



**COMMON THEMES IN THE**  
**MISSION**  
**AND**  
**IDENTITY**  
**OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON**



LINKING OUR

# LEARNING

WITH

SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP

## *Common Themes in the Mission and Identity of the University of Dayton*

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

“We are a comprehensive, Catholic university, a diverse community committed to the Marianist tradition of educating the whole person and linking learning and scholarship with leadership and service.”


Our mission statement and its shortened form, “Learn, Lead, Serve,” are the cornerstone for our reflections. Our mission and identity are founded in Marianist education, Catholic higher education and independent higher education in the United States. Although these three traditions have various origins and histories, they come together in the mission of our University like the different colored threads in an ornate tapestry.




# A COMMUNITY OF LEADERS Grounded in Faith

---

## Roots of the Marianists

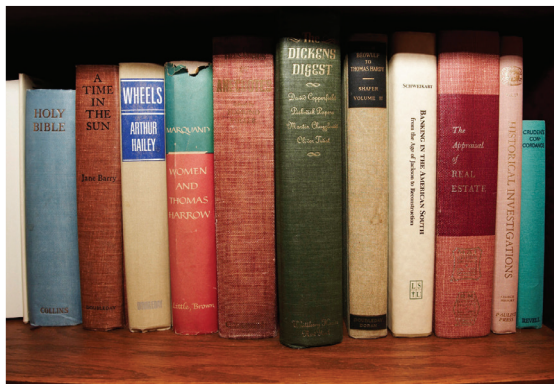


At the University of Dayton, our educational mission and traditions are rooted in the response of Blessed Father William Joseph Chaminade and the early Marianists to the chaos of the French Revolution. Chaminade believed that this tumultuous time required new methods of spreading the Gospel. His disciples in the Society of Mary established an institution in 1850 to continue the mission of educating young men to be grounded in faith, developed as whole persons and prepared for careers and for leadership in society and the church. By 1920, this institution would be called the University of Dayton.



With the goal to educate both the mind and the heart, the members of the Society of Mary set high standards for our school by establishing the Marianist tradition of education that we continue to honor today. They emphasized relationships of caring in a family spirit, integrated both the theoretical and practical approaches to learning, and expressed a special concern for the poor.

Today, we read the signs of the times and respond in ways that help us realize our mission more effectively, while sustaining a creative fidelity to our Marianist educational principles.







COMMON THEMES IN THE

## MISSION AND IDENTITY

of the University of Dayton



### THEME 1: EXCELLING IN INTEGRATED LEARNING AND SCHOLARSHIP

Through integrated learning and scholarship, we're able to discover, combine and apply what we've learned to answer new questions and solve problems. For example, the University's Common Academic Program (CAP) allows for integrated learning across disciplines and gives students opportunities to learn inside and outside the classroom to advance knowledge while exploring the critical issues shaping our world.

What we do:

- **Encourage the building of community** and expecting the very best from ourselves and one another.
- **Use our head, heart and hands** to balance our lives to become more fully human.
- **Connect leadership and service** to our education and personal lives.
- **Realize our learning is a gift** and that we have a responsibility to benefit those other than ourselves in order to provide well-being for our global community.
- **Integrate learning and scholarship** in our search for wisdom from a variety of sources — texts, conversations, experiences and reflection.



## THEME 2: SEARCHING FOR TRUTH GROUNDED IN FAITH AND REASON

Our search for truth is based on the belief that truth is more fully known through faith and reason. To discover this truth, we must first ask questions with academic freedom and openness in our academic, intellectual and religious lives to the transcendent dimension of life.

The Catholic intellectual tradition dynamically shapes the intellectual inquiry of our University faculty, staff and students. By engaging the resources of the Catholic faith with the great human questions, histories and insights, we are encouraged to create new conversations and explore our own questions to better understand truth, faith and reason.

We are a Catholic university; we rely on the diversity of our community members – indeed all people of good will – to support and respect our Catholic Marianist mission and identity. Our conversations across differences move beyond mere tolerance to genuine dialogue and consensus building. Thus, through our community, curriculum, culture and conversations, we support one another and our University in our mission and identity.

### **Formation in faith:**

- Is a central element in the Marianist tradition of education and has both a personal and public dimension.
- Provides conceptual and moral resources and a deep motivation to link learning and scholarship to leadership and service.
- Creates a disposition of the heart, an openness to the transcendent, and the ability to experience faith as both a gift from God and as a relationship with God.



## THEME 3: EDUCATING FOR PRACTICAL WISDOM

The virtue of practical wisdom combines practical reasoning, commitment to a moral tradition and practical knowledge. This commitment involves knowledge and a set of habits or virtues that support the realization of the common human good. The virtue of compassion is an important complement to practical wisdom in the Catholic tradition.

We strive to:

- **See** by framing a problem or issue so we understand the causes.
- **Judge** by imagining the good and designing a response to realize that good.
- **Act** and implement that response to find the good.
- **Reflect** on our decisions and draw practical knowledge from our experiences.

Practical wisdom allows us to:

- Read the signs of our times to **adapt and change**.
- Evaluate trends to **seek justice, peace, reconciliation and the common good**.
- Develop a **special sense of purpose** and **deeper sense of vocation**.

Together, we develop a community of learners and scholars who think critically and imaginatively, judge from sound moral principles and practical knowledge, and work together collaboratively for the common good.



## THEME 4: BUILDING COMMUNITY ACROSS DIVERSITY

Our University's commitment to community can be seen through the meaningful relationships between our students, faculty and staff – and in our shared sense of a common purpose.

### **We all create community**

As we deepen and expand our strong campus connections, we continue to build community across diversity. As people of faith, we value the dignity of each and every person, emphasizing community as a part of our educational experience. Beginning in the classroom, these insights permeate our campus culture – including residence life and service learning – to create a tradition of respect and appreciation for one another.

Our University of Dayton community:

- **Educates for family spirit** – based on mutual respect, care, and genuine concern that allows challenging and supportive growth.
- **“Stays at the table”** when conflicts and tensions arise.
- **Listens to and appreciates others** who are different.
- **Shares beliefs and convictions** in a way that touches the experience of others.
- **Creatively merges and expands ideas** into solutions for the good of everyone.
- **Models a way for change** within society and the church in the Marianist tradition of education.



## THEME 5: PARTNERING FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Connecting our education with community through civic engagement, we utilize resources and scholarship to create a more hopeful future – and to help others to realize these possibilities too.

### **Uniting in education to benefit the world**

As a Catholic university, we are dedicated to bring out the best of contemporary knowledge and unite with other institutions, especially with other colleges and universities, to solve critical social issues. As we build partnerships expanding from our own University, we seek to address social issues and advance justice in our neighborhoods, our community and the world.

### **Because common good should be more common**

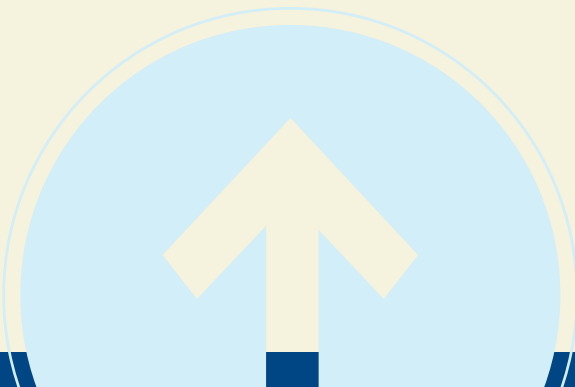
Our connections and partnerships are made with a variety of groups and individuals working to realize the common good. In public conversations, we must do so in ways that respect and appreciate other moral and religious traditions, articulate our perspectives so others can appreciate them, and work toward public consensus to advance justice. We strive to educate our students to be community builders with the desire to create and share a vision characterized by respect, the common good, help for the poor and a better community.

### **Building a global community**

As a Marianist university, we must build and support connections to allow our community to address critical issues in society, characterized by respect, the common good and a preferential option for the poor.

Together, we build our global community through our:

- Partnerships in working toward the common good, which include the Catholic Church, urban neighborhoods, regional efforts to revitalize economies and international immersion in the work of development, human rights, sustainability and education.
- Solidarity, a moral virtue recognizing the connections of all peoples and groups and in which we are especially called to judge how society affects those who are most vulnerable.
- Subsidiarity, or shared governance, in which we allow all to exercise their responsibility for contributing to the common good.





*Common Themes in the  
Mission and Identity of  
the University of Dayton*<sup>1</sup>

This document provides us with the ideas and concepts we will need to continue to grow and develop in response to the new challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. At the same time, we will remain creatively faithful to our founding mission of building a learning community dedicated to educate faith-filled persons, prepared and committed to lead and serve society and the church.

1. This document is a summary of the key ideas of the longer document ***Common Themes in the Mission and Identity of the University of Dayton*** that can be found on the University website at [go.udayton.edu/commonthemes](http://go.udayton.edu/commonthemes).