

**Augsburg 2004:  
Extending the Vision**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROLOGUE: NAVIGATING THE FUTURE	2
PART ONE: THE AUGSBURG VISION	4
I. AUGSBURG 2004	4
II. AN AUGSBURG MODEL OF LUTHERAN EDUCATION	7
1. Overview	7
2. The Concept of Vocation	9
3. <i>Caritas</i> : The Lutheran College in the World	10
4. Paradox, Freedom, and Commitment	12
5. Diversity and the Lutheran College	13
III. A TRANSFORMING EDUCATION	15
1. Overview	15
2. An Education “Based in the Liberal Arts”	16
3. A Classroom in the City and the World	23
4. A <i>Community</i> of Learners	25
5. Community and Diversity	27
IV. EDUCATION AS OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGE	31
1. Overview	31
2. An Expectation of Excellence and Service	31
3. A Wide Range of Students	32
V. PROVIDING AN AUGSBURG EDUCATION	34
1. Overview	34
2. Vocation and Stewardship	35
PART TWO: RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS OF CONCERN	36
I. AN AUGSBURG MODEL OF LUTHERAN EDUCATION	36
II. A TRANSFORMING EDUCATION	38
III. EDUCATION AS OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGE	43
IV. PROVIDING AN AUGSBURG EDUCATION	45
BIBLIOGRAPHY & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	50

## PROLOGUE: NAVIGATING THE FUTURE

Western philosophy, claim most history texts, begins with Thales, an Ionian Greek whose principal efforts were to train sailors, and who was most famous in his time for inventing an instrument for navigation. Thales' students needed to know both where they were and the direction in which they were going in order to safely and successfully bring their ships to their intended destinations. Human life is a voyage in time much more than it is in distance. Although our century has seen ever-increasing capability and accuracy of navigating on land, on the sea, and even in space, the greater challenge is to navigate the future.

If this were an epic, a work that recalls the past to locate the present and chart the future, we might wish to invoke as our muse Thales, truth seeker and navigator. In a modest sense, this is such a document. It outlines a vision for the educational program at Augsburg College that connects the college's past with its future. It submits that an Augsburg education can and will provide navigational skills: To the extent possible for any institution of higher education, Augsburg will develop graduates who will be prepared for life and work in a complex and increasingly globalized world; equipped to deal with its diversity of peoples, movements, and opinions; experienced in the uses and limitations of technology; and possessed with a character and outlook influenced by a rich understanding of the Christian faith. But first Augsburg must continue to plot a successful course during the next decade so that it can best prepare its students to sail into their own futures.

This document derives from the collective visions of numerous segments of the Augsburg community over a period of three years. In Spring 1996 then-President Charles Anderson began a visioning process involving the Augsburg community--students, faculty, staff, and alumni. The meetings and resulting dialogue continued with the commissioning of a set of position papers in summer 1996 on the topics of Church Connections, Quality, Diversity, on being Urban, and on being Student Centered which were discussed at public forums throughout the 1996-1997 academic year. When President William Frame began his tenure in Fall 1997, he authorized the formation of five commissions, on Diversity, Work Culture, Faith and Reason, Experiential Education, and Academic Trends. Each commission, again composed of persons from all sectors of the Augsburg community, was charged to prepare a document that would guide the vision of the College in the coming years.

This report builds on these documents, and thus on the work of hundreds of persons on and off campus who have volunteered many hours of their time to helping extend Augsburg's vision. It is not, however, merely a compilation or digest of this previous work. Instead it hopes to bring the many ideas and recommendations of these past individual and corporate efforts into a fresh and comprehensive framework that can help shape Augsburg's future.

Our report begins with a glimpse of an Augsburg College of 2004. The date is deliberate. It is ceremonial in that it marks Augsburg's 135th anniversary and falls at the end of the 1997-2003 term of President Frame's administration. More important, its proximity to the present suggests the urgency with which Augsburg must attend to its future. Its description of the College translates the themes and values that have guided the past and present Augsburg into the future.

Four principles underlie this vision of a distinctive college community:

- 1) Augsburg will continue to affirm its identity as college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America whose ethos and educational mission reflect its unique historical and theological roots.

- 2) Augsburg will remain true to the vision of its founders in providing a "transforming" education that unites the liberal and practical. It will prepare students to participate as good citizens in and stewards of this world through its curricular leadership in experiential pedagogies; through its incorporation of the advantages of its location in the city into its curriculum; and through its continued commitment to creating a heterogeneous college community.
- 3) Augsburg will fulfill its historical Vocation as a college by helping students with a wide range of academic experience realize their own excellence as they meet the challenges of college-level academic work.
- 4) Augsburg will maintain a work community that enables faculty and staff to contribute effectively to the College's mission and that exemplifies the sort of world that the College's educational mission is intended to create.

The next section of the paper analyzes each principle which will inform "Augsburg 2004." Because this paper will be put to multiple uses, not every section may be of equal interest to every reader. Therefore the discussion of each principle begins with an overview intended for an audience that wishes to see the big picture. The subsections that follow each overview offer more detailed explanations and rationales for that picture.

The four principles are unified by three themes: Vocation, *caritas*, and community. Our vision is that Augsburg can and should lead students, faculty, and staff alike to find and realize their Vocations, develop their abilities to communicate *caritas*, and build a creative and supportive community.

The concept of Vocation involves consideration of the meaning and use of one's life: Why was I born? What is my purpose? The Lutheran understanding of God and the world is that each person has a Vocation--and that Vocation is one's own, unique way of using one's life to serve others and to care for this world.

*Caritas*, the Latin word for "love" as used in the biblical writings of John and Paul, is what our Vocations are to convey. It is love--*caritas*--that combines the leadership, service, and stewardship through which we can effectively care for creation and each other.

The concept of community is key both to sustaining the ability of Augsburg's faculty and staff to implement its mission, and to helping its students and graduates sustain their Vocation and *caritas* throughout their lives. Community is even more necessary in today's globalized world and on an urban campus among people who take Vocation and *caritas* seriously.

The final section of the paper offers recommendations grounded in the four tenets of Augsburg 2004. Many of these originated in the five Commission documents. Others are our own and resulted from our work as we synthesized, clarified, and sometimes extended the ideas of those documents. Still others emerged from additional segments of the Augsburg community when the fourth draft of this document was made available and the community as a whole had the chance to discuss it. We should note that their ordering is not hierarchical.

As we complete the fifth, and final, draft of this document, we want to acknowledge the many suggestions that members of the Augsburg community have made for improving this paper. We are pleased that earlier drafts have stimulated so much interest, and regret that a rapidly approaching deadline has made it impossible to fully explore and perhaps incorporate all of the ideas that have come our way, particularly during the last week or so. In that sense, although the document may be finished, the vision is not. We hope, and indeed anticipate, that it will continue to prompt conversations that otherwise might not have taken place.

Mark Engebretson  
Joan Griffin  
14 December 1998

## **PART ONE: THE AUGSBURG VISION**

### **I. Introduction: Augsburg 2004**

The date is Wednesday, September 8, 2004. Augsburg College has just begun its 135th year. As is the case every year, the entering students do not arrive alone. They bring their hopes and fears, faith and doubt, experience and naiveté, and individual mix of talents and intellect. They bring their pasts, but they hope to transcend them. They bring their hopes for the future, knowing that the better they are prepared, the more the future is in some part theirs to shape.

As students arrive on campus, they will be met, as in earlier years, by returning students, by faculty who serve as academic advisors, and by numerous administrators and staff members. They will be both welcomed and challenged, both affirmed and advised to stretch their wings. What will be the character of the education they and returning Augsburg students receive? How will an Augsburg education transform them? How will Augsburg prepare them to assume roles of leadership and service in the world once they have graduated?

The Augsburg of 2004 has built on the strengths it identified in 1998, including the vitality and educational expertise of its faculty and staff, its urban location, its historically diverse mix of students, and its remarkable historical ethos.

Although its specific societal context differs greatly from that of the college's founding in 1869, and even somewhat from that of 1998, the Augsburg College of 2004 continues its historic task of educating persons for a changing future, both setting their best course and becoming resilient enough to respond successfully to the inevitable surprises that lie ahead.

Augsburg students come to a college whose mission is rooted in the high appreciation of education found in the Lutheran Christian tradition, and focused on developing excellence and intellectual freedom in order to best care for and improve one's world. Rather than retreating from the realities of modern life, Augsburg's curriculum helps students develop both general and specific expertise for making their way in the world to become capable of guiding their own education and deciding wisely about their own, and society's, future.

Augsburg students, of course, will participate in an educational community that reflects the vision of the faculty, staff, and administrators who work with and among these students. What will their character be?

Faculty, staff, and students remember with pride that Augsburg won its twelfth national wrestling championship the previous year, and is one of the top three early season picks to win the conference championship in football, basketball, volleyball, and hockey. Its women's ice hockey team--the first college varsity team in Minnesota--continues to play and often beat the teams of nationally known universities. Leaders of the college's choirs, band, and orchestra are looking forward to new concerts and tours, and the forensics team looks forward to hosting its second tournament. Augsburg continues to offer some of the best nonprofessional theater in the Twin Cities, and LINK continues to offer a vital connection between Augsburg and the larger community. But Augsburg is not only recognized because of its athletic, fine arts, and community service programs.

Beginning students come to a college increasingly proud of the accomplishments of its faculty as effective teachers and scholars. Augsburg's faculty development program continues to be regarded as a national leader; it has taken on an larger role in assisting all new and returning

faculty to understand the college's Lutheran vision of education and helping them develop the skills necessary to educate the whole student -- not just in the academic discipline of each professor. Augsburg recognizes the essential contributions that staff makes to each student's education. Thus many "faculty development" programs include staff. In 2004, Augsburg has discovered and refined the formal governance structures that enable faculty and staff to collaborate in their shared mission of educating the "whole student."

At the same time, Augsburg's faculty members have become more successful in setting up research programs for themselves and their students, and have helped the college obtain regional, and in several cases national, recognition for their work, in part because of the College's and Twin Cities community's increasingly substantial support for such efforts.

When they register for their first classes, beginning students will find a variety of interdisciplinary seminars and course pairs and triads that were formerly available only to honors students. These courses provide for many students their first opportunity to understand the importance and coherence of a liberal arts education, which increasingly permeates the full extent of their college education rather than being segmented into many discrete course units. Augsburg's required development of college-level skills in writing, critical thinking, speaking, and quantitative reasoning serves as the foundation for both breadth of perspective and depth of knowledge and expertise in one or more academic disciplines or professional fields.

The experience and education of the incoming class in 2004 also will reflect the kind of personal environment created at Augsburg. That environment, of course, will be influenced by the College's physical plant, which reflects the substantial and steady investment in new and remodeled academic and residential buildings beginning in the 1990s and the master plan adopted in 1999. But it also includes the intangibles of friendships, opportunities for spiritual expression and personal growth, and the campus culture outside the classroom: in short, a complex web of relationships and experiences created by the College's conception of community and the ways in which it attempts to enact that conception through extracurricular activities, including a vigorous chapel and religious life program.

Augsburg's urban location, several decades earlier considered by many a mixed blessing, has now become one of its most significant assets. Augsburg's neighborhood has nearly completed its remarkable re-emergence as a vital center of education, health care, government service, research, and commerce within the Twin Cities. In 2004 Augsburg students need walk only a short distance to board the Twin Cities' first light rail line, which will take them to internships at government agencies or businesses downtown or in the southern suburbs, to shopping, or to local theaters, arenas, schools, and churches.

The Augsburg community remains inclusive. The college welcomes students from a variety of religious, racial, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds -- consistent with its students' future in an increasingly global and interconnected world.

The Augsburg of 2004 has learned to do some things differently in order to continue to do well what it has always done. The city has become a more deliberate part of the excellence of the education that Augsburg offers to students in every major, not only in traditional service majors like Social Work or Education. Nationally recognized for its leadership in experiential education, Augsburg 2004 plunges every student into the city through off-campus internships, Cooperative Education, and other semester programs, lab work, or internships that link experience with students' areas of academic interest.

Across the curriculum, Augsburg has designed courses that will make explicit use of the resources available in the metropolitan area. Many of these courses emphasize the city as a place of cultural, political, and economic opportunity: stewardship, after all, involves people in business, the arts, technology, and politics as well as education, social work, health care, and the ministry. Indeed, once they have graduated, Augsburg students play a role in community life far out of their numerical proportion among Minnesota college alumni. The Student Activities

Program and other student services likewise help students discover the city and make it a place for recreation as well as work.

Despite its visibility and involvement in the city, however, Augsburg has remained a small neighborhood in itself. Recognizing the challenges that an urban environment initially can pose to some students, it has continued to design a physical environment that can make students feel welcome and safe.

But life does not always promise security. Thus an Augsburg education also teaches resilience. Ships can be tossed about by winds; but capable, resilient navigators can again find their bearings, and determine a new course that will take the ship to its destination. Life will probably continue to hold surprises for Augsburg graduates. The purpose of an Augsburg education is not to prevent surprises. Rather its liberal and practical education will produce graduates who will have goals that will transcend the vicissitudes of life and who will have enough resilience so that after each surprise they will be able to find their bearings and continue toward their intended futures.

Is this what Augsburg will be like in 2004? How should it view itself? What should it expect of itself? How would it like to be regarded by the larger community? Finally, what can we do or plan, now, to help make that vision a reality? The following sections outline the themes implicit in this vision, and suggest ways Augsburg College can make this future a reality.

## I. An Augsburg Model of Lutheran Education

**Augsburg will continue to affirm its identity as college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America whose ethos and educational mission reflect its unique historical and theological roots.**

### 1. Overview

The Augsburg of 2004 will continue to assert its identity as a college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America whose academic mission is shaped by its religious heritage. This heritage has both religious and intellectual components that can be summarized by five basic concepts: grace, Vocation, *caritas*, paradox, and freedom.

Christianity begins with God's grace. It is made concrete for Lutherans, as for all Christians, through God's saving action in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus Christians need not worry about salvation. That is God's free gift to them. Instead of having to justify their lives before God, Christians can live "in Christ" to serve the created world and each other.

This is the theological basis of Augsburg's model of Lutheran education.

As a college, Augsburg focuses on equipping students to realize and use all of their talents in service to and celebration of creation--that is, to discover and fulfill their Vocations. The concept of Vocation represents the Lutheran view of the congruence between one's being and one's doing. Therefore Augsburg faculty and staff are committed to helping students discover and fulfill their Vocations. Vocation requires each individual to realize and use all of his or her talents in service to and celebration of creation. It asks students to live up to their academic potential. Discovering one's Vocation involves more than choosing the right major and finding the right job. Vocation claims the entirety of one's life. Thus an Augsburg education asks students fully to explore how they will be in the world and how they will live their lives.

Augsburg's tradition also affirms that the excellence of each individual is a gift to be shared through leadership and service both in the college and in the larger community to which each person belongs. An Augsburg education should lead to *caritas*<sup>1</sup>-- responding to God's love for creation by caring for and acting responsibly in the world. At Augsburg "education for service" is not restricted to extracurricular activities. It is an integral part of the curriculum and is an important reason why Augsburg claims the city as one of its classrooms. Augsburg also maintains that good stewardship of the world begins with oneself. For this reason, an Augsburg education involves "the whole student." The faculty and staff see themselves as partners in each student's education.

The Lutheran Church was born in a university. As an educational institution, Augsburg recognizes the intellectual challenges inherent in both understanding and action. Indeed its

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<sup>1</sup> *Caritas* is the Latin word that the Vulgate uses to translate the word *agape* in 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 ("If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels . . ."). In English, *caritas* and *agape* are usually translated as charity or love. Neither word adequately conveys the radical love of God that includes care, concern, charity, and more. Since the original text does use the Greek *agape*, this word is a better choice to convey our meaning--except that popular understandings have diminished and even trivialized the term. For instance, it frequently is used to oppose the word *Eros* and, as such, conveys a naive understanding that opposes spirit and flesh. Yet *Eros* means binding and connecting; although popular use reduces it to sexual relationships, it may also suggest the connection of people in communities or express their relationship to nature. Thus we have opted for the less familiar term, *caritas*, to express the radical love of God which enables human care for an loving action in the world.

Lutheran heritage stresses paradox--the realization that deep truths about God's relation to human beings and the rest of creation cannot always be packaged as facile sound bites. Augsburg's model of education, then, recognizes the complexity of many issues of both faith and human life, and admits the fallibility of both individual humans and all human institutions. Christians, according to the Lutheran understanding, are simultaneously saints and sinners. God calls us to be caring servants and bold leaders, but also to remember that we could be wrong.

Augsburg gladly shares these emphases with many of its Lutheran sister colleges. However, Augsburg also derives some of its character from its heritage as a college founded and shepherded by Norwegian immigrants, and associated for nearly seventy years with the Lutheran Free Church. The Lutheran Free Church's insistence on the individual's freedom in matters of religious belief translates into a community that embraces academic freedom to a degree perhaps unusual in Lutheran and, for that matter, most other church-related colleges. Because of its ultimate confidence in the "good news" of a God whose love--*caritas*--overcomes human frailty and error, Augsburg can allow many voices and viewpoints to be heard on campus. Augsburg students and employees enjoy the freedom to explore and express unpopular and unorthodox ideas. They are equally free to contradict and critique those ideas.

Augsburg eagerly claims an ecumenical tradition that welcomes and values students who come from a variety of religious--and non-religious--backgrounds. Because it maintains that its academic mission requires the full and open exploration of truth, Augsburg does not seek to indoctrinate its students. But Augsburg does not confuse academic freedom with intellectual or moral indifference. An Augsburg education leads to commitment:<sup>2</sup> what one believes matters.

Therefore Augsburg students will be part of a community in which matters of religious belief--and doubt--are frequently and openly discussed. On one hand, Augsburg does not aim at embalming faith. It does not, to borrow from St. Paul and John Milton, wish students to have a "fugitive and cloistered" faith "unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and seeks her adversary."<sup>3</sup> Rather it strives to help students cultivate and develop a mature faith that is equal to the challenges of complexity and ambiguity. The community of the faithful--which extends back to the apostles--often has had and benefited from its "doubting Thomases;" thus the College does not shrink from addressing ideas and issues which might appear to challenge faith. On the other hand, however, Augsburg believes that the claims of faith can and will challenge the skeptic. Unlike the secular university, Augsburg believes that an individual in pursuit of truth must consider the claims of religious belief.

For this reason, Augsburg students will find opportunities to nourish and debate faith intellectually in the classroom and other academic forums. Since faith is also a matter of the

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<sup>2</sup> William G. Perry, Jr., *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years: A Scheme*. (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1968, 1970). For an overview of the scheme, see summary foldout at the end of the text.

Briefly, Perry describes four stages of intellectual and moral development frequently found in college students. First year students often arrive in the stage of "dualism." This stage is characterized by the student's conviction that the world can readily be divided into what's right and what's wrong. Every question has a right answer. All knowledge boils down to facts. The authorities--church, parents, textbooks--are always right. The second stage, "multiplicity," is more commonly what most people would call "relativism." Here the student recognizes that truth is subject to many opinions. Students in this stage are inclined to argue, "Whatever you think is true is true." "Everyone has their own truth." "It's only your opinion." "All opinions are equally valid." The third stage, which Perry calls "relativism," introduces more discernment. The student recognizes that some opinions are better than others. There are ways of analyzing opinions and making distinctions. Qualitative approaches to truth are as valid as quantitative approaches. The final stage, commitment, introduces resolutions and choices.

<sup>3</sup> John Milton, "Areopagitica" in *John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (New York: Macmillan 1957), p.728. The actual quotation is: "I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees [sic, the Scott Elledge edition uses *seeks*] her adversarys, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat." The context of the passage is Milton's defense of intellectual freedom. It echoes Philippians 3:14.

heart and soul, they will find opportunities to nourish faith through worship in daily chapel, in informal prayer groups, in music performances, in dorm discussions, and in campus ministry activities. Although Augsburg is a Lutheran college, many of these groups will be ecumenical. And because Augsburg regards faith seriously, it will help both Christian and non-Christian students who so desire to find the faith communities in which they can cultivate this vital aspect of their lives.

A community dedicated to the freedom of inquiry at times will experience conflicting opinions among its members. Augsburg recognizes that intellectual freedom can flourish only in a community in which open debate is guided by reason and civility. A community whose founders were committed to the "priesthood of all believers" does not require unquestioning obedience to authority or intellectual conformity, but it also insists on the fuller meaning of this idea that sees each person as a mediator between God and other people. Thus Augsburg demands that members of its community treat each other with respect. This is important in any community that is devoted to truth; it is essential in a community that trusts in the divine *caritas* that overcomes human differences.

## 2. The Concept of Vocation

Augsburg's educational paradigm has its roots both in the common understandings of Judeo-Christian faith and in the particular roots of the Lutheran tradition.

Christianity's Hebraic heritage asserts that although nature itself is not divine (it was created by God), the world of time and matter is good. God's promises and blessings come through history, and in large part they come through our actions. God leads us and all people in time and space: human work is important, and civilizations are of real value. Both the "spiritual life" and the "life of the mind" take place exactly in the human being's actual, historical life. These points, although firmly rooted in scripture, have not always been clearly appreciated within Christianity, much less outside of it.

Central to the Christian faith is the understanding that salvation is not a matter of our effort, but of God's. God called Israel; Israel did not call God. Christ died for the ungodly, while they/we were and are yet sinners. Yet even this basic understanding has not always been successfully conveyed to new generations, even in religious or academic institutions. It was after an extended period of confusion on this issue in late medieval Europe that Martin Luther and other reformers appeared; the Protestant Reformation re-asserted the priority of God's effort, and revived and sharpened the Biblical view of humans' role.

When Luther began his work, there were essentially two classes of Christians -- those who withdrew from life, such as monks or nuns, and the vast majority who continued to live "in the world." The former had Vocations or "callings." It was believed that they performed a higher duty or service, and thus were able to gain merit for themselves and for those who remained in the world. The latter, such as the farmer in the field or the lawyer in his study, sustained earthly life with their labors. Though only a few were capable of the demands of monastic life, most believed that a life of intentional self-denial (poverty and chastity) provided the surest and most certain route to salvation.

Luther's understanding of God's saving action rejected that system. The world is no longer the realm where we must try to prove our worthiness, where we must try to placate a demanding God. "Vocations" are not limited to a special class of Christians who by the supposed holiness of their lives have placed themselves closer to their Creator. Instead, God calls all people to Vocations, which are focused precisely in and on this world. The world becomes the network of relationships where they become instruments or vessels of the love that God has first given them.

The society of Luther's day was dominated by hierarchical systems--from princes and

nobles to peasants and serfs. Although the idea that “all men are created equal” came later, Lutherans--and especially Lutheran immigrants to America--found in the idea of Vocation a fertile seedbed for the democratic ethos. If all Vocations and all people were equally important before God, then neither social class nor heritage should be the basis of distinctions between people. The Lutheran Free Church in particular insisted on this idea, and to this day Augsburg is characterized by its egalitarian ethos.

Augsburg stresses Luther’s understanding that we do not find and live out our callings (exercise our Vocations) in order to please God. Instead, Vocation is for this life, and is on behalf of this world -- for our neighbors. For Luther, there is nothing that particularly distinguishes Christians from non-Christians in regard to life in the present world. According to the Lutheran view, living out the spiritual character of one's life is to live in faithful trust of God while expressing that faith in loving service.<sup>4</sup>

This view of Vocation both stresses the importance of education, and clarifies its role. One does not seek education for either self-advancement or as a way to reach salvation. Its proper role is in helping persons determine and develop their abilities in preparation for investigating and celebrating God's creation, for probing the mysteries of the human condition, and ultimately for furthering the well-being of society. As Luther said, God doesn't want a cobbler who puts crosses on shoes; God wants a cobbler who makes good, reliable footwear.<sup>5</sup>

The concept of Vocation also locates the role of reason in the Christian faith. In contrast to the Scholastic notion that all truth can be discerned through reason, Luther would argue that reason cannot be used to comprehend a God who would die on a cross; as Paul wrote, this is foolishness to the world. However, once one has come to faith, reason can and must be used in service of neighbor and culture. The worlds of science, literature, arts, and commerce are the proper realms of reason, and thus are proper tools for Christian service. Education becomes an important means of preparing for, and for carrying out, one's calling.<sup>6</sup>

### **3. *Caritas*: The Lutheran College in the World**

The greatest gift of the Spirit, argues Paul in 1 Corinthians 13, is not esoteric knowledge (“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels...”). It is not even hope or faith. Rather it is love--*agape* or *caritas*, God’s love for the world that is expressed through the Incarnation in Christ. Presumably it is this love that sent Paul into the world and into the great cities of his time: Jerusalem, Corinth, Athens, and Rome. It is this love that enables what Lutherans call stewardship: the leadership and service through which Christians care for creation.

*Caritas* is an important part of Augsburg’s inheritance. Its tradition of Lutheran pietism stressed the importance of one’s personal relationship with God. God’s love, however, demands to be enacted in the world. Thus Augsburg traditionally has promoted an education that enables works to spring from faith.

A loving relationship with God should be enacted as a loving relationship with the world. Thus an Augsburg education emphasizes service in the community to an extent that is unusual even for a Lutheran college. This is the basis of its service learning programs and its motto

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<sup>4</sup> Ernest Simmons, *Lutheran Higher Education*: (Minneapolis, Augsburg Fortress, 1998), p. 43.

<sup>5</sup> Faith & Reason Commission Document, p. 30.

<sup>6</sup> It is particularly important to note that Vocation should not necessarily be identified as one’s job or as worldly success in a job. (Simmons suggests later Calvinist tradition supplies that definition.) A Lutheran understanding is more extensive. Thus a student who is called to play the flute or play baseball may have to fulfill that Vocation as a hobby or by coaching a little league team. This is why a liberal arts education and attention to educating the “whole student” are crucial to helping students explore their Vocations. The statement that the liberal arts prepare a student for “making a life” may be a cliché, but it comprehends the idea that Vocation “entails all that one does in the world,” that it “includes personal, communal, and historical relationships as well as occupational.”<sup>6</sup> (Simmons, pp.38-43)

“Education for Service.” This is why an Augsburg education does not turn its back on the world, but rather prepares its students to play active roles in the world. Although attention to social justice is not a typical theme of Lutheran education, it is part of Augsburg’s tradition. Augsburg’s attention to social justice is shaped principally by Luther’s idea of being “a Christ to one’s neighbor.”<sup>7</sup> But its early leaders were also influenced by the egalitarianism of Norwegian pietism and American democratic ideals to an extent seldom matched at other Lutheran colleges. Augsburg’s faculty and especially alumni have displayed a concern for issues of justice as well as those of mercy in their furtherance of what is often called “social justice.” But “social justice” as such can neither be identified simply with a particular kind of politics, nor with Latin American liberation theology. It represents an attitude much more than it denotes a particular program.

*Caritas* necessitates moral responsibility. Augsburg continues to stress that attention to personal ethics is an essential component of education. Although the climate of moral discourse has changed in the last few decades, so that the language of simple prohibition does not readily accommodate the complexities or needs of many in our present society, Augsburg, in its classroom and community assignments, as well as through its wellness programs, public forums on ethical issues, and other extracurricular activities such as campus ministry programs and prayer groups, continues to encourage students to recognize both the personal and communal consequences of their moral choices and to consider how these choices affect their relationship with God.

Augsburg is the only ELCA college to be located in the center of an urban area. As part of its life in urban society, as well as because of its Christian traditions, Augsburg remains committed to intentional diversity among its students, staff, and faculty. Augsburg's commitment to diversity is a function not only of the Gospel but also of Luther's notion of Vocation. Because God's love extends to all, those who would be faithful to the Gospel cannot preserve non-essential distinctions between persons, and in fact are called to extend special attention to those pushed to the fringes of society. Further, an institution that takes seriously the future of its students cannot avoid preparing those students to work in the diverse communities that make up the modern world.

As a college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and because of its own earlier traditions, Augsburg embodies an ecumenical vision from within a Lutheran Christian context. Grounding in a specific Christian tradition rather than in a general sort of religious orientation neither isolates nor insulates Augsburg from the world; it rather provides a specific context from which to learn and then act on behalf of the worldwide Christian community, and models the specific contexts from which its students, and future graduates, will live their lives in our increasingly interconnected world.

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<sup>7</sup> The idea of “little Christs” originates in this passage from Martin Luther’s “Treatise on Christian Liberty” in *Works of Martin Luther* Vol. II, trans. W.A. Lambert (A.J. Holman Co., 1916), pp. 337-338: “Although the Christian is thus free from all works, he ought in this liberty to empty himself, to take upon himself the form of a servant, to be made in the likeness of men, to be found in fashion as a man, and to serve, help, and in every way deal with his neighbor, as he sees that God through Christ has dealt and still deals with himself. And this he should do freely, having regard to nothing except the divine approval. He ought to think, ‘Though I am an unworthy and condemned man, my God has given me in Christ all the riches of righteousness and salvation without any merit on my part, out of pure, free mercy, so that henceforth I need nothing whatever except faith which believes that this is true. Why should I not therefore freely joyfully with all my heart, and with an eager will, do all things which I know are pleasing and acceptable to such a Father, Who has overwhelmed me with His inestimable riches? I will therefore give myself as a Christ to my neighbor, just as Christ offered Himself to me; I will do nothing in this life except what I see is necessary, profitable and salutary to my neighbor, since through faith I have an abundance of all good things in Christ.’”

Also, (*Ibid.*, p.338): “Just as our neighbor is in need and lacks that in which we abound, so we also have been in need before God and have lacked His mercy. Hence, as our heavenly Father has in Christ freely come to our help, we also ought freely to help our neighbor through our body and its works, and each should become as it were a Christ to the other, that we may be Christs to one another and Christ may be the same in all; that is, that we may be truly Christian.”

#### **4. Paradox, Freedom, and Commitment**

Although the centrality of the concept of Vocation is what sets a Lutheran education apart from other models of higher education, there has never been a complete separation between Lutheran views of higher education and those of other traditions, whether religious or secular. The Liberal Arts tradition in Western Culture has deep roots in the same Classical culture that nourished the Christian theological tradition, but both the form and the content of that educational tradition has had a remarkable fluidity. Nearly all American colleges and universities can lay claim to at least some parts of that tradition, and thus Augsburg's claims to distinctiveness cannot lie entirely in its apprehension, or adaptation, of the Liberal Arts.

It is also not sufficient to simply place Augsburg's actual or ideal sort of education on some sort of continuum between the extremes of a "secular university" and a "Bible college" in the extent and intensity with which students are exposed to, or involved in, religious ideas or activities. Such a one-dimensional comparison runs the risk of focusing attention primarily on the level of explicit attention to religious faith (from little or none at one end to dominant or all-encompassing at the other), with the result that the "middle ground" is more in a position of compromise or restraint than of distinctiveness. Such a focus also diverts attention from what is, to Lutherans, the equally important issue of the quality of the educational experience. A Lutheran model of higher education is distinctive, not in its level of religious intensity, but in its simultaneous commitment to the Christian faith and to free, rigorous intellectual inquiry.

Perhaps paradoxically, it is because of its Lutheran tradition that Augsburg can allow and encourage free inquiry, even into that very tradition. In fact, Augsburg's other motto, "Through Truth to Freedom," expresses the confidence that Christian faith can free human intellect.

In common with other Lutherans, Augsburg builds on the idea of the "priesthood of all believers," which holds that each individual is a mediator between God and other people, and thus supports participation and responsibility of all within the community. At the same time, this idea emphasizes individual freedom in matters of religious belief. In addition, the particular influence of the Lutheran Free Church provides the Augsburg community with a heritage of no strong outside church influence or formal structures to require conformity or obedience, and an explicitly egalitarian and democratic ethos that welcomes diversity. Augsburg's tradition encourages it to defend freedom of thought and academic inquiry, actively welcome faculty and students from both within and outside the Lutheran tradition, people with differing views on a broad range of social, political, and religious issues, and students with a broad range of experience and academic accomplishment.

Because it is a Lutheran college, the pursuit of truth at Augsburg is also tempered by a certain intellectual modesty: Lutheran theology and its understanding of the fallen human condition foil all attempts to claim the ultimate truth of a particular position. The revelation that we are saved solely by Christ underscores the fragility of humanity and suggests that absolute claims of truth in the human realm are inappropriate (see, for example, the discussion of science and religion and the "critical realist" view of scientific knowledge described in the Faith and Reason Commission's report). Therefore, Lutheran scholarship must be accompanied by humility. Scholars trained in the Lutheran tradition must make their best claims about truth, but then concede that they haven't fully captured it.

That same tradition of freedom of inquiry, however, demands that standards of scholarship and discourse be high, and that members of a learning community be given the opportunity to carefully examine the various claims to truth and authority made in contemporary culture -- to not settle for mediocrity when distinguishing between what is valuable and good and what is not.

In its strictly academic function as well as in its role as a college of the church, Augsburg

is committed to the search for truth. Augsburg will not insist that individual students, staff, and faculty be Lutherans or even Christians. But it will insist that what a person chooses to believe matters. Both faith and reason obligate us to make choices, to sort out what is patently false from what may be true. An Augsburg education should lead to ethical, philosophical, and religious commitments.<sup>8</sup>

## 5. Diversity and the Lutheran College

Augsburg's mission statement commits it both to its Lutheran heritage and to intentional diversity. Some might object that these twin commitments test the limits of paradox: How can Augsburg be both Lutheran and diverse?

A more critical question might be: How can Augsburg live up to its Vocation as a Lutheran college and *not* be diverse? We have suggested that the ideas of *caritas* and Vocation in particular compel at least some kinds of diversity in a Lutheran college. We might further add that if Augsburg is to prepare students to assume roles of leadership in the Lutheran church, it needs to remember that the future of Lutheranism is not exclusively among the German and Scandinavian ethnic groups that brought the Lutheran church to this country. Increasingly, the future of the Lutheran church is in Asia, Africa, and Central America. By definition, the Lutheran church is and increasingly will be culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse. At home, the ELCA already has begun discussion about the status of homosexual people in Lutheran congregations; future leaders must be prepared to take a thoughtful, informed role in these discussions. Augsburg graduates who intend to assume leadership in non-Lutheran religious bodies likewise benefit from the College's emphasis on diversity.

Lutherans can hardly avoid diversity when the Bible itself was written by people whom many of them might deem "diverse." Moreover, the church did not begin its history behind closed doors on that first Pentecost (Acts 2). Its history begins when the disciples engaged "the multitude" "from every nation under heaven."<sup>9</sup> Granted that this multitude was Jewish, the remainder of Acts nevertheless records the church's emergence from its Jewish roots and its struggles as it grappled with the choice whether to restrict "the good news" to a chosen few or to embrace a diverse church that would include Gentile as well as Jew. Paul, of course, chose the latter. Likewise the Augsburg model of Lutheran education does not hide in the cloister; it too engages the world in all its complexity and variety.

Asking whether Augsburg can be Lutheran and diverse, then, is the wrong question. We might rather ask, Does its commitment to diversity threaten Augsburg's ability to assert the claims of Christian faith? Or does it condemn Augsburg to a stance of theological and moral relativism?

Although most of the discussion of this issue at Augsburg has not approached the extremes of opinion nationwide, it nevertheless has taken place in the context of a wider community and cannot altogether avoid what have been labeled the "culture wars." The importance of a thoughtful grappling with the issue of diversity is underlined by theologian Ted Peters, who makes a distinction between "descriptive pluralism," which describes the situation in the U.S. in this decade, and "dogmatic or radical pluralism," which he defines as a way of viewing reality that threatens to preclude critical appraisal and moral formation. Peters believes the latter "so embraces cultural relativism that no universal value regarding 'the good' or vision of what fulfills human aspiration can be mounted. Radical pluralism so affirms the integrity of a given perspective that any attempt to change is considered a cultural violation."<sup>10</sup> Such a set of

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<sup>8</sup> See Note 2.

<sup>9</sup> In fact, the multitude were all Jews; nevertheless Acts records the early Church's sometimes painful realization that God's grace is not just for one people, but for all. Thus the point seemed apt.

<sup>10</sup> Ted Peters, "Culture Wars: Should Lutherans Volunteer or Be Conscripted?" *Dialog*. Winter 1993, p. 37.

cultural taboos, he suggests, fundamentally threatens both the freedom to question and the possibility of real human community spanning cultural groups (and thus renders the New Testament claims for such a community “in Christ” meaningless.)

Perhaps paradoxically, Augsburg can also strengthen its devotion to faith, and to the necessary dialogue between faith and reason, by deliberately recruiting some faculty, staff, and students who are not Lutherans or even Christians and offering courses that examine non-Lutheran and non-Christian religious viewpoints. As our colleagues Curt and Catherine Paulsen argue:

A homogeneous environment, where everyone subscribes to similar, comparable, or the same beliefs, suffers the strong probability of sterile agreement, a deadening homeostasis that can lack the energy or motivation necessary for creativity. There is little to push against; variety is needed.<sup>11</sup>

The Lutheran church itself, we might recall, began with a challenge to the status quo, to the orthodox assumptions of the medieval church. If reformation is an ongoing theme of Lutheran tradition, then the curriculum of a Lutheran college should encourage both critical and creative engagement with its traditions. In part, this can be accomplished through dialogue with other viewpoints.

Indeed, Paulsen and Paulsen contend, the church-related college that fosters dialectical conversations between opposing viewpoints (especially the sacred and secular) can create unique opportunities for learning:

This dialectic is manifest in a community that is tolerant, without compromise on either side; has conviction, yet maintains openness, caring and fairness beyond simple tolerance; and recognizes that the reality of pluralism, multiculturalism, and diversity is only as strong as commitment to a faith that offers the necessary cohesiveness for an energized, spirited community where possibilities for learning are unlimited.<sup>12</sup>

If Augsburg is to assist its students in developing a committed faith, it must have diversity. True commitment, we would add, does not inflexibly insist on one “ultimate truth;” this may simply be “dualism revisited.” Rather, Augsburg views faith commitment as “the reasoned choice of one perspective and truth on which one is willing to build and stake a life and community.” At the same time such commitment acknowledges that it “is one of many possible ways of discerning and being in the world. Those who are Lutheran [or other religions], then, should take a *stand* as Lutherans [or as Catholics, Jews, etc.], but they should also be able to understand, respect, and learn from the moral vision of others.”<sup>13</sup>

Finally, the inclusion of diverse viewpoints in the curriculum is a concomitant of the freedom of the Christian to explore “the kingdom on the left” and is essential to an academic institution whose commitment to truth--paradoxically--must allow, even advocate, the exploration of viewpoints that may--or may not--be false.

### **III. A TRANSFORMING EDUCATION**

#### **Augsburg will remain true to the vision of its founders in providing a**

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<sup>11</sup> Curt Paulsen and Catherine Paulsen, “The Church-Affiliated College: A Context for Advancing Pluralism, Multiculturalism, and Diversity.” Presented at the conference “The Church College’s Postmodern Opportunity,” Rhodes College, Memphis, TN., May 2-4, 1997, p. 6.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup> Bev Stratton, Comments on the third draft of this document. We acknowledge Bev’s ideas and often words throughout this paragraph.

**"transforming" education that unites the liberal and practical. It will prepare students to participate as good citizens in and stewards of this world through its curricular leadership in experiential and classroom pedagogies; through its incorporation of the advantages of its city location into its curriculum; and through its continued commitment to creating a heterogeneous college community.**

## 1. Overview

Vocation, writes Frederick Buechner, has to do with finding “the kind of work a) that you need most to do and b) that the world most needs to have done . . . The place God calls you to is the place where your own deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”<sup>14</sup> While this paper’s understanding of Vocation is somewhat more expansive, Buechner’s definition suggests something of what we mean by a “transforming education.”

A “transforming education” is not as much about changing who students are as it is about evoking who and what they are capable of becoming. As the roots of the word *educate* would argue, it suggests drawing out the student’s potential. An Augsburg education should aim at helping students discover their “own deep gladness” to use in transforming the world.

Similarly the world does not have to be changed because it is bad or hopeless; Lutheran re-formation does not proceed from despising the world. Rather, transformation of the world entails calling forth its potential and its goodness. An Augsburg education teaches students that they are part of the world and that their actions have power in the world. To seek one’s better self and to realize one’s capabilities already make a difference in the world.

Augsburg will prepare its students to make that difference through an education that unites the liberal and practical arts. Its liberal arts curriculum asks students to connect their individual biographies to the history of all human intellectual and creative endeavors; to the social, political, economic systems to which they contribute and can affect; and to the natural world which they are called to care for and of which they are a fundamental part. Through its practical education, Augsburg will equip its students with the skills they need to be leaders, participants, and decision-makers in the world.

Augsburg is committed to transformational pedagogies that unite teachers and learners in learning communities. Thus the teacher-student relationship is transformed into one of mutual truth-seeking. Faculty understand that they are transformed--called to their potential--by their students. Augsburg’s pedagogical leadership in experiential learning strives to “create the conditions for experience that will result in the ‘transformation of experience’ into understanding, knowledge, and outcomes that we espouse in our catalogue.”<sup>15</sup>

In evoking each person’s potential, a transforming education must involve “the whole student.” It must pay attention to what happens to students in their lives beyond the classroom: in the residence halls, in informal gathering places on campus, in chapel, in extracurricular activities, and in on-campus jobs. To achieve this, faculty and staff must transform their vision of their roles and relationship in the college community, identifying ways in which the education of Augsburg’s students is truly a collaborative enterprise.

Finally Augsburg seeks to transform the world by engaging students in that world. Its students both serve and are served by the community as they seek opportunities for community service, benefit from the cultural opportunities of the city, and prepare for their own futures through internships in businesses, churches, government, and social service agencies.

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<sup>14</sup> Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), p. 95.

<sup>15</sup> Commission on Experiential Pedagogies Document, p. 17

Augsburg's commitment to creating a heterogeneous community suggests its understanding that the best "communities of learners" are global; to truly prepare students for their Vocations in the world, Augsburg must bring the world, as much as possible, to its campus.

## 2. An Education "Based in the Liberal Arts"

According to the Carnegie classification of American colleges and universities, Augsburg is a comprehensive college. That is, its size and curriculum identify it as a hybrid institution committed both to liberal and professional education.<sup>16</sup> This is consistent with Augsburg's history. In forging a curriculum which "stressed Old Norse and Greek (not Latin), history (more than classical literature), practical living and civic responsibility (rather than theory and elitism),"<sup>17</sup> Augsburg's early presidents Georg Sverdrup and Sven Oftedal anticipated the multiple purposes of a present-day college education. And in September 1874 when the faculty resolved to strengthen Augsburg's liberal arts curriculum by adding a science division, it aspired to a model of education that the Carnegie system would term "comprehensive:"

As surely as Augsburg Seminary shall become as we with God's help hope to make it, an intellectual center for the Norwegians in America, then it would lack a necessary link in this its task, if it did not have its science division resting on the same Christian principles as the Seminary itself, and with this aim to educate capable liberal-minded, practical men on the same foundation . . . We must be able to come to the farmer, to the worker and to the businessman. And the subjects of instructions must be calculated to be a practical general education.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> We must immediately acknowledge some problems of definition. The U.S. National Center for Education Statistics (*Digest of Educational Studies*, 1996) defines the liberal arts as the disciplines normally associated with the humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences. It classifies business, communications, computer science, health sciences, education, and social work as professional/technical studies. At Augsburg, some of these professional/technical studies are housed in the Humanities, Natural Science, and Social Science Divisions. Others are part of the Professional Studies Division. To further complicate matters, some universities differentiate the fine and performing arts from the liberal arts. At Augsburg the fine and performing arts (music, theatre, art) fall into the Professional Studies and Humanities Divisions.

Augsburg's history contributes yet another term to the discussion: "practical". We believe that the word "practical" is *not* a strict synonym for the content areas represented in the professional/technical areas as defined above. It can be conceived more broadly as also including courses or portions of courses in the liberal arts that provide students with skills intended for the marketplace (e.g. laboratory skills in the sciences, writing courses, the skills components across the curriculum). It includes internships and experiential education in any discipline.

We realize--and regret--that for some the word "practical" may have pejorative connotations. This is perhaps an unfortunate concomitant of class-ism both within the academy and without. However, we feel that it is important to recognize that Augsburg's history links a philosophy of practical education to its early proposals to become a liberal arts college. We believe that attention to a practical education is a part of Augsburg's history that is worth honoring, and thus, when we wish to invoke its larger meanings, we have used the word "practical" throughout this section.

We wish to acknowledge too that the Trends Commission recommends resisting the trend of "offering highly specialized professionally oriented majors which do not allow breadth of study in the liberal arts." This recommendation is represented and amplified in the recommendations section of this document. In both the Commission on Trends document and in the recommendations section of this paper, the liberal and professional arts are defined by content or discipline, as in the Carnegie classification system and in the document cited above. However, in this section we have stressed the history and traditional functions of the liberal arts.

Finally this section aims at defining what it means to provide an education "based in the liberal arts." It seeks to define the common goals of both the liberal arts and professional/technical disciplines at Augsburg.

<sup>17</sup> Gene Skibbe, "Questions and Answers about the Humanities." Presented to the Augsburg College Humanities Division, 1981.

<sup>18</sup> From "A Program for Augsburg Seminary," Adopted at the faculty meeting September 1874. Translated by and printed in Einar Oscar Johnson, *Soli Deo Gloria: A Study of the Philosophy and Problems of Higher Education among Norwegian Lutherans in the American Environment, 1860-1960*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Washington, 1961, pp. 475-476.

At the same time, however, the Restated Articles of Incorporation of Augsburg College call Augsburg a “Christian College of Liberal Arts.” Augsburg’s mission statement calls for an “education based in the liberal arts.” And the 1998 Trends Commission calls for Augsburg to reaffirm the foundation of its curriculum in the liberal arts by resisting trends in private higher education that would turn colleges into places intended *exclusively* for career preparation or market places in which the curriculum is sold to the highest bidder.<sup>19</sup>

As it articulates its educational mission, Augsburg may encounter a perceived, and perhaps actual, dichotomy implicit in its dual heritage of liberal and practical education. Is there a coherent community of scholarship or philosophy of education that clearly comprehends its present curriculum? What, in short, does it mean to be “based in the liberal arts?” What links the professional and technical curriculum to the liberal arts?

Some of the perceived rift between liberal and practical education may originate in popular definitions (and misconceptions) which pit the two against each other in almost diametric opposition. By these definitions, the liberal arts stress the theoretical, the ideational, and the useless as opposed to the applied, the experiential, and the practical. If you ask the question, “What can I do with this major if I don’t want to teach,” chances are you’re asking about a liberal arts major. The liberal arts education takes place in the ivory tower; the practical education occurs in the “real” world. The liberal arts, as the cliché goes, are devoted to the questions that enable one to “make a life.” The practical curriculum goes about the business of earning the bread that will sustain that life. The liberal arts are sometimes viewed as the indulgence of a leisure class that can afford enrichment; practical education pays the tuition loans. Of course such definitions can lead to erroneous understandings of what’s liberal and what’s not. The studio arts and music performance are not traditional liberal arts disciplines; physics, math, and chemistry are. Yet another definition equates the liberal arts with General Education as opposed to the major. These definitions are further muddled by the equation of liberal arts with the component of the curriculum that incorporates and discusses ethics and values questions. The grand questions of philosophy--What’s true? How do I know? How should this knowledge guide my actions?--characterize the liberal arts. The practical arts, says the popular view, don’t bother with such grand ideas.

### *Defining the Liberal Arts: The Tradition*

Although they oversimplify matters, these popular understandings of the liberal arts contain elements of truth. They retain something of Aristotle’s remark that philosophy is the most liberal of studies because it serves no master other than itself.<sup>20</sup> It is free from the

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The proposed science division, claims Einar Johnson, was intended “to prepare men in a practical way and give them the assurance that they had a real contribution to make to the new society to evolve from the merging of the Norwegian immigrants and the established American society” (p. 218). Unfortunately, a lack of funds led to an indefinite postponement of the Science Division, and more than two generations passed before these ideas were revived.

<sup>19</sup> See Trends, pp. 3-18.

<sup>20</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysica* in *The Works of Aristotle Translated into English*. Ed., trans. W.D. Ross. Vol. viii. 2nd ed. (Oxford at the Clarendon Press: 1908-1952), 982 b 25-27. H. Johnston (“Liberal Education” in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, New York: McGraw Hill, 1967, VIII:700) identifies this text as the source of the term and idea of “liberal” education.”

David Apolloni of the Philosophy Department has suggested that Aristotle’s views on liberal education are better represented in *Politics* 1338a:

But leisure seems itself to contain pleasure and happiness and felicity of life. And this is not possessed by the busy but by the leisured; for the busy man busies himself for the sake of some end as not being in his possession, but happiness is an end achieved, which all men think is accompanied by pleasure and not by pain. But all men do not go on to define this pleasure in the same way, but according to their various natures and to their own characters, and the pleasure with which the best man thinks that happiness is conjoined is the best pleasure and the one arising from

necessity or obligation of making or doing anything. In its purest forms, then, liberal study simply fulfills human nature--the ability to think, to reason. Thus the biology major who wants simply to see physical nature as it is is pursuing a liberal education; the pre-med major is not. The English major who contemplates the beauty of a Shakespeare sonnet is engaged in liberal study; the Ph.D. candidate whose dissertation on the sonnets might become a published credential is not. According to this definition, few academic disciplines, if any, can claim to be purely liberal.

The term "liberal arts" itself describes the medieval curriculum, although the origins of the curriculum can be traced back to Greece. The liberal arts number seven, including the trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and logic) and the quadrivium (arithmetic, astronomy, music, and geometry). They are "liberal" because they are tied to contemplation, not to action. The trivium describes the nature of reason; the quadrivium describes the essential order of the created world. The trivium gives us the alphabet, the grammar and syntax, as it were, of the mind. If, as Pythagoras might argue, the world is essentially composed of numbers, then the quadrivium provides a glimpse of the essential order of creation.

In fact, though, the medieval liberal arts education rarely confined itself to the contemplative ideal. It was indeed freeing; but often it freed the student from the need to follow his family's occupation. It freed him from cultivating the fields, as it were, to cultivating his mind. And then, as now, a liberal arts education potentially freed a student from his social class; study could become a means of career and social advancement. Even today, when students talk about a college education as a means of "bettering themselves," they seldom have a purely moral agenda in mind. In the Middle Ages, the study of the liberal arts was likely to be pre-professional. Focused largely on methods of thinking and arguing, it equipped the student with the skills to pursue professional studies in medicine, theology, or law. One cannot help but note the irony that the discipline that is often considered the most "liberal" of arts in today's academy, philosophy, was the primary pre-professional curriculum of an earlier age.

Nor are the liberal arts of today's academy the original liberal arts. At Augsburg, the trivium and quadrivium linger in the General Education skills requirements (writing, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, and speaking). But the division of the curriculum into the arts and sciences (or humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences), results from the humanist revision of the liberal arts. We would emphasize that the natural sciences are as fully part of the humanist liberal arts as are poetry, history and philosophy. Romantics, with often justifiable antipathy toward the excesses of the industrial revolution, tried to exclude the quadrivium and its related natural and mathematical sciences from full membership in the Liberal Arts; popular understandings of the liberal arts sometimes inherit this bias.

The humanists rejected the medieval emphasis on the contemplative nature of the liberal arts. Study that leads to Truth, they would argue, also leads to Virtue. But Truth and Virtue cannot remain passive; they must be enacted in the world. Study, argues Sir Philip Sidney, has

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the noblest sources. So that it is clear that some subjects must be learnt and acquired merely with a view to the pleasure in their pursuit, and that these studies and these branches of learning are ends in themselves, while the forms of learning related to business are studied as necessary and as means to other things. . .

It is clear therefore that there is a form of education in which boys should be trained not because it is useful or necessary but as being liberal and noble . . . And it is also clear that some of the useful subjects as well ought to be studied by the young not only because of their utility, like the study of reading and writing, but also because they may lead on to many other branches of knowledge; and similarly they should study drawing not in order that they may not go wrong in their private purchases and may avoid being cheated in buying and selling furniture. . . .

In Aristotle, *Politics*. Trans. H. Rackham. (London: H. Heineman; New York: G.P Putnam's Sons, 1932).

“the end of well-doing and not of well-knowing only.”<sup>21</sup> Renaissance humanists subscribed to Plato’s notion that education should serve the Republic. Thus the humanist curriculum emphasizes the public as well as private ethics that prepare the student for public service. Interestingly from Augsburg’s perspective, the humanist liberal arts were tied to the resurgence of cities; education was intended to prepare men to participate responsibly and morally in centers of power and manage the affairs of the state. For Renaissance humanists, government and the higher rungs of the ecclesiastical hierarchy would have been the primary institutions of worldly power. It is difficult to know how they would regard today’s competing centers of power: the corporations.

The Christian humanist curriculum, then, has several purposes. First, it emphasizes the study of human subjects, especially the classical curriculum. It retains the earlier liberal arts agenda of seeking the essential order of things and exercising the mind. But it then translates truth into action. Thus its purposes are moral; literature, philosophy, and history, for instance, are to be studied for their moral applications. And they are to prepare leaders. In his treatise “Of Education,” a classic of humanist thought, Milton first provides for the moral purposes of education:

The end then of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith, makes up the highest perfection.<sup>22</sup>

But then he argues professional applications of learning:

I call therefore a complete and generous [i.e., liberal] education that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices both private and public, of peace and war.<sup>23</sup>

Significantly, Milton’s curriculum includes subjects that we might find in today’s business and agricultural or ecology departments: economics (by which he means public administration); agriculture (his students would read classical works on agricultural--so that they could “improve the tillage of their country, to recover the bad soil and to remedy the waste that is made of good”); and health care, so that they might have healthy armies. Moreover, Milton suggests that his ideal school would “procure, as oft as shall be needful, the helpful experiences of hunters, fowlers, fishermen, shepherds, gardeners, apothecaries; and in the other sciences, architects, engineers, mariners, anatomists . . .”<sup>24</sup> In other words, John Milton advocated what would come close to today’s experiential learning.

Milton’s ideas, of course, represent an English tradition that has had a strong influence on American education. A Lutheran college, however, can also find similar ideas in its roots. Thus Martin Luther, argues Ernest Simmons, valued “the emerging liberal-arts humanism of the Renaissance”<sup>25</sup> for reasons similar to Milton’s. Luther anticipates Milton in thinking that the new humanist liberal arts can help recover the knowledge lost at the fall: “we are at the dawn of a new era for we are beginning to recover the knowledge of the external world which we had lost

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<sup>21</sup> Sir Philip Sidney, “Defense of Poesy” in *Sir Philip Sidney’s Defense of Poesy*, ed. Lewis Soens. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), p. 14.

<sup>22</sup> John Milton, “Of Education” in *John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1957) p. 631. A Lutheran model of humanist education may not wish to proclaim the ethical goals of education as boldly as Milton does here, but still may retain the humanist emphasis on ethics. Merritt Hughes suggests that this passage expresses Milton’s belief that Adam (and Eve?) lost all natural knowledge at the fall; education seeks to regain knowledge of nature.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 632.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 635.

<sup>25</sup> Ernest L. Simmons, *Lutheran Higher Education: An Introduction for Faculty* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress 1998) p. 13. See discussion on p 12 ff.

through the fall of Adam. We now observe creatures properly and not as formerly.<sup>26</sup> He likewise agrees that the humanist liberal arts can improve character and help one fulfill one's Vocation in the earthly kingdom:

Through the teaching of history children would hear of the doings and sayings of the entire world, and how things went with various cities, kingdoms, princes, men and women. Thus they could in a short time set before themselves as in a mirror the character, life, counsels, and purposes, successful and unsuccessful, of the whole world from the beginning; on the basis of which they could then draw the proper inferences and in the fear of God take their own place in the stream of human events. In addition they could gain from history the knowledge and understanding of what to seek and what to avoid in this outward life and be able to advise and direct others accordingly.<sup>27</sup>

In fact, Lutheran education has emphasized the entire range of the humanist liberal arts, the natural sciences as well as the arts.<sup>28</sup> And it has not despised the practical applications of those arts: Luther thought that education should serve the practical purpose of earning a living and administering the affairs of the state.<sup>29</sup>

The liberal arts tradition, then, has been fluid and open to innovation. Moreover, it has contained contradictions that defy popular understandings of the term. Therefore, in determining what it means to base a curriculum in the liberal arts, Augsburg might ask: "What is essential to the liberal arts? How can the College reconcile its commitments to both the liberal arts and practical education?"

#### *Grounding an Augsburg Education in the Liberal Arts Tradition*

We propose seven understandings of the liberal arts tradition that ultimately can help unite the liberal arts and professional/technical curriculum at Augsburg:

- 1) The liberal arts are freeing.

To the extent that they are truly free from practical application, the liberal arts encourage students to realize their essential human nature as *homo sapiens* by developing the critical and creative capabilities of the mind.

However, the tradition suggests other kinds of freedom as well. For instance, the liberal arts are the studies that free students from the limits of themselves and their experiences. Thus Georg Sverdrup's retort to the critics who thought that Augsburg's curriculum required too many languages to be truly liberal actually shows a truer grasp of what the liberal arts mean: "It is possible to live in a remote shaded valley, particularly when one has known no other surroundings; but the young man who can escape to high plateaus and scan the horizon is doubly fortunate." And Carl Chrislock could add, "A young person desiring a comprehension of what was stirring in the world required a broader perspective than only one language might provide."<sup>30</sup>

To expand one's sense of the world is to expand the moral imagination. Thus Isaiah Berlin might suggest, "The precondition of a liberal society was not consensus or shared values, . . . but our capacity to *understand* moral worlds different from our own."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Quoted in Simmons, p. 13

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Simmons, p. 13

<sup>28</sup> Simmons 12-16 passim. See also Einar Johnson, p. 37, pp. 49-57.

<sup>29</sup> Johnson, p 33 and p. 36.

<sup>30</sup> Trends paper, p. 7

<sup>31</sup> Quoted in Diversity, p. 6

While we hope that education leads to at least some consensus and shared values, we would certainly agree that a liberal arts education should liberate by enabling that sort of understanding.

These moral worlds, we would submit, include not only the worlds of people living in the present, but also the worlds of people who lived in the past. A liberating education, we submit, must free the learner from the tyranny of the present. To know the past is to more fully imagine the possibilities of the present and future.<sup>32</sup>

2) The liberal arts cultivate the ability to think creatively and critically.

We have suggested that the liberal arts aim at liberating the mind to realize its essential nature. As such, the liberal arts are not as much as a collection of academic subjects as they are academic disciplines in the purest sense of the word: the methods used to produce orderly, clear thinking, in short, reason. These methods emphasize logic, argumentation, and the rhetoric that can help one express thoughts clearly; they also include quantitative approaches to truth.<sup>33</sup> Beyond the trivium and quadrivium, a contemporary liberal arts curriculum includes the ability to think creatively--the arts.

3) The liberal arts seek to integrate knowledge; they thus involve a broad education.

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<sup>32</sup> Thus the program for Augsburg Seminary's Science Division adopted by Augsburg's faculty in 1874 gave great prominence to historical study:

In reality there is to be found only one true subject of instruction, history, of men and of mankind, and those associations, spiritual and physical, which this history entails. All that man can aspire to know is 'to know himself', and he can only know himself by his own development and that of his own kind, enlightened by the intervention of revelation. A quick glance at our plan will soon note the prominent position which the teaching of history has been given. World history and, by preference, Norway's history and the history of the American States, the history of science and the development of the world, the history of literature and culture, as well in Norway as in America, and finally the history of the Church or Christianity's development, are the foundations which will develop our students' essential knowledge and prepare them to envision and appraise their own place within the great development in its individual phenomena, and from an independent point of view, correctly perceive their obligations within the community in a religious and civic sense.

From "A Program for Augsburg Seminary: Augsburg Seminary's Science Division," Adopted by the Augsburg faculty at its September 1874 meeting. Trans. Einar Johnson in *Soli Deo Gloria*: p.477.

<sup>33</sup> The Augsburg faculty in 1874 gave considerable attention to this agenda. Although we cannot endorse the minor role it assigns to philosophy, we note that it connects liberal with practical study:

There are, moreover, certain immovable natural laws, unalterable rules, by which Reason must classify all matter for comprehension, and this classification therefore is inevitably necessary for each rational thought or development or ideas. It is what we call logic. It can, of course, be considered a subject for philosophy. But it will, even under the best conditions, be in danger of being influenced by personal presuppositions or judgments on the part of the teacher, and it has therefore always been deemed an educational axiom that the foundations of logic in their purest form are presented and stated best through mathematics. A more prolonged instruction in language and more thorough preparation for further philosophical study in the Greek division will compensate for this; but in the science division, it will be indispensable; the graduates of the science division shall be prepared by the clarity of logic to be able to attain the very important knowledge of history. Therefore mathematics appears in the science division as not only significant to lecture on in all the classes, but it in a measure carries the department and gives it its special character. In connection with this study there will be as a practical by-product, bookkeeping and, it is anticipated, surveying will constitute a special part. *Ibid.*, p. 478.

The document goes on to say (pp. 478-479):

It is, then, and principally under this country's free institutions, not only necessary to have the information and the ability to think logically, it is even more necessary to be able to give one's ideas the clearest and most adequate form. It is, in other words, necessary to express one's thoughts with simplicity and clarity, both in speaking and in writing. This can be attained by a thorough study of language."

In freeing students from the limits of themselves, the liberal arts also frees them, paradoxically, to become more fully themselves, the selves that express their potential, or fulfill their Vocations. Thus the liberal arts education certainly addresses the biases, preconceptions, and inexperience that limits students' views of the world, but also encourages students to try out a wide variety of studies. The student who thinks she's pre-med might discover that she really prefers art history. The student who thought he was no good at math might discover that what he really was no good at was thinking of himself as being a competent mathematician. Therefore the liberal arts necessitate a General Education curriculum. More important, they mean educating students about the reasons for pursuing both breadth and depth in their studies.

There are other reasons why a liberal arts college must maintain a strong general curriculum. The humanist liberal arts of the Renaissance and Enlightenment could conceive of the unity of knowledge. The twentieth century academy might smile and dismiss the encyclopedic thirst of prior centuries as human overconfidence. But in this age of information overload it runs the opposing risk of overspecialization. To the degree that *any* area of study conceives its task too narrowly, it becomes a most illiberal art. Thus a liberal arts curriculum should look beyond majors or disciplines to help students make connections among their studies.

4) The liberal arts aim at “well knowing,” and thus involve sufficient depth of study.

Although liberal arts graduates should be conversant with a wide range of studies in the arts and sciences, they should also acquire the depth in their major field(s) of study appropriate to the baccalaureate degree. Depth of study is a corollary of the second principle above. It enables students to develop their critical and creative cognitive capabilities.

5) The liberal arts prepare students to become leaders in and stewards of the world.

For humanists, the liberal arts should lead to action in the world--especially leadership and service in the centers of power, the city. Clearly, the liberal arts traditionally have had a practical or professional goal. In an occupational setting, the difference between the student educated in a liberal arts college and one trained in a technical school will be the college student's enlarged conception of his or her responsibilities; the student's ability to place his or her career in an ethical context; the personal and intellectual discipline that enables clear judgment and continued learning; and possibly, the student's ability to relate his or her job to the rest of his or her life. Humanists also expected, of course, that education should improve the world. This may seem overly optimistic from a Lutheran perspective that is always aware of human finitude and therefore suspicious of utopian aspirations. Nevertheless, a Lutheran humanism that emphasizes stewardship of the world and God's action in history does not preclude the possibility of bettering it.

6) The liberal arts deal with ethics and claims to truth.

Action entails ethics. The liberal arts, especially as defined by humanists, focus on “well doing” as well as “well knowing.” This is the basis of the public ethics that underlie responsible stewardship. But a liberal arts curriculum should also attend to matters of private action and belief. It should lead to what William G. Perry called “commitment,” the stage of intellectual and we believe moral development at which a person has grappled with the complexities of life, has been confronted with a variety of moral and intellectual choices, and is able to commit himself or herself to “an affirmation, choice, or decision,” whether it be career, a religion, an ethical stance, a political position, a personal relationship.<sup>34</sup>

The liberal arts not only address the “values *du jour*,” but also seek out abiding, universal ethical truths and explore how human beings have responded in many places and times. The tradition confronts human actions with the questions: Is this true? Is this good?

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<sup>34</sup> See Note 2 on page 8.

7) A liberal arts education should equip students to become self-activating, lifelong learners and use their education to navigate capably into the uncertain world of the future.

Finally, the liberal arts enable resilience. Technical and practical courses provide students with the specific skills and knowledge that will serve them well in specific occupations at specific times and places. By providing students with a larger view of the world and with cognitive skills that can be adapted to many situations, the liberal arts transcend the specific and equip students to become lifelong learners.

#### *What these definitions mean for Augsburg*

Defined by their traditional functions, the liberal arts are not at odds with professional studies. A “professional studies” course can address ethics and values; it can raise the issues relevant to responsible leadership and citizenship; it can help students hone cognitive abilities; it can encourage students to think of worlds and realities beyond themselves; its professor can create a moral community within the classroom. Similarly a liberal arts course--unfortunately--might betray its tradition by being overspecialized, neglecting questions of ethics and values, regarding students’ minds as holes to be filled rather than as potential to be developed, and leaving students’ moral imaginations pretty much as it found them.

We would argue, then, that the liberal arts and professional/technical studies at Augsburg can share a philosophy of education. The challenge to Augsburg of 2004 is to incorporate these liberal arts principles deliberately into the entire curriculum as much as possible or appropriate. Thus the liberal can transform the professional and technical. But the opposite is also true; experiential education and professional and technical studies programs can help students translate liberal knowledge into the *vita activa*--into leadership, stewardship and service in their careers.

### **3. A Classroom in the City and the World<sup>35</sup>**

The college as an institution originated in the cloister. There students retreated from the world to devote themselves to the contemplative life. Many centuries later, it is not unusual for colleges to retreat to the contemporary equivalent of the cloister--the small town, the suburbs, and the country--to offer an education in a sheltered environment.

In earlier times too many people were inclined to see God at work in the natural or even "supernatural," where the natural causes of things were unknown, rather than in even the best products of human creativity--God was seen perhaps more readily in the blessing over the sick than in the skill of the doctor. This view has been retained by some who believe that this world, and especially the cities and their technology, are not as worthy of study by virtuous or religiously inclined people. Augsburg is different. The student who comes to Augsburg will arrive in the world, a world created and sustained by God, a world affirmed to be good.

The early Christian church grew in the cosmopolitan environment of the Roman Empire, and especially thrived in cities such as Ephesus, Corinth, Jerusalem, and Rome. Lutheranism developed in Wittenberg in a university that became deeply involved in political, social, and scientific as well as theological issues of its day. (For example, the Lutheran scholars at Wittenberg were some of the first academic champions of Copernicus' new astronomical view of a sun-centered universe.)

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<sup>35</sup> We wish to acknowledge the influence of the ideas of Gordon Nelson (“A Reflection on What Its Urban Setting Should Mean for Augsburg”) and Chris Kimball (“Augsburg College: Authentically Urban”) in this part of the paper.

Lutheran Christians believe that they are called very specially to see God at work in the expert knowledge of the physician -- not alongside of the doctor, or even as someone who guides a hand or prompts with a whisper, but in the doctor who remains himself or herself. The more a creature is itself, the more God is active in it. God's action does not consist of pushing aside any part of creation, but bringing it--especially humans--to be itself as fully as possible

God did not create the world long ago. God *is* in the act of creating the world, and also does it through us. It is not of course true that God makes the countryside and humans make the cities. The cities are almost even more God's creation, because humans, the climax of God's creation, express themselves in them. What humans make is God's creation.<sup>36</sup>

Augsburg's conception of community is global. It believes that the best way to prepare students to become good stewards of and good citizens in the world is to educate them in the city, "the point of maximum concentration for the power and culture of a community."<sup>37</sup> Therefore Augsburg is located in the city by intention, not by accident. Given that increasing numbers of Americans will live and work in urban areas, it would be foolish to pretend that all that is worth learning in higher education is contained within the walls of a library or accessible electronically over the internet. Augsburg, in fact, has made its location part of its curriculum, to the benefit of its many graduates who now serve in our modern and increasingly urban society.

In 1872 the College chose to move from a small town, Marshall, Wisconsin to Minneapolis. In 1946, it resisted the approaching exodus to the suburbs by deciding to remain in its present location rather than moving to Richfield, Minnesota. A future Augsburg should be a college that has enlarged its conception of what it means to be a college in the city. It truly should forge a curriculum that is "shaped by the context of a vital metropolitan setting." It will become more than a dot on the "mental map" of the city.<sup>38</sup>

Many of the departments and programs at Augsburg that have made the most use of Augsburg's urban location have been those involved in the service professions (e.g., social work, education). As part of their task, they have focused on the very real problems and needs of contemporary American urban areas, and have worked to overcome the aberrant character (and the often still-dire reality) of many of the cities of 20th century America.

The Augsburg of 2004 has done exceedingly well in using its commitment to service as a reason for addressing urban problems. At the same time, students at Augsburg have learned to examine and appreciate the significant contributions of cities -- both American cities, and cities throughout the world and throughout human history--as areas of civilization and high culture and as key areas for successfully navigating the future. As the rebuilt and revitalized neighborhood around Augsburg has become part of an emerging education/health care/research corridor for the Twin Cities, Augsburg's location has increasingly linked it to the city's centers of power and innovation as well as its centers of need.

Beyond the city, the Augsburg of 2004 has found ways to more fully realize the potential of The Center for Global Education. In a sense, Augsburg already had campuses in Cuernavaca, Mexico, Windhoek, Namibia, and Managua, Nicaragua in 1998. In 2004, these campuses are accessible to a greater number of students in a greater number of majors. At home, the world has come to Augsburg as it has enrolled a greater number of international students.

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<sup>36</sup> The Dutch Catechism, Herder and Herder, 1967.

<sup>37</sup> Lewis Mumford, "What is a City" in *The Lewis Mumford Reader*. Ed. Donald L. Miller. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986). Excerpted from Introduction of *The Culture of Cities*, p. 104.

<sup>38</sup> Chris Kimball's paper.

Some things will not and should not change. Augsburg's notion of stewardship includes its devotion to social justice. This is a concomitant of Luther's call to express faith through action as well as to Augsburg's distinctive historical roots. Augsburg responds to God's radical love for creation by making social justice, a species of *caritas*, a theme of an Augsburg education. This explains the inclusive nature of the Augsburg community: it welcomes the world. It seeks students from a variety of religious, racial, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds. It works hard to accommodate students whose physical disabilities may make physical access difficult or impossible at other colleges. It admits students with a range of academic and learning styles and backgrounds. It makes a place for both heterosexual and homosexual students. Its students range widely in age and life experience. Finally, Augsburg believes that a college education is for any capable student who is willing to dedicate herself or himself to the demands of the academic enterprise. Its excellence, in part, consists in educating students who have risen to the challenges of the opportunity that Augsburg has extended to them.

#### 4. A *Community of Learners*

Although Augsburg's educational mission is shaped by its church connections and urban environment, the College is fundamentally an academic institution whose major commitment is the education of its students.<sup>39</sup> The very etymology of the word college--*collegium*, meaning guild, corporation, etc.--argues that this education will not be a solitary enterprise. Augsburg believes that "students learn best when they are engaged in social interactions with one another [and with their teachers]."<sup>40</sup> Therefore students who come to Augsburg will join a *community* of learners who are united by their search for truth.

Therefore Augsburg students will not be marooned in a lecture hall of several hundred students. They will not be stranded in front of a computer, taped lecture, or other mechanical piece of technology; Augsburg courses will increasingly employ educational technologies to enhance student learning, but every class will involve personal interaction with the professor and other students:

As a community of learners, we should continue to focus on the search for understanding and meaning, not simply collecting more information. This has been accomplished in the past through regular contact between students and teachers and the development of a sense of connectedness that leads to lasting relationships.<sup>41</sup>

For this reason, Augsburg seeks relational approaches to teaching and learning.

Augsburg professors understand and support Augsburg's emphasis on relational models of education by striving for the full meaning of "professing." An Augsburg education focuses not only on the content of the curriculum, but also on how *professors*--as opposed to *instructors*--view their role in the classroom. Because an education based in the liberal arts is a moral undertaking, both teaching and learning must be conceived in ethical terms: "Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and the integrity of the teacher."<sup>42</sup> Teaching involves conviction: "The classroom is the microcosm of the

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<sup>39</sup> As Diane Pike writes in "On Being Student Centered," "our commitment requires vigilance in putting learning first. It does not mean we take up the slack where other institutions of society are failing. We are not fundamentally a church, a government, a workplace, a health club, a social community, nor a family, although we incorporate and bridge to these institutions. We *are* about the profession of formal education: particular opportunities for learning knowledge, skills, values, and character." p. 4

<sup>40</sup> Richard Light quoted in Commission on Experiential Pedagogies Document. p. 13.

<sup>41</sup> Commission on Trends Document, p. 17

<sup>42</sup> Commission on Experiential Pedagogies Document, Parker Palmer quoted on p. 10

world; it is the chance we have to practice whatever ideals we cherish. The kind of classroom situation one creates is the acid test of what one really stands for.”<sup>43</sup>

Morality involves relationship. It involves the relationship of professors to the material they are “professing,” that is, how they relate the course material to truth and what connections they make between what they teach and the wholeness of their experience. In short, the integrative function of the liberal arts principles demands attention to a larger context of truth. The humanist tradition would also ask the professor to bridge theory and practice: How does knowing the material well, to again invoke Sidney, translate into “well doing?”

Just as and perhaps more important, an Augsburg pedagogy should involve relationships that unite professor and student in “a community of mutual truth-seeking.” This means that professors will try to establish “I-Thou” relationships with students, and thereby “connect with the inward living core of . . . students’ lives.” Thus a *professor* is not the same as an *instructor*,<sup>44</sup> who, as the etymology of the term implies establishes an “I-It” relationship in which the student is a receptacle in which to load information. At Augsburg, professors avoid the mechanical; they resist an objectivist epistemology that makes “objects of each other and the world to be manipulated for our own private ends.”<sup>45</sup>

Augsburg likewise tries to realize relational models of education through formal structures. Thus the research that shows “the effectiveness of linked courses, learning clusters, freshman interest groups and coordinated studies programs”<sup>46</sup> is reflected in the classroom practices of Augsburg faculty. Since truth-seeking is a mutual enterprise, Augsburg students will find opportunities to engage in research with their professors. Physics majors have long enjoyed the opportunity to be part of an international team of space physics researchers; many have co-published papers with far more established physicists. Students in other disciplines--psychology and biology to name two--likewise have presented papers at local and national conferences, either in collaboration with professors or as the result of projects advised by professors.

Interdisciplinary courses likewise provide opportunities in which faculty can join students as learners; and experiential learning emphasizes the place of a community in education.

The community of learners is not confined to the classroom. Student activities have clear goals related to the academic mission of the college. Students too are beneficiaries of Augsburg’s egalitarian culture as they exercise real power in student government, student publications, and other student activities.

The Augsburg of 2004 will continue to extend its academic excellence into the residence halls. There Augsburg will maintain a culture that will balance the freedom students need to mature with the College’s ethics and values; they will find the corollary of the academic tenet that protects freedom by insisting on civility. Resident students will find an environment that is conducive to academic achievement. They--and other--students will adhere to a code of ethics that says, “part of Vocation and stewardship is learning that we are responsible for our choices and our behaviors. Therefore if one chooses to act against the code of ethics, he or she must bear the consequences of that decision.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Virginia Allery paper, Jane Tompkins quoted on p. 2. We note that the central metaphor of Allery paper is the teacher as guerrilla. Guerrillas are liberators.

<sup>44</sup> To prevent misunderstanding, we note that we are not talking about the words that describe conventional academic ranks (e.g. Instructor of Philosophy, Professor of Communications). Rather we are interested in what the etymologies of these words imply about philosophies of teaching.

<sup>45</sup> Parker Palmer quoted by Virginia Allery, p. 5-6 See also her discussion on pp 5 ff.

<sup>46</sup> Commission on Experiential Pedagogies Document p. 8

<sup>47</sup> Commission on Work Culture Document, 19

## 5. Community and Diversity<sup>48</sup>

Augsburg's commitment to creating a heterogeneous college community proceeds from its understanding that a community shaped by Christian convictions should reflect God's love for all; from the promptings of United States constitutional law and the principles of equality and liberty on which it is founded; and from its educational mission to prepare its students to be thoughtful, confident leaders in a diverse world.<sup>49</sup>

Augsburg's conception of diversity is remarkably broad.<sup>50</sup> It includes people from a variety of cultural, racial, religious, and socio-economic groups. It includes people with learning and physical disabilities. It describes learners who range in age from their late teens to their 60s or older. It is reflected in programs and organizations like AWARE (Augsburg Women's Activities, Resources & Education), BAGLS (Bisexual and Gay/Lesbian Support), and the Honors Program.<sup>51</sup> Diversity is implicit in the variety of Augsburg's academic programs and in its intention to "come to the farmer, to the worker, and to the businessman."<sup>52</sup> Augsburg, we

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<sup>48</sup> As might be expected, this section owes much to the Diversity Commission Document. But we also want to acknowledge the ideas--and often the words--that William Frame and Bev Stratton have contributed to this section of this paper.

<sup>49</sup> We acknowledge that members of Augsburg's community may not unanimously agree on these three points.

For many in the Augsburg community, support for diversity *is*, in fact, rooted primarily in the Christian faith, and secondarily in the particularly Lutheran and Scandinavian-American heritage of the college. Christians ground their views and behavior in God's action in reaching out to all humans through Jesus of Nazareth. The Christian community, at least ideally, is inclusive. It is characterized by the remarkable love--*caritas*--exemplified in Paul's view of the transformative power of the Gospel that makes all human differences and polarities less important than being "in Christ." This view would claim that as agents of God's purposes, Christians, both individually and collectively, are charged to build up all persons and communities because others, just as much as they, are loved by God.

Others, however, locate their support for diversity in a political and humanistic idealism that takes quite seriously the democratic vision of equality and "liberty and justice for all." They would challenge Augsburg to serve as a model for a pluralistic America. Some have called diversity the second great American experiment; few other modern societies are attempting to build a nation upon so heterogeneous a social foundation. Augsburg can contribute and already has contributed to the success of this experiment, not least by shaping students who are able to work well within this milieu and who may be committed to its success. Augsburg's nationally known programs in experiential education and its utilization of its metropolitan setting already provide it with considerable advantages in equipping its students for this important role. As noted elsewhere in this document, alumni anecdotes continually remind us that Augsburg does successfully prepare students to deal with the world.

These viewpoints, of course, are potentially harmonious, and some people at Augsburg hold both. But to the extent that one is religious and the other secular, they also hold the potential for discord. These fundamental differences in rationale and preferred modes of discourse need not jeopardize our ability to craft a unified vision of Augsburg's commitment to diversity. It clearly has been in Augsburg's tradition for its leaders to make common cause with persons with a variety of beliefs and values when they were convinced that faithfulness to the Gospel demanded it. In this way, it may be possible for people with either or both views to work together without the need to agree about the bases of their values or the rationale for their ultimate goals.

Moreover, those discussing issues of diversity at Augsburg, at least as can be inferred from the Commission papers, appear to agree on three points: First, they can turn to Augsburg's history to legitimize its commitment to diversity. Second, they acknowledge that diversity can and possibly should be accompanied by some tensions, although they may interpret those tensions somewhat differently. Third, they acknowledge that diversity is not in itself an ultimate goal; it is a means to other ends. Prominent among these is the best education for Augsburg's students as they prepare to enter our increasingly diverse and globalized society.

<sup>50</sup> See pp. 9-15 of the Diversity Commission Document for a discussion of the complexity of diversity at Augsburg.

<sup>51</sup> The Diversity Commission (p. 13) identifies over seventeen Augsburg programs and groups that serve particular communities--and even that list is likely to be incomplete.

<sup>52</sup> See Section III:2 above.

would cautiously claim, has been successful in attracting and supporting a diverse student body.<sup>53</sup>

But creating a heterogeneous community cannot be an end in itself. Augsburg is further challenged to find “unity” in diversity, to truly create community by finding the common ground that gives integrity to Augsburg’s educational enterprise and to the College’s identity. What ideas, then, should define the “intentionality” of Augsburg’s diversity?

In defining what it means by “intentional diversity,” Augsburg differentiates racism, sexism, and other species of hatred and prejudice from cultural diversity. In abhors the former, and--to the degree consistent with its mission statement--promotes the latter. Therefore Augsburg feels compelled to make its education available to all people who are willing to participate in its educational mission. It hopes that people of all conditions of life will be widely represented on campus among its students, employees, and regents. It is not as much concerned with any particular demographic composition of its community as it is with eliminating hatred and prejudice from campus culture and institutional structures, and with promoting the dialogues among people of varying cultures, races, religions, sexes, sexual orientations, and so forth that are essential to its students’ education.

Augsburg, we have claimed, is not a cloister. This is not always an advantage. To engage the world is to admit its failings as well as its possibilities. Certainly a Lutheran college should not expect to banish human imperfections and limitations from its premises. Augsburg recognizes that since its beginnings, American society has favored some people (e.g. white people) to the disadvantage, even oppression, of others (e.g. people of color). Because this propensity is systemic in American society and is carried anew into the College in its many contacts with the world, Augsburg must wage a steady and willful campaign against it. As an agent of such injuries, albeit unwitting, Augsburg seeks to right those wrongs.

This is one reason why Augsburg provides groups like American Indian Student Services, Hispanic-Latino Student Services, Pan-Afrikan Student Services, and Pan-Asian Student Services and recognizes the importance of other organizations mentioned above. By recruiting and then protecting those who identify themselves, for instance, in racial or ethnic terms, the College aims not only at resisting oppression, but also at helping to heal or at least diminish those injuries that America historically has inflicted on many groups of people. By giving visibility to their members and celebrating their contributions to civilization and their improvement of the human condition, Augsburg does not seek to judge achievements by their origins, but to counteract the popular tendency to do so.

But the function of these student service groups is educational as well. In part, they hope to ameliorate the effects of systemic prejudice. Augsburg recognizes that learning can be affected by the social or cultural subtext of the classroom and general campus culture. Being part of the dominant culture confers social self-confidence. Anything that makes a student different from the presumed “norm”--age, class, sex, race, culture, a physical or learning difference or disability, or sexual orientation--potentially can undermine confidence and thus become a barrier to learning.<sup>54</sup> Until Augsburg’s campus culture and curriculum are truly transformed, some students, in order to make the most of their educational opportunity, may need the support of a group of people to whom they won’t have to explain themselves and who can affirm who they are. Such groups can assist students in finding their Vocations.

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<sup>53</sup> Our caution is accompanied by qualifications. Augsburg is certainly diverse for a small private four-year college in the upper Midwest. See pp. 9-12 in the Diversity Commission Document for demographic information.

<sup>54</sup> See, for instance, Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences through Work in Women’s Studies.” (Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA: Center for Research on Women). Working Paper No. 189. 1988.

Just as, and perhaps more, important, these student service groups make an essential contribution to Augsburg's "transforming" education. They provide programs that benefit the larger community (e.g. African American History programs, Latino Week, Women's History Month programs, etc.). Both these groups and specific academic programs (e.g. the Women's Studies major, American Indian Studies minor, and courses about African American history) assist the critical dialogue about culture, race, gender, sexual orientation, and similar topics that can question, widen, and potentially transform the vision of other people on campus. And by challenging Augsburg to incorporate into its curriculum many different ways of knowing and learning--not just those of a traditional "mainstream"--they can enlarge the educational experience of everyone: students, faculty, and staff alike.<sup>55</sup>

This, then, suggests the diversity that best serves Augsburg's educational mission. If Augsburg is to provide an education for service in this life--Luther's "kingdom on the left"--Augsburg's faculty, staff, and students must become familiar with the wide world of *cultural* diversity. This is the world in which legends and myths, heroes and heroines, moral and ethical convictions have served to define a regime or way of life of a people. This is the world in which many different ways of knowing and learning testify to the complexity and wonder of creation. This is the world which asks each of us to confront our human finitude and then to look beyond the limitations imposed on us by our own cultural assumptions in order to realize more fully our human potential. As Parker Palmer puts it, "We invite 'diversity' into our community not because it is politically correct, but because diverse viewpoints are demanded by the manifold mysteries of great things."<sup>56</sup> It is in confronting those mysteries that we discover our essential humanity that lies beyond our differences, the wholeness that is "more than the sum of the parts."

In this sense, cultural diversity is critical for all of us--employees and students alike--to fulfill our obligations as stewards. To pursue our Vocations in the world, we need engagement with ways of life and convictions that pose alternatives to our own. Knowing the other helps us know ourselves.

The availability of this diversity need not be secured entirely by physical representation in the learning community. Indeed, such a requirement would eliminate historical alternatives that have passed away and imagined ones that have not yet been realized. But the entire community--faculty, staff as well as students--must confront a broad segment of this diversity in order to learn how to live and work in the midst of it.

It is also important to define what is *not* intended by Augsburg's "intentional commitment to diversity." Above all, commitment to diversity does not mean that Augsburg can or will abandon its mission statement. It does *not* mean that all claims to truth have equal validity; it does not excuse us from the intellectual and indeed moral responsibility of differentiating what is true from what is false, what is better from what is worse. It does not mean accommodating and celebrating every claim to cultural distinction. Commitment to diversity does *not* allow us to abandon the moral principles that are necessary to true academic freedom and discourse. On one hand, it does not see the constitutional doctrine of free speech as a necessary protection for hateful or obscene speech or expression; thus it can resist, for example, racist ideologies. Nor, on the other hand, does the College require political orthodoxy or conformity.<sup>57</sup>

What Augsburg does require is academic rigor, intellectual honesty and humility, and the decorum that can protect the free exchange of ideas. It demands that members of its community treat each other with consideration and respect.

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<sup>55</sup> See Commission on Diversity Document, p. 26-27.

<sup>56</sup> Parker J. Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998) p. 107

<sup>57</sup> See Diversity Commission Document, pp. 26-27: "As a community we must expect civil behavior even as we engage in difficult religious and moral deliberation, educating ourselves and one another, but we can neither legislate attitudes nor prescribe a set of moral or religious values."

In short, Augsburg is committed to an “intentional diversity” that will share the College’s profound interest in the pursuit of truth; in the spiritual welfare of the human soul; in the vitality and morality of the human spirit; and in human sociality, civility, and justice. These are the interests that bind us all together. Diversity at Augsburg, then, serves a goal beyond itself. It is an essential participant in the dialogue about the foundational ideas that every human community must address.

#### **IV. EDUCATION AS OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGE**

**Augsburg will fulfill its historical Vocation as a college by helping students with a wide range of academic experience realize their own excellence as they meet**

## **the challenges of college-level academic work.**

### **1. Overview**

Augsburg College in 2004 will retain its character as a friendly, welcoming place, but also renew its emphasis on its role as a place where students can be challenged and empowered, as well as welcomed and supported. This Augsburg will have been careful not to fall into a "market niche" of having a certain homogeneous level of student ability, but will have maintained its interest in and capability of serving, educating, and empowering students with a range of experience and academic achievements, from average to excellent.

Augsburg's traditional approach to the excellence vs. access continuum has been to clearly spell out its vision (with explicit mention of the Christian faith and its Lutheran heritage), welcome those who choose to enter (and in many cases work to make their entry possible), and then challenge and empower them with excellent personal attention from faculty and staff who are both caring and gifted.

It is the outcomes of the college experience, not the profile of entering students, that will be the touchstone of Augsburg's achievement. Augsburg's CLASS program has had a significant impact on the lives and careers of many learning-disabled students. Just as significantly, we note the stories from alumni, some from nearly 75 years ago, who report that they owe their considerable success to Augsburg's having "provided them a chance" that they otherwise do not believe they would have received. That chance had and has not so much to do with admissions, as with the impact that faculty, other students, and college-level knowledge had on these students during their years at Augsburg. For a student body that since its founding contained a mix of social classes and levels of education, it was and is the transformative power of the Augsburg experience that is of salient importance.

### **2. An Expectation of Excellence and Service**

Augsburg's motto "Education for Service" powerfully portrays the College's dual traditions of concern for social justice and faithfulness to the Christian Gospel. However, too-frequent use of this theme has not been an unalloyed blessing in that the valuable ideas were confused by the word "service." "Service" and "serve" may connote "servant status" or, more pejoratively, "servitude" or "servility" rather than "stewardship." Both "service" and "stewardship" focus on responsibility and care for one's neighbor and the world, but the latter also recognizes the authority and power of those who have that responsibility. "Education for service" might also imply particular careers--church work, teaching, social work, and health care--and thus might subvert the profound insights expressed in the Lutheran concept of Vocation that all callings are venues for God's care of the world.

Jesus's parables were as often about the stewardship of the rich and powerful as they were about humanity-in-general's responsibility toward the powerless. The power of the stewards was often recognized; rather than denigrating them because of their power, Jesus challenged them to be good stewards. Likewise one could argue that God gave Adam and Eve considerable authority over creation--with the concomitant care that Eden required. Augsburg in recent years has done a much better job of conveying to our students their sense of present or future power, and a concomitant sense of stewardship.

The word "stewardship" might not be an adequate replacement for "service," since its theological nuances may not be intelligible to a wide audience and its definition may have been reduced to the name of the Sunday that inaugurates the church's annual pledge drive. The secular phrases "good management" and "responsible citizenship" capture at least in part some of what Jesus's parables of stewardship are about, but may be too narrowly conceived. As noted above, the Latin word *caritas* and the Greek word *agape* also might convey better the intended

stance of Augsburg and its graduates toward the world.

Misunderstanding of the role of "service" may also be one reason why Augsburg's traditions have so seldom referred to other words in the Christian lexicon such as "excellence" (*arete* in Greek). Is the lack of stress on excellence rooted in a confusion between excellence and arrogance (and hence somehow related to our "collegiate values"), or does the phrase "militant modesty" that is said to be characteristic of Augsburg in fact betray the honest assessment of some that mediocrity is, and even should be, characteristic of Augsburg?

There may even be some theological confusion at the root of such attitudes. Several Commissions have noted in Augsburg's Lutheran tradition the intellectual humility and caution exemplified in the phrase "I might be wrong." However, this phrase fits paradoxically with Luther's call to "sin boldly," and this paradox appears not to have been widely understood.

Focusing exclusively on the "I might be wrong" pole of this paradox might encourage a kind of relativism that is quite foreign to the Lutheran tradition. Luther's point in encouraging his listeners to "sin boldly" can be paraphrased as

"I might be wrong, but I have to act. God gives me the freedom to act boldly, for despite the possibility that I may have misread the situation, it is my responsibility to care for this world in the best way that I know how. My Vocation impels me as a steward of God's word, and of God's people, to act boldly, even if my action be sinful."

### **3. A Wide Range of Students**

We propose a definition of excellence for Augsburg that is consistent with its historical and continuing mission and identity. Augsburg finds some of its genius and uniqueness in resisting facile classification. It is not elitist--its founders were well aware of their status as immigrants, new to American culture--but it doesn't ignore excellence. In fact, the concept of Vocation demands excellence, and the concepts of Vocation and stewardship provide a clear link both to Augsburg's commitment to service to its community and social justice, and to the best secular purposes of education.

Augsburg is braver than many institutions in its acceptance of students with a broad range of ability and interests. However, we believe that an education which involves the variety of the "real world" can contribute greatly to lifting its students out of their "valleys" to see the horizons of their world. Central to Augsburg's mission is to help its students realize their gifts, and to develop them to the best of their abilities, whatever their current level of achievement. Augsburg claims that, instead of being an isolated, homogeneous community, an "ivory tower," it is a place that prepares students for successfully living "in the world." It's not the typical college image; it's better.

Therefore, Augsburg should continue to admit people who bring a range of academic achievement, preparation, and experience to college. However, Augsburg's Vocation as a college demands that it make its high standards clear. Accommodation at Augsburg does not mean compromising standards; it means that the College strives to find ways of helping students meet those standards. Augsburg guarantees opportunities, not diplomas. Because Augsburg respects its students and is committed to helping them find their Vocations, it resists the cynicism that gives passing grades to students who have not achieved college standards in their work.

An Augsburg education, then, should challenge all of its students to see themselves as potentially powerful actors in the world. Students who already have more wealth, comfort and some assurance that their personal history has already conferred upon them a place in the world especially need to learn to take seriously the responsibility that accompanies privilege. Students

who have not yet taken their education seriously need to be challenged to do so (and, according to the comments of our alumni, Augsburg has historically often done an excellent job of this). Those who already take their education seriously need to be challenged to use their time and opportunities to the best of their ability (and, again, many alumni tell us that individual faculty and/or staff at Augsburg have done an excellent job of this). The challenge of an education at Augsburg is to bring students to an awareness of, and a commitment to, their opportunities and responsibilities (in other words, their Vocations). In the context of conveying this sense of "radical responsibility" Augsburg has already achieved considerable excellence, but we believe there is room for improvement in both.

In short, an Augsburg education is for any capable student who is willing to dedicate himself or herself to the demands of the academic enterprise. Augsburg's excellence, in part, consists in graduating students who have risen to the challenges of the opportunity that the College has extended to them.

## **V. PROVIDING AN AUGSBURG EDUCATION**

**Augsburg will maintain a work community that enables faculty and staff to effectively contribute to the College's mission and that models the sort of world that the College's education vision is intended to create.**

## **1. Overview**

The Augsburg of 2004 will be a college in which faculty and staff regard themselves as stewards of students' lives. They are committed to helping students discover and fulfill their Vocations for leadership in and service to the world. They do their best to model the care and concern that members of a Christian community ought to have for each other. At the same time they do not confuse *caritas* or compassion with indulgence that cultivates dependence, immaturity, or irresponsibility. Because Augsburg cares that students fulfill their Vocations by living up to their academic potential, faculty and staff expect students to strive for excellence. Nor do they hold students to a standard which they do not expect from themselves. Although the primary obligation of the College is the education of its students, faculty and staff try to model the ideals of Augsburg's academic community in their interactions with each other and in their job performances. At Augsburg the excellence of each individual is a gift to be shared in service both to the College and to the larger community; thus the accomplishments of each individual are a cause for community recognition and celebration.

Faculty and staff model what it means to be part of a community of learners through their own research and professional development. They participate in Augsburg's unusually vigorous faculty development programs, seeking to improve their professional performances as teachers as well as scholars. Augsburg likewise provides staff with opportunities to develop in their jobs. Both faculty and staff attend and participate in extra-curricular activities--lectures, debates, and performances that provide learning opportunities beyond the classroom. An egalitarian work culture (another inheritance from its Norwegian Lutheran roots) that invests "authority, responsibility, and accountability at the lowest possible level" helps employees become invested in their jobs and contribute more to the college community.

At the same time, Augsburg expects, and receives, more long-range leadership from its top administrators and a more integrated sense of campus management and stewardship from all levels of its work community. The fragmentation of interest and attention that was all too common among both staff and faculty in previous decades is replaced by shared awareness and by effective communication about Augsburg's vision and the strategic efforts needed to implement it.

Because Augsburg is a Lutheran college, it asks both its students and its employees to use all the tools of their reason and imagination to seek out their callings and fulfill their Vocations. Augsburg therefore expects those who are to provide and present a Lutheran education to be well equipped for their task and to do it to the best of their ability. Because Augsburg is a Lutheran college, it values the work of all of its employees, deeming everyone's contribution essential to its educational mission. Augsburg's work culture is therefore friendly and supportive. It encourages excellence in the performance of all jobs--and recognizes and rewards the achievements of all its employees.

Although Augsburg expects its employees to understand and support its mission as a Lutheran college, it welcomes employees with a variety of faiths and religious viewpoints. It acknowledges the contributions that they can make to prepare students for their futures.

Behind the activities, guidelines, and job expectations of the Augsburg work culture lies an assumed, and often-unstated, code of ethics. Such a code at Augsburg includes hospitality to all persons; respect for civil discussion of diverse opinions as a means of sustaining a sense of community; pride in our work and in the accomplishments of our students; concern for the larger local and global community of which we are a part; recognition of human frailty, balanced by a concern for the longevity of the College; accountability to the College's mission and

standards; commitment to the Lutheran concept of Vocation; and support (or at least favorable recognition) of the College's grounding in the Christian faith.

## **2. Vocation and Stewardship**

It should not be surprising that Martin Luther's ideas of Vocation and stewardship might play an important role in the work culture of a Lutheran college. At Augsburg these ideas help define the mutual expectations that the College and its employees should have of each other.

Augsburg has benefited greatly from the fact that so many of its employees regard their jobs as Vocations, that is, that they have been called to do the work that they "should" be doing at the place where they "should" be doing it. The sense of self fulfillment that such people bring to their jobs often has resulted not only in excellent work, but work that goes well beyond the demands of their job descriptions. Likewise many of Augsburg's employees bring a sense of stewardship to the College: this is the small world that they have a chance to care for and help flourish. And indeed their care has resulted in extraordinary contributions to the well-being of the College.

Not all employees will regard their job responsibilities in the Lutheran terms of calling and stewardship. Nevertheless, the College can and should expect all employees to do their jobs well and conscientiously; they should be committed to the best interests of the College. All employees should expect to be held accountable for their work; they should anticipate that failure to perform their jobs well will have consequences.

A college that takes Vocation and stewardship seriously also has considerable obligations to its employees. The idea of Vocation means that Augsburg will regard the work of all its employees as important. Whatever their worth in worldly currency, the work of a Lutheran college president is not necessarily more important than that of adjunct instructor teaching a required freshman course; the work of that instructor may not be more vital to the institution than that of the custodian whose work creates a physical environment conducive to those students' study. It is unlikely that Augsburg will create a utopia that obliterates all hierarchical distinctions. However, it can recognize and reward the work of exemplary employees. It can provide fair compensation to all its workers. And it can create structures that allow all employees to participate significantly in the decision-making processes of the College. Luther's idea of Vocation also means that no job is so unimportant that it can be done poorly; therefore the College can expect at least competence, if not always excellence, from all of its employees. In return, the College must marshal all its resources to live up to its ideals so that its employees can be confident that their work indeed supports a worthwhile effort.

Just as Augsburg employees are to be good stewards of the resources of the College, so are the employees resources that the College should care for wisely. This means that the College must demonstrate its concern for the well-being of its employees by treating them fairly, by providing them with the resources that they need to do their jobs well, and by compensating them at rates competitive with similar institutions. It may need to be especially careful not to abuse the enthusiasm of its workers who do regard their jobs as callings. Attention to Vocation also recognizes that one's job may not be the totality of one's Vocation. Thus Augsburg's employee policies will be as mindful of "the whole employee" as its educational mission is of "the whole student."

## **PART TWO: RECOMMENDATIONS and AREAS of CONCERN**

### **I. AN AUGSBURG MODEL OF LUTHERAN EDUCATION**

**Augsburg will continue to affirm its identity as a college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America whose ethos and educational mission reflect its unique historical and theological roots.**

**1. In addition to reaffirming its tradition of Lutheran education, provide regular opportunities to examine this tradition and its implications to all segments of the Augsburg community.**

Augsburg's tradition encourages it to defend freedom of thought and academic inquiry, actively welcome faculty and students from both within and outside the Lutheran tradition, people with differing views on a broad range of social, political, and religious issues, and students with a broad range of academic accomplishment and potential.

Although this ecumenical spirit is known and affirmed by those who regularly attend its chapel services, those who have not shared these experiences are often threatened by suggestions that Augsburg reaffirm and strengthen its Lutheran Christian roots. We believe that Augsburg's Lutheran model has much to contribute to society, even to those who do not share its religious heritage. This is, again, consistent with the Lutheran concept of Vocation, as described earlier.

**2. Provide an atmosphere that supports a focus on the relation between faith and reason, and of questions of values and ethics, in both curricular and extracurricular contexts.**

A Lutheran education provides opportunities for reasoned dialogue on matters of faith, reason, and ethics as they relate to many and/or all matters of academic and personal interest. We thus believe that Augsburg's leaders can and should make clear to faculty and staff that it is appropriate that discussions on matters of faith, reason, and ethics may take place beyond the confines of a Religion class or a chapel period. The 1996 Augsburg Self Study document, prepared for its North Central Association accreditation review, noted that this institution can provide the opportunity "for the community to wrestle with issues of faith and values through supporting a classroom environment which makes possible regular questioning, referencing, and reinforcing theological issues in non-Religion classes (since it is possible at a Christian college to unhesitatingly introduce religious themes where appropriate) and which enables students to provide volunteer service opportunities to the community."<sup>58</sup>

Faculty in particular may have the opportunity to devote at least some classroom time to content or curricular issues which students may perceive to challenge faith or values. This may not be possible or ideal in all courses, however. We acknowledge the tension between adequately preparing students for mastery of course-related material and addressing "important" issues not apparently related to such courses. However, as discussed earlier, we believe that faculty should be encouraged to "profess," not just facilitate. Thus they should be open to those "teachable moments" when they can, perhaps quickly or perhaps in greater detail, indicate that they are engaged not only in their disciplines but in their own Vocations/callings, and that they are amenable to discussing such issues outside of, if not in, the formal classroom environment.

Given the constraints of time of Weekend College and its students, individual grappling with such issues as part of course assignments may well remain the principal means of carrying out this important portion of Augsburg's curricular efforts. Even here we recommend that the College find ways to explicitly encourage and model such dialogue. Regular "sampler" or "issues" forums for Weekend College students, featuring both Augsburg faculty, staff, and those from the wider community, might provide a welcome environment for such encounters. Public discussion of Christianity and religious issues should be a regular feature of formal convocations, forums, and perhaps even debates for all Augsburg students, not only those in the

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<sup>58</sup> Faith and Reason Commission Document, p. 14.

day school.

But serious encounters with questions of faith, reason, and values should occur not only in the classroom or in public, structured events, but also among students, faculty, and staff, even in the inner dialogue of the learner as he or she grapples with ideas presented in books, films, and increasingly through computer-based means. Although some students already have begun to address these issues by the time they enroll at Augsburg, many others will need more explicit guidance and encouragement in order to do so. An attitude and environment that encourages raising and discussing such issues must come from faculty and staff, and must involve "extracurricular time" as well as "academic time."

At present the Batalden Ethics and Christensen Symposia are two forums for such discussion. We would encourage Augsburg to find creative ways of using existing resources as well as creating new ones. For instance, at least on occasion, the resources of these two forums (and perhaps others) be combined to allow a more substantial year-long program that could substantially explore opposing viewpoints and use faculty and staff expertise as well addresses by compelling speakers from outside the campus. Courses and seminars could be linked to these programs.

Finally, Augsburg's tradition of strong community service programs and attention to social justice (e.g. Center for Global Education programs, participation in the Nobel Peace Prize Forum) should be stressed as students seek ways of translating faith into action and as ways of realizing *caritas*.

**3. Provide sufficient administrative attention and economic resources to matters of faith discussion and formation to ensure them an adequate prominence in both academic and non-classroom opportunities for learning.**

We emphasize that words of support alone will not turn such visions into reality. They must be reflected in economic commitments. It has been easier to find funding for secular initiatives than for those related to faith. Various government agencies and foundations support academic ventures related to their own agendas, and these have had an impact on Augsburg's campus, not least because of their economic power. If the Augsburg community believes in the distinctive importance of a Lutheran Christian model of higher education, it must provide the administrative focus and economic resources necessary to support it. Many persons both on and off campus recognize the need for more community events (special forums and lecture series and ongoing small group activities, for both day and Weekend College audiences) and also for considerably more individual efforts (faculty and staff training, time for faculty to develop courses and prepare scholarly papers, and if possible both long-term and short-term visiting professorships). Student services that promote faith discussion and formation, e.g. campus ministry, likewise should receive the support to maintain and perhaps expand their programs.

## **II. A TRANSFORMING EDUCATION**

**Augsburg will remain true to the vision of its founders in providing a "transforming" education that unites the liberal and practical. It will**

prepare students to participate as good citizens in and stewards of Luther's "kingdom on the left," e.g., this world, through its curricular leadership in experiential pedagogies; through its incorporation of the advantages of its city location into its curriculum; and through its continued commitment to creating a heterogeneous college community.

**1. Review and streamline Augsburg's current general education program to ensure more interdisciplinary, cross-disciplinary, and integrative courses.**

As defined above, Augsburg provides both a "liberating" and a "practical" education. The challenge is to incorporate principles of the liberal arts deliberately into the entire curriculum as much as possible or appropriate. What does this mean? We offer the following suggestions, noting that their order does not indicate their importance:

Most American liberal arts colleges, Augsburg among them, have traded the vision of the "plateaus," as George Sverdrup might say, for the more focused and limited vision of the valleys. The nineteenth century curriculum of Augsburg significantly reflected the personal academic vision of its founders and leaders. But during the past twenty years, the political role of departments and the intellectual role of academic disciplines have tended to overshadow much of the integrative character of the College's earlier curricular vision. This is not unusual: the German research university model, which has so thoroughly permeated American universities in the last half of this century, has been the training ground for essentially all of Augsburg's current faculty and administrators.

Although the dual large-scale patterns of general education and more specialized majors are a fact of life in today's American higher education, a fact which the College can ignore or avoid only at its own peril, we note the increasing dissatisfaction with what has become arguably a "disciplinary cafeteria" approach to Bachelor's level education, with many general education courses being indistinguishable from introductory courses for the majors, focusing more on preparation for future study in the discipline than in understanding the connections between the discipline and either society or the students' own hopes and experiences.

Two aspects of Augsburg's current general education program in fact offer advantages over this model: its explicit requirement of teaching (and successfully learning) cross-disciplinary skills such as writing, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, and speaking; and its organizing general education courses using the theme of "perspectives," not academic disciplines. We urge Augsburg to review its general education offerings emphasizing renewed attention to the integrative aspects of the college experience, and a curriculum that is defined more broadly than as a collection of courses. This includes, but is not limited to, implementing more interdisciplinary and integrative courses, encouraging capstone courses that focus on professional as well as disciplinary issues, and facilitating the ability and interest of both faculty and staff in "educating the whole person."

Such courses can be particularly important in the faith development of our students. We reiterate the "Faith and Reason" Commission's recommendation that Augsburg "support and develop cross-disciplinary dialogue and courses in which issues relevant to faith and reason can be studied and discussed." In particular, such a course could be a capstone in many majors. For instance, the Natural Sciences division could offer a Christian Faith course which explored the relationship of the sciences to religion. The Business Department could offer a course on ethical business practices. Resources allowing, such courses could team faculty from several disciplines.

In addition, we recommend that General Education requirements be restructured to require (or at least encourage) students to take such courses throughout their entire college careers rather than "getting them out of the way" at the beginning. General education courses thereby could be structured to take advantage of students' intellectual and moral development.

Students would be able to make connections between their majors and other subjects at a time when they might be more open to exploring possibilities. This would also provide a chance to re-articulate Augsburg's philosophy of education closer to the time when students are going to graduate.

Finally, we recommend that a review of General Education consider ways of streamlining its requirements. For instance, could a student meet a Western Heritage and Christian Faith requirement by participating in a series of Paideia seminars (led by a team of faculty) linked to extra-curricular public symposia (Baltalden Conference, Christensen Symposium, etc.) Could one course (or more) of a faculty member's teaching load consist of leading some of those seminars and participating in and planning the public symposia? (See recommendation I:2). Could the present General Education philosophy be realized through a series of cross-disciplinary seminars combined with some disciplinary courses outside a student's major? To what extent can Augsburg think beyond "the course" as the measure of academic achievement while at the same time insuring that it maintains strong academic departments and majors?

## **2. Effectively incorporate both breadth and depth into academic majors.**

The additional connections suggested above should not be accomplished at the expense of the depth and coherence of majors programs. It has been politically easier to add important educational programs by vitiating majors than by holding general education programs to historical proportions. Although such curtailment of majors may seem needed for short-term economic reasons, it clearly runs at cross-purposes to the Lutheran vision of equipping graduates for effective leadership and service.

While we reiterate the importance of strong majors programs if Augsburg is to honestly claim that it will equip its graduates for their future as leaders and servants, we also encourage departments to collaborate in defining majors that incorporate courses from other disciplines, particularly when courses in theory can support courses that emphasize application. We support traditional liberal arts disciplines whose lack of immediate utility might threaten their existence, and encourage all departments, especially those offering professional programs of study, to revise disciplinary offerings to incorporate some of the principles of the liberal arts as described above (if, in fact, those courses do not already exist).

We support the Trends Commission's recommendation that "traditional liberal arts courses should be firmly embedded wherever possible in every professional degree so that they can enhance student understanding of professional concepts. For example, before studying specific examples of educational psychology, students would be required to take an appropriate principles of psychology course."<sup>59</sup> Other examples include the Social Work Department, whose majors take core courses in psychology and sociology; Business majors take courses in economics.

In addition, departments might advise students to take appropriate support courses in other disciplines that might improve their understanding of the larger contexts of their fields as well as improving skills that might support their professions. Thus appropriate advising includes attention to the importance of electives as well as to general education and to majors and minors. Finally, departments might want to collaborate on creating disciplinary courses that can accommodate the needs of students in other disciplines.

## **3. Continue to focus attention on effective advising.**

In paying attention to the development of "the whole student," Augsburg should devote more time to each student's "whole education plan." This may necessitate reviewing and revising the initial advising of first year students during summer registration periods. We also

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<sup>59</sup> Trends Commission Document, p. 11.

recommend making advising a more deliberate part of faculty and staff members' roles, providing the training of faculty and staff that can improve advising, and improving the collaboration among faculty, staff, and existing advising offices.

We would submit that the best advising takes place in the context of mentoring relationships. These may be between faculty and students who may or may not be official advisees. These frequently occur between staff and students as well. Therefore much excellent advising is likely to "happen accidentally," perhaps while a student is working in a physics lab or consulting an Effective Writing instructor about a paper, to cite examples familiar to the writers, or while a student worker is chatting with a librarian, coach, or work-study supervisor. Thus effective advising means cultivating a friendly community in which students have many opportunities for informal access to faculty and staff.

But attention should be paid to formal advising as well. This is particularly important before a student registers for his or her first semester or trimester at Augsburg. Students should have time to talk about their larger educational goals and life plans. They should talk about what they think they want to do (perhaps as opposed to what their parents want them to do, or what they think they want to do because it's what people in their family did). Since students mature and their interests change, time should be made for substantial advising throughout a student's career. Given the hectic pace of student, faculty, and staff schedules, it may be worthwhile to find some ways of making more time in the academic calendar to schedule more time for such advising to occur.

**4. Require every student to participate in at least one Internship, Cooperative Education and/or semester program which has as its central focus the linking of first-hand experience with the ideas and concepts of one or more disciplines. Require every student to take "at least one course with a service-learning or field study component that explicitly links that experience to the basic ideas of the course." Maximize the resources available in the metropolitan area in most courses taught at Augsburg.**

This might appear to belong more to the realm of the practical or professional than to the liberal arts. We would argue that this realizes several liberal arts goals: it fulfills the integrative aspirations of the liberal arts by linking experience to theory, life to study; it potentially prepares students for leadership in the world; such experiences can help students' expand their imagination of the world and the possibilities of their own lives.

Although in many cases the most effective experiences occur off campus, in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, in some cases the relevant "real world" experience is equally present on Augsburg's campus. Its science labs accomplish "real" research. Its writing interns are engaged in "real-life" work.

Again, the humanist liberal arts that wish to prepare students for the *vita activa*, to take their place in the centers of political, cultural, and economic power, offer a rationale for the first part of this reaction. The latter point--giving a more deliberate consideration to the experience that students bring to the classroom--suggests the moral agenda not only of a liberal arts pedagogy, but Augsburg's Christian ideal of *caritas*.

We do not think that every course can accomplish this goal. But we agree that Augsburg could make much more significant use of its urban resources than it presently does.

**5. Continue to develop a climate which both maximizes the welcome Augsburg provides to people from a broad range of cultures, and supports the educational experience which can be gained from the interactions among the members of its diverse community.**

Both as a college of the Lutheran church and as a college of the city, Augsburg sees the

importance of maintaining an environment rich in diversity. We believe it is necessary that Augsburg continue to develop academic, extracurricular, and residential programs related to diversity which further the aims of that mission.

These include:

- 1) Modeling lively dialogue and serious respect among different people.
- 2) Developing in students cross-cultural competencies, commitment to listening across differences, and skills in building and sustaining community.
- 3) Making the tensions between faith commitments and intentional diversity, whether perceived or real, part of an ongoing campus discussion.
- 4) Continuing the lively debate about both the nature and goals of our emerging diverse society.

Consistent with its intent to counter the presence and effects of systemic prejudice in American society, encourage efforts to:<sup>60</sup>

- 1) Increase awareness of the systems that support the power and privilege of some groups of people, but exclude and even oppress others (because of age, culture, gender, learning or physical disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, etc.)
- 2) Develop a deeper understanding of Augsburg's accountability to oppressed communities.
- 3) To the extent that is consistent with Augsburg's mission statement, restructure institutional life for full participation of all people, taking into account their world views, cultures, and lifestyles. This includes continued efforts to transform the curriculum to include a wider range of viewpoints and to recognize many ways of learning and knowing, and to implement new structures and practices for inclusive decision making and other forms of power sharing in the institution's life and work.
- 4) Create an institutional climate characterized by open and civil discussion of differences that potentially can divide the community.
- 5) Develop ongoing processes of institutional planning and assessment to ensure equity and justice in Augsburg's organizational structures as part of its commitment to eradicate social oppression within its life and mission.

## **6. Explore ways to increase the opportunities for affordable international experience for students, faculty, and staff and to increase opportunities for international students to study at Augsburg.**

Many Augsburg alumni can attest to the transformative power of their own experiences as international travelers, in many cases while they were students. The same expectations lead

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<sup>60</sup> We wish to acknowledge suggestions for this section from Marie McNeff and a document provided to us by Jim Addington, A summary of "Vision: A Transformed Multicultural Institution."

many international students to study at Augsburg.

Although such programs were considered beyond the reach of many if not most students a generation ago, they are increasingly seen today as necessary components of an education that will prepare students for both living and working in our increasingly interconnected global society. However, such activities still involve costs beyond those associated with residential studies, and we encourage efforts to both plan such programs and investigate ways to provide for their financial support. We are encouraged that the already considerable breadth of Augsburg programs involving international student and faculty contact, including those in foreign languages, international business, music, social work, and the natural sciences, will by 1999 be augmented by others in education and youth ministry.

### **III. EDUCATION AS OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGE**

**Augsburg will fulfill its historical Vocation as a college by helping students with a range of experience realize their own excellence as they meet the challenges of college-level academic work.**

**1. Clarify for both its internal and external constituencies Augsburg's vision of and commitment to excellence, and take steps necessary to implement that vision in all sectors of campus life.**

As noted above, Augsburg's traditional culture of modesty has led to some confusion between its welcoming atmosphere and its striving for excellence as an educational outcome. Disagreements about how to balance opportunities and challenges have led to conflicting messages to our students and to the wider community. Some wonder whether Augsburg can truly develop a community composed of both honor students and those needing remedial courses.

It is not a simple matter to educate well the range of students Augsburg has admitted in recent years. Efficiency alone would dictate filling each classroom with students as nearly uniform in background and achievement as possible. Although Augsburg's successful incorporation of experiential and cooperative education methods goes a long way toward addressing the challenges presented by such diverse backgrounds, many difficulties remain. Too wide a range of experience and ability among Augsburg students will inevitably degrade the quality of classroom experiences, increase demands on faculty and staff outside of class time, and tend to fragment the student community, thus threatening some of the other strengths of Augsburg's program. If Augsburg is to continue to fulfill this part of its mission, it must more intentionally consider its costs as well as its many benefits and chart its course clearly.

Implementing Augsburg's vision of excellence also entails educating all faculty and staff to see beyond the "valleys" of their own programs and the specific groups of students with which they work. Developing and maintaining adequate communication and a shared vision on this important aspect of Augsburg's mission must be given high priority.

**2. Develop a clear public message that adequately conveys the character and mission of Augsburg to potential students and benefactors.**

Augsburg's distinctive vision must be clearly expressed in its public statements and admissions materials. Because so many institutions of higher education have a different basis for identifying their audience, this is no easy matter. Augsburg cannot simply claim to enroll only students with higher test scores -- or lower ones -- than other neighboring schools. It cannot simply claim to have more midwestern middle class students -- or less -- than others. It cannot simply claim to be more religious -- or less. Nor can Augsburg claim its well-known friendly and caring atmosphere without at the same time describing the challenges that it puts to its students to think more deeply, to stretch their abilities as well as their ideas about their abilities. However, stress on both challenge and opportunity, properly presented, may in fact help Augsburg interest more students who can contribute to and benefit from its mission.

**3. Review policies regarding satisfactory academic progress. Review and, if necessary, improve academic advising of students whose academic performances are marginal.**

Anecdotal evidence, at least, suggests that some students continue to matriculate at Augsburg even though they have repeatedly failed basic courses or skills assessments required for graduation (e.g., entering math skill requirements, English 111).

Augsburg, it has been claimed, finds it easier to give students the opportunity for college study than it does to recognize when students are not ready for the opportunity. Because its special programs for high-risk students have been fairly successful, the College might consider admitting students to this program whose freshman and sophomore records suggest the need for additional help. The College could also review and revise its advising of students who repeatedly fail courses. Any policy change regarding measuring satisfactory progress, however, should be accompanied by attention to appropriate academic and career advising that can help students on

academic probation assess their commitment to a college education at this point in their lives. It is possible that Augsburg should be bolder about dismissing students who are not prepared to take advantage of this educational opportunity, but it is also possible to accomplish this with genuine regard for and attention to the student's Vocation.

**4. Review admissions policies to ensure that students who are admitted have a high probability of success in college-level academic work.**

Although Augsburg faculty have worked hard to accommodate students with a breadth of ability and interest in individual courses, both faculty and students are aware of the threat posed to the individual classroom environment (at all grade levels) when there is too wide a spread of academic ability and interest. Neither lectures nor active learning, laboratory work, or discussions can succeed under such conditions.

There is also the ethical and educational dilemma of whether and how best to serve those students who place into predominantly or exclusively remedial courses during their first term. Such students have little chance to experience the intellectual stimulation afforded by regular courses and the more typical variety of Augsburg students.

Augsburg should thus consider the following:

- 1) Establishing earlier admissions deadlines for students who may require extensive remedial services, with the intention of more successfully providing summer and academic year support for them.
- 2) Requiring a summer preparatory program for students whose first semester would otherwise consist entirely of developmental courses.
- 3) Continuing recent initiatives to raise minimum admissions standards, or at least to limit the number of students whose academic records and entrance examinations indicate the probable need for developmental courses.

#### **IV. PROVIDING AN AUGSBURG EDUCATION**

**Augsburg will maintain a work community that enables faculty and staff to effectively contribute to the College's mission and that models the sort of world that the College's education vision is intended to create.**

To insure that an Augsburg education carries out the visions described in this document, Augsburg must maintain a community that is committed to that vision, and trained to foster it. Implicit in this point is that the entire Augsburg community is involved in educating its students, so this concern extends to all those who work on campus, not only those faculty who teach in certain departments.

The compartmentalization that characterizes much of Augsburg's current work culture is not in accord with its mission. Such fragmentation, which is explicit in its faculty organization by department and division, extends even more into its staff and administration. Why? This may be because the College's administration has been viewed as supporting the academic sector rather than supporting and directing the integrated educational enterprise, modeling it, and participating in it.

Most faculty have been acculturated to view themselves as needing little management. Paradoxically, this has led to the view that administrative leadership is paternalistic rather than liberating, limiting rather than freeing, and restraining rather than facilitating. Rather than carrying out the much-needed long-range visioning function that can help the various academic and non-academic units of the campus cohere, such planning efforts have too often been the setting for conflict between, and even within, the College's various sectors. Collegiality more often has been about private matters than about collaborative planning for major changes.

As an institution, Augsburg must clearly articulate its purposes to all members of its permanent community--faculty, staff, and administration--both full and part-time. This is a first step toward developing an environment of excellence and integrity. We cannot expect excellence and integrity if we fail to clearly define them, and we cannot model these characteristics as a community if some do not believe in them, or know how to communicate them. We have too often operated in the belief that all members of the Augsburg community share the same vision of its purpose, and that the good intentions of many will automatically make an effective and harmonious community of all.

**1. Revise current practices of hiring faculty and staff to ensure the willingness of candidates to contribute to the mission of the College. This includes taking into account candidates' ability and interest beyond their specialties or disciplines and interest in the Christian faith.**

It is of primary importance to Augsburg's mission to hire and retain staff, faculty, and administration of the highest quality, and who are a good "fit" to its purposes. To this end, they must be clearly informed about Augsburg's mission at the time of hiring, and they must "buy in" to the College's longer-range goals and values. One specific corollary is that faculty and staff should be hired to the College, not just to a specific department; consistent attention needs to be paid to balancing the needs of specific programs against the needs and purposes of the institution as a whole.

It should be obvious that hiring should be done so that each academic department has an appropriate blend of specialists whose expertise can contribute to the depth of majors' education and generalists who can contribute to broader liberal arts programs. One means of accomplishing this (one which has been used at a number of colleges, some of them nonreligious) is to establish a standing faculty interview committee to promote better two-way communication between the College and candidates on these aspects of the College's character and mission. A similar mechanism should be developed for staff to assure an appropriate fit with the mission of the College. Augsburg's vision of providing an education that equips students for an unpredictable future requires that for both faculty and staff hiring, the College must take steps to ensure that ability and interest beyond one's specialty or discipline, and in the Christian faith, be taken significantly into account.

Our recommendation regarding interest in the Christian faith does not mean that

membership in a Lutheran congregation is required or even sufficient for the kind of people whom the College seeks to have work with its students. What is needed, instead, is a commitment to the development of the whole person, including engagement with Christian faith and the employee's own sense of Vocation. Perhaps paradoxically, Augsburg can also strengthen its devotion to faith, and to the necessary dialogue between faith and reason, by deliberately recruiting some articulate faculty, staff, and students who are not Lutherans or even Christians. As noted above, although we believe the rich Lutheran educational tradition offers much that employees as well as students can value, the search for excellence in staff and faculty does not and cannot stop at boundaries of religious affiliation.

Finally, the importance of interdisciplinary education can be modeled by creating some joint appointments.

**2. Improve orientation and development programs for faculty and staff to communicate Augsburg's vision and empower the community to effectively fulfill its educational mission.**

Institutional goals and priorities should of course be communicated clearly to job candidates; the College should provide both formal and informal orientation for new hires among both faculty and staff. But it should also to provide continuing opportunities for education about its mission as well as about issues specifically related to one's work. The goal of instilling a life-long love of learning is greatly aided by a campus community that itself consistently models the practice of life-long learning. In order that our rhetoric to students, parents, and the world about the nature and value of an Augsburg education be more than mere words, employee growth and development are necessary, not optional.

In order for Augsburg faculty, staff, and students to be responsible and ethical managers of their time and resources, they must know both the details and the "big picture" -- and they must be willing to work on the College's behalf. In addition, College decisions, strategies, and objectives must be communicated on a regular basis to the entire community.

New and ongoing development programs should include acquainting new and returning faculty with Augsburg's understanding of the liberal arts, the complementary roles of general education, and the Lutheran idea of education for Vocation; equipping the entire community to learn from experience, whether the primary locus is outside the formal bounds of the classroom or the classroom itself; and helping faculty develop as truly "liberating" professors. We would like to suggest that these already are some of Augsburg's strengths. This recommendation thus articulates what Augsburg already does well--but of course could do better.

Clearly, building a consensus to move toward, and adequately support, excellence in the workplace will be required before either perceptions or reality can be adequately changed. And, as is the case regarding issues of diversity, there is no single set of motivating factors that impels all members of the Augsburg community. Although we believe that the Lutheran concept of Vocation can provide a clear underpinning for the efforts of many at Augsburg, many other exemplary faculty and staff have not reached their levels of service and stewardship by means of Lutheran, or even Christian traditions, and, conversely, the ranks of the mediocre cross all religious lines. We also acknowledge that for some at Augsburg, many of the references above to the Lutheran, or even Judeo-Christian, faith may confuse, mislead, or simply remind them of previous painful experiences with so-called religious people, and yet these persons may exemplify in their own lives the behaviors that many Christians strive to emulate.

Although we urge continued staff and faculty education in the College's faith tradition, believing it can enrich and empower the Augsburg community in ways not possible in a secular institution or business, we would insist that all members of the Augsburg work community, regardless of their personal faith commitments, be held accountable for the quality of their work. We believe that a consensus on excellence, service, and stewardship can be built at Augsburg, and must be built; then it must be carried out by means of considerably more administrative

attention than at present and, ultimately, commitment of more economic resources.

**3. Initiate a thorough review of the College's systems for compensation, acknowledgment, and promotion with the aim of providing adequate incentives for excellence as well as avenues for career growth.**

Related to ongoing training, of course, is the development of a consistent atmosphere that encourages and prizes excellence, and effectively responds to inadequate efforts among both faculty and staff. Indeed, many excellent candidates for faculty and staff positions have found Augsburg unsuitable not because of its traditions but because of its realities.

Unfortunately, Augsburg's workplace has not been uniformly characterized by high standards, much less excellence, or by consistent attitudes of working together for a common goal. Augsburg in the 1980s and 1990s has paid the price for acceptance of less than excellent work, and at least some sectors of the College have reaped the harvest of years of tacit acceptance of mediocre work output and lack of commitment in return for low salaries. For some, there is the sense of frustration, anger, even helplessness felt when working with those who are clearly under-performing -- and in some cases flaunting their lack of effort -- and with those who do not share the College's commitments. For others, it is the disappointment of not being able to hire the most promising (and often highly suitable) faculty and staff members because of the considerably lower salaries Augsburg has offered, and the high staff turnover that has led to frequent disruption of programs and occasionally inconsistent leadership. The combination of acceptance of mediocrity, inconsistent level of commitment, and thinness of economic resources has tended to undermine the sense of community that is so well supported by other aspects of Augsburg's programs.

The obverse side of this issue is a complementary "culture of overwork." Many other faculty and staff work heroically and excellently for Augsburg, but risk burnout. A drain on faculty/staff energy is also created by overload assignments and even by integrated Weekend/Day schedules; some people are regularly required to be on campus at least six days a week. Because of back-to-back weekends and college activities (Peace Prize Forum, Faculty Retreat, President's Scholarship Competition, Discovery Day, etc.), at times it's possible for faculty and staff members to work for long stretches without the relief of a two-day weekend. Overloads for faculty may be motivated by financial opportunity and the need for good Weekend College teachers, but may also create a steady drain on faculty ability to provide teaching excellence, and may thus undermine the faculty-student relationships that are one of the historically distinctive attributes of the College. We note that many students too are heavily engaged in work as well as study; overwork is clearly not a problem unique to Augsburg.

Can we as an institution help students, faculty, and staff find the optimum balance between work and restoration that will best maintain both them and their Vocations? Is the lack of proper remuneration a major contributor here, as well as the lack of adequate distinction between mediocre and excellent work (leading some to work additionally to "make up" for others' lack of results)?

We further note that the kind of education we hold out for our students, whom we hope will be recognized for their service and leadership, at times seems at odds with the opportunities, recognition, and compensation provided to our own employees. In the area of job performance, several areas need to be addressed.

- 1) First, and at the very least, the College should implement an environment and/or structure that facilitates fair treatment to all employees -- students, faculty, and staff.
- 2) Second, there is a need to clarify job descriptions, including standards of what is excellent work, and then hold workers accountable to such descriptions and standards. A Staff Manual should articulate the general expectations of the

College.

- 3) Third, the College must address the relative lack of personal consequences associated with employees' work -- the lack of consistent acknowledgment and/or rewards for good and excellent work, and the frequent lack of significant response to less than adequate performance.
- 4) Fourth, because of the absence of clear career growth tracks for many staff areas, which may contribute to the high turnover rate in some positions, the College must lay out for each group of its employees possible steps that are achievable.

Finally, although for many at Augsburg, the "students first" ethos is sufficient to justify low salaries and often-inadequate recognition on campus, the biblical admonition to not "muzzle the ox that treads the grain" (I Corinthians 9:9) should be heeded especially carefully if the College is to take the Lutheran doctrine of Vocation seriously. Proper salary, benefits, and camaraderie are good stewardship for the long-term health of the institution because they demonstrate a commitment to fairness and community among employees. Augsburg should not ask its workers to sacrifice as a permanent state of employment.

**4. Continue to invest in both Augsburg's physical plant, in equipment, and in educational technologies (computers, electronic communications, office and laboratory equipment, etc.), but do so in the context of its educational vision, considering both academic excellence and the continuance of personal interactions as a primary means of instilling that excellence.**

Although the human factor is and will remain the key educative force at Augsburg, it is increasingly obvious that higher education is not disembodied -- to be properly prepared for the future, Augsburg students need not only dormitories and books but also science, computer, and media laboratories; the new Lindell Library exemplifies the intentional mix of the traditional and the new that is a necessary part of an Augsburg education.

The Lutheran model of higher education was in many ways grounded in the medieval university, where the only available educational technologies were the ancestors of our modern blackboards, but it also enjoyed the fruits of a relatively new invention at the time, the printing press, and it quickly adapted to make use of, and in turn influence, the published word. The analogous invention in this century is, of course, the computer. Its meteoric rise challenges Augsburg as well as all other American colleges to adapt to new ways of learning and communicating, yet without abandoning what is good among older means. A key criterion for evaluating Augsburg's use of these new tools and techniques is to determine the extent to which they enhance students' future effectiveness in working in society -- not merely their efficiency in mastering information.

**5. Find ways to create a more attractive urban neighborhood and a more integrated sense of a "living/learning" community in the area in and around the Augsburg campus.**

In order to fully live out its vision, Augsburg must also attend to its nature as a community outside of the classroom and formal extracurricular events. Developing inviting, humane spaces both on campus and near campus which increase involvement in campus activities and neighborhood life by faculty, staff, and students will serve the entire learning community.

Although Augsburg benefits from a location which allows it to provide a small-college education to many commuter students who simply cannot afford to live on or near campus and nontraditional students who in any case would not choose to live on campus, the education of all students can be enriched an inviting, humane spaces both on and near campus. In addition, by

providing a richer community environment, Augsburg can encourage more of those students who do have adequate financial resources to stay on campus and contribute to student life.

Many persons over the years have also suggested that Augsburg provide residence options close to campus for both faculty and staff. The transformation of the Riverside Avenue community in the past two decades has begun to make this dream possible, and the planned development of a light rail hub a few blocks west of campus provides significant new impetus to all planning efforts in Augsburg's neighborhood -- residential, commercial, and academic. We are particularly encouraged by the recent example of cooperation between Augsburg and neighborhood groups in designing new, attractive residential spaces that are well integrated into their surroundings.

We encourage the master planning efforts that have begun, and that include emerging concepts of an "urban village" as well as improvements in campus design and pedestrian movement and safety

## **6. Increase the collaboration between faculty and staff in their joint enterprise to educate "the whole student."**

Despite many successes in communicating its culture of opportunity, support, and challenge to its students, Augsburg has not always been as successful in communicating this to its own staff members. There is a perceived, and too often real, rift between staff and faculty that benefits neither group, nor the College as a whole. Some staff members sense that they have lower status, power, and access to financial resources than faculty, despite an often- equivalent level of effort, ability, and commitment. Some faculty sense less understanding of the College's mission, and at times a weaker commitment to it, among some staff members. Both groups experience a lack of communication with the other, even on issues of mutual concern.

A first step is to review and revise formal structures of organization and governance to maximize collaboration between faculty and staff in the many areas where their efforts intersect. Recent efforts to bring student services under the umbrella of the Academic Vice President are a significant step, but more work needs to be done to more fully integrate the efforts of faculty and staff and to build a stronger sense of trust and teamwork.

During the past three years of campus discussions and commission meetings that have culminated in this document, we have noted many examples of excellent collaboration between faculty, staff, students, and administrators. These efforts demonstrate that working together on issues related to our shared vision is possible and, we believe, has been empowering for those who have participated. Ongoing opportunities for both faculty and staff education, as suggested above, should also help to heal the rifts that exist, and build a stronger, more effective community.

In the short term, the College might also consider giving more visible expression to this collaboration by inviting more staff to participate in the ceremonial occasions of the College. For example, it would seem appropriate that people who have contributed significantly to graduates' success, but don't have faculty status (e.g., Academic Enrichment, Residence Life, Counseling) should join "the community of scholars" in formal procession on graduation day, and new professionals in these areas should be introduced at the yearly opening convocation.

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