



A COMMUNITY **2018 - 2023**
OF MISSION

Strategic Plan for Harding University



HARDING
UNIVERSITY

YEAR FOUR REPORT

MCMXXIV

The 2018-2023 strategic plan,

The 2018-2023 strategic plan, approved by the board of trustees in May 2018, was developed around five University-wide strategic priorities and consists of broader strategic initiatives and more specific action items under each strategic priority. This 2021-2022 report highlights the significant accomplishments related to the strategic initiatives and action items during year four of the strategic plan.



Strategic Priority 1: A Christ-Focused Community of Mission

Both biblical history and the history of Christian higher education bear witness that faith commitments often fade with time and eventually disappear. A once-vibrant spiritual identity can easily degrade into nothing more than a curious detail of our past and no longer a living commitment in our present. During this strategic planning process, the Harding University Community of Mission was challenged to address, as if for the first time, the assignment of making Jesus Christ the center of the Harding classroom and the entire Harding campus. These action items accomplished during 2021-2022 are the result of this challenge:

- Administered a chapel survey in Fall 2021 with questions designed to assess newly established student learning outcomes. Data was shared with key leaders and decision-makers.
- Incorporated the following statement into all syllabi for Harding Online programs: "Harding Online presents all courses within a faith-based, Christ-centered worldview. Faculty are committed to integrating their faith perspective with their academic disciplines, resulting in holistic critical applications of their courses. Harding Online prepares students to implement their knowledge and skills in such a way that demonstrates biblically rooted understanding, care, and service for people and institutions in their contexts."
- The Ritchie Endowed Chair for Discipleship and Church Planting hosted a disciple-making training weekend event on campus in which 92 participants learned how to bring renewal to their local congregations through evangelistic outreach.
- Created a Preacher Resource Database in Scholarworks in collaboration with the Center for Preaching
- The College of Bible and Ministry launched the Office of Community Connections, located on Race Street, where students partner with local nonprofit 100 Families to use their professional training by serving as life coaches and spiritual mentors for local families recovering from crises.
- The Center for Health Sciences programs began offering a number of curricular and service-learning opportunities that foster student growth in the areas of poverty, hunger and related social issues; as well as providing services to campus and community organizations such as local school athletes, Special Olympics athletes and Upward Bound students.
- Began requiring nursing undergraduates to take NURS 4530 Community Health with class time dedicated to poverty and social determinants of health. NURS 3050 Culture of Poverty is an elective that is open to all Center for Health Sciences students.
- Developed and administered an instrument to assess social club participation objectives and outcomes related to personal and spiritual development
- Initiated a student-athlete group called Mission 4:13, led by faculty and students, that provided spiritual development and growth opportunities for each team and dedicated time to praying with and engaging others in spiritual conversations and discipleship
- The Student-Athlete Advisory Committee hosted a Mental Health Awareness Week, engaging student-athletes in a number of activities promoting mental and spiritual well being.
- Grew the endowment fund that provides additional scholarships for children of missionaries to over \$600,000 and increased the award amount from 25% to 35% with a goal of 50% at full funding
- Hired Mangan Holcomb Partners to assist in planning the Centennial Celebration of Harding and her mission, obtaining feedback from multiple constituents for strategy and planning activities and projects for August 2023 through September 2024

Strategic Priority 2: An Affordable Community of Mission

Cost is an area where Harding University is committed to moving from “good” to “great” in the next five years. While we are presently very economically priced for private higher education, we will not rest until every qualified student who wishes to come to Harding can afford to do so. That is why in this strategic plan, the full creative resources of the Harding community have been brought to bear on this challenge. During this strategic planning process, the Harding University Community of Mission was challenged to find bold new ways to combine stewardship and philanthropy to make a Harding education even more affordable for all students. These action items accomplished during 2021-2022 are the result of this challenge:

- Updated the Centennial Campaign case statement with new projects and adjustments based on donor feedback. Of the total funds raised in the comprehensive campaign to date, 50.1% are for student scholarships. The public phase of the campaign begins fall 2022.
- Raised \$2 million for the Freedom Fund to serve students with demonstrated financial need as well as other scholarships to support students with financial need
- Raised \$17.5 million to date via estate planning efforts, with over \$5 million recorded this year
- Partnered with alumni and friends of international programs to establish an endowed scholarship fund to provide need-based scholarships to study abroad students
- Developed a policy to clearly define parameters allowing students to use undergraduate scholarships in certain accelerated programs that result in both bachelor's and master's degrees
- Based on results of a market analysis and peer program analysis, an adjustment was made to the pricing for the physical therapy program, and a scholarship model was implemented for the incoming class of students.
- To address affordability, reduced the minimum graduation requirement for a bachelor's degree from 128 credit hours to 120 and changed the liberal arts as part of a renewal process resulting in a reduction from 53 to 47 credit hours required for the liberal arts.
- Accelerated bachelor's plus master's programs were added to the graduate programs' Enrollment Marketing Platform, in collaboration with undergraduate admissions.
- Added minors to support accelerated programs of study toward the Master of Business Administration and Master of Science in information systems for non-business majors, which allows students with any major to add a minor and earn up to 12 hours of graduate credit that counts toward a bachelor's degree
- A one-hour course – BUS 2510: Personal Finance for College Students – became a required course in the liberal arts, thus integrating Christian stewardship into the undergraduate curriculum.
- Planned part-time student job fairs for Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 to inform students of available on-campus and local work opportunities
- Added dual support for undergraduate and graduate programs to improve user pathway on the Harding website, including a comprehensive list at harding.edu/majors and a new landing page
- Offered a third voluntary retirement incentive to qualifying employees who were identified as not needing to be replaced if they accepted the offer
- Reduced energy costs by upgrading equipment in new projects including Cathcart and Armstrong Halls, Welcome Center, Public Safety offices, hallways in the Pryor-England Science Center and Benson Auditorium
- Began exploring the use of solar energy to reduce electricity costs



Strategic Priority 3: A Successful Community of Mission

The conviction of Harding University is that academic excellence is deeply rooted in our spiritual commitments. We clearly hear the call of Jesus to “love the Lord . . . with all (our) minds” (Mt 22:37). That is why Harding is committed to maintaining and enhancing high-quality academic and support programming that promotes educational and professional success. We want our students to retain, persist, graduate and excel in graduate school and job placement at even higher levels than before. These are areas where we can quantitatively “move the needle” in the next five years. During this strategic planning process, the Harding University Community of Mission was challenged to develop new strategies for helping our students succeed and excel. These action items accomplished during 2021-2022 are the result of this challenge:

- Strengthened enrollment strategies by featuring graduate and professional programs more prominently in University publications and launching numerous digital marketing initiatives
- Created personalized dashboards within Slate CRM for the enrollment services leadership team, providing greater undergraduate enrollment forecasting
- Contracted with Hanover to provide a market analysis on undergraduate majors and changed the processes for new program approval to require all new programs to provide evidence for new students and revenue to cover expenses
- Program reviews were completed by the departments of biology, chemistry & biochemistry, and engineering & physics
- Approved a Master of Science in cardiac function and interventional technology and a Master of Arts in history with an associated accelerated program for bachelor's degrees
- The physician assistant program submitted a plan to expand class size
- The Arkansas Board of Nursing approved the accelerated Bachelor of Science in nursing program at Harding's Northwest Arkansas location.
- In collaboration with Harding Online, a Master of Education in Christian education leadership commenced in Spring 2022.
- Entered into MOU with Crowley's Ridge College and signed articulation agreement for preferred admission for CRC students to the pharmacy program.
- Changed the ADVANCE curriculum to reduce the number of remedial reading courses to one
- Created a graduate registrar position with responsibilities for managing the Office of Graduate and Professional Support which provides academic and student support services for graduate and professional programs including, but not limited to, registrar, marketing, admissions and institutional research
- A NetVUE grant was used to support alumni engagement on campus to develop clarity of vocation and calling among students. The grant provided training to faculty and staff to support implementation of strength-finder tools for all new students beginning Fall 2022.
- The Provost Office and Career Center implemented a comprehensive process involving faculty in collecting missing outcomes data from recent graduates.
- Developed a plan for expanding student health services to include a disease-specific scope of practice by a certified family nurse practitioner
- New advisory boards were created for the Waldron Center in the Paul R. Carter College of Business Administration and for architecture and interior architecture in the College of Arts and Humanities. The Center for Organizational Leadership Advisory Board was created to guide the development of organizational leadership programs.
- Held official signing ceremony for the David and Betsy Waldron Distinguished Chair for the Waldron Center in October 2021
- Initial plans and fundraising have occurred for two additional chairs in two different colleges. These will be announced publicly in the following year.

- Increased focus on honors thesis research resulted in three in 2020-21 (with four faculty thesis advisors) and 14 in 2021-22 (with 14 faculty thesis advisors)
- The second annual Research Conference had 20 presentations with lead student authors representing 18 disciplines and 12 faculty mentors.
- Hosted social media workshop to train on-campus managers of social media accounts in content creation and strategy
- Re-engaged with Ellucian, undertaking a strategic alignment plan to ensure effective use of all University information systems
- Increased digital engagement and enhanced user experience on the Harding website, digital magazine, social media, Harding app and print media using hyperlinks and QR codes.
- Slate Customer Relationship Management system is live for undergraduate admissions and selected graduate programs.
- Commenced the complete redesign of www.harding.edu in preparation for the centennial year; selected the new content management system in preparation for starting the design and implementation of the new website
- Implemented multi-factor authentication for all employees accessing University information systems to further enhance cybersecurity.
- Enhanced the University's web presence and user experience to support the Harding Online initiative.
- A Welcome Center, located on the first floor of the David B. Burks American Heritage Building, was completed and opened for guests. Enrollment services and alumni and parent relations are utilizing this new space to better serve prospective students and alumni.
- Construction began on the new Holland-Waller Center that will replace the Ganus Building and house history and political science, foreign languages and international studies, various international student programs, and ROTC.
- Began renovations and upgrades to the Benson Auditorium lobby, restrooms, HVAC and lighting
- Armstrong Hall renovations included upgrades to rooms, bathrooms, study lounges and lobby.
- A portion of the first floor of Kendall Hall was repurposed and renovated to house all divisions of public safety in one location near the center of campus.
- Plans were finalized, and fundraising began for the construction of a new track and field complex.
- Based on comparisons of teacher salaries at other White County schools, increased the pay scale levels for Harding Academy teachers with 1-20 years of experience
- Based on an evaluation of pay for faculty in comparable universities and professionals in the industry, increased the salary level of faculty in communications and sciences disorders

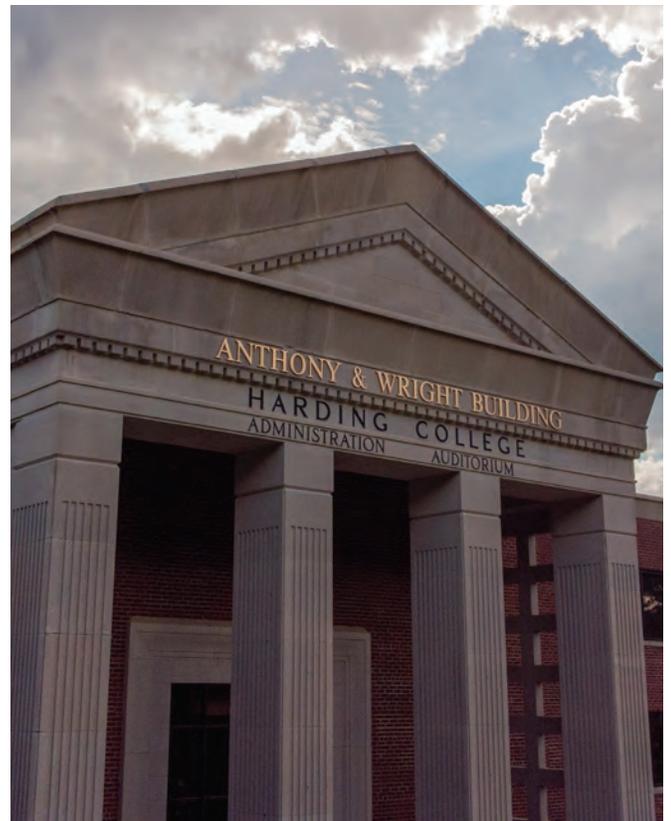
Consistently called community members toward markers of academic success, having the following recent measures:

	Goal	Yr 1 Results	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4
Freshman Retention Rate	85.0%	84.8%	86.7	84.3	83.9
Four-Year Graduation Rate	50.0%	48.5%	52.6	55.3	50.0
Six-Year Graduation Rate	70.0%	68.5%	71.5	67.2	69.3
Six-Months-Out Placement Rate	85.0%	88.1%	73.9	76.6	82.7

Strategic Priority 4: A Diverse Community of Mission

Harding is deeply committed to increasing the racial diversity of the University and to increasing opportunities for women. For us, diversity flows from our belief that "Christ is all, and is in all" (Col. 3:11). With this strategic plan, what has long been a desire must become a priority. We realize that this will require new perspectives and the allocation of significant new resources. During this strategic planning process, the Harding University Community of Mission was challenged to develop new strategies to accomplish these goals. These action items accomplished during 2021-2022 are the result of this challenge:

- Dedicated the Anthony and Wright Administration Building and nearby monuments honoring Harding's earliest African American alumni
- Dedicated the Botham Shem Jean Memorial located near the south entrance of the David B. Burks American Heritage Building
- The Diversity in Education Scholarship was named in honor of Mrs. Thelma Fae Smith, a distinguished educator and one of Harding's first African American graduates.
- The African American Alumni Association hosted the first annual Sankofa Gala at Homecoming where alumni, employees and students recognized and celebrated prominent alumni.
- Appointed a faculty member in the College of Bible and Ministry as liaison and advisor to the church relations director focused on serving predominantly African American churches and Spanish-speaking congregations.
- Partnered with universities in China to establish 3+1+1 programs where students transfer to Harding after three years of undergraduate study in China to complete a bachelor's degree and then enroll for an additional year to complete a master's degree.
- A harassment prevention training module was administered to employees during Spring 2022.

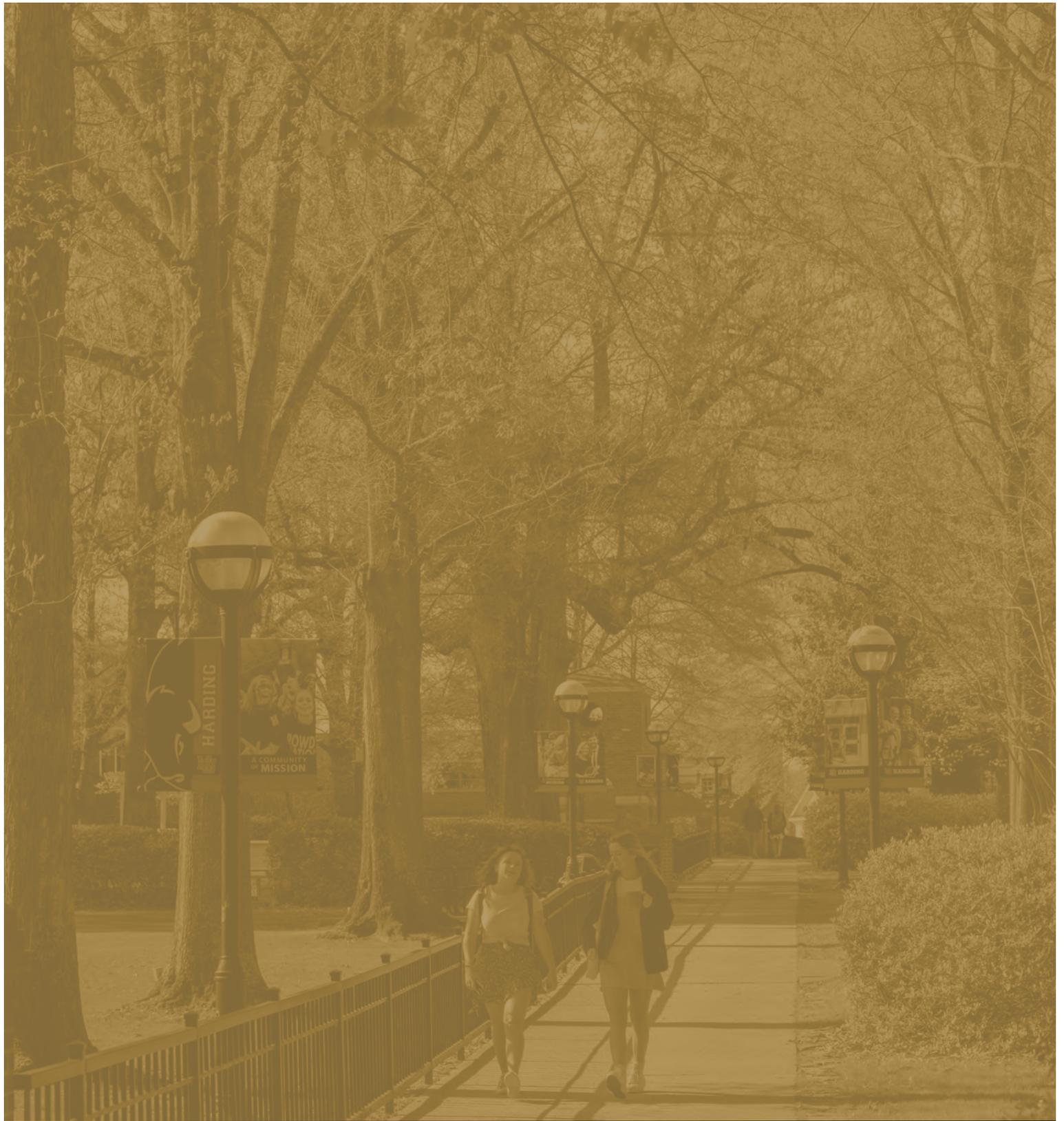


Strategic Priority 5: A Collaborative Community of Mission

This priority sprang from a year-long discussion among the faculty considering the question: “What is one idea, big or small, that would make Harding University better?” With one voice, the University faculty expressed their desire to work in a more interdisciplinary, collaborative environment. This reflects not only personal longings but also the demands of an increasingly inter-professional work world. Consequently, during this strategic planning process, the Harding University Community of Mission was challenged to envision collaborative processes not only among all academic disciplines but also among administrative units as a way to create a richer learning environment. These action items accomplished during 2021-2022 are the result of this challenge:

- Approved a new interdisciplinary major in human biology
- Assessment plans were developed for three major co-curricular programs (chapel, international programs and social clubs) which included learning goals tied to the co-curricular profiles. Data will be collected on a regular cycle and analyzed for program improvement.
- Partnered with Chartwells to have a faculty lunch space in the cafeteria and conference center.
- Remodeled the Center for Teaching and Learning to provide space for small groups of faculty to meet, hosting Harding Read groups and others such as planning focus groups for the teacher-coaching program
- The Center for Teaching and Learning featured events in which expert faculty addressed teacher identity and mental wellness.
- Provided support for 15 faculty to pursue Association of College and University Educators online certificate of teaching in 2022-2023.
- Collaborated with HEAL@Harding to pilot a Canvas course for wellness, the Faculty Leadership Council to create small groups for the Harding Read program, and E-Learning to help plan and offer a “Best of” teaching panel featuring some of the best ideas from ACUE.
- Developed Harding Online resources to support the integration of faith into online classes





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