

“Bridge” Strategic Plan for Bryn Athyn College, 2022-2025

Approved by the ANC Board of Trustees on 2/11/23

Introduction

Bryn Athyn College produced a Strategic Plan for 2017-2021. In 2021, this Plan was extended to 2022. Because Bryn Athyn College has been involved in a process of review and re-accreditation and is currently in a period of transition, seeking to appoint a new President by the end of the 2022-2023 academic year, it is imprudent to develop and approve a new Strategic Plan that would become binding for years into the future.

However, our process of re-accreditation requires that we show the connections between a Strategic Plan and the Goals of our Mission. Moreover, operations at Bryn Athyn College require that we have and follow a Strategic Plan, which provides transparency in the allocation of resources and evidence of consensus on the direction of the College.

The Board of Trustees has asked for a \$300,000 decrease in the deficit of the College's Budget in each of the succeeding three years. For this reason, in addition to the above, it may be prudent to produce a three-year Bridge Strategic Plan, with the goal of making explicit the need to plan the actions and management of resources in accordance with this request.

The Strategic Plan that is presented here is intended to be a trim and operational Plan that carries over certain ongoing initiatives from the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan and adds to these a limited number of new initiatives that are specifically linked to Goals in the Mission.

It is expected that the Strategic Plan described here, which is presented without a statement of Vision or the establishment of Values or Principles, will be reviewed, amended, or replaced by a new President when one is appointed and has developed a new Plan with those necessary components.

The Strategic Plan presented here is, therefore, a "Bridge" between the 2017-2021 Plan, extended to 2022, and a new Plan that will be developed and affirmed under a new Presidency.

The Mission Statement and Mission Goals are presented on page 2 as a key for the links provided in the Bridge Strategic Plan which follows, beginning on page 3.

Mission Goals are part of the Mission and are established and approved by Faculty, Administration, and Board. These are reviewed periodically and were affirmed most recently in 2020, at which time the Goals were divided into the categories of Educational Goals and Operational Goals. Like the Mission Statement, the Mission Goals are only revised with a process of review and approval.

In the Bridge Strategic Plan, Mission Goals associated with each Strategic Goal and/or Strategic Initiative are so designated in blue at the end of each entry.

JDK, 11/30/22 (revised 12/2/22)

Mission of Bryn Athyn College

Mission Statement

Bryn Athyn College of the New Church serves as an intellectual center for all who desire to engage in higher education enriched, guided, and structured by the study of the Old Testament, New Testament, and theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. This education challenges students to develop spiritual purpose, to think broadly and critically from a variety of perspectives, and to build intellectual and practical skills. The ultimate purpose is to enhance students' civil, moral, and spiritual lives, and to contribute to human spiritual welfare.

Educational Goals:

- EG1:** Offering undergraduate and graduate liberal arts and science programs and outreach programs that integrate academic and New Church spiritual perspectives.
- EG2:** Enriching students' physical, social, mental, and spiritual lives by providing purposeful, student-centered programs and services guided by New Church principles.
- EG3:** Educating theological students to serve as priests in the General Church.
- EG4:** Preparing education students to be successful teachers in public, private, or New Church schools.
- EG5:** Supporting research and publication that advances secular and New Church thought.
- EG6:** Providing library services to support the academic programs and New Church collections and archives for use throughout the world.

Operational goals:

- OG1:** Recruiting and retaining students who can contribute to and benefit from the institution's mission.
- OG2:** Recruiting, developing, and retaining high-quality, mission-focused faculty, administrators, and staff.
- OG3:** Ensuring fiscal stability and resource stewardship to support the mission of the College.
- OG4:** Engaging friends and alumni, inspiring philanthropic support, and advancing the transformative mission of Bryn Athyn College.
- OG5:** Developing and maintaining facilities, infrastructure, and grounds to serve the educational, aesthetic, and spiritual values of the institution.
- OG6:** Responding to evidence in order to continuously improve the implementation of the College's mission.

BRIDGE STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal 1: Financial Sustainability: Reduce budget deficit by \$300k each year for three years, starting with FY24, from the FY23 deficit of \$3.16M, as per Board direction.

This may be achieved through added revenue (i.e. gifts or tuition) to offset expenses, but must otherwise be realized through cuts to program or operational expenses. (OG3)

Initiative 1.1: Develop and follow a strategic development plan linked to ambitious yet achievable enrollment projections aimed to produce tuition-driven revenue which, together with revenue from ROA Program and renewable annual gifts, direct the College to a sustainable draw on endowment. (OG3)

*Initiative 1.2: Develop Return on Assets Program (OG3)

*Initiative 1.3: Develop coordinated fundraising plan for strategic objectives (OG3)

Initiative 1.4: Assess programs or expense areas in each portion of the College Budget (Admissions and Marketing, Professional Development, Academics, Student Life and Athletics, Infrastructure, Other Administration) for cost, return on investment, and impact of removal. Identify areas that could be cut or trimmed for savings to expenses if revenue is not found to otherwise decrease deficit. (OG3)

Goal 2 – Develop practices and procedures to ensure that growth in enrollment is achieved with a highest-possible percentage of “Mission-friendly” students who will be welcomed and belong in BAC culture. (OG1)

Initiative 2.1: Review doctrinal foundations of curriculum *and* of the desire that growth in enrollment include students from non-New-Church backgrounds. (OG1)

Initiative 2.2: Continually assess recruitment and enrollment processes to ensure that clear statements on the distinctive elements of our educational philosophy are clearly and consistently communicated to students before enrollment at BAC. Assess and document what works well and what does not work in marketing and recruitment to ensure that enrolling students are prepared to benefit from and contribute to the College’s Mission. (OG1)

Initiative 2.3: Develop a plan, through use of student feedback (such as responses from student-satisfaction surveys) to gain an understanding of student perceptions of New Church culture on campus – what aspects of practice and doctrine resonate / which do not? Use this information together with consideration of desired outcomes to assess programs and make changes as necessary. (OG1, OG6)

Initiative 2.4: Develop and continue programs and practices to encourage, grow, and support the diversity of the student body. (OG1)

Initiative 2.5: Maintain and/or strengthen student support groups and mental health facilities for all students. (OG1)

Initiative 2.6: Assess needs of students from diverse backgrounds. Maintain and/or strengthen student support groups and mental health facilities specifically for students of diverse backgrounds, such that these feel welcomed and a sense of belonging on the BAC campus and in the BAC community. (OG1, EG2)

Initiative 2.7: Develop clear statements and policies describing BAC stance on LGBTQ issues as pertaining to enrolled students. Ensure that these are described on the College website and in the Student Handbook. (OG1, EG2)

Initiative 2.8: Reactivate “First Generation College Students Committee,” to provide continued support for students who may otherwise be disadvantaged. (OG1)

Goal 3 – Ensure that Bryn Athyn College is a desirable place to work and is properly staffed by professionals with appropriate credentials and dedication for advancing the College Mission. (OG2)

*Initiative 3.1: Continue to develop and implement plans for growth and succession of Faculty, Staff, and Administrators, specifically to include Dean of Theological School. Identify and track potential successors. (OG2, EG5)

*Initiative 3.2: Support faculty and staff in career-related education and development. (OG2)

Initiative 3.3: Review and report on desired outcomes and methods of assessment for both curricular and extra-curricular programs such that all stakeholders understand what is being done across BAC to advance the Mission of the College. (OG2)

Initiative 3.4: Review workload (actual and expectations) and make necessary adjustments to ensure that employees are properly tasked and compensated (as per benchmark with comparable institutions and position responsibilities) and not overburdened. (OG2)

Initiative 3.5: Ensure availability of funding for faculty research and for faculty and staff to attend and/or present at professional conferences. (OG2, EG5)

Initiative 3.6: Develop clear statements and policies describing BAC stance on LGBTQ issues as pertaining to employees (Faculty, Staff, and Administration). Ensure that these are described in all appropriate Employee Manuals and Faculty Handbook. (OG2)

Initiative 3.7: Establish a process and/or body to assess employee satisfaction and recommend appropriate actions to supervisors, in order to enhance employee satisfaction and minimize departure/turnover. (OG2)

Goal 4 – Ensure integrity of academic programs and curriculum appropriate to BAC as a Liberal Arts institution with a particular New Church affiliation and Mission. (EG1)

*Initiative 4.1: Support Institute of Swedenborgian Studies. (EG1, EG5)

*Initiative 4.3: Support Swedenborg Library services by maintaining required staff positions, maintaining Library, and strategically expanding resources and collections. (EG1, EG6)

*Initiative 4.4: Digitize 5 NC Collections. (EG1, EG6)

*Initiative 4.5: Establish endowment for Swedenborgiana collection. (EG1, EG6)

*Initiative 4.6: Meet growing academic advising needs. (EG1, EG6)

*Initiative 4.7: Strengthen academic support. (EG1, EG2)

Initiative 4.8: Continue symposia, hosted by Faculty Council and the Institute for Swedenborg Studies. Invite M.Div and MARS students to participate with presentations on current scholarship. (EG1, EG3, EG5)

Initiative 4.10: Assess and support programs of Theological School. (EG1, EG3)

Initiative 4.11: Develop and enact sufficient marketing and recruitment strategies for all programs that fall beyond the scope of standard undergraduate majors or otherwise require specialized approaches to attract and retain students, i.e. Building Arts, Master of Science in Special Education, Master of Arts in Religious Studies, Master of Divinity. (EG1, EG2, EG4)

Initiative 4.12: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, ensure facilities and resources are appropriately accessible to all students, faculty, and staff. (EG1, EG2, OG5)

Initiative 4.13: Review Core (GenEd) Program and enact necessary changes as recommended by Core Committee and approved by Dean of Academics and Faculty Council. Ensure that Core requirements include “Intercultural Competency” and/or DEI content, as per the guidelines of MSCHE Standard III, criterion 5 and/or revised Standards. (EG1, EG2)

Initiative 4.14: Continue research and development of a summer “Bridge Program” to support students who are not otherwise academically prepared for college. (EG1, EG2, OG1)

Goal 5 - Ensure integrity of the College experience by providing extra-curricular programs and services appropriate to BAC as a four-year, residential institution of Higher Education with a particular New Church affiliation and Mission (EG2)

*Initiative 5.1: Maintain and assess NCAA DIII Athletic Programs and ACHA Club Ice Hockey for areas/items needing additional physical and programmatic financial support. (EG2)

Initiative 5.2: Under continued direction of Athletic Director and Athletic staff (coaches), maintain and/or further develop aspects of NCAA DIII and ACHA Club Ice Hockey Athletic Programs that stress the importance of camaraderie and sportsmanship. (EG2)

*Initiative 5.3: Continue to assess and develop chapel program to ensure that it is advancing the mission of BAC while meeting the various needs of BAC students. Ensure that the Chapel program is properly positioned and managed (including methods of recording attendance), such that it can be assessed for efficacy. (EG2)

*Initiative 5.4: Assess and develop on-campus programs and support groups (Chaplaincy, student- and faculty-led discussion groups, etc.) to help students maintain spiritual perspective and practice. (EG2)

*Initiative 5.5: Assess and develop student access to goods and services necessary to maintain personal health and physical wellness, including both food services (cafeteria and off-hour purchases) and basic personal supplies. (EG2)

*Initiative 5.6: Assess and continue to develop medical and mental-health services, including student-support groups, as necessary. (EG2)

*Initiative 5.7: Assess and develop residences and Residence Life programs to best serve students who live on campus. (EG2)

Initiative 5.8: Assess and develop programs and facilities to best serve students who commute to campus. (EG2)

Initiative 5.9: Provide Career Counseling and Job Placement services for BAC students. (EG2)

Initiative 5.10: Assess and develop extra-curricular student activities and BAC traditions in a manner that fosters a sense of community and belonging and develops a shared sense of what it is to be a Bryn Athyn College student (and alumnus/a). (EG2, OG4)

Goal 6 – Ensure sufficient, sound infrastructure, both physical and operational, to support achievement of all goals (OG5)

Initiative 6.1: Maintain physical infrastructure as needed to ensure continued use of buildings and campus facilities. (OG5)

Initiative 6.2: Support IT Department and its staff. (OG5)

Initiative 6.3: Reinstate Strategic Plan Committee with charge to review progress on initiatives in this Bridge Strategic Plan, review allocation of resources to Strategic Plan initiatives, solicit and develop recommendations for goals and initiatives for the subsequent Strategic Plan on the basis of evidence provided from assessment measures, among other sources. (OG3, OG5, OG6)

Initiative 6.4: Review committee structures to ensure that Faculty, Staff, Administration, and Student representatives are properly situated across the institution as appropriate to principles and practices of Shared Governance and to best facilitate communication in a manner that is appropriate, transparent, and conducive to advancing the Mission of the College. (OG5, OG6)

Goal 7 – Advance the Mission of Bryn Athyn College and Strengthen Alumni and Community Relations by engaging Alumni and Friends (OG4)

*Initiative 7.1: Develop plan and procedures to raise \$1 - \$1.5 M per annum from alumni and consistent donor base (OG4)

Initiative 7.2: Educate young alumni and friends about philanthropy and engage the same in funding drives. (OG4)

Initiative 7.3: Maintain series of events to promote alumni cultivation and community engagement. (OG4)

Initiative 7.4: Collect and maintain accurate data on alumni outcomes. (OG4)

Initiative 7.5: Support the growth and engagement of the Bryn Athyn College Alumni Association (BACAA). (OG4)

APPENDICES

Items *Not* Carried Over from 2012-22 Strategic Plan

#		Status	Assessment
4	Return to Cash Flow Break Even	Underway	Aspirational
5	Return boarder ratio to 60-65%	Underway	Aspirational
8	Grow net tuition revenue	Underway	Aspirational
10	Enhance central funds payout	Underway	Aspirational
11	Mission Display and Visitor's Center	Deferred	No Funding
12	Presidential Scholars Program	Deferred	No Funding
13.1	Add Women's Soccer	Completed	Completed
13.2	Add Women's Field hockey	Completed	Completed
13.3	Change Ice Hockey from Club to Varsity Sport	Completed	Completed
14	Increase FTE enrollment to reach 500	Ongoing	Aspirational
52	Accelerated Degree Program	Completed	Completed
no #	Enhance Admission Office resources to recruit more students	Underway	Modified
15	Improve academic achievement scholarships for qualified students	Deferred	No Funding
no #	Improve mental health services to address root cause of behavior and academic student issues	Completed	Completed
18	Increase faculty w/ terminal degrees while maintaining core NC faculty	Ongoing	Modified
19	Masters of Special Ed	Completed	Completed
20	Institute of Swedenborg Studies	Continuing	Vague
21	Develop 4-year degree in Building Arts	Completed	Completed
22	Math Major	Completed	Completed
23	Data Science Major	Completed	Completed
24	Dual Certification in Education	Completed	Completed
25	Garden-based Learning Program	Completed	Completed
26	English and Communications Major/Minor	Completed	Completed
28	Academic Calendar (switch to semester)	Deferred	Untenable
55	Transform physical environment of Library	Deferred	No Funding
33	Meet growing academic advising needs	Continuing	Modified
34	Strengthen academic support	Continuing	Modified
53	Increase occupancy and retention within the Residence Halls	Continuing	Modified
54	Maximize out-of-class engagement (by adding student life events)	Continuing	Modified
39	Construct artificial turf field	Completed	Completed
40	Construct student union/conference center	Completed	Completed
42	Develop academic facility/office plan for 500 enrollment	Completed	Completed
43	Enhance BAC authority over CSS operations for college campus	Completed	Completed
44	Deferred maintenance plan	Deferred	Include?
46	Fundraise for Education Program	Completed	Completed

47	Fundraise for Athletics	Completed	Completed
48	Fundraise for Building Arts	Completed	Completed
49	Fundraise for Religion Department Endowment	Ongoing	Include?
51	Fundraise for Swedenborgiana and Archives	Ongoing	Include?
##?	Add new turf to Junge Pavilion	Completed	Completed
##?	Air condition Pendleton Hall, including Auditorium	Deferred	No Funding

Tasks that BAC has assigned itself as a result of the Self-Study that are proposed for the Strategic Plan

Opportunities for Improvement	Result
(Initiative 1 for Standard 1) Establish a process for developing and communicating clearly defined outcomes for mission fulfillment that can engender broad consensus among alumni, donors, members of the board of trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students. Communicate and collaborate with the College Board Committee (or its designated subcommittee) in this work. Systematize these processes. (Standard I Criteria 1.d. and 4)	See initiatives 2.1, 2.3 Will also be done through CAO's Report to the ANC Board.
(Initiative 10 for Standard 3) Reactivate the "First Generation College Students Committee," begun in 2019 but inactive since the beginning of the Pandemic. (Standard III Criterion 4)	Added as initiative 2.8
(Initiative 12 for Standard 3) Add an "Intercultural Competency" requirement to the Core curriculum by modifying extant courses or developing appropriate new courses. (Standard III Criterion 5)	Added as initiative 4.14
(Initiative 15 for Standard 4) Continue research and development of a summer bridge program to support students who are not academically prepared for college. (Standard IV Criteria 1 and 6)	Added as initiative 4.15
(Initiative 22 for Standard 6) Implement improved processes for introduction and approval of strategic plan initiatives, budgetary review of initiatives within the Strategic Planning Committee, and campus communications of plan initiatives and outcomes. (Standard VI Criterion 2)	Added as initiative 6.3
(Initiative 24 for Standard 6) Continue efforts with the assistance of the College Board Committee to eliminate cash flow deficit operations within the next 5 years. Near term focus will remain on revenue growth. (Standard VI Criterion 3)	See initiatives 1.1-1.4
(Initiative 25 for Standard 6) Establish a task force to examine and enhance employee satisfaction and minimize setbacks caused by employee turnover. (Standard VI Criterion 4)	Added as initiative 3.7
(Initiative 26 for Standard 6) Identify appropriate resource needs for broadening donor and alumni support. (Standard VI Criterion 4)	See initiatives of Goal 7
(Initiative 29 for Standard VII) Continued study of ways to improve governance to enhance feedback, communication, and commitment to mission. (Standard VII all criteria)	Added as initiative 6.4