

# **Going on the Offensive to Defend Higher Education:**

*Crafting the Value Proposition for Private Education  
in the New Economy*

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**GDA Integrated Services**  
*is a market research, consulting, strategic planning and services firm that specializes in customized, integrated marketing solutions designed to help colleges and universities gain visibility, recruit students and raise money.*

# Capabilities include:

- Strategic Planning
- Market Research
- Positioning/Branding
- Student Recruitment Consulting
- Public Relations & Strategic Visibility Consulting
- Financial Aid Consulting
- Student Search Programs
- Predictive Modeling
- Tele-recruiting
- Print Communications
- Customized Web & E-Communications
- Social Media Consulting
- Video Production

# **GDAIS Research surveys:**

- 30,000 to 40,000 college-bound high school seniors
- 10,000 to 20,000 current college students
- 5,000 to 10,000 parents
- 10,000 to 15,000 alumni
- 1,000 to 2,000 guidance counselors
- 2,000 to 5,000 employers

# You have all heard the story...

- Professional skills are in
- STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields are in demand
- Practical, vocational higher education is in favor
- The liberal arts are out, relics of a “traditional” way of thinking that has been overtaken by the pressing demands of our dizzyingly complex digital age
- Majoring in history or English or anthropology is a surefire recipe for a life of irrelevance, poor job prospects, and living in your parents’ basement
- These “conventional” disciplines cannot possibly train students for productive, enriching careers in the high-tech information age whose future is now

# New public scrutiny of higher education

- Prospective students, their parents, and the public are questioning the *value* of higher education
- Driving new government interest in *oversight* of colleges and universities

# What's driving this new scrutiny?

- Rising college costs  
(sticker price and net cost)
- Coupled with the economic crisis

## **Recent National Survey:**

- GDA teamed up with Carnegie Communications
- Surveyed over 700 first-year college students who just completed the college search process
- Majority of respondents were attending a private college or university

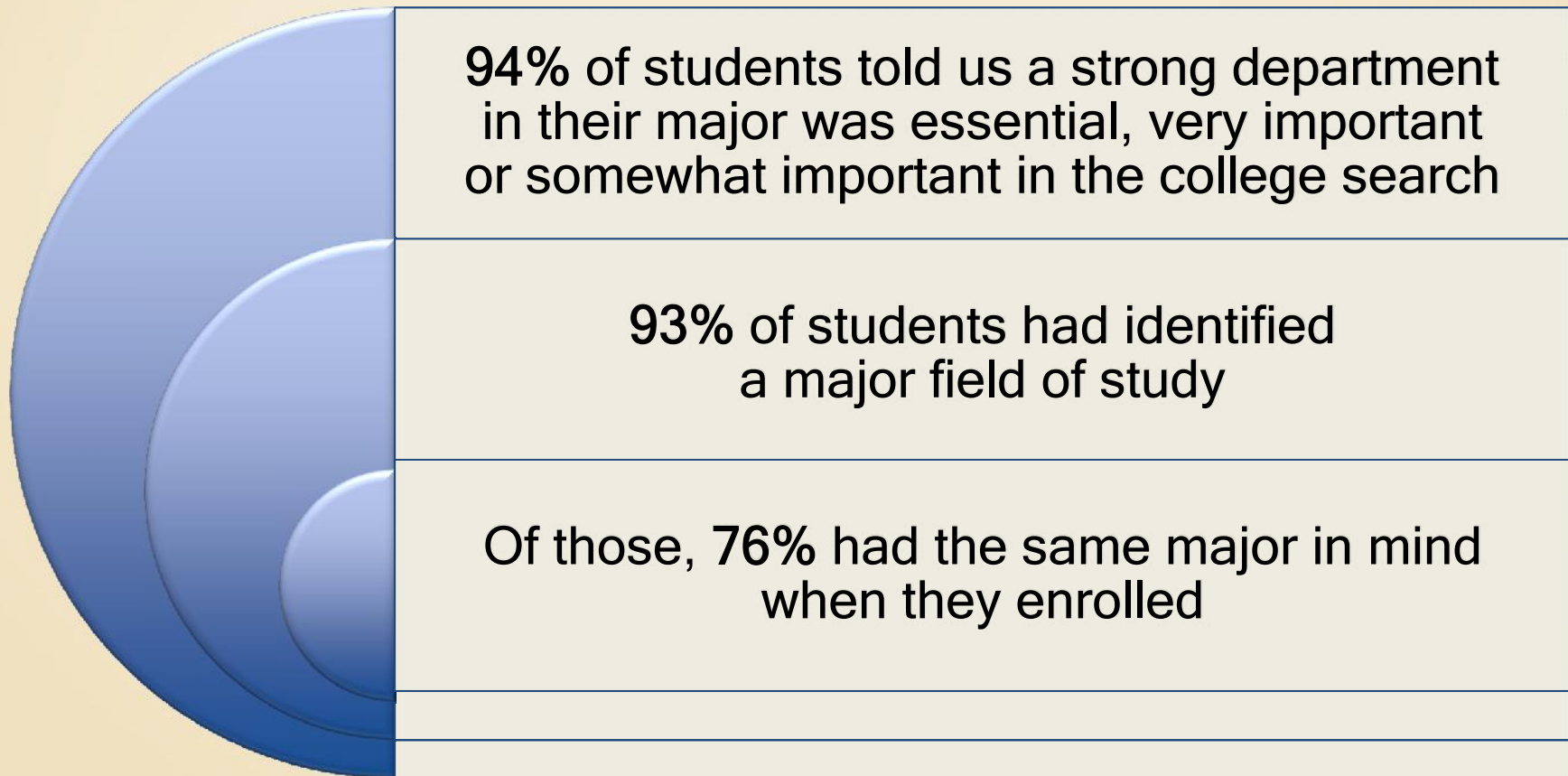


# What's driving this new scrutiny?

In our survey of first-year students:

- 81% found the financial aid process stressful
- 72% were concerned their top choice was too expensive
- Only 43% were attending what they considered their first choice college

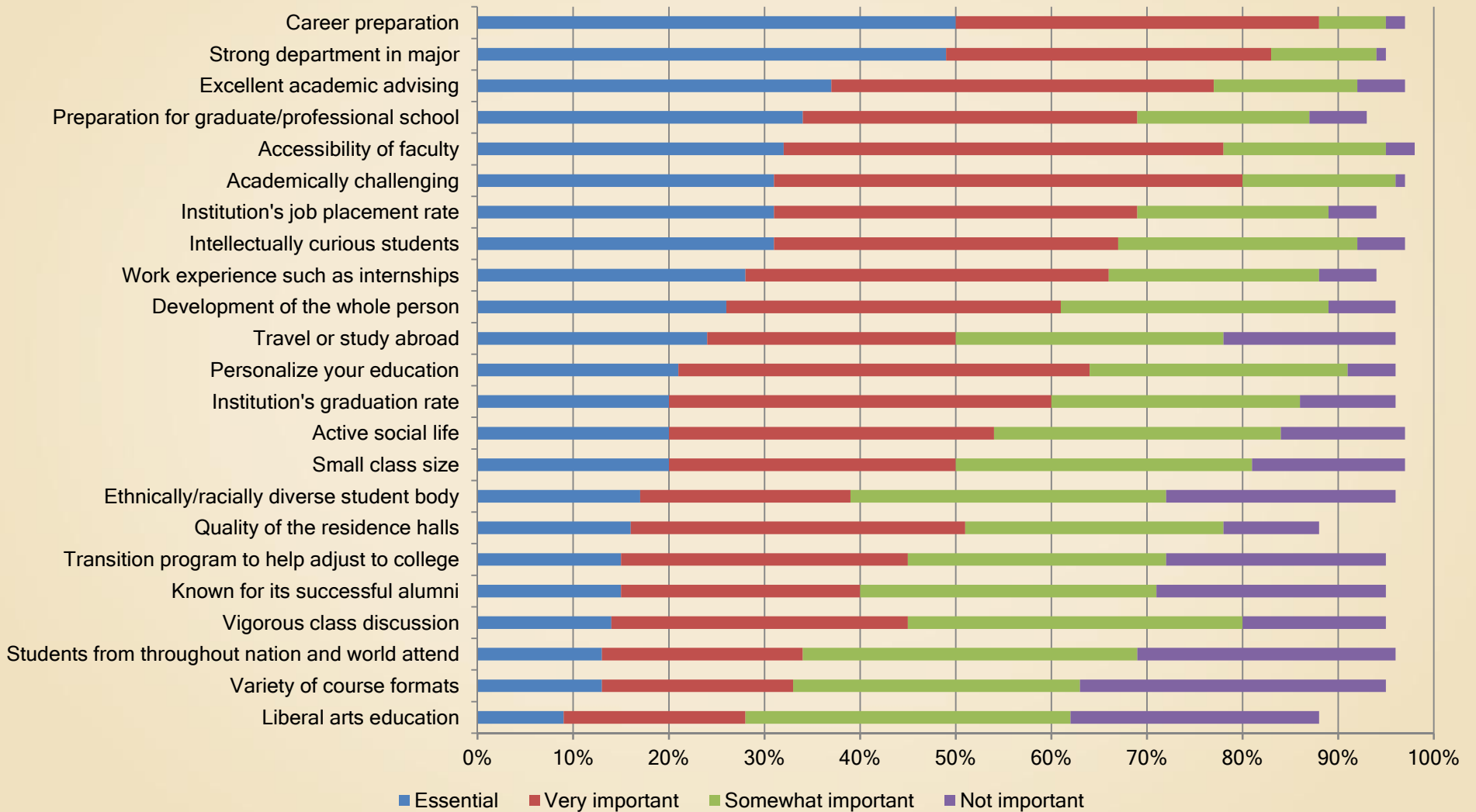
# From the GDAIS-Carnegie Survey



# **Here were their top 10 majors:**

1. Engineering
2. Biology
3. Pre-medicine, Pre-dental, Pre-vet
4. Psychology
5. Nursing
6. Business administration
7. Communication
8. Computer science
9. English
10. Political Science

### Important Characteristics



# **What's driving this new scrutiny of higher education?**

- Politicians are latching on to the public momentum for career preparation and Angst about college costs, and they are leveraging it for greater government oversight of higher education.
- This comes on top of the already booming private sector college rankings business.

# **Push for grater government oversight**

- Executive branch is pushing for new rankings tied to federal financial aid allocation
- Legislative branch is threatening to link new layers of oversight to renewal of Higher Education Act
- System of self-accreditation is coming under fire

# Compounding the problem

- Rankings squeeze colleges into rigid categories to make comparisons
- Few colleges or universities come out looking good
- The government track record for doing things well, fairly, and efficiently isn't very good
- Government rankings will be tied to federal financial aid dollars
- Sets a dangerous precedent of ongoing government oversight of higher education

# How do we get out of this mess?

At the institutional level colleges and universities need to demonstrate:

- Alumni successes
- Benefit to the public good
- Development of skills needed in society and the workplace, etc.
- Demonstrate the intangibles of higher learning



# Defining educational outcomes

- Statistics and metrics that prove positive outcomes
- Success stories
- Evidence that colleges do what they say they do
- Proof that colleges and universities are fulfilling their institutional missions

# Getting there

- Survey alumni to quantitatively determine outcomes
- Let alumni define institutional strengths
- Use success stories to describe the more intangible elements of your successes
- Couple those with quantitative data to prove the college is creating successes systematically
- Take the pulse of the industries your alumni serve

## **Turn quotes, videos, sound bites, and pie charts into a narrative keyed to each target audience**

- Make alumni word of mouth champions
- Use outcomes data as the cornerstone of student recruitment messaging
- Present accreditors and lawmakers with all the metrics and evidence they need to see successful outcomes
- Use this new understanding of educational outcomes to:
  - direct and focus the recruitment effort
  - improve retention
  - grow alumni satisfaction and loyalty
  - inform strategic planning

# Case Studies

- **Dakota Wesleyan University**
- **Hendrix College**
- **Morningside College**

# Dakota Wesleyan University

**Learn STRONG**  
DAKOTA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

BETWEEN 2005 AND 2008, NEARLY 70% OF ATHLETIC TRAINING GRADUATES WENT ON TO GRADUATE SCHOOL.

**Learn STRONG**  
Become an agent for change and for good

"The thing I am most proud of is the outreach work I've done during my internships. I learned a lot about medicine, and myself, through these experiences."

**WITH HIGH**  
Kendra Butler spent one internship year with a local radiologist in a private clinic in a South Dakota Native American reservation to provide medical outreach services.

**FOR THE GLOBAL GOOD**  
Through DWU's association with the United Methodist Church, students just finished trips to such places as Tanzania and Peru.

# **Review & Research**

- Identified the school's inherent strengths and leadership in nursing, athletic training, and education
- Conducted extensive research and surveyed prospective students throughout DWU's recruiting territories

# Results of the Research

- Positive association between DWU and healthcare education
- A desire among prospects for healthcare professions, especially in fitness and allied health professions

# Recommendations

- Establishment of three new colleges within the university
  - College of Healthcare, Fitness, and Sciences (intentionally named flagship college)
  - College of Arts and Humanities
  - College of Leadership and Public Service





# Learn **STRONG**

DAKOTA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF HEALTHCARE, FITNESS AND SCIENCES

HEALTHCARE

FITNESS

SCIENCES

# LearnStrong

- Positioning based on the school's extensive use of skills assessment
- Coupled with a new Center for Talent Development
  - Helps each student match talents and strengths with programs of study that are most likely to be the best fit



# Student Success Stories

"Our focus on teaching, program personalization and strengths-based learning yields exceptional placement of students into graduate schools and the workplace."

Amy Novak, President, Dakota Wesleyan University

## ORGANIZED AROUND YOU

DWU is organized into colleges that offer a host of uniquely career-focused programs. Healthcare and wellness are emphasized in the Dorvo Star Christen College of Healthcare, Fitness and Sciences. Graduates of the colleges of Arts and Humanities and Leadership and Public Service have exceptional placement rates into such fields as education, criminal justice, church leadership, digital communications and more.



**70%+**  
of students have gone on to graduate school or secured related careers

## DOCUMENT YOUR SUCCESS

Every DWU student maintains an electronic portfolio that includes coursework, campus leadership and service activities. It becomes part of a permanent record that helps you stand out with prospective employers and graduate schools.

## DEVELOP YOUR TALENTS

Beginning on day one, the **CENTER FOR TALENT DEVELOPMENT** will assess your skills and strengths, provide individualized academic and career counseling, and guide you toward essential support services and internships.

## CAREER CONNECTED

In addition to providing highly personalized career search, skills development and professional contacts through faculty and staff, DWU partners with the South Dakota Department of Labor for off-campus jobs and counseling.

## PROFESSIONAL WITH AN EDGE

For young entrepreneurs, now is the time to turn an awesome idea into a successful business plan. The **KELLEY CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP** at DWU is like your personalized launching pad for innovation. Gain experience and support for your project through our network of regional and state resources. Hone leadership and business skills. Learn to transform your creative innovation into professional success.

## DWU SUCCESS STORIES

### ON A MISSION

Soon after **SARAH GRINGS '18**, nursing, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Africa, graduated at the top of her DWU class, she knew she would head back to Africa as a missionary nurse. The daughter of missionaries had already spent most of her life in Africa, and DWU offered the perfect combination of exceptional nursing training and faith-based education she sought. "My parents always told me that the safest place to be was where God wanted us to be," she says.



**75%** of students have conducted independent research, had an internship or presented at professional conferences

## RECENT EMPLOYERS

- American Veterans Center
- Avera Health System
- East Credit Services of America
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Internal Revenue Service
- AFRC Financial Services
- Sanford Health System
- South Dakota Department of Social Services
- South Dakota Governor's Office
- South Dakota Highway Patrol
- U.S. Department of Justice
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Wells Fargo
- Wyoming Department of Family Services

## SELECTED GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

- Adler School of Professional Psychology
- Astbury Theological Seminary
- Ave Maria University
- Deighton University School of Law
- Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
- Haworth University School of Law
- Indiana State University
- Iowa State University
- Indiana Wesleyan
- Winkley Seminary
- Kirkville College of Osteopathic Medicine
- South Dakota State University
- Southern Methodist University
- Stetson School of Law
- St. Colbanes University
- Herietta School of Health
- Sanford University
- Curtland School of Law
- St. Louis University School of Medicine
- Iowa Tech University School of Law
- University of Colorado-Denver School of Medicine
- University of Michigan
- University of Nebraska College of Law
- University of South Dakota
- Beason School of Business
- Sanford School of Medicine
- School of Health Sciences
- School of Law
- University of St. Thomas School of Law
- University of Virginia
- University of Washington School of Law
- University of Wyoming College of Law

## STRENGTH in numbers



**95%**

Placement rate into medical and other healthcare-related programs



**90%+**

Job placement rate for education graduates



**95%**

Successful acceptance rate into graduate programs



**100%**

Job placement rate for nursing graduates

## DWU SUCCESS STORIES



### DOING WELL, DOING GOOD

**DANIELLE (BELLETT) EVENSON '13**, biochemistry, Lead, S.D., entered veterinary school at Iowa State University prepared for the challenge. "My DWU education provided me with the kinds of challenges that keep me at the top of my game," she says. Recruited to play Tiger golf, Danielle was also an outstanding athlete and team leader. "I learned as much about helping others as about helping myself at DWU," she says. "I learned how to reach for the greater good."

- Aaron Rowe '12**, history, just completed his first year of law school at Southern Methodist University
- Michelle Mathers '11**, criminal justice and psychology, is completing her Ph.D. at the Adler School of Psychology
- Captain Jason Leaming '08**, biology, U.S. Army, recently graduated from medical school and is a resident at William Beaumont Army Medical Center
- Carly Hayes '11**, accounting, is working at Deloitte & Touche, LLP, a Big Four accounting firm
- Kacie Emberton '12**, athletic training, works with Trinity Mother Francis Hospital and Clinics while she attends graduate school at the University of Texas at Tyler

### PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE

**DERRIC LUDENS '18**, Geddes, S.D., took full advantage of DWU's extraordinary liberal arts program. Working with his advisor, he structured an entirely unique academic program that resulted in dual majors in history and English and minors in political science and classical studies. Now a member of the English faculty at the University of South Dakota, Deric can fully appreciate the strength of a DWU education. "The effort you put in here will follow you," he says. "It prepares you for your future."

# DWU Transformed

- Attracted \$10 million in capital campaign funds to improve campus facilities
- A growing number students eager to attend a school whose purpose and position are now clearly defined and in line with the region's educational needs and expectations

# Hendrix College



# A Little History

- Hendrix had a long history as Arkansas' most distinguished private college, but for a variety of reasons had fallen on hard times in enrollment.
- Realized they had to make some significant changes or lose their strong reputation in the State



GDA INTEGRATED SERVICES

*Marketing Solutions for Higher Education*

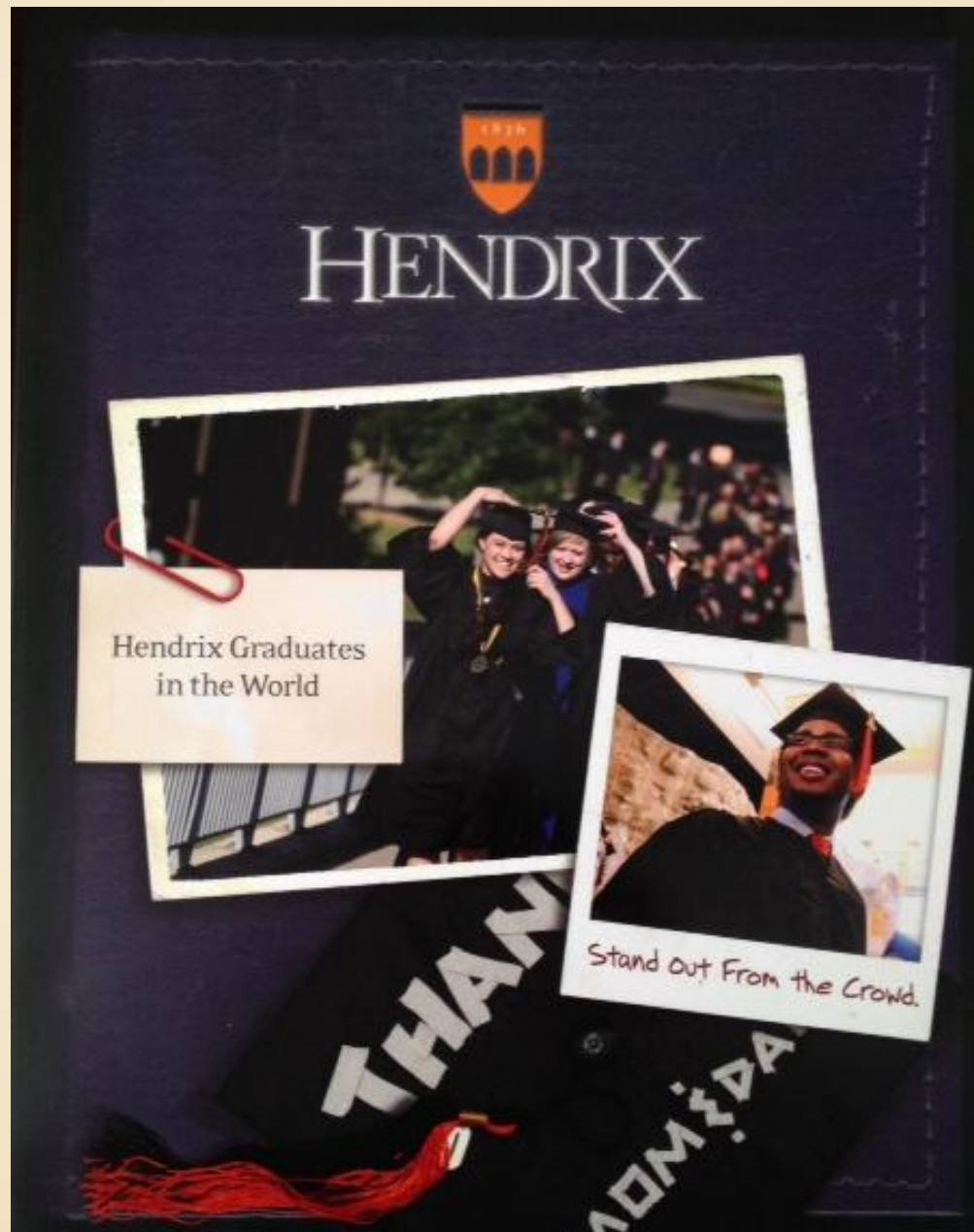
# Your Hendrix Odyssey



# Your Hendrix Odyssey

- Provides funding and transcript recognition for six areas of hands-on learning:
  - Artistic creativity
  - Global awareness
  - Professional and leadership development
  - Service to the world
  - Undergraduate research
  - Special projects





# Hendrix Results

- Received national attention
  - #1 “Up and Coming” liberal arts college in the country
- Record-breaking classes
- Steadily improving academic profiles
- More than half of new students are from out of state

# Morningside College



A New Major for a New Era

# **Applied Agricultural & Food Studies program**

- Designed in collaboration with agribusiness executives and visionaries
- Prepares students with workplace skills and habits of mind that industry professionals say they need most
- Externships provide real work experience for students and recruiting opportunities for partner organizations

# **Distinctions from the big state schools:**

- Individualized education with a focus on leadership
- Major is personalized to the student's interests
- Externships enable students to earn credit while working at agricultural businesses, on farms, in food production facilities, and in related workplaces
- Grounded in the liberal arts

## New Career Opportunities for a New Era

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, agriculture is adding 50,000 new jobs every year to the U.S. economy.



### Agribusiness

The USDA predicts the strongest growth in this sector. Best job prospects go to college graduates with "strong life science and business credentials; excellent interpersonal communication skills, and work experience in food production and distribution systems."

### Career paths

- Agricultural sales and service
- Environmental and legal compliance specialists
- Quality assurance specialists
- Agricultural equipment specialists and engineers
- Financial planners
- Food marketing managers
- Crop insurance assessors
- Agribusiness analysts
- Grain merchandisers
- Agronomy sales
- Green industry products managers
- Farm loan specialists
- Land use planners

### Agronomy

The USDA predicts increasing demand for agriculture production specialists, noting that in the future, "a higher percentage of farm and ranch operators will have a baccalaureate degree or higher. Practical work experience on farms, ranches, or in forests is an essential part of their college preparation."

### Career paths

- Crop consultants and managers
- Poultry, swine, and beef production managers
- Precision agriculture specialists
- Seed producers
- Soil agronomists
- Land rehabilitation specialists
- Animal nutritionists
- Crop protection specialists
- Horticultural crop agronomists
- Environmental services managers
- Integrated agriculture production solutions consultants

# Program Launch

- Comprehensive rollout plan
- Publicity/visibility events and programs
- Consistent language and vocabulary
- Customized messages for each audience
- New multi-media communications arsenal
  - Print
  - Digital
  - Mobile
  - Social





Introducing Applied Agricultural & Food Studies

# A New Major for a New Era

Transform your passion for food and agriculture into a rewarding career at the forefront of a new and exciting era in food production and agriculture.



**Morningside College's Applied Agricultural and Food Studies (AAFS) major** — from the people who created it.



**Morningside president John Reynders** on why the College has launched the most distinctive new food and agriculture major in the Midwest.



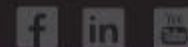
**Anthony Kern, professor of biology and AAFS chair,** describes classes and experiences that prepare students "for success in a new era of food and agriculture."



**Program director Chris Benson, class of '94 and former executive at Tyson Fresh Meats:** "Paid externships distinguish AAFS majors among employers."



[Career Dimensions](#) | [Tell Me More](#) | [Read About the Program](#)



Applied Agricultural  
& Food Studies

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# Thank You

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