Winthrop University provides personalized and challenging undergraduate, graduate, and continuing professional education programs of national caliber within a context dedicated to public service to the nation and to the State of South Carolina. Winthrop's longtime commitment to be among the very best institutions of its kind in the nation continually guides the mission of the university.

Building on its 19th century origins as a distinctive women’s college, the Winthrop University of the 21st century is achieving national stature as a competitive and distinctive, co-educational, public, residential comprehensive, values oriented institution. The values of service, excellence, diversity, community, and leadership provide the foundation for Winthrop’s continuing development and shape Winthrop’s continuing success.

Winthrop enrolls an achievement-oriented, culturally diverse and socially responsible student body between 6,500 and 7,000 students. The University recruits South Carolina’s most able students as well as highly qualified students from beyond the state whose presence adds diversity and enrichment to the campus and the state. Winthrop prides itself on being an institution of choice for groups traditionally under-represented on many college campuses.

Winthrop is located in a traditional setting of exceptional beauty, and provides a contemporary, collaborative, and supportive environment that fosters engaged student learning and development. Winthrop has a diverse and able faculty and professional staff of national caliber and supports their work as effective teachers, scholars, researchers, practitioners, and creative artists. Through this talented group, Winthrop students acquire and develop knowledge, skills, capabilities and values that enrich their lives and prepare them to meet the needs and challenges of the contemporary world, including the ability to communicate effectively, appreciate diversity, work collaboratively, synthesize knowledge, solve complex problems and adapt to change. Ongoing assessment of programs and services ensures both that all academic programs challenge students at their highest level of ability and that the library, instructional technology and other academic service areas support courses of study that are consonant with best practices. As a result, Winthrop graduates are eminently well prepared to enter the most competitive
graduate or professional schools as well as to be leaders in their chosen professions and in their communities.

**AGENCY’S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

The goals, strategies, and objectives outlined in Winthrop University's Strategic Planning Template were developed and adopted in 2013-14, following a comprehensive, multi-method assessment involving qualitative and quantitative methods that included analysis of key performance indicators, review of internal factors and externalities influencing Winthrop, input/feedback from internal and external stakeholders, and town hall and visioning meetings. Winthrop's aspiration to define excellence by offering quality and access in a singular institution promotes individual achievement and the greater good, recognizing that higher education serves three primary, interrelated purposes:

- To fuel our nation’s and our state’s economic engine through workforce development and inspiring entrepreneurs;
- To prepare people for democratic citizenship and social responsibility through exposure to the liberal arts, diverse people and experiences, and challenges that develop higher levels of intellectual, ethical, and moral reasoning;
- To promote professional success and social mobility by recognizing the fundamental connection between quality of education and equality of opportunity.

Winthrop University engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes. The University incorporates a systematic review of institutional mission, goals, and outcomes that includes strategic planning, annual reports, institution-wide annual budget review and planning, program assessment, personnel performance appraisal, and ongoing program and curricular reviews. Key participants include senior and mid-level leadership in academic units, administrative units, and student support services. The annual planning cycle is synchronized with South Carolina’s Fiscal Year, July 1 through June 30.

The key internal and external factors affecting Winthrop were re-evaluated to reflect results from the University’s comprehensive 2013-14 assessment initiative, and these strategic challenges are framed as “How best to:”

1. Address affordability stemming from shrinking state fiscal support, rising college costs, and increasing student debt;
2. Ensure that all Winthrop students have opportunities to achieve essential learning outcomes produced by high impact practices like collaborative research and creative activity, study abroad, service-learning, and internships;
3. Serve national, state, and regional workforce development needs, demonstrate student proficiencies with employer-desired skills that transcend disciplines, and use technology to broaden access and increase the percentage of adults with high quality college degrees;
4. Serve the expanding student archetype that includes residential students, adult students, veterans, and working professionals who need graduate degrees and certificates to advance or change careers;
5. Demonstrate student success relative to retention, graduation rates, and capacities as informed, engaged, and globally responsible citizens;
6. Meet reporting obligations of federal and state regulatory agencies and regional and specialized programmatic accreditation standards.

Winthrop’s State Accountability Report, one element of its comprehensive and continuous assessment, planning, and improvement process, is a summary of performance and achievements over time, providing transparency and evidence of compliance with SACSCOC standards, federal and state regulations, and Winthrop’s contributions to achieving South Carolina’s goals for higher education. Examples of Winthrop’s efforts, results, and selected achievements in 2013-14 span all divisions and are contextualized by the four goals described in the Strategic Planning Template.

**Goal 1: Promote access and degree attainment for an increasing number of students.**

- The Office of Admissions continues to provide prospective students with personalized service, where students are encouraged to get to know an admissions counselor, schedule campus visits, attend programs, view Winthrop’s institution profiles, or chat online. Admissions personnel work with faculty, providing opportunities for prospective students and parents to meet Winthrop’s faculty and staff.

- The Winthrop Bridge Program welcomed its first group of students in fall 2013. It is an academic transfer program that allows freshmen to attend York Technical College for two years to earn an associate’s degree or university studies certificate before transferring to Winthrop to complete a four-year degree. Plans to expand the program to include other two-year institutions are in progress.

- Winthrop’s Resource Center for Adult Students (RCAS) continues to work with student veterans to better understand and accommodate their learning needs. The Academic Success Center, LEAP initiative, and McNair Scholars program are resources to support enrollment and retention of underrepresented student groups and improve their opportunities to participate in high impact learning opportunities like undergraduate research, service-learning, and global learning experiences.

- Residence Life (Division of Student Life) and University College (Division of Academic Affairs) collaborate to feature academic theme floors, called Academic Success Communities, where students are housed together in a residential setting with others possessing similar academic and personal interests. Residence life staff, faculty members, other academic partners, and residents themselves present specific programs designed around a floor’s theme.

- The development, expansion, and automation of Winthrop’s early intervention system to support academic success exemplifies how, over time, Winthrop assessed the needs of academically at-risk students, used its organizational knowledge and new technologies to conceptualize and improve interventions to address needs, and delivered academic support students need to be successful.

- Winthrop redesigned Principles of the Learning Academy (ACAD 101), an essential course for all first-time freshmen. ACAD 101 introduces students to the concepts, principles, and skills necessary for successful higher learning and facilitates students’ adjustment to and engagement in the learning community.

- Jessie DuBard ’58 and her husband established the Jessie DuBard endowed scholarship to support education majors who come from homes where one or both parents are deceased. The DuBards’ generous gift was to promote Winthrop as an institution uniquely positioned to offer quality and access, and support the SC goal to be one of the most educated states.

- The American Council on Education (ACE) selected Winthrop to participate in the national Change and Innovation Lab (CIL) funded by a $400,000.00 Lumina Foundation grant to help colleges and universities
implement significant, sustainable initiatives to increase the number of first-generation and nontraditional students earning college degrees.\textsuperscript{vi}

Goal 2: Continually enhance the quality of the Winthrop experience for all students.

- Winthrop received a number of recognitions in 2013-14, including being named one of the Best in the Southeast by The Princeton Review, one of the Top Ten Regional Public Universities in the South by U.S. News & World Report, one of Barron’s Best Buys in College Education, one of Washington Monthly’s Best Bang for the Buck colleges, and Winthrop was among 32 postsecondary institutions—and the only SC institution—recognized for its efforts to improve college completion rates and prepare students for successful careers in the national report Beating the Odds, developed with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

- College of Business Administration’s Student Professional Development Conference, Employment-Seeking in a Digital Age, (March 4, 2014), attracted 250 participants to six workshops featuring nine speakers from corporate America and Winthrop’s MBA program.\textsuperscript{vii}

- More than 40 students worked with 15 faculty members during summer 2013 as part of Winthrop summer undergraduate research experiences program, funded by grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF).\textsuperscript{iv}

- Recognizing the need for healthcare professionals to have a bridge between their professional degrees and management aspects of clinical industries, College of Business Administration announced its new Healthcare Management Academic Certification.\textsuperscript{v}

- Winthrop’s newly established Global Ambassador Scholarship allows recipients to grow their leadership skills and provide opportunities to study abroad and engage with global issues.

- Winthrop used its $40,000 grant from the Council of Graduate Schools to develop a financial literacy program for students, with content created by College of Business faculty and webpage developed by students in the Visual Design program.

- 33 Winthrop students studied abroad during fall 2013, a 27% increase over fall 2012.\textsuperscript{vi}

- The National Institutes of Health recently awarded a $360,000 grant to Winthrop biology faculty member Dr. Eric Birgbauer to continue his studies on optic nerve growth and regeneration. Undergraduate students will help in the investigation to learn analytical skills and an understanding of the scientific process.\textsuperscript{vii}

- Dr. Laura Ullrich, Economics, completed a Fulbright (May 2014) at the University of Pristina in Kosovo.\textsuperscript{viii}

- The S.C. Area Health Education Consortium (AHEC) presented Dr. Dwight Dimaculangan, Biology, its 2014 Gateway Award for his promotion of the Bench to Bedside (B2B) initiative and commitment to successful matriculation of undergraduate students into health professions programs.

- Dr. Marshall Jones, Education, traveled to Kyiv, Ukraine in October 2013 to lead workshops for university administrators from Eastern Europe. Jones attended at the request of the International
Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), the non-profit organization that works with the U.S. State Department on education initiatives.

- **Dr. Seymour Simmons**, Fine Arts, received the 2013 Higher Education “Educator of the Year Award” at the SC Arts Educators Association (SCAEA) conference.

- Fine Arts professor **Phil Moody** was named “Educator of the Year” by the Society of Photographic Educators.

- Expanding **Blackboard Learn** applications continue to improve operational efficiencies for online course delivery and enhance opportunities to conduct student learning outcomes assessment initiatives.

**Goal 3: Enhance the work environment for faculty and staff.**

- As a result of town-hall style meetings in fall 2013, senior leaders identified a need to improve staff communications and opportunities for shared governance and in spring 2014 established **Staff Conference**, a staff assembly and a staff council.

- Winthrop participated in the **Great Colleges To Work For** Survey in spring 2014. Findings from the 2014 national study, administered by ModernThink in partnership with the Chronicle for Higher Education, are due in fall 2014 and will enable Winthrop to evaluate its workplace quality and climate with experiences reported by employees of other higher education institutions.

- Results from a multi-year comprehensive assessment performed by Winthrop’s **Faculty Roles and Rewards Committee** led to recommendations for improvements, which are now being prioritized and integrated into Winthrop’s governance structure as well as tenure, promotion, retention, and post-tenure review processes.

- Phased in migration to **standardize faculty documentation** using a secured, internally-developed Primary Instructor Credentialing System (PICS) and **Activity Insight** (proprietary application developed by Digital Measures) continues in 2013-14 as a result of assessment findings (during Winthrop’s 2011 decennial SACSCOC reaffirmation self-study) identifying the need for improved and more standardized documentation of faculty qualifications, credentials, and accomplishments.

- Automation of Winthrop’s **job application process** demonstrates improved process design and delivery in Human Resources that integrates organization knowledge, cost controls, efficiency and effectiveness factors.

**Goal 4: Forge new and solidify existing government, organizational, and business partnerships that create mutual benefit.**

- Winthrop is a member of the Rock Hill **Knowledge Park** community private/public partnership to attract jobs and new businesses.x

- 26 students from 14 S.C. colleges and universities visited Winthrop in May 2014 as part of the second annual **NEW Leadership Summer Institute**. One of the purposes of the institute is to encourage women to consider careers in public service.

- **Family Trust Federal Credit Union** commissioned 5 Winthrop students to create art for its new headquarters on White Street in downtown Rock Hill.
During the April 2014 Faculty, Staff, and Retirees awards ceremony, senior leaders presented 58 Community Service Awards to faculty and staff for service to the University and the community, demonstrating the broad range of community service contributions employees make to SC and beyond.

Winthrop’s achievements of the Carnegie Elective Classification on Community Engagement (awarded in 2009), inclusion on the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll every year (2013, 2012, 2010-11, 2009 Honor Roll with Distinction) since 2008 (inaugural year), and selection for the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) Core Commitments leadership consortium demonstrate Winthrop is accomplishing its community/public service objectives.

Winthrop University’s Inn at Winthrop became the first lodging property in York County, and the first collegiate property in South Carolina, to become a member of the SC Green Hospitality Alliance, a program of the SC Restaurant and Lodging Association and the SC DHEC Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling designed to help hotels, motels, restaurants and other hospitality facilities go green.

The National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER) presented Winthrop’s University-School Partnership Network with the 2013 Richard W. Clark Partner School Award for its vision and progress in partner school work advancing quality schools for all learners.

Winthrop’s Dare to Rise Initiative raised more than $1.1 million in seven weeks to galvanize initiatives designed to ensure the highest caliber of instruction and support for students and allow Winthrop to promote a program of “inclusive excellence” through need-based financial aid.

Winthrop’s 2013-14 achievements demonstrate the University’s current efforts and results associated with its own goals, as well as its ongoing contributions to South Carolina’s four education goals, as articulated in the 2009 report, Leveraging Higher Education for a Stronger SC. The four goals include making SC one of the most educated states, increasing research and innovation in SC, making SC a Leader in Workforce Training and Educational Services, and realizing SC’s Potential – Resources and Effectiveness.

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