



GARDNER-WEBB  
UNIVERSITY

## School of Performing and Visual Arts 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 increase the number of recruiting initiatives performed by elements of the school to more actively attract students to our arts programs with the purpose of making the School of Performing and Visual Arts a unique and highly sought-after destination for students wanting a quality education in the arts.

**Metric 1.1.** We will work toward presenting an arts presence in the community that shows Gardner-Webb University as a top institution for performance and arts study, through off-campus performances and exhibits. Examples are (a) public concerts in town, (b) traveling art exhibits to local community open-house styled events, (c) faculty involvement in planning local and area arts events, etc.

**Metric 1.2.** We will create events on campus that help to aid local arts programs, both in schools and in the community, such as music and arts festivals, invitational performances, local competitions, and events such as “Bulldog for a Day.”

**Metric 1.3.** We will renew our efforts in offering participation and facilities to the North Carolina Theater Conference Regional Festival through contact with the event sponsor and local/area participants.

**Metric 1.4.** We will work with Admissions to identify an admissions counselor equipped with strong knowledge in the area of recruiting performing and visual arts students. Arts majors are highly sought after and competitive for employment, even outside of their field, for their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. At least 35-40 new majors across the three departments should be the target for the next 3 years, with that number increasing by 5-10 per year thereafter.

**Metric 1.5.** We will increase visitation to regional magnet schools to identify the most talented candidates for arts education by visiting at least 20% more schools in the next 2 years.

**Metric 1.6.** We will strengthen professional readiness, create opportunities for field work, study abroad, and outreach to professionals through the addition of potential course requirements in at least 10% more arts classes. Additionally, we will seek further funding opportunities for the Distinguished Artist Series through budget increase requests and identification of potential donors/patrons.

**Metric 1.7.** We will continue to collect information from our alumni as to their successes upon graduation and display this information on the school web page as well as social media.

**Objective 2.** We will work toward the establishment of graduate programs to better serve constituents that work in arts fields in the area as well as serve GWU alumni in their career paths.

**Metric 2.1.** We will request information from recent alumni as to their advanced education needs and determine the type and focus of graduate degrees that will best fit their needs.

**Metric 2.2.** We will poll local arts teachers with the intent of finding out how graduate programs would help enrich and enhance their careers.

## **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.** All departments will periodically evaluate courses of study so that the number of required hours/courses are consistent with needs, rigor, and viability.

**Metric 3.1.** All departments will look for ways to “cross-connect” courses to increase interest and allow for the possibility of making arts classes more interesting and meaningful to students. An increase in 10% of student enrollment in arts classes within 2 years will be the goal.

**Metric 3.2.** The Music Department will continue its plans to create a piano lab, where the required piano curriculum can be taught more time-efficiently. The facility has been identified, vendors for necessary equipment have been contacted, and a qualified faculty member has

been chosen to coordinate this lab. The donor for the funding is expected to release funds within one year.

**Objective 4.** Performing ensembles will reduce/eliminate the use of paid performers, both professionals and community semi-professionals with the purpose of using more recruiting efforts to primarily staff ensembles with university students.

**Objective 5.** We will continue to press for and identify financial donors and resources to build a new Fine Arts Center, for use as not only a world-class facility for our fine arts students, but also as a hub of cultural and community activity for the region.

### **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 6.** We will continue to provide performing and visual arts support to the region in order to help improve the quality of life as well as being “the face of the University” in ways that other academic units cannot.

**Metric 6.1.** We will provide increased opportunity for performances and exhibits to be seen off-campus, throughout the region, to bring attention to the University by planning a 10-15% increase in arts performances/exhibits in local/regional locations.

**Metric 6.2.** We will develop new initiatives to create festivals, workshops, and clinics to draw potential students to campus, providing opportunities to meet faculty and staff, and show the close community fostered between GWU and the community/region.

**Metric 6.3.** We will facilitate artists/visitors/clinicians to our campus to help bring our part of the “cultural capital” needed to make Gardner-Webb an important destination for potential students and community members/businesses.

**Metric 6.4.** We will document annual increases in the number of performance and artistic events hosted on campus, as well as annual increases in the number of persons attending.

#### **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 encourage our students to seek out opportunities to participate in community activities where their talents and abilities can enhance faith and hope in the people of the region.

**Metric 7.1.** We will record and document the number of students that participate in School-approved community activities on an annual basis as well as maintain a list of these activities that prove to be repeated opportunities.

**Objective 8.** We will, in addition to our academic arts studies, continue to explore ways to promote Christian musical and artistic growth in our students as well as provide appropriate support to the local Christian community.

**Metric 8.1.** Our collegiate chapter of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) will take their talents to local assisted living centers, shut-in facilities, etc. to provide performances and services as part of their ongoing commitment to service through music.

**Metric 8.2.** The theater department will commit to producing one religious-themed play every four years.

**Metric 8.3.** We will create a list of creative and performance opportunities and record student participation to determine trends toward repeat performances and student service hours.