



# Salisbury University Mission (1996) & The Strategic Plan, 1998-2003 (February 1998)

## MISSION

Salisbury University's mission is to cultivate and sustain a superior, student-centered learning community where students, faculty, and staff are viewed as both teachers and learners, and where a commitment to excellence permeates all aspects of University life. We recruit exceptional and diverse faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students and support them as they work together to reach the University's goals. Serving Maryland and the Mid-Atlantic region, we are concerned participants in responding to the educational, economic, cultural and social needs of our community and believe that service is a vital component of civic life. Our highest purpose is to empower our students with the knowledge, skills, and core values that contribute to life-long learning and active citizenship in a democratic society and interdependent world.

## VALUES

The core values of Salisbury University are excellence, student-centeredness, learning, community, civic engagement, and diversity. We believe these values must be lived and experienced as integral to everyday campus life so that students make the connection between what they learn and how they live.

Excellence: Excellence, the standard against which all University activities and outcomes are measured, connotes the perfection and the quality for which we strive and hold ourselves accountable. We accept the notion that the quality of a university depends on the heads and hearts of those in it.

Student-Centeredness: Our students are the primary reason for our existence. Our focus is on their academic and individual success and on their health and well-being. We are committed to helping students learn to make reasoned decisions and to be accountable for the outcomes of the decisions they have made.

Learning: We believe that learning is fundamental to living a life with purpose in an increasingly inter-related world and that our role, is to teach students not what to think, but how to think. The university introduces students to a system of ideas about the nature of humanity, the universe, and the world created by art and thought. Through active learning, service learning, international experience, and co-curricular activities, students connect research to practice, and theory to action.

Community: Salisbury University takes pride in being a caring and civil place where individuals accept their obligations to the group, learn through their interactions and relationships with others, where governance is shared, and where the focus is on the common good. We honor the heritage and traditions of the institution which serve as a foundation for future change.

Civic Engagement: The University stands as a part of, rather than apart from, the local and regional community. Recognizing its history and traditions, we seek to improve the quality of life for citizens in the region. We believe it is our responsibility to enrich cultural life, enhance the conduct of public affairs, and contribute to the advancement of the region. We seek to instill in our students a lifelong commitment to civic engagement.

Diversity: Salisbury University views itself as a just community where there is respect for the value of global, societal, and individual differences and commitment to equal opportunity. Diversity is purposefully cultivated as a way to strengthen and enhance our University community.

## VISION

Salisbury University will achieve national eminence as one of the country's best public comprehensive universities by maintaining, enhancing, and building upon the nurturing student-oriented environment we now provide and by being a model student-centered community of learning and civic engagement.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**Goal A: To maintain a vibrant, intellectually engaged, educationally purposeful community of learning.**

### Objectives

**1. The University will continue to strengthen its emphasis on learning.**

- Each school/department will define clear expectations for student validation of learning outcomes prior to graduation.
- Faculty development opportunities and resource support will assist faculty in modifying teaching approaches, creating learning environments, pursuing scholarly activities and assessing student learning outcomes.
- Faculty workload, evaluation and reward systems will reflect the emphasis on learning.
- The academic calendar, class size, and student-faculty ratios will be examined in the context of the focus on learning and recommendations made regarding needed changes.
- Emerging technologies will be implemented in ways that complement the traditional academic program and meet regional educational/training needs.

**2. The general education component of the curriculum will be integral to major programs of study and elective courses to enhance academic community, and to contribute substantially to educational excellence.**

- The general education component of the curriculum will be reviewed by the faculty and recommendations made for any proposed changes.
- The role and importance of interdisciplinary courses will be considered in the general education review.
- A comprehensive assessment of the outcomes of general education will be undertaken.

**3. Students will actively engage in learning opportunities provided by undergraduate research, internships, and other comparable experiences.**

- Schools will define undergraduate research projects, internships, or other active learning experiences for their students and will establish targets for appropriate levels of achievement.
- Internships for students will be cultivated by academic departments and will be coordinated to assure successful experiences and access to information for both students and faculty.
- Resources will be identified to encourage students to participate in undergraduate research and scholarly projects and to reward outstanding accomplishments.
- Schools will provide a vehicle for celebrating and communicating undergraduate accomplishments.
- Faculty and staff reward systems will reflect the emphasis on faculty and staff involvement in active learning experiences.

**4. Students will actively engage in service learning opportunities provided by structured community involvement experiences.**

- Schools will define service learning experiences for their students and will establish targets for appropriate levels of achievement.
- Service learning opportunities will be centrally coordinated on campus to facilitate access for students and faculty.
- Service learning experiences will be coordinated with other aspects of the students' curriculum.
- Faculty and staff participation in student service learning experiences will be included in the reward systems.
- Outcomes of service learning programs will be regularly assessed.

5. **Students will actively engage in international learning opportunities provided by an array of international learning experiences.**
  - Schools will identify international learning experiences for their students and will establish appropriate levels of achievement.
  - Opportunities for international experiences for students and faculty in all disciplines will be expanded and clearly communicated.
  - Administrative processes will be streamlined where necessary to facilitate agreements for international experiences.
  - The outcomes and impact of the international learning experiences will be regularly assessed.
6. **The University will clearly express the shared civic principles used to guide interactions in the campus community.**
  - The principles presently guiding community life that are articulated either directly or indirectly in various campus documents and processes will be refined to provide comprehensive direction for community living.
  - Faculty, students, and staff will identify, refine, articulate, and determine application of these principles.
7. **The University's graduate programs will be strengthened.**
  - The need for additional graduate programs will be assessed.
  - Each graduate program will be examined in the context of the University's mission, goals, and objectives.
  - Resource needs for graduate programs will be determined and a plan to meet these needs will be developed.
  - Continuing opportunities for collaborative graduate programs will be sought.
  - A plan will be developed for monitoring graduate program outcomes.
  - The responsibility for graduate program oversight within the administrative structure will be clarified.
8. **The University will maintain its controlled growth rate of 3% over the next five years.**
  - A long term enrollment plan will be developed that emphasizes enrollment of first-time full-time freshmen and the implications of growth in this sector of students.
  - The use of extended learning to increase enrollments while minimally impacting facilities will be explored.
  - The focus of growth will be primarily at the graduate level.

**Goal B: To provide a student-centered campus that holds all aspects of the student experience as focal.**

### **Objectives**

1. **Recruitment and selection of students will be consistent with the University's mission and goals.**
  - Scholarship funds for students will increase.
  - The University will be more proactive in assuring that admitted students matriculate.
  - Technology will continue to be used to facilitate the student recruitment, application, and selection processes.
  - The role of faculty in recruitment and selection will be defined.
  - The adequacy of services available for physically and learning challenged students will be examined and recommendations made.
2. **Student needs will be considered a major factor in the offering of student services.**
  - Flexible course offerings, such as evening and weekend courses, will be considered.
  - Flexible scheduling of advising services will be considered.
  - A highly integrated program of admission, advising, registration, instruction, and career placement will be available to all students.
  - A mechanism for on-going assessment of student service needs will be implemented.
  - Computer technology will be used to enhance the delivery of academic and student services.

**3. Current retention and graduation rates will be maintained or improved.**

- Each School will have a specially trained academic advising coordinator to complement the services of faculty advisors and to enhance advising services.
- Faculty development activities will continue to assist faculty in maintaining currency in advising-related activities and information.
- Tutoring and mentoring services will be enhanced.
- The New Student Experience Seminar will place greater emphasis on advising and retention of students.
- Consideration will be given to expanding the New Student Seminar alternative experiences to include every freshman and transfer student.
- The effectiveness of the advising process will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

**4. Graduate and undergraduate students will be assisted with integration of their career enrichment experiences.**

- Faculty and student affairs staff will explore ways to help students document their out-of-class learning experiences as part of their transcript.
- The Career Services office will assist departments in selecting internships and other active learning experiences consistent with their career goals.
- Models for enhancing the delivery of placement and career development services to undergraduate and graduate students will be explored and recommendations made.
- Graduate school placement services will be enhanced.

**5. The development of leadership and teamwork skills will be emphasized.**

A plan for the development of leadership skills will be elaborated, implemented, and assessed by faculty and student affairs' staff.

**6. Student services will be restructured to reflect a wellness model.**

- The development of an integrated campus-based wellness program for faculty, students, and staff will be explored.
- Current physical fitness facilities will be expanded to meet student, faculty and staff demand.

**Goal C: To continue to be active partners in responding to the educational, economic, cultural, and social needs of the region.**

**Objectives**

**1. The University will develop and promote innovative educational programs and economic support programs for the region.**

- Available and emerging technologies will be evaluated for use in offering on-site programs to meet workplace educational needs.
- Schools will have partnership boards with appropriate regional organizations to serve as incubators for programs contributing to economic development.
- An expedited approval process for programs enhancing economic development will be explored.

**2. Educational services focused on the needs of regional life-long learners and alumni will be offered.**

- The life-long learning needs, including undergraduate, graduate, and extended needs of the region will be regularly assessed.
- The development of an Institute for Life-Long Learning will be considered and recommendations made and implemented as appropriate.
- The best administrative structure for assuring the delivery of appropriate life long education programs will be determined.
- Interactions between non-traditional students and traditional students will be encouraged.

**3. The educational needs of high school students seeking higher education experiences will be addressed.**

- University experience programs will be provided for high school students as a way of earning college credit and experiencing college life.
- University experience programs will be effectively tied to recruiting outstanding students for the freshman class.

**4. Efforts will continue to expand collaboration and partnership opportunities.**

- Partnerships with the K-12 school system will be expanded.
- Collaborative academic programs will continue to be a priority, particularly those between SU and UMES.
- Plans to assess the effectiveness of collaborations and partnerships and resource use will be built into agreements.
- Opportunities for collaboration through the Eastern Shore Associated Colleges will be explored on an ongoing basis.

**5. The educational mission of the university will be supported with well-rounded cultural and academic resource programs.**

- Cultural/academic resource programs will be used to complement the University's academic objectives.
- A plan will be developed and implemented for increasing community, faculty, staff and student involvement in and support of cultural/academic resource programming.

**6. The University will develop an integrated mechanism for the community to access the services and expertise of the University.**

- The University will support entrepreneurial activity with the community.
- The University will support faculty, staff, and students engaging in outreach activities.

**Goal D: To build a caring community where each individual feels affirmed and respected.**

**Objectives**

**1. The University will recruit students and faculty reflective of our desire for a diverse and culturally rich community.**

- The University will continue to implement the Minority Achievement Plan and will continue active recruiting of international students and other under-represented student groups.
- Faculty recruitment will increase the number of qualified women and minority faculty as well as faculty with degrees from a wide range of institutions.
- Innovative efforts to recruit minority students, such as school partnerships, faculty and student mentoring, and school enrichment programs will be expanded.

**2. An inclusive shared governance structure will be developed.**

- Faculty, staff, and students will be represented and will be strongly encouraged to participate in the governance structure.
- University governance mechanisms will ensure that individuals are consistently treated with justice, equity, and respect for diversity and human dignity.
- Administrative decision making processes will be reviewed to assure that faculty, staff and students have appropriate input into decision making.

**3. Communication at all levels of the campus community will be improved.**

- The various units of the administrative and governance structures will be used as vehicles for communication.
- Satisfaction with communications within the University community will be monitored on an on-going basis.

**4. The budget process will be more open and participatory.**

- Administrative and governance structures will ensure that faculty and staff will have significant opportunities for input into the budget process.
- Communication about budget decisions will be enhanced.

**Goal E: To strengthen the University's human, learning, physical, and fiscal resources.**

**Objectives**

**1. Resources and recognition for faculty will be enhanced.**

- Efforts to bring faculty salaries at each rank to the level of the AAUP 85th percentile will continue.
- A comprehensive faculty development program will be developed and implemented and coordinated resources made available.
- Opportunities for greater faculty involvement in University administration will be identified.
- Development opportunities will be coordinated with sabbaticals and faculty members held accountable for the work accomplished while on sabbatical.
- Outstanding teaching will be rewarded in each School.
- University merit, tenure, and promotion awards will reflect the University's mission and goals and will be based on clearly defined and comprehensive standards of excellence.
- The employment status, benefit options, and evaluation of full- and part-time contractual faculty will be assessed on an ongoing basis.
- Departments will be empowered to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities.

**2. Technologic, scientific and classroom resources will be appropriate for maximal implementation of the curriculum.**

- A long-range technology enhancement plan will be developed and widely circulated and implemented as resources become available.
- Supplemental budget money will be available regularly for purchase of major scientific equipment, learning technologies, and updating of classroom facilities.
- Technologically integrated classrooms will be established for use by every department.
- Undergraduate students engaged in research will have access to funds to purchase needed equipment.
- Incoming students will be increasingly expected to own, purchase, or lease their own computers.
- Technological support services to faculty, staff, and students will be enhanced to reflect the University's vision.

**3. The Library will be better integrated with the educational processes of the community.**

- The University's library will be a primary center of learning on campus and will be an environment that promotes student and faculty scholarship.
- The concept of the modern library will be explored in light of technological developments and electronic access.
- The library will obtain state-of-the-art data bases and electronic access and will provide staff support for these resources.
- The library's holdings and resources will be comparable to those of our aspirational peers.
- Library resources, including those of the Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture, will be integrated to facilitate easy access to a wide range of information.

**4. Support of University staff will be enhanced.**

- Efforts will continue to support and increase staff compensation including bringing administrative staff salaries to the CUPA 60th percentile.
- Development opportunities for all staff will be increased and improved.
- An incentive and reward system for staff will be developed and implemented.
- Conversion of contingent positions to State positions and State-equivalent positions will be a priority.

**5. The efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of services provided by all administrative units will be improved.**

- All administrative units will complete a self-assessment to identify strategies for improving efficiency, effectiveness, and quality and will implement appropriate strategies.
- Information systems will be upgraded as necessary.
- Administrative units improving their efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of service will be acknowledged and rewarded.

**6. The University's physical environment and facilities will reflect the mission, goals, and objectives of the institution.**

- The facilities master plan will be closely tied to the University strategic plan.
- Academic departments currently housed on the East campus will be relocated to the main campus.
- A mechanism will be determined to allow for faculty, student, and staff input into physical environment and facilities priorities.

**7. The University will attract and increase private support for endowments, scholarships, academic support and other initiatives.**

- A loyal and responsive constituency of alumni, individual donors, volunteers, and advocates will be built.
- The reputation of the University will be enhanced among opinion leaders, peer institutions, graduate schools, traditional 2-year community colleges and the general public.
- Partnerships and financial enterprises will be forged with constituents both on and off campus.
- Appealing activities that are educational, social, athletic, and cultural will be offered to alumni and other constituents.
- The public phase of a major capital campaign will be initiated.
- Annual, planned giving, and corporate and foundation fund-raising efforts will be enhanced.
- Entrepreneurial partnerships with state, regional and national entities will be cultivated to enhance revenue available for the academic mission of the University.
- Faculty and staff will be encouraged to expand the University's grants and sponsored research awards and will be rewarded accordingly.