



GARDNER-WEBB  
UNIVERSITY

## Christian Life and Service Strategic Plan 2020-2025

### I. ENROLLMENT, RETENTION, AND STUDENT SUCCESS

**Commitment 1.** We will make our University a destination of first choice for an increasing number of students from around the state, from across the region, and beyond.

**Objective 1.** We will intensify our efforts to promote the church-matching and ministers' dependent scholarships as well as the Christian Service Organization by creating opportunities for the President and strategic employees to visit with pastors and youth ministers and by sending related recruitment materials with FOCUS and mission teams.

**Metric 1.1.** We will measure increases in support for Christian Service Organization scholarships and in the recruitment yield from church-matching and ministers' dependent scholarships.

**Metric 1.2.** We will annually track the President's visits with pastors and youth ministers and the number of FOCUS and mission teams sent out.

**Objective 2.** We will attract and retain students through the expansion and strengthening of local, regional, national and international mission opportunities.

**Metric 2.1.** We will measure the percentage of GWU students who participate annually in mission opportunities.

### II. STRENGTHENING GWU'S FINANCIAL BASE

**Commitment 2.** We will increase and diversify the sources of revenue needed to sustain the growth and strengthening of our vibrant, comprehensive University.

**Objective 3.** We will collaborate with the Advancement team to increase endowment opportunities and secure private grant and individual donor funding that will support Christian programming, especially as it relates to the Dimensions program, University lecture series, and the mission endowment.

**Metric 3.1.** We will measure the number of proposals submitted, the number of awards received, and the total dollars granted and/or added to the endowment.

### **III. BECOME AND INDISPENSABLE PARTNER TO THE TOWN, COUNTY, AND REGION**

**Commitment 3.** Gardner-Webb University is a private university with a very public mission. We will increase our positive impact in the broader community and in the region by partnering with those who share our interest in improving the quality of life in Cleveland County and beyond.

**Objective 4.** We will grow participation in community partnerships with the Shelby Mission Camp, Rutherford Housing Project, Cleveland County Schools, and/or local churches.

**Metric 4.1.** We will measure the increase in the annual number of engagements with community partners and the number of students participating.

**Objective 5.** We will develop a new community partnership with Mt. Calvary Baptist Church's Community Life Center aimed at improving the lives of people in Shelby and Cleveland County.

**Metric 5.1.** We will document our progress in establishing this partnership and measure the annual number of engagements and the number of students participating.

**Objective 6.** We will increase our community engagement efforts in regional markets.

**Metric 6.1.** We will document annual increases in the number of community engagement events in regional markets.

### **IV. RESPECT OUR HERITAGE, EXTEND OUR BRAND, AND SHARPEN OUR IDENTITY**

**Commitment 4.** We will achieve and sustain a reputation as North Carolina's leader in Christian higher education.

**Objective 7.** We will increase the frequency of programming (especially on Sundays) in one of our University's greatest structural assets, Dover Chapel.

**Metric 7.1.** We will document efforts by the Office of Christian Life and Service, the School of Divinity, the Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy, the Music Department, etc. to support initiatives to increase the frequency of programming in Dover Chapel.

**Metric 7.2.** We will document annual increases in the number of events hosted at Dover Chapel and in attendance, making special note of worship events held on Sundays.

**Objective 8.** We will establish and underwrite a major new “Religion and Culture” public lecture series that attracts scholars, theologians, and the general public to engage in dialogue about timely topics.

**Metric 8.1.** The President’s Council on Christian Mission and Identity will evaluate the Mary Washburn Wilson Lecture Series in collaboration with the School of Divinity and recommend either aligning this objective within the existing lecture series or developing the framework for a new “Religion and Culture” public lecture in preparation for a successful launch once properly resourced.

**Objective 9.** We will commit to making University-produced Christian content as a resource for all Gardner-Webb University students (including DCP and Graduate students) via learning management systems. Components of this content might also be included as part of the Office of Christian Life and Service web page for external audiences to access.

**Metric 9.1.** We will identify content (i.e. Monday Morning Devotionals, Advent Devotionals, etc.) and monitor the posting of content to learning management systems and the Office of Christian Life and Service web page.

**Objective 10.** We will increase the foot traffic of ministerial and lay leaders at Gardner-Webb University through events such as established lecture series (i.e. C.O. And Eliza Greene Lectures, Mary Washburn Wilson Lectures), the annual Winter Bible Study Preview, the Pastor’s School, the Community Prayer Gathering, GWU Youth Days, and the University’s partnership with the Center for Healthy Churches.

**Metric 10.1.** We will measure increases in the attendance at events which attract the participation of ministerial and lay leaders.

**Objective 11.** We will support the University’s Christ-centered focus by recommending a weekly verse of Scripture or inspirational quote, utilizing digital signage/TV monitors on campus.

**Metric11.1.** We will document the 52 verses/quotes chosen, designate one for each week, and evaluate annually.