

**ONE COLLEGE INITIATIVE**  
**Connection to the Mission of the College**  
**Augsburg Rochester Program**

Historical Context

The connection of the Rochester Program to the mission of Augsburg is rooted in the decision made 25 years ago that the College would make its educational program accessible to non-traditional adults. In the early 1980's, the downturn in high school graduates and the corresponding decrease in the traditional-age student population at Augsburg (which fell to below 1300 students) triggered a discussion within the College as to how its educational programs might extend to new student populations. The Educational Policies Committee B, in charge of long-range planning, conducted an extensive study of non-traditional adult programs. It was decided at that time that it was indeed appropriate for the College to make its unique, church-related educational program available to working adults.

Within the present context, this decision is consistent with most of the elements of how the College currently views its mission. Most specifically, the following elements of this mission are especially relevant to this decision to include non-traditional adults within Augsburg's educational focus:

- To combine the intellectually liberating and the practical
- To inspire lifelong learning
- To be inclusive of all persons and faiths
- To engage citizens of the city as partners in education
- To utilize the city as a practical laboratory
- To educate a wide range of students from many backgrounds
- To affirm individual differences

It must be emphasized that Augsburg did not make the decision to offer a different educational program to non-traditional adults, but rather it decided to place its traditional liberal arts and professional programs into a schedule that was accessible to working adults.

Augsburg's Presence in Rochester

In 1998 the decision was made to extend Augsburg's traditional liberal arts and professional degree programs to a satellite campus in Rochester, Minnesota. A subcommittee of Faculty Senate (the Rochester Committee) was empowered to oversee the implementation of this new initiative, and the college underwent a separate accreditation review by North Central to verify that the Rochester site was sanctioned by this accrediting body.

Briefly, it was determined that Rochester was an appropriate site for delivery of Augsburg programs for the following reasons:

1. Augsburg is a college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The college is owned by the four ELCA synods that surround Augsburg (Metro East, Metro West, NW Wisconsin and SE Minnesota). Augsburg' main campus is located at the boundary between the Metro East and Metro West synods. Rochester is the seat of the SE Minnesota Synod of the ELCA, and Rochester, with its high concentration of Lutherans, was therefore seen as an appropriate location for college programs.
2. Augsburg has as part of its mission the goal of relating to the urban context. Rochester has recently become the largest urban area outside the Twin Cities Metro area.
3. Augsburg is a college that seeks to relate effectively to a diverse student body. Olmsted County, in which Rochester is located, has nearly the same level of diversity (though somewhat different in composition) than does Hennepin County, in which the main campus is located.

In addition to the mission elements listed above, the Augsburg Rochester Program is consistent with the goal of the College to engage in collaborative programs. The Rochester program is housed at Bethel Lutheran Church, the largest ELCA congregation in SE Minnesota and a congregation that is located very near downtown and in the midst of one of the most diverse communities in the city.

In sum, the Rochester program is closely linked to the central mission of Augsburg College, and it offers the same educational programs as are offered on the main campus. The program is overseen by a designated subcommittee of Faculty Senate, and its educational program and faculty are approved and managed by the same officers and departments chairs. Essentially, the Rochester Program is simply an alternative class meeting site for established Augsburg programs.