

CORE VALUES

DISCUSSIONS BY THE STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE IDENTIFIED THESE CORE VALUES—QUALITIES ABOUT CALVIN THAT THE TASK FORCE THINKS NEED TO BE KEPT OR STRENGTHENED THROUGH THIS PLANNING PROCESS:

We value our Reformed identity.

We endorse our Reformed theological identity and see a need for this particular voice in the context of global Christian and public higher education. Our religious heritage has given us many of the strengths that have led to the vibrancy of this particular educational and intellectual project.

We value Calvin's future.

We want to ensure, through this planning process and through the practices that this process supports, a strong and healthy future for the college. We are committed to a structure and to practices that maintain our core strength, even when we are creatively pushing into new programs. Therefore, a significant challenge going forward is for the campus community to learn how to prioritize, and, at times, to say no to new opportunities.

We value our mission in undergraduate education.

Calvin is, and should remain, primarily a place for undergraduates. Our educational efforts will continue to be shaped for the traditional-aged undergraduate. We will add master's programs only if such programs do not challenge our fundamental undergraduate mission, if they are best done at Calvin, and if they meet budgetary guidelines.

We value the liberal arts.

We continue to believe that the liberal arts will provide the best preparation for the lives that will be lived by our graduates in the first half of the twenty-first century. We will continue to emphasize the broad contextual education, critical discernment, and emphasis on formation that are central to the liberal arts.

We value liberal arts–infused professional programs.

Calvin's history is entwined with a strong educational program, and we continue to have excellent professional programs that build on, without detracting from, the liberal arts core. This hybrid emphasis, however, is difficult to maintain in the face of increasing demands, from both students and external bodies, for even more extensive professional preparation.

We value our residential nature.

Calvin has not moved heavily into distance education, primarily because we are committed to the interaction and formation that happen in a traditional residential campus. We are aware of conversations within the college to extend the intentionality of upper-classman living, both through more intentional off-campus living communities and through more on-campus housing. The task force recommends that these conversations continue and that they involve the entire college community.

We value our growing diversity and our global reach.

Calvin endorsed *From Every Nation*, and we continue to believe that its aims are visionary and necessary for our mission. The college is also asked to play a leading role internationally, and we do not want to abandon this role.

We value creativity.

Calvin has an entrepreneurial planning style, and we make room for new programs and positions fairly easily. We have added many faculty and staff positions over the past decade, primarily for new programs. Although we emphasize a need for broad strategic planning and prioritization, we must have room for ongoing creativity.

We value our size.

We value our size, although our size is unusual in the realm of both Christian colleges and liberal arts colleges. We have discovered that we are small enough to experience the assets of a strong liberal arts college, with its focus on formation and collegial scholarly work. But we are also large enough to provide a critical mass for numerous creative majors and minors, strong research centers, and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.

We value our location.

We are located in a city large enough to provide extensive educational opportunities, active community partnerships, ethnic and racial diversity, and a rich cultural context. But the city is also small enough so that we make a difference by our presence here. We are able to take educational advantage of urban, rural, lakeshore, and forest environments in close proximity to the campus. And the community has multiple colleges and universities for current and potential partnerships.

We value our constituency.

We gain strength from our strong link to the church, from active and engaged alumni, and from a network of supporters throughout the world.

We value environmental sustainability.

Calvin has endorsed a statement on sustainability, and its goals are important to our identity and mission.

We value collegiality.

We want to preserve and embody the best aspects of the word *college*. We do not seek to become a fragmented, multi-directional “university.” We value wisdom and purpose that are drafted through interaction, mutual dependence, and trust.