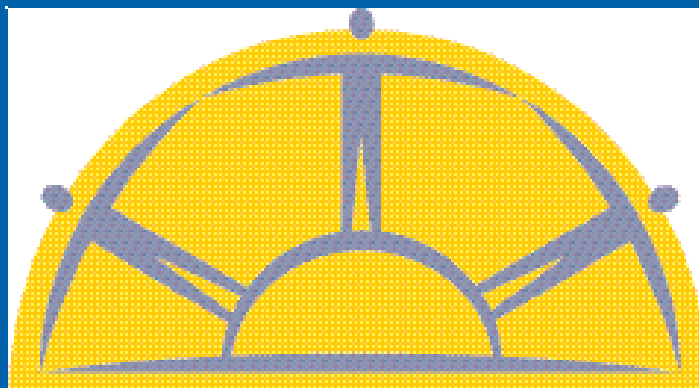
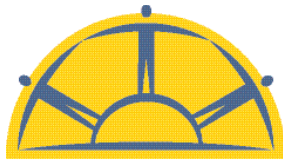


The Next Five: Years 2002–2007



Associated Colleges of the South



ASSOCIATED
COLLEGES
OF THE SOUTH

The Associated Colleges of the South (ACS) is comprised of 16 exceptional liberal arts institutions located in 12 southern states. Each institution features high quality academic programs, distinguished faculty, outstanding students and attractive campus facilities. Formed in 1991, ACS offers cooperative programs, promoting and strengthening liberal arts education. ACS is a mechanism through which member colleges and universities create and build programs in ways that would not be possible on an individual basis. Members share ideas and resources, thereby increasing the efficiency of administrative operations and the effectiveness of academic programs, ultimately increasing benefits for students. Joint summer and academic year programs for students overseas, seminars and projects for faculty enrichment, staff development activities, an electronic virtual library and cooperation in environmental studies are a few of the initiatives undertaken by the consortium.

The Next Five: Years 2002–2007

The Associated Colleges of the South began as an effort to improve the international program offerings of small, private, select liberal arts colleges in the South. Since that time, ACS has greatly broadened its work and plans further expansion in the years ahead. The following plan outlines ACS goals, objectives and plans for the next five years, noting the status of current initiatives in the process. Using the first 10 years as a stepping stone, ACS is poised to continue making a difference in liberal arts education in the South and in the nation.

Provide opportunities to strengthen faculty teaching, scholarship and creative work.

Continue to offer the ACS Summer Teaching and Learning Workshop.

The workshop has been held every year since 1992, enrolling 168 participants so far.

The workshop will continue to be an annual event, attracting 20 or more faculty each year.

Employ the Summer Teaching and Learning Workshop model for other ACS groups.

Consideration is being given to similar workshops for groups such as faculty in transition.

New workshops may begin as early as the summer of 2002.

Enhance effective faculty use of technology both in and out of the classroom.

Schedule technology workshops, extending the experiences made available from 1996 through 2001.

Workshops were held in the summer of 2001.

Additional workshops are planned through 2003 under the "Teaching for the New Millennium" Mellon Foundation grant.

Make available technological programs tailored to specific academic departments – building on the pilot programs created under the "Teaching through Technology" Mellon Foundation grant.

Pilot programs are continuing in 2001-2002 in the sciences, social sciences and humanities with special activities in classics and archaeology underway as a part of a recent Mellon Foundation grant for technology training.

Additional pilot programs are being explored.

Promote the ACS Technology Center at Southwestern University at which various technology initiatives will take place.

The ACS Technology Center at Southwestern University is fully operational and led by four talented staff members.

Regional and national services will be provided as the ACS becomes a major center in the new National Institute for Technology and Liberal Education (NITLE).

Create an academic "virtual department."

As a result of a Mellon Foundation grant, a "virtual department" has been established in classics and archaeology, with various activities underway.

Similar initiatives are planned for modern languages and Latin American Studies.

Academic Quality

	Goals	Objectives	Status	Plan
3	Stimulate enhanced information fluency among students.	Promote cooperation among library staff, faculty and information technology staff in improving information fluency.	Five joint committees are addressing various dimensions of this topic. They participated in a joint workshop in 2001.	The committees and 12 pilot program directors will take part in a winter 2002 conference on the subject.
		Establish standards and guidelines for student fluency.	A set of draft guidelines has been prepared and reviewed by library, faculty and IT staff.	ACS will disseminate and focus on guidelines in a national discussion on information fluency.
		Identify and/or create courses that produce such fluency.	A curriculum review is underway, and curriculum frameworks have been shared among faculty and staff.	Model courses will be identified or created.
		Provide training in research skills for faculty, staff and students.	A research skills committee has identified specific training needs.	The needed training will be provided.
		Create an appropriate assessment process for measuring fluency.	A committee has been formed to develop a framework for assessment.	An assessment effort will be put into operation.
4	Offer opportunities to explore collaboration in curriculum and program development.	Stimulate a range of collaborative programs in Latin American Studies.	A Latin American Studies committee has been formed to plan for overseas seminars, research possibilities and a possible overseas Latin American program.	Specific priorities are being established in 2002, and connections are being made in Cuba.
		Stimulate additional collaborative efforts in women's studies.	The steering committee is planning a conference for spring 2002 conference at Hendrix. Funding has been found to help underwrite student participation.	The committee will plan the next conference for 2004. They also will explore other creative uses of funds that will continue to be available for women's studies.
		Create, implement and evaluate alternative models of science courses for the non-major.	A plan has been prepared, drawing from two ACS workshops.	Funding will be sought to implement the consortium's plan.

Goals	Objectives	Status	Plan
	Stimulate a new environmental and sustainability initiative utilizing the network established from 1997 through 2001.	The consortium is beginning a new four-year initiative in environmental leadership.	ACS will offer a variety of programs, creating alliances in student development and engagement; curriculum and faculty development; the campus as a laboratory for sustainability; campus/ community partnerships; sustainable development in global communities; and spirituality and sustainability.
Promote an exchange of information among faculty and create academic networks.	Encourage and sponsor meetings, workshops and conferences of academic groups on a departmental and inter-departmental basis.	ACS maintains more than 80 e-mail lists, linking faculty from various disciplines and staff.	ACS will help arrange meetings of new consortial groups such as Asian studies faculty, along with the other groups that meet regularly.
Extend library collaboration beyond the “Palladian Alliance” initiative funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.	Continue basic licensing arrangements made possible by a Mellon Foundation grant.	Staff is identifying materials desired and the cost involved.	A limited number of licensing arrangements will be made available depending on institutional interest.
	Provide on-going staff training.	Institutions are exploring the idea that expertise on some campuses may be made available to assist in training on other ACS campuses.	The consortium plans to develop a proposal for the funding of such an exchange of talented staff people among the institutions.
	Explore use of e-books on the campuses.	An agreement has been reached to provide access to 500 e-books for ACS libraries.	ACS institutions will add more e-books, perhaps in cooperation with other organizations.
	Institute a program enhancing the ability of institutions to carry out digital archiving.	A proposal and possible funding sources are being considered, following a workshop on this subject.	The proposal will be submitted to funding agencies, perhaps linked to an ACS plan for the “library of the future.”

Academic Quality

Goals	Objectives	Status	Plan
7 Strengthen international programs for students and faculty.	Implement the cooperative overseas Global Partners project funded by The Mellon Foundation with the Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA) and the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM).	ACS has established a tripartite communication system and network. Programs are being carried out in Russia/Czech Republic, East Africa and Turkey.	Funding has been found to extend the program for the next three years. Features will include strategic dialogues, regional alliances and cooperation in language instruction.
		A conference held in June 2001 brought together faculty and international directors to share information on best practices. Grants have been given for follow-up projects.	Global Partners will provide more grants to partner institutions interested in creating innovative models and best practices.
			A review will be made of current overseas programs among the three consortia, pointing to further cooperation.
	Promote collaborative experiential learning programs.	An ACS-related service learning program continues in Honduras.	Additional service learning possibilities – in South Africa and elsewhere – will be explored.
	Expand the scope of collaborative Latin American Studies activity.	Planning began at the 1999 Latin American Studies Conference and has continued since. Review has begun of current programs, pointing to potential cooperation in research, joint faculty seminars and overseas programs.	The ACS steering committee for Latin America will create a virtual department within ACS and may initiate conversations with ACM and GLCA for additional collaboration in Latin America.

Goals

Objectives

Status

Plan

Revitalize institutional liaison arrangements for consortial programs.

An evaluation is underway of the ACS international program committees in order to maximize their effectiveness.

Current committees will be reconstituted and new committees added.

With an eye toward campus programs, examine the link between intellectual and character development.

Initiate a dialogue between chief academic and student affairs officers on the subject.

Joint meetings on the topic were held in November 1998 and October 1999.

The consortium will continue to explore collaborative efforts.

Promote cooperation among ACS institutions in undergraduate research.

Examine current initiatives with an eye toward transferring ideas from one campus to others.

Data is being collected on current opportunities for student research and collaborative student-faculty research.

ACS will create specific new venues to present student research.

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Reach out to other academic groups in order to identify new ideas and possibilities for efforts within ACS and to share ACS lessons with others.

Promote cooperation with GLCA and ACM.

Such collaboration is already underway in the international and technology areas.

The current collaborative arrangements will be used as a springboard to discussion of other collaborative arrangements and joint fundraising activities with these two organizations.

Promote collaboration with the Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Possible cooperative ventures with this organization are under consideration.

The cooperative plan for the future will pay particular attention to diversity on the campus, women's studies, faculty development and program evaluation.

Explore possible cooperation with other groups such as the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, the Annapolis Group and the Associated New American Colleges.

The dialogue continues with these groups.

ACS will look at ways in which the consortium can draw on and contribute to the ideas being pursued in these groups.

Administrative Effectiveness

	Goals	Objectives	Status	Plan
1	Provide a forum for regular exchange of information on administrative and business matters.	Support groups that can make effective use of such networks.	Meetings of many of the groups continue to be scheduled; in addition, e-mail lists have been established through which extensive communication takes place. Staff share information with various groups to trigger exploration of new collaborative undertakings.	Various ACS groups will meet, with ACS continuing to assist in organizing and planning meetings.
2	Conduct special studies on key issues of common interest and importance such as staffing.	Take benchmarking initiatives, focusing on areas such as admissions, the business office, physical plant, academic program and faculty.	Funding has been obtained for benchmarking in admissions and the business offices. Groups have formed and consultants engaged to begin the benchmarking effort.	Benchmarking will continue and expand, using models developed in admissions and the business offices.
3	Strongly promote cooperation that can lead to cost containment.	Promote energy conservation.	The consortium continues to build on its energy conservation effort.	ACS will look at new ways through which energy may be conserved, in particular through the ACS environmental program.
		Promote joint purchasing initiatives through the new consortium buying group.	The buying group has arranged a number of specific contracts for the consortia. More are expected in 2001-2002 and thereafter.	ACS will establish an e-commerce mall for buying goods and services.
4	Consider new ideas for administrative collaboration.	Analyze ideas such as budget planning models, joint staff training, purchase of natural gas, student loan alternatives and other possibilities.	The chief business officers are analyzing various subjects with an eye toward establishing priorities among many initiatives.	Drawing on outside funding, the group will begin to focus on the development and sharing of financial ratio analyses.
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Administrative Effectiveness

Goals	Objectives	Status	Plan
Explore and examine revenue-generating projects.	Share experiences and focus on examples such as conference centers, leasing of facilities and other possibilities.	The business officers have begun to reflect on such possibilities.	ACS will confer with other consortia and organizations in order to gather ideas on activities that have been helpful to them.
Explore diversity issues and programs on the various campuses.	Identify top priority issues and bring together key players to identify individual and collaborative actions that might be taken.	A workshop was held in October 2001, beginning the effort to identify needs and possible ACS responses.	A diversity group will meet on a regular basis, initiate joint projects and hold a diversity workshop in the fall of 2002.
7 Establish effective career planning cooperation within the consortium.	Promote the use of an on-line job referral service.	This effort is underway.	The consortia will meet with employers to assess the use of on-line referrals and undertake other joint efforts.
	Establish an internship program, initially with an environmental emphasis.	A number of internships were offered in the summers of 1999, 2000 and 2001.	Further internships will be available in the future, and funding will be sought for an expanded program.
	Forge connections with potential employers.	An effort is underway to identify employers who would be especially receptive to collaboration with ACS.	The consortium will make arrangements with a dozen or more employers as partners in opening up internship and career opportunities for ACS students.



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Membership Services

Goals	Objectives	Status	Plan
1 Communicate extensively with the campuses.	Continue publication of written and e-mail forms of <i>Palladian</i> , the consortial newsletter.	The print version goes out three times a year and the e-mail version approximately five times per year.	Planning is underway to expand the number of publications and the coverage of ACS programs, with particular attention to publicizing programs in technology and information fluency.
	Make extensive and productive use of e-mail lists for the various ACS groups.	Currently, the ACS maintains more than 80 e-mail lists.	The group will explore the possibility of extending these lists to members of ACM and GLCA.
	Produce a display of materials that may be made available at ACS activities and outside of the consortium.	Such a display is now available.	Special attention will be given to using the display during the 10th year of the consortium, which occurs in 2001-2002.
	Make more extensive use of the ACS web site.	It is currently being used extensively by member institutions and others and is regularly updated by ACS staff.	The consortium plans to add more workshop descriptions, application forms, reports and other items to the web site.
2 Gather and exchange specific information among the members.	Make full use of the e-mail lists by the various individual ACS groups.	The staff continues to remind various groups of the availability of the e-mail lists and volunteers to assist in every way possible.	More use will be made of discussion groups and web boards.
	Serve as a clearinghouse for information of various kinds.	The consortium is putting together a list of subjects on which the staff can be particularly helpful to the individual institutions.	ACS will continue to serve in this capacity, identifying particularly helpful outside organizations from which it can gather information.
	Make effective use of the HEDS organization in sharing information.	A number of ACS institutions participate in each specific HEDS survey, with information exchanged among participating institutions.	The staff will encourage full participation in the HEDS questionnaires.

Membership Services

Goals	Objectives	Status	Plan
Offer an attractive tuition exchange program.	Provide up-to-date information on the program for faculty and staff throughout the consortium.	Fourteen institutions participate in the current program, which seems to be working smoothly and efficiently (judging from institutional feedback).	Staff will explore the prospects of making the program more visible; a descriptive brochure will be circulated throughout the consortium.

ACS Member Institutions

Birmingham-Southern College
 Centenary College of Louisiana
 Centre College
 Davidson College
 Furman University
 Hendrix College
 Millsaps College
 Morehouse College
 Rhodes College
 Rollins College
 Southwestern University
 Spelman College
 Trinity University
 University of Richmond
 University of the South
 Washington and Lee University

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