



*Not Self, But Others*

**Ferrum College**  
A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO  
OUR CENTENNIAL

**2008-2013**



## *Achieving Excellence through Student Success and Service*

# *The Ferrum College Ethos*

## *Achieving Excellence through Student Success and Service*

### *A Message from the President*

Speaking before the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1910, a Virginia Annual Conference representative made a plea for the education of young people in the Blue Ridge foothills. There were 9,400 school-aged children in a three-county area but only 1,400 were enrolled in school. The women of Virginia's Methodist churches accepted the challenge and worked with Conference personnel to make Ferrum Training School a reality. This missionary zeal has been the bedrock of Ferrum's ethos since the training school opened in 1913, and has continued through its history as a high school, junior college, and four-year baccalaureate program.

In this updated version of the strategic plan we continue to anticipate our 2013 Centennial while focusing on the next evolutionary steps on the Ferrum journey. The Plan is a working, actionable document, and I encourage everyone in our community to use it as such. In these pages, you will find evidence of our staunch commitment to improving the academic and social success of our students; read about the sense of mission, vision, and aspiration for the growth of the College; and learn of the College's dedication to working with others to achieve vibrant health through community and economic development in the Village of Ferrum and throughout western Franklin County.

I am grateful to all of you who exemplify Ferrum's motto, *Not Self But Others*, and who help create the vision and high standards that so define Ferrum College.



*Jennifer L. Braaten, President*



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# The Ferrum College Community

## *Converging Mission and Vision*

*Convergence between the historic mission of the College and the vision of our future is based upon certain Aspirations, Basic Assumptions, and Core Values that have been articulated by the Ferrum College Board of Trustees.*

### **Statement of Mission**

Ferrum College is a liberal arts institution founded on Christian principles and related to the United Methodist Church. It is our mission to educate students in the disciplines of higher learning and to help them be thoughtful and perceptive, to be articulate and professionally capable, and to be caring and concerned citizens in their community, nation, and world. We therefore commit ourselves to developing the whole student, both in openness to a wide range of intellectual discovery, and in the physical, spiritual, and social aspects of life.

Our campus environment supports service to others and the development of a personal code of values. Toward these ends, we expect all members of the campus community to treat each other with compassion, to respect each other's diverse qualities and backgrounds, and to support each other in the common pursuit of insight and discovery. In all these endeavors, we encourage students, faculty, and staff to appreciate excellence and to dedicate themselves to achieving it.

### **Vision Statement**

Ferrum College's unparalleled setting in Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains forms an inspiring backdrop for a unique and multifaceted experience that will focus on leading-edge learning opportunities, diverse outdoor, cultural, and service activities, and spiritual enrichment.



# The Ferrum College Community

## *Defining Characteristics*

### Aspirations

- I. Ferrum College will become nationally acclaimed for its approach to academic and co-curricular learning, demonstrating its motto in both word and deed: “Not Self, but Others.”
  - a. The academic program will be known for blending together the [perspectives of](#) the liberal arts and sciences with disciplinary and interdisciplinary programs of study through intentional and robust experiential and academic service learning experiences in both curricular and co-curricular venues. The academic program will aim to assist students in their pursuit of careers and/or graduate and professional education.
  - b. Student life will be known for its intentional development in academics, athletics, service, leadership, and life skills.
- II. As an institution affiliated with the United Methodist Church, the integrated College experience will reflect the ideals of spiritual development and value formation.
- III. Ferrum College graduates will be successful global citizens who are prepared academically, physically and spiritually to assume roles of influence and leadership in their chosen endeavors.



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## Basic Assumptions

- I. Ferrum College will primarily remain a residential institution serving traditional college-age students (2,000??).
- II. Ferrum College will continue to strategically pursue offering educational opportunities for non-traditional adult students.
- III. Ferrum College will express its community partnership through educational offerings and participation in civic activities, organizations, and economic development efforts.
- IV. Ferrum College will continue to provide access to capable students.
- V. Ferrum college will strengthen key academic majors, curricular and co-curricular programs of study (e.g., Honors Program; Student Leadership Program) and examine carefully the potential addition of others in order to strengthen the College for both the near and longer terms.
- VI. Ferrum College's curricular and co-curricular programs will include service/ experiential/ cross-cultural components.
- VII. Ferrum College will be sensitive to environmental issues in its planning and operations.

## Core Values

- I. Critical thinking.
- II. Career preparedness.
- III. Character education.
- IV. Communication skills.
- V. Church relatedness (faith-based).
- VI. Global citizenship.



# Achieving Institutional Effectiveness

*To fulfill its historic mission and achieve its vision, Ferrum College programs and personnel are focused on the accomplishment of six campus wide goals that are measured in terms of three key performance indicators.*

## Key Performance Indicators

- I. *Student success*, which measures success in terms of academic standing and persistence to graduation.
- II. *Full-time enrollment*, which measures success on the basis of recruitment and retention of the student body
- III. *Financial health*, which measures success in terms of comparable salaries, competitive facilities, and a Financial Composite Index that is reported in the annual audit.

## Campus Wide Goals (modified)

- I. Recruit and retain an appropriate student population.
- II. Provide a distinctive and robust academic program and student experience.
- III. Recruit and retain excellent faculty and staff at benchmark salaries.
- IV. Create and market excellence as we continually seek a more effective position in our sphere of influence.
- V. Develop, maintain, and manage competitive facilities and services, while strengthening our financial assets.



VI. Assess all aspects of the College's operations to determine its level of success in fulfilling the mission of the College.



# Achieving the Goals

*The remainder of this document records the objectives that have been identified and agreed upon as we accomplish the six campus wide goals. The Administrative Council of the College is ultimately responsible for making these goals and objectives operational in meaningful ways.*

## **Goal 1: Attract and Maintain an Appropriate Student Population**

*Ferrum College will develop a comprehensive and integrated approach to recruiting and retaining an appropriate student population by strengthening enrollment management practices and policies.*

*Objective 1.a. (Modified)*

Ferrum College will achieve a yearly applicant pool of 3000 by the year 2013, and full time enrollment of 2000 traditional-aged, mostly residential students.

*Objective 1.b.*

Ferrum College will enroll non-traditional students in its Adult Education program.

*Objective 1.c.*

Ferrum College will achieve 50 percent five-year graduation rate by 2010.

*Objective 1.d.*

Ferrum College will plan for the implementation of graduate programs in disciplines that are appropriate to the needs of our constituents, and will become a Level III Master's Degree-granting institution by 2013-14.



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**Goal 2: Provide a Distinctive Academic Program and Student Experience**

*Ferrum College will develop a comprehensive and integrated approach to student learning that includes a coherent academic and co-curricular program, coupled with a coordinated advising and academic support program that provides assistance to students.*

*Objective 2.a*

Ferrum College will continue to refine the *Pathways to Success* program focused on creating a strong student connection to Ferrum College’s academic and co-curricular learning culture, and that demonstrates a commitment to the welfare of each student.

*Objective 2.b.*

Ferrum College will continue to refine the core student learning experience (General Education) and its majors, minors and other programs of study as conceptualized and assessed through the Student Learning Outcomes.

*Objective 2.c.*

Ferrum College will develop a faculty and staff development program that enables our faculty and staff to strengthen and support our strategic student learning initiatives through the use of best practices in higher education pedagogy and scholarship.

*Objective 2.d*

Ferrum College will research, opportunities for creating new programs (traditional undergraduate, AEP, graduate). Based on market analyses and trends, a few strategically selected programs will be planned and implementing as institutional capacity allows.

*Objective 2.e*

Ferrum College will develop and implement a comprehensive assessment process to improve its programs for student learning.

*Objective 2.h.*

Ferrum College will engage in an ongoing, integrated, institution-wide data-based planning and evaluation process.

*Objective 2.i.n (NEW)*

Ferrum College will continue to enhance the campus environment to foster students' intellectual, social, ethical, and personal development through the development of a



seamless learning environment and the support of holistic student development throughout college.

**Goal 3: Provide a Distinctive Academic Program and Student Experience**

*Ferrum College will develop and implement a strategy for benchmarking faculty and staff salaries and compensation using appropriate comparison peer institutions from across the nation.*

*Objective 3.a.*

Ferrum College will incorporate into its five-year budget planning models a salary benchmarking pool and a projected percentage for across the board increases for faculty and staff salary adjustments.

*Objective 3.b.*

Ferrum College will generate a five-year projection of faculty and staff retirements and prepare a strategic plan for new hires that includes internal considerations such as curriculum development, program review, market trends, collaborative and consortial ventures, student enrollment, and external considerations.

*Objective 3.c.*

Ferrum College will continue to enhance the faculty and staff development program by placing emphasis on the College strategic initiatives, practical liberal arts, integrated academic service and experiential learning, innovative pedagogies (including instructional design and technology), use of assessment for continuous improvement, and curricular/co-curricular integration..

**Goal 4: Market Excellence and Create a More Effective Position in Our Sphere of Influence**

*Ferrum College will develop a comprehensive and integrated program to communicate its excellence and strengthen its ties to the community.*



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*Objective 4.a.*

Ferrum College will continually evaluate its self-image and develop targeted communication strategies for internal and external audiences.

*Objective 4.b.*

Ferrum College will develop partnerships and implement outreach opportunities to strengthen its ties to the community and its many constituents.

*Objective 4.c.*

Ferrum College will actively seek to better serve the needs of the surrounding community regarding health and social services, economic development, community building, and other aspects of community revitalization.

*Objective 4.d.*

Ferrum College will market its new conference facilities to the community.

*Objective 4.e.*

Ferrum College will increase its visibility with middle and high schools, and with other colleges and universities.

**Goal 5: Develop, Maintain, and Manage Competitive Facilities and Services, While Strengthening Our Financial Assets**

*Ferrum College will develop a comprehensive and integrated program to enhance its physical plant, improve its technological services, and strengthen its financial resources.*

*Objective 5.a.*

Ferrum College will engage in master facilities planning and community development to ensure the adequacy of its physical plant in support of student learning and those who live and work in this setting.

*Objective 5.b.*

Ferrum College will strengthen its financial stability and expand its revenue sources and assets to ensure the long term excellence of programs, services, and facilities.

*Objective 5.c.*

Ferrum College will work with the Blue Ridge Foundation and other entities to seek additional funding for community development and revitalization projects.



*Objective 5.d.*

Ferrum College will develop a comprehensive plan for student, faculty, staff, and instructional computing that includes a new computing philosophy and plans for procurement and professional development. (OLD)

*Objective 5.d. (MODIFIED)*

Ferrum College will provide reliable and secure internet access from every classroom, dormitory room, and office on campus. The College will also provide wireless internet access in every classroom and office building on campus.

*Objective 5.e. (NEW)*

Ferrum College will provide and support an instructional technology program that includes an easily-accessed and contemporary course-management system as well as training and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.

*Objective 5.f. (NEW)*

Ferrum College will develop a comprehensive analysis of the current administrative computing system, the College's anticipated future needs for administrative computing, and a plan for how we move from where we are to where we need to be.

*Objective 5.g. (NEW)*

Ferrum College will develop and implement data security and privacy policies, practices, and audits which are consistent with current best-practices for institutions of higher education.

**Goal 6: Assess All Aspects of Institutional Effectiveness**

*Ferrum College will assess all aspects of its operations to determine its level of success in fulfilling the mission of the College.*

*Objective 6.a.*



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Ferrum College will engage in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that incorporate a systematic review of programs and services that (a) results in continuing improvement, and (b) demonstrates that the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission.

*Objective 6.b.*

Ferrum College will develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) and demonstrate that the QEP is part of an ongoing planning and evaluation process

*Objective 6.c.*

Ferrum College will identify expected outcomes for its educational programs and its administrative and educational support services; assess whether it achieves these outcomes; and provide evidence of improvement based on analysis of those results.

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**Notes**