



Data as Fuel for More Confident, Dynamic, and Distributed Leadership



The Council of
Independent Colleges

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2025 Presidents Institute

January 4–7, 2025 ● JW Marriott San Antonio Hill Resort & Spa ● San Antonio, Texas



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The Council of
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2023 Presidents Institute



Presenters

Rebecca Ehretsman, Ph.D., President
Wartburg College

Colin Irvine, Ph.D., President
Concordia College – Moorhead, MN

Chair

James H. Day, Founding Principal
MARKETview



Objectives and Key Results For Today's Session

OBJECTIVE:

Make the case for measurable, distributed leadership on independent university campuses.

KEY RESULTS:

- Finish the presentation in 60 minutes
- Showcase examples of effective distributed leadership on 2 CIC campuses
- Answer a minimum of 3 questions from the audience



WARTBURG™

COLLEGE

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Is the current model
of higher ed leadership
outdated?

Tuition, Enrollment & Revenue: 2008-2022

TUITION INCREASE

Tuition has increased from \$25,360 to \$46,740, an 84.3% increase.

Housing and food has increased from \$7,511 to \$10,493, a 40% increase.

**TOTAL INCREASE:
74%**



ENROLLMENT DECREASE

Enrollment dropped by roughly 433 students.

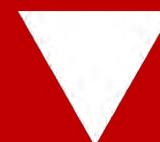
DECREASE: 26%



NET TUITION DROP

Net tuition (after discounting) dropped from \$21M to \$18M.

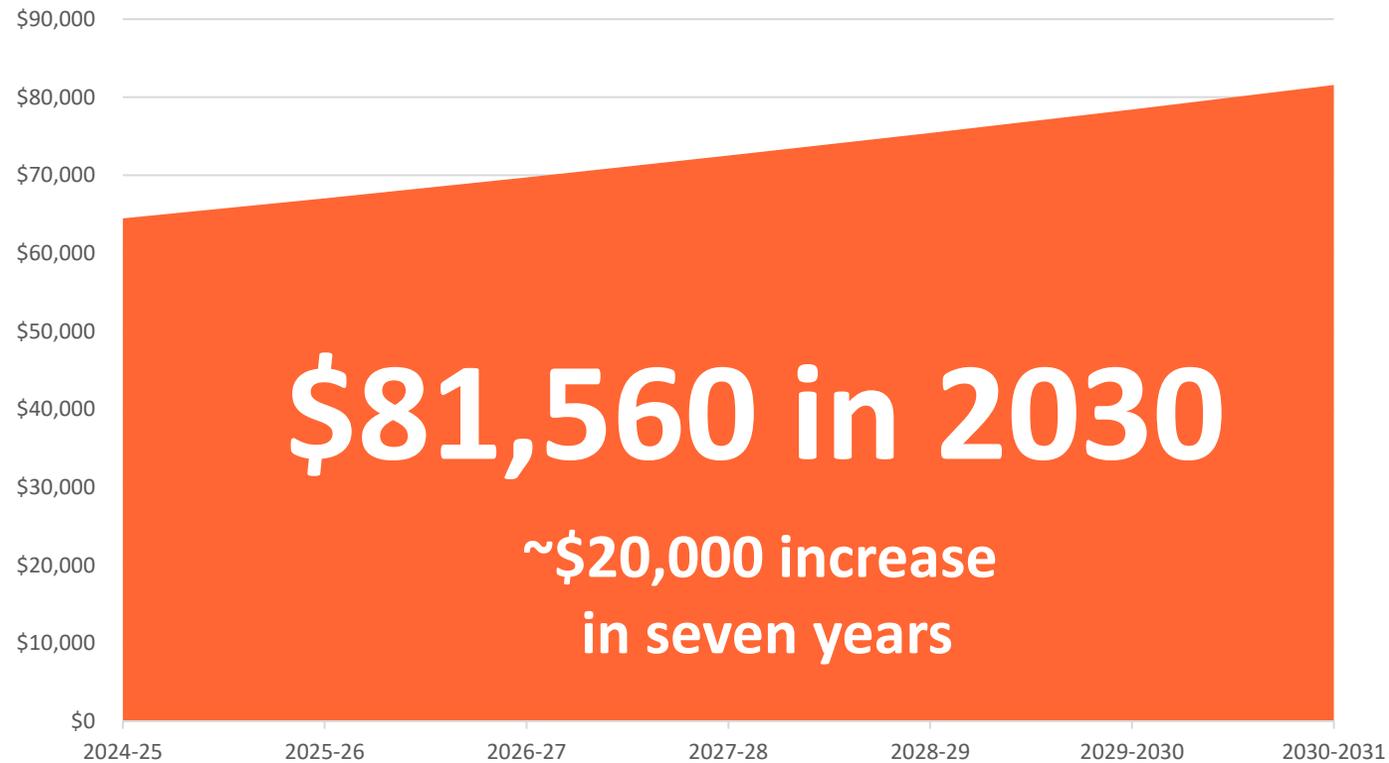
DECREASE: 18%



Sticker Price Projections

Tuition, Standard Fees, Housing & Food

Assumes annual 4% increase - \$2,500-\$3,000 per year



Big things are happening at Wartburg.



Providing more access to Wartburg gives students hands-on experiences that lead to greater possibilities.



Many hands make
light work.



To effectively lead, we must modulate our message based on the audience.





The role of the Board
is no longer ceremonial.
They are **in the work.**

In higher ed, we build structures and systems that are resistant to change.

USS Iwo Jima



WARTBURG COLLEGE

OUR BRIGHTEST DAYS

REALIZING PURPOSE, LEADING CHANGE

Wartburg College is called to be the leading institution in education of the whole person. Together, we create an inclusive community combining diverse curricular and co-curricular experiences to prepare students to be resilient leaders of positive change through service in a complex world.

EDUCATING MIND, BODY, AND SPIRIT

Wartburg will lean into its strengths: a liberal arts curriculum rooted in experiential and service learning with a commitment to vocation; extensive co-curricular programming; state-of-the-art facilities that ensure access to opportunities for intellectual growth and physical wellness; and a campus ministry rooted in our Lutheran tradition, open and welcoming to all.

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

We will create a community where all students, faculty, and staff are known and valued for the unique experiences they bring to the college. Rooted in our values that call us to serve our neighbors, our campus will be a place where we take care of one another. That support will provide our students with the confidence and resilience they need to be thought leaders and agents of change in today's world.

STUDENT SUCCESS

To attract and retain students, we will equip them with the skills they need to thrive on our campus, in the community, and in the world. Wartburg faculty and staff guide our students on their path to success and we will improve accessibility for all students — through policy, practice, and infrastructure — to ensure every student's successful navigation to graduation.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

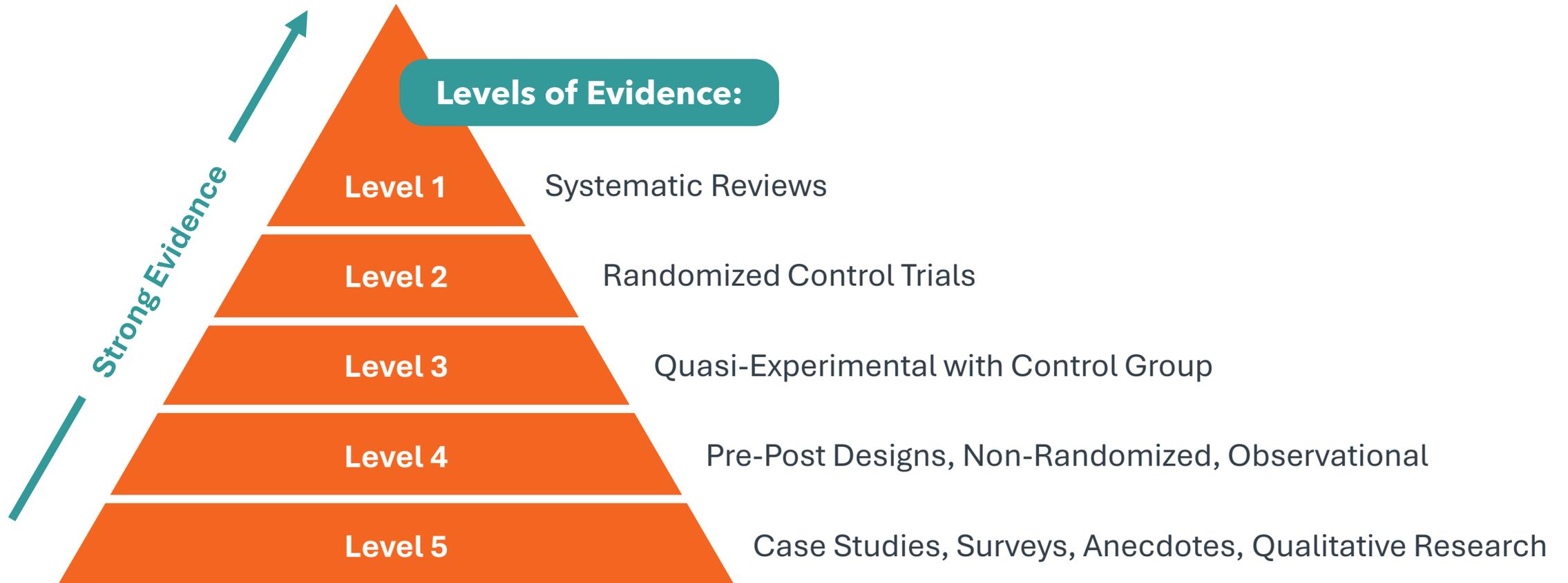
To maintain affordability for students and guarantee long-term financial stability for the college, we will find innovative ways to diversify our revenue streams to decrease dependence on tuition. We will strengthen our recruitment and development of faculty and staff, empowering our employees to thrive as they contribute to the distinctiveness of the Wartburg story.

www.wartburg.edu/brightest-days

If the play isn't working, you change it.



Evidence-based practice is required to know if something is working.



MARKETview provides Level 1 data and enables real-time pivots based on our goals.



Grow Enrollment & Increase Revenue

Critical Elements:

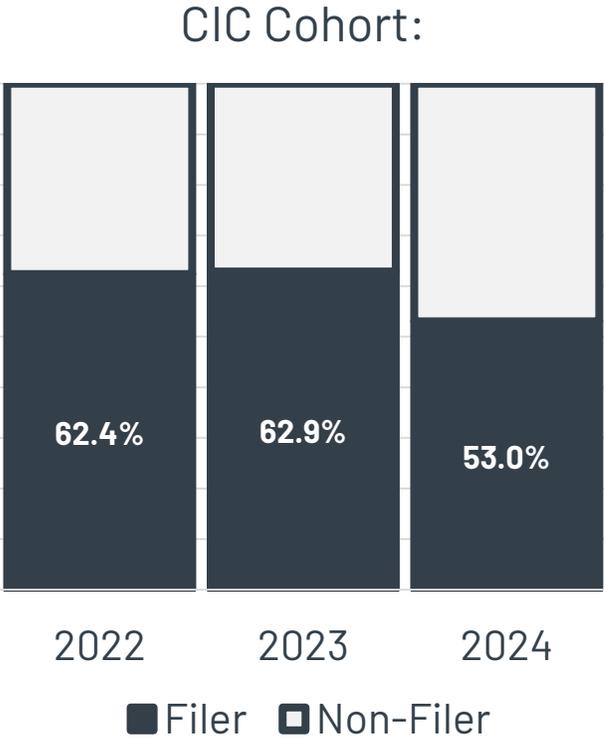
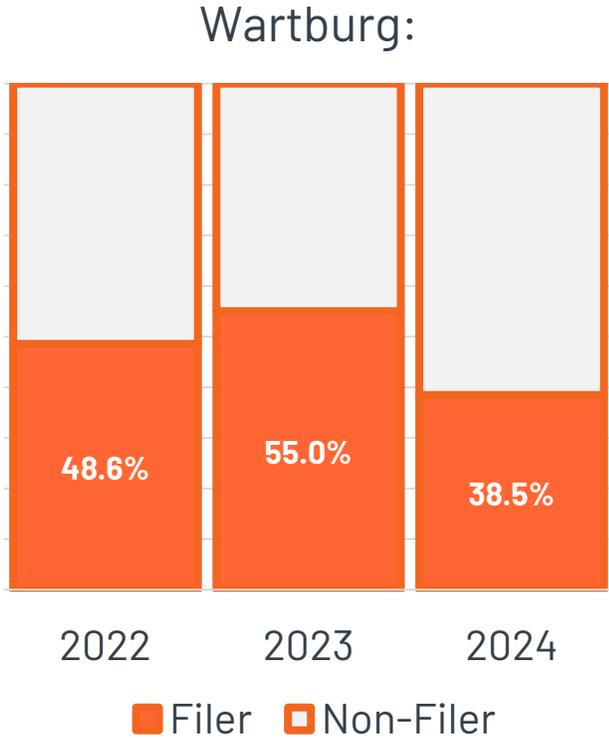
-  FAFSA Filer Volume
-  In-State, Income <\$100K
-  Beyond 200 Miles, Senior Inquiries

Daily monitoring of the students who matter most for our success and market comparisons against our peers and aspirants.

If we're off track, we can take **immediate action.**

Once students file for aid, Wartburg outpaces CIC institutions in terms of yield rate

Proportion of Aid Filers
(Admit Stage)



Final Filer Volume

931 2024
1,373 2023
1,328 2022

Year-to-Year Change in Filers

-32.2% 2023-2024 **-13.1%**

Final Yield Rates for Filers

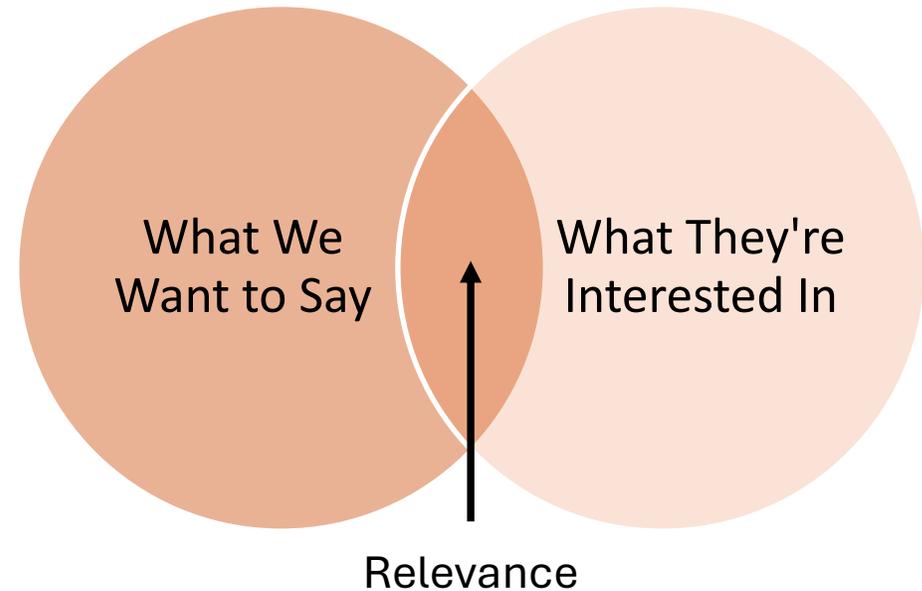
38.9%	2024	19.9%
28.5%	2023	19.1%

Wartburg CIC Cohort

What is a brand?

It's not a slogan.

A brand is the culmination of experiences our audiences have with us. The process of building our brand is based on research to identify the distinct aspects of a Wartburg education that our audiences are seeking.



Wartburg is investing in who we are and who we serve.

Brands Platform Testing:

- **All In For You Concept**
 - Messaging focus on *community* as primary attractor.
- **The Power of Connection Concept**
 - Messaging focus on *connection* as primary attractor.
- **Experience More Concept**
 - Messaging focus on *engagement* as primary attractor.

	ALL			Low / Moderate Income		
	All In For You	Experience More	Connect to More	All In For You	Experience More	Connect to More
Appeal (Top-2-Box 'Very' or 'Somewhat' Appealing)	73%	78%	69%	75%	78%	69%
Interest (Top-2-Box '5 Extremely Interested' or '4')	44%	56%	47%	46%	56%	50%
Average Evaluation Statement Agreement (Top-2-Box '5 Extremely Interested' or '4')	65%	67%	65%	68%	66%	67%
Average Characteristic Association (Top-2-Box '5 Strongly Applies' or '4')	66%	71%	66%	68%	70%	67%
Average Affinity (Top-2-Box '5 Very Positively' or '4')	65%	70%	65%	67%	69%	66%
Average Word Association (Multipunch)	45%	47%	43%	46%	47%	43%



Will distributed
leadership help curb
burnout?



How can data guide us in
establishing benchmarks for
all constituents?



A STRATEGIC PLAN/MODEL/PROCESS
OPERATIONALIZING 2030 LEADS

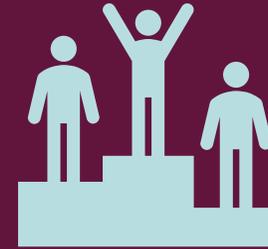


Growth and Success



We must **grow.**

- Grow enrollment
- Grow scholarships
- Grow endowment



We must **excel.**

To succeed – to compete – we must pursue excellence in all that we do!



Concordia Leads: The Plan for 2030



**TRANSFORMATIONAL
LEARNING**



**EXCELLENCE THROUGH
DIVERSITY**



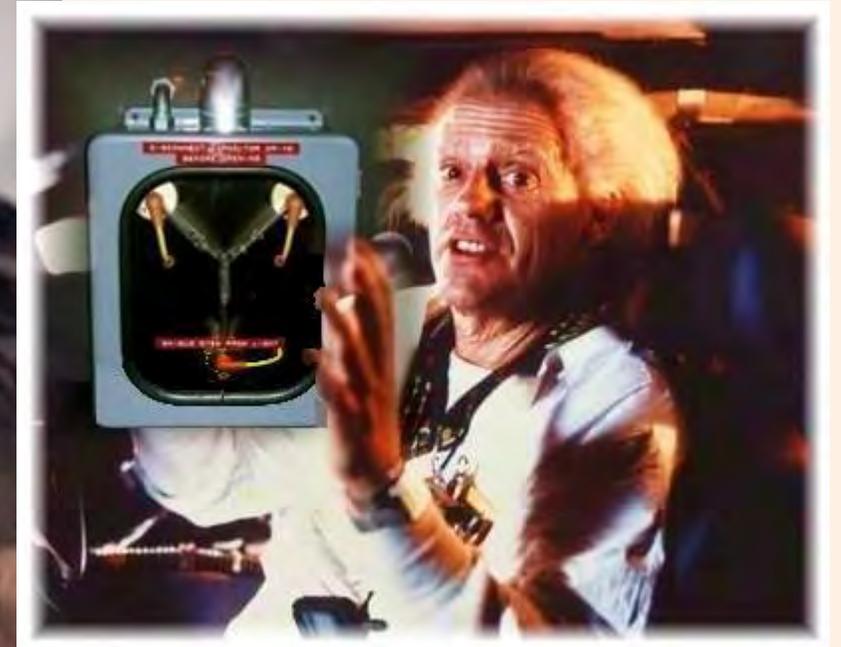
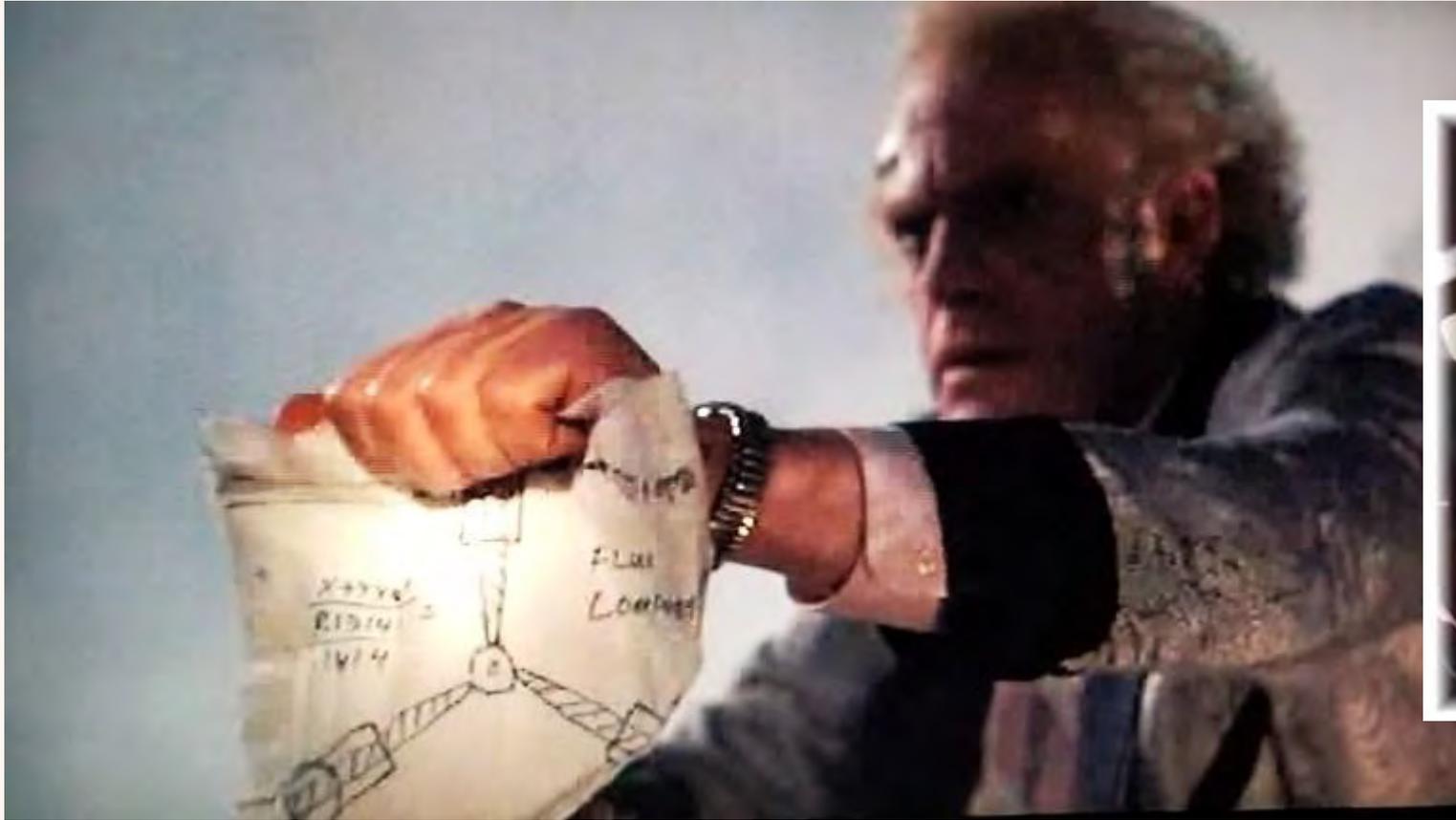
**WHOLENESS AND
HEALTH OF THE
COMMUNITY**



**FINANCIAL
FOUNDATION**



Pop Quiz







MEASURES
OF EXCELLENCE



MISSION
MOMENT
MOMENTUM



ENROLLMENT
GOALS



FINANCIAL
GOALS

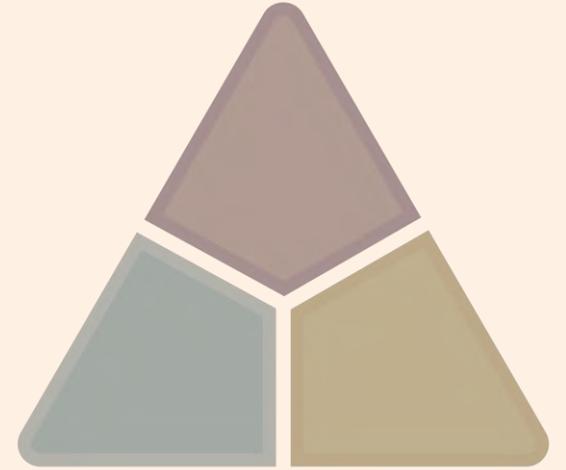
A Strategic Model





ENROLLMENT GOALS

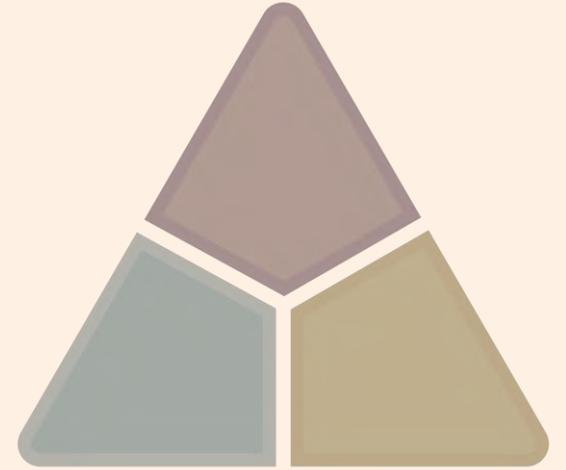
- 2,200-2,400 FTE
- 600 Freshman
- (Retention Rates)





FINANCIAL GOALS

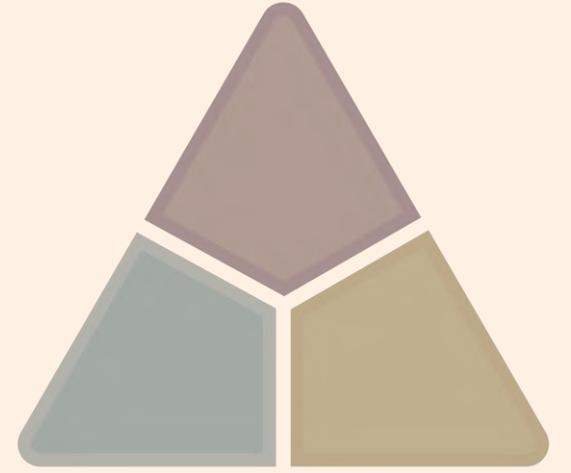
- Campaign
- NTR
- Endowment
- Structural Deficit
- Capital/Deferred
- Cost-Per-Credit Hour





MEASURES OF EXCELLENCE

- Academic Excellence
- Artistic Excellence
- Athletic Excellence
- Inclusive Excellence
- Holistic Excellence





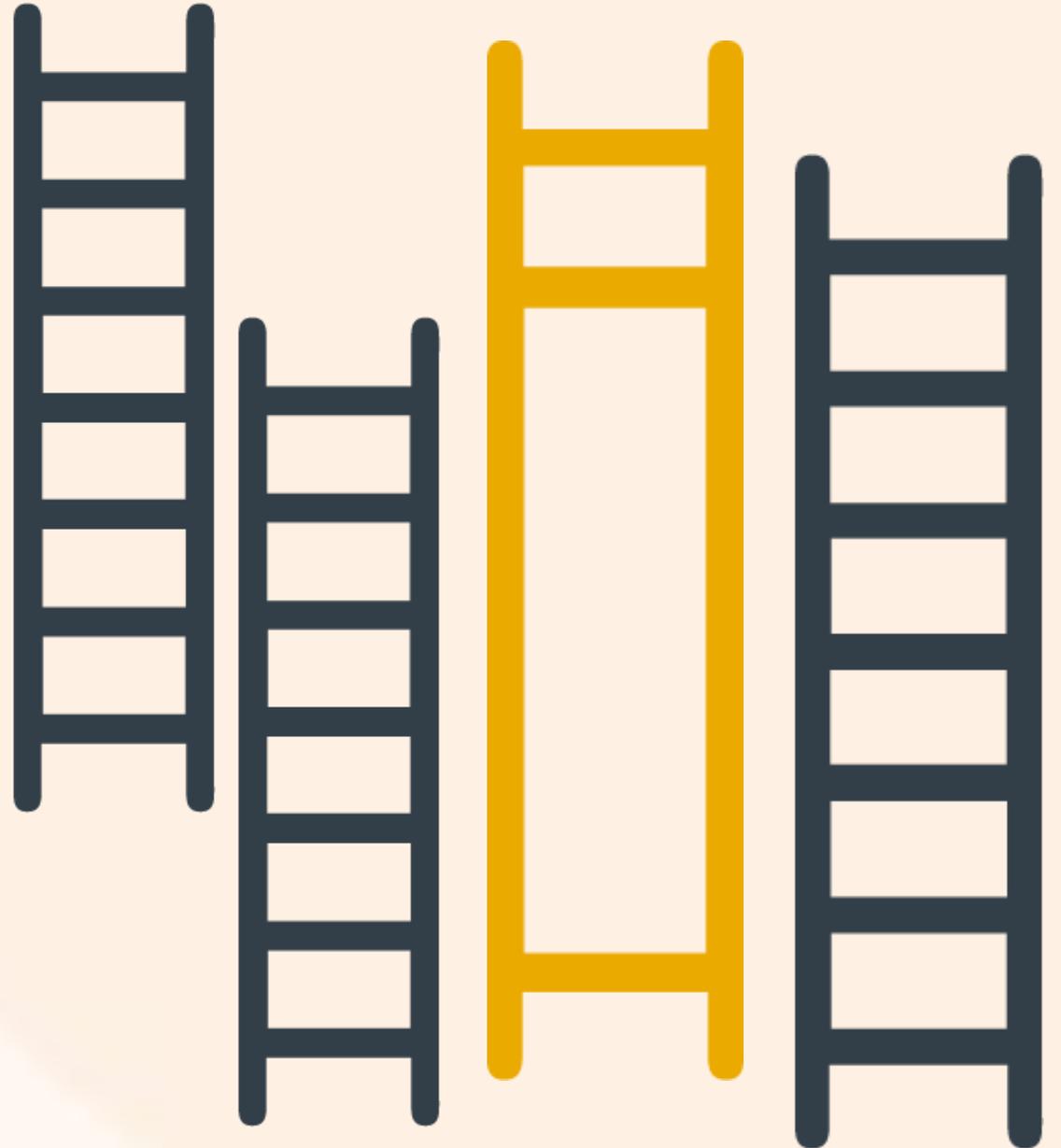
**MEASURE WHAT MATTERS:
WHY OKRs AND WHY NOW**

“If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.”

~ Henry David Thoreau

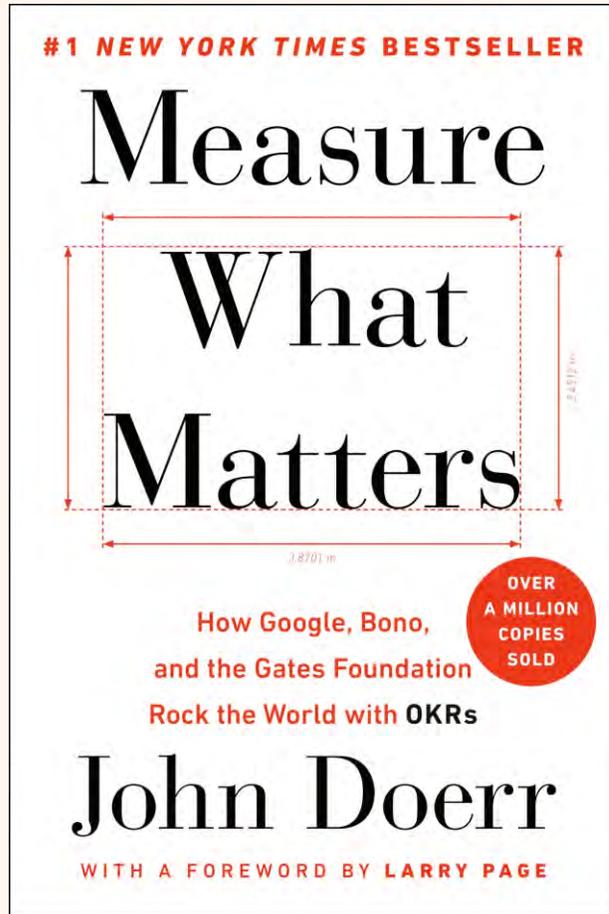


A plan
without a
process is
like a
ladder
without
rungs.





What is an OKR?



OBJECTIVE

A memorable, qualitative description of WHAT you want to achieve.

Clear & Concise | Inspiring | Audacious



KEY RESULTS

Metrics that benchmark and monitor achievement of the objective.

**Specific | Aggressive, Yet Realistic
Time-Based | Measurable | Verifiable**

Established **annually or quarterly** to create alignment across an organization and ensure everyone is **focused on the things that matter most.**

I will _____ as measured by _____.



What are OKRs **good** for?

- Providing **clarity** to goal setting, tracking, and day-to-day focus
- Fostering **COLLABORATION** across and within teams
- Aligning collective **focus on outcomes**
- Connecting every individual to **a bigger purpose**
- Promoting **AMPLIFICATION** of engagement and productivity
- Empowering teams to stretch beyond “business as usual”
- Inspiring accountability and **ownership**
- Keeping **data at the forefront** for all team members
- Creating a **culture of measurement**, iteration, and **CELEBRATION**
- Enabling **agility** on a strategic and tactical level



Future Road Map: Update to the Strategic Plan

HOME / ABOUT / OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT / STRATEGIC PLAN / STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Greeting from the President

Greeting from the President

In This Section

Concordia's Strategic Model

Academic Excellence

Artistic Excellence

Athletic Excellence

Holistic Excellence

Inclusive Excellence

Concordia's Campaign

Dear Colleagues and Friends of Concordia College,

We are entering an exciting new era in Concordia's legacy. Enrollment has increased, new academic programs are beginning, and there is a renewed sense of energy and excitement on campus. As I write, our students are just settling back in to the routine of the fall semester, and I am looking forward to seeing all of the amazing things they create and accomplish inside and outside of the classroom this year.

As we celebrate the exciting things happening on our campus, we also contemplate the hard work we still have ahead of us. I am excited to share with you an important update to the "Concordia Leads" strategic plan, a plan that builds on the work we've done and positions us to accomplish even more in the years ahead. As we reflect on Concordia's mission and this crucial moment in the college's history, we are driven by a sense of purpose, urgency, and momentum to grow and even thrive. Our commitment to excellence in academics, the arts, athletics, inclusion, and holistic care for our people and the campus community remains the foundation of



Athletic Excellence

In This Section

We will elevate the student-athlete experience across all of Concordia's intercollegiate sport offerings. Our vision of athletic distinction includes achieving success in competition and recruiting a diverse community of student-athletes who excel in academics, character, and service to others. Recognizing athletics as an integral component of the overall Concordia experience, we will provide comprehensive support and resources as we build a legacy of Cobber Athletics within the community and the region.

Goal 1

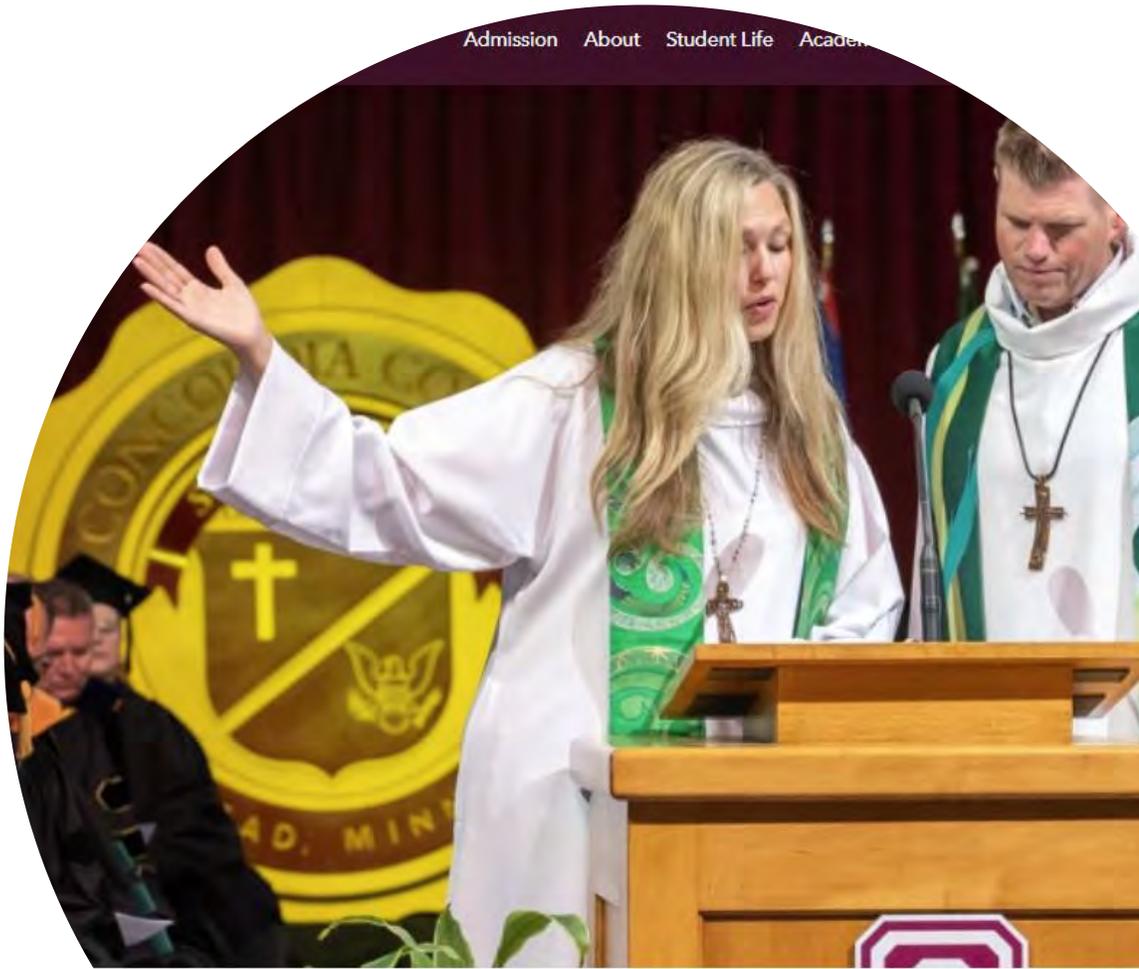
Enhance financial sustainability to ensure sustained growth and support for athletic programs.

- Objective 1: Create a financial sustainability plan for athletics.
- Objective 2: Increase fundraising resources, initiatives, and results.
- Objective 3: Determine plans for comprehensive campaign.

Goal 2

Strengthen performance in academics, competitiveness, and service.

- Objective 1: Demonstrate excellence in academic performance measures.



Inclusive Excellence

In This Section

We will be a college community characterized by a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff, one where students live and learn in an environment that welcomes and embraces their full selves. By offering diverse and robust learning experiences, viewpoints, and perspectives in and outside of the classroom, we will be known for providing exceptional opportunities for free and open inquiry, civil discourse, interfaith cooperation, and learning across difference. Concordia will be a leader for interfaith cooperation, global language, and cultural study.

Goal 1

Recognize and celebrate our diverse community of students, faculty, and staff.

- Objective 1: Continue to strengthen the recruitment and retention of diverse students, faculty, and staff.
- Objective 2: Foster an inclusive work environment.

Goal 2

Create living and learning environments that embrace students' full selves.

- Objective 1: Align the work of the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Opportunity Office with student-facing initiatives within the Student Development and Campus Life division to enhance diversity and inclusion efforts.
- Objective 2: Reimagine the Bias Incident Response Team.





STRATEGIC GOAL

What do you want to accomplish in the next 3-5 years?

INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVE

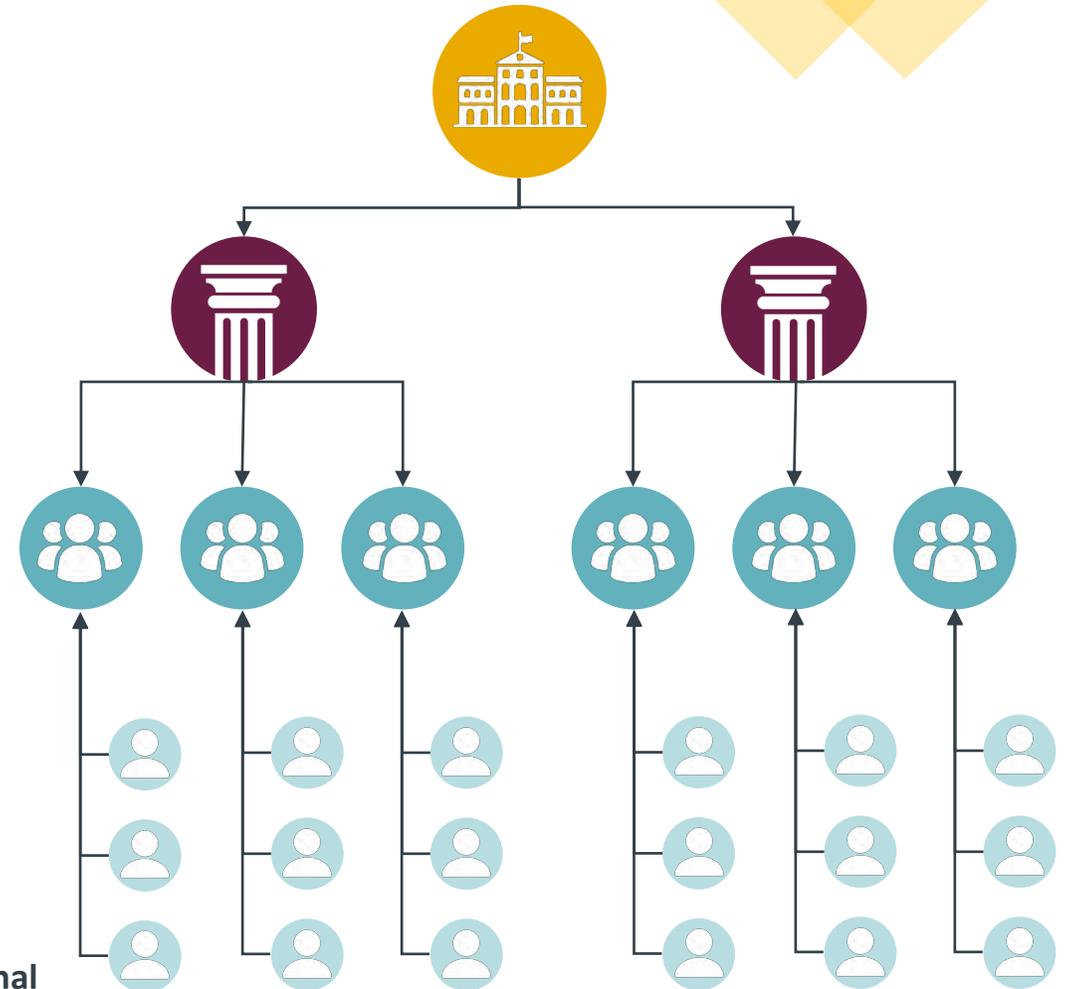
What are the areas of focus this year to support the strategic goals?

KEY RESULT (TEAM)

How will you know you are progressing towards achievement of your institutional objectives?

KEY RESULT (INDIVIDUAL)

What will you be accountable for to support the team and institutional objectives?





STRATEGIC GOAL

Verb + Desired Achievement + Why
(Long-Term)

INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVE

Verb + Desired Achievement
(Annual)

KEY RESULT (TEAM)

Verb + Impact to Achieving Institutional Objective + Metric
(Annual or Quarterly)

KEY RESULT (INDIVIDUAL)

Verb + Impact to Achieving Team Objective + Metric
(Quarterly)



Strategic Goal: Strengthen diversity, inclusion, and social justice to ensure that all community members thrive.



Institutional Objective: Be one of the 100 most diverse, independent universities in the country.



Key Result (and Team Objective): Enroll a class comprised of more than 50% students of color.



Individual Key Result: Initiate 2 additional partnerships with Community-Based Organizations.

Individual Key Result: Add 10 Spanish-speaking tours to serve at least 60 students.

Individual Key Result: Visit 16 high schools that enroll at least 70% minority students.



WHO DEVELOPS?

STRATEGIC GOAL

President, Board and/or Strategic Plan

**The foundation for
MARKETview's support**

INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVE

Cabinet/Executive Leadership Team

KEY RESULT (TEAM)

Enrollment Leadership Team

KEY RESULT (INDIVIDUAL)

Individual Team Members



WHO DEVELOPS?

STRATEGIC GOAL

President, Board and/or Strategic Plan

INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVE

Cabinet/Executive Leadership Team

KEY RESULT (TEAM)

Enrollment Leadership Team

KEY RESULT (INDIVIDUAL)

Individual Team Members

Identifying and monitoring the Critical Elements (or Key Results) for the success of each objective



WHO DEVELOPS?

STRATEGIC GOAL

President, Board and/or Strategic Plan

INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVE

Cabinet/Executive Leadership Team

KEY RESULT (TEAM)

Enrollment Leadership Team

KEY RESULT (INDIVIDUAL)

Individual Team Members

Collaborating with you and your team on the strategic and tactical actions you can take to achieve your goals



Grow Enrollment and Revenue

Critical Elements



\$150K+ Consumer Income



Pre-Senior Inquiries



In-State, <\$100K Income

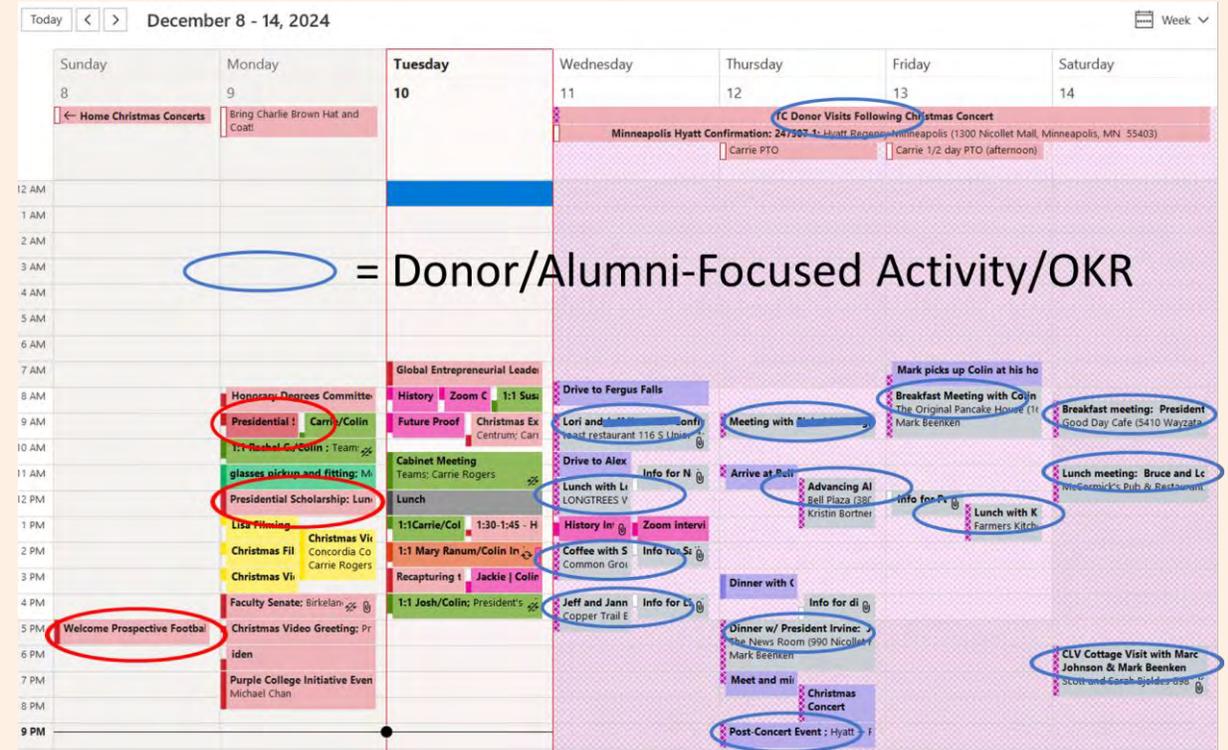


Daily monitoring of the students who matter most for our success and market comparisons against our peers and aspirants.

If we're off track, we can take **immediate action.**



Reflected in Our Work





Shared, Public Goals

Concordia		Following		
OKRs Initiatives Dashboards Analytics Settings Updates				
Title	Owner	Team	Status and progress	Last updated
✓ Athletic Excellence	Lisa Sethr... Rachel Ber...	Concordia	At Risk 0% Measure as 100% complete	Today
✓ Enhance financial sustainability to ensure sustained growth and support for athletic programs	Lisa Sethr... Rachel Ber...	Concordia	On Track 48% Measure as 100% complete	Today
Create a financial sustainability plan for athletics	Lisa Sethr... Rachel Ber...	Concordia	On Track 1 Reach 1	Today
Increase fundraising resources, initiatives, and results	Lisa Sethr... Rachel Ber...	Concordia	On Track 45% Measure as 100% complete	Today
Determine plans for comprehensive campaign	Lisa Sethr... Rachel Ber...	Concordia	Not Started - Measure as 100% complete	—
Strengthen performance in academics, competitiveness, and service	Lisa Sethr... Rachel Ber...	Concordia	Not Started - Measure as 100% complete	—
Optimize roster opportunities in current and new sports and complete a master plan for athletics to support the athletic community	Lisa Sethr... Rachel Ber...	Concordia	Not Started - Measure as 100% complete	—
> Artistic Excellence	Nathaniel ... Sonja Wen...	Concordia	Not Started - Measure as 100% complete	—



Roll Cobbs!



concordia_mn

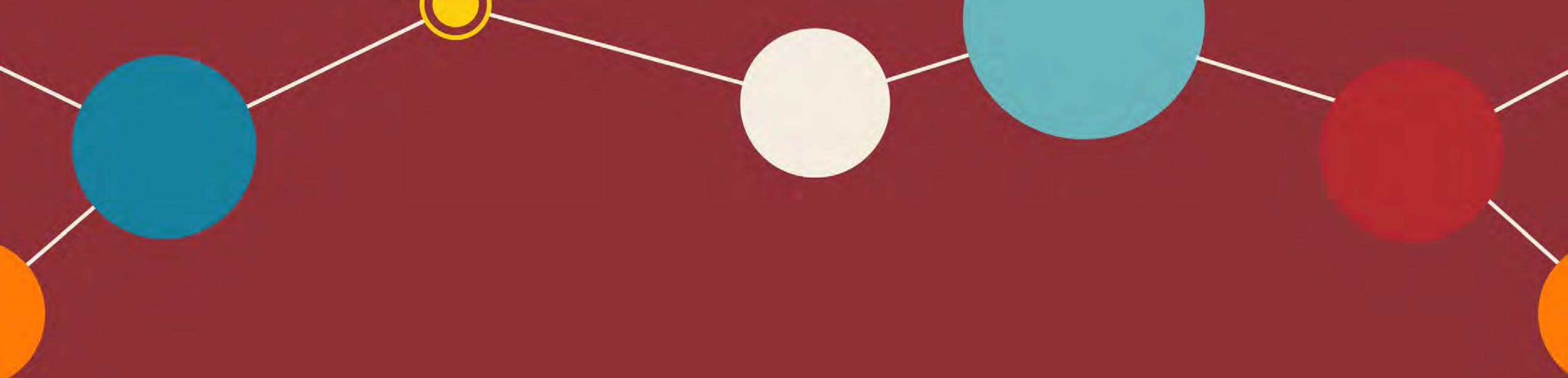




Let's **G(r)ooooo(w)**!



Tor(nado)
Bjørn



Q&A



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