

St. Olaf College
Quality Initiative Results Report
Higher Learning Commission
“The Main Street Initiative”
August 31, 2012

Overview of the Quality Initiative: “The Main Street Initiative”

1. Executive Summary

In the “Main Street Initiative,” 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. The Main Street Initiative seeks to connect the first and last days of a student’s time at St. Olaf through a thoughtful, integrated sequence of curricular and co-curricular programs designed to teach students how to shape and implement a vocation and career plan that aligns with their gifts and passions, that has clear first steps, that enables them to support themselves, and that can respond to their evolving interests, strengths, career opportunities, and life situations after they graduate from St. Olaf.

The Main Street Initiative takes its name from the renovation of the former science building at the center of the campus. Completed in 2011, the renovation created a “main street” on the building’s east-west axis. At the campus level, the west end of this “main street” features a welcoming foyer for the enrollment office. The east end features the equally welcoming offices of the Harry C. Piper Center for Vocation and Career, where students receive assistance with vocational discernment, obtaining internships, applications for graduate and professional school, and the resumes, cover letters, and interview skills they develop as they seek and secure their first post-college jobs. Along the “main street” corridor on each of the building’s three floors are classrooms; faculty offices; student services, including the offices of the Registrar, the Dean of Students, and Off-Campus and International Studies; and, on the campus level, the offices of the Provost and the President—each providing important contributions to students’ journeys along “main street” during their years at St. Olaf.

Prior to the renovation of this building, the office that assisted students with vocational discernment and career planning was located in a temporary building on the edge of campus. The Main Street Initiative—in both location and program—integrates vocational discernment and career planning into the core of the St. Olaf experience.

Since February 2010, when we launched the Main Street Initiative, we have achieved these key accomplishments:

February to June 2010

- The Quality Initiative Proposal was developed.
- President David Anderson appointed the Main Street Steering Committee, including faculty, staff, and student members.

June 2010 to May 2011

- The Main Street Steering Committee developed specific objectives for the project; reviewed existing programs, activities, and relevant assessment data; researched promising practices at other institutions; consulted widely with both on- and off-campus members of the St. Olaf community; and prepared its report.
- St. Olaf was selected to participate in an assessment program supporting the use of evidence for institutional improvement funded by the Teagle Foundation and administered by the Center for Inquiry in the Liberal Arts at Wabash College. St. Olaf's Wabash Study Group developed a plan for using assessment data to shape and inform the Main Street Initiative.
- The college's strategic planning process was integrated with the development of the Main Street Initiative.
- The Main Street Steering Committee submitted its final report to President Anderson on April 26, 2011.

May 2011 to August 2012

- Selected program initiatives were piloted.
- Grants and gifts were received to support program pilots.
- The Wabash Study Group advised groups piloting Main Street programming options and prepared a "Backpack" of assessment findings to inform future Main Street programming initiatives.
- A faculty-staff committee studied the programs and organizational structure of the Center for Experiential Learning (the office that included vocation and career planning) and made recommendations to President Anderson and Provost Sortor.
- A search for a director of the newly-configured Center for Vocation and Career was successfully conducted, with a new director beginning in July 2012.
- Board of Regents Chair Addison Piper and his family gave an endowment gift to support programs in the vocation and career center, which was re-named "The Harry C. Piper Center for Vocation and Career."

Scope and Impact of the Initiative

2. Details about what was accomplished in the Quality Initiative

In the two years since we began the Main Street Initiative at St. Olaf, we have made significant progress toward our overarching goal that all St. Olaf students participate in an

intentional and comprehensive program that fosters vocational discernment and career planning. Work on the project began with the formation of the Main Street Steering Committee in June 2010 and came to include many individuals and groups, both on- and off-campus over the next two years.

Recommendations for Program Development: The Main Street Steering Committee

President David Anderson appointed the Main Street Steering Committee, which included faculty, staff, and student members, to develop a set of recommendations on how to achieve St. Olaf's goal to become pre-eminent among liberal arts colleges in America at combining a resolute commitment to the liberal arts with an intentional, comprehensive program for helping students transition to life after college.

The committee posted its minutes, the statement of the project's objectives, its preliminary findings, examples of resources it consulted, reports of its research teams, and other documents to <http://www.stolaf.edu/president/mainstreet/>. The committee used surveys to gather information and responses from the St. Olaf community and incorporated these in the development of the project. The committee also invited all faculty and staff to participate in discussions of the project's objectives and of the preliminary draft of its recommendations. Student input was gathered in meetings and in surveys conducted by the committee's student research teams. A student research team surveyed recent alumni, an alumni and parent advisory committee advised the committee, and a survey soliciting responses to the preliminary draft of the committee's recommendations was sent to all alumni.

The institutional commitments that guided the work of the Main Street Steering Committee included the following:

1. The Main Street Initiative will strongly support the goals and aspirations stated in St. Olaf's Mission Statement.
2. The Main Street Initiative 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 Initiative 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.

The committee articulated the following goals for Main Street programming:

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, and thus 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.
- Articulate a vocational vision in which they reflect on their goals, the world’s needs, and their life’s work.
- 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. Choosing a pathway on which to pursue their vocation, St. Olaf 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.
- Be able to align their intellectual and personal strengths, commitments, and interests with appropriate post-graduation opportunities.
- Be able to communicate effectively their intellectual and personal strengths as they pursue post-graduation opportunities.
- 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.

On April 26, 2011, the Main Street Steering Committee submitted its Final Report of the Main Street Initiative Steering Committee on Programming Options to President Anderson. The report includes thirty-nine potential programming proposals organized in three domains of the college: 1) curriculum and pedagogy; 2) co-curricular programs and services (provided principally by St. Olaf faculty and staff); and 3) community connections (engaging alumni, parents, employers, graduate schools, and other members of the community beyond St. Olaf). The committee also noted five items that the implementation of the Main Street Initiative may require.

The five additional areas that the committee noted for potential development as we proceed with the Main Street Initiative are student advising, our survey of recent graduates, the relationship of the Center for Vocation and Career with the Advancement Office, faculty and staff development programs, and new resources to support new programs.

Assessment Tools: The Wabash Study Group

In August 2010, St. Olaf was selected to participate in an assessment program funded by the Teagle Foundation and administered by the Center for Inquiry in the Liberal Arts at Wabash College. The Wabash Study focuses in particular on how institutions can use assessment data they already collect to move forward with significant initiatives. St. Olaf's project in the Wabash Study was to develop a plan for using assessment data to shape and inform the Main Street Initiative.

The Wabash Study Group formed to develop this plan included faculty and staff members, some of whom were also members of the Main Street Steering Committee. This overlap assured that the plan for using assessment data in the development of the Main Street Initiative would align with the Main Street Steering Committee's work and that the Wabash Study Group would include representation from college's assessment committee and from each of the college's academic divisions.

During the next two years, the Wabash Study Group wrote intended outcomes for student learning and development for the Main Street Initiative; reviewed key assessment data to identify data most relevant to the development of the Main Street Initiative; gathered relevant assessment data in a robust on-line "Backpack," which will be a resource for staff and faculty as they develop Main Street Initiative program options in the future; developed assessment tools for two Main Street Initiative program pilots; and developed a strategy for sharing relevant assessment findings with individual college units to inform their contributions to the on-going development of Main Street Initiative programming in 2012-13.

Implementation and Planning for the Future: The 2011 St. Olaf Strategic Plan

In 2010, the St. Olaf Board of Regents initiated a process to develop a new strategic plan for the college. The planning effort began with a survey of faculty, staff, students, regents, and a selection of alumni on three questions: What are the College's greatest strengths? In what areas could it improve? And what should be the College's top priorities in the next five years? The Board of Regents reviewed the survey responses and conducted an additional "environmental scan" of alumni who are leaders in business, finance, and government about what external threats to the college might exist in the economic and political environment. In response to the input provided, the Board of Regents created three working groups consisting of faculty, staff, regents, alumni, and students to reflect on the three areas that emerged as crucial in the survey and scan: academic excellence, the

“St. Olaf experience,” and the “value proposition” for a St. Olaf education. The working groups submitted reports in December 2010. The Board approved the 2011 Strategic Plan in May 2011.

The confluence of the strategic planning process and the work of the Main Street Steering Committee offered opportunities to integrate Main Street Initiative programming ideas with the strategic plan with the result that key elements of the Main Street Initiative are included in the strategic plan. Two particularly relevant commitments in the 2011 Strategic Plan are to “enhance student participation in and experience of high-impact educational experiences” and to “advance the employment and post-graduate study outcomes of St. Olaf students.”

Embedding these significant elements of the Main Street Initiative in the college’s new strategic plan is testimony to St. Olaf’s commitment to the goals of the Main Street Initiative and provides a plan for continuing the college’s efforts to enhance and expand current Main Street programming and to support new Main Street programming in the future.

The Harry C. Piper Center for Vocation and Career

The scope of the Main Street Initiative includes the curriculum, the co-curriculum, and the external community, but a special role in the Initiative is played by the on-campus office that provides resources and services to students as they discern their vocation and plan their career.

The confluence of the renovation of a building at the center of campus and the development of both the Main Street Initiative proposal and St. Olaf’s new strategic plan gave us an opportunity to re-think both the physical location and the role of the vocation and career office. In 2000, St. Olaf launched a “Center for Experiential Learning” to “create and facilitate experiential learning that complements the St. Olaf curriculum.” This center included staff who provided support to students as they made their post-graduation plans. The Center for Experiential Learning was first housed in a temporary building on the southeast corner of campus and was later moved to another temporary building, this one on the northwest corner of the campus.

When we began thinking in 2009-10 about the Quality Initiative proposal and the strategic direction of the college, it was becoming clear that the economic crisis that began in 2008 was going to persist and that given the expense of education at private liberal arts colleges such as St. Olaf, it would be important for us to define and communicate clearly the value proposition of a liberal arts education for students and their families. It is important for us to be able to demonstrate to current and prospective students and families that St. Olaf’s liberal education—which, by definition, prepares students for more than a specific career—empowers students with thoughtful, intentional, and effective strategies to lead them to successful and rewarding vocations and careers. To help us define, communicate, and demonstrate this value proposition more clearly, we re-thought both the location and the role of the vocation and career office.

The opening of a new science building at St. Olaf in 2008 made available for new uses the large building that had formerly housed the college's science departments. This building lies at the center of campus, directly across the campus green from the library, the student union, and the chapel. Plans were developed to renovate the former science building as a mixed-use building that would include classrooms, faculty offices, student services offices, and the President's and Provost's offices. It was determined that the vocation and career office would be included in this mix, and the site designated for its office suite is on the main campus level across from the main entrance to the building. Bringing the vocation and career office into the midst of this building where all students would regularly have classes, meetings with faculty, and appointments with student services personnel facilitates the integration of vocational discernment and career planning into the core of the St. Olaf experience. The renovation of the building began in 2009, and the new vocation and career office was opened in January 2011.

After the retirements of the Executive Director and the Director of the Center for Experiential Learning in 2011 and 2010 respectively, the president and provost formed a study group comprised of faculty and staff to examine the accomplishments of the Center for Experiential Learning (CEL) and its goals for the future. The study group was asked to consider in particular: 1) the efficacy of current programs; 2) the mission and goals of the CEL, taking into consideration the emphases of the strategic plan; 3) the organizational structure of the CEL; and 4) the talents and expertise desirable in the new director. In October 2011, the study group submitted its report to President Anderson and Provost Sortor with four recommendations: 1) adopting a new name for the center; 2) developing a four-year developmental model that would serve all students; 3) re-energizing connections and communication with students, faculty, staff, alumni, employers, and graduate schools to better serve students as they make post-graduation plans; and 4) re-thinking the center's organizational structure and reporting line.

The president and provost adopted the study group's recommendations. The center's reporting line was moved to the President's Office, and in January 2012, with the assistance of an external search consultant, a faculty-staff committee began a search for the new director. The search concluded in June 2012 with the appointment of the new director, who began work at St. Olaf in July 2012.

Throughout the development of the Main Street Initiative, staff from the then Center for Experiential Learning participated in the planning process as members of the Main Street Steering Committee and its subcommittees and as consultants to the steering committee, its subcommittees, and its research teams. The Center staff also participated in the college's strategic planning process as members of committees focused on particular elements of the plan. Center staff served on the Wabash Study Group and met with the CEL Study Group.

With the new director now leading the newly-named and re-configured Piper Center for Vocation and Career, work has begun on a new mission statement and a new strategic plan for the center. Staff members are participating in development opportunities and

exploring new ways to use technology to enhance and expand the impact of Piper Center programs.

The new Harry C. Piper Center for Vocation and Career will be dedicated in a ceremony during fall semester 2012.

Pilots of Main Street Program Enhancements, Expansions, and Initiatives: 2010-12

During 2010-12, faculty and staff piloted a number of Main Street program enhancements, expansions, and initiatives. Funding to support these pilots was received from foundations and individuals. Going forward, we will assess each pilot, adopting those that have succeeded and adapting them to improve as needed. The Piper Center's new endowment will fund some of these new programs in the future, and we will seek additional grant or gift funding to support others.

Career Network for Oles

In spring semester 2010, a committee including staff from the Center for Experiential Learning, the President's office, the Alumni and Parent Relations office, the Information and Instructional Technology office, and the Advancement office developed an on-line program to connect St. Olaf juniors and seniors with alumni and parents who would offer advice about vocation and career as well as provide leads on internships and job opportunities. The pilot program ran for three years. With assistance from CEL staff, students prepared brief resumes and short descriptions of their strengths and interests. Alumni and parent volunteers were recruited and oriented. During a seven-week period from January to March, students' resumes and profiles were emailed to alumni and parent volunteers who contacted students to begin conversations. Over the three-year pilot, average participation of juniors was 20% and of seniors was 31%. Piper Center staff is currently reviewing this pilot.

Sophomore Retreat

In spring semesters 2011 and 2012, staff in the Center for Experiential Learning collaborated with staff in Student Life and Athletics on a sophomore retreat focused on vocation and career. The retreat was held at an off-campus site over two days. The retreat program included presentations by alumni, faculty-led discussions, and round-table discussions with young alumni. In spring 2011, 40 sophomores participated, and in 2012, 80 sophomores participated. The Piper Center is making plans to scale the retreat model so that all sophomores may participate.

Summer Internship Program

St. Olaf has long supported credit-bearing summer internships for sophomores and juniors. In spring 2012, staff in the CEL developed a program to support non-credit-bearing internships, coordinating with staff in the Treasurer's Office and the Financial Aid Office to assure compliance with all college policies. The new summer internship program includes a pre-internship workshop, a mid-internship check-in, a post-internship workshop, an electronic portfolio, and a post-internship oral presentation. For summer 2012, funding

was received to provide scholarships for students with financial need to participate in the program.

Connections Program

In 2011 and 2012, CEL staff piloted a spring-break externship program in Washington, D.C. Participating students met with alumni working in various professions in the DC area and shadowed alumni at their jobs. While the initial pilot of this program was limited to Washington, D.C. and included a limited number of students each year, plans are being made to expand the program to other cities in 2012-13 and to scale the program model so that the program can serve large numbers of sophomores and juniors.

Financial Literacy Programs

To inform the Main Street Steering Committee's thinking as it developed its programming proposals, its research teams conducted surveys of the St. Olaf student body. In these surveys, students expressed a desire for additional opportunities to build financial literacy. In 2011-12, the Financial Aid Office developed on-line tools for St. Olaf students and young alums, launching its "Financial Skills on the Hill" webpage and Facebook page in January 2012. In February 2012, the Financial Aid Office offered the first annual "Money Week" on campus, offering workshops and presentations on financial skills.

Student Work Programs

The Main Street Steering Committee recommended that the college develop programs to enhance student work positions as opportunities for career exploration. To facilitate the development of these programs, management of student work was moved from the Financial Aid Office to the Human Resources Office, where a new staff member was hired to administer the new programming.

First Destination Survey

Staff in the Institutional Research and Evaluation office, the President's office, the Center for Experiential Learning, and the Alumni and Parent Relations office collaborated to develop a robust survey of the Class of 2011 to gather information about their first destination after graduation. The team used multiple contacts over one year (April 2011 to April 2012), completing the survey with a 92% response rate. The results show that of the 92%, 28% of the Class of 2011 pursued further education in the year after graduation, and 70% were employed or working for a service organization or agency, such as the Peace Corps or Teach for America. Complete results of the survey are posted on the St. Olaf website at <http://www.stolaf.edu/return/>. The results have attracted national attention, including references to the survey in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, in the *CBS Money Watch* blog, and in a number of newspapers across the country.

3. What worked and what did not work during implementation

Our goal for the Main Street Initiative is ambitious. In this first two-year period of developing the initiative, we planned to lay a strong foundation for the program, to pilot elements of the program, and to seek resources to support the initiative.

We believe that we succeeded in laying a strong foundation for the initiative. The Main Street Steering Committee conducted a thorough, open, flexible, and fruitful planning process. The committee reached out to all portions of the St. Olaf community, engaged in substantive discussion of issues and questions raised, considered existing evaluation and assessment evidence, reviewed programs and practices in other institutions, and proposed a wide range of programming options that can serve the College's varied programs and students effectively. The pilots we conducted helped us understand how we might coordinate programs across College units and develop programs that can serve all St. Olaf students. We were successful in receiving grants and gifts to support program pilots, and the generous endowment gift given in 2012 to support vocation and career programming assures that we will have resources to support the initiative into the future.

The challenges we faced developing the Quality Initiative involved coordinating work across college units that are not accustomed to working closely together and re-grouping when staff departures affected our pilot programs. In some cases, these challenges meant that we delayed implementing some program proposals, and in others, they meant that we decided not to pursue a programming option or we incorporated that option into another program. The breadth and depth of the set of thirty-nine program possibilities that the Main Street Steering Committee included in its final report gives us latitude to absorb some setbacks in particular programming areas without affecting the overall success of the initiative.

4. The impact of the initiative, including any changes in processes, policies, technology, curricula, programs, student learning and success

The summaries of programming innovations in section two above provide details of some of the changes in processes, policies, technology, curriculum, programs, and student learning and success that are now in place in consequence of the Main Street Initiative.

Additional examples include the following:

- Intended student learning and development outcomes and tailored rubrics for the Career Network for Oles program and the summer internship program
- New technology tools for use in the Piper Center for Vocation and Career
- New transportation options for students to travel to internship sites
- Consolidated support for applications for graduate fellowships such as the Fulbright under the direction of one faculty member
- An annual "Senior Success Guide" outlining key vocation and career points for seniors and includes information about job fairs, scholarship competitions, etc.
- Vocation and career services available to St. Olaf alumni
- Enhanced collaboration between faculty and staff

5. Tools, data, or other information that resulted from the work of the initiative

A number of new tools, data-sets, and information banks were created or enhanced as we developed Main Street programming. Particularly notable among these are the Wabash Study “Backpack” of assessment data relevant to the student learning and development outcomes of the Main Street Initiative; the electronic tool our Information and Instructional Technology department created for the Career Network for Oles program; and the First Destination Survey we conducted of the Class of 2011. We also developed interview protocols and supplementary assessment questions for institutional surveys we administered in 2010-11 to inform Main Street programming; these results are also useful for assessing our General Education curriculum.

We plan to use these new tools, data-sets, and information banks as we continue to develop Main Street programming. The Class of 2011 First Destination Profile, for instance, was used by science departments to prepare a grant proposal to the National Science Foundation. We expect that the Wabash Study Backpack and the First Destination Profile will be used as we develop new tools for student advising in the implementation of our strategic plan.

6. The biggest challenges and opportunities encountered in implementing the initiative

As noted above in section 3, the biggest challenges we faced in developing the Quality Initiative involved coordinating work across college units that are not accustomed to working closely together and re-grouping when staff departures affected our pilot programs.

In the Main Street Initiative, we had opportunities to collaborate in new ways, to gather information and ideas that have enriched our program offerings, to re-think key parts of the St. Olaf experience to meet students’ new needs, and to engage alumni and friends of the college in supporting students as they transition to post-college life. Generous gifts from alumni and friends of the college have enabled us to enhance and expand our programming for students, and these gifts will assure that these programs will continue to serve students into the future.

Commitment to and Engagement in the Quality Initiative

7. The individuals and groups involved at stages throughout the initiative and their perceptions of its worth and impact

While many individuals and groups have been involved in the Main Street Initiative, the Main Street Steering Committee led the development efforts. The Wabash Study Group created a plan for using assessment data to inform and shape the Main Street Initiative and to provide a mechanism for reviewing and improving elements of the Main Street program. The CEL (Center for Experiential Learning) Study Group studied the center that had provided resources and services for vocational discernment and career planning,

recommending changes in this center to enable it to meet the new goals for these functions at the college.

The Main Street Steering Committee

The Main Street Steering Committee, chaired by Steven McKelvey, Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science, had eleven members and included faculty, staff, and student members.

To generate program possibilities, the Main Street Steering Committee formed subcommittees in four areas: reflection, exploration, mentoring, and connections. These subcommittees included members of the Main Street Steering Committee and 17 additional faculty, staff, and student members.

An Alumni and Parent Advisory Committee provided counsel to the Main Street Steering Committee as it worked. Eleven alumni and parents served on this committee.

To inform the work of the Main Street Steering Committee, 35 students in Professor Ryan Sheppard's research methods classes for upper-division sociology and anthropology majors formed six research teams that conducted research, wrote reports, presented their results, and responded to committee members' questions. In their work for the committee, the research teams surveyed much of the St. Olaf student body, achieving response rates close to 50% for all their surveys. The research teams were assisted by 3 statistics majors, a professor of statistics, and a professor of mathematics. A seventh student research team surveyed young alumni.

The four members of the college's Office of Institutional Research and Evaluation advised the Main Street Steering Committee and its subcommittees, Advisory Committee, and student research teams, providing counsel and data throughout the development process. Jo Beld, Director of Assessment and Evaluation and Professor of Political Science, drafted the Steering Committee's report.

The Wabash Study Group

The Wabash Study Group, co-chaired by Jo Beld, Director of Assessment and Evaluation and Professor of Political Science, and Paula Carlson, Vice President for Mission, had 10 members (5 faculty and 5 staff).

The CEL Study Group

The CEL Study Group, chaired by Paula Carlson, Vice President for Mission, had 7 members, 3 faculty and 4 staff.

Other Key Groups

In the development of the Main Street Initiative, significant assistance was provided by the Information and Instructional Technology Office and the Alumni and Parent Relations Office. Guidance, counsel, and feedback were provided at key points by several additional groups: the President's Cabinet, the Dean's Council, the Student Government Association Senate, the Alumni Association Board, and the Board of Regents.

8. The most important points learned by those involved in the Quality Initiative

Most importantly, we learned how deeply our constituency cares about students' discernment of their vocations and preparation for their careers. Students, parents, alumni, and friends of the College clearly see the goals of the Main Street Initiative as central to the St. Olaf experience.

For faculty and staff, success for the Main Street Initiative meant that we collaborated in new ways and that we reached across typical boundaries to coordinate programs and services. Work on the Initiative reminded us how important partnerships across units are to support the innovative spirit and tradition that has marked both St. Olaf's curriculum and its co-curriculum for many years.

Resource Provision

9. Explain the human, financial, physical, and technological resources that supported the initiative

Human Resources: The eleven members of the Main Street Steering Committee led the development of the Quality Initiative, bringing close to 100 more people into the development process as members of subcommittees and other groups that directly supported the committee's work. In addition, many members of the faculty, staff, and student body participated in focus groups and/or surveys that the Steering Committee or its student research teams facilitated and conducted. Approximately 30,000 St. Olaf alumni received an electronic version of the Steering Committee's final report and were invited to submit comments in an electronic survey.

Financial Resources: Financial resources supporting the development of the initiative—including program pilots, assessment tools, and consulting services—included grants from the following foundations and organizations: the Andrew F. Mellon Foundation, the Teagle Foundation, the Target Foundation, the Lilly Endowment, the Medtronic Foundation, and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. A gift from then-chair of St. Olaf's Board of Regents, O. Jay Tomson, and his wife, Patricia, supported the renovation of the former science center where the Piper Center for Vocation and Career is now located. A grant from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundation supported the renovation of the Piper Center's new suite in Tomson Hall. Program pilots were supported in part by the college's Finstad Endowment

for Entrepreneurship and by a gift from St. Olaf Regent B. Kristine Johnson's family foundation.

Three endowment gifts were given in 2012 to support the initiative: \$50,000 to support internships in the legal field; \$250,000 to support programming in career development; and \$2.575 million to name and support the college's vocation and career center, which is now the Harry C. Piper Center for Vocation and Career. These endowment gifts will all be matched by a college program that supports elements of the new strategic plan, making the total new endowment support for the center \$5.75 million.

Physical Resources: The college's vocation and career center was for many years housed in temporary buildings at the edges of the campus. In January 2011, the center moved into newly-renovated offices in a newly-renovated building at the heart of the campus. The Piper Center for Vocation and Career has offices at the main entrance to this newly-renovated building, immediately next door to the President's office suite.

Technological Resources: A number of technological resources supported the development of the initiative. The Main Street Steering Committee and its research teams surveyed thousands of people using the college's in-house "FormCreator" survey administration program. Technological resources supported all program pilots. New technology added in summer 2012 will support the Piper Center staff's work beginning in fall semester 2012.

Plans for the Future

10. Describe plans for ongoing work related to or as a result of the initiative

The overarching goal of the Main Street Initiative is that St. Olaf will be a national leader among highly selective liberal arts colleges at intentionally and comprehensively preparing its students for life after college. During the two years we have devoted to the initiative, we have created a strong, viable plan for achieving this goal, we have made significant progress in developing specific elements of our plan, and we have secured financial resources to assure that we will be able to achieve our goal. Under the leadership of the new director of the Piper Center for Vocation and Career as well as faculty and staff across the college, ongoing work will continue as we launch programs described in the Main Street Steering Committee's report and develop new program models and possibilities in response to new needs, challenges, and opportunities that arise going forward.

11. Describe any practices or artifacts from the initiative that other institutions might find meaningful or useful

We welcome faculty and staff at other institutions to review the Main Street Initiative resources and reports posted on the St. Olaf website to identify practices or artifacts that may be useful to them.

Among the artifacts we developed, our First Destination Survey has attracted national media attention. The results of this survey are posted on our new “ROI” webpage: <http://www.stolaf.edu/return/>

As we developed the Main Street Initiative, we consulted widely with faculty, staff, students, alumni, Regents, parents, and friends of St. Olaf. Throughout the development process, we reported on our work, on the resources we used, and on the consultations we made. Conducting an open, transparent process was crucial to the initiative’s success. Our goal for the Main Street Initiative is ambitious. We will reach it only with the support and engagement of members of the St. Olaf community.