



# Leading in a Global Society: *Agnes Scott Reinvents the Liberal Arts for the 21st Century*

October 30, 2015

## Mission

AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE educates women to think deeply, live honorably and engage the intellectual and social challenges of their times.

## Vision

AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE re-imagines a liberal arts education for the 21st century and becomes, and is recognized as, the best college for educating women to be ethical leaders in a global society.

## Prologue

For 125 years, Agnes Scott College has inspired and empowered women by providing a liberal education “abreast of the best institutions of the country.”<sup>1</sup> Today, we renew that commitment, charting a course for institutional growth, strength and vitality through curricular innovation, programmatic expansion and sound management of resources.

At the heart of *Leading in a Global Society* is Agnes Scott’s unique initiative SUMMIT, which reinvents a liberal education for the 21st century by preparing every student to be an effective change agent in a global society. SUMMIT provides every undergraduate with a core curriculum focused on global learning and leadership development. Students benefit from the guidance of a personal Board of Advisors and integrate their learning through a digital portfolio. SUMMIT’s combination of academic study and immersive experiences enables students to develop their leadership abilities and understanding of complex global dynamics.

Developed on the basis of a rigorous market study, SUMMIT is designed to make Agnes Scott a more compelling choice for today’s students. It renews and magnifies the college’s core mission, offering a distinctive college experience grounded in the liberal arts, which cultivates thoughtful global citizenship and inspires our graduates to become strong leaders helping to build a better world.

Agnes Scott also commits to *Leading in a Global Society* by expanding our educational programs to serve new student populations, leveraging the college’s intellectual, physical and technological resources and the opportunities provided by the dynamic global city on our doorstep to launch new graduate and extended programs and strategic alliances.

Through these efforts, we will attract new students, new resources and partnerships, and strengthen Agnes Scott’s reputation for educational excellence.

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<sup>1</sup> Agnes Scott Ideal, 1889

**GOAL #1: CREATE A DISTINCTIVE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE  
THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF 21ST-CENTURY STUDENTS AND PREPARES THEM  
TO LEAD IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY**

**I.A Implement SUMMIT, Agnes Scott’s innovative curricular, experiential and co-curricular focus on global learning and leadership development for every student**

1. Implement and refine the signature components of SUMMIT that all students complete—first-year travel, Board of Advisors, leadership and global core curriculum, Peak Week and digital portfolios—resulting in programs with proven records of success, a stable cohort of faculty and staff participants and ongoing commitments to exploration and enhancement;
2. Create attractive and feasible advanced specializations in both global learning and leadership development so that by 2020 100 percent of students have declared and at least 50 percent of graduates have successfully completed one of them;
3. Create an expanded global study program anchored by the SUMMIT Global Journeys course to provide all students with for-credit global learning opportunities, ensuring that 100 percent of students experience study away and at least 90 percent study outside the United States before graduation;
4. Provide regular professional development opportunities to faculty and staff through a variety of vehicles, including the Center for Teaching and Learning, to ensure an intellectually engaging and sustainable future for SUMMIT;
5. Recruit new members of the Board of Trustees and Board of Visitors with special leadership and global experiences who can help the college strengthen SUMMIT.
6. Implement an assessment cycle to continually refine, strengthen and deepen SUMMIT and develop processes over time to explore and evaluate new innovative ideas to ensure that SUMMIT remains bold and relevant.

**I.B Offer a high-quality, dynamic, relevant and interdisciplinary liberal arts curriculum**

1. Ensure that the college’s approach to global learning and leadership development is deeply informed by the liberal arts;
2. Provide ongoing opportunities for faculty, student and staff conversations about the meaning and value of a liberal arts education and survey graduates’ understanding of the liberal arts to establish a baseline and seek to increase it over time;
3. Support pedagogical innovation and curricular expansion by leveraging faculty and student interest and Atlanta-area resources in order to strengthen existing interdisciplinary programs and institutional partnerships and develop new ones;
4. Support the use and development of library resources and of the college’s learning centers, including the Center for Writing and Speaking and the new Center for Digital and Visual Literacy, to promote innovation in teaching, learning and scholarship.

### **I.C Prepare students for post-graduate success**

1. Strengthen the tracking and visibility of post-graduate outcomes and create a new section of the college website featuring information on job offers, graduate and professional school acceptance rates and selection for competitive fellowships and programs;
2. Work with students across all four years to build career literacy, develop professional skills and financial literacy and empower personal leadership development;
3. Develop a Career Mentor program as a component of the SUMMIT Board of Advisors, helping students explore career options and engaging alumnae and friends of the college;
4. Have at least 75 percent of students complete an internship or external research experience before graduation;
5. Provide support for mentored research opportunities across the curriculum;
6. Create a one-stop shop for information and guidance on nationally competitive post-graduate fellowships.

### **I.D Strengthen the college's commitment to diversity and inclusive excellence<sup>2</sup>**

1. Provide ongoing learning opportunities for students, faculty and staff that engage multiple forms of diversity (including differences in racial, ethnic, national, cultural, religious and gender identity and in political and social views), striving to foster a productive intellectual community for all;
2. Support a full array of strategic initiatives and signature programs through the new Center for Global Diversity and Inclusion, including the Gay Johnson McDougall Symposium on Race, Justice and Reconciliation and *Think, Live, Engage*;
3. Recruit, support and retain a diverse faculty and staff, with an ultimate goal of a faculty and staff that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of the student body and an interim goal by 2020 of having at least 30 percent of tenured and tenure-track faculty and 40 percent of exempt staff coming from underrepresented racial or ethnic groups;
4. Make at least two TOP (target of opportunity) faculty hires to diversify academic programs;
5. Expand the faculty development program to enhance support for the promotion and tenure of underrepresented faculty;
6. Expand the racial, ethnic, cultural and religious diversity of the college's Board of Trustees and Board of Visitors;
7. Conduct a campus-wide diversity and inclusion climate audit, using surveys, focus groups and other methods and develop and implement an action plan based on the results.

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<sup>2</sup> For more information about Inclusive Excellence as a conceptual framework integrating diversity, equity and excellence as higher education goals, see [https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/mei/williams\\_et\\_al.pdf](https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/mei/williams_et_al.pdf) and <https://www.aacu.org/programs-partnerships/making-excellence-inclusive>

**I.E Create a vibrant campus that enhances and enlivens the student experience outside the classroom and contributes to student success**

1. Create vibrant and dynamic spaces and attractive amenities that foster a sense of community, beginning with a transformed Alston Campus Center and including new food options, with goals and priorities informed by student feedback through the Student Satisfaction Survey and other means;
2. Launch and support signature events, such as concerts and festivals, that make Agnes Scott a magnet for students from other campuses;
3. Form collaborative partnerships with area colleges and universities for social, recreational and intramural activities;
4. Expand the Scottie Shuttle and other means to provide easier access for students to other campuses, off-campus attractions, festivals, events and other venues.

**I.F Expand the college's footprint and enhance its reputation as a center for lifelong learning through Graduate and Extended Programs and Strategic Alliances**

1. Establish and grow an undergraduate degree completion program for non-traditional age women and secure recognition as a leader in educating women of all ages;
2. Establish and grow at least two graduate programs that leverage the college's strengths and meet market demand;
3. Beginning in 2016, launch Summer@Agnes as the centerpiece of a diversified portfolio of extended programs and initiatives that serve a varied population of learners, including high school students, college students and adults.

## **GOAL #2: BUILD AGNES SCOTT'S REPUTATION WITH KEY AUDIENCES AS THE BEST COLLEGE FOR EDUCATING WOMEN TO LEAD IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY**

### **II.A. Launch a marketing and public relations campaign to build awareness of and support for SUMMIT**

1. Feature SUMMIT prominently on the website and in all college publications, events and electronic communications and create an updated SUMMIT brochure for distribution to diverse audiences, including academic leaders and donors;
2. Launch social media campaigns around SUMMIT on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and LinkedIn;
3. Launch a comprehensive SUMMIT marketing strategy to prospective students and parents;
4. Communicate about SUMMIT to higher education leaders and influencers, including college presidents, chief academic and enrollment officers and high school guidance counselors;
5. Provide alumnae with a media kit to spread the word about SUMMIT and build alumnae engagement with SUMMIT through the career mentor program and through events such as *SUMMIT Salons*;
6. Pitch stories related to the launch of SUMMIT to local and national media outlets;
7. Encourage and support faculty and staff to present at regional and national conferences and to publish about SUMMIT and about Agnes Scott's institutional transformation as a model of higher education innovation.

### **II.B. Build Agnes Scott's reputation with key local, national and global audiences**

1. Highlight faculty, staff, student and alumnae accomplishments through the college website and publications and by creating a speakers bureau and media contact list to position and deploy faculty and staff as thought leaders;
2. Leverage the college's distinctive initiatives, including SUMMIT and sustainability, to increase coverage of Agnes Scott in local and national media outlets;
3. Build strategic alliances and reciprocal partnerships with Atlanta-area civic associations, non-profits, corporations and agencies whose work aligns with SUMMIT and with the college's mission;
4. Raise Agnes Scott's global profile by identifying two international markets and deploying a coordinated strategy to build awareness of the college, drawing on relationships developed by admissions, college advancement, corporate and civic partners, or SUMMIT faculty and staff;
5. Use campus events to build awareness of the college, turning *LeaderStories* into a signature series that draws a broad audience from the Decatur and Atlanta communities.

### **GOAL #3: CREATE A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MODEL THAT ENSURES THE COLLEGE'S CONTINUED VITALITY**

#### **III.A Increase undergraduate enrollment and net revenue**

1. Grow undergraduate enrollment to at least 1,100 and increase undergraduate net revenue from tuition and room & board to \$25 million per year;
2. Implement a strategic plan for retention that draws on the SUMMIT advising model and the early alert system Compass and raise first-year to sophomore retention to 90 percent;
3. Recruit a socio-economically diverse and balanced student body.

#### **III.B Diversify the college's revenue streams through Graduate and Extended Programs**

1. Implement a plan for the development and growth of programs and initiatives that yield progressive, sustainable revenue of at least \$1.1 million per year by 2020;
2. Benchmark programs and initiatives for attainable revenue targets;
3. Use effective tools for modeling the net revenue generated by new programs, events and partnerships.

#### **III.C Strengthen and expand the college's philanthropic support**

1. By December 2016, successfully complete *The Greatness Before Us* campaign including funding for Rebekah Scott Hall;
2. Beginning in 2017, roll out new strategies to expand philanthropic support; regionally, nationally and globally and raise funds for institutional priorities, including students, faculty, campus renovation and SUMMIT;
3. Broaden and deepen constituent engagement with the college, developing more meaningful relationships with the college's donors and donor prospects, alumnae, friends and students and devoting more time, effort and resources to strategic stewardship of donors.

#### **III.D Exercise strong financial resource management and stewardship**

1. Steadily reduce endowment draws, achieving a standard endowment draw of 5.5 percent or less and a strategic draw of 1.5 percent or less by 2020, with an ultimate goal of a total endowment draw of 5.5 percent by 2025;
2. Reduce overall debt to \$53 million by 2020 and continue the policy of taking on no additional long-term debt;
3. Manage expense growth by sustaining a student-faculty ratio of approximately 11:1 and by prudently managing staff hiring to ensure all new hires are strategic and necessary to sustain enrollment and revenue growth;
4. Reduce utility costs through investments in energy efficiency from the Green Revolving Fund, achieving a fund annual return of 12 percent or greater;
5. Manage expense growth through prudent budget management techniques, processes and collaborative purchasing.

### **III.E Attract and retain an exceptional faculty and staff and support their well-being and professional development**

1. Offer competitive compensation and benefits to faculty and staff, providing regular salary increases and sustaining the college's commitment to a Living Wage policy and, as revenue growth permits, making progress toward a 2:1 match for retirement contributions;
2. Review faculty compensation against AAUP benchmarks annually and, as revenue growth permits, make progress toward the college's goal of the 80th percentile of Baccalaureate IIB institutions;
3. Review and benchmark staff compensation on a rotating five-year cycle and, as revenue growth permits, address issues of competitiveness and equity;
4. Update the Living Wage target at least once every five years and, as revenue growth permits, enable all employees to reach the target within no more than five years of initial hire;
5. Conduct a campus-wide audit of current professional development resources and opportunities for staff and develop an action plan for enhancing them, including promotion of Lynda.com as a resource;
6. Offer a balance of wellness initiatives that support mental, physical, emotional and social health and inspire employees to live healthier lives;
7. Foster a culture of collegiality and respect that honors the college's commitment to community and to living honorably.

### **III.F Become a regional and national model of climate leadership and environmental sustainability**

1. Achieve a 20 percent reduction in energy use by 2020, making progress toward the college's commitment to be climate neutral by 2037;
2. Complete a campus-community resilience assessment and implement plans for mitigating risks associated with climate change;
3. Include sustainability in the design of all major renovation projects, as well as in all regular equipment maintenance and retrofitting;
4. Increase campus awareness of and participation in sustainability initiatives through the new Center for Sustainability;
5. Raise the visibility of the college's sustainability efforts and achievements on the website and in other promotional materials.

### **III.G Enhance the quality of the college's physical and technological infrastructure**

1. Exercise good stewardship of the college's historic campus through a routine and deferred maintenance plan, with a goal of fully funding depreciation on an annual basis by 2025;
2. Establish priorities for capital projects, with emphasis on residence hall renovations;
3. Start capital projects only when funding commitments are obtained and seek to raise funds for building maintenance endowments;
4. Sustain a secure and reliable technology infrastructure that provides access to a global network of resources;
5. Create flexible learning and advising environments, including enhanced classrooms that accommodate new pedagogies and initiatives by meshing technology, furnishings, lighting and writing and presentation surfaces.