St. Olaf College
The Main Street Project
August 30, 2010

St. Olaf College aspires to be a national leader among highly selective liberal arts colleges at intentionally and comprehensively preparing its students for life after college.

**Main Street Project Objectives**

1) The Main Street Project will strongly support the goals and aspirations stated in St. Olaf’s Mission Statement.

2) The Main Street Project will support the identity of St. Olaf College as a nationally-ranked, highly-selective undergraduate liberal arts college in the Lutheran tradition.

3) The faculty and staff of the College will provide guidance and assistance as students gather and organize information, perspectives, and personal insights from curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular experiences to help them make clear, informed, and deliberate decisions about who they are, who they want to become, and the work they hope to do in the world.

4) Because good ideas need and deserve support, the College will seek resources where necessary to support this project.

5) The goals and program elements of the Main Street Project will be communicated in a clear, compelling way to current students, prospective students, parents, faculty, academic staff, alumni, donors, and other friends of the College.

**Vocation and Career**

St. Olaf students will engage in an intentional four-year-long process of identifying and articulating their intellectual and personal strengths, weaknesses, values, beliefs, interests, and commitments as they discern their vocation and develop an initial plan for their career.
**Vocation:** from the Latin “vocare,” to call. To discern a “call” that aligns with a person’s gifts and talents and that uses the knowledge and skills a person has gained through study and experience. A vocation focuses on the meaning and purpose of a life’s work.

1) At St. Olaf, students will engage in the process of discerning their vocations as they work with faculty, other campus mentors, and alumni and parent volunteers to choose their major(s) and concentration(s), plan off-campus study, identify and apply for internships and career exploration opportunities, and plan their co-curricular involvements.

2) Students will articulate a vocational vision in which they reflect on their goals, the world’s needs, and their life’s work.

3) Students will see St. Olaf and the relationships they establish at the College as resources to be nurtured and used both while they are enrolled at St. Olaf and after graduation.

**Career:** from the Latin “carraria,” a road or carriageway. Choose a pathway on which to pursue one’s vocation.

1) Students will become aware of a wide range of opportunities available to them, including employment in businesses, non-profits, government agencies; graduate school; volunteer opportunities; etc.

2) Students will be able to align their intellectual and personal strengths, commitments, and interests with appropriate post-graduation opportunities.

3) Students will be able to communicate effectively their intellectual and personal strengths as they pursue post-graduation opportunities.

4) Students will develop an initial career plan that derives from their discernment of their vocation; that can respond to their evolving interests, strengths, and life situations as the decades pass; and that will include a short-term, economically-feasible, and actionable plan for the years immediately following their graduation from St. Olaf.