



A COMMUNITY 2018 - 2023  
**OF MISSION**  
Strategic Plan for Harding University



**HARDING**  
UNIVERSITY

## YEAR ONE REPORT

MCMXXIV

“This has been and will continue to be a monumental process, and Harding University will be changed for the better because of it.”



## 2018-2019 Report and Highlights

The 2018-2023 strategic plan, approved by the Board of Trustees in May 2018, was developed around five presidential strategic priorities and consists of broader strategic initiatives and more specific action items under each strategic priority. This report highlights the significant accomplishments related to the strategic initiatives and action items during the first year of the strategic plan.

## Strategic Priority 1: A Christ-Focused Community of Mission

- Increased the number of employees mentoring students by establishing a program where, in its first year, 25 faculty and staff members who had been first generation students themselves mentored incoming first generation students.
- Expanded efforts to increase student involvement in intergenerational work of local churches through intentional Bible classroom discussions and engaging with local congregations to draw students into church ministries.
- Created the Andy T. Ritchie Jr. Endowed Chair for Discipleship and Church Planting to support the activities in the Center for World Missions within the College of Bible and Ministry. Andy T. Ritchie Jr. was a pioneer of church planting at Harding.

## Strategic Priority 2: An Affordable Community of Mission

- Utilized the consulting firm of Gonser Gerber to perform a feasibility study for the upcoming comprehensive campaign and a draft case statement was piloted with select donors for feedback.
- Utilized the consulting firm of Ruffalo Noel Levitz in implementing a new, data-driven scholarship model that, in addition to standardized test scores, now incorporates financial need and will incorporate high school GPA in 2020.
- Reduced energy costs by replacing approximately half of the fluorescent lighting on campus with LED lighting. Temperature limiting thermostats were installed in three construction or renovation projects and lighting occupancy sensors were added in two projects.
- Connected graduate and professional programs more closely to their undergraduate feeder programs by developing dual degree programs and beginning a 3+3 B.A. in Bible and M.Div. track and approving 4+1 B.B.A. and MBA, 4+1 B.B.A. and MSIS, and 3+2 B.S. and MSAT degree paths.
- All telephones have been moved from Nortel PBX to the VoIP system.
- Using the reputation strategy firm of Carnegie Dartlet, incorporated a message of quality and affordability into all recruiting and communication materials and website content. Implemented true cost calculator to allow students to understand the cost of attendance and apply eligible discounts and scholarships.



## Strategic Priority 3: A Successful Community of Mission

- Implemented a new enrollment marketing platform for prospective students, incorporating new brand messaging and more comprehensive information that is customized with name and individual interests.
- A program review electronic dashboard was created in Tableau that provides program, department and college leaders with 28 filterable data views. The program review process was revised to include self study guiding questions in the evaluation of resource allocation. Program reviews were completed by the departments of English, kinesiology and mathematics, as well as by the College of Bible and Ministry, using the dashboard and guiding questions.
- Acquired a NetVUE grant for expanding career services and assisting students in their identification and pursuit of calling and vocation.
- A transfer recruiter was hired to increase transfer enrollment and further develop admissions and support services for transfer students.
- Created an endowed chair to support the activities of the Waldron Center for Entrepreneurship and Family Business in the College of Business Administration.
- Enhanced the capabilities of library systems by migrating to the Tipasa interlibrary loan system and updating procedures and tutorials.

Presentations at two faculty meetings communicated the strategic plan goals for markers of academic success as stated in the strategic plan.

	Goal	Most Recent Results
Freshman Retention Rate	85.0%	84.8%
Four-Year Graduation Rate	50.0%	48.5%
Six-Year Graduation Rate	70.0%	68.5%
Six-Months-Out Placement Rate	85.0%	88.1%

- Advancement purchased and implemented the Reeher-Blackbaud client relationship management (CRM) system to focus on gift officer activities, annual fund giving information, and donor analytics.
- Hired reputation strategy consulting firm of Carnegie Dartlet who completed a baseline brand perception study by conducting message development workshops and gathering input from more than 500 individuals to define brand message and personality. A reputation strategy document was developed, including a comprehensive guide for messaging using terms that best represent Harding's distinctiveness as Christian, ethical, transformative, passionate and excellent.
- Following a thorough exploration of the marketplace and the strategic direction of Ellucian (Banner), engaged with Campus Management Corporation to implement the full Nexus enterprise resource program (ERP), student information system (SIS), and client relationship management (CRM) suite. The implementation will be spread over three years and be complete before our current contract with Ellucian expires.
- Renovated the Stevens Art Building classrooms, offices and gallery, and installed new HVAC and fresh air systems.
- Completed a Harding Academy addition of elementary and junior high classrooms and elementary offices.
- Renovated Graduate Hall rooms, bathrooms, study lounges and lobby.
- Constructed Huckeba Field House indoor football practice facility.

## Strategic Priority 4: A Diverse Community of Mission

- Built a diverse recruiting staff with even gender representation and one-fourth non-white representation.
- An admissions recruiter was given an added role of multicultural resource advisor to work with visiting families from underrepresented groups and provide support and information to address their questions about their student's experience at Harding, and to partner with regional recruiters at receptions, events and visits to predominantly African American or Hispanic churches and organizations.
- Scholarships were created for students from the Caribbean in memory of Botham Jean. Scholarships were created for National Youth Conference and Southeastern Youth for Christ attendees, Jóvenes for Christ conference attendees, and for students transferring from Southwestern Christian College.
- Half of the keynote presentations for W.I.N.G.S. ladies conference were delivered by minority speakers, and more than half of the keynote speakers for the fall Bible Lectureship are minorities.
- Provided racial and cultural competency training to faculty and administrators during the faculty pre-session conference and to all Aramark employees. The multicultural resource advisor began ongoing training sessions with the admissions staff regarding frequently asked questions by students and families of various ethnicities.
- Conducted Harding on the Go events in Memphis, Dallas and Houston and hosted Ministers Visit Days on campus to build and strengthen the university's relationships with predominantly African American churches.
- Coaches and athletic trainers participated in professional development sessions conducted by the Title IX Coordinator and a university counselor on sexual harassment and violence prevention and response, and student athletes received training in sexual harassment and violence awareness and prevention during annual NCAA compliance meetings.

## Strategic Priority 5: A Collaborative Community of Mission

- Transitioned the Center for Student Success into a University College that is home to many academic support services and special academic programs.
- Approved a new integrative studies major in the University College and appointed a faculty member as director to advocate for interdisciplinary studies on campus and advise and mentor students who pursue the major.
- Utilized the extended features of the VoIP system to begin use of an automated attendant to replace the full-time switchboard attendant, and the Jabber app has been made available to the entire campus.
- Strengthened the repository of research, scholarship and creative works by adding material from the departments of biology and computer science, the College of Bible and Ministry, the McNair Scholars program, the Honors College, and dissertations from the Cannon-Clary College of Education. Added current and past lectureship and chapel programs to the Harding history repository.



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