

The Plan for Kalamazoo College's Future

Fall 2011

Never has the world had a more urgent need for the kind of liberally educated person that emerges from Kalamazoo College. We live in a radically new age, and students today need more from their Kalamazoo College education than ever before: more depth and breadth of knowledge; more experience in the workplace, the community, and with other cultures; greater facility with technologies. They must continue, above all, to be critical thinkers and problem solvers in order to address challenges never before seen or imagined.

The College's distinctive model of liberal arts education—the K-Plan—continues to be dramatically effective in equipping enterprising students and graduates with the self-reliance, resourcefulness, and global perspective they need in the 21st century. As we look ahead to the College's bicentennial in 2033, we are poised to create a new national model, **one that is based on the bedrock elements and insights of the K-Plan** and reflects the evolving knowledge and abilities “K” students will need to thrive and to lead, locally and globally.

What is this innovative new model?

- We will dramatically expand—and integrate—the four components of the K-Plan to reflect the evolution of new learning styles and new media and markets for information, opinion, theory, and engagement. The K-Plan (Senior Individualized Project, international engagement, experiential learning, and rigorous, in-depth examination of the liberal arts) will remain a hallmark of Kalamazoo College. We will expand significantly our students' international and career development opportunities to reflect the ways in which they must engage in the 21st century global community. Finally, we are expanding the K-Plan by adding a critical fifth element: enlightened leadership.
- We will create a distinctive, comprehensive, and intentional advising and mentorship model called K-Planning to ensure that each student is integrating various educational elements into a personalized “My K-Plan.” K-Planning will focus on the complete undergraduate experience, from admission through graduation, both academic and non-academic, throughout the student's entire four years.
- We are expanding opportunities for students, the campus, and alumni to be engaged with each other and the world in innovative ways.
- We will build a campus community that reflects the global community in which our students will live and lead.

THE K-PLAN: EXPANDED AND FULLY INTEGRATED

Expanding a Rigorous Liberal Arts Curriculum

A more open liberal arts curriculum requires all students to become active agents of their own education and enables them to turn their individual passions to important contributions after graduation. Breadth and rigor remain key components of the Kalamazoo curriculum, as do selection of a major, study of a second language, and completion of the Senior Individualized Project. The “K” curriculum also includes a series of seminars that incorporates global and intercultural issues and fosters

the integration of on-campus study with study abroad. Additionally, the faculty approved an innovative addition to our curricular offerings, an integrated interdisciplinary minor, allowing students to examine a topic of their choosing from multiple disciplinary perspectives. In collaboration with their academic advisors, our inquisitive, ambitious students will use the opportunity presented by greater curricular choice to create an educational plan that will develop their critical thinking skills, prepare them for the important choices they will be called upon to make throughout their lives, encourage continuous learning, and increase their ability to grow and change.

Global Engagement: Living, Working and Contributing in the 21st Century

Kalamazoo College has provided a distinctive international experience for more than 50 years, and today, 85 percent of our students study abroad. To prepare students to live, work, and contribute in the 21st century global community, we will provide new opportunities for international and intercultural engagement. These will include expanded opportunities for study, work, service, research, and internships abroad; the new core seminars; and new academic programs with an international and intercultural focus.

Creating Meaningful Connections to the World of Work and Service

We have expanded the concept of career development to highlight a broader array of programs, available throughout the year, to help students prepare for life after “K.” In addition to the traditional career development programs, which themselves have been strengthened through the creation of the Center for Career and Professional Development, we are implementing several new programs. The most exciting is the Guilds program, a powerful opportunity for professional development and networking with alumni. The Guilds convene students, alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the College around common professional interests. They foster mentoring relationships in which professional “masters” share their experiences, knowledge, and connection with student “apprentices.” The five existing Guilds – Business, Health, Justice and Peace, Law, and Sustainability – currently have more than 750 members in total.

“K” Students Will Develop into Enlightened Leaders

Leadership development is at the heart of the mission of Kalamazoo College. Intentional, ongoing state-of-the-art leadership development, supported by professional expertise and programmatic resources, is essential for students to develop the skills they will use after “K.” We will provide multiple opportunities for students to develop and practice leadership skills in both curricular and co-curricular situations. Two new centers—described later in this document—will present innovative ways for our students to acquire and practice the many attributes of leadership: directing, guiding, influencing, mentoring, collaborating, and participating, among others.

K-PLANNING: THE INTEGRATED K-PLAN

We are beginning to weave together the distinct elements of the K-Plan through a unique approach to undergraduate advising and mentoring called K-Planning. Through K-Planning, we seek to integrate rigorous academics, study abroad, service-learning, leadership development, career preparation, and graduate school planning into a single *network* tailored to each student as we assist them in exploring, identifying, and pursuing their intellectual, personal, and career interests. More importantly, through K-Planning, students develop a powerful narrative of their Kalamazoo College experience.

K-Planning integrates the varied components of college advising, separate and isolated on most campuses, into a seamless process. In this model, students have support from both an academic advisor and a K-Guide. The academic advisor focuses with them on their course selection and major; the K-

Guide provides direction for all other aspects of students' educational experience. Together, students and their K-Guides navigate the major mileposts on their educational journey, pausing to reflect on and evaluate their experiences and how they connect to one another.

The innovative nature of this advising concept was recognized by a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, which is allowing us to build on the work of an initial pilot program. We believe that K-Planning provides a compelling and powerful model for a contemporary liberal arts education that is truly distinctive.

CENTERS FOR LEADERSHIP IN SOCIAL JUSTICE & ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

The Arcus Center for Social Justice Leadership is providing a nexus for the rigorous intellectual examination of social justice and practical engagement with real world issues. Through the center, we are developing a new cadre of individuals who, through majoring in a variety of liberal arts fields and engaging in a broad array of social justice concerns, are equipped to provide enlightened leadership as they work toward more just communities and a more just world. The center is bringing to campus and the Kalamazoo community the leading thinkers, practitioners, and artists working in the area of human rights and social justice to interact with one another and our students. Through these efforts, "K" is beginning to be recognized for its contribution to the field of social justice much like it is recognized for outstanding work in the liberal arts and sciences. As liberal arts education was transformed by the widespread adoption of various components of the K-Plan over the past four decades, we expect the same to happen as other colleges see us as a developing model of social justice education and leadership. A new home for the center will also bring national recognition due to the inspired design produced by Jeanne Gang of Studio Gang, who was recently awarded a MacArthur "genius grant" for her body of work.

Still in the concept phase, the Center for Environmental Stewardship will take advantage of an underused yet very accessible college resource: the Lillian Anderson Arboretum. Building on the College's strength in the sciences as well as the green movement on campus, LandSea, and other environmentally based programs, the center will create new opportunities for the study of issues related to environmental stewardship and to the development of the skills required for students to provide leadership in addressing the environmental challenges of our modern society.

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE, STUDENT-FOCUSED ENVIRONMENT

To build and sustain a diverse student body we will increase the presence of matriculating international students; expand our national footprint with about half of our students recruited from out of state; and increase endowed scholarship funds to support international students, low-income students, and students from underrepresented groups. We already have seen progress toward some of these goals; the last two entering classes have averaged 37 percent out-of-state, 8 percent four-year international students, and 20 percent students of color. We continue to seek current and endowed scholarship funds from alumni and friends to recruit and retain a diverse group of exceptional students so that our campus reflects the global community in which our graduates will live and lead.

We plan to increase the student body by 150 new students in the next few years. An enrollment of 1,500 will create a more vibrant campus and ensure sufficient numbers of students for leadership positions, productions and ensembles, and competitive athletic teams.

We will also address needed improvements in our facilities that will strengthen the sense of community on campus. Our athletics fields and field house, currently under renovation, will enhance the student athletic experience and support our growing intramural programs (track the progress at <http://www.kzoo.edu/sports/>). Planning also is underway for a new fitness center and natatorium. Functional and aesthetically pleasing athletic facilities motivate the entire campus to begin and maintain a lifelong pattern of healthy lifestyles. Together with the renovated Hicks Center and the emergent home of the Arcus Center for Social Justice Leadership, the new fitness center will be a fundamental expansion of the “common living space” on campus—those places outside the classroom and library where students come together for informal, but often formative, exchanges with other students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

CREATING STRONGER CONNECTIONS WITH ALUMNI

We are developing more opportunities for alumni to be involved with students and with one another: more robust programming through the Alumni Relations office, including regional events and campus activities; more opportunities to support students through Guilds, internships, and externships; greater occasions for networking through technology. The inclusion of alumni in our students’ four-year experience is quite intentional and will ensure that they have the range of experiences and the networks they will need upon graduation.

We encourage you to become involved with “K” students by offering an internship or externship or joining one or more of the Guilds. Contact the Center for Career and Professional Development at 269.337.7183 or career@kzoo.edu. Stay current with the Guilds at <http://guilds.kzoo.edu/>. Alumni can tap into their *alma mater*, and into one another, through the College’s home page at www.kzoo.edu; Alumni Relations office, www.kzoo.edu/aluminfo or 269.337.7300; and Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/KalamazooCollege>.

INVESTING IN OUR FACULTY AND STAFF

Kalamazoo College provides a unique experience, integrating academic rigor with experiential education. The quality of our work is dependent on an outstanding faculty and staff who are committed to student engagement and experiential learning. Our faculty are active scholars and researchers who are committed to teaching and mentoring. Unfortunately, their salaries do not compete with institutions whose quality we rival or excel in educational outcomes. In order to attract and retain the necessary talent, the College seeks to enhance compensation in the years ahead, in part by increasing our endowment, which lags well behind other top liberal arts colleges across the country.

In 2033, when we gather to celebrate our bicentennial, Kalamazoo College again will be recognized for providing one of the most meaningful and distinctive educational experiences in higher education. The changes described here deepen the College's commitment to the liberal arts and ensure that Kalamazoo College students graduate with an understanding of how to navigate the world, bringing intellectual rigor, a global perspective, passionate interest, and practical experience to whatever they choose to pursue.

As we implement this powerful educational plan, we invite you to join us by giving, volunteering, and championing Kalamazoo College’s creatively evolving liberal arts education. The plan and the involvement of our alumni and friends will ensure that Kalamazoo College lives up to President Hoben’s vision of “a small college that is better than any other.”