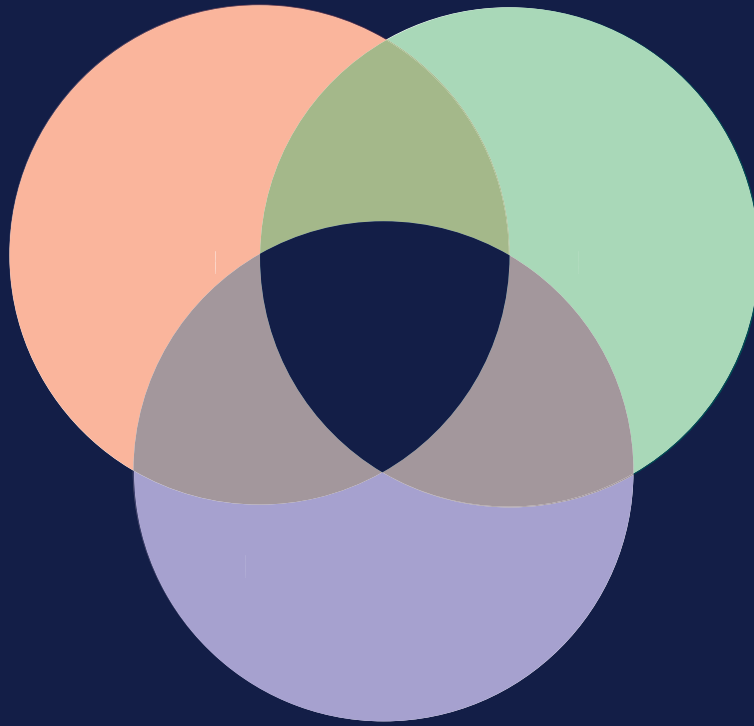


THIEL 2021: *Student Success*



The strategic plan for Thiel College 2017-2021

Approved by the Thiel College Board of Trustees Friday, February 3, 2017



Thiel College:
combining tradition with innovation
for more than 150 years!

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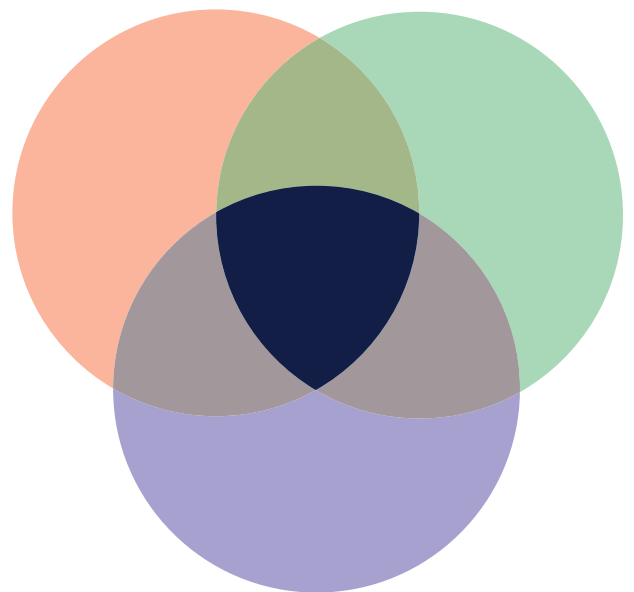
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Foreword

Dear Board of Trustees, Alumni, Friends and Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to present *Thiel 2021: Student Success*, a strategic plan to guide our work throughout the next five years (2017-2021). Trustees, administrative leadership, faculty members, alumni and students contributed to the development of this plan, distilling a vision



for Thiel in 2021 and crafting goals and strategies to advance the College. The *Thiel 2021* strategic plan builds on the accomplishments and momentum of the *Thiel 2016* plan, setting bold goals to enhance Thiel's educational excellence and financial strength.

The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) was the engine of the planning process. Appointed in 2015 and enlarged in 2016, the committee evaluated the risks and opportunities specific to Thiel and in the larger context of higher education. That work generated creative ideas to improve Thiel's position in a competitive marketplace.

In the fall, the SPC reviewed the College's mission, identity and core values, a process that put student success and institutional vitality in the center of our vision. In November, trustees and other campus stakeholders reviewed a draft version of the plan, and, subsequently, the SPC incorporated goals and strategies from that consultative process.

"...an inclusive learning environment where every student has the potential to succeed and where rich curricular and co-curricular opportunities prepare students for careers and lives of meaning and purpose."

Thiel 2021: Student Success advances a vision of Thiel College as an inclusive learning environment where every student has the potential to succeed and where rich curricular and co-curricular opportunities prepare students for careers and lives of meaning and purpose. It is a vision of enhanced institutional confidence embracing the powerful influence that the College can have on students' lives. Stronger enrollment, both for new students and ongoing, is a key feature of the 2021 vision, with a greater number of motivated students thriving at Thiel. Through increased enrollment and higher graduation rates, the College will demonstrate its educational quality and strengthen its financial standing.

Thiel 2021: Student Success identifies three integrated goals to 1) create a compelling educational experience for every student; 2) attract a larger number of motivated students; and 3) enhance resources—human, facilities and financial. The implementation of the strategic plan will be ongoing, accomplished through the annual development of two-year rolling action plans that outline priority actions, measureable outcomes and responsible parties. In this way, *Thiel 2021* will be a living document that guides our work, providing clear direction while also keeping the College open to new opportunities.

“...Thiel 2021 will be a living document that guides our work, providing clear direction while also keeping the College open to new opportunities.”

As required by our accrediting body, we will align the College’s financial investments and fundraising priorities with the *Thiel 2021* strategic plan. Annual budgets will incorporate the revenue and expenses related to priority actions, identifying new sources of revenue for strategic initiatives and/or reallocating budgets to advance the College’s strategic priorities.

As a new member of the Thiel community, I am deeply grateful for the steady engagement of the Strategic Planning Committee, the leadership of the Cabinet, and the support of the Trustees in the development of the *Thiel 2021* strategic plan. Illustrated by the Venn diagram of the three goals, *Thiel 2021* is an integrated plan requiring and fostering collaboration among Academic Affairs, Student Life and Athletics, Enrollment, Finance, Advancement, and Marketing. Its unfolding implementation process will open opportunities to strengthen Thiel’s commitment to shared governance, bringing together faculty, staff and trustees to achieve the goals of the plan.

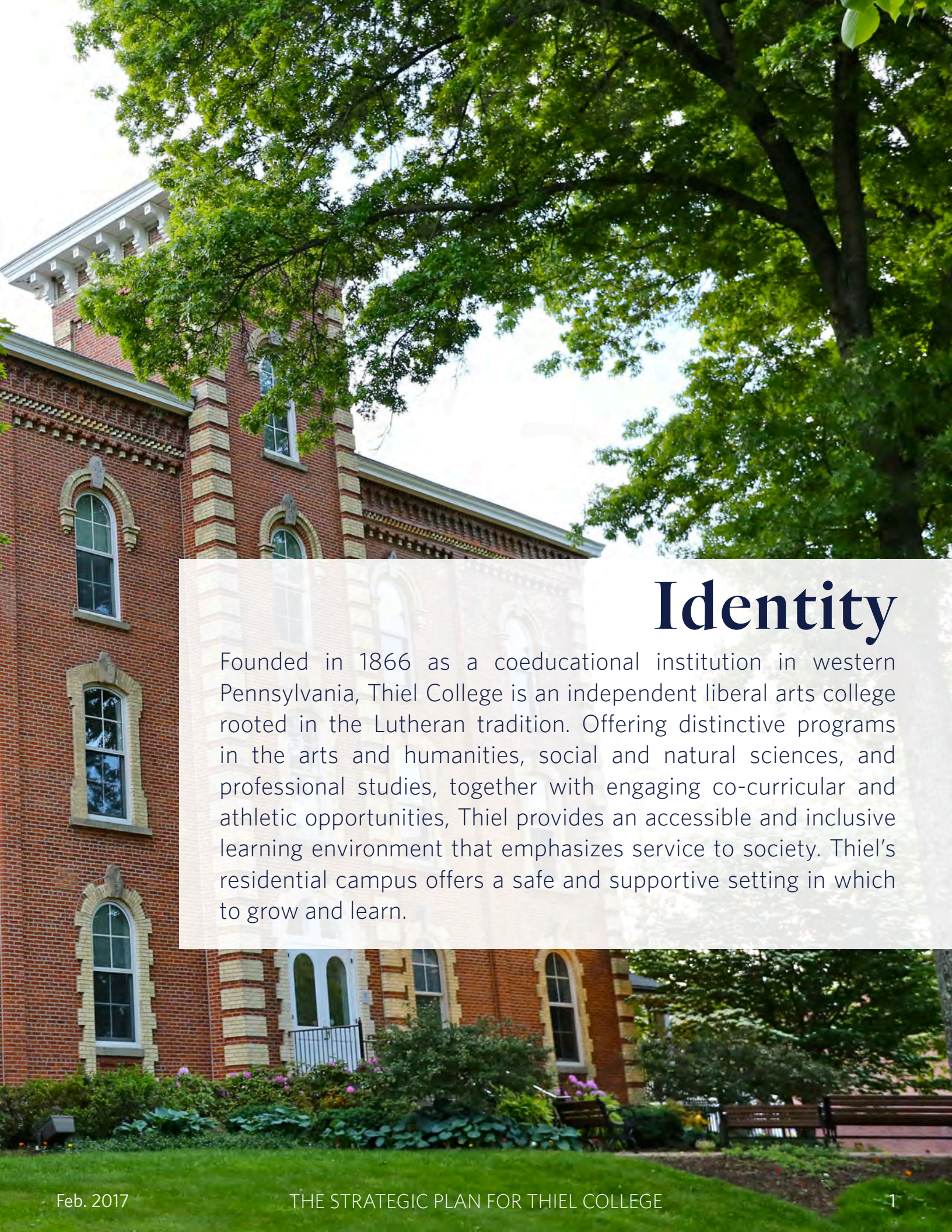
This approach will tap the creativity of the campus community as we strive to realize our vision for 2021. Most importantly, the *Thiel 2021* strategic plan puts student success in the center of our work, keeping us true to Thiel’s heritage values and mission of empowering students to reach their full potential.



Susan Traverso, Ph.D.
20th President of Thiel College





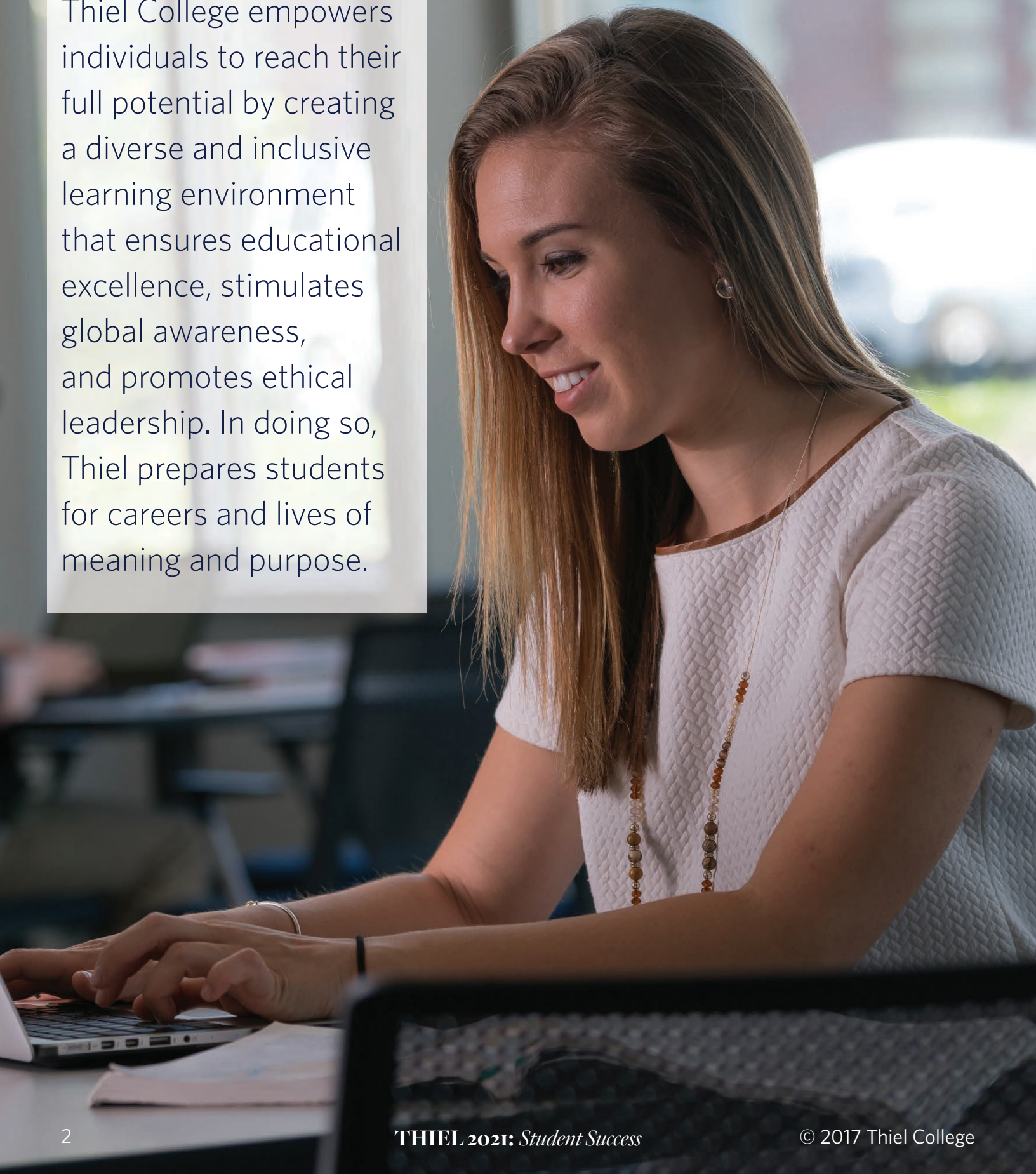


Identity

Founded in 1866 as a coeducational institution in western Pennsylvania, Thiel College is an independent liberal arts college rooted in the Lutheran tradition. Offering distinctive programs in the arts and humanities, social and natural sciences, and professional studies, together with engaging co-curricular and athletic opportunities, Thiel provides an accessible and inclusive learning environment that emphasizes service to society. Thiel's residential campus offers a safe and supportive setting in which to grow and learn.

Mission

Thiel College empowers individuals to reach their full potential by creating a diverse and inclusive learning environment that ensures educational excellence, stimulates global awareness, and promotes ethical leadership. In doing so, Thiel prepares students for careers and lives of meaning and purpose.



Values

COMMUNITY. **truth** *civility*
service *creativity*
FREEDOM OF
INQUIRY **respect**
FAITH **curiosity**
independence

Freedom of inquiry is at the center of our value system and is the basis from which we study with curiosity, live together with civility, serve society, respect one another, build our community, deepen our faith, express our creativity, and experience our independence in pursuit of truth.

Vision Statement

By 2021, Thiel College will convey enhanced confidence in its identity and mission as a liberal arts college that empowers students to reach their full potential.

To realize this vision, Thiel will advance student success as a strategic imperative and foster institutional vitality through sustained financial strength and enrollment growth.

As a liberal arts college offering a gold-standard education at an affordable price, Thiel will attract students from a wide range of backgrounds who are motivated to succeed in College. Distinguished by an integrative teaching and learning model, blending liberal arts with professional education, Thiel's academic programs will offer innovative classroom instruction and enriching experiential learning opportunities, including faculty-student research, internships and study abroad. This educational model, combined with distinctively immersive and individualized student support, will afford students exceptional preparation for careers and lives of meaning and purpose.

From their first day on campus, students will discover a deep sense of connection, satisfaction and joy at having selected Thiel College. Engaged

and motivated by new ideas, compelling courses, and robust co-curricular and athletic programs, students will commit to graduate from Thiel, appreciative of the opportunity to learn and excel in a diverse and nurturing community that values the unique contributions of every individual.

The integrity of Thiel's commitment to mission will be validated and supported by a dedicated and diverse Board of Trustees. The College's culture of philanthropy will mature, financial stability will be enhanced, and mission-focused faculty and staff will benefit from resources devoted to a vibrant learning community.

Guided by core values including freedom of inquiry, creativity, and the pursuit of truth, and inspired by the Lutheran call of service to the world and respect for the dignity of all persons, Thiel College will exemplify the institutional integrity, vitality and confidence its historic mission inspires.

[For a complete vision narrative, see appendix A on Page 15.]



*Student
Success*



Goals

Goal I: Inclusive Learning Environment

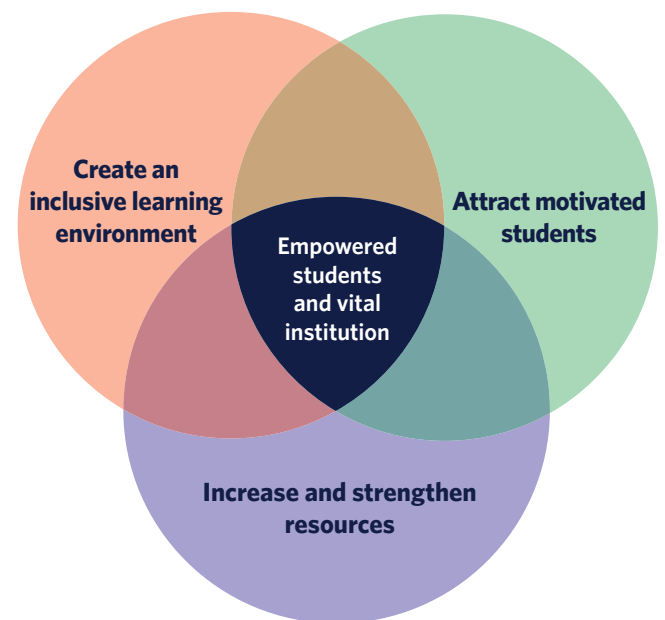
Create an inclusive learning environment where students succeed through innovative academic programs, rich experiential learning opportunities, and dynamic co-curricular and athletic programs.

Goal II: Motivated Students

Enroll 1,100 students from a wide-range of backgrounds, motivated to succeed in college.

Goal III: Resources

Increase and strengthen resources through effective leadership, faculty, and staff development, financial management, fundraising, and partnerships.



The strategic goals of the College are derived from the mission and vision statements and serve the specific purpose of empowering students and ensuring institutional vitality. These three interdependent goals will foster collaborative endeavors by College stakeholders.

Strategies



Goal I: Create an inclusive learning environment where students succeed

Strategy 1:

Implement a first-year program

Strategy 2:

Strengthen programs providing individualized academic support and student services

Strategy 3:

Provide enhanced learning experiences for every student

Strategy 4:

Foster a campus climate that appreciates diversity and advances inclusion

Strategy 5:

Create a compelling residential life experience

Create an inclusive learning environment

Goal II: Enroll 1,100 students from a wide range of backgrounds, motivated to succeed in college

Strategy 1:

Strengthen the College's brand, reputation and market position

Strategy 2:

Implement new undergraduate and master's level graduate programs

Strategy 3:

Strengthen and enlarge athletics and co-curricular program opportunities

Strategy 4:

Enhance campus appearance and make facility investments to advance programs

Strategy 5:

Establish a robust recruitment and admissions program

Attract motivated students



Goal III: Increase and strengthen resources

Strategy 1:

Recruit and develop faculty and staff committed to the College's mission and vision who bring diverse talents and perspectives that enrich the learning community

Strategy 2:

Implement a consistent recruitment and financial aid strategy that meets enrollment and net tuition expectations

Strategy 3:

Increase fundraising and endowment through private gifts, foundations, and grants

Strategy 4:

Strengthen and increase alumni engagement, external partnerships and collaborations

Strategy 5:

Grow auxiliary income through effective utilization of campus facilities and programs

**Increase and strengthen
resources**





Alignment and Implementation

The *Thiel 2021* strategic plan will strengthen the College's **Mission** and realize a **Vision** for student success and institutional vitality. The plan establishes three integrated **Goals** and identifies 15 **Strategies** aligned with the goals. The development of **Priority Actions** will guide the implementation of the plan. Assembled in two-year rolling schedules, the Priority Actions will be developed annually through collaborative engagement with campus stakeholders, guided by the ongoing assessment of the outcomes of the plan as it unfolds over five years.

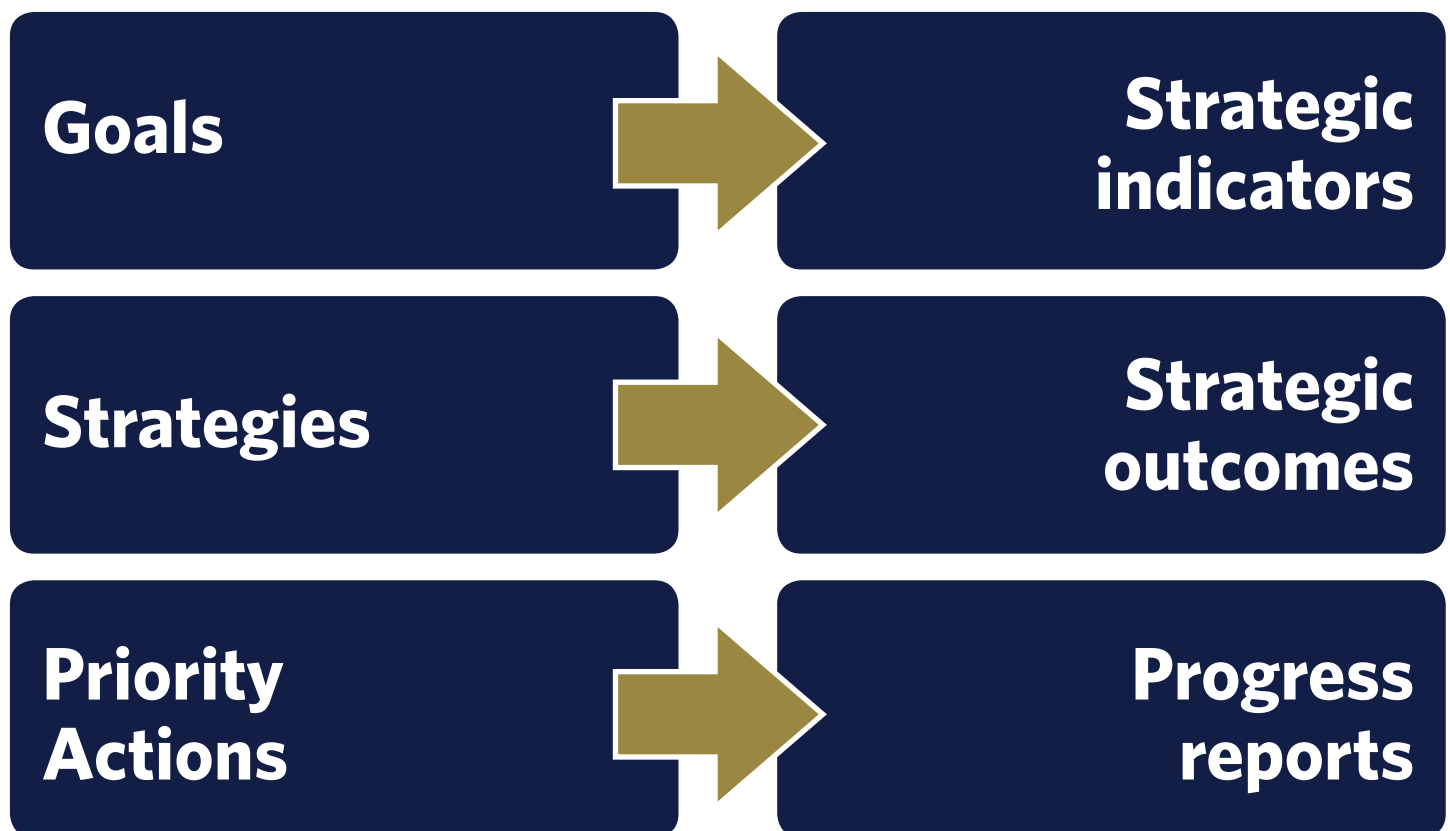
The Action Plans will identify Responsible Parties to lead the implementation of the plan. They will craft detailed **Work Plans**, including timelines, budgets, staff plans, projections and research. Review and approval by the appropriate faculty governance and management bodies will guide implementation. Faculty and staff will layer Priority Actions and related items from Work Plans into annual **Program & Personnel Performance Goals** to ensure the full alignment of the plan and its implementation.

The College will align budget, staffing and fundraising priorities with the *Thiel 2021* strategic plan. The development of the two-year Action Plan will include projected budget and staffing requirements. These budget projections as well as resources identified in related Work Plans will be reviewed within the College's budget process to ensure appropriate alignment of resources with the *Thiel 2021* strategic plan.

An ongoing implementation of the strategic plan through annual planning will tap the creativity of campus stakeholders, foster active governance oversight and provide opportunities for new initiatives to advance *Thiel 2021* and the College's mission.

Assessment

Active and ongoing assessment will be integral to the implementation of *Thiel 2021: Student Success*. The **Goals** of the plan will be monitored using sets of **Strategic Indicators**, measuring progress from 2016 baselines to 2021 benchmarks. The **Strategies** will be assessed against expected **Outcomes** for implementation and impact, and the **Priority Actions** will be measured in **Progress Reports** outlining their completion and impact on the forward momentum of the strategies. The assessment process will measure the effectiveness of the strategic plan to strengthen and advance the College.



Board Oversight

The Board of Trustees will actively oversee progress on the *Thiel 2021* strategic plan and allocate resources to advance strategic initiatives within the annual budget-approval process.



2021 Strategic Indicators

Progress on the Strategic Goals will be measured against sets of Strategic Indicators for each goal. A detailed set of measures, identifying 2016 baseline and annual benchmarks will be monitored internally. What follows are a selection of 2021 benchmarks.

Goal I:

55% graduation rate

At or higher than the **top 50%** of schools in **NSSE engagement indications** for both first-year students and seniors.

Outperforming Mid-East Private Comparison Group by at least **5 points** on **diversity-related questions** for both first-year students and seniors.

First-year retention rate:

73%



30%

of graduates in the Class of 2021 go on to **graduate school.**

96%

of graduates in the Class of 2021 **employed or in graduate school** within 6 months of Commencement.

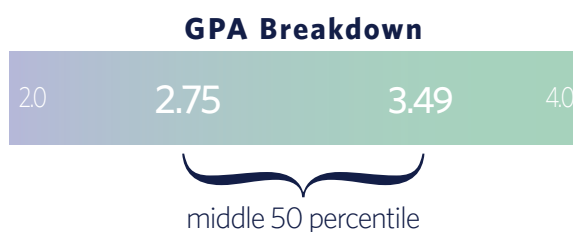
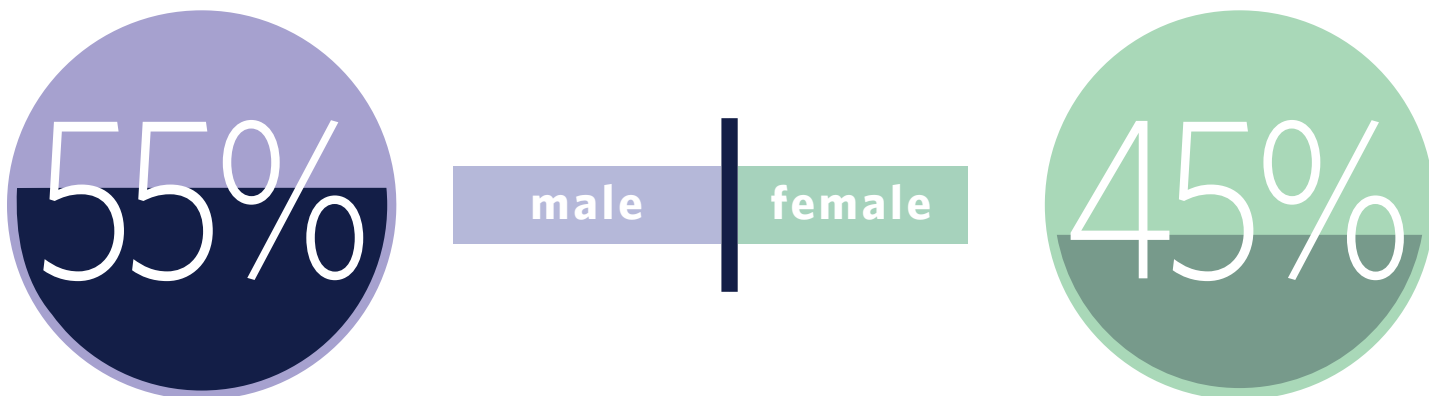
All groups of students participating in at least one high impact program before graduating.

Goal II:

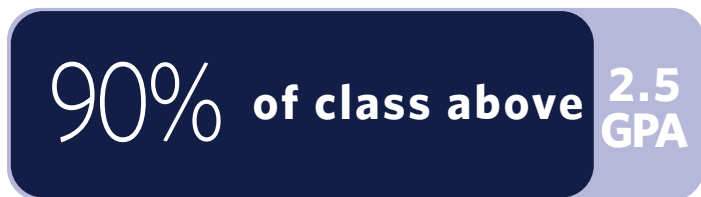
2021 total enrollment: 1,100 students

New-student enrollment: 405 students

Diversity of entering class:



Motivation to succeed in college:



of entering students with **10 or more** core high school classes.



of entering students with **two or more** years of sustained engagement in one or more co-curricular activity, including athletics.

Goal III:

Fiscal year 2021-2022

Total net tuition and fees: \$15.7 M

Change in operating net assets: \$2.9 M

Thiel Fund: \$1 M

Endowment funds: \$85 M



of faculty and staff participating in **two or more** professional development activities annually.

Increase in base salaries

at or above inflation.

Appendix A: Vision Narrative

By 2021, Thiel College will project enhanced confidence in its identity and mission as a liberal arts college that empowers students to reach their full potential. The learning environment on campus will be diverse and inclusive, attracting motivated students from a wide range of backgrounds and engaging them successfully in a rich array of curricular, co-curricular, and athletic programs. The College will emphasize educational excellence, global awareness, and ethical leadership as signature features of its educational programs. Through the integration of the liberal arts and professional preparation, extensive experiential learning opportunities, and a campus-wide student success ethos, the College will be distinguished for exceptionally effective preparation of students for careers and lives of meaning and purpose.

The campus will continue to depend upon tuition as its primary source of revenue and, accordingly, will prioritize enrollment growth and student success. A total enrollment of 1,100 students will be achieved through greater success with persistence to graduation (proposed target of 73% first-year retention) and enrollment growth of new students from 323 in fall of 2016 to 405 in the fall of 2021. Reflecting the College's commitment to inclusive

1,100 students

73% first-year retention

405 new students in fall 2021

excellence, each new student cohort will include approximately 20% students enrolled in the Dietrich Honors Institute and 20% demonstrating motivation to succeed in college, but admitted conditionally based on their high school record.

The College will continue to excel in recruiting student-athletes, Dietrich Honors Scholars, and student-musicians (marching band; choir). Academic

programs in business administration, criminal justice studies, the health sciences and psychology will continue to attract large student cohorts. The College will develop 3-4 new undergraduate programs to enlarge enrollment. Identified opportunities include Sports Management, Exercise Science, and Equestrian Studies, but a revitalized legal studies/pre-law initiative as well as a strengthened media and communication program are areas to be explored as potential sites for strategic investments and growth. At least one fifth-year master's program will be launched, likely in Communications Disorders, and a second graduate program, possibly in special education, public policy, or counseling psychology, could further expand the College's academic programs. These programs will be innovative and competitive, attracting additional students and improving the College's market position. New articulation agreements with community colleges and with high schools through dual enrollment, as well as enhanced international recruitment, will be other avenues to increased enrollment. Articulations with professional and graduate programs will also be updated and expanded.

Among the College's current marquee programs, accounting will be nationally recognized for its 150-credit-hour program and extraordinary post-graduate outcomes as will the education program for successful placement of graduates in teaching positions. The Dietrich Honors Institute will be nationally recognized for offering a creative and challenging curriculum while

**Enrollment growth through
competitive and *innovative*
marquee programs**

being accessible to students who demonstrate potential to excel in college academically and as student

leaders. All academic programs will be characterized by an unrelenting focus on teaching and learning, and strong learning outcomes will be rigorously pursued as new pedagogies, learning platforms, and methods for supplemental instruction are adopted and tested for effectiveness. Curricula and pedagogies will foster interdisciplinary understanding and ensure student engagement with the liberal arts. The College will seek national venues to share its success in providing high quality private education to motivated students who may not have had the opportunity or resources to prepare adequately for college, and who, in a rich learning environment, meet and exceed expectations.

Experiential learning opportunities, including faculty-student research, internships, study abroad and community-based learning, will be available throughout the academic year, inclusive of well-designed January and May terms. Creative learning opportunities will characterize the first-year curriculum, including a first-year seminar and, possibly, a required J-Term. Shared rituals celebrating student scholarly, creative and service accomplishment will be established.

Co-curricular programs will provide learning opportunities through clubs, organizations, and athletics and will foreground the advantages of Thiel's location in a scenic region easily accessible to Pittsburgh, Erie and Cleveland. All activities on campus will be open and inclusive to ensure opportunities for every student to thrive. The health and well-being of all students will be fostered through intercollegiate, intramural and club sports, as well as through varied opportunities for recreational activities across the seasons and throughout the region.

The College will develop exceptionally effective

strategies for meeting the educational needs of students, engaging them with compelling and relevant learning experiences in and out of the classroom and providing support, guidance and resources to foster learning and growth. The College will model successful engagement of a high percentage of first-generation and other underrepresented groups. It will also be recognized for strong post-graduate outcomes.

“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”
- *W.B. Yeats*

The College will cluster its programs, student services and, possibly, academic departments, into Centers of Excellence. Currently operating Centers of Excellence—the Hodge Center for Teaching and Learning, the Haller Enterprise Institute, the Health Professions Institute, the Dietrich Honors Institute, the GNC Faculty/Student Research Institute—will be more effectively marketed and supported and will serve as models for future development.

centers of excellence

The Career Development Center will be well resourced to work with academic departments and individual students to support internship and post-graduate placements. It will also offer programs to strengthen graduate school options and to connect current students with an engaged alumni network. Academic departments and interdisciplinary groups (for example, the Health Professions Institute) will provide discipline-based support for student career preparation.

During the academic year, cultural affairs, the arts and student activities will enliven the campus, and a robust program of summer camps and conferences will keep the campus busy year-round. From matriculation through commencement, students will demonstrate a high level of engagement and a sense of satisfaction

at having selected Thiel. For an increasing number of students, Thiel will have been among their preferred choice of colleges, and—if not identified initially as first choice will quickly be identified as best choice—a place that provides a sense of joy and connection even as it challenges all students to perform at their highest level.

The College will continue to position itself as a value-added liberal arts college offering a gold-standard education at an affordable price—both a lower-than-average published tuition and high scholarship aid. Faculty and staff will share the students’ sense of pride in Thiel as well as a sense of achievement at having opened new opportunities to students who might not otherwise enjoy the benefits of a private college setting in which to learn, grow and excel.

With oversight by a committed and diverse Board of Trustees, the College will improve its financial position through increased enrollment, achieving positive annual operating results and growth in net assets in year three of the plan. Budget efficiencies will be gained through targeted efforts to reduce costs while maintaining program strength. Strategic investments in facilities, guided by a campus enhancement plan, will strengthen academic programs, make improvements in campus housing, and create more appealing and welcoming outdoor spaces for Thiel students. A new Track and Field Complex will enlarge athletic programs while also extending health and wellness opportunities for the larger Thiel and Greenville communities.

Building on the momentum of the *Thiel 2016* Campaign, the College will attract a growing level of financial support from external sources, including individual donors, foundations and public funding agencies. The Thiel Fund will have reached an annual goal of \$1 million, excluding restricted bequeaths. Total gifts and grants will average \$4 million annually, and alumni participation

Thiel Fund: \$1M
Total grants and gifts: \$4M
Alumni giving: 23%

will have increased from 21 to 23 percent. To support the Alumni program, the College will have established an Alumni Center, including guest suites.

The College’s Marketing and Communications will project a compelling and consistent brand that conveys quality, access, and successful outcomes. The advantages of Thiel’s location, the size of the College and the beauty of the campus and its surroundings will be framed as competitive advantages. Core values of respect, civility, curiosity, creativity, independence, and freedom of inquiry in the pursuit of truth enhanced by Thiel’s heritage of Lutheran values of community, service, and faith will prevail on campus and permeate the College’s marketing materials.

what we value

Of all the resources available to the College, the essential and most valuable are its human resources—individuals of commitment, skill, and dedication who bring a rich diversity of talents and perspectives to campus every day. Accordingly, Thiel College will actively recruit and support an excellent and mission-focused faculty and staff by providing the resources and professional development required for effective performance and supportive of institutional integrity, vitality, and confidence. Thiel will foster a sense of mutual respect within a structure of shared governance that values each individual’s contribution to institutional flourishing.

Integrity Vitality Confidence

Appendix B:

The Strategic Planning Committee

Trustees

Dr. Bob Burns '74

Bev Cigler, Ph.D. '68

Chip Dufala '92 (2015-2016)

John Frangakis (2015-2016)

Fred Haer '65

Dr. Frank Maenpa '69

Dr. Barry Stamm '70

Cabinet

Susan Traverso, Ph.D., President

Lynn Franken, Ph.D., Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of the College

Stephen Lazowski, Vice President for Enrollment Management

Roberta Leonard, Vice President for College Advancement

Mike McKinney '02, Vice President of Student Life

Linda Nochta, Administrative Assistant to the President

Richard Orr, Executive Director of Communications and Marketing

Amy Schafer, Director of Athletics

Bob Schmoll, Vice President for Finance and Management

Faculty

Delbert Abi Abdallah, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Biology (2015-2016)

David Buck, Ph.D., Associate Dean of the Core Curriculum, Professor of History

Greg Butcher, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Neuroscience, Department Chair (2015-2016)

Marie Courtemanche, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Political Science, Department Chair

Dan Eppley, Ph.D., Professor of Religion, Faculty Chair

John Gomolchak, Esq., Assistant Professor of Business Administration and Accounting

Mary Theresa Hall, Ph.D., Associate Academic Dean, Professor of English

Anna Reinsel, Ph.D. '06, Assistant Professor of Environmental Science and Chemistry, Department Chair

Chris Stanisky, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Chemistry, Department Chair (2015-2016)

Gary Witosky, '79, Professor of Business, Administration and Accounting, David M. Miller Endowed Chair of Accounting (2015-2016)

Staff

Angella Bradley, Transfer Admission Coordinator and Lead Diversity Recruiter

Caleb McCracken, Public Relations Coordinator

Kelly Sanzari '13, Director of Alumni Relations

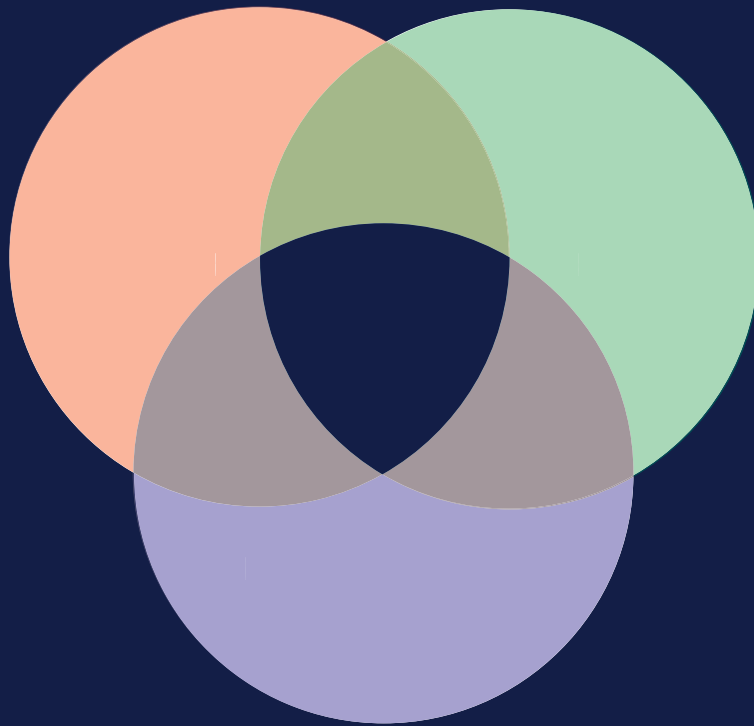
Alumni Board

Antonio Quarterman '08, President of Alumni Association Board of Directors

Students

Dan Wiegmann '17

Mercedez Quarles '17



“Preparation, I have often said, is rightly
two-thirds of any venture.”

- Amelia Earhart H'32

150
THIEL
COLLEGE
1866 - 2016