



**FINAL DRAFT**  
APPROVED BY BOARD OF  
TRUSTEES, May 18, 2002

## ***ONU CHARTS ITS FUTURE: DIRECTIONS FOR A NEW CENTURY***

### ***INTRODUCTION***

Ohio Northern University has a long and successful history of planning. We had a plan for the decade of the eighties, another one for the nineties, and still another one for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Hence, this plan, “ONU Charts Its Future: Directions for A New Century,” is simply the latest example of a long term commitment to planning.

All of our plans have emphasized the rigorous pursuit of academic excellence and the fostering of a quality experience for the students, faculty and staff associated with Ohio Northern. They have also stressed the importance of a collegial atmosphere in all areas of the institution and regarded diversity in values, cultures, perspectives, and educational programs as one of the keys to successful and rewarding lives and careers.

In an effort to enrich this planning tradition, the University has recently created a University Planning Council. This group, which guided the development of the current plan, is responsible for monitoring the University’s progress in achieving its goals and for modifying existing goals and developing new ones as conditions and the University’s environment change and evolve.

The vision, goals, and strategies outlined in our plan, therefore, represent the University’s aspirations and directions at this very early point in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. But, we now also have a process in place that will enable Ohio Northern University to remain the dynamic, vibrant institution it knows it must be in order to respond and contribute to the rapidly changing world in which we live.



## **MISSION AND PURPOSE STATEMENT**

Ohio Northern University, a United Methodist-related institution of higher learning, seeks to educate and graduate students accomplished in scholastic achievement, prepared for a useful life and meaningful career, and inspired with a desire to contribute to the good of humankind consistent with Judeo-Christian ideals.

Ohio Northern's purpose is to help develop students into self-reliant mature men and women open to dealing with the contemporary world, actively involved in their learning, capable of clear and logical thinking and sensitive to the higher values of beauty, truth and goodness. In keeping with these goals, students will study diverse ideas and influences and develop technology skills appropriate to the needs of an ever changing world. The University's academic program includes mutually supportive liberal and professional education components and integrates practice with theory and provides students with opportunities for research, internships, co-op and international study and work.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

Ohio Northern University will be a leading, private, student-centered institution of increasing regional and national prominence. It will be a diverse, dynamic and unique learning community offering rigorous professional programs in partnership with the arts and the sciences to prepare individuals for lifelong challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



## The University's Commitments

Ohio Northern is a student-centered, service oriented, values-based institution of higher learning committed to the rigorous pursuit of academic inquiry and achievement.

**Student-Centered** - Ohio Northern is proud to be a place where the learning, development and welfare of students is the first priority. It is committed to providing the support that will ensure that students are always the University's principal concern.

**Service-Oriented** - Ohio Northern University is committed to providing service and outreach to its community by offering helping, learning, consulting, and leadership opportunities to its constituents.

**Values-Based** - Ohio Northern University, as a United Methodist Church related institution, is committed to being a university where values matter and to providing an ecumenical and interfaith environment that nurtures the spiritual growth and development of its constituents.

## The University's Values

Ohio Northern University values excellence, innovation, technology, diversity and its people.

**Excellence** - Ohio Northern University seeks to achieve the highest level of performance in all endeavors and believes that a process for continuous improvement provides a mechanism to sustain excellence.

**Innovation** - Ohio Northern University, while a strong advocate of its current programs and activities, encourages the development of new initiatives and opportunities, the discovery of new sources of support and commitment, and the development of alternative delivery systems for educational services.

**Technology** - Ohio Northern University recognizes the importance of technology in contemporary education and instruction and seeks to maintain an advanced technological environment that meets the ever-changing needs of its constituents.

**Diversity** - Ohio Northern University's motto is *Ex diversitate vires*, ("out of diversity, strength") and it seeks to provide experiences and programs that prepare graduates to live in an inclusive world characterized by difference.

**People** - Ohio Northern University values the talents of its diverse human resources and strives to provide an environment in which they can thrive, grow and excel.



## STRATEGIC GOALS

**Goal #1: ONU will continue to be a dynamic, medium-sized, private institution growing and changing as the development of the University's infrastructure permits.**

1. Develop a multi-year Enrollment Management Plan for the period through the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that will guide the recruitment of undergraduate and graduate, traditional and non-traditional students at the regional and national levels who can be served by conventional and innovative educational delivery systems. This plan will be implemented by the Vice President for Admissions and Financial Aid and will be based on the strategic plans developed by the college and vice presidential areas (Goal #2). It will be reviewed annually and thoroughly evaluated every five years.
2. Based on financial projections and expectations (Goal #4), provide support for infrastructure expansion that will reasonably accommodate programmatic and enrollment growth. [Infrastructure, minimally, includes such things as: faculty, staff, classrooms, laboratories, studios, offices; library, technology, residence, parking, and dining capacities; and utility costs.]
3. Ensure that enrollment growth does not negatively affect traditional indicators of educational quality, such as student/faculty ratio, class sizes, advisor loads and opportunities for student and faculty interaction both inside and outside the classroom, such as involving students in faculty research. In order to maintain one of the principal characteristics of an ONU education, ensure, as well, that enrollment growth does not discourage students from experiencing a variety of curricula and programs outside their discipline.
4. Evaluate enrollment levels in all colleges, but especially in the College of Law and the College of Business Administration. Develop and implement plans for enrollment growth as appropriate.

5. Ensure that all enrollment growth is carefully controlled and that the size of the student body does not outpace the ability of the University's personnel and physical resources to serve it.

**Goal #2: ONU will continue to offer traditional and non-traditional programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels that respond to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.**

1. Each college and vice presidential areas will develop, by January, 2003, strategic plans that indicate how faculty and staff in these units intend to contribute programmatically, to the vision, mission, financial stability, and strategic goals of the University. These plans are to be carefully and thoroughly reviewed by appropriate college/vice presidential groups every five years. College plans will identify what the faculty regard as programmatic growth opportunities, if any, in existing majors, new areas of study that respond to emerging needs and trends, and graduate and non-traditional educational areas.
2. Implement a Masters of Education in Teaching by summer 2003. Average enrollment in this program should be restricted to 60.
3. Evaluate opportunities for cross-college degrees, e.g. Engineering Management, Health Care Administration, and develop appropriate programming in a timely manner. Ask faculty to explore the possibility of 5 year masters degrees in selected areas using the six-year pharmacy doctorate as a model.
4. Evaluate the non-traditional doctorate in the College of Pharmacy in 2002 with faculty input and involvement and determine ways in which it can be enhanced and further developed.
5. Continue to develop and expand partnerships with other educational institutions, businesses and industries to enhance educational programs.

**Goal #3: ONU will continue to emphasize respect for diversity in all of its forms and build programming and a faculty, staff and student body that provides experiences in diversity that will properly prepare students to thrive and succeed in the world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.**

1. Include increases in minority and international students as central components of the University's enrollment management plan (Goal #1).
2. Continue to stress the identification of minority, women, and international candidates in faculty and staff recruitment.
3. Strongly encourage the inclusion of issues of difference and diversity in curricular programs throughout the University.
4. Strongly encourage discussions of diversity in residence hall programming and in extra-curricular initiatives sponsored by Academic and Student Affairs and all other areas of the institution.
5. Provide an ecumenical and interfaith environment for students and provide encouragement and assistance to students in all faith traditions.
6. Build a University culture and support services designed to encourage a diverse campus community.

**Goal #4: ONU will generate and manage the resources sufficient to advance its educational ambitions.**

1. Maintain a balanced budget and achieve a margin of \$1 million by 2005-06.
2. Endeavor to restrict tuition increases to levels close to annual cost of living increases.
3. Increase the Northern Fund to, at least, \$2 million by 2005-06,
4. Increase endowment gift assets by, at least, \$19 million by 2005-06.
5. Support capital projects with donated funds, partnerships, grants or contracts, unless very compelling circumstances exist to fund the project in some other way.
6. Identify income generating opportunities in college/vice presidential area plans. By 2005-06, each college will have grants, programs, partnerships etc. in place that will reduce the college's dependency on income derived from tuition by 5% of the 2001-02 level. For

example, the overall University goal by 2005-06 will be total new net revenue of \$3.6 million (5% of \$72 million).

7. Insist on prioritization in budgeting and expenditure processes.
8. Stress the need to reallocate resources from lower to higher priorities rather than always seeking new funding for new activities. Create, where necessary, programs and criteria that will evaluate the extent to which academic and non-academic programs and services are achieving goals and meeting needs. (See also Goal 7, #2) Renew, reorganize, or discontinue programming or services that are not meeting expectations.
9. Seek opportunities to reduce costs and optimize the use of existing resources on every occasion.
10. The overhead rate for public and private grants for college and University programs will be 25%. As possible, it will be 40% for research grants.
11. Make every effort to reduce the 2001-02 tuition discounting rate.

**Goals #5: ONU will have a positive, differentiated public image as a leading institution of higher education.**

1. Building on the strengths, images and points of pride identified in the 2001 report of the Marketing Task Force, each college/vice presidential area will prepare, by January, 2003, a plan to market its programming, opportunities and strengths. These plans will be integrated into a University Marketing Plan by the Cabinet. This plan will be implemented by the Vice President for Development, beginning no later than May, 2003.
2. University marketing will have an increased national and regional focus and will make use of electronic marketing venues, such as the Internet and television. It will also be segmented as necessary and appropriate.
3. By September, 2002, a University Marketing Committee will be appointed by the President to advise the Vice President for Development on such things as marketing strategies, venues and techniques. It will also work with the vice president to assess the effectiveness and success of marketing efforts. (See Goal #7)

Regular reports on the work of the Committee will be included on the agendas of University Council and University faculty meetings.

4. University marketing efforts will use uniform symbols and consistent and repeated messages.

**Goal #6: ONU will have advanced services and facilities to support its mission.**

1. By January, 2003, develop a Facilities Plan that will prioritize (i) renovation and repair and (ii) new construction projects. This will be a rolling 5 year plan that will be reviewed annually. The University's Master Plan as well as the plans developed in each of the college/vice presidential areas (Goal #2) will provide the foundation for the Facilities Plan.
2. By September, 2002, develop a plan for the continuing evolution of technology at ONU (Technology Plan) that will identify directions and priorities the University needs to pursue. Update regularly.
3. Create a campus wide Facilities Committee, appointed by the President, that will participate in the annual review of the Facilities Plan and advise the Vice President for Finance on facility priorities and needs. Regular reports on the work of the Committee will be included on the agendas of University Council and University faculty meetings.
4. Regularly review the organization and performance of facilities and services to ensure that the University is providing the highest quality, most cost-effective support systems possible. Examine alternatives as appropriate and necessary. (See Goal #7)

**Goal #7: ONU will have an on-going planning process that includes the assessment and evaluation of performance and goals.**

1. By November 2001, create a University Planning Council that will be responsible for regularly reviewing the University's Strategic Plan, monitoring and evaluating the accomplishment of goals, and modifying existing goals and strategies and developing new ones as environmental factors warrant.
2. By December, 2002, each vice presidential area will develop procedures, which must include indicators or metrics of success,

that will enable performance and continuous improvement in each department within the division to be assessed. [The procedures currently used in Academic Affairs (see Appendix A) provide a useful starting point for other divisions.]

3. Each vice presidential area will regularly review its personnel evaluation procedures to ensure that contributions to the University are identified, acknowledged, promoted and rewarded.

**Goal #8: ONU will promote a user-friendly environment that emphasizes communication, celebrates individual initiative and teamwork, and fosters timely and effective responses to University priorities.**

1. Develop in-house training programs for non-academic staff at all classification levels that update, enrich and expand skills and capabilities and invoke ONU's vision, values and sense of pride.
2. Stress communication and make use of all forms of communication, e.g. Internet, meetings, forums, memos, notices, etc. to address employee concerns and questions and to inform them of University developments, activities, and finances.
3. Provide reward and recognition programs that identify and acknowledge the contribution employees make to the welfare, growth, development and reputation of the University.

## **APPENDIX A**

In 1998, a task force published a report titled "Strength for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." In this report, ten criteria were established by which all programs were to be evaluated annually. By using these criteria, the University intended to determine both the quality and the financial viability of each program. Programs that were determined not to be meeting the standard of excellence could be identified and shortcomings could then be remedied.

The ten criteria are:

1. Defined and realistic goals and objectives including excellence in personalized instruction.
2. Faculty and staff who assume responsibility and authority for the goals and objectives.
3. A creative/aggressive spirit.
4. A commitment to extra/co-curricular activities which enhance the learning experience.
5. A commitment to academic advising and mentoring.
6. The development and use of professional networks that benefit students.
7. Appropriately credentialed faculty who maintain competence and breadth in the field of study.
8. Achievement of a high level of measurable learning outcomes.
9. A viable mass of enthusiastic and involved students.
10. An evaluation of expense versus revenue and integral position in the curricula.

The report attempts to address each of these criteria, by College, in as quantitative a fashion as possible.