

Make it Methodist

**Methodist College Strategic Plan
2023-2026**

MC 2023 Strategic Plan: Make it Methodist

Introduction

Methodist College (MC) is one of the first nursing focused colleges in Central Illinois and is committed to educating and preparing students for careers in the healthcare industry. Methodist College provides services to support and enhance student learning and strives to meet students where they are, essentially erasing geographic and demographic barriers of access to relevant academic programs and quality support services for more than 450 active students. MC continually improves on the characteristics that support over 120 years of alumni. MC believes that education is the best way to ensure social mobility and social justice, serving as an engine to empower individuals to improve their own lives, provide for their families, contribute to their communities, and improve patient outcomes in Central Illinois. MC focuses on educational opportunity and is a place where administrators, faculty, and staff work hard, every day, to develop and sustain high-quality academic programs in an environment where policies, procedures, and resources are optimized to support students meeting their educational goals.

As an institution of higher learning, we are committed to expanding our understanding, and improving drastically in the area of understanding one another. To this end, through our College Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Committee, we create open dialogue to explore what our community members need, what more each of us can do, and how we can support one another. We are committed to ensuring a safe place for everyone at MC.

History and Context

Methodist College is a four-year, private, not-for-profit college affiliated with Carle Health, located in Peoria, Illinois. Methodist College is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission (HLC), the regional accreditation agency that accredits degree-granting institutions of higher education that are based in the 19-state North Central region of the United States. Methodist College was first awarded HLC institutional accreditation in 2008. The college also holds discipline-based accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), and the Commission of Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

Methodist College has a history that began in 1900 when the Deaconess of the Methodist Episcopal Church opened the Deaconess home, hospital, and school of nursing. In 2000, the Methodist School of Nursing evolved into Methodist College and began offering the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program.

In 2012, the Arts and Science department was launched. As a result, general education courses for all academic programs were offered. The Bachelor of Science in Health Science program, and the Gerontology Certificate program launched in 2012. In spring 2017 the college began offering certified nursing assistant and certified medical assistant programs. The Bachelor of Social Work program was offered in 2017 and in 2019, The HLC approved The Bachelor of Science in Health Science program change to the Bachelor of Science with a concentration in Healthcare Management. MC offers minors in Arts & Humanities, Diversity, Equity, and

Inclusion Studies, Mathematics and Science, Philosophy, Psychology, and Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Since expiration of the last Strategic Plan, the college has undergone a number of significant changes. The Chancellor who executed the plan departed, an interim was identified, and the search and appointment of a new Chancellor occurred. The college replaced several key leadership positions, in addition to replacing its outdated student information system. Most recently, MC was acquired as an independent affiliate of the non-profit Carle Health System via an official *change in ownership*, which moved the college from UnityPoint Health to Carle Health.

The new 2023-2026 Strategic Plan builds upon the MC's past strategic priorities. This new plan acknowledges the successes of the past, the evolution of the college, and a changing higher education landscape. MC recognizes that full inclusion of diverse perspectives and life experiences is central to academic excellence. In order to realize this commitment, MC recognized the need to strengthen efforts to adopt a framework to imbed equity and inclusion in all that we do. This led to the revamping of the MC Diversity Equity Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Committee which will also serve as a lens through which we view the work and built our revised strategic plan.

The Planning Process

Methodist College initiated the development of a new Strategic Plan in the fall of 2021, after the previous plan had expired. The interim Chancellor put strategic planning on hold until a new Chancellor was hired. Under new leadership, the college followed the process for strategic planning as described by The Society for College and University Planning (SCUP). This was a very inclusive and iterative process that is based on an environmental scan, surveying constituents, identifying themes, creating goals, implementing, and assessing progress regularly.

In the fall of 2021, the college had an open training for the community. SCUP consultants came to the college to describe the strategic planning process and help to create a culture of strategic planning. SCUP training participants included academic leaders, full-time and part-time faculty, support staff, and alumni who ultimately developed the draft definitions for the 2023 mission, vision, and values as a starting point to engage the college community.

The college then engaged a private firm to launch a survey of alumni, board members, community members, students, staff, and faculty. The survey that was launched in spring 2022 gleaned from the survey identified common themes that were ultimately converted to the pillars of the strategic plan.

Next, we identified thematic group leaders who were responsible for steering the work of their committees, which included facilitating meetings, sharing information, and creating draft goals for each theme (pillar and foundation) identified.

Environmental Scan

MC's 2023 Strategic Plan was informed by an environmental scan of the higher education, workforce, and community landscape. This informed Chancellor Shanderson's characterization of that landscape relative to managing the pandemic and demographic shifts. The strategic plan provides focus to meet anticipated external challenges. These challenges include known demographic shifts such as the declining cohort of traditional age students over the next 5-7 years, which will increase competition and shifted the growth area in higher education to graduate programs; shifts in public perceptions of the value of a college degree; increasing pressures on pricing in response to the affordability movement; continuing advances in costly innovative technologies; and the immediate impact of competition. The 2023 Strategic Plan was also drafted during a period of disruption on higher education due to declining enrollments and the COVID 19 pandemic.

Mission, Vision, and Goals

Methodist College's Mission, Vision, and Goals define the college and guide all that it does. The goals and strategies that emerged in the 2023-26 strategic planning processes will be constantly compared to our Mission, Vision, and Goals to calibrate alignment during the multi-year development process and to facilitate meeting its mission and vision as an expression of institutional goals. The Mission, Vision, and Goals refresh was approved by the Board of Directors in 2022.

Mission

Methodist College is committed to educating and preparing future health and human services professionals for careers that meet community and regional healthcare industry needs.

Vision

Deliver quality transformational experiences that enable future healthcare leaders to enhance and contribute to positive health outcomes for our community.

Methodist College Institutional Goals

- Provide rigorous academic experiential learning opportunities required of healthcare industry professionals.
- Support a positive, student-centered learning environment.
- Foster quality instruction and innovative programs.
- Offer quality student support services and programs.
- Recruit and retain a diverse, qualified workforce.
- Demonstrate fiscal responsibility and accountability.
- Provide resources to support institutional mission.
- Recruit and retain a qualified, diverse student body.
- Cultivate collaborative community relationships to support the mission and vision of the college.

The MC Parthenon

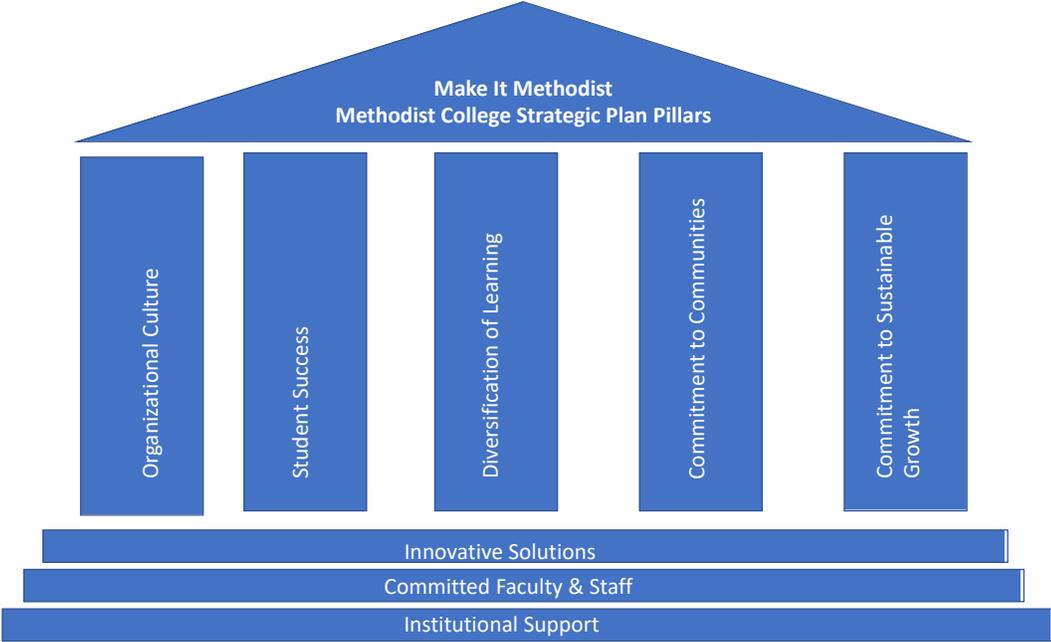
Methodist College envisioned its plan as a Parthenon, with the pillars representing overarching strategic directions for the college. These pillars rest upon rock-steady foundations.

Pillars

- Organizational Culture
- Student Success
- Diversification of Learning
- Commitment to Communities
- Commitment to Sustainable Growth

Foundations

- Innovative Solutions
- Committed Faculty and Staff
- Institutional Support



Pillars Defined

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture involves creating a welcoming college community that supports a nurturing environment for faculty, staff, and students. Our organizational culture celebrates collaborative space and prioritizes building competent, culturally sensitive, and ethical professionals. Our organizational culture seeks to foster and develop institutional knowledge and welcomes the valuable contributors made by the overall college community. At MC, faculty, staff, and students commit to engaging in quality learning and scholarship.

Goals:

1. Create a college-wide Organizational Culture Committee (OCC) that provides focus on the creation and nurturing of a strong organizational culture.
 2. Host an annual academic conference which includes submissions for presentations where faculty, staff and students may present and share academic, research and professional topics.
 3. With input from the OCC, establish annual signature-events that support collegially exchanges and strengthen the Methodist College family.
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Student Success

Student success is the completion of a rigorous and relevant program providing skills and the knowledge that empowers students to improve their lives, careers, and communities.

Goals:

1. To meet the holistic and academic needs of MC students, establish on-going evaluation of student service efforts that is reviewed annually.
 2. Within the Annual Program Report (APR) process, each program will identify at least two course(s) that represent the greatest barriers to student success and revise by the end of the fiscal year.
 3. Reach full participation with all MC students completing service-learning/civic engagement activities in which they may contribute to the public good.
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Diversification of Learning

Furthering the educational and professional experience of students, employees, and the community by providing diverse learning opportunities to promote life-long and experiential learning.

Goals:

1. Provide lifelong learning opportunities for the community.
 2. Provide continuing education and training to employees and the community.
 3. Provide experiential learning opportunities to students and community.
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Commitment to Communities

At MC, we value each member of our community including students, alumni, faculty, staff, and administrators. Our intention is to ensure that each member feels valued, respected, and included in our educational environment. We commit to meaningful, honest, and transparent communication with our community as we support learning experiences that have the capacity to improve the human condition for each of our respective communities.

Goals:

1. Prepare students with the training and experience needed to enact social responsibility to become leaders in their community upon graduation.
 2. Provide all faculty and staff an opportunity to evaluate leaders related to their assessment of honest and transparent communication and whether they feel like their voices are included and their ideas are implemented across the programs.
 3. Improve feedback mechanisms to provide students with opportunities to share feedback at regular intervals.
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Commitment to Sustainable Growth

The college's commitment to sustainable growth includes engaging in responsible growth to develop in-demand, high-quality, relevant and viable, academic programs, aligned with both industry and community needs, in a fiscally responsible manner.

Goals:

1. Increase new student enrollments by 10%-15% each year, emphasizing academic quality and diversity of students.
 2. Develop new programs, and adjust current programs, to align with industry demand and community needs.
 3. Expand student support opportunities that positively impact student retention by reaching our retention goal of 85%.
 4. Regularly measure stakeholder satisfaction.
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Foundations Defined

Innovative Solutions

Leveraging ideas, perspectives, and methods that strengthen our pillars through the skills and expertise of our employees, curriculum, technology, processes, governance, policies, and culture.

Goals:

1. Create a comprehensive foundational structure for faculty and staff, that outlines clear and consistent guidelines for their roles, responsibilities, and expectations, including policies and procedures, training programs, and performance evaluation methods which is reviewed and revised annually.

2. Enhance technology literacy among students and employees, annually determining the specific technology skills students and employees need, and offering training on those skills.
 3. Increase the diversity and accessibility of our curriculum, annually reviewing course offerings for diversity and accessibility, and recommending changes to increase the diversity and accessibility of the course material, assignments, and delivery.
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Committed Faculty and Staff

Methodist College faculty and staff are essential to our mission, vision, values, and goals. It is essential that we develop and support them while demonstrating they are valued. We will do this by providing development opportunities, support, policies, recognition, partnerships, wellness, and a philosophy that promotes integrity, encourages diversity, and inspires our work.

Goals:

1. Faculty and staff demonstrate their commitment to MC's mission, vision, and goals through effective communication, increased engagement and interaction with students.
 2. Increase faculty and staff commitment to MC's mission, vision, and values by providing more accommodation and flexibility, career paths, training and professional development, superior benefits and compensation based upon performance.
 3. Increase faculty and staff commitment to MC and its mission, vision, and goals by building stronger and more personal professional relationships between administration and staff.
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Institutional Support

Aiding leadership to ensure the mission, vision, and values of the college are accomplished in a way that facilitates the provision of meaningful support for Methodist College's faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community members.

Goals:

1. To better determine how MC's faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community members use available supports and resources, and determine the most effective ways to support student success, we will create a baseline of usage for available services provided by each unit at the end of Spring 2023 and subsequent reporting at the end of each semester. To do this, each unit will be responsible for preparing an end of semester report detailing service/usage data.
2. To Increase awareness of the supports and resources provided by MC's leadership, faculty, and staff for students and alumni we will create a landing page for available supports and resources offered by the college that is accessible for all MC faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community members that is updated prior to the start of each semester.

3. To provide opportunities to identify needed services and to support the development of relevant and easily accessible supports and resources for all MC faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community members each unit will survey and collect feedback from each service user and subsequently be provided in a report at the end of each semester.
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Upholding the Pillars: Accountability of Plan Implementation

Methodist College measures its progress on strategic goals and initiatives and developed its tactical approaches to implementing those goals and initiatives in its institutional program review, annual assessment review and program review processes. These comprehensive institutional assessment processes engage teams of college constituents in workspaces developed for every academic program and support departments of the college. Progress on tactical action plans will be reviewed regularly, while the strategic goals are measured, evaluated, and periodically reported to the Board by the continuing work of the Strategic Plan Steering Committee.

Opportunities Found: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging (DEIB)

Through the process of developing our revised strategic plan, we recognized the opportunity to infuse diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) more comprehensively and systemically throughout our plan. We recognize that diversity is core to educational excellence, and we believe in efforts that are intentional, systemic, and central to the mission and values of Methodist College.

Methodist College further recognizes that DEIB cannot be the work of one unit, and to this end, the DEIB framework will be facilitated through a partnership between the DEIB Committee, Academic Affairs, and Institutional Effectiveness office. The effort of these offices will support the various units across the College.

Strategic Plan Goals Committee

Ms. Ravin Addison
Federal Work Study-Admissions & Library

Ms. Mandy Barlow
Center for Student Success Nursing Coordinator

Dr. David Burkitt
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Mr. Corey Campbell
Program Director, Social Work

Ms. Tricia Fox
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Assistant Professor - Medical Assistant Program

Dr. Alaina Hamilton
Assistant Professor Nursing-Undergraduate

Ms. Colleen Karn
Associate Professor of English & Humanities
LMS Support Specialist

Ms. Justina Kirchgessner
Senior Financial Analyst

Dr. Blanca Miller
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Ms. Gail Piscaglia
Manager of Testing Center

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Dr. Amer Qatanani
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Federal Work Study-Registrar

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Chancellor

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Mr. Ryan Schubert
Chief of Security

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Recruitment and Title IX Coordinator

Ms. Danelle Thorpe
Student Wellness Coordinator

Dr. Lori Wagner
Associate Professor-Nursing

Ms. Michele Gebhart
Campus Security Officer

Ms. Marjorie Getz
Professor-Psychology & Coordinator of Faculty
Mentoring

Ms. Gwen Huls-Fritz
Instructor of Nursing

Ms. Jacquie Kauffman
Instructor Nursing-Undergraduate

Mr. Nate McCoy
Director of Institutional Research

Ms. Andrea Parker
Executive Director Hult Center for Healthy Living

Ms. Stephanie Poignant
Dean & Faculty Administrative Assistant

Ms. Lisa Pumfrey
Associate Professor-Biology

Ms. Angie Robinson
Director of Financial Aid

Ms. Clara Sanders
Campus Café Lead

Dr. Amber Schappaugh
Associate Professor
Program Director Medical Assisting & Health Sciences

Ms. Leah Jones Schneblin
Director of Academic Advising

Dr. Theresa Schwindenhammer
Graduate Nursing Program Coordinator

Mr. Joel Shoemaker
Associate Director of Library Services

Ms. Vanessa Tsan
Federal Work Study-OASIS & Tutor

Ms. Jennifer White
Human Resources Business Partner

Ms. Victoria Whitehouse
Federal Work Study-Admissions & Library

We are grateful to all who participated in the development of the 2023 –2026 Make It Methodist Strategic Planning process.

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