

“Freedom can exist only in the society of knowledge. Without learning, men [and women] are incapable of knowing their rights, and where learning is confined to a few people, liberty can be neither equal nor universal.”

**Benjamin Rush, founder of Dickinson College,
*Education Agreeable to a Republican Form of Government, 1786***

Mission

Dickinson College provides undergraduates with a useful education in the liberal arts and sciences. Anchored in a dynamic academic curriculum and sustained by an inclusive residential community of inquiry, a Dickinson education prepares students for lives of engaged citizenship and service.

Our community is committed to the life of the mind and to the power of learning to inform participation in the wider world. We educate students to seek knowledge and contribute to the well-being of others. We instill in our students a sense of responsibility for their communities, their planetary home, and their alma mater.

Chartered just days after the conclusion of the American Revolution in 1783, the college was established to prepare citizens who could ensure the success of the new democracy. Our founders intended Dickinson graduates to use their liberal arts education to advance the lot of humanity. We expect no less today.

Values

- **Liberal Education.** Our rigorous academic program challenges students to seek knowledge and think critically. We embrace pedagogical innovation. Our goal is to create active, life-long learners who possess the intellectual agility necessary to a life of meaningful service.
- **Community of Inquiry.** Students are members of a community of scholarly, artistic and creative inquiry. They learn in close collaboration with dedicated faculty and staff and in open-minded dialogue with their peers.
- **Interdisciplinary Exploration.** Our academic program engages students in framing questions, pursuing research, and developing interests that cross disciplinary boundaries and combine ways of knowing. We teach our students to see individual phenomena as part of a larger whole.
- **Residential Experience.** The Dickinson immersive educational experience extends beyond the classroom. Students learn across all dimensions of their lives. We envision our communities – human and natural, local and global – as living laboratories for learning and service.
- **Inclusivity.** Dickinson values a diverse community characterized by access, equity and a meaningful voice for all. We foster the thoughtful discovery of one’s own voice while cultivating the capacity to respect, understand, and learn from the views of others.
- **Shared Governance.** Distinctive to Dickinson and a foundation of our community is the collaboration of faculty, staff, and students in decision-making for the good of the college.
- **Global Awareness.** Dickinson emphasizes a cross-cultural and global perspective -- a willingness to appreciate, participate, and thrive in a complex world.
- **Sustainability.** The college educates for a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable world.
- **One College/One Community.** Dickinson’s vitality rests on the strong, mutually shared dedication of students, faculty, staff and alumni to the mission and values of the college.

Vision

Our mission and values set a high bar. Over the past decade, Dickinson has made marked progress toward this end. Our current challenge is to sustain the trajectory toward our ideals. In essence, we have defined a distinctive identity in higher education and among liberal arts colleges. Our vision is a college that fully embodies that identity.

This means deepening those characteristics that already make us distinctive. These include:

- close student-faculty interaction in and out of the classroom
- commitment to active learning, pedagogical innovation and research
- ongoing leadership in global education and sustainability, and
- interdisciplinarity.

All of these - carried forward by capable, engaged students, a dedicated faculty of teacher-scholars, and expert staff – will remain defining characteristics in the college's future.

At the same time, we must address areas where we fall short. Achieving our vision depends upon:

- a full realization of inclusivity in recruitment, learning experience, and community
- a clear definition of a vibrant residential life program that contributes to student success
- resources, human and financial, adequate to achieve our aspirations
- a strong affinity of students, alumni, parents and friends to Dickinson, and
- a greater visibility for what we do.

Achieving this vision will require effective, collegial decision-making and wise commitment of our current resources. This plan identifies the key priorities and strategies that will chart our path forward.