



MONTREAT COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN

BUILDING THE MONTREAT COLLEGE OF TOMORROW



MONTREAT COLLEGE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

STRATEGIC PLAN
2019-2025

I. STRENGTHEN THE MISSION

Introduction	2
A. Intellectual Inquiry	6
B. Spiritual Formation	8
C. Preparation for Calling and Career	10

II. STRENGTHEN THE MODEL

A. Enrollment Growth	12
B. Alternate Revenue Streams	16
C. Increase Gift Income	18

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

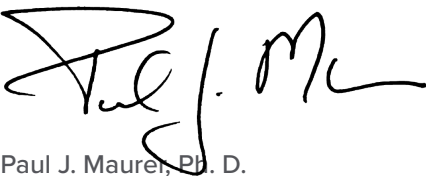
A MIRACULOUS SEASON

In 2012-2014 in response to declining enrollment, the college faced an uncertain future. A merger option did not materialize, and the college was faced with possible closure. However, God was not finished with Montreat College. In early 2014, an anonymous couple made a pledge of \$6M to help restart one of the remaining Christian colleges in North Carolina. Their gift was catalytic, triggering record levels of gift income and a newly energized campus culture. Building on that momentum, the college has experienced consecutive, year-over-year record enrollment growth for both face-to-face and online students.

The college has learned the important lesson that miracles are intended to show the greatness of God, but they do not necessarily make things easy. The college has been hard at work building on the opportunities provided and planning for a promising future.

We are deeply grateful to the faculty and staff, the college’s executive team, and members of the board of trustees for their invaluable help in crafting this plan.

We are excited about the Montreat College of tomorrow. We hope you are too, and that this plan deepens not only your excitement, but your engagement as well.



Paul J. Maurel, Ph. D.
President



BUILDING ON A CENTURY OF SERVICE

Montreat College, founded in 1916, has served the purposes of God’s kingdom for over a century. Montreat College has served the families of the Appalachian region and the Southeast United States by providing a Christ-centered education to generations of servant-leaders through disciplines such as biology, business, Christian ministry, communication, cybersecurity, education, English, environmental science, health sciences, history, music business, outdoor education/ministry, psychology and human services, and theatre. The college’s master’s degrees have prepared leaders for business, clinical mental health counseling, marriage and family therapy, and public health and administration.

VISION

Montreat College seeks to be a leader in Christ-centered higher education regionally, nationally, and globally.

MISSION

Montreat College is an independent, Christ-centered, liberal arts institution that educates students through intellectual inquiry, spiritual formation, and preparation for calling and career, all to impact the world for Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCTION

A VISION FOR TOMORROW

Montreat College’s vision is to be a leader in Christ-centered education regionally, nationally, and globally. As the college has considered its tomorrow, it has identified four pillars to provide guidance toward this vision:

Christ-centered. The college has unapologetically re-rooted its future in a historic understanding of orthodox, biblical Christianity. While the winds of culture change, there remain timeless truths fixed in an ordered universe. This commitment has led the college to move forward with freshly considered vision and mission statements, a revised statement of faith, and a community life covenant. These documents provide missional clarity in hiring, policy, and operational decisions.

Liberal Arts. The liberal arts educational tradition goes back to Cicero in the first century B.C. It has largely defined American higher education for most of its nearly 400-year history. In recent decades, liberal arts education has fallen out of vogue. What is lost in the conversation is that the liberal arts is the best way to help young people develop their minds not only for work but for life; and that it’s far more practical than the pathway of specialized university programs. Why? Because the overwhelming majority of 18 to 22 year olds have no actual idea of what they will do vocationally over the long term. They will change not only jobs but also careers along the way. The liberal arts, by teaching the core life competencies of reading, writing, critical thinking, analysis, and communication skills, educates students for any vocation, not a single vocation. When you combine liberal arts with an education that recognizes that we serve a Creator, you have the finest education designed by humanity for humanity.

STEM. The global economy of today and tomorrow is being built on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). Montreat College has chosen to pivot its future growth in these areas with an initial focus in science and technology. The college’s first major initiative in this direction is in cybersecurity, the economic and security threat of our age. The college launched its cybersecurity major in 2014, and since has developed a wide range of programs and initiatives to address this global challenge. Along the way, cybersecurity has become the college’s fastest growing program. The college has also added new science majors. In the years ahead, the college will continue to expand its footprint in these areas.

Leadership. Montreat College seeks to be a leader at regional, national, and global levels as we combine the three elements above: an institutional identity of Christ-centeredness, a commitment to teaching the competencies of the liberal arts, and growth focused on developing STEM -related programs. Providing leadership in higher education with this combination is extremely rare in American higher education. We believe this combination of traditional commitments and progressive academic programs is vital in our post-Christian culture and will continue to attract increasing numbers of families toward a Montreat College education.



THE TWO MACRO GOALS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

In executing this plan, Montreat College will focus on two principle macro goals. The first is to “**Strengthen the Mission,**” namely the focus on further development of the pillars of the college’s mission, which describe how Montreat educates its students: intellectual inquiry, spiritual formation, and preparation for calling and career. The college’s mission statement provides a meaningful and powerful pathway for the development of our students as intellectual beings, Christ-followers, and citizens who contribute to society.

The second macro goal is to **Strengthen the Model.** For Montreat College to achieve its vision, it must strengthen its economic model. This requires enrollment growth and increased gift income. It also requires more than these traditional methods. The college seeks to develop a new business model through alternate revenue sources, thereby reducing the college’s dependence on its traditional model.

STRENGTHEN THE MISSION

- I. Strengthen the Mission
 - A. Intellectual Inquiry
 - B. Spiritual Formation
 - C. Preparation for Calling and Career

STRENGTHEN THE MODEL

- II. Strengthen the Model
 - A. Enrollment Growth
 - B. Alternate Revenue Streams
 - C. Increase Gift Income

I. STRENGTHEN THE MISSION
A. INTELLECTUAL INQUIRY



OBJECTIVE #1 – STRENGTHEN ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

For Montreat College to fulfill its vision to become a leader in Christ-centered education, the college must strengthen its academic profile. To achieve this, the college will design and implement a Quality Enhancement Plan on critical thinking, strengthen programs in the natural sciences and business, add new academic programs, and continue to grow and increase selectivity in our honors and cybersecurity programs.

OUTCOMES



Stronger academic reputation



Enrollment growth



Increased confidence and marketability of graduates



Improved student recruiting



Alumni pride



Increased capacity for fundraising

OBJECTIVE #2 – CREATE NEW STUDENT PIPELINES FOR NON-ATHLETE STUDENTS

More than 70 percent of Montreat College’s traditional undergraduate student population is student-athletes. Achievement of the college’s vision requires the college to increase recruitment of non-athletes. The college must create academic activities, connected to community, to recruit and retain non-athletes. Initially, the strategic plan will focus on creating competitive academic teams and expanding participation in the fine arts, specifically theater and music.

OUTCOMES



Enrollment growth



Allows the college to move beyond its dependence on athletic programs

OBJECTIVE #3 – INCREASE STUDENT SELECTIVITY

For the college to achieve its vision, it must increase student selectivity. While the primary focus over the next few years will be enrollment growth, the college should also make progress on selectivity by gradually increasing enrollment criteria for our honors and cybersecurity programs and reducing the overall number of students who are admitted conditionally.

OUTCOMES



Increased value proposition in the marketplace



Enrollment growth

OBJECTIVE #4 – STRENGTHEN FACULTY CREDENTIALS, PUBLICATIONS, AND ENGAGEMENT

Increasing the college’s value proposition in the marketplace is tied to the strength of the college’s faculty and their academic credentials. Montreat College will work to increase the percentage of faculty who hold a terminal degree in their field, and faculty will be encouraged to publish and present with greater frequency.

OUTCOMES



Stronger faculty and new faculty candidates



Enrollment growth

B. SPIRITUAL FORMATION



OBJECTIVE #1
CLARIFY AND CREATE
STRUCTURE FOR
SPIRITUAL FORMATION

In light of the college having clarified its identity as a Christ-centered college, the current structure for chapel also needs reconsideration. The Dean of Spiritual Formation will lead in transforming the student chapel experience and redefining the chapel requirements for our students.

OBJECTIVE #2
ASSESS FRESHMEN
THROUGH SENIOR
SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Spiritual Formation is a critical pillar in the mission of Montreat College. An assessment process will be identified and implemented to help determine how traditional undergraduate students are progressing in their spiritual development over the course of their time at the college.

OUTCOMES



Structure that is in alignment with the college’s commitment to spiritual formation



Provide the college with important data about the spiritual formation of its students

OBJECTIVE #3 – DEVELOP TWO-TO-FOUR-YEAR PLAN
FOR COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS

The college wants to be intentional about what topics are covered during a student's time at Montreat College. A two- to four-year chapel plan will focus on spiritual formation, including the cultivation of biblical literacy and cultural engagement. Every fall, a Gospel will be covered with the spring semester focused on other areas of scripture and spiritual formation. Each semester will also provide opportunities to engage with relevant cultural issues through the lens of Scripture.

OUTCOME



Students will receive an intentionally considered offering of messages during chapel.

OBJECTIVE #4 – ADVANCE STUDENT DISCIPLESHIP INITIATIVES

To provide opportunities for students who want to go deeper in their spiritual journey, the college will develop new initiatives, including student-led campus small groups, missions opportunities in partnership with local churches, and service work with local non-profits.

OUTCOME



Increased number of students who have grown deeper in their spiritual journey

OBJECTIVE #5 – FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF BIBLICAL
WORLDVIEW IN CURRICULUM AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

To achieve this objective, the college must define what is meant by the term “biblical worldview” and create a common understanding, which will influence all aspects of the student experience. "Lord, walking in the way of your laws. We wait for you; your name and renown are the desire of our hearts." (Isaiah 26:8)

OUTCOME



Intentional delivery of deeper theological understanding of biblical worldview and its alternatives

C. PREPARATION FOR CALLING AND CAREER



OBJECTIVE #1 – CREATE AND CLARIFY THE STRUCTURE FOR INTERNSHIPS

To strengthen the college’s internship program, the college will revise its structure of the internship program and clarify the coordination, oversight, and accountability for internships. The college will also work to increase percentage of students engaging in job shadowing, mentoring, and informational interview experiences.

OUTCOME



Increased quantity and quality of internships, thereby strengthening career prospects for our graduates

OBJECTIVE #2 – EXPAND DELIVERY OF STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT AND SELF-AWARENESS

Self-awareness contributes to college student success and outcomes, such as identity development, well-being, and decision making. This objective will better equip students to choose a major and a meaningful career pathway through ongoing reflection and intentional application of their strengths, interests, and personal characteristics.

OUTCOME



Graduates who are better equipped to begin their careers

OBJECTIVE #3 – DEVELOP AND EXECUTE THE MONTREAT EXPERIENCE

Through a set of defined core experiences, the development of “The Montreat Experience” seeks to provide an intentional student experience that helps students understand and articulate the value of the liberal arts and a Montreat College education.

OUTCOMES



Additional high impact experiences that result in growth of desirable skills



Students can recognize and convey the development of skills desired by employers



Students articulate high satisfaction with experiences at Montreat College

OBJECTIVE #4 – STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ALUMNI NETWORK AND CALLING AND CAREER SERVICES

A strong college engages in helping young graduates with their career path and supports its alumni through career services. The goal of this objective is to determine how Montreat College prepared alumni for their current job/ministry and how they might support current students as they prepare to enter their calling and career.

OUTCOME



Pathway to re-engage college alumni and new graduates in both School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) and School of Adult and Graduate Studies (AGS)

II. STRENGTHEN THE MODEL
A. ENROLLMENT GROWTH



OBJECTIVE #1 – GROW NEW STUDENT ENROLLMENT IN THE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES (SAS)

The college has experienced multiple years of record SAS enrollment. Moving forward, continued growth in traditional undergraduate enrollment is essential to achieving the college’s vision. The goal is to increase SAS new student enrollment by 60 percent by 2025. This goal will be supported through the strategic development of new programs, which will provide additional pipelines for new students.

OUTCOMES



A stronger model by which to operate the college

OBJECTIVE #2
INCREASE SAS AND AGS STUDENT RETENTION

The college must increase retention to grow enrollment and strengthen its value proposition in the marketplace. Improving student retention requires a multi-faceted approach. For the duration of the strategic plan, goals will focus on improving facilities and increasing engagement opportunities by expanding the number of clubs and organizations available to Montreat College students.

OUTCOMES



A stronger model by which to operate the college



Strengthened value proposition in the marketplace

OBJECTIVE #3
GROW ENROLLMENT IN THE SCHOOL OF ADULT AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Increasing AGS enrollment is an essential element to achieving a stronger model. Through strategic enrollment, marketing, and programmatic decisions, the goal is to facilitate AGS enrollment growth.

OUTCOME



A stronger model by which to operate the college





OBJECTIVE #4 – EXPAND MONTREAT COLLEGE’S
ROLE AS A THOUGHT LEADER

Expanding the college’s role as a thought-leader will strengthen the college’s value proposition in the marketplace. Through events, lectures, conferences, published faculty scholarly work, and a book on cybersecurity ethics, Montreat College will gain recognition as a leader in providing high-quality academic experiences for its students and the communities and regions the college serves.

OUTCOMES



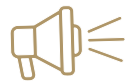
Increased academic
reputation



Strengthened fundraising
opportunities



Strengthened enrollment
pipelines



Increased PR
for college



Expanded footprint in
Asheville and Charlotte

OBJECTIVE #5 – ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN AN INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY (IT) ENVIRONMENT TO SUPPORT AND
SUSTAIN THE COLLEGE'S MISSION

The college must gain the efficiencies of an enterprise system to maximize enrollment opportunities, improve reporting, and create college-wide data integrity.

OUTCOMES



Increased enrollment



Strengthened data integrity
across departments



Strengthened data and reporting
efficiencies across departments



More accurate and timely data to
identify areas for institutional improvement

B. ALTERNATIVE REVENUE STREAMS



OBJECTIVE #1 – DEVELOP AND BEGIN OPERATION OF THE CAROLINA CYBER CENTER

The creation and operation of the Carolina Cyber Center provides significant benefit to the college toward its vision as a regional and national leader in education. The college will create a separate non-profit organization to harden the cybersecurity defenses of North Carolina and the region surrounding Asheville, N.C.

OUTCOMES



Creates significant distinctive for the college by standing up a national demonstration project cyber training center



Alternate revenue stream for the college



The Carolina Cyber Center will began providing training and services in 2020. Fundraising for the Carolina Cyber Center facility will also begin with a goal of securing all the pledges needed to build the brick-and-mortar location no later than 2025.

“It is an honor for Montreat College to be recognized as a cybersecurity leader in this way. Cybersecurity is the national security threat of our age. Montreat has focused on not only building a strong technical program, but we are advocating at a national level what we believe is a significant gap in cyber education. At its core, cybersecurity is a people problem more than a technical problem. Therefore, it is essential that cyber education places a strong emphasis on the character and ethics of the nation’s cyber leaders and operators. We look forward to working with the NSA and DHS to bring solutions to one of the major national crises of our time.” - President Maurer

According to the NSA and DHS, “[Montreat College’s] ability to meet the increasing demands of the program criteria will serve the nation well in contributing to the protection of the National Information Infrastructure... Like all nations, the United States has a compelling interest in defending its vital national assets, as well as our core principles and values, and we are committed to defending against those who would attempt to impede our ability to do so. Education is the key to promoting these ideals.”



C. INCREASE GIFT INCOME



OBJECTIVE #1 – INCREASE GIVING TO KEYSTONE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

For many of our students, an education at Montreat College would not be possible without scholarship support. Donor support of the Keystone Scholarship Fund allows Montreat College to make this Christ-centered education financially attainable for families and reward high-achieving students. Make a gift to the Keystone Scholarship Fund with your support of the Keystone Scholarship Dinner.

By increasing gift income to the Keystone Scholarship Fund, additional scholarships will be available to support enrollment growth in the School of Arts and Sciences. Increases will be achieved through fundraising campaigns, expansion of the Keystone Scholarship Dinner, and strategic initiatives to increase the number of donors contributing to the Keystone Scholarship Fund.

OUTCOME



Expanded ability to fund student scholarships

OBJECTIVE #2 – FUND IMPROVEMENTS TO COLLEGE FACILITIES AND FUND ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The college must fund the investments already made in the turnaround, elements of the strategic plan, continued improvements to existing facilities, and construction of new facilities on the Black Mountain campus. A feasibility study will be completed, and a comprehensive campaign will identify funding priorities for the college.

OUTCOME



A successful comprehensive campaign is a major step forward in the transformation of a college, helping the institution, its alumni, and its constituents think differently about the college and its future.





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