

PLU 2010
THE NEXT LEVEL OF DISTINCTION

APRIL 15, 2003

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Students are at the heart of the university's mission—our first commitment is to serve, support and empower them. Fulfilling this commitment will require effort, planning, and a serious allocation of time, energy and resources on the part of the entire university community to more clearly articulate our mission and the value of a PLU education to prospective students and their families, to build an even stronger, more vital student recruiting program; and to refine and expand our cocurricular offerings.

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PLU is an academic community with its own unique and complex culture shaped not only by its history and context, but flowing from its mission: "educating for lives of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership and care—for people, for their communities and for the earth." This is an educational mission and so makes PLU's culture essentially and integrally an academic culture.

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The university claims both a distinctive mission—a powerful determination to awaken students to an unfolding sense of meaning and purpose in their lives—and an intellectually challenging and creative faculty. To serve that mission, PLU also claims distinction and excellence in its fundamental understanding of knowledge and learning and in carefully selected dimensions of its academic program, particularly international education and collaborative student/faculty research and creative projects.

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The university must bring the same degree of purposefulness to planning and budgeting that it brings to learning and teaching. The next level of distinction will be difficult to reach without purposeful allocation of resources in support of long-range goals and strategic plans. PLU 2010 provides the framework for conversation. The culture and procedures for governance provide the framework for decision-making. The task is to translate conversation into decisions and go boldly into the future.

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FOREWORD

Completion of the long-range plan, PLU 2010: The Next Level of Distinction, marks the threshold of a remarkable new era in the life of Pacific Lutheran University. Setting forth our highest hopes for the future, this document will serve as the framework for strategic planning in the years immediately ahead.

Preparation of PLU 2010 began during the 1999-2000 academic year. At 24 “town meetings” in the U.S. and abroad, more than 1,300 PLU alumni and other friends gathered to discuss the university’s future. Clear and consistent themes emerged from these conversations, including the importance of our Lutheran heritage, the centrality of the liberal arts, our focus on encouraging global perspectives and our emphasis on educating for lives of service. These key themes helped shape more than two years of campus conversation and writing and now they inform this final report. There has, in other words, been a remarkable focus and consensus on key ideas throughout the planning process.

The 2010 report reaffirms PLU’s core identity as a liberal arts Lutheran university in the Pacific Northwest. That identity is the platform from which we will address the challenges of the future:

- *building a more distinctive academic program,*
- *claiming PLU’s unique culture,*
- *engaging fully our students in the learning process,*
- *strengthening our resource base, and more completely realizing our mission.*

In addition to describing PLU's identity—who we are—the PLU 2010 report points the university in a clear direction—where we are headed—and provides a framework for detailed planning and strategic action. The report, however, is not itself a strategic plan. It does not preempt. Instead it offers a vision to guide ongoing annual planning, it informs decision-making, and it supports established governance structures.

As was the case with PLU 2000, each chapter of this report includes a series of recommendations. These 2010 recommendations are not mandated actions or imperatives. They are solely advisory in intent and purpose. They set forth areas that need attention, that open new possibilities, and that characterize priorities and choices. Following each recommendation is a set of possible actions that emerged from the planning process. They amount to a vision statement against which decisions will be made in the coming years, guiding ongoing annual planning across the university and engaging the full campus governance structure.

The ultimate goal of the 2010 planning process has been to develop a statement of identity and direction that captures a workable consensus born of three years of listening and discussing, writing and reflecting. Such a consensus will be a great strength as the university pursues the opportunities and navigates the challenges of the current decade.

CHAPTER I
MISSION AND VISION:
A FRAMEWORK FOR DISTINCTION

The mission statement that emerged from Pacific Lutheran University’s previous long-range plan, *PLU 2000: Embracing the 21st Century*, captured well our identity, strengths and purpose: “PLU seeks to empower students for lives of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership, and care—for other people, for their communities, and for the earth.”

Over the past seven years, the university community has increasingly embraced and employed this statement as a powerful and effective expression of PLU’s central mission and vocation. It flows directly from the university’s Lutheran tradition, and it captures the institution’s commitment to purposeful learning, academic rigor and lifelong vocations of service. Now the 2010 planning process has clarified, reaffirmed and elaborated on that mission statement and has set out a vision for the future based on the best of our past accomplishments. Indeed, this report interprets and applies this mission statement as a guide for PLU’s future—a future that is grounded in the university’s Lutheran heritage and its location in the Pacific Northwest, a future that is energized by aspirations to enhance the distinctiveness of its programs and to fulfill its mission more effectively.

ASPIRATIONS

By its very character, PLU is a striving place—a learning community focused on progress and achievement and motivated always by compelling notions of possibility. These possibilities, in turn, find form and expression as the university community articulates its shared vision, aspirations and goals.

As the university looks to 2010 and beyond, five aspirations frame its direction, its hopes and its goals: strengthening academic excellence, expanding community engagement, enhancing global perspectives and local commitments, nurturing a sense of life as vocation and seeking fiscal strength.

Strengthening Academic Excellence. At PLU the pursuit of the highest level of academic excellence is understood and measured both by traditional standards and by the university's own understandings.

Ours is an academic experience that helps all individual students discover their own gifts and maximize their achievement. Here students are fully engaged in the daily tasks of learning and knowing, in close relationship with faculty mentors and guides, and increasingly able and motivated to shape their own learning experiences.

Excellence in academic programs at PLU is characterized by wholeness and coherence, a sense of unity that elucidates the inter-relatedness of knowledge and honors the complexity of multiple perspectives. The university welcomes the dialectic and tensions that accompany reason and faith as models of knowing, theory and practice as strategies for learning, liberal arts and professional programs as fields of study, and research and teaching as areas of professional activity.

The university's notion of academic excellence commits all members of the community to challenge and support students, to build a vital and dedicated faculty and staff, to regularly refine and improve the academic program, and to provide adequate resources for the learning environment.

Expanding Community Engagement. PLU is dedicated to building a strong, collegial and dynamic learning community. Such a community affirms and wel-

comes the gifts of each person and respects the rights of each individual, even as it calls all into common purpose and responsible citizenship. It is, at its best, a community enriched by diversity, strengthened by shared traditions and values, aware of its frailty, yet bold in its aspirations.

In an academic community, learning occurs most readily when able and motivated students share common cause and experience with capable and caring faculty and staff. Their interactions are dynamic, for they require challenge and risk as well as support and respect. Learning and knowing are neither predictable nor linear, but rather spontaneous and creative, sometimes random and always deeply personal.

Community at PLU is enhanced by its vital urban location, the diversity of its student body and the endless variety of life itself. While this complexity gives rise to substantial challenges, the university's resolve holds firm its conviction that learning in community is an institutional hallmark that is utterly foundational to all notions of purposeful learning in service to others.

Enhancing Global Perspectives and Local Commitments. PLU's aspirations to academic excellence and an engaged community are framed by a global perspective. Such a perspective is, in one sense, without boundaries and, in another, profoundly local. International education is not a flight from the university campus or American society, but ultimately a more vital and insightful way to engage them both.

Hence, the university will seek to internationalize its curriculum, encourage study abroad and diversify its community, even as it builds connections with its nearest neighbors. Said differently, the global/local dialectic will readily define PLU and have the potential to enrich both its programs and its culture.

Nurturing a Sense of Life as Vocation. Lutherans understand all of creation and life itself as the gifts of a caring God. Likewise, the mind is a precious gift, education is a calling, and a sense of purpose is essential to human fulfillment. At PLU, the experience of each student is a journey toward discovery and new understanding. The university strives to awaken the curiosity of each learner so that all of life becomes a quest for knowledge and understanding, a journey shaped by what human beings can know, and guided by what they believe. Faith, values, and commitments are essential to nurturing a sense of life as vocation—a call to serve others and even the whole world. Only then can life move beyond the interests of self; and only then can education attain its ultimate value.

Seeking Fiscal Strength. PLU's desire for educational excellence has encouraged (and frequently delivered) bold achievement with very modest capital and financial resources. The university gives living expression to the claim that a university's most important assets are intellectual and not financial. Nonetheless, sustained excellence ultimately requires first-rate facilities and equipment, adequate compensation, and of course, strong financial aid programs. So PLU will continue its aggressive drive to move from stability to strength.

FOUNDATIONS

A Lutheran Heritage. Throughout PLU's history our Lutheran heritage has been the foundation on which past achievements and plans for the future have been based. It is even more true today that our aspirations and plans for action are shaped by the rich, inclusive, and unique environment for teaching and learning that is a hallmark of a university of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As PLU is shaped in fundamental ways by its Lutheran roots and legacy, it is important to ask: What does it mean to be a Lutheran university?

Historically, it means that PLU is part of an educational tradition that stretches back to and was profoundly influenced by Martin Luther and the Reformation. The Reformation was initially a university event, launched by a cadre of intellectuals at the University of Wittenberg. Luther was the leader, and some of his most compelling theological and educational ideas are still foundational at PLU. Those ideas are as vital today as when Luther professed them, and have far transcended any parochial or personal bounds they might have appeared to have at times.

Education at PLU, like other modern universities, is first built upon *intellectual freedom*, a theme initiated by Luther in the Reformation. Universities are places where scholars communicate to others the fruits of their study. Such study requires freedom, and one cannot imagine modern European and American education or intellectual life without it. In his own situation Luther wrote: "No science [including theology] should stand in the way of another science, but each should continue to have its own mode of procedure and its own terms."

Second, the Lutheran idea of *vocation* is fundamental in guiding this university. It hit with revolutionary impact in the 16th century and is highly relevant today. Vocation is not the work we do, though that has great value. Vocation connotes another level, for it means being called to deep and energizing purpose—welcomed by God into the opportunities and responsibilities inherent in creation, into an ethic of human community, and into an understanding that the gifts of self and nature are not to be plundered. We should be servants and rescuers, not bystanders or perpetrators. At PLU, students are deliberately stimulated and nurtured to begin in earnest the formation of meaning and purpose, and a sense of vocation for their lives.

Third, education at PLU has been and continues to be shaped by Luther's *creative, dialectical theology relating faith to all of life*. It distinguishes between the realm of God's overtly gracious salvation for humanity, and the entire created world where God's agency is more hidden. The former, Luther thought, was expressed most powerfully in the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the administration of the sacraments. The latter side of God's activity, he proclaimed, includes all human work and social institutions, including intellectual activity and education. It, too, is to be taken with the utmost seriousness; it is good, and never to be denigrated or avoided. Moreover, it is open to free and creative study, as well as responsible activity and analysis using reason and justice as norms.

There is necessarily a constant dialogue between the two modes of God's expression—a constant conversation, one might say, between Christ and culture. In that conversation Luther was not afraid of tension and challenge. PLU approaches other contemporary themes at the center of its educational mission in a similar, and distinctly Lutheran, fashion: liberal arts and professional studies, teaching and research, mind and body, singularity and diversity, and faith and reason. These pairings are not either-or alternatives, nor are they weak or pallid compromises. Rather, both concepts in each pairing are to be held in fruitful interplay and creative tension, for they are bold proclamations that not only guide but continually stimulate the university.

In addition to these three foundational ideas—academic freedom, lives of vocation, and a creative, dialectical theology—Luther also emphasized liberal arts education as it was expressed in the Christian humanism of his day. He introduced the notion of compulsory education for both genders.

With a daring enthusiasm for learning and a sense of vocation and service, PLU is dedicated to the highest ideals of liberal and professional education and service to others. Lutherans establish and maintain colleges and universities for these reasons—giving society the kinds of leaders and citizens it needs, the kind who serve all of the world and work for human dignity and justice.

A Pacific Northwest Location. PLU today reflects both its Lutheran heritage and its Pacific Northwest location. Both mark the university, and both are fundamental as the institution looks to the future.

First, PLU is a young university. Founded in 1890, the university, did not evolve from an academy to a four-year college until 1940 and did not claim full university status until 1960, owing largely to the small number of Lutherans in the Northwest (and consequent financial constraints). This long, courageous and challenge-filled journey means that PLU is, in many important ways, a post-World War II institution. Today the university is young in spirit, entrepreneurial in character and bold in aspirations, eagerly welcoming new people and possibilities. Although it lacks the benefit of large constituencies and large endowments, PLU is an energetic and exciting place.

PLU also reflects the cultural ethos of the West. Mobility is high, personal independence is valued, egalitarian values are strong, diversity is apparent and environmental issues are a priority. Social institutions are fragile. Dominant norms and values are elusive, and the region continues to be the least churched in the United States. It is always a powerful challenge for a church-related liberal arts university to remain faithful to its theological heritage and effectively engaged in its context. And it is an even greater challenge to articulate Luther's dialectical theology and understanding of vocation in a Pacific Northwest setting that is

increasingly diverse and largely secular. Yet, the university's success suggests the challenge can be met.

PLU's Pacific Northwest setting also locates the university on the Pacific Rim. Over the past 30 years, relationships with Asian neighbors as well as Scandinavian ancestors have flourished. The university's emerging international focus is a natural reflection of its coastal location, its ethnic roots and contemporary vision, and the growing ethnic diversity of the entire university community.

FROM ASPIRATION AND FOUNDATIONS TO ACTION

The five action-oriented aspirations described above—cultivating academic excellence, building an engaged community, enhancing global perspectives, seeking fiscal strength and nurturing a sense of life as vocation—express the university's highest hopes. They represent ideals to be pursued; they are much more than concrete goals that can be rapidly achieved or simply measured. They quickly assume definition and flavor when understood in the context of PLU's Lutheran history and tradition, its Pacific Northwest location, and its sense of mission and purpose. Taken in context, these aspirations point directly to the chapters that follow, and the recommendations that emerge.

CHAPTER II
AWAKENED TO THE WORLD:
WHERE COMMITTED STUDENTS DISCOVER MEANING AND PURPOSE

Students are at the heart of the university's mission—the first commitment is to serve, support and empower them. Fulfilling this commitment will require effort, planning and a serious allocation of time, energy and resources on the part of the entire university community. In the years ahead the university must more clearly articulate the value of a PLU education to prospective students and their families; build an even more vital student recruiting and orientation program; and refine and expand campus cocurricular offerings.

Every institution of higher education seeks the best and the brightest students. Most universities, when they use this terminology, are referring only to grade point averages, test scores, and honors earned by prospective applicants. PLU, too, values these traditional indicators of academic accomplishment and seeks students who manifest them. The successes of PLU graduates is clear:

- 71 percent of those who graduate from PLU finish in four years.
- Within six months of graduation, 83 percent are employed full-time and 11 percent are enrolled in graduate school.
- Six months after completing their degrees, 95 percent of graduates say their job or graduate program is related to their long-term career goals, and
- 79 percent have a job related to their major.
- 60 graduates have received Fulbright Scholarships since 1975.
- Two-thirds of medical school applicants and nearly 100 percent of dental school applicants are accepted.¹

However, PLU expectations for student achievement do not end with these traditional measurements. PLU is distinctive because it seeks to attract academically

capable students who also are prepared to welcome intellectual challenge and who are willing to join with faculty and staff in creating an engaged and distinctive educational community. PLU offers students learning opportunities that foster and develop their capacity to work closely with faculty, staff and classmates to pursue and use knowledge in ways that benefit others.

Articulating the PLU Story

Articulating the character and the unique value of a PLU education in a clear and compelling way is increasingly important in attracting students who are academically strong, who are open to new ideas and people, and who are willing to enter into a community characterized by study, dialogue, inquiry and exploration. Success in this endeavor will require the continued development and refinement of the distinctive PLU experience as described to prospective students and their families so they fully understand the rich array of opportunities that await them here. The PLU story centers on its mission and affirms a commitment to ensure that students think deeply, act responsibly and live joyfully.

Many prospective and current students may not fully or immediately understand either the unique value of such a PLU education or the kind of thinking and engagement it demands of them. Some will have been shaped by years of study in impersonal institutions where relatively little attention has been paid to thoughtful reading, writing, and conversation, to critical thinking and problem solving, and to deep engagement with persons and ideas. Others will initially think of higher education solely as a means toward accomplishing a very instrumental goal or gaining a credential that can ensure employment. Still others, coming to us after years in the workforce or home, will have little within their frame of reference to help them understand what to expect in a university with a mission such as PLU's.

And so the university must thoroughly consider how it will attract and initiate students into the wonder and challenge of learning and thinking and engaging with others around important ideas. It must offer them a varied set of learning opportunities that will challenge and stretch them. In short, the university seeks students who come to the university open, ready, and able to learn, and the university must respond by inviting them into a community where rigorous and civil exploration of ideas, beliefs, values and the created world occurs on a daily basis.

Our university's public message must:

- emphasize that the vision of excellence includes both academic achievement and the pursuit of meaning and purpose;
- stress that PLU is committed both to cultivating students' minds and to developing within them a set of dispositions, attitudes, and habits that will equip them for a lifetime of joy, learning, leadership and service;
- emphasize the challenges they will face and the hard work that will be required of them and, at the same time, emphasize the high level of support they will receive as a member of the PLU community;
- assist our students in imagining boldly what an education that is focused on inquiry, service, leadership, and care entails; and
- invite them into our community by painting an honest, clear, and compelling picture of life and work and study at Pacific Lutheran University.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY CONTINUE TO DEVELOP AND REFINE MESSAGES THAT ACCURATELY AND EFFECTIVELY DESCRIBE PLU FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *USE VARIOUS MEDIA BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE UNIVERSITY TO REGULARLY, CONSISTENTLY AND PERSUASIVELY COMMUNICATE THE PLU MESSAGE TO PROSPECTIVE AND CURRENT STUDENTS*
- *REGULARLY ENGAGE FACULTY AND STAFF IN ONGOING MESSAGE DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATION*
- *DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A REGULAR PROGRAM OF MARKET RESEARCH TO ASSIST IN "TESTING" AND REFINING THE MESSAGE AND IN GUIDING EFFORTS TO ATTRACT, RECRUIT AND RETAIN STUDENTS*

ENHANCING RECRUITING AND BUILDING DIVERSITY

The university must place a high priority on building an even stronger admissions recruiting program in order to ensure a bright, talented, engaged and ethnically diverse and balanced student population. It must strategically reach out to more potential students in our city, state, region, nation and world. PLU must strengthen existing recruiting networks and build new ones and must engage all members of the campus community in recruitment, support and retention efforts.

As recruiting strategies are enhanced, PLU must embrace our place in a world where diversity and difference are the hallmarks of families, schools, neighborhoods and cultures. In a focused way, the university must seek to become a place where students representing a wide range of socio-economic, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds engage with one another and with equally diverse faculty and staff. Experiences, values, and perspectives and beliefs that each person brings with him or her must be acknowledged and respected as the community learns to understand and celebrate difference and diversity.

In order to honor a commitment to diversity and, specifically, to recruiting and supporting an increasingly diverse student body, the PLU community must first recognize structures already in place that support work in this area. These include an impressive number of academic opportunities to engage with alternative and cross-cultural perspectives, growing international and intercultural programs, a vibrant and active Diversity Center and a host of others. Efforts for the future should honor and build upon these structures. They should also, though, recognize that there is much work ahead.

In *PLU 2000* the university community committed itself to celebrating and pursuing diversity. Many of the objectives embraced in that report have been achieved with at least some measure of success. However, the recruitment and retention

of “a diverse range of students and employees” has been only partially realized. The university’s ability to become a place of engagement with, exploration of, and conversation about multiple perspectives will depend, in part, on reaching out to and attracting a larger number of students who bring a range of perspectives, cultural backgrounds and life experiences with them. It will also depend on the ways such students are drawn into the university community—and on the ways faculty and staff honor distinctions and differences and seek to know and understand people on their own terms. The university intends to redouble its commitment to diversity and take seriously what this commitment entails by encouraging necessary resources, time and energy.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY GIVE HIGH PRIORITY TO BUILDING AN EVEN STRONGER PROGRAM OF STUDENT RECRUITMENT TO REACH OUR TRADITIONAL CONSTITUENCIES WHILE GIVING SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON ATTRACTING AND RETAINING A DIVERSE GROUP OF STUDENTS.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *ARTICULATE CLEARLY THE RICH SENSE OF DIVERSITY INHERENT IN AND INSPIRED BY OUR HERITAGE—PROVIDING A LIBERAL, LIFE SHAPING AND WORLD CHALLENGED EDUCATION FOR ALL*
- *DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT AN EARLY IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM FOR HIGH PRIORITY PROSPECTS*
- *ENGAGE IN STRONG OUTREACH TO “FEEDER” ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING HIGH SCHOOLS, COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND OTHER COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES*
- *DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN STUDENTS OF COLOR, INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, STUDENTS WITH DIVERSE RELIGIOUS AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS AND NONTRADITIONAL AGE LEARNERS*

THE COCURRICULAR CAMPUS

The university must do more to support and develop campus cocurricular programs that offer students opportunities for deep engagement with people, cultures, ideas and the environment. It must discover ways to better align activities in the classroom and in the world and provide students with a rich array of opportunities to inquire into the human condition and natural world as they learn to care for, lead and serve within it.

In many ways, an education at PLU is an invitation to join a journey of discovery. On this journey, students should be asked, "What are you going to do with your one wild and precious life?"² Faculty, staff and administrators must help them recognize and revel in the uncertainties, possibilities and surprises that life holds and to appreciate the uniqueness and beauty of each human life. As PLU guides them, it must engage in focused efforts, both to retain students and to offer them a varied set of opportunities within and outside of classes that foster strong and positive relationships, provide opportunities for experiential learning, leadership and service, and foster deep and pervasive feelings of belonging. PLU must create ways for students to assume an increasingly large role in shaping the work of the university and their own education and we must support students physically, emotionally, ethically, and intellectually as they grow as thinkers, learners, and citizens of such a community. Each should leave with a greater sense of his or her place and purpose and with a commitment to lead and to serve in a diverse and ever-changing world.

This report reaffirms an understanding of education that values relationships and experiences within and outside of classrooms and an understanding of PLU as a community where everyone matters and contributes. These understandings compel recognition of the many staff members who create and maintain different learning environments and who develop a host of powerful cocurricular experiences for students. The university must honor and support these staff and discover ways to strengthen and focus their work and align it more closely with work within the academic arena. The shared focus must be on supporting students in their journey toward a lifetime of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership and care.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY SHOULD SUPPORT AN ARRAY OF COCURRICULAR ACTIVITIES THAT PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH PEOPLE, CULTURES, IDEAS, AND THE NATURAL WORLD.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *SHARE AND CELEBRATE MORE FREQUENTLY THE CHALLENGING EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS ENGAGING THE INTELLECTUALLY AND SPIRITUALLY CREATED WORLD*
- *DESIGN AND CREATE ACTIVITIES AND PHYSICAL SPACES THAT BETTER ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY INTERACTION, REFLECTION, STUDY, PLAY, AND WORSHIP*
- *RE-CONCEPTUALIZE THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG ACADEMIC AND COCURRICULAR PROGRAMS TO DISCOVER WAYS TO BETTER ALIGN AND SHARE WORK THAT PROMOTES STUDENT GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT*

CHAPTER III

**COMMITTED TO A FLOURISHING ACADEMIC CULTURE:
CULTIVATING AN INTELLECTUALLY VIBRANT, CREATIVE AND
CONNECTED ACADEMIC COMMUNITY**

Pacific Lutheran University is an academic community with its own unique and complex culture shaped not only by its history and context, but flowing from its mission: “educating for lives of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership and care—for people, for their communities and for the earth.” This is an educational mission and so makes PLU’s culture essentially and integrally an academic culture.

Culture serves as a community’s organizing core, shaping and containing a community, and expressing its vision, values, goals, purposes, practices, sensibilities, expectations, norms, boundaries and the rights and obligations of membership. It carries forward the community’s deepest vision beyond the memory or participation of any single member. Hence, an institution’s culture is a powerful and essential resource that needs to be cultivated, especially at times of institutional transition and broader social change.

PLU: AN ACADEMIC COMMUNITY WITH A DISTINCTIVE CULTURE

PLU moves into the 21st century engaged with multiple opportunities and challenges. It is welcoming large numbers of new faculty and staff as a result of retirements, exploring more fully the implications of its Pacific Rim location, and integrating new technological capacities for managing the institution. At the same time the university is dealing with the realities of new constraints in financial commitments to higher education on the part of both government and the private sector, and a growing tendency to value higher education exclusively for its credentialing. As the 21st century begins the university must address the public's

diminishing understanding of the necessity of the life of the mind for a humane future and for the survival of the ecosystems that sustain life. Given the contemporary context, it is a bold move for PLU to articulate for itself and the larger public its distinctive culture as an academic community. This process clarifies values and vision, brings into relief how policies and resource allocations should be congruent with the university's deepest purposes, and so contributes to making wise choices about PLU's future.

The PLU academic community is a particular kind of professional community. It is not a family, though it is a context within which those involved experience a range of relationships that support their growth and maturation. It is not a church, though it is a setting in which questions of faith—questions of meaning and purpose, or vocation—are encouraged and explored with respect and intellectual rigor. It is not a factory, though knowledge is produced. It is not a marketplace, though learning is acquired. An academic community is distinct.

Cultural and Religious Roots. PLU's academic community is distinctive in three ways. First, the university draws from its cultural and religious roots in the Renaissance and Reformation the belief that education expands possibilities for meaningful life and work and for contributing to a more just and equitable society. Only an education of breadth, depth, rigor and purpose turns this belief into a real possibility for students. Committed to making that available to a diverse student population, PLU provides "an elite education for all." "Elite" refers to a quality of education that, historically, was available only to the socially privileged. At PLU such an education is available to "all" who enter the university, whether they matriculate for a liberal arts or a professional degree.

Clarity about this commitment enabled the university to serve the ethnic immigrants who founded PLU, the soldiers who became adult students after World

War II, and today's new immigrant communities, first-generation college students, returning adult students, students with disabilities, underrepresented ethnic minorities, exceptionally gifted students, highly creative students—all who seek an empowering educational experience. PLU is unapologetic about its commitment to make an excellent education available to all who matriculate.

Providing such a first-class education for all necessitates excellence and high standards. All segments of the university, from admissions to student life, from faculty instructors to advisors, must help students grasp that by entering the university, they are entering a culture in which commitment to learning, reasoning and excellence is required. All divisions of the university must collaborate to socialize students into a community whose members cultivate an attitude of openness, a willingness to be changed in pursuit of truth and a deeper understanding of all of life. All aspects of the university should support the life of the mind inside and outside the classroom.

Life of the Mind. Second, PLU's academic culture recognizes that higher education involves complex intellectual, moral and social challenges. Sometimes this is expressed as PLU's commitment to the education of whole persons. That holistic education, however, is constructed around the practices of the life of the mind placed at the center of the community. Life of the mind captures mature human beings practicing rigorous critical reasoning and creative imagination as they explore the meaning of life, address novel challenges, grapple with problems and live with integrity. Supporting students to participate in the life of the mind requires attending to them as whole persons—body, mind and spirit. At the same time, it entails doing so in ways that invite students to appreciate their privileged status as part of the 1 percent of the world's population that goes to college, that lead them to engage their world, and that encourage consideration of a worthy vocation for their lives.

The participation of students, faculty and staff in this enterprise creates a mutual relationship of privileges and responsibilities, a covenantal relationship in which all are bound to each other by their commitment to the educational mission of the university, and to the disciplines, practices and dispositions it entails. In this covenantal relationship, all dimensions of the university—from curricular requirements to cocurricular activities to the requirements of residential life—should support the pursuit of an intellectual life that challenges individuals to grow.

In a society that approaches education primarily as a consumer commodity, PLU's academic culture will deliberately and self-consciously assist students to understand that the practices of the life of the mind are valuable, entail serious commitment of time and energy and change those who undertake them, often in profound ways. PLU's academic community will be most richly and powerfully effective for students when all dimensions of the PLU experience are aligned to support students' development of active, independent, intellectual lives.

Contributing to the Larger Good. Thirdly, PLU's academic culture is committed to "an ecumenically understood public welfare," to broad human and ecological good throughout the world.³ This is integral to PLU's understanding of the life of the mind. Whether one works on minute, incremental developments in cell research, deciphers an ancient text, refines a nursing technique or engages in applied social research, one's activity is situated in and contributes to the larger good. Within PLU's academic culture, then, knowledge is not completely sufficient as its own end, nor is it sufficient as a tool for one's self-interest. Knowledge is situated, value-saturated and ordered to broader ends. Those who gain knowledge and the privilege and power a university education brings must make ethical decisions about how they will use their knowledge and the possibilities it presents. As PLU matures as an academic community committed to excellence,

it becomes more fully a place that can help people grow and mature, find balance between individuality and group responsibility, and see themselves as important contributors to communities.⁴

BUILDING A STRONGER ACADEMIC CULTURE AT PLU: A COMMUNITY PROJECT

Historically, PLU has been an academic community marked by strong faculty governance, cooperation between faculty and staff and a commitment to excellent education, that includes concern for all dimensions of students' development. As PLU moves into the future, it needs to think through how to advance these commitments in ways that further cultivate its academic culture.

Everyone at the university shares the project of building PLU's academic culture. The academic community will be most rich and powerfully effective for students when all dimensions of the PLU experience are aligned to support students' development of active, disciplined, independent, intellectual lives. Academic culture thrives when everyone carries out their educational work in ways that allow students to develop their greatest possible capacities in the life of the mind. Strengthening the academic culture at PLU in this way requires continued and expanded consultation and collaboration across the campus.

A number of interrelated factors are integral to the PLU community strengthening its academic culture. First is commitment to a broadly shared understanding of academic culture and its significance. Without shared understanding of academic culture, the life of the mind will be perceived as simply one dimension of PLU's educational experience among many others rather than the center of that experience. Clarity about academic culture will help the university remain purposeful in its life.

Second, there needs to exist a more extensive knowledge of the interrelationship of people, roles and mission across the university on the part of all who work at PLU. Broader understanding of this interrelationship by faculty and staff will increase their effectiveness in aligning curricular, cocurricular, and other programs, services and resources.

Third is decision-making processes and practices. Decision-making practices must support the educational mission of the university and respect the expertise and responsibilities of faculty and staff. Sustained and effective communication across all segments of the university strengthens and makes more visible a genuine coherence in the culture that is so much more vital than superficial uniformity. Genuine coherence permeates all dimensions of the community from curriculum, teaching, advising and other academic support, through cocurricular programming, to administrative decision-making, clerical tasks, and resource allocation, and so advances the university's mission. Faculty and staff need to draw on their full range of expertise around effective decision-making so that their work together supports genuine cultural coherence.

Fourth, is a renewed commitment to the life of the mind at PLU. The academic community thrives best when the classroom and scholarship are enhanced by lively and high quality intellectual opportunities that permeate cocurricular campus events, residential living, university publications and development ventures. Further, in today's climate, the university must exhibit and explain the life of the mind in order to articulate its institutional vocation and value to constituencies and to the larger public. Attending to these four interrelated factors will ensure PLU can provide students the academic culture that is integral to an excellent education.

Achieving the collaboration among faculty and staff envisioned here is a challenge for any university and especially so at this time in higher education. Significant faculty and staff turnover, pressures for efficiency and lack of clarity about how to align expertise and experience from different sectors of the university contribute to the challenge. Yet, the PLU community must commit to building a stronger, more vital academic culture if it is to reach and sustain its desired level of academic distinctiveness and focus on excellent education.

The following recommendations will contribute to strengthening PLU as an academic community with a distinctive culture.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY CLARIFY AND BROADEN THE UNDERSTANDING OF ACADEMIC CULTURE ACROSS THE UNIVERSITY. THIS INCLUDES ARTICULATING HOW A THRIVING ACADEMIC CULTURE DISTINGUISHES A UNIVERSITY-LEVEL EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT FROM OTHER EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS AND HOW THAT CULTURE DEPENDS ON THE ALIGNMENT OF ACADEMIC AND DEVELOPMENTAL DIMENSIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY'S PROGRAMS.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY USE STAFF AND FACULTY ORIENTATION AND TRAINING TO EXTEND THE UNDERSTANDING OF ALL ABOUT HOW EACH PERSON'S ROLE AND TASKS CONTRIBUTE TO PLU'S EDUCATIONAL MISSION AND HOW THESE ARE INTERCONNECTED WITH THE ROLES AND TASKS OF OTHERS. ORIENTATION SHOULD INCLUDE:

- *PRESENTATION OF THE UNIVERSITY'S EDUCATIONAL MISSION, ACADEMIC CULTURE AND APPROACH TO STUDENTS*
- *EXPLANATION OF HOW FACULTY AND STAFF CONTRIBUTE TO THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY AND COLLABORATE WITH EACH OTHER*
- *EDUCATION ABOUT ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND SHARED GOVERNANCE*
- *OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF AND FACULTY TO DISCUSS WITH EACH OTHER HOW THEIR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES INTERTWINE*

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY REVIEW DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AND REVISE THEM SO THAT DECISION-MAKING WILL BE CHARACTERIZED BY:

- *EDUCATIONAL MISSION AS THE DETERMINATIVE CRITERION FOR ALL DECISIONS*
- *CONSULTATION AS POSSIBLE WITH PERSONS WHO HAVE RELEVANT INFORMATION AND WHO WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE DECISION*
- *IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS OR PROPOSED ACTIVITIES ONLY AFTER CONSIDERING HOW THEY INFLUENCE THE CARRYING OUT OF THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY*
- *RECOGNITION OF THE CENTRAL ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE FACULTY IN CURRICULUM AND BOTH FACULTY AND STAFF IN UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE*

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY DEVELOP PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AMONG STAFF AND FACULTY THAT RESPECT AND DRAW ON THE EXPERTISE OF EACH, AND THAT RESULT IN MORE EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION IN SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY'S MISSION AND CONTRIBUTE TO A THRIVING ACADEMIC CULTURE.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY FEATURE THE LIFE OF THE MIND MORE VIGOROUSLY AND BROADLY ACROSS THE CAMPUS.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *INCREASE AND ENHANCE THE FACULTY CAMPUS LIFE COMMITTEE'S CONNECTIONS TO STUDENT LIFE, THE DIVERSITY OFFICE, ASPLU, AND OTHER OFFICES AND GROUPS THAT DO COCURRICULAR PROGRAMMING*
- *EVALUATE AND SUPPORT COCURRICULAR PROGRAMMING BASED ON ITS QUALITY AND INTELLECTUAL VALUE AND EXPAND ACTIVITIES THAT MODEL THE PRACTICES OF THE LIFE OF THE MIND*
- *REGULARLY CELEBRATE FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS IN PUBLISHING, RESEARCH, ARTISTIC CREATION AND PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT THROUGH SPECIAL EVENTS AND IN UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS*
- *RECOGNIZE THAT ALL CAMPUS POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES ARE THEMSELVES ELEMENTS IN ACADEMIC CULTURE AND MAKE THEM CONGRUENT WITH THE MISSION AND VALUES OF THE UNIVERSITY*

STAFF AND ACADEMIC CULTURE: RECOGNIZING AND DRAWING ON EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE

Staff play key roles in building, sustaining and enhancing PLU's academic culture. They bring expertise to the running of the university and to out-of-classroom educational activities including an array of cocurricular, academic support, student life, campus ministry and other programming that advance the university's educational mission. From the smooth running of administrative offices and the attitudes conveyed toward intellectual pursuits by office assistants to residence-hall policies and career counseling, staff shape the university's culture and enrich students' comprehensive educational experience. The academic culture of the university is profoundly influenced by the institutional context and broader educational environment that staff compose for students, faculty and each other.

To have a thriving academic community, PLU must recruit, retain and support professional, creative and committed staff who understand and support the mis-

sion of the university and recognize their particular contributions to it. Cultivating the life of the mind requires supporting students' intellectual, physical, psychological and spiritual development with energizing collaboration between faculty and staff in carrying out the educational mission of the university.

Given the complexity of the university, the many challenges facing higher education and the increasing amount of support that university students require, issues related to staff—working conditions, professional development opportunities, collaboration with faculty and more—require attention. While most of these are enumerated in Chapter V, “A Place of Purpose,” two are particularly significant for strengthening academic culture.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY ARTICULATE THE DISTINCT AREAS OF EXPERTISE THAT STAFF BRING TO THE UNIVERSITY SO THAT STAFF AND FACULTY CAN BETTER UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER'S STRENGTHS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNIVERSITY'S MISSION.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF TO INTERACT WITH FACULTY AND ESPECIALLY WITH FACULTY COMMITTEES RELATED TO AREAS OF UNIVERSITY LIFE TO WHICH STAFF BRING EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE.

FACULTY AND ACADEMIC CULTURE: **SAFEGUARDING AUTONOMY AND DEVELOPING RESPONSIBILITY**

Faculty are the guardians and drivers of the university's academic culture. By virtue of their education and expertise, faculty are the primary educators in the university and the ones on whom the university's academic quality and reputation for excellence depend most directly. The faculty is responsible for formulating and enacting educational policy, which is the central concern of the university.

Committed to Academic Culture. A current strength of PLU is a faculty committed to academic culture. Faculty are focused on students' learning and passionate about teaching. They collaborate with staff where curricular and cocur-

ricular projects intersect and appreciate how crucial staff support of students around development issues is to achieving PLU's mission. PLU's faculty embody the institution's deep respect for individual students and so employ a range of pedagogical strategies. They willingly wrestle with balancing two goals in their teaching: preparing students for graduate school and preparing them for jobs and life more generally.

PLU's envisioned future demands that it build on these current strengths and cultivate an intellectually vibrant faculty who are creative in their teaching, scholarship and service. Such individuals are connected to their students, their peers and the institution. They are committed to its clear educational mission and strive to experience their relationship to the institution in all their roles as just, professional and mutually beneficial. Such faculty engage in a wide range of research and scholarship, understanding their work as part of a larger human project and as an activity that contributes to the humanization of the world, to justice among communities and to the protection of the planet. These faculty model the life of the mind in ways that are profoundly engaged with the world.

Support for Faculty. Recruiting, retaining and supporting the kind of faculty PLU needs to move into the future is a complex task, one that is influenced by how faculty are situated in the university's culture, by institutional structures and by resource constraints. During the PLU 2010 planning process, a number of issues emerged that were related to supporting faculty as they carry out their responsibilities. While some of these are addressed in Chapter V, "A Place of Purpose," those most central to building a thriving academic culture are included here. The major issue that emerged was the need to reaffirm the centrality of faculty in the work of the university in the face of trends that obscure that role and erode faculty agency.

Academic Freedom and Shared Governance. Faculty need both academic freedom and shared governance to carry out their responsibilities and to provide to the university the wide range of gifts that they bring. PLU has a history of strong academic freedom allowing faculty to express ideas and call established beliefs into question, even when doing so challenges current practices or received wisdom.⁵

Shared governance recognizes that faculty are responsible for decision-making regarding curriculum and for formulating and enacting educational policy. It entails “regular exchanges of information and opinion, consultation, reflection, mediation and compromise.”⁶ Healthy shared governance keeps faculty in the decision-making process regarding all issues and decisions that directly impact teaching, learning and faculty life. Inserting their expertise into the decision-making process is part of the responsibility of faculty and a mark of a healthy academic community. PLU’s current faculty and university committee system was established to support shared governance and should be fully employed.

While faculty bring to the university expertise that is the result of years of training and engagement in the practices of excellence in their field, those fields and their disciplinary procedures vary widely, so autonomy is essential to teachers and scholars doing their work to the highest standard. At the same time, by entering the professorate at Pacific Lutheran University, faculty assume responsibilities to serve their students, their peers and the institution. A healthy academic community values faculty expertise, acknowledges and draws effectively upon faculty autonomy in administrative decision-making processes and socializes faculty into full participation in the responsibilities of the professorate. One of those responsibilities is faculty governance. While it can seem cumbersome, faculty governance is a vital part of the university’s embodiment of education as a unique activity and culture that contributes to democratic society. Faculty need to participate

fully in it, staff need to work cooperatively with it, and the university as a whole needs to support it.

The following recommendations will enhance faculty members' ability to fulfill their roles and responsibilities as the chief drivers of academic culture.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY REAFFIRM PLU'S COMMITMENT TO SHARED GOVERNANCE; REVIEW, AND WHERE NECESSARY, REVISE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AND STRUCTURES TO SUPPORT THE PRACTICE OF SHARED GOVERNANCE.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY STRENGTHEN THE FACULTY GOVERNANCE SYSTEM BY: 1) INCREASING FACULTY PARTICIPATION IN IT; 2) ACKNOWLEDGING AND APPROPRIATELY WEIGHING PARTICIPATION IN FACULTY COMMITTEES IN FACULTY REVIEW PROCEDURES; AND, 3) FAMILIARIZING STAFF WITH THE FACULTY COMMITTEE SYSTEM.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY REVISE THE UNIVERSITY CALENDAR AND CLASS SCHEDULE TO CREATE WEEKLY AND YEARLY SCHEDULED TIMES FOR FACULTY TO WORK COLLABORATIVELY WITH ALL DIMENSIONS OF FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY INCLUDING GOVERNANCE, CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND SCHOLARSHIP.

Chapter IV

CLAIMING THE UNIVERSITY'S DISTINCTION: PURPOSEFUL LEARNING, INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT RESEARCH

Pacific Lutheran University claims both a distinctive mission—a powerful determination to awaken students to an unfolding sense of meaning and purpose in their lives—and an intellectually challenging and creative faculty. To serve that mission, PLU also claims distinction and excellence in its fundamental understanding of knowledge and learning and in carefully selected dimensions of its academic program, particularly international education and collaborative student/faculty research and creative projects.

A DISTINCTIVE UNDERSTANDING OF EDUCATION: SITUATED KNOWLEDGE AND PURPOSEFUL LEARNING

Implicit in the commitment of the university to educate students for lives of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership and care is a certain purposeful perspective on knowledge and its acquisition. In their time at the university, students should, of course, learn certain bodies of knowledge, learn how to become increasingly knowledgeable the rest of their lives, and learn to apply knowledge in actual societal contexts. Something even beyond this, however, characterizes the academic ethos at PLU: knowledge and learning *themselves* are understood to be purposeful. Though nonetheless academically rigorous and open-minded, knowledge and learning are unapologetically understood as situated in people's values and connected to their agency in the world. PLU does its work on behalf of the planet and of people everywhere now and in the future.

This understanding is not just idealistic rhetoric. It manifests itself in the academic life of the university in distinct ways. It undergirds PLU's membership in the Associated New American Colleges and is reflected in its commitment to integrate liberal and professional education. More directly, it calls on people to think hard and critically about *what* knowledge is important enough to learn.

Person-Focused, Holistic Learning. While traditional bodies of knowledge established within disciplines are certainly a vital part of the learning enterprise, they should not determine scholarly work without being questioned and challenged. This understanding also requires great attention to *how* to go about academic work. Above all, that work is person-focused. While academic work and discipline need to be distinguished from the cocurriculum, learning is still a holistic process in which what students do outside their course work can profoundly influence both what they learn and what they choose to do with that learning.

While knowledge is purposeful, it is not to be understood in a merely “instrumentalist” fashion—aimed uncritically at a pre-ordained, univocal, dominant goal such as employment or career achievement. Education ought to educate one not only for work, but for understanding what one works *for* in the world.

This purposeful nature makes a PLU education intellectual, practical and moral. It requires that students wrestle with issues of value throughout their studies and that they develop the skills and sensibilities necessary to use their learning discriminatingly and courageously for the genuine benefit of the world around them.

Such an education is not “soft” because of its purposeful and moral dimensions; rather, it involves the most rigorous intellectual learning. It begins with questions about knowledge and learning itself amidst the academic life: what is the nature of what can really count as “knowledge,” and what are the more rather than less important things for people to learn in a university education?

Questions of Value. Questions of value infuse the very enterprise, and university life needs to acknowledge and engage them from the start. Moreover, matters of value are not to be seen as needing any less rigorous examination than any other subject matter—they are not the addition of something merely subjective or personal to a very different mass of objective, academic content. “Valuing,” in fact, is explicitly one of the five academically fundamental “integrative learning objectives” (ILO’s) adopted by the PLU faculty to assist in integrating the university’s understanding of its various curricula and pedagogies. (The other four ILO’s—critical reflection, expression, interaction with others and understanding multiple frameworks—also reflect an integrated, purposeful education.)

A Sense of Vocation. At the same time that a purposeful, moral education is academically rigorous, it cannot be focused only on intellectual examination of questions of value. The pursuit of those questions in a context where *thoughtful service, leadership, and care* as well as thoughtful inquiry are at the heart of the enterprise pushes faculty and students to develop positive views—*critically* develop them, of course—about how actually to act in the world. Students are nurtured to develop their own sense of vocation, the meaning and purpose in their lives. As a vital part of that development they are encouraged and supported to step out courageously into action, performance, and practice of various sorts. Here again the university’s ILO’s can be cited: valuing is explained there to include the trans-intellectual dispositions to “develop a habit of caring for oneself, for others, and for the environment” and to “approach moral, spiritual, and intellectual development as a life-long process.”

There is no single set of programs at the university that can achieve this kind of moral and civic learning, and it certainly cannot be “pasted on a student’s character, somewhat as she or he might learn calculus. Rather it is a complex combination of cognitive and emotional learning.”⁷ It naturally leads to an emphasis

on international education and undergraduate research, two areas of distinction that will be articulated in detail below. It will be bolstered by the project on “Exploring Vocation at PLU,” funded for 2003-2007 by the Lilly Endowment, which will enhance the attention of students to the intellectually rich and deeply personal challenge for each of them to develop a sense of vocation through their university education. In addition, numerous other particular things can be done to assist the development of critically purposeful learning.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY FOSTER EXPLICITLY THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICALLY PURPOSEFUL LEARNING.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *INTEGRATE THE STUDY OF ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES WITH SUBJECT MATTER AND STUDENT PROJECTS THROUGHOUT THE CURRICULUM AND COCURRICULUM. OFFER WORKSHOPS IN DESIGNING COURSES AND ASSIGNMENTS THAT INTEGRATE QUESTIONS OF VALUE WITH PARTICULAR SUBJECT MATTER AREAS AND ADVANCE STUDENTS’ DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES IN ETHICAL THINKING*
- *DEVELOP, THROUGH WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS, AND SPECIAL SPEAKERS, A RICHER UNDERSTANDING OF THE ACTIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES THAT INTENTIONALLY LINK RIGOROUS ACADEMIC REFLECTION WITH SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY*
- *CELEBRATE AND HIGHLIGHT FACULTY, STUDENT AND STAFF COMMITMENTS TO ALL FORMS OF SERVICE IN CAMPUS PROGRAMMING AND PUBLICATIONS, AND FOCUS VISITING LECTURES AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS OFTEN ON VITAL CONTEMPORARY SOCIETAL ISSUES*
- *SUPPORT ENGAGEMENT WITH SERVICE LEARNING AS ONE OF THE VIABLE CHOICES AVAILABLE FOR INDIVIDUAL FACULTY IN CONSIDERATIONS OF TENURE AND PROMOTION*

Amidst the contemporary culture of higher education, the challenges involved in implementing this dimension of the university’s vision are admittedly daunting. In the search for knowledge and understanding, the academy has increasingly devalued the holistic and revered the specialized and the technical. It has also tended to homogenize excellence and prestige. PLU, by contrast, must have the courage to say that good education takes place in a specific cultural context, including a specific educational culture.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

If knowledge and learning at PLU are purposeful and the university exists to benefit the planet and people everywhere, it is hardly surprising that one of its academic emphases is international education. Based on the notable initiative of numerous faculty and the strong interest of its students, PLU, with little central direction or institutional guidance, has achieved considerable strength in international education.

Since the late 1990s more than a third of graduating baccalaureate students have had an international study experience, and international students now comprise over 6 percent of the student body. In recent years, more than 20 faculty annually (roughly 10 percent of the full-time faculty) have taught January-term courses abroad. For a comprehensive university with many local students and professional school majors, these numbers rank PLU among the most internationally active schools in the nation. In addition, on campus the university offers eight foreign languages, an International Business concentration within the BBA degree, cross-disciplinary majors in Chinese Studies, Global Studies, and Scandinavian Area Studies, a minor in the Americas, and an International Core curriculum that students may use to satisfy many of their general university requirements.

Growing Support and Interest. In the past year international education at PLU has been propelled forward by the formation of The Wang Center for International Programs, supported by a \$4 million endowment gift from Peter and Grace Wang. Sizable support from the Freeman and Teagle Foundations, the U.S. Department of Education, and the U.S. Agency for International Development provide multiple-year enhancements of Chinese Studies, international academic internships, the International Core, and the program on the Norwegian Approach to Democracy and Development that is connected with Namibia. Previous grants

have supported the use of non-English languages across the curriculum and the infusion of international content into the curricula of various majors.

Research done as part of the American Council on Education's long-term study on the internationalization of U.S. higher education helps place PLU's growth in international education amidst the interests and behavior of U.S. college and college-bound students generally.⁸ In the ACE national study, nearly half of students entering four-year colleges wanted to study abroad, yet only 3 percent actually did. Similarly, nearly 60 percent of students entering college planned to continue foreign language study, yet only 8 percent did. Moreover, when forced to state which *one* activity during their college years was most important, only internships were selected by more students than study abroad.

Cultural Immersion and Global Issues. It is important to understand that the university's excellence in international education is driven by a deep commitment to and respect for all humanity. At this particular time in history, dedication to international education aligns with the desires of students and the needs of globalization. PLU's commitment to the whole enterprise of international education, however, is deeper and wider than those particular interests at the beginning of the 21st century. The university's mission of educating for lives of service and thoughtful inquiry about the whole human condition demands that the international study experiences it offers involve not only considerable immersion in other cultures but challenging examination of the largest, most difficult global issues. It will thereby enhance students' capacity and sense of responsibility to assist in furthering constructive solutions to those issues.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY FOCUS ON SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES TO HELP IT ACHIEVE DISTINCTION IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION, WITH THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE WANG CENTER AND THE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE FACULTY, AND WITH WIDESPREAD PARTICIPATION FROM ACADEMIC SCHOOLS AND DEPARTMENTS.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *EXPAND PARTICIPATION IN THE INTERNATIONAL CORE (ESPECIALLY BY PROFESSIONAL DEGREE STUDENTS) AND INFUSE GENERAL UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENT AND MAJOR COURSES WITH INTERNATIONAL MATERIAL*
- *SET A SPECIFIC TARGET FOR PARTICIPATION IN STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS (A TARGET OF OVER 50 PERCENT OF GRADUATING BACCALAUREATE STUDENTS HAS BEEN SUGGESTED)*
- *PROVIDE STUDENTS IN ALL MAJORS WITH THE REALISTIC OPPORTUNITY FOR AT LEAST ONE INTERNATIONAL STUDY EXPERIENCE THAT ENHANCES THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF OTHER CULTURES OR LANGUAGES*
- *EXPAND THE UNIVERSITY'S OWN SEMESTER-LONG STUDY AWAY PROGRAMS, AND WORK TO INTEGRATE ON-CAMPUS CURRICULA WITH THE CONTENT OF BOTH OUR OWN STUDY AWAY PROGRAMS AND THE PLU-BROKERED INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS*
- *CREATE A SEMINAR OR SUSTAINED DISCUSSION GROUP FOR STUDENTS RETURNING TO CAMPUS FROM STUDY ABROAD TO PROVIDE THEM AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE WITH OTHERS AND FORMALLY PROCESS THEIR EXPERIENCE: ENCOURAGE RETURNING STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNITY PROJECTS THAT RELATE TO THEIR INTERNATIONAL STUDY*

Various challenges will need to be met if the university is to succeed in pursuing such an agenda. Financial considerations for the university will require that most of the growth of student participation in international study be in PLU's own semester, January-term and internship programs, not in the study-away programs of other institutions that PLU brokers. While J-term international courses are popular with students and faculty and might indeed expand, the proportion of study-away experiences that they constitute must not increase if the university is to gain a reputation for educating students into deeper international understanding.

To best respect people in other cultures, acquisition of a respectable level of language proficiency must accompany a high percentage of international study experiences in non-English speaking countries. Virtually all departments and schools will need to participate in international programs if PLU's growing distinction in international education is to strengthen the university generally, not just in selected disciplines. All these challenges can be met if the university develops international education carefully and courageously.

STUDENT RESEARCH AND CREATIVE PROJECTS

Just as international education is an outgrowth of the university's fundamental understanding of knowledge and learning, so also is its emphasis on collaborative student/faculty research and creative projects, particularly at the undergraduate level, where it is more unusual in the academy than at the graduate level.

Active Learners. If the purpose of a university education is for people to gain a sense of their genuine agency in the world, students need to develop actively as learners as quickly as possible. In the past decade the university has laid the foundation for outstanding undergraduate research, artistic performance, and original creative projects through the senior capstone seminars, the Severtson Scholarships in the Social Sciences, the Natural Sciences Undergraduate Research Endowment and the Moe Scholarships in the Arts and Communication.

Student learning in cocurricular activities—including student media, student leadership positions and community service—contribute to the foundations for student research and creative projects. By taking advantage of its low student-faculty ratio, PLU can expand these existing learning opportunities and intensify student engagement in the learning process.

In 1997, the addendum to *PLU 2000* on academic distinction⁹ articulated active learning as one emphasis of academic excellence at PLU. Active learning, it said, “attempts to increase not only the responsibility that students take for their education but their capacity for substantive independence of thought. The active learner becomes the active questioner, not only capable of greater self-reliance but possessing more developed skills of analysis and articulation.”

Now, for *PLU 2010*, we wish to single out the potential of perhaps the quintessential exemplification of active learning—student research and creative

projects—both for raising academic reputation and for realizing the university's highest ideals for its students.

RECOMMENDATIONS: THAT THE UNIVERSITY MAKE STUDENT RESEARCH AND CREATIVE PROJECTS ONE OF THE HALLMARK CHARACTERISTICS THE UNIVERSITY.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- CONTINUE TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS TAKING PART IN UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH--A TARGET OF 12-50 PERCENT, COMPARED TO THE CURRENT LEVEL OF 4-15 PERCENT, HAS BEEN SUGGESTED¹⁰
- COMPENSATE FACULTY DIRECTING UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AND CREATIVE PROJECTS (BY ITS INCLUSION IN THEIR COURSE LOADS, BY SUMMER PAY WHERE APPROPRIATE, OR BY OTHER MEANS)
- BEGIN A NEW PROGRAM OF MATCHING THE MOST HIGHLY QUALIFIED AND TALENTED NEW STUDENTS WITH A FACULTY MEMBER ON A RESEARCH PROJECT—THE PROGRAM MIGHT START WITH 10-16 STUDENTS (ONE OR TWO IN EACH SCHOOL AND DIVISION) WHO WOULD BE PAIRED WITH A FACULTY MEMBER AND AWARDED A SPECIAL RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP AT ENTRANCE
- SHARE AND CELEBRATE MORE VISIBLY STUDENT RESEARCH OF ALL KINDS, PERHAPS IN A CAMPUS-WIDE FORUM SIMILAR TO THE NATURAL SCIENCE DIVISION'S ACADEMIC FESTIVAL
- PUBLISH ANNUALLY THE BEST NOVEL BY A PLU UNDERGRADUATE (PERHAPS IN A FORMAT SIMILAR TO SAXIFRAGE, THE ANNUAL PLU STUDENT LITERARY PUBLICATION, OR IN A RECOGNIZED EXTERNAL MEDIUM)¹¹
- PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT ASSISTANCE FROM A CENTRAL OFFICE TO FACILITATE AND MANAGE GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR OUTSIDE FUNDING OF COLLABORATIVE STUDENT/FACULTY UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH
- REGULARLY HONOR AND CELEBRATE FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS IN PUBLISHING AND ARTISTIC CREATION/PERFORMANCE TO REFLECT THE FACT THAT FACULTY MODEL FOR STUDENTS THE IMPORTANCE AND EXCITEMENT OF SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE PRODUCTION
- INFUSE INTERNSHIPS, PROFESSIONAL PRACTICA AND SERVICE LEARNING WITH SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS OF RESEARCH AND CREATIVE PROJECTS SO THAT THEY ALSO BECOME AVENUES FOR INVESTIGATIVE LEARNING IN WHICH FACULTY AND STUDENTS WORK COLLABORATIVELY OUTSIDE OF THE FORMAL CLASSROOM

Challenges and Opportunities. Among the challenges and points of resistance to realizing this institutional ambition for student/faculty research and creative projects are three—scarcity of resources, the alleged competition of scholarship with teaching, and the fear of an undue hegemony of those faculty who emphasize their own active research. The last is simply misplaced, for insofar as the faculty who are active scholars, performers and creators are willing to involve

students in their work, they represent an ideal of teaching and mentoring to which all faculty at PLU should aspire.

The second—competition of scholarship with teaching—is misconceived. Scholarly and creative activity stimulates and fertilizes sustained excellence in teaching, and when faculty involve their students in such activity, important dimensions of teaching and learning are enhanced.

The first challenge—scarcity of resources—is very real. In the long term, however, the university believes it can be addressed by dedicated efforts to raising program endowment for student research and creative production. More immediately, faculty can address this challenge by leading their departments and schools toward greater focus in their major curricula so that more teaching load credit can be given to faculty for supervising student research and creative projects as an indispensable part of the major.

The university holds deeply to a purposeful understanding of knowledge and learning connected to a sense of vocation and agency in the world. It emphasizes international education and student research and creative projects as particularly effective avenues through which students can prepare to lead lives of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership and care. These three claims to distinction serve as both institutional characteristics and ideals—to a great extent they mark who we currently are, but they also powerfully inspire and boldly challenge us to become a more distinctive university.

CHAPTER V

A PLACE OF PURPOSE:

ALIGNING RESOURCES WITH MISSION, GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The preceding chapters of this *PLU 2010* report set forth our highest hopes and aspirations and point the way toward their accomplishment, guiding Pacific Lutheran University to the next level of distinction. These chapters challenge the university to continue to build on its historic strengths, to cultivate academic excellence and distinctive academic culture, to focus on student engagement and achievement, to enhance global perspective and to nurture a sense of life as vocation.

With this vision in mind, the attention of the university community must turn to questions of implementation. How will this vision be achieved? How does PLU align its resources to reflect its mission, goals and priorities? What are the infrastructure, facility, technology and personnel needs it must address? How can it fund innovation in an era of resource scarcity? How will these difficult questions be answered in a timely way and by whom?

This chapter does not answer these questions—they will be the topics of campus conversations in the coming weeks and years. Instead, it makes the case for increasing investments to enable the vision, identifying sources of revenue to invest in distinction and developing a strategic pathway to analyze and set priorities and make funding choices. To thrive in challenging financial conditions, the people of PLU must exercise great discipline and become as purposeful about budget planning as we are about education. The university budget is, after all, one expression of how we translate values into action.

ACHIEVING THE VISION: INCREASED INVESTMENTS

To excel and prosper in the coming decade the university must sustain a distinctive academic program—the first priority will be the allocation of resources to support academic goals and priorities. But the path to success is not as simple as focusing solely on academics. PLU must also be prepared to commit resources to the foundation upon which its academic program is built: the people who bring the mission to life, the programs that fulfill the mission and the facilities in which the people deliver programs. Curricular and cocurricular distinction are the markers of all great universities; such distinction requires strategic investments in people, programs and facilities.

Success in achieving the top 2010 goals and priorities will require a substantially greater investment of time, talent and financial resources in the five key areas described below: 1) long-range academic program priorities, 2) learning environments, 3) human resources, 4) student quality and diversity and 5) budget stability.

At the same time, other, less central, recommendations in the 2010 report may prove to be of parallel importance and will require increased financial support. In addition, important goals and objectives in the *PLU 2000* long-range plan remain to be achieved. Many of them will also require funding if they are to be accomplished.

Without purposeful action to align resources strategically, increased investments in any area of the university will be very difficult to make. Indeed, the success of *PLU 2010* and the financial viability of the university as a whole depend upon our ability to make basic changes in these five areas:

Long-Range Academic Program Priority Investments. The three distinctions of the university’s academic program developed in Chapter IV of this report—purposeful learning, international education and student-faculty research and creative projects—will require careful development within the curriculum. Some may be developed within existing structures and will not need new “programs” per se; others, will require new and reinvested resources. For example, the newly endowed Wang Center for International Programs will be of considerable assistance in the development of distinction in international education, but Wang Center programs must build upon and in some fashion combine with existing efforts. The designated endowments for student-faculty research and creative projects are already helpful, but they will need to be expanded—building on the existing natural sciences, Severtson, Wang and Moe endowments.

Critically important to the success of the three marks of academic distinction will be the reinvestment and refocusing of current academic program resources. For example, in international education financial balance for the university will be assisted by the development of PLU “owned” study-away programs, reducing the amount of tuition dollars sent to other institutions and enhancing the integration of off-campus study with on-campus programs. Similarly, curricular refocusing can assist in achieving gains in student-faculty research without significant financial additions. As research and creative projects receive more emphasis, general university requirement courses might be refocused to better prepare students for such work; and within the majors, student credit hours and faculty teaching load credits might be redistributed to accommodate a greater concentration on projects.

As we look forward to the next decade, we must identify academic program priorities to achieve the successful implementation of these marks of distinction and to secure the financial stability of the entire institution.

SEE CHAPTER IV, "CLAIMING THE UNIVERSITY'S DISTINCTION," FOR RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING: 1) PURPOSEFUL LEARNING, 2) INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION, AND 3) STUDENT-FACULTY RESEARCH AND CREATIVE PROJECTS.

SEE THE SECTION IN THIS CHAPTER, "INVESTING IN DISTINCTION: SOURCES OF REVENUE, RESOURCE REALLOCATION," FOR A RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING THE REALLOCATION OF ACADEMIC RESOURCES.

Learning Environment Investments. Creating and maintaining the healthiest learning environment is central to providing a distinctive educational experience for students. In the decade ahead, the university must continue to invest in vital capital needs. Many facilities for faculty and instruction have been completed or scheduled for completion under the current fund-raising campaign (including the Xavier and Eastvold renovations and the construction of the Morken Center). In the future, renovation of existing academic space must be a strategic priority. In addition, consideration should be given to the renovation and construction of cocurricular and living spaces such as the residence halls, dining facilities and athletic facilities.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY DEVELOP A NEW LONG-TERM CAPITAL PROJECTS PLAN WITH COST ESTIMATES FOR ACADEMIC BUILDINGS, ATHLETIC FACILITIES, RESIDENCE HALLS AND DINING SERVICES.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *UPDATE THE FACILITIES MASTER PLAN*
- *REVIEW CAPITAL EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES PLANS IN LIGHT OF THE ACADEMIC MASTER PLAN AND DESIGN MULTIPLE-YEAR BUDGET STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES*
- *REVISE AND CONTINUE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSITY TECHNOLOGY PLAN, INCLUDING THE UPGRADING OF "GENERIC" CLASSROOMS*
- *REVIEW ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES FOR POSSIBLE COMBINATIONS, CONSOLIDATIONS AND GREATER EFFICIENCIES, AS WELL AS SYNERGIES WITH PLU 2010*

Human Resources Investments. The university has no larger expense and no more important investment than its faculty, staff and student employees. The university must commit the financial resources necessary to strengthen faculty and staff salaries and benefits as well as other support of the work of each per-

son, including professional development, research and travel and adequate working space and equipment. Only through this combination of competitive pay and benefits and leading-edge professional support will we be able to attract and retain the high-quality faculty and staff needed to realize our vision for the future.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY SHOULD RECOMMIT ITSELF TO STRENGTHENING COMPENSATION AND LEADING EDGE PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *WORK TO PROVIDE MARKET-COMPETITIVE SALARIES AND BENEFITS*
- *EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT*
- *ENSURE REASONABLE WORKLOADS AND CAREER PATH FLEXIBILITY*
- *COMMUNICATE, EMPHASIZE, AND CREATE LINKS AMONG THE THEMES OF EXCELLENCE, VOCATION, LIFELONG LEARNING, SERVICE, COMMUNITY, LEADERSHIP, HEALTHY LIFESTYLES, BALANCE AND A DIVERSITY OF IDEAS AND PEOPLE*

PLU is entering a period of significant faculty turnover due to retirements. During the next decade the university must recruit faculty who are committed to the educational mission of the university and see themselves, their departments and their particular work within the broader frame of institutional and public life.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY, AND ESPECIALLY FACULTY LEADERSHIP, WELCOME AND INTEGRATE NEW FACULTY INTO THE CAMPUS CULTURE IN DELIBERATE AND EFFECTIVE WAYS.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY AND MAJOR DIMENSIONS OF ITS ACADEMIC CULTURE*
- *PROVIDE A WELL DEVELOPED, YEAR-LONG, FACULTY-LED ORIENTATION PROGRAM FOR ALL NEW FACULTY*
- *DEVELOP NEW PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT FACULTY DEVELOPMENT DURING THEIR EARLY YEARS AT PLU. ONE POSSIBILITY MIGHT BE HALF-YEAR, JUNIOR SABBATICALS FOR WHICH FACULTY WOULD BECOME ELIGIBLE AT THE CONCLUSION OF A SUCCESSFUL THIRD-YEAR REVIEW*

An academic culture depends on faculty and staff who are committed to excellence, are vitally engaged in their teaching, scholarship and citizenship, and flexible and hence able to move among activities and contributions throughout their careers. This involves the ability to maintain standards of excellence while

appreciating difference in faculty and staff gifts and talents. The goal is not a constricting, leveling equality, but an appreciation and organic coordination of the expertise and experience of each. Across the career span, faculty and staff will not always engage with equal enthusiasm and energy in the same activities, nor should they. At particular times a staff or faculty member's gifts and tasks come together in different ways. Therefore, PLU must have faculty personnel policies that support life-span approaches to faculty careers and move beyond traditional "one size fits all" policies.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY ATTEND TO FACULTY AND STAFF ROLES, EXPECTATIONS AND REWARDS ACROSS THE CAREER SPAN TO MAINTAIN VITALITY AND FLEXIBILITY.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *PROVIDE MULTIPLE FACULTY DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES AROUND TEACHING, SCHOLARSHIP, AND SERVICE, ESPECIALLY FACULTY LEADERSHIP*
- *ARTICULATE REASONABLE AND EQUITABLE EXPECTATIONS AND NORMS FOR FACULTY AND STAFF ACROSS ALL AREAS OF CAMPUS LIFE*
- *STRUCTURE APPROPRIATE WORKLOADS FOR FACULTY AND STAFF AND PROVIDE APPROPRIATE AND EQUITABLE REWARDS FOR DIVERSE MODES OF EXCELLENCE*
- *DEVELOP A MECHANISM FOR GENERATING AND DISTRIBUTING MONEY IN SUPPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF FACULTY AND STAFF*
- *CONSIDER FORMS OF SUPPORT THAT SERVE THE PROFESSIONAL NEEDS OF SELECTED FACULTY WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING ACADEMIC OFFERINGS IN ANY GIVEN YEAR. EXAMPLES ARE FIVE-COURSE TEACHING LOADS, SUMMER STIPENDS, ADDITIONAL SABBATICAL SEMESTERS FOR MID-CAREER FACULTY, RELEASE TIME FOR GRANT-WRITING, ETC.*

Student Quality and Diversity Investments. Efforts to identify and attract academically capable, diverse, open and committed students cannot succeed without adequate resources. The university must develop a fully integrated enrollment management strategy and commit the financial and other resources necessary to support scholarships, outreach activities, and campus-based programs designed to recruit academically strong students who seek the kind of education PLU offers.

The university must also continue to improve its efforts to retain students, committing resources to understanding student needs and then building programming that will ensure that students remain at PLU.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY REDOUBLE ITS COMMITMENT TO RECRUITING AND RETAINING AN ACADEMICALLY ABLE AND DIVERSE STUDENT BODY.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *BUILD RESOURCES FOR STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS AND RESEARCH ADDITIONAL METHODS OF INCREASING INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FROM SUCH SCHOLARSHIPS THROUGHOUT A STUDENT'S YEARS AT PLU*
- *DEVELOP STRONGER STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS THAT REFLECT THE GROWING DIVERSITY OF PLU STUDENTS*
- *INCREASE SUPPORT FOR ON-CAMPUS PROGRAMMING THAT ENGAGES THE INTERCULTURAL DIVERSITY OF STUDENTS AND FACULTY (DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL) AT PLU*
- *FOCUS RESOURCES TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN A DIVERSE FACULTY WHO CAN THEN SERVE AS MENTORS AND ROLE MODELS FOR A DIVERSE STUDENT BODY*

Budget Stability Investments. Among the requirements for maintaining and improving the university's fiscal health are the development of new budgeting strategies and budget reserves. Each of mark of distinction comes with real financial costs. Without operating reserves or special funds for new initiatives, good ideas and major priorities will go unfunded. The university must adopt an annual budget based clearly on achievable enrollment goals to minimize or eliminate unpleasant budget shocks. The university must also commit fully to planning for and then developing reserves in the annual operating budget to avoid cost cutting measures in years when enrollment falls short of budgeted projections or when unanticipated expenses occur.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY ADOPT A MULTIPLE-YEAR APPROACH TO BUDGET DEVELOPMENT TO CREATE AND MANAGE HEALTHY BUDGET RESERVES AT SPECIFIED LEVELS.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *ADOPT AN ANNUAL BUDGET BASED ON CLEARLY ACHIEVABLE GOALS AND LONG-TERM PRIORITIES*
- *BEGIN TO DEVELOP A RESERVE AGAINST UNANTICIPATED BUDGET SHORTFALLS*
- *INCREASE BUDGET LITERACY IN THE COMMUNITY BY PREPARING AND DISTRIBUTING A YEARLY BUDGET SUMMARY, DETAILING THE SOURCES AND USES OF FUNDS BY MAJOR CATEGORY*

- *IMPLEMENT WAYS IN WHICH UNIT-LEVEL BUDGETS MIGHT BETTER LINK BEHAVIORAL CONTROLS AND UNIT PERFORMANCE BY, FOR EXAMPLE, REWARDING COST-SAVING PROPOSALS AND REMOVING THE “USE-IT-OR-LOSE-IT” BIAS*

INVESTING IN DISTINCTION: SOURCES OF REVENUE

Great universities align their resources in support of mission, goals and priorities. What they choose to do, they do well. That approach must be true for PLU. The university is strong enough academically that it can do almost anything, but it does not have the resources to do everything. Difficult choices must be made. *PLU 2010: The Next Level of Distinction* is the blueprint for deciding, it is the statement of mission and identity, and it is the strategic pathway to greatness.

Knowing the costs that will be involved in undertaking new programs while enhancing and sustaining existing ones brings a critical question: Where does the university find the resources needed to achieve its vision? There are not many places to look. Among them are: 1) student enrollment, 2) resource reallocation, 3) endowment, 4) fund raising and 5) our heritage and our place.

Student Enrollment Revenue. Demographics and the capacity of existing facilities rule out a significant increase in the size of student population as a source of new funds—the university will do well to focus on enrollment management and maintain enrollment at current target levels of 3,500 to 3,600 students. In the coming years, recruiting and retaining students should be high on everyone’s agenda; attracting and keeping up to 3,500 students (or more) will require a coordinated effort by the entire university community.

While tuition revenue will continue to be the largest source of operating income, there are no realistic prospects of substantially increasing tuition to fund new program initiatives. In fact, we should look for ways to reduce tuition dependency, and we must keep costs low so that tuition can remain affordable for stu-

dents and their families. Financial aid will continue to be used as a strategic enrollment management tool to remain competitive in the marketplace, but we cannot increase enrollment by increasing the tuition discount.

Fine-tuning the student enrollment management program could bring improved financial stability and the potential for marginal revenue enhancement.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY WORK TO UNDERSTAND HOW THE VARIABLES OF PROGRAM, IDENTITY, COMMUNITY, TUITION, FINANCIAL AID AND ENROLLMENT INTERACT.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *UNDERTAKE REGULAR STUDIES TO DETERMINE THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STUDENT ENROLLMENT (BOTH MATRICULATION AND RETENTION), TUITION, FINANCIAL AID, PROGRAM AVAILABILITY AND OTHER VARIABLES UNDER THE UNIVERSITY'S CONTROL*
- *REGULARLY REVIEW THE FINANCIAL AID TARGETING MODEL TO DETERMINE IF THE RESULTING STUDENT MIX IS CONSISTENT WITH THE GOALS OUTLINED IN THE 2010 PLAN. SPECIFICALLY, CONSIDER ADJUSTING FINANCIAL AID WITH RESPECT TO ADVANCED PLACEMENT, INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE, LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL, GPA ADJUSTMENTS BY SCHOOL, DIVERSITY OF STUDENT POOL AND OTHER FACTORS TO BE DETERMINED*
- *MAXIMIZE THE NET REVENUE POSSIBILITIES OF AUXILIARIES, CONTINUING EDUCATION AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES.*

Resource Reallocation. The single greatest financial source for achieving the vision is resource reallocation. In a certain sense, reallocation of resources is revenue neutral: “reallocation” means dividing resources in new ways rather than raising new resources. In another sense, reallocation of financial resources may free up human resources and allow people to choose to spend their time differently. The university must commit fully to carrying out an institutional assessment leading to the reduction and, in some cases, the elimination of programs and activities that are no longer central to its vision and mission so that these resources may be reallocated to top priorities. A fully open and transparent reallocation process must involve the entire community in planning and decision-making.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY DEVELOP A MULTIPLE-YEAR PLAN FOR REALLOCATING CURRENT RESOURCES TO SUPPORT ACADEMIC AND OTHER PROGRAM PRIORITIES.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *CREATE AN ACADEMIC MASTER PLAN THAT ESTABLISHES MULTIPLE-YEAR STAFFING AND PROGRAM SUPPORT LEVELS FOR ALL PROGRAMS, REALLOCATING CURRENT RESOURCES TO MATCH PLU 2010 AND OTHER ACADEMIC PRIORITIES*
- *CONDUCT AN AUDIT OF ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS (BOTH MAJORS AND GUR'S), ASSESSING THOSE REQUIREMENTS IN LIGHT OF PLU 2010 AND FINANCIAL REALITIES*
- *REORGANIZE THE ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION IN LIGHT OF PLU 2010, FINANCIAL REALITIES AND THE COMMITMENT TO "GROWTH BY SUBSTITUTION."*
- *DEVELOP YEAR-LONG CLASS SCHEDULES TO PROMOTE MORE EFFECTIVE REGISTRATION AND TO ENCOURAGE RESPONSIVENESS TO STUDENT INTERESTS*
- *CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF OFFERING FEWER ACADEMIC PROGRAMS TO ASSURE ADEQUATE FUNDING OF EACH.*

Endowment Revenue. A stronger endowment liberates the university from immediate economic pressures and gives the institution the latitude it needs to be adaptive, creative and forward-thinking. Income from endowment helps support financial aid, an important resource for the majority of our students. It provides a stable source of funds for ongoing technology enhancements, enabling us to stay current with evolving technologies. And it also supports professorships, new initiatives in teaching and research and visiting scholar programs.

While the university's endowment has grown at a remarkable rate over the past few years, at only \$45 million it is quite small for a university of PLU's size and scope. In the current economic climate regionally and nationally, large gains in endowment are not anticipated in the coming decade; however, enhancing the endowment to supplement the funding of new and existing programs and activities must continue to be an institutional priority.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY ACCELERATE ONGOING PROGRAMS TO SEEK GIFTS IN SUPPORT OF THE ENDOWMENT FUND AND INCLUDE AS A PROMINENT COMPONENT OF THE NEXT FUND-RAISING CAMPAIGN ENDOWMENT SUPPORT FOR SCHOLARSHIPS, PROGRAMS AND FACULTY.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *DEVELOP CASE STATEMENTS FOR ENDOWED FACULTY POSITIONS IN TEACHING, RESEARCH, AND SERVICE*
- *DEVELOP CASE STATEMENTS FOR ENDOWED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS, EMPHASIZING NAMING OPPORTUNITIES*

Fund-Raising Revenue. Fund raising is a key source of revenue for meeting 2010 goals and objectives. Money raised through fund raising provides scholarships and programmatic support, builds and maintains buildings, and helps the university keep pace with rapidly changing technology and admissions markets. Fund raising at PLU has become more organized, focused, and far-reaching over the past 10 years and with great success. The university must continue to build on that success by broadening the sources of these funds.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY SUSTAIN AND ENHANCE THE ANNUAL GIVING PROGRAM AND UNDERTAKE A NEW CAPITAL CAMPAIGN THAT WILL BE AN ESSENTIAL SOURCE OF REVENUE IN THE DECADE AHEAD.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *ACCELERATE PROGRAMS TO SEEK GIFTS AND GRANTS IN SUPPORT OF GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES AND SPECIFIC PROGRAM SUPPORT.*
- *PLAN FOR THE NEXT FUND-RAISING CAMPAIGN, INCLUDING FUNDING FOR ENDOWMENT AS WELL AS CAPITAL PROJECTS*
- *STRENGTHEN THE GRANT-WRITING EFFORTS OF THE FACULTY WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON GRANTS TO SUPPORT BUDGET OFFSET AND CURRENT PROGRAMS*
- *CREATE "CASE STATEMENTS" FOR EACH ACADEMIC SCHOOL AND DIVISION TO BE USED IN SUPPORT OF ANNUAL GIVING AND GRANT REQUESTS.*

Our Heritage and Our Place. While not directly a revenue source, our Pacific Northwest and Pacific Rim location does differentiate PLU from other Lutheran colleges and universities, and the combination of faith and learning in dialogue differentiates it from other Pacific Northwest and most ANAC institutions. The university must better articulate these distinctions it and thereby entreat others to recognize, embrace and support the excellence of its programs.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE UNIVERSITY TAKE STEPS TO CELEBRATE ITS ACADEMIC DISTINCTIVENESS AS A PATHWAY TO REALIZING ITS VISION FOR THE FUTURE.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- *DEVELOP CLEAR MARKETING MESSAGES FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS TO BE USED CONSISTENTLY IN ADMISSIONS EFFORTS*
- *PROMOTE FACULTY CREATIVITY, SHOWCASING RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ENDEAVORS*
- *HOST A CAMPUS-WIDE ACADEMIC FESTIVAL EACH SEMESTER TO SHOWCASE STUDENT WORK, EMPHASIZING THE WORK OF GRADUATING SENIORS*
- *USE THE WEB TO PROMOTE A “REAL TIME” UNDERSTANDING OF THE NUANCES OF THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM, INCLUDING STORIES OF ACADEMIC DISTINCTION*

THE DECISION MAKING STRUCTURE: A STRATEGIC PATHWAY

Significantly increasing the university’s funding base over the next decade will be difficult. The projected scarcity of new resources means that the allocation and reallocation of existing resources in accordance with academic priorities will be critical to achieve long-range goals. Simply stated, the university has no other choice: it must develop a set of academic priorities and reasonable strategies for accomplishing them.

The logical outcome of the adoption of *PLU 2010*, therefore, is the creation of strategic plans and budgets that show how the university will reach its long-range goals and realize its vision for academic distinction. Without a strategic pathway to guide decisions, the goals will be more difficult, if not impossible, to reach.

The creation of this strategic pathway requires absolute clarity about process and a steadfast commitment to linking budgets to academic priorities. In the jargon of the day, the university must move to “mission-based” budgeting and adopt practices that tie expenditure plans to long-range goals and short-range priorities. One of the advantages of mission-based budgeting is that dollars follow priorities. As priorities change, budgets will change, too. With a strategic pathway in place and clarity about process, we can know where we are going and how we will be getting there.

The existing university governance structure seems quite capable of addressing strategic planning and budgeting. Faculty leadership will have to work collaboratively with the administrative leadership to implement the details for strategic planning and budgeting, including how and at what speed 2010 priorities are met. Challenges from higher education competitors and the general condition of the economy suggest urgency.

When strategic decisions and resource allocations are made, they should continue to be made using the appropriate channels, including the faculty, staff, administrative and regents governance systems.

The university community must ask itself and soon provide detailed responses to these questions and others: How will our vision be achieved? How will we align our financial resources to reflect new and continuing academic and administrative priorities? What are the plans and budgets for investments in infrastructure, facility, technology and personnel PLU will implement, at what cost, and by when? How will we fund current commitments and innovation in an era of relative resource scarcity? How are budgets directly linked to mission, priorities and plans?

This chapter is a call to conversation and action. The university must bring the same degree of purposefulness to planning and budgeting that it brings to learning and teaching. The next level of distinction will be difficult to reach without purposeful allocation of resources in support of long-range goals and strategic plans. *PLU 2010* provides the framework for conversation. The culture and procedures for governance provide the framework for decision-making. The task is to translate conversation into decisions and go boldly into the future.

ENDNOTES

¹ Data published in PLU Viewbook “PLU Challenge, Support, Success” (Elliot Press, 2002), p. 10.

² “What will you do with your one wild and precious life?”
Parks, Sharon Raloz (oral communication), paraphrasing
Mary Oliver, “The Summer Day” (poem), *House of Light* (Beacon Press, 1990), p. 60.

³ Edward LeRoy Long, Jr., “The Vocation of Religious Affiliated Higher Education,” unpublished manuscript, p. 19

⁴ See Community Commission final report, p. 2.

⁵ Joan Wallach Scott, “The Critical State of Shared Governance,” *Academe* 88/4 (July-August 2002), p. 41; Will Harris, “Teaching in a Constitutional University,” *Almanac* 42/15 (Tuesday, December 12, 1995).

⁶ Scott, p. 42.

⁷ Thomas Ehrlich, “Civic and Moral Learning,” *About Campus*, September-October 1999, pp. 5-9 at p. 7.

⁸ Data published in *studentPOLL*, vol. 4, no. 3 (2001), a quarterly publication of The Art & Science Group, Inc., in collaboration with the American Council on Education.

⁹ “Building a More Distinguished and Distinctive Academic Program: An Addendum to *PLU 2000*,” 1997.

¹⁰ The range in these percentages represents the difference between “undergraduate research” more narrowly and more broadly defined. The lower end of the current percentage range would include only the Natural Sciences undergraduate research scholars (17), the Severtson Scholars in Social Sciences (5), the Moe Scholars in Arts and Communication (3), and those among the Divisional/School Fellows in each of the Arts and Sciences divisions and professional schools (16) who work with faculty on research projects. Adding all the senior capstone students who present their projects at a professional presentation event such as the Natural Sciences Academic Festival more than triples that number. Expansion of formal undergraduate research participation to 100 students per year and more broadly defined participation to 400 would raise the percentages to 12% and 50% of 800 graduating baccalaureate students annually.

¹¹ Wofford College does this and has elicited 40 novels by students since 1995 (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 15, 2002, p. A39).