

State of the College
William Craft, President
Earl Lewis, Chair of the Board

August 21, 2018
Centrum
8:30-9:45

The Concordia That Is Yet To Be

*Please note that the President and Chair of the Board of Regents spoke alternately throughout the State of the College as specifically noted in the report.

Part I: Celebration of Summer Work

{Greetings from Dr. Craft:}

Welcome to all, and welcome to Board Chair Earl Lewis.

We're coming to the close of a summer of wonderful [achievement across campus](#):

- ❖ Outstanding graduates, May 2018
- ❖ 4 national awards for Dining Services
- ❖ 135,000 meals served to daycare sites and Meals on Wheels, June-August
- ❖ Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold Certification for Integrated Science Center
- ❖ Landscaping around the Integrated Science Center
- ❖ Reconstructed parking lot just north of the Integrated Science Center
- ❖ 10,000 course materials—ready in the bookstore for 1st semester
- ❖ New football scoreboard
- ❖ More than 200 new athletes recruited
- ❖ New coaches for our varsity teams
- ❖ Vote by Regents to approve promotion and tenure of Concordia faculty
- ❖ More than 100 faculty who did summer development through Academic Affairs
- ❖ More than 30 staff who *joined* them
- ❖ PEAK learning this summer
- ❖ Core Curriculum study, with a focus on global and U.S. diversity
- ❖ Student summer research
- ❖ Summer orientation for our first ever Community Access Scholars
- ❖ Concordia selected for the *Student Success Academy* of the Higher Learning Commission
- ❖ PEAK approved student leadership roles through Student Development and Campus Life
- ❖ Fjelstad back online as a student residence
- ❖ Center for Student Success moving into Normandy
- ❖ \$5 million gift from Kenny Park to build culturally authentic *Sup sogŭi Hosu*, the Korean village at the Concordia Language Villages
- ❖ A Number that Begins with 6: 605 new first-year students—the largest incoming class in five years
- ❖ A complete refresh of the Concordia website
- ❖ Brandon Zylstra '15, becomes a Viking.

Part II: Honoring Our Colleagues

Dean Eric Eliason introduced the presentation of awards. The Flaata awards recognize the legacy given to the College by Ole and Lucy Flaata. The Flaata awards were established with an endowment given to the college by the Flaatas in 1972, to recognize those who have distinguished themselves by their contributions to the mission of the college.

- ❖ Dean Eliason presented the Ole and Lucy Flaata Distinguished Teaching Award to Ron Twedt, Assistant Professor of Accounting.
- ❖ Associate Dean of the College Stephanie Ahlfeldt presented the Ole and Lucy Flaata Distinguished Advisor Award to Roy Hammerling, Professor of Religion and Chair of the Department of Religion.
- ❖ Director of Human Resources Peggy Torrance presented the Ole and Lucy Flaata Distinguished Service Award to Lance Anderson, lead groundskeeper at Concordia Language Villages in Bemidji, Minnesota.
- ❖ Chief Diversity Officer Edward Antonio presented the inaugural Ole and Lucy Flaata Inclusive Excellence Award to Mikal Kenfield, Director of Residence Life. This new award was introduced to recognize work that advances diversity and inclusion.

Dean Eliason noted that the final award recognizes the legacy given to the college by Reuel and Alma Wije. The Wije Distinguished Professorship was established with an endowment given to the college to honor and pay tribute to professors who have distinguished themselves by their contributions to the mission of the college.

- ❖ Dean Eliason presented the Reuel and Alma Wije Distinguished Professor Award to Joan Kopperud, Professor of English and Acting Director of Integrative Learning.

Part III: The Concordia That Is Yet To Be

A. An Invitation

{Dr. Craft:} Two years ago, just outside the Centrum on the celebration of our 125th anniversary, Professor Olin Storvick stepped up onto a dais to raise a toast. It was his 63rd year at Concordia, and no one would have begrudged him a look back at his decades of service. But that isn't what he did. He raised his glass and asked us all to join him in a toast "to the Concordia that is yet to be!"

Building that Concordia will be the theme for Dr. Lewis and me this morning. We come with an invitation to create that new Concordia together. And we will speak of our inheritance in higher education at Concordia and in the larger educational universe around us. We'll turn then to envisioning "the Concordia that is yet to be" and the work of planning for it.¹

B. Our Inheritance in Higher Education

1. {Dr. Craft:} Concordia's Resistance to Mechanical Models of Learning

All of us here, in all of our roles, inherited a model of the university created in the late 19th and early 20th century. Inspired in part by the German research model, it was funded by people whose names we know: Carnegie, Cornell, Duke, Marshall Field, Rockefeller, Stanford, and Vanderbilt. They weren't *disinterested* donors: they worked in close partnership with the presidents of American universities from Charles Eliot at Harvard to William Rainey Harper at the University of Chicago to Andrew White at Cornell. What both the presidents and the philanthropists sought was a new university for an industrial age.

That's what they created, and that is our inheritance. These institutions brought us the elective system, a greatly expanded curriculum, and the credit hour. They believed in what came to be called "scientific management"—assigning discreet tasks to discreet workers—and they believed in factory-like production. It was the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching that in 1910 commissioned an engineer named Morris Cooke to write a study called *Academic and Industrial Efficiency*. If you're as crazy as I am, you can read the whole thing online.² It is from Cooke's study that the credit hour comes.

With the adoption of the elective system and the student credit hour, colleges and universities shifted the definition of a baccalaureate from "mastery of a comprehensive curriculum to the completion of a series of courses and credit units."³ This system, which has stood now for more than a century, has done what it was designed to do: to create specialists and managers for an industrial economy. The challenge is that our students *don't live* in that industrial age. They live in a radically interconnected, post-industrial era.

Concordia is self-evidently the child of the university system I've described: we have divisions, departments, disciplines, electives, and credit hours (126 required). But Concordia—more than any other college I know well—has also *stood apart* from this system. We have long known about students what one contemporary guide noted in this Sunday's *New York Times*: "The more you regard college as a credentialing exercise, the less likely you are to get the benefits."⁴

Concordia stands apart

- ❖ In its mission, whose purpose (to quote contemporary scholar Cathy Davidson) is to create graduates not only work ready but *world ready*.⁵
- ❖ Likewise, in the BREW ambition of our common core
- ❖ In music and theatre ensembles fully open to non-specialists
- ❖ In Division III sports, where students play for the love of it and in which no one could guess the range of each athlete's interests
- ❖ In ministry that seeks to practice faith and spirituality in action within and beyond campus
- ❖ And as Dean Eliason has noted to me, in refusing to play the college ratings game, as so many have, by defining ourselves by the number of people we can *reject*.

The 2012-17 college plan was inspired by the aspiration to take the best of these Concordia distinctions and to push back against a fragmented, mechanical model that still prevails in higher

education: and so we called it *whole* self, *whole* life, *whole* world. Your achievements prompted by that plan are remarkable:

- ❖ The Integrated Science Center designed, funded, built, and opened on schedule
- ❖ Integrative learning launched through PEAK, with major grants from the Mellon Foundation in support, one of them received in honor of Earl Lewis
- ❖ The Offutt School of Business—rooted in the liberal arts and ethical practice—designed, funded, built, and opened in the renovated Grant Center
- ❖ New academic programs established across arts and sciences and business: in Museum Studies, Neuroscience, Computer Science, and Finance
- ❖ Student Development and Campus Life created—crossing and erasing old academic/student affairs boundaries
- ❖ Office of Diversity opened and Council for Diversity created
- ❖ Diversity Student Endowed Scholarship established
- ❖ Cohort recruitment begun: FOCUS, Act Six, Community Access Scholarships
- ❖ National recognition gained for interfaith study, dialogue, and service
- ❖ Concordia Language Villages named a National Language Training Center
- ❖ Sustainability achieved in Learning and in Operations:
 - The Cargill Foundation funded project in environmental citizenship, Tunnel Garden, Integrated Climate Commitment, Taste Not Waste, and LEED Gold for the Integrated Science Center
 - At the Concordia Language Villages: efficiencies in lighting and heating; reduction of food waste; and staff workshops on how to integrate sustainability learning into the language and culture curriculum in each Village.
- ❖ The Concordia Commitment launched in enrollment marketing
- ❖ The RISE Campaign almost fully funded at 95% of its \$150 million goal, with 16 months to go
- ❖ The One-Staff initiative launched, with the creation of staff salary categories/bands.

This is all the more remarkable because you did it even as we responded to the broadside of small incoming classes in 2014 and 15.

There is, we know, unfinished work from 2012-17:

- ❖ Determining what it should mean *now* to be a *global* college: not only *where* we study, but *who* studies, *who* teaches, *who* leads in a world rich in diversity but unequal in opportunity
- ❖ Broadly engaging campus in the work of ministry and in spiritual development at a time when the U.S. is becoming increasingly less “churched”
- ❖ Claiming the full potential of the Offutt School to become a signature program that strengthens Concordia as a whole
- ❖ Building on non-baccalaureate learning like that of the Concordia Language Villages, the accelerated nursing program, the master’s in nutrition, and our first efforts in leadership education to create a continuum of learning before, during, and after college—and to build revenue for Concordia as a whole
- ❖ Offering the best possible compensation—salary, benefits, professional growth, leadership opportunities for our faculty and staff.

A full report on 2012-17 plan will be published online soon, but for today, my message is, your work has laid the foundation for the Concordia of 2023 and well beyond.

2. {Dr. Lewis:} Continuity and Change

- ❖ In 1971 the historian James Axtell wrote a blistering essay for the journal *History of Education Quarterly* in which he criticized, among others, the venerable Richard Hofstadter, who was an imminent American historian at Columbia. In “The Death of the Liberal Arts College,” Axtell took us back to the late 19th century, when the emergence of both the land grant and the research university supposedly heralded the death of the liberal arts college. He penned a faux obituary. He documents that while some of the schools morphed into research universities, the residential, liberal arts model not only endured in the decades ahead, it thrived.⁶
- ❖ Of course some of the schools changed. They added more applied fields, became co-ed, and subordinated their traditional religious affiliations.
- ❖ In a way, Axtell reminded us that these schools have always been living institutions, capable of adapting to broader societal shifts and demands. Rather than clinging tenaciously to an outdated sense of self, with each era the colleges modernized, innovated, and adapted.
- ❖ Instead of lamenting a new era of so-called demise, this is another time for forthright, imaginative leadership that combines elements of continuity and change. So, what’s our plan?
- ❖ It is important to answer this question for a number of reasons. Let me offer one. The global consulting firm, McKinsey, released a report at the end of 2017 in which they predict that 800 million jobs that exist today will be non-existent by 2030—54 million in the US, about 1/3 of the labor force.⁷ That’s in 13 years!! What’s happening? Automation and technological and digital advancements.
- ❖ What’s a college to do? A version of an answer at Concordia:
 - Mission (Whole Self, Life, World)
 - Advancement (New Resources through the RISE Campaign)
 - Aggressive Marketing and Market-Sensitive Pricing
 - Diversity and Inclusion
 - Financial and Institutional Sustainability
- ❖ Is that a sharp enough distinction? How many other colleges maintain that they are educating the person for an ever changing world? How many worry about the discount rate—the amount we give back to students so that they and their parents can afford to pay our asking price? How many understand that their future hinges on recruiting and retaining an ever more diverse student body? How many are working hard to expand their economic pie so as to bring the resources needed to mount new efforts and recruit and retain a faculty, staff, and student body of the future? The vast majority of the 4000+ postsecondary institutions in the U.S., I venture.
- ❖ So what new questions should we be asking, what new initiatives should we be devising, what new approaches and partners should we be pursuing? That’s what I want to come to after Bill concludes his next set of comments.

C. The Concordia of 2023 and Beyond

1. {Dr. Craft:} The Process for Planning

Six years ago, I stood beside Olin Storvick after the memorial service for Carl Bailey, Concordia scientist, dean, and author of our mission statement. With no preface, Olin inclined his head and said, “It is the *audacity* of Bailey’s mission statement that struck me most: to influence, from this little college in Moorhead, the *world*.” I commend to everyone here the compelling essay on that statement written this year by Religion Professor Ahmed Afzaal. The Dovre Center will publish it and organize conversations about its scholarly and provocative argument.

Constant in mission, and creative in action, we will affirm the gains of our 2012-17 plan, acknowledge what we haven’t yet accomplished, and reach further still as we educate for our students’ post-industrial, richly diverse, radically interconnected, and still suffering world.

Here is the process we’ll follow, and here is my invitation to join it:

- ❖ At the May 2019 meeting of the Board of Regents, we will present for final review the goals for Concordia 2023—and beyond. Those goals will address our aspirations for
 - Student Learning
 - Institutional Distinction
 - Financial Strength
 - Faculty and Staff Well Being
- ❖ Those goals will flow from the knowledge, imagination, and dialogue of
 - The Faculty and Staff
 - Our Students and Graduates
 - The Cabinet and Regents
- ❖ Campus reflection will be led and organized by a faculty/staff/student steering committee, co-chaired by Mark Jensen and Laurie Probst.⁸
- ❖ The plan we create will be marked by clear goals, regular assessment and accountability, resource investments needed, the discipline to drop what doesn’t work, and creative collaboration among us all.
- ❖ That work will be completed on a timeline published to everyone and culminating in May of 2019—when the real work will begin!

2. {Dr. Craft:} Creating Our Vision Together

By design, we haven’t composed a formal vision statement yet; we won’t until the planning work is near its conclusion. But we need a first frame, and so over the summer cabinet and board leadership have focused on these three elements:

- ❖ A Concordia committed to the adaptive and transformative liberal arts: leading our students to *learn*, to *teach*, and to *act* for the greater good in a highly networked, inter-dependent world.
- ❖ A Concordia where that kind of learning builds character, careers, and citizenship: leading our graduates to know *who* they are, *how* they can stand independently, and what they will stand *for*.
- ❖ A Concordia committed to an institution-wide practice that is inclusive and entrepreneurial in fulfillment of mission; leading *us*, staff, faculty, and governing board,

to embrace the courage, the strength in diversity, and the openness to change that we ask of our students.

In some cases, we will be pressing our advantages, as with the emerging strength of integrative learning and PEAK, which we are just living into and which our recent market study has told us strikes a chord with prospective students and families. In other cases, we will be looking at current structures to ask whether they best inspire and challenge our students—for example, at the core curriculum, which is under review. In still others, we will look to see if we should do things new—as in new combinations of our learning programs, as in new offerings for non-undergraduate learners, as in forms and sites for learning that extend the reach of that mission well beyond this campus. Thoughtful, informed, and bold, we will act with every single student’s success in mind, and we will think big about what Concordia College can be and do in 2023—and well beyond.

3. {Dr. Lewis:} Let me take us back out—say 20,000 feet and then back down to earth.

- ❖ I started with a reference to the McKinsey report. I could have easily started with references to two books—one by Joseph Aoun and the other by Cathy Davidson. Both have written books in the last year about the future of American higher education. Aoun, in *Robot-Proof*, argues that the critical learning and analytical skills taught in the liberal arts, when combined with entrepreneurship, creative learning and social and cultural competence, will prepare one to work and succeed in a world when routine tasks can be automated. Aoun is the president of Northeastern University in Boston. He implies that the future can be had by those who have mastered learning and who have the ability to tackle problems that cannot be routinized. Cathy Davidson argues in *The New Education* that education of the 20th century shifted from the founding “mission to train ministers toward the selection, preparation, and credentialing of future leaders of new professions, new institutions, and new companies.”⁹ She concludes, the new education “means refocusing away from the passive student to the whole person learning new ways of thinking through problems with no easy solutions. It shifts the goal of college from fulfilling course and graduation requirements to learning for success in the world after college.”¹⁰
- ❖ Both books raise profoundly important and salient questions:
 - How should a college be organized in the years ahead? Do the old configurations, shaped around disciplines and departments and majors, make sense?
 - What pedagogical practices do we retain and which ones do we jettison? More important, what new practices do we introduce?
 - Should we be educating students to tackle complex problems across a spectrum of so-called areas? What does that mean for CC? New divisions called . . . Liberal Arts? Business? Allied Health? Language, Culture and Public Policy? Other?
 - What academic neighborhood do we want to live in? Is our point of reference liberal arts colleges in Minnesota or the Upper Midwest? Or are we a national college, seeking to become even more recognized as a national institution of distinction? Besides money, what does it take to get there? If the point of reference is the coming decades rather than the past, how do we become viewed as a top college for a student looking for a 21st century education? If so, how do we make the marketplace shift?

- We have long talked about diversity. Are we equally committed to inclusion? Is the place prepared to change as we invite more unlike people into the fold of community? That's a key to being both, for if we are diverse without being inclusive, we will have failed.
- If we are to adjust our ambitions and alter our neighborhood, we will need to plan. Implementable change will require a plan and a willingness to adjust the plan to meet the stated goals.
- The Board is prepared to challenge, support, endorse, and partner as you attempt to answer these and other questions. We must have an understandable and convincing answer for those who ask, "why Concordia?" Our answer should not run away from our past, but steer us toward our future. If we are to prepare men and women to shape the affairs of the world, we have to confront, engage, and embrace that world. This may mean jettisoning things that no longer work, experimenting with things we know little about, and producing things that demand innovation, creativity, ingenuity. For example, we have taught languages in Bemidji and Moorhead for decades. Do we have the courage to experiment with teaching English in China, for example? Do we do it alone or in partnership, if at all?
- I am sure you can all think of scores of other examples. It is that willingness to think afresh I want to encourage.
- ❖ Let me conclude this way. Concordia College has had a wonderful history. What we decide in the coming weeks and months will determine the character of its future. I am excited for a new year, and I and other members of the board are excited to join you in a deliberate and intentional planning project. That's our future. Let's embrace it with discernment, vigor, and purpose. Success means we not only manufacture a robot-proof education, it means we revolutionize the ways we prepare students for a world perceived to be in flux. Thank you.

¹ Dr. Craft notes: In my preparation for this year's state of the college with Earl Lewis, I have drawn on Concordia history, the broader history of American education, and also on two recent books that I commend to all: Joseph Aoun's *Robot Proof* and Cathy Davidson's *The New Education*, both published in 2017. Aoun begins with the fast-changing realm of work and then asks what it means for education; Davidson begins with higher education as it now is and calls for fundamental change for the sake of our students.

² Follow this link to read an online copy of Cooke's essay:
<https://archive.org/details/academicindustri05cookuoft>.

³ Jennifer Shedd, "The History of the Student Credit Hour," in *How the Student Credit Hour Shapes Higher Education: The Tie That Binds, New Directions for Higher Education*, Number 122, Summer 2003 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), p. 12.

⁴ Frank Bruni, "How to Get the Most Out of College," *New York Times*, April 17, 2018:
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/17/opinion/college-students.html>.

⁵ See *The New Education* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), p. 15: “The goal of higher education is greater than workforce readiness. It’s *world* readiness.”

⁶ James L. Axtell, *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (Winter, 1971), pp. 339-352.

⁷ James Manyika, Susan Lund, Michael Chui, Jacques Bughin, Jonathan Woetzel, Parul Batra, Ryan Ko, and Saurabh Sanghvi, *Jobs Lost, Jobs Gained: Workforce Transitions in a Time of Automation*, McKinsey Global Institute, December 2017.

⁸ Faculty: Dan Biebighauser, Nat Dickey, Ken Foster, Susan Lee, Kristi Loberg, Chris Mason, Faith Ngunjiri, Kirsten Theye, Lisa Twomey. Staff: Eric Addington, Rachel Bergeson, Kristin Bortnem, Wayne Flack, Mikal Kenfield, Mark Lillehaugen, Larry Papenfuss, Erik Ramstad, Jennifer Speir. Resource Members: Jasi O’Connor, Peggy Torrance .

⁹ Davidson, p. 3.

¹⁰ Davidson, pp. 8-9.