Featured Facts,” SREB, June 2005.

<sup>iv</sup> Online at <http://www.sreb.org/main/EdData/DataLibrary/03/demographics/FB02.xls> (as of December 16, 2005).

<sup>v</sup> Hussar, William J. *Projections of Education Statistics to 2014* (NCES 2005-074). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2005.

<sup>vi</sup> Online at <[http://www.collegeboard.com/prod\\_downloads/highered/res/hel/Seniors-by-State-2004.ppt](http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/highered/res/hel/Seniors-by-State-2004.ppt)

<sup>vii</sup> Kentucky received a \$750,000 one-year grant to improve high school graduation and college-readiness rates from the National Governors Association. Kentucky also secured a \$42 million dollar grant for GEAR Up to better prepare disadvantaged students for postsecondary education. Kentucky is among 22 states that are part of the “State K-16 Network” sponsored by Ed Trust and the National Association of System Heads.

<sup>viii</sup> Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center, “Kentucky’s Brain Drain Unplugged,” *Policy Notes*, June 2001, no. 3.

<sup>ix</sup> Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center, “Kentucky’s Brain Drain Unplugged,” *Policy Notes*, June 2001, no. 3.

<sup>x</sup> Online at <http://www.census.gov/> (as of December 16, 2005).

<sup>xi</sup> Southern Regional Education Board, “SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, Kentucky Featured Facts,” SREB, June 2005.

<sup>xii</sup> Southern Regional Education Board, “SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, Kentucky Featured Facts,” SREB, June 2005.

<sup>xiii</sup> Southern Regional Education Board, “SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, Kentucky Featured Facts,” SREB, June 2005.

<sup>xiv</sup> Online at <http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/school/tabA-6.pdf> (as of December 16, 2005).

<sup>xv</sup> Southern Regional Education Board, “SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, Kentucky Featured Facts,” SREB, June 2005.

<sup>xvi</sup> Southern Regional Education Board, “SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, Kentucky Featured Facts,” SREB, June 2005.

<sup>xvii</sup> Selingo, Jeffrey, Affirmative Action Without Numerical Goals: U. of Wisconsin tries new approaches to recruit minority students, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 28, 1999.

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