



2019 Annual Report to the Synods

Wartburg College is dedicated to challenging and nurturing students for lives of leadership and service as a spirited expression of their faith and learning.

Enrollment

Fall 2019 enrollment was 1,505 students from a record 38 U.S. states and a record 59 countries. This number included 123 international students and 189 U.S. students of color. The top five majors are business administration, biology, elementary education, psychology, and music therapy.

Academic Programs

- Wartburg received approval from the Higher Learning Commission to offer its first complete online programs – an English as a Second Language (PK-12) endorsement for educators and a graduate certificate in leadership. Both are 12-month programs and will launch in Summer 2020; the leadership certificate requires two brief on-campus summer residencies at the start and end of the program.
- As the new Irving R. Burling Distinguished Professor in Leadership, Dr. Michael Gleason will guide the launch of the online graduate leadership certificate and oversee a new Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Leadership. Both programs leverage the popular leadership minor for undergraduates and promise to extend Wartburg's reach to new audiences.
- Dr. Stephanie Toering-Peters was inducted into the new Dr. Richard L. and Sandra K. Wahl Professorship in Biology. Both Waverly natives, Richard '74 is an internationally recognized physician scientist and Sandra is an accomplished math educator.
- The College continues raising funds to renovate Wartburg's current strength and conditioning room to house the Department of Health and Human Performance and create new laboratory space for exercise science. A new Strength and Conditioning Center will better meet the needs of a growing intercollegiate athletics program and integrate with student-faculty research opportunities in exercise science.
- In October, the Board of Regents authorized a collaborative planning effort involving Regents, faculty, and staff to clarify a vision for the College and produce a three-year plan of action.

Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry

- On the occasion of the Wartburg Chapel's 25th anniversary, the College dedicated *Lebenskreuz* (Life Cross), a sculpture based on the wooden crosses handcrafted in Neuendettelsau, Germany, that depict the Seven Acts of Mercy found in Matthew 25. Other highlights of the Homecoming weekend included an open house, dinner, and worship service. More information can be found at <https://www.wartburg.edu/chapel-25/>.
- Adrian Miller, award-winning author and executive director of the Colorado Council of Churches, was the 2019 Graven Award recipient. The annual award for Christian vocation continues to highlight the powerful and positive effect of a strong sense of Christian vocation as it interfaces with service to community, the church, and the world.
- Rebecca Baird '18 became the first four-year pastoral intern at an ELCA college when she assumed the role at Wartburg in August. Baird is working part-time (20-25 hours/week) while taking classes online through Wartburg Theological Seminary's Collaborative Learning Program.
- The cooperative articulation agreement with Wartburg Seminary continues to mature. Nine students are currently at the College pursuing the joint B.A.-M.Div. Programs to prepare for ordained ministry. Two challenge grants from O. Jay and Pat Tomson will provide scholarship funds for these students. The program's founding director, Halcyon Bjornstad, accepted a call to become a congregational pastor in December. Wartburg's Dean of Spiritual Life Brian Beckstrom is leading efforts to ensure the program's success.

- The Spiritual Life Guiding Team comprising faculty, staff, and students continues to work on initiatives that provide a theological center for ministry on campus while inviting those of different perspectives to be full participants in the religious life of the College. A new interfaith prayer space in the Chapel Commons allows students of different traditions a place for prayer and reflection. A Muslim Student Association has become a new Faith Expression Group.

Recognition

- Longtime Wartburg men's basketball coach and professor emeritus Lewis "Buzz" Levick and Harold '58 and Grace Jahn '61 Kurtz, loyal alums and devout Lutherans, received the Wartburg Medal in recognition of sustained service to the College.
- New Regents include Barbara Gamez '98, laboratory services and partnership development director for Mayo Clinic; Tammy Jackson '83, director of the ELCA International Leaders Program, and Paul Mugan '91, biology teacher at Waverly-Shell Rock High School and Alumni Board president-elect. Bishop Jim Arends stepped off the Board in October.
- For the second year in a row, Wartburg was second in the 2019 Break Away National Alternative Break Survey. Nearly 10 percent of students participated in 13 trips helping with flood recovery, sustainability, homelessness, hunger, and several other social issues.
- Campus Compact named Joshua Voigt '20 of Ezulwini, eSwatini, a Newman Civic Fellow for his contributions to community and civic engagement. Student Body President as a junior, Voigt worked to reduce summer housing rates for international students, organized campus Peace Dialogues, and championed an international flag display, among other diversity-related initiatives.
- Sophomore Rachel Ndjuluwa and juniors Saffa Bockarie and Tyler Bitting each received \$10,000 grants from the Davis Projects for Peace to construct a classroom in Namibia and improve access to clean water in Sierra Leone, respectively.
- Eleven athletics teams qualified for their respective NCAA tournaments/championships. Seven student-athletes were named Conference MVPs in football, women's cross country, women's soccer, women's basketball, softball, and wrestling. Matt Sacia won an NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship, bringing the total to 42.
- President Darrel Colson was named to the board of directors for the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, serving on its taxation committee. He continues to serve on the board of the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities (NECU) and on the Council of Independent College's NetVUE Advisory Board.

We are blessed to work with gifted students who are committed to changing the world through leadership and service. Thank you for encouraging your students to join Wartburg's rich tradition as they share their gifts to enrich our community of learning.

Darrel D. Colson, President