

Menu of potential strategic aspirations for the University of Dayton

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The descriptions below reflect possible signature themes and potential aspirations for UD's long-term future that have emerged from many dozens of on- and off-campus consultations, as well as through the five Working Group reports submitted in late December and Steering Committee discussions. In addition to questions posed below each description, the criteria by which these aspirations are to be evaluated appear on the last page of this document.

The premier Catholic university for applied creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship

UD's new institute for applied creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship will function as a dynamic, campus-wide network, offering opportunities for every academic program and UDRI as well as engaging external partners from every social sector. The institute will not only support traditional innovation and entrepreneurship emphases, including the commercialization of products and services developed by students, faculty, staff, and community partners, but it will shape an environment of creativity and innovation throughout the campus community and take a leadership role in the region's growing culture of entrepreneurship and social innovation.

Building on our reputation for excellence in applied research in tandem with our Catholic and Marianist mission, UD will become known among Catholic universities as a leading catalyst for innovation and entrepreneurship that fosters positive social transformation. No other Catholic university currently occupies this space.

The institute will utilize a broad range of pathways to infuse applied creativity and innovation into a UD education, ranging from certificates, internships, and education abroad experiences to new, signature cohort programs that enable selected groups of students to develop their capacities for creative ideation and innovation in active collaboration with major institutional partners. The institute also will house a new, cross-unit degree program in innovation and disruptive design. New institutional partnerships will be developed in Dayton and the region, around the country, and around the world to advance the institute's work and expand opportunities for the entire university community. For instance, one arm of the institute could focus specifically on innovation for social justice and transformation guided by the UN's Global Compact and Sustainability Development Goals, consonant with Catholic social teaching.

A facility will be designed as a creative commons to foster interdisciplinary collisions and disruptive thinking among the institute's participants and partners.

The institute's distinctive design and depth of impact will depend, in part, on its close alignment with the other signature themes and research emphases that emerge from the strategic visioning process.

Questions for discussion:

- Given the prevalence of entrepreneurship initiatives on university campuses, how can this concept be made most distinctive and creative and include a diverse range of constituencies?
- Is widespread campus impact for the proposed institute feasible?

- Can the proposed institute successfully encompass both for-profit entrepreneurship and leadership in social innovation and transformation?

A national Catholic leader in university-wide inclusive and intercultural excellence

UD will be a national Catholic leader in the creative, comprehensive, and effective development of learning for inclusive and intercultural excellence, integrated throughout the curriculum and co-curriculum. UD also will exercise leadership in faculty and staff development, along with allied research initiatives, to promote and sustain inclusive, intercultural learning across the campus. This will entail construction of best-in-class mechanisms and systems for inclusive faculty and staff recruitment, retention, and advancement.

Integral to this aspiration is the development of a university-wide center for inclusive dialogue and learning that will systematically support and assess the campus' capacity for meaningful dialogue across challenging forms of human difference and division. This center also will be incorporated in UD's aspiration to become the leading Catholic university in leadership development for civic engagement and community building. Complementing its work on campus, the center will foster deeper dialogue across organizations, communities, and neighborhoods throughout Dayton and the region.

This aspiration will entail bold commitments to cultivate broad compositional inclusion and representation in the student body and in our faculty and staff. While this will be a campus-wide initiative, the University will become a nationally preferred recruitment site in particular fields for employers and graduate schools seeking holistically educated undergraduates whose academic capabilities and professional skills include excellence in inclusive dialogue and intercultural collaboration.

UD's commitment to leadership in inclusive and intercultural excellence will inform the entirety of the student experience, including, among other things, students' work in research, internships and coops, education abroad and cultural immersions, Campus Ministry retreats, and student-led clubs and organizations, in addition to shaping formal course work and Student Development's residential curriculum. This initiative will also enrich the workplace environment for faculty and staff.

Questions for discussion:

- Can UD build sufficient capacity to achieve this aspiration?
- Is this concept sufficiently bold and differentiating among Catholic universities?
- Will sustained, campus-wide commitment to this aspiration be achievable?

The premier Catholic university for leadership development in civic engagement, community building, and social innovation

UD will be recognized nationally as the foremost Catholic university to develop students' leadership capacity, with particular attention to public-servant leadership for community-building and community-engaged innovation and research, in concert with our Marianist mission. UD's role as an anchor institution in Dayton will expand comprehensively, integrating the campus more fully in the City through reciprocal scholarly and educational partnerships and

through shared physical spaces that foster deep and sustained educational and research collaborations with community partners.

This aspiration would take the form of a School of Leadership and Public Service in Community, building upon the mission of the Fitz Center and expanding its influence through new scholarly initiatives and degree programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The resources of the Center for Leadership also will be utilized to elevate students' encounter with state-of-the-art leadership theory and development. Institutions throughout the region would work with UD students, faculty, and staff, creating an environment of innovative, public service learning and scholarship that would engage a wide spectrum of academic fields in every unit.

Focusing on leadership will distinguish this initiative from other universities' work in civic engagement and renew our commitment to public service. Similarly, focusing on community building and social innovation will differentiate the initiative from standard leadership development institutes. Moreover, the alignment of this aspiration with strategic commitments to the institute for applied creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship, campus-wide inclusive excellence, and to health and community well-being will position the School for Leadership and Public Service in Community for deep impact throughout the University, as well as across the region and throughout the country.

Questions for discussion:

- Would the establishment of a new school be valuable for this aspiration?
- Can the leadership dimension of this concept be developed in a genuinely distinctive manner?
- Should other proposed aspirations on this menu be combined with this concept?

A national Catholic leader in emerging fields of health and community well-being

UD will establish a School of Health and Community Well-being that studies issues of personal and community health and well-being, with special attention to health-related needs of our Dayton community. The school will support new academic programs and continuing education in the health sciences and professions as well as explore cross-unit certificate and degree offerings related to broader areas of study concerning health and well-being, potentially involving communication, economics, education, environmental sustainability, ethics, management, public administration and policy, psychology, religious studies, sociology and social work, and technology, among others. Research in the biosciences and bioengineering related to growing health care challenges will be allied with the new unit's mission, as will other multi-disciplinary areas of community-based research and education.

Educational and research initiatives would stimulate and build upon robust institutional partnerships in the health care, social service, education, and governmental sectors, as well as with innovative technology firms. The new school programs would evolve to align with and strengthen the other strategic aspirations in UD's vision, taking advantage of new capacities in creative innovation, inclusive and intercultural intelligence, leadership and civic engagement, and research.

The School of Health and Community Well-being will devote special attention to the health-care needs of and educational opportunities for under-resourced local communities, such as veterans and the working poor.

In addition to developing the new facilities required for expanded degree offerings and research in health-related fields, UD will establish a shared facility with institutional partners for joint initiatives in community-based health care, education, and research.

Questions for discussion:

- Is this concept too broad in virtue of seeking to encompass professional education in health fields, biomedical and biotechnology research, and broader study of community health and well-being?
- How should “well-being” be understood in the development of this aspiration? Is “wellness” a more appropriate concept?
- Can UD achieve national excellence and differentiation among Catholic universities in this area without having a medical school or nursing school?

The premier international center for multi-disciplinary scholarship and public outreach in Marian studies

Drawing upon the unique and extensive resources of the Marian Library, the strengths of our graduate programs in Catholic theology and pastoral ministry, and the extensive reach of the Institute for Pastoral Initiatives and Center for Catholic Education, UD will refashion and elevate the International Marian Research Institute to become a world-renowned center for Marian research and education. The center will highlight UD’s academic impact as the Society of Mary’s primary research university. The center’s research will be conceived broadly, including Mary’s role in faith traditions other than Roman Catholicism and extending to multiple disciplines and scholarly methodologies beyond the traditional boundaries of theology.

In addition to hosting visiting scholars and graduate student fellows and supporting academic conferences, symposia, and publications, the center’s mission also will advance public outreach and education concerning Mary across the U.S. and around the world. The center could stimulate creation of a new, multi-disciplinary graduate program in Marian studies, as well as the establishment of new continuing and professional education programs. Programming designed to attract participants from a diverse spectrum of global cultures and to engage Mary’s multicultural presence would be priorities of the center.

The center would be housed in a new facility designed especially for research-oriented special collections. This facility would have high public visibility and would celebrate the University’s Marianist foundations and the influence of Mary on the University’s research and teaching missions.

Questions for discussion:

- Is this concept a plausible basis for excellence at the national level?
- Is the scope of this aspiration defined appropriately?

The top Catholic university and a leading national university for inter- and multi-disciplinary research in (some of) the following areas: a) environmental sustainability and energy, including human rights dimensions of climate change and environmental degradation; b) materials engineering, bioscience, and biotechnology; c) selected areas of autonomous systems research; and d) innovations in teaching and learning.

a) Research emphasis on environmental sustainability and energy would build upon strengths in applied energy research and applications to advancements in sustainable practices across many academic fields, bridging the School of Engineering and UDRI with research on sustainability conducted in many other academic departments and aligned with the Hanley Sustainability Institute. This emphasis also would include study of the human rights dimensions of unsustainable energy systems and environmental degradation.

b) Already one of the top universities in the nation for materials research, UD would expand capacity in the biosciences and bioengineering to develop and test future generations of biologically inspired materials for selected applications in aviation and in health care.

c) Building upon current scholarly capacity in machine perception, advanced sensors, electro-optics, machine learning, and virtual reality, UD will expand and focus its research strengths in these areas, revising current academic programs and building new graduate programs to prepare students for rapidly emerging professions related to machine autonomy and human collaboration with intelligent systems.

d) In light of the Marianists' historical focus on education, the capacity of the School of Education and Health Sciences and the Learning Teaching Center, and the on-going need to revise radically our pedagogies and theories of learning in the face of on-going technological, organizational, and sociocultural change in the field of education, UD will expand capabilities to generate outstanding scholarship on teaching and learning and to incorporate this scholarship in faculty and staff development, becoming the leading Catholic innovator in this domain.

All of these initiatives would entail investments in cluster faculty hiring around the desired research specializations, graduate student funding, and major facilities expansions to support the research and affiliated graduate programs.

Question for discussion:

- In what ways can any or all of these research areas be elevated to a sufficient degree of boldness and differentiation?
- Which of these potential research emphases can realistically achieve national excellence over the coming 20 years?
- Are there other research areas that should replace any of these proposed emphases?

Criteria for developing aspirational recommendations

- Boldness and imagination, oriented by the 20-year horizon for the vision, recognizing that differentiation, innovation, and excellence are essential in higher education's highly competitive environment
- Attention to the University's Catholic and Marianist mission and values and the landscape of Catholic higher education, with particular consideration of the *Common Themes in the Mission and Identity of the University of Dayton* (2012)
- Responsiveness to the demands of diversity, equity, and inclusion and the importance of global and intercultural learning and scholarship for an American Catholic research university in the 21st century
- A realistic appraisal of the University's absolute and relative strengths, potential, and limitations
- Consideration of the responsibilities inherent in mission- and vision-based institutional stewardship

Key questions to raise about proposed aspirational recommendations

- *Mission*: To what extent is the proposed goal grounded well in UD's mission?
- *Realism*: Does the aspiration build well upon current University strengths and commitments?
- *Boldness*: Is the proposed aspiration sufficiently bold? Would it yield sufficient institutional differentiation, innovation, and excellence at the national level?
- *Long-term impact*: How great would the long-term impact of the proposed aspiration be, if it were realized? For which university constituents would the impact be most significant and valuable?
- *Coherence*: Would this aspiration cohere well with other proposed goals, yielding a vision with holistic integrity? Should this aspiration be combined or allied with other proposals that are being considered in order to elevate its ambition or impact?
- *Priority*: How high a priority, all things considered, should be assigned to the proposed aspiration as a guiding future goal for UD (high/medium/low priority)?