

SHAPING OUR FUTURE

May 2022 Progress Report

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Our current strategic focus is on five categories of initiatives.

1. Institutional Growth
2. Constituent Engagement
3. Sustainable Infrastructure
4. Organizational Strength
5. Academic Life

This report summarizes progress on specific initiatives during Spring 2022. This is the second report for Shaping Our Future, with reports planned for each December and May. Spring 2022 strategic work focused on five initiatives coming from two of the three goal categories. Additionally, progress is reported on three other initiatives that had already been addressed in prior reports.

Sustainable Infrastructure

We are stewards of our history, and that includes our campus. We will systematically care for our facilities. We will also work to modernize our infrastructure for future effectiveness.

Improve System-wide Communication Infrastructure

This initiative was reported on in an earlier report. In the current period, though, we have upgraded our emergency text messaging service for both Academy and college. The new system improves reliability, robustness and cost.

Organizational Strength

In addition to our facility resources, we also steward our organizational resources. We will learn new ways to serve our employees meaningfully. We will build on our strengths to prepare for continued holistic organizational health.

Develop a Multi-ethnic Presence among Employees

This initiative has been reported before; this report is an update. This spring, we posted an employment opportunity to the ABHE Jobs Board to engage a broader pool of potential candidates. We are unable to determine that this increased ethnic diversity of applicants, but plan to continue using the Jobs Board. While this initiative continues to be a challenge because of constituent demographics, we will continue efforts to provide a multi-ethnic presence among employees, something especially important in the Academy, given the diversity of the student population.

Find Ways to Be More Competitive in Hiring

Several steps are being piloted or are under development to increase employee benefits and to increase flexibility in a range of employment practices. We anticipate some of these being formalized into policy in the next few months. This will enable us to create new "workplace culture" statements to be published on the hiring section of our website, as well as integrated into the application process.

Enhance Physical Security of Campus

This semester we have increased digital access to all main campus doors. Additionally, a camera surveillance system is being installed. These cameras will be accessible on our intranet to be monitored by security guards and others.

Refine Our Crisis-response Plan

The Emergency Preparedness Plan is updated and revised, with input from the Crisis Response Committee. This updating includes a specific schedule to practice our response plan regularly.

Academic Life

Our mission calls us to a focus on education. We will enhance our existing educational offerings to maintain and increase quality. We will also follow our timeless mission by developing new learning opportunities that meet present constituent needs and that enable students to serve the 21st-century Church.

Enhance Academic Program Review

This initiative has been reported in a previous report and is updated here. Spring 2022's program review focused on our General Education Core.

In addition to formal program review, this initiative includes activities intended to improve programs, and this includes strengthening pedagogies. In Spring 2022, two specific projects addressed the area of pedagogy.

1. The January Assessment Week I included a scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) presentation; we intend to keep these a regular part of Assessment Weeks. SoTL is an important area of work, in which faculty conduct what is essentially action research into their teaching, experimenting with new approaches to improve student learning. January's presentation featured Jessica Smith, who shared steps she has taken to individualize instruction in music theory labs; her work includes "leveling," which focuses the theory labs on measured competencies.
2. The January Assessment Week I also featured a workshop and panel discussion on active learning. In the workshop, two ACA faculty members presented theory and practice of active learning. Flowing out of this, the Professional Development Committee sponsored a project to encourage faculty implementation of active learning approaches.

Develop Future Faculty

We are currently providing funding for six employees pursuing graduate degrees; these degrees will enable employees to teach at the college level, at the graduate level or in another academic discipline. Another faculty member will be teaching a new category of course, expanding capacity.

Three new online faculty are scheduled to offer courses in Fall 2022, and at least one new adjunct will be teaching on campus.

Additionally, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and division chairs discuss future faculty regularly. A tracking document has been developed to list possible future faculty prospects.

Identify Factors that Increase Student Enjoyment of Campus Life

In order to collect data for this initiative, a variety of avenues are being explored. Research on GBSC student success has been collected by a contracted individual and is currently being examined for use. Two questions regarding enjoyment of campus life were added to this year's Student Life Survey, which is administered in the spring. This survey is currently in progress. Other informal data has been collected by resident assistants in a campus residence hall. This data will all be compiled and synthesized for analysis before December 2022 in order to form a plan of action. We anticipate this work may generate a strategic initiative for the next 2-year plan.