

transport students to service sites, off-campus events, conferences, and retreats.

- Establish an annual calendar of AGS-specific community-building events such as retreats, family picnics, and a lecture series.

Goal 5: Enhance the quality of the MHU experience for student athletes.

- Increase coordination and cooperation between faculty and athletic staff/coaches for the purpose of enhancing retention and graduation rates of student-athletes.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive plan to address deficiencies in athletic facilities and to bring team budgets and scholarships up to par with the conference average.
- Strengthen the existing Life Skills Program to assist personal development of student athletes.

- Develop and implement a multi-year plan to ensure that the university is keeping pace with changing technology for instruction, resource management, and planning.
- Develop and communicate a multi-year facilities plan to rehabilitate existing buildings and athletic facilities that will meet needs of the future.



IV. EXPANDING UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

The MHU alumni office, advancement office, administrative offices, and Board of Trustees will work to increase the resources available for strengthening existing programs, establishing new ones, and maintaining and improving the campus infrastructure and facilities.

Goal 1: Broaden and strengthen financial resources. (See also II.3, V.1)

- Actively seek new funding sources.
- Keep endowment growth a major priority.

Goal 2: Use strategic marketing and communication to promote strengths of Mars Hill University. (See also I.3, V.4)

- Define primary, secondary, and tertiary markets for traditional and AGS student recruitment.
- Optimize key marketing and communication tools: website, print, advertising, social media, digital message centers, and recruitment efforts.
- Define and promote the Mars Hill University brand.

Goal 3: Create a campus that is conducive to learning and living by ensuring technology and infrastructure meet the needs of the university. (See also V.2)

V. VALUING OUR FACULTY AND STAFF

MHU will strengthen employee morale by valuing faculty and staff through improved work environments, compensation, and benefits.

Goal 1: Improve compensation and benefits for faculty and staff. (See also IV.1)

- Increase employee salaries by implementing a plan proposed by the Budget Advisory Committee.
- Review and align employment policies and benefits.
- Design professional development opportunities and institute yearly evaluations for staff.
- Recognize, in diverse venues, the professional achievements of individuals and departments as well as commitment to the institution.

Goal 2: Improve work environment and processes. (See also IV.3)

- Improve efficiency for accessing and managing resources at the department/office level.
- Ensure that employees have working equipment and sufficient supplies to complete job tasks efficiently.

MHU MISSION STATEMENT

Mars Hill University, an academic community rooted in the Christian faith, challenges and equips students to pursue intellectual, spiritual, and personal growth through an education that is:

- grounded in a rigorous study of the Liberal Arts
- connected with the world of work
- committed to character development, to service, and to responsible citizenship in the community, the region, and the world.

- Provide and maintain a safe and healthy work environment for faculty and staff.

Goal 3: Increase communication among all levels of employees.

- Strengthen the Staff Personnel Committee and have it report to a member of the President's Leadership team.
- Share updated information and events online and through venues where all staff and faculty have access.

Goal 4: Recruit Diverse Faculty and Staff. (See also IV.2)

- Strengthen MHU visibility through advertising and networking to increase the applications, interviews, and hires of diverse faculty and staff.
- Retool the search process to increase opportunities to hire diverse faculty and staff.



STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2022



PO Box 6761 | 100 Athletic Street | Mars Hill, NC 28754

866-642-4968

mhu.edu

I. ENROLLMENT FOR SUCCESS

MHU will grow as an institution by focusing retention efforts on current students, recruitment and marketing efforts on prospective students, and financial aid efforts on all students.

Goal 1: Increase retention and degree completion by providing adequate and diverse academic support resources and student life facilities that meet the needs of students. (See also II.2, III.1, III.1)

- Coordinate and improve current tutoring, study hall, and other academic support programs for traditional students and for AGS across all sites.
- Focus resources to develop and implement support structures and programming for groups of students with the lowest retention rates.
- Enhance support for the Office of Disability Services by implementing a university-wide testing center.
- Prioritize the plan for a student center and other facilities that have a significant impact on the student experience, beginning with Wren Student Center and Chambers athletic facilities.

Goal 2: Strengthen institutional processes in order to provide necessary financial aid.

- Continue to improve the current financial aid model by annually increasing academic aid for incoming students to make competitive offers.
- Communicate cost of attendance information to allow students to plan for financial increases.
- Increase departmental, program, and other scholarships for continuing students.
- Make outside scholarship resources easily available through the implementation of a comprehensive source database.

Goal 3: Focus recruitment efforts on students who can thrive academically and socially at Mars Hill University. (See also IV.2)

- Focus marketing to highlight quality faculty, strong academic programs, liberal arts curriculum, and successful alumni.



- Increase collaboration between traditional student and AGS recruitment, including marketing and print materials.
- Involve faculty from high-demand programs in recruitment efforts.
- Develop a predictive model based on data and use it to guide recruitment efforts, goals, and targets for programs and teams.

II. QUALITY ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

MHU will strive to improve and enhance the current academic programs and seek opportunities to move into new and innovative academic arenas that better serve our students, the region, and the changing landscape of higher education.

Goal 1: Strengthen our commitment to liberal arts education and career development for the 21st century.

- Assess the sustainability, effectiveness, and efficiencies of our current academic programming to better position MHU as the preeminent, private liberal arts university in western North Carolina.
- Position AGS as a campus and regional incubator for innovative educational models, thus promoting the value of AGS and the university.
- Create and maintain a Teaching and Learning Center.
- Implement a fully integrated, comprehensive career development model to help students transition from university engagement to employability.

Goal 2: Develop and increase effective and proven academic support services to ensure students' academic success. (See also I.1)

- Enhance existing and create new academic support services that retain students.
- Create the mission, purpose, and goals for a university-wide academic tutoring center.
- Increase support for students, faculty, and staff with disabilities and those across campus who serve individuals with disabilities.

Goal 3: Strengthen our commitment to quality academic programs—undergraduate and graduate. (See also IV.1)

- Develop budget planning processes to sustain academic excellence.
- Support newly developed and existing academic programs.

Goal 4: Establish new and strengthen existing programs and partnerships that engage students in the community, the region, and the world. (See also III.2)

- Establish the expectation that MHU students will engage in a semester abroad or travel abroad experience.
- Integrate the various curricular, co-curricular, and interdisciplinary programs.
- Develop partnerships that support all university offerings.



III. ENGAGING STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Students will experience an ongoing sense of welcome throughout their careers at MHU by increasing opportunities for connections with campus resources and engaged involvement.

Goal 1: Improve sense of student ownership of their respective experiences at MHU. (See also I.1)

- Encourage the development of a 21st century, web-based, student-led journalism platform.
- Offer opportunities for students to ask questions and receive public answers, such as an "Ask Administration" venue.
- Reinvigorate the AGS Student Advisory Council and have representation from AGS serve on SGA.

Goal 2: Increase opportunities for interaction between students and faculty/staff outside of classrooms and offices. (See also II.4)

- Develop a variety of ways for students to interact with faculty/staff outside classrooms and offices.
- Offer staff and faculty mixer events tied to existing campus events such as Move-in Day and Homecoming Week.

Goal 3: Develop co-curricular programs that are supportive of specific student populations.

- Develop co-curricular objectives and programming for each class year (first-year, sophomore, junior, senior).
- Implement a standing AGS orientation and open house.
- Assess the student body to identify populations that are marginalized, underrepresented in higher education in general, and/or less likely to persist and graduate at MHU.
- Develop and implement programs and resources for those identified populations to be provided from visitation through to graduation.

Goal 4: Expand student activities offerings. (See also I.1)

- Expand club sports and intramural programs.
- Enhance use of the Outdoor Center.
- Establish an on-campus pool of vehicles to