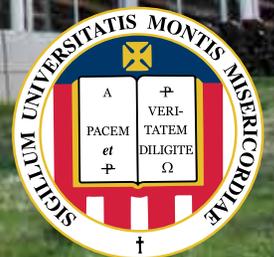


Our name is
Mercy
Our spirit is
Compassion

Strengthening
Our **Foundation**
and Securing
Our **Future**

Strategic Plan
Mount Mercy
University
2013-2016

MOUNT MERCY UNIVERSITY



Welcome



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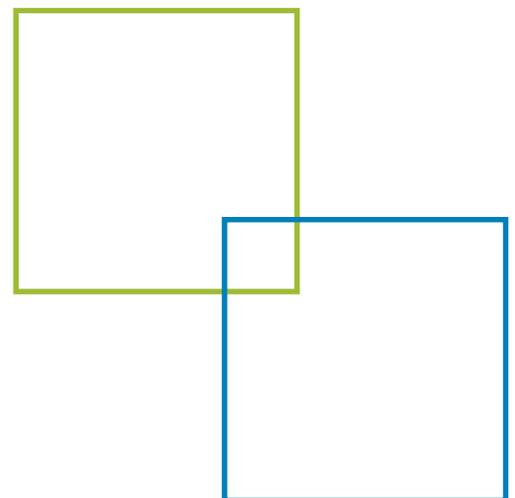
elcome to Mount Mercy's 2013-2016 strategic plan –
Strengthening our Foundation and Securing our Future.

We thank you for your interest in Mount Mercy University and its future.

As with our last strategic plan, this plan builds upon our mission, values and vision as a Catholic institution of higher learning, founded by the Sisters of Mercy, and providing a high quality student-focused education at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

This strategic plan reflects the inputs of many faculty, staff, students and administrators. A dedicated committee, the Strategic Innovation Committee, guided the planning process and worked to identify strategies which will move the university toward a more complete realization of its mission. Mount Mercy's foundation has been enhanced through recent significant institutional accomplishments. This plan will continue to strengthen our foundation while being mindful of the future. The themes and goals outlined in the plan will provide institutional direction and a framework for prioritizing our energies and resources in the coming years.

The strategic plan will be monitored in its progress by the Strategic Innovation Committee and the Senior Leadership Team. The monitoring will include providing regular feedback to the Board of Trustees on the implementation, development and progress of the plan.



Our Mission

Mount Mercy is a Catholic University providing student-focused baccalaureate and graduate education in the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy.

As a Catholic University founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, Mount Mercy University welcomes women and men of all beliefs to join our community in the pursuit of baccalaureate and graduate education and service to those in need.

Mount Mercy University promotes reflective judgment, strategic communication, the common good and purposeful living through a core curriculum, liberal arts and professional majors and student development programs.

OUR NAME IS MERCY
OUR SPIRIT IS COMPASSION



We strive for excellence in accomplishing our mission through our four interdependent goals:

Using reflective judgment

The abilities to think clearly and carefully, argue coherently and evaluate competing truth claims critically are fundamental to a college education. Reflective judgment requires a knowledge of basic fact, examination and evaluation of assumptions, adequate justification for drawing a conclusion and understanding implications of drawing that conclusion. With these skills, individuals can solve problems creatively and integrate knowledge across disciplines.

Engaging in strategic communication

Strategic communication requires selecting from a range of options in order to accomplish a chosen goal in an ethical manner. These options include construction and interpretation of messages in the written, oral and aesthetic forms using appropriate technology.

Serving the common good

The common good is at the heart of Catholic social teaching. Because persons are social by nature, every individual's good relates necessarily to the common good, the sum of social conditions that allows all people to reach their human potential more fully. It includes respect for and ethical interaction with every person and the natural environment and, in the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy, service for the wellbeing of all humanity and action in the cause of justice in the world.

Promoting purposeful living

A liberal education enables persons to achieve a greater degree of freedom upon which to act purposefully. Since development of purpose entails planning for life based on a set of priorities, Mount Mercy University provides opportunities for spiritual growth, intellectual engagement, vocational clarity, social development, physical well-being, emotional maturity and responsible community leadership.

Our Values

As members of the Mount Mercy University community, grounded in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy and our Catholic identity, we are committed to:

Lifelong learning and education of the whole person

We believe that education is a lifelong experience where learning empowers the whole person, intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

Pursuit of truth and dignity

We foster free inquiry in a compassionate culture where our dedication to faith, truth and mercy supports the dignity of each person within the human community.

Commitment to students

We acknowledge and affirm that our students' needs are central to decisions that affect community life.

Justice

We advocate for equality by actively creating just and healthy relationships in our learning community and in our global society.

Gratitude

We celebrate with humility all gifts and talents bestowed by God and faithfully share these blessings with the wider community.

Hospitality

We accomplish our work in the spirit of Catherine McAuley's graciousness and inclusion that welcomes all people and perspectives.

Service

We instill a sense of responsibility and caring that calls us to serve the common good.

Mount Mercy University will be a distinguished regional institution in the Catholic intellectual tradition and a national leader within Mercy higher education.

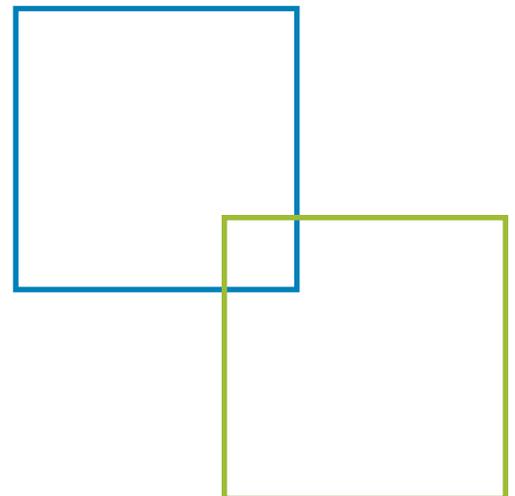
Academic Life where learning in the Mercy tradition is academically acclaimed and the university's integrated approach to the liberal arts, professional preparation and service learning creates a community and culture of free inquiry, social responsibility and purposeful living.

Student Experiences which foster a vibrant university community where a diverse student population participates in campus activities, strong residential programs, international experiences, and personal and spiritual growth in an atmosphere promoting service to the common good.

Institutional Resources with robust finances, a campus environment, and human resources to accommodate growth in quality and quantity of undergraduate and graduate students and realize the full potential and reputation of a successful small to mid-size regional university.

Community Outreach where Mount Mercy is the educational partner of choice in relationship with the business community, other educational institutions, alumni, parents, area residents, civic organizations and other local and national organizations.

Approved as amended by Board of Trustees November 1, 2013.



Introduction

Our vision calls for Mount Mercy University to be a distinguished regional institution in the Catholic intellectual tradition and a national leader within Mercy higher education.

Mount Mercy is committed to sustaining itself as a preferred regional choice in private higher education, fostering a culture of educational excellence and innovation at both undergraduate and graduate levels. That culture will inspire students of diverse backgrounds to distinguish themselves as 21st century ethical leaders in their communities and professions. We continue the work of obtaining national prominence in the family of Mercy colleges and universities. Our inspiration is drawn from the Catholic vision of the pursuit of truth and integration of knowledge for the common good in concert with the values and traditions of the Sisters of Mercy. We remain dedicated to the educational aspirations of our students and the professional enhancement of our faculty and staff.

This strategic plan, *Strengthening Our Foundation and Securing Our Future*, establishes goals to achieve our vision.



Theme #1: Working in New Ways to Fulfill Our Mission

Mount Mercy is committed to maintaining and enriching our reputation as a desirable place to work within the community. Through intentional valuing of the whole person, support of professional development, strategic investment in human resources, and a commitment to diversity, Mount Mercy recognizes the importance of its greatest asset: its people.

Goal #1

Support a robust staff development program.

Implementation of professional development programming, in accordance with national standards for excellence in higher education, will help Mount Mercy to attract and retain qualified employees.

Goal #2

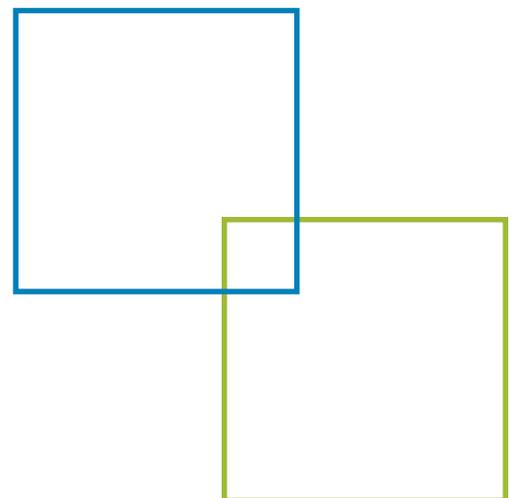
Implement an active health and wellness program for all employees.

Develop and implement programming for the physical well-being of our employees in support of our value of the whole person.

Goal #3

Foster a community of tolerance and inclusiveness where diversity among faculty, staff and students is supported.

Based on the Mercy values of acceptance and hospitality, the Mount Mercy mission, and the Catholic intellectual tradition, we will actively work to increase the diversity and the cultural aptitude of faculty, staff and students.



Theme #2: Growing Our Presence and Impact

In order to meet our enrollment goals we will develop new core programs, academic and co-curricular, that will strengthen Mount Mercy's position as a preferred choice in higher education within the region. Strong, self-sustaining academic programs operating in partnership with student life offerings provide the foundation for growth. Innovative programming and a commitment to affordability will contribute to securing our regional presence.

Goal #1

Analyze academic offerings to strategically support majors and launch selected new programs.

A strategic analysis of current undergraduate offerings can help determine what majors will provide the most value for prospective students. Addition of new, market-driven majors will help us meet enrollment goals and solidify our presence in the region.

Goal #2

Develop innovative programming to expand our presence in the community.

Developing new masters degree programs, designing corporate training partnerships, offering community-based learning opportunities, and exploring doctoral degrees in practitioner fields are among the options that will help establish Mount Mercy as a leading provider of adult education in the community. Programs of this type will take full advantage of the new CRST International Graduate Center and other campus facilities.

Goal #3

Support new co-curricular activities that encourage planned and purposeful involvement.

Experiential learning opportunities, such as new student clubs and organizations, new performance-based activities, and new service learning experiences will help us attain enrollment goals. Purposeful campus-life experiences help build a strong institutional affinity and lifelong connection to Mount Mercy.

Goal #4

Explore best practices supporting our commitment to accessibility and affordability of education for students from a variety of life situations.

Through such actions as continual review of the efficiency of internal processes, cost-effective operational and environmental solutions, and optimal positioning in the marketplace, Mount Mercy will strive to meet students' need for affordability.

Theme #3: Building a Strong Campus Community

Mount Mercy believes the physical and technological environments in which we learn and work should enhance communication, engagement and reflection. To that end, Mount Mercy recognizes the need for continued improvement in current facilities, the necessity for physical expansion, and the importance of updating technology used in serving the campus community.

Goal #1

Improve information technology capabilities across campus.

We will systematically work to improve the network infrastructure, streamline business processes using technology, and strengthen data management.

Goal #2

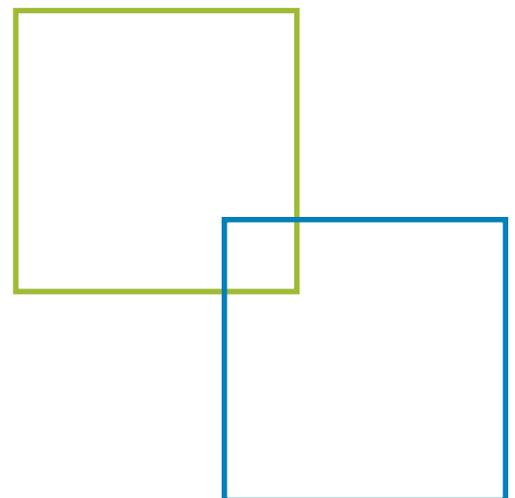
Develop the Mount Mercy Outdoor Athletic Complex to support and enhance athletic programming, including the addition of a new athletic program.

The Outdoor Athletic Complex will support our intercollegiate teams, accommodate better practice schedules for student athletes, assist in student retention and recruitment, provide tangible outlets for alumni engagement, improve our ability to mentor young people, and provide opportunities to partner with the community's recreational sports programs.

Goal #3

Renovate chemistry laboratories to strengthen pre-professional programming.

Updated lab space will increase the scope and quality of hands-on research and experimentation, and provide for a safe and technologically current environment for learning.



Theme #4: Preparing Students for Success

We believe education is a continuum. As such, we see higher education as an important phase in that continuum, bridging the educational aspirations of young adults with the world of work and responsible adulthood. At the same time, higher education offers important enrichment opportunities to those who strive to complete their undergraduate or graduate degrees at a later stage in life. Therefore, we will more effectively transition new students into campus life while preparing current students for success through and beyond graduation.

Goal #1

Expand transition programs to provide increased support to new students, particularly in traditional or adult undergraduate programs.

Helping students develop early, meaningful connections with peers, faculty, and staff will help ensure their transition to Mount Mercy is successful. Robust transition programs also contribute to retention and success by prompting new students to understand the Mercy values, our mission, and the supportive services available to them.

Goal #2

For majors and programs, increase the richness and variety of service learning and other experiential learning opportunities provided.

In keeping with our Mercy values, development of rich, diverse experiential and service learning opportunities supports long-term community partnerships, civic engagement, and our mission to serve the common good.

Goal #3

Encourage student-centered pedagogies geared toward today's learners.

Commitment to improvement in teaching and learning is essential to achieving the University's mission and goals. Strategies will be developed to encourage and support adopters of innovative teaching approaches, helping them share their techniques and results.

Goal #4

Develop "life after college" programming for students to help them plan for a successful future.

Programming will be developed to engage students in 'high impact' practices and support their career decision making and planning. Intentional, systematic preparation for 'life after college' will help articulate the value of their education, including knowledge and skills they have gained both inside and outside the classroom.

Health of the University: Key Performance Indicators

Our Future

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) can provide a quick snapshot of critical areas of the emerging University. Since rarely does a single measure convey the status of the institution, multiple KPI's have been selected to help provide a more holistic view of Mount Mercy. This document contains current measures and aspirational outcomes. These targets provide potential and likely outcomes to our strategic plan. Like all plans and anticipated outcomes, these may be subject to refinement and revision as the plan is implemented.

Aspirational Markers	Fall 2013/FY2013	Fall 2016
Freshmen retention rate (freshman to sophomore)	82.3%	84%
Freshmen graduation rate (6 year)	72.9%	74%
Traditional transfer student retention rate	74.7%	77%
Traditional transfer student graduation rate (3 year)	57.8%	60%
% of students employed (FT) or in graduate school 9 months after graduation	88.4%	90%
Number of classes that offer service learning opportunities	TBD	TBD
Number of service learning opportunities available through classes	TBD	TBD
% of graduates (Traditional Prgm) who reported participating in service learning	80.7%	85%
Enrollment goals – total headcount	1761	1830
Total annual semester hours Accelerated Programs	7990	8110
Total annual semester hours Graduate Programs	5214	5500
Unity Campaign total	\$19,669,621	\$33,000,000
Staff development participation rate	TBD	65%
Full-time Faculty and Staff turnover rate	13.39%	11%
Percentage of occupancy of residential housing	82%	89%
Residential student headcount	389	425
Net tuition dependency	78.2%	75%
Tuition discount rate – overall	36%	36%
Percent of faculty with terminal degrees	65.1%	67%
Total number of varsity sports programs offered	15	16
Freshmen cohort headcount	154	175
Student Athletes – unduplicated	295	315
Number of programs or events held at CRST Graduate Center	0	12
Average student indebtedness upon graduation	\$26,211*	\$26,000
Level of endowment	\$24,159,789	\$24,600,000

* 2011-12 figure

Strategic Planning Advisory Committee 2012-13

This strategic plan was developed with the assistance of the following members of the campus community during the 2012-13 academic year.

Connie Albaugh, *Payroll Manager*
Walter Chien, *Director of Grants Administration*
Dennis Gehring, *Assistant Director of Facilities*
Jenifer Hanson, *Interim Dean of Students*
Lori Heying, *Executive Director of Institutional Research and Data*
Michael Lown, *Recruitment Coordinator for Accelerated and Graduate Programs*
Chance McWorthy, *Senior Associate Registrar*
Nancy Merryman, *Associate Professor of Education*
Brooke Oehme, *Coordinator of Volunteerism and Service Learning*
Kristy Raine, *Librarian and Archivist*
Scot Reisinger, *Director of Athletics*
Ryan Ronan, *Assistant Director of Admissions*
Stephanie Russell, *Student Representative*
Audrey Sheller, *Lecturer in Nursing*
Teresa Wery, *Assistant Campus Store Manager*

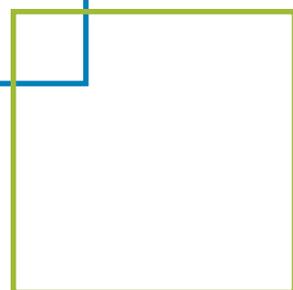
Executive Officers of the Institution

Norm Nielsen, Ph.D.,
Interim President
Janet R. Handler, Ed.D.,
Provost
Duff Ridgeway,
Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations
Robert B. Callahan,
Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services
Vicky A. Smith,
Vice President for Administrative Services
Jennifer L. Kaefring '00,
Executive Director of Business Services
Dianne M. Austad '84,
Executive Assistant to the President

This plan was approved by the Mount Mercy University Board of Trustees on November 1, 2013.

The Board on that date consisted of:

Brandt A. Worley, *Chair*
Barbara A. Barhamand '77, *Vice Chair*
Sr. Mary Lou Podzimek AC'52,'66, *Secretary*
Sr. Margaret Weigel '66, *Assistant Secretary*
Martin L. Andreas
Thomas C. Barbee
Dawn M. Bazarko '85
F. James Bradley
Michele M. Busse
Terri A. Christoffersen
Loren L. Coppock
Patrick E. Falconio
Magda M. Golobic
Cammie C. Greif '88
Sr. Delores M. Hannon '73
Ronald J. Herold
Nancy L. Kasperek
Robert F. Kazimour
Richard T. Kettelkamp '93
Bruce M. King
Barbara A. Knapp
C. John Linge
Scott B. Lynch '85
Norman R. Nielsen, *Ex Officio*
James M. Nikrant
H. Thomas Reed
John M. Rinderknecht
Charles A. Rohde, *Immediate Past Chair*
Dyan C. Smith
Margee M. Stamper '77
Sr. Kathy R. Thornton '66
Rev. Msgr. Thomas E. Toale



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