COURAGE TO ACT
THE PLAN FOR JUNIATA COLLEGE
For the past five years, change has dominated the conversation at Juniata. Beginning with a global economic crisis and moving through our Middle States Commission for Higher Education accreditation, master plan process, and subsequent leadership transition, the Juniata community has considered itself from a variety of vantage points. The result has been a vigorous discussion of ideas, directions, challenges, and concerns. In this context, we have engaged in a sustained consideration of our future.

At a time of challenge to higher education in the United States, in one of the most competitive environments in the nation, Juniata has grown and diversified enrollment, improved its reputation while earning accolades for its academic performance, bolstered its infrastructure, and expanded its national reach for students. However, it has also encountered challenges in the understanding and administration of its POE and two-adviser system, incurred debt related to its expansion of physical plant, expanded operational costs against flat revenues, and experienced challenges in student demand and quality related to a lingering regionalism even as we are poised for national presence.

Among small liberal arts colleges, most experience the same set of challenges as we. As a sector, generally we have employed similar means of dealing with those challenges. Juniata has long sought to be an educational crucible accessible to those with the potential and drive to succeed, grounded in values of peace, simplicity, community, and service. What will distinguish Juniata among our competitors, and strengthen our ability to deliver on the mission and ensure the long viability of our enterprise, will be a clarity of focus on that historic promise and its contemporary expression.

Achieving clarity necessitates that we reiterate what is important to Juniata, and understand our current state after a period of transition. This plan includes several comprehensive reviews to help us evaluate areas that have not received critical attention in some time, including our general curriculum, the interplay between curricular and co-curricular life, how we engage technology, and our reputation. We will take those findings and use them to strengthen areas that are key to who we are:

- the scholarship inherent in our academic offerings, the flexibility of our signature Program of Emphasis system, and our experience-driven approach to inspiring learners;
- the community and its particular mix of challenge and support, commitment to inclusion, respect for peace and service, and focus on wellness;
- the distinctiveness of our location, academic offerings, and mission;
- our resources and the ways in which they enable us and must focus us on our mission and vision;
- and our presence as a college of high academic standards and performance transitioning from regional to international in its reach, recruiting, and impact.

Studying our foundational attributes and using what we learn to guide future philanthropic investment and resource deployment will continue to distinguish Juniata, because we will bolster that which distinguishes us now. Such a plan does not preclude discovery, reinvestment, or reduction of some activities. Rather, by placing a premium on working together to understand the underpinnings of who we are, we will become ever clearer about what will best move Juniata forward.

If this strategic plan is about any one thing, it is about placing the College on a clear path to build on its strengths and, through that endeavor, extend and nurture those strengths. Such work will position Juniata to face the challenges and opportunities ahead with clear information, a robust plan, and diverse resources to muster the necessary courage to act in ways that enliven and expand opportunities for our students. Our historic values of peace, community, service, and simplicity have resulted in a liberal arts college committed to learning through experience, service to our region and the world, global awareness and an enviable international focus, and a community of supportive alumni and friends that go to great lengths to share our story and to bring new students to this place. This plan’s vision draws on those strengths and is a manifestation of our historic values: to ensure that Juniata is known as a place that inspires citizens of consequence to understand the world in which they act.
ANIMATING PRINCIPLES

JUNIATA COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

Juniata’s mission is to provide an engaging personalized educational experience empowering our students to develop the skills, knowledge and values that lead to a fulfilling life of service and ethical leadership in the global community.

JUNIATA COLLEGE VISION STATEMENT

Juniata will be known as a place that inspires citizens of consequence to understand the world in which they act.

ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Juniata College is a liberal arts college with an academic program predicated on significant experiential learning that exposes students to the international community and challenges them to be leaders in problem solving. The namesake of the river that flows through the nearby mountains of central Pennsylvania, Juniata is home to a community of active, healthy engagement between students, faculty, staff, and administration, animated by principles of peace, community, service, simplicity that are attributable to the values of our founders, members of the Church of the Brethren.

Juniata’s distinctive campus—including its community members, its advantageous geographic location, and its defining characteristic as a place of markedly high academic and social expectations and results—will serve as the center of its extended network of opportunities. Juniata places a premium on both collegiality and challenge, and must ensure it remains nimble enough to anticipate ways to encounter and respond to societal pressures related to the diversity of communities and workplaces, technology and its manifold applications, the opportunities and challenges of globalization, and the ethical ambiguities of contemporary life.

Juniata students and employees have long lived and worked in an environment where the focus is on student success and great outcomes. This plan, focused on the period of the next five years, at a time when Juniata is poised for ascendance while challenged by its present resources, will outline priorities and principles that, properly executed and followed, can ensure that this great college continues to provide a distinctive experience for our students. This plan will guide Juniata in ensuring our resources are developed and deployed to make the most of our strong scholarship, our community resources, our distinctive place, and our growing influence and presence.
SCHOLARSHIP

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1: Juniata College will foster an environment that encourages and rewards intellectual rigor.

SITUATION ANALYSIS:
As confirmed by surveys to alumni, faculty, students, and related constituents, Juniata College provides a challenging curriculum backed by supportive and intellectually vibrant faculty and staff. Our academic rigor was noted as our greatest strength by survey participants and our accreditation effort, and our academic indicators and outcomes (here indicating graduate and professional school placement rates, employment rates, and similar measures) place us among a competitive group of the strongest liberal arts colleges in our region and, increasingly, nationally.

In one of the most competitive educational markets in the country, we will improve academic rigor by strengthening the curriculum, emphasizing clearly articulated learning outcomes that ensure an interdisciplinary and experiential educational experience, and enhancing flexibility. Following recommendations of our most recent academic accreditation report, this initiative will include developing assessment strategies, curriculum adjustments, and support for learning technologies.

In short, this initiative is aimed at ensuring Juniata students can expect a challenging, experience-driven liberal arts education that respects their individual ability to contribute to the learning goals of the community.

KEY INITIATIVES:

Student Outcomes
Juniata College will ensure rigor and challenge for the contemporary college student, be responsive to the growing and changing needs of our students, and provide an effective two-adviser system. The College initially will evaluate our present curriculum and, based on assessment, develop clear student outcome expectations designed to foster the skills, knowledge, and values the College deems necessary for a college graduate in the coming decade.

To achieve success with this initiative, Juniata plans to increase and routinize assessment plans tied to articulated student learning goals. The early part of this plan will focus assessment of the general curriculum, and expand to encompass all curricular offerings. At the same time, Juniata will enhance advising competencies in its faculty through a variety of professional development related to advising, diversity, inclusion, and stress intervention. Finally, the College will build on current efforts to expand the scope and efficacy of career services, tying it explicitly to academic affairs and capitalizing on natural connections in student support while maintaining network ties through alumni and constituent relations.

MEASURES INDICATING SUCCESS:

- Every course and learning experience will have articulated institutional goals for student learning.
- A culture of assessment will foster an environment of evidence-based decision-making that will be evident across the institution.
- Student retention rates will exceed those of peers overall and across all measure of inclusion (ALANA, international, LGBTQ).
- 95% of graduating students will experience at least one effective high-impact curricular or co-curricular learning experience.
- 95% graduates will be employed or in graduate school within 12 months of commencement.
- 95% of students who matriculate to graduate school will earn their degrees at the same rate or better than their peers.
- Annual increases in the percentage of students performing substantive creative or scholarly activity, with faculty, as part of earning their Program of Emphasis.
- Exceed institutional and competitor benchmarks established in NSSE surveys related to student learning outcomes.
- Every incoming student will be assigned a faculty adviser, and all advisers will be trained in student diversity and inclusion.
- Juniata’s four-year graduation rate will be equal to or greater than 75 percent, and its six-year graduation rate will be equal to or greater than 80 percent.
Faculty Support
Juniata College will provide faculty with professional development opportunities needed to sustain and evolve a viable curriculum in a knowledge-driven society.

To achieve success with this initiative, the provost will work with faculty leadership to develop a measure for faculty workload that is responsive and appropriate to contemporary and future conditions related to being an effective teacher, college citizen, and scholar. At the same time, the College will embark on assessment of its academic organization and technological needs and potentialities, anticipating that as student learning styles and expectations evolve, pedagogical practice, interdisciplinary collaboration, and technological flexibility will evolve. Workload metrics and assessment will provide means to ensure our faculty continue to have the professional support to provide the best for students.

TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
Juniata College will assess the environment in which it delivers a competitive and salient education.

To achieve success with this initiative, Juniata College will first have to complete a specific assessment of learning spaces. Assessing learning spaces differs from the Master Plan work of 2012 because it will spend less time considering growth and capacity and more considering how classrooms and other learning spaces help or hinder learning and collaboration. Because the campus community has enjoyed spirited conversation about headcount in courses and its effect on campus climate and teaching style, the accumulated feedback to date suggests the need for analysis of size dynamics related to overall student body, class headcounts, and climate.
COMMUNITY

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2: Juniata College will grow, nurture and support an inclusive, engaged, and vibrant community.

SITUATION ANALYSIS:

Research and planning efforts of the last three years have yielded a consistent theme: Juniata’s most distinctive asset is its people and community. We’ve learned that a student-first approach is not merely a tagline but the lived experience for most everyone at Juniata. We also have learned that the Juniata experience is not limited to our campus or to the four years a student spends as an undergraduate. Students and their families become part of the Juniata fabric as prospective students, and they continue to be part of that fabric as engaged alumni for a lifetime.

Our community is predicated on learning, but we are also mindful of the many environments in which learning occurs at a residential college set in a distinctive environment. Except when studying abroad, students are expected to live on campus, learning the essential life skills that comes from an intentional and integrated residential experience. But their residential experience is not static, nor contained to campus. Juniata’s many co-curricular opportunities—ranging from athletics, student government and advocacy, scores of academic and interest clubs, service and campus leadership, community engagement and service, arts and cultural opportunities, and residential living itself—are credited by generations of alumni and current students alike with helping them grow as a person while engaging in their more traditional educational pursuits.

“The total experience of Juniata is perhaps stated most compellingly by a then-senior student quoted in the book Colleges That Change Lives. He said, “It feels like the whole school is set up just to make sure we succeed.” We have benefited from students feeling the sense that Juniata is organized for success. However, recent studies as part of administrative department reviews have suggested that resources merit a review, and in many parts of the organization are not optimal.

Juniata’s community has long been described as welcoming, but as it has grown and diversified along many measures, the College has had to consider ways to be welcoming to a greater variety of people. Our community has a greater number of international students than ever before, and greater ethnic and racial diversity than ever before. In addition, other measures of diversity show that we continue to become a more heterogeneous campus. As such, our historic welcoming impulses have to grow as contemporary students arrive with different strengths, ideas, challenges, and needs.

As a result of this initiative, students coming to Juniata will know they can expect to find a community characterized by international awareness and exposure, support for individuals with an eye toward the inclusion of everyone, a healthy level of personal and intellectual challenge, and mindful attention to wellness.

KEY INITIATIVES:

Student Residential Experience
We will provide a residential experience that encourages considerations of community and service, promotes intellectual challenge, and facilitates personal and academic growth and empowerment.

To achieve success with this initiative, Juniata will first conduct several benchmarking surveys to quantify the campus climate, culture, and awareness of and sophistication related to matters of diversity and inclusion. Student services and faculty/academic services teams will consider development of student programming and co-curricular learning outcome goals.

MEASURES INDICATING SUCCESS:

• Student retention rates will exceed those of peers overall and across all measure of inclusion (ALANA, international, LGBTQ).
• Residence life programming, personnel, and facilities will meet or exceed student expectation.
• The College will develop and articulate measurable co-curricular learning goals.

Diversity
Juniata College will create a campus community of inclusiveness from the classroom to the residence hall room to the conference room.

To achieve success with this initiative, Juniata will evaluate the effectiveness of its stewards of diversity program in helping to ensure diverse employee candidate pools, and recommend actions based on that review. Over the course of this planning period, Juniata will
also develop academic and residential life activities that encourage dialogue, develop competencies, and foster interaction around diversity. Finally, achieving the ability to offer regular and graduated training opportunities for faculty, staff, and students will contribute to success.

MEASURES INDICATING SUCCESS:
• Search pools for all positions will reflect available pool of applicants by appropriate benchmarks.
• Juniata will achieve annual increases in the percentage of faculty, staff, and administration who are ALANA, international, and LGBTQQ.
• Juniata will achieve annual increases in the percentage of students who are ALANA, international, and LGBTQQ.
• Student retention rates will meet or exceed 90 percent, and Juniata will achieve annual increases in the retention rate of ALANA, international, LGBTQQ populations.

Internationalization
Juniata College will strengthen international opportunities, programs, and skills in its community.

To achieve success with this initiative, Juniata will work to expand already strong and award-winning efforts. First, the College will identify present barriers to achieving a rate of 50 percent of students studying abroad, and devise a plan to address and overcome those barriers. From there, Juniata will cement internationalism as a signature part of its offering to students. At the same time, recognizing the role faculty agency plays in strong international programming, Juniata will identify opportunities and partners for service and faculty exchanges outside the United States.

MEASURES INDICATING SUCCESS:
• Greater than 50 percent of students will undertake a study-abroad experience with measurable outcomes; 75 percent of students will undertake a substantive international experience of any duration; and 90 percent of students will undertake a substantive study-away experience.
• Greater than 10 percent of faculty per academic year will participate in an international experience with measurable outcomes.
• Juniata will exceed institutional and competitor benchmarks established in the NSSE Global Engagement survey on culture and climate of inclusion.

Wellness
Juniata College will create an environment that inspires our students, faculty, staff, and alumni to sustain a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

A great deal of research exists on the benefits of adopting habits to sustain a healthy and balanced lifestyle, a notion at least as old as Aristotle. While college degree attainment is already a leading indicator of lifespan and the likelihood of healthy behaviors, Juniata believes that our setting and attributes of our service- and community-oriented campus can enhance the likelihood of students adopting wellness habits. During the early part of the planning period, Juniata’s first steps on this initiative will be to identify work to expand the conception and intentionality of our wellness programming to include intellect, physical health, emotional balance, social fluency, and mindfulness. From there, Juniata will develop means for students to access recreational and service opportunities in our distinct region.

MEASURES INDICATING SUCCESS:
• Juniata will exceed institutional and competitor benchmarks associated with wellness behaviors established in the NSSE surveys.
• Juniata will achieve annual increases in the percentage of employees participating in wellness programs.
• Juniata will achieve a measure of greater than 50 percent of the campus community participating annually in cultural and physical opportunities on campus and in the Huntingdon region.
DISTINCTIVENESS

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3: Juniata College will deepen and enrich the unique characteristics that make the College an extraordinary place.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Research and planning efforts yielded the following themes related to Juniata’s place and environment: the assets and challenges of our rural location; our commitment to overall wellness and sustainability, the strong sense of community, and its values of support and challenge, for which we are known; and the physical beauty of our campus. Many components contribute to the value of these themes, and several of those can be strengthened through the strategic plan.

Given those themes, we will pursue initiatives that will enhance and highlight the advantages of our geographical location, strengthen and make more distinct the challenging and supportive character of our community, and ensure the sustainability and flexibility of our physical spaces to best serve the learning and professional objectives of our community constituents. The main highlight of this overall strategic priority will be developing a comprehensive plan to connect and utilize the Juniata-Huntingdon connection.

Students coming to Juniata in 2020 can expect to deeply engage with a distinctive place by discovering Juniata and Huntingdon, and in so doing, will also learn behaviors and expectations that engage their future communities in similarly substantive ways.

KEY INITIATIVES

Geography

Juniata College will enhance and highlight the advantages of our geographical location.

To achieve success with this initiative, Juniata will take a series of actions to understand the distinctions of our place and to capitalize upon them. The core of this activity will be a comprehensive assessment of our brand equity in the higher education marketplace. While that study will yield information to help position the College, we already know of regional assets we can highlight with greater emphasis in our student publications, and will do so. Finally, as with so much of this strategic priority, success will hinge on a thorough development of the Juniata-Huntingdon 2020 plan.

MEASURES INDICATING SUCCESS:

• As measured by survey, steady improvement in community perception of Juniata over the period of the plan.

• Juniata will achieve annual increases in the percentage of Huntingdon County community members participating in events on campus.

• Juniata will achieve a measure of greater than 50 percent of the campus community participating annually in cultural and physical opportunities on campus and in the Huntingdon region.

• Juniata will achieve annual increases in the percentage of students, employees and alumni participating in community service, particularly in Huntingdon County.

Character of Community

Juniata College will strengthen and make more distinctive the challenging and supportive character of our community.

Juniata knows that recent NSSE surveys have highlighted the College’s combination of challenge and support is relatively distinct. We know from admitted students, market research, and external constituents that the Program of Emphasis and the two-adviser system also appears distinctive; parts of this plan will study carefully the expression and sustainability of those distinguishing characteristics. Depending on what our branding research and curricular assessments reveal, Juniata will enhance its messaging regarding distinctive assets, including the POE and the advising system, in addition to community traditions and other attributes. Finally, because one characteristic of our community has long been access and support for students with talent and drive but who are from homes of modest means, we will take a careful look at financial aid strategy, as it is perceived by many of our students and alumni as among the most demonstrable support we provide.
MEASURES INDICATING SUCCESS:
• Market research will show prospective and current student understanding of distinctive characteristics identified through research.
• Juniata will achieve and maintain a cohort loan default rate of less than 2.3 percent.

Campus Physical Environment
Juniata College will enhance and provide for the sustainability of the physical beauty and usefulness of our campus.

Juniata has already undergone the Master Planning process in 2012, and that plan informs a forthcoming comprehensive campaign to support many identified capital improvements. In the context of distinctiveness, Juniata will ensure that new capital improvements will be designed with an eye toward intentional curricular and co-curricular goals that will emerge through work on Strategic Objective #1: Scholarship. Since sustainability has become fairly standard practice since the 2008 strategic plan, this plan will ensure sustainable practice in the campus environment.

MEASURES INDICATING SUCCESS:
• All new construction is built to LEED standards, as applicable.
• Timely development of campus infrastructure per the 2012 master plan, with clear connections to stated learning outcome goals.
• All new construction will have 85 percent or more of associated operational costs and deferred maintenance provided by endowment funds.
RESOURCES

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4: Juniata College will strengthen its financial position.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Research and planning efforts have long suggested that Juniata’s financial position has supported a period of growth while being relatively precarious. We know from various data that our resources are leaner than those of many of our peers. We have tended to do “more with less,” and in the period leading to this plan, the campus as a whole has shown concern regarding the sustainability of such an approach.

Given those concerns, we will pursue initiatives that will strengthen our financial position; ensure accessibility to talented students from challenging financial situations; and diversify our revenue streams.

As a result of this plan, students can expect that their investment is stewarded to ensure high quality services and outcomes, and they will understand what their lifelong connection and investment as alumni can make possible for future students.

KEY INITIATIVES

Financial

Juniata College will strengthen its financial position to provide greater security and flexibility with which to deliver on its mission.

Juniata will take a serious look at elements of its pricing strategy and cost structures. At the same time, a comprehensive campaign will help to provide gifts that, along with sound investment strategies, will result in significant endowment growth during the plan period. Close monitoring of peer financials and best practices will assist in moving the College toward stronger and more flexible financial health. Consistent with an evidence-based decision making culture, the allocation of all discretionary dollars will be clearly linked to this strategy and will be vetted by the Budget Team, Senior Leadership Team, and ultimately the Board of Trustees.

MEASURES INDICATING SUCCESS:

- Endowment per Full Time Equivalent Student >= peer average.
- Facilities Condition Index >= 0.75
- Debt service coverage >1.2.
- Net Tuition and Fees Per Full Time Equivalent Student = 90 percent of Moody’s A-rated colleges.
- Education and General Expenses per Full Time Equivalent = 90 percent of Moody’s A-rated colleges.

Diversify Revenue

Juniata College will diversify its revenue sources.

With nascent online programs, a variety of summer instructional programs and camps, and other revenue lines to consider, the College will articulate means to capitalize on or enhance strengths and possibilities related to revenue. Residence hall differential pricing has already seen success in Nathan Hall, and with other residences possible in the future, opportunity exists for enhanced revenue. A comprehensive campaign also has the potential to increase unrestricted assets. Study and resource development will be necessary for success.

MEASURES INDICATING SUCCESS:

- Annual fund exceeds $2 million per year by 2020.
- Summer tuition revenue exceeds $500,000 per year.
- 50% of face-value goal of campaign ($75 million) achieved by FY18.
- Conferences and Events revenue increasing annually.
PRESENCE

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #5: Juniata College will increase its national and international reach and reputation.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Strategic plan surveys and market research done both internally and by external contractors have made clear that one of Juniata’s main challenges is its name recognition and brand value outside of central Pennsylvania. In the strategic planning surveys, it was identified as the single greatest weakness with which the College struggles.

As a result of success on this initiative, students can expect that people of influence will know or quickly understand the value of where they earned their education.

KEY INITIATIVES

Awareness
Juniata College will develop and execute means to advance its national and international presence.

As noted earlier, a significant brand equity study will be the basis upon which success in this area rests. Additionally, our presence in the region and community, guided by the Juniata-Huntingdon 2020 plan, will ensure that a key demographic will know our story and be able to tell it. Finally, our own community has the potential to influence its various publics, and work during the writing of this plan suggests we have some potential for upward movement with our faculty and staff about communicating our successes.

MEASURES INDICATING SUCCESS:
• As measured by survey, steady improvement in community and regional perception of Juniata over the period of the plan.
• Increased earned media placements.
• Ascent in relative position against competitors in national rankings.
• Increase to 50% of students from outside PA by 2020, and an increase in the percentage of students from metro zones.
• Survey results show constituent (internal and external) awareness of College success and ideals.
• Admitted student survey shows understanding of brand characteristics.
• 50% of face-value goal of campaign ($75 million) achieved by FY18.
“COURAGE TO ACT: The Plan for Juniata College” is the result of nearly 18 months of collaboration and consideration by senior leadership, the strategic planning committee, and more broadly, Juniata’s larger constituency base. However, when one considers the source documents that inform this plan, the work began in 2011 when the Middle States accreditation process began. The opening statement that contextualizes this plan already discusses all that has transpired over the past four years as we have transitioned and grown as an institution to this moment.

Amid such a period of change and uncertainty, and the with the collective understanding of all that is at stake as we work not simply to maintain but to improve our position and the results of our work, it is easy to imagine readers of this plan, particularly those members of the campus community, looking for an explicit mention of their department, their function, or their concerns in this plan. If an office or idea is not mentioned specifically, it is natural to wonder what such a perceived omission implies. The committee who generated this plan, as well as the senior leadership endorsing it, wish to be clear: just because an entity is not specifically mentioned does not mean it cannot and does not contribute to the mission, vision, and goals of the College as expressed in this plan.

By its nature, a strategic plan is designed to focus on higher-level, institution-spanning items that require collective and heightened focus during the window of time the plan covers. Please note the emphasis on collective. Take but one example: the Juniata/Huntingdon 2020 plan. While the strategic planning committee has discussed some possibility of what items might be covered, every area of campus can devise goals and actions to take to enhance Juniata’s engagement with Huntingdon. Whether through athletics, the arts, the library’s resources, a particular academic department, or residence life, to name but a few, each area could have specific goals that make for a more robust and positive relationship with the town and region in which we are located. Most campus offices and constituents are not mentioned specifically in this plan, but it is the expectation that all Juniata constituencies will engage with the goals and aspirations found here.

We trust that after thoughtful consideration of the plan you will find opportunities to see how you and your department or office or work team can help advance this plan. A critical component of our success over the next five years will be our ability to enhance our community by becoming more welcoming, inclusive and supportive; obviously, each of us has a role in that. The process of departmental and individual goal setting will help to highlight these opportunities and bring the plan to life for all of us. As part of the first few months of acting on the plan, we anticipate workshops and discussions, as well as professional development with administrative directors and department heads on methods of mapping annual performance goals with strategic plan goals.

On behalf of the Strategic Plan Committee, we thank everyone for their contributions to this work. We trust the process has given you opportunities to provide meaningful input and has yielded a plan you can support and find enthusiasm for implementing. When we have achieved all we plan to achieve through this plan we will have further solidified our place and presence in the higher education landscape, and we will have positioned ourselves well to continue to serve students, employees, alumni and the Huntingdon community, for another century.