

Goal 3

Ensure that students, staff, and faculty have support and opportunities to thrive at St. Olaf and beyond.

Intent and Purpose

The entire plan has as its intent and purpose establishing a campus culture and learning and work environment in which all members of the campus community can thrive. Nationally, students of color, low-income, and first-generation students retain and graduate at lower levels than overall rates. Nationally, rates for tenure and promotion for faculty of color are lower than the average, for both negative reasons, such as implicit bias affecting on-campus interactions and performance reviews, and for positive reasons, such as robust competition for faculty of color who are thriving in their fields. The Working Group for Equity and Inclusion advised that St. Olaf consider the experience of members of the campus community from the very start to the conclusion of their time at the college.

3.a. Strengthen and advance a culture of inclusion through the development of networks and affinity groups, orientation of new community members to promote connections; identify points of welcome.

What the college is already doing in regard to 3.a.

- A revised Week One orientation for students (also see Appendix 1 for related issues of training)
- St. Olaf Orientation to Academics and Resources pilot in 2018-19; 2019-20 expansion
- Connect for Success (see 3.b)
- The Taylor Center staffing and programming for domestic multicultural, international, and **LGBTQIA+** students
- POSSE and SSS TRIO specialized programming and mentoring for certain members the student body
- CILA programming including
 - Orientation for new faculty members
 - Learning communities for new faculty members
 - Mentoring program for faculty members
- Orientation for new staff members
- All-staff meetings (launched in 2017)
- *To Include is To Excel* sponsored sessions for faculty of color, focusing on professional thriving

Examples of how we might further implement 3.a.

- Implement a 12-month staff orientation along the lines proposed by the “Leadership to Legacy” team looking into hiring diverse staff members.
- Explore the feasibility of a new student orientation mentoring program throughout the first year and paired with programming now available through SOAR (see 3.b).

3. b. Invest in robust advising and academic support services.

What the college is already doing in regard to 3.b

- See Appendix 1 regarding training of new advisors.
- The [Center for Advising and Academic Support](#) provides a robust array of support services. Specialized services include:
 - Academic coaching
 - Workshops: study strategies, time management mindfulness, test anxiety
 - Supplemental Instruction and tutoring.
 - Additional writing assistance and courses
 - [Accessibility and Access](#) services, including advising and accommodations
 - Connect for Success, a pilot program launched in spring 2018 that pairs a cohort of first-generation, first-year students with a faculty or staff mentor.
 - SOAR—Student Orientation to Academics and Resources—piloted in 2018/19 by the Athletics Department, Center for Advising and Academic Support, and Piper Center for Vocation and Career offering workshops. In 2019/20, a second pilot of SOAR is expanded to include up to 250 first-year students.
 - Ole Pass (Professional and Academic Student Support): provides students on probation with support and resources
 - Intensive advising for students on probation
 - Advising support for DACA students
- [TRIO Student Support Services](#) (SSS) TRIO. With retention and graduation rates for participating students that are typically on par with the college overall, St. Olaf’s SSS TRIO program is nationally recognized.
- [Summer Bridge](#). As part of the SSS TRIO program, qualifying first-year students arrive on campus early to take two college courses, learn about campus life, and begin to establish good study habits and supportive relationships.
- The [POSSE](#) program enrolls annually 10-12 first-year inner city students and provides specialized advising and enrichment programs for the students’ four years. SSS TRIO also extends much of its programming to POSSE students.
- Hiring of mental health counselors who specialize in counseling international and domestic students of color.

Examples of how we might further implement 3.b. These examples of implementation tactics are merely illustrative.

- Develop a one-stop shop website providing information about resources for students.
- Consider assessing the use of email aliases and newsletters to create easier access to resources available to students.
- Develop an informational Admissions/New Student brochure that provides information about programming, opportunities, and other resources available for all students, including resources serving particular cohorts of students.
- Review pilot programs such as OLE Pass, SOAR, Connect for Success to identify which elements should be applied broadly to all students and which programs should focus on particular cohorts.
- Launch proactive advising for students who may be at higher risk of not retaining
- Develop a case management and early alert system to identify and support struggling students

3.c. Further under-represented students' post-baccalaureate preparation through vocational and scholarship/fellowship programming.

What the college is already doing in regard to 3.c.

- [Ronald E. McNair program Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program](#) (TRIO McNair Scholars) is a graduate school preparatory program at St. Olaf College funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The TRIO McNair program supports 30 students annually through research opportunities, internship placements, a summer research writing class, graduate school preparation, and assistance with financial aid.
- TRIO Student Support Services collaborates with the Piper Center, International and Off-campus Study, and Collaborative Undergraduate Research and Inquiry to provide opportunities for TRIO SSS students to learn about and plan for off-campus study, research, and internship opportunities. SSS also helps students learn about graduate study.
- Specialized career advising for international students. Facing unique barriers to employment in the U.S., all international students are seen by Piper Center coaches and Peer Advisors and receive training related to relevant cultural and immigration factors. International students participate in the Piper Center's student Peer Advisor team and contribute to projects to improve services and resources for international students. Advising and trainings include:
 - Optional Practical Training (OPT) Workshop: a joint meeting with the Piper Center and International Student Advising staff for international students interested in post-graduate employment in the U.S. A Piper Center representative reviews job search techniques and resources, and shares information about the application process, application materials and costs, deadlines, and responsibilities while working on OPT.
 - Nuts and Bolts of Networking with Introduction to Curricular Practical Training (CPT): In this workshop, students learn the basics of networking, observe mock networking scenarios, and practice key skills. The workshop connects the practice of networking to landing internships, and introduces Curricular Practical Training (CPT) work authorization for U.S. internships.

- Curricular Practical Training (CPT) Workshop: a joint meeting with the Piper Center and International Student Advising Staff that provides an overview of Piper Center resources, strategies, and best practices to streamline international students' time and efforts in the job search process.
- Post-graduation fellowships and scholarships reach out specifically to TRIO SSS and Pell-eligible students.
- Participation in the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM)- Mellon Diversity Scholars program for students, matching students with research mentors at select universities.
- The Johnson Family Fund provides financial resources for low-income students to participate in internships and other high impact learning experiences.

Examples of how we might further implement 3.c.

- Building on the successful strategies and collaborations that facilitate participation for many first-generation, low-income, domestic multicultural, and international students in career and vocational opportunities and internships, identify opportunities and craft strategies to address remaining disparities.
- Explore the feasibility and advisability of developing a McNair-like program as a way of expanding access to this kind of opportunity.
- Investigate opportunities to enhance international student applications for post-baccalaureate fellowships and scholarships.

3.d. Enhance support systems to retain under-represented members of the tenure-track faculty and staff.

What the college is already doing in regard to 3.d.

- Implicit bias training (see Appendix 1)
- *To Include is To Excel*-sponsored session for department chairs and administrators regarding career issues experienced by faculty of color.
- Several *To Include is to Excel* grants awarded for studying departmental culture.
- All-staff meetings, established in 2017/18, intended to help staff members get to know each other and to provide knowledge about the college generally, and about specific issues pertinent to staff members
- Programming for new faculty members through the Center for Innovation in the Liberal Arts and *To Include is To Excel* (see 3.a, above)
- Participation in the ACM-Mellon Faculty Fellows program, which provides resources and networking opportunities for the fellows
- The college offers membership of new tenure track faculty of color in the [National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity](#).

Partners in achieving Goal 3:

- Academic Division
- Center for Advising and Academic Support

- Co-directors of External Fellowships
- Counseling
- Human Resources
- Piper Center for Career and Vocations
- POSSE
- Student Life
- Tenure and Promotion and Faculty Life committees
- TRIO Student Support Services and TRIO McNair
- Wellness Center