



UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

COMMITMENT *to* **COMMUNITY**

Catholic and Marianist Learning and Living



THE CATHOLIC AND MARIANIST

VISION *of* EDUCATION

makes the UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON unique.

It shapes the “warmth of welcome” we first experience and the “family spirit” we treasure. It calls us to academic rigor integrated with faith and life. It challenges each person and group to take up the hard work necessary to build the intellectual, spiritual, religious, moral, physical and social dimensions of our educational community.

Behavior, expectations, policies and relationships at UD are guided by the Catholic moral tradition. This document highlights three Catholic and Marianist *principles* for learning and living in community and the key *habits* which are derived from them. Individuals and groups are called to understand these principles and to develop these habits. Doing so will strengthen the educational community at UD and will prepare students to live as mature members of society.



PRINCIPLES *of* **COMMUNITY LIVING**
at the UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

COMMUNITY LIVING *is* an ESSENTIAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Living and learning in community are essential to the full development and education of the whole person. The Marianist tradition values being in community as the practical way in which Christians learn to live the Gospel, striving to love God, neighbor and self in daily life. All people learn essential life lessons, such as self-awareness, communication, cooperation, mutual respect, courage, forgiveness, patience and trust, from being in community with others.

The climate of acceptance that Marianists call family spirit presumes an attention to the quality of relationships among the people in the community. At the level of daily interaction, all members of the community treat each other with respect and speak with simplicity and openness. Over the long term, these daily habits acknowledge the value and dignity of every member of the community and create the ground in which genuine friendships can flourish.²

However, building community requires more than friendliness, and is certainly about more than following rules. Genuine community requires commitment to personal growth, authenticity, learning about others, self-sacrifice, accountability, dialogue and hard work.

Such a vision of community and friendship runs the risk of being romanticized. It must therefore be recalled that friendliness and hospitality are genuine expressions of a process that necessarily includes conflict, division and all manner of human suffering and failing. Yet, those grounded in the Marianist vision of education recognize that only precisely out of this mix of joy and sorrow can genuine communities be formed.³

Through learning in community, UD students are more able to become persons of great character and integrity. They are better prepared to assume responsible membership in communities throughout their lifetime and to make a positive difference in the world.

THE DIGNITY *of* EVERY PERSON

The Catholic and Marianist vision of being in community is based on the conviction that every person has innate dignity because all people are made in the image and likeness of God:

All persons are endowed with a rational soul and are created in God's image ... there is here a basic equality between all and it must be accorded ever greater recognition ... any kind of social or cultural discrimination in basic personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, color, social conditions, language or religion, must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God's design.⁴

This conviction calls us not only to *respect* ourselves and others but also to *love* ourselves and all people because of the human dignity each of us receives from God. Respect and love for self include making personal, social and academic decisions that preserve and improve one's own dignity and well-being.

Respect and love for others includes intentionally seeking opportunities to learn from them, to support their growth and to be mutually challenged. The presence of a wide range of perspectives, opinions and beliefs — and the diverse people who represent them — enhance the depth of the UD community and the ability of students to integrate the academic, religious, cultural and social elements of their lives. The University Statement of Dignity states clearly:

A primary assertion of both our religious and civil traditions is the inviolable dignity of each person. Recognition of and respect for the person are central to our life as a Christian and educational community and are what allow us to pursue our common mission while being many diverse persons.⁵





SOLIDARITY and the COMMON GOOD

The Catholic and Marianist emphasis on solidarity and the common good emerges from the conviction that respect for human dignity draws us into community. The Catholic emphasis on the common good is countercultural. Rather than prioritizing freedom of the individual over the needs of others, a concern for the common good leads us to make choices as individuals, groups or organizations in light of how these choices positively affect other persons and the community as a whole.

*The common good is the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily ... Every group must take into account the needs and legitimate aspirations of every other group, and even those of the human family as a whole.*⁶

Our decisions and actions affect people where we live, in our classrooms, residence halls, houses, neighborhood, campus, city and country, and ultimately the world community.

As we make these decisions and live in community, we remember that the common good is more than compassion from afar and more than what is best for the greatest number of people. The Catholic understanding of the common good is rooted in the practice of solidarity and in a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters.

*In the present condition of global society, where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable, the principle of the common good immediately becomes, logically and inevitably, a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters.*⁷

*[Solidarity] is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.*⁸

Practicing solidarity means being actively present with those who are struggling. Practicing solidarity is about challenging behavior that is harmful to others. It also involves working to change unjust social structures that inhibit people from reaching their fulfillment. Practicing solidarity includes a commitment to care for our common home, the environment, by being mindful of and making decisions that benefit the earth and all God's creatures. We are called to practice solidarity and to actively contribute to the common good at UD and beyond.

A photograph of a dining table and chairs, overlaid with a teal color and a faint geometric pattern of overlapping circles and lines. The text is positioned in the lower right corner.

HABITS *for* **COMMUNITY LIVING**
at the UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON



**GOOD CHOICES MADE REPEATEDLY
OVER TIME DEVELOP INTO HABITS WHICH
HAVE A POSITIVE LIFELONG EXPERIENCE.**

The following habits are essential for living
the Catholic and Marianist vision of community.

Individuals, groups and organizations are called to
DEVELOP AND PRACTICE THESE HABITS,
whether they are **ON CAMPUS, OFF CAMPUS OR ONLINE.**

INTEGRATE LEARNING AND LIVING AT UD

- Learn about the Catholic and Marianist views of life that shape UD's values.
- Inform and integrate your faith and beliefs with your academic learning and moral living.
- Seek truth and wisdom, not just knowledge and job skills.
- Seek out mentors and models who will affirm and challenge you.
- Consider your life's path not just as a career, but as a vocation or a calling from God.
- Grieve losses, embrace challenges, celebrate successes. Live fully and joyfully.

Are the physical, spiritual, academic, social and personal dimensions of my life in harmony?

TREAT YOURSELF WITH RESPECT

- Seek relationships that bring out the best in you and others.
- Make choices that are safe, healthy and consistent with your faith tradition and values.
- Follow the law. Don't abuse alcohol or controlled substances.
- Develop a sense of reverence for the dignity of your own sexuality.
- Develop a social media presence that is consistent with your values and beliefs..

Do I respect myself? How does my behavior show it?

TREAT OTHERS WITH RESPECT

- Demonstrate dignity and respect in your communication with others.
- Develop relationships with people who are different from you.
- Honor the dignity and sexual integrity of others with your actions and words.
- Pay attention to the safety, comfort and health of others.
- Consider the impact of your online presence on others and as reflection of this community.
- Learn to handle conflict with respect, dialogue, understanding and forgiveness.

Does my behavior show respect for the people around me?



BE HONEST, TRUTHFUL AND LIVE WITH INTEGRITY

- Model moral behavior and virtue.
- Practice behavior that is not insulting, demeaning, destructive or harmful to you or others.
- Exercise academic integrity. Follow the UD Honor Code.
- Respond truthfully and respectfully when your behavior is questioned by another.
- Accept the consequences of your behavior, while learning to forgive and to accept forgiveness.

Am I becoming the kind of person I want to be?

DEVELOP YOUR FAITH LIFE

- Develop a capacity for silence.
- Pray, alone and with others. Participate in worship.
- Reflect on how faith contributes meaning to and challenges your everyday life.
- Study your religious tradition to deepen your understanding, practice and commitment to it.
- Learn about and show respect for the religious traditions of others.
- Live gratefully; show appreciation; give thanks to God and others.

Am I willing to be part of a faith tradition that is larger and wiser than I am?

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELF AND COMMUNITY

- Exercise self-discipline as an individual and in group situations.
- Be aware of the weakest and most vulnerable around you and seek to serve and empower them.
- Challenge groups and organizations to respond to community problems and needs.
- Speak up when you witness alcohol abuse, drug use, violence, vandalism and behaviors that harm or demean people and damage community.
- Engage in sustainable practices that protect and nurture the environment as a portion of God's creation.

What does it mean for me or my organization to contribute to the common good?

PRACTICE SERVICE IN LEADERSHIP

- Listen first. Learn from others. Consider the needs of all.
- Practice humility and generosity of spirit when using your gifts and skills.
- Lead for the good of the community, not for advancing your own image.
- Speak up for those in need and those who have no voice.
- Encourage your student organization to make a positive contribution to UD and to the city of Dayton.

How do I learn from others and encourage them to use their gifts?





The distinctive family spirit of life at UD

DEPENDS ON THE COMMITMENT

each of us makes to

THE CATHOLIC AND MARIANIST VISION OF LEARNING AND LIVING IN COMMUNITY.

In the struggles and joys of forming genuine community, students are encouraged to support one another and to draw on the support of faculty and staff, advisors and mentors. Together, our commitment to these principles and habits will form us with life-long skills for making a difference in our world.

¹ *Rule of Life of the Society of Mary*, (Dayton, OH: Marianist Press, 1984), article 8.

² *Characteristics of Marianist Universities: A Resource Paper* (Chaminade University of Honolulu, St. Mary's University, University of Dayton, 1999), 36.

³ *Ibid*, 38.

⁴ *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* in Vatican II, the Basic Sixteen Documents, Austin Flannery, O.P. (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Co., 1996), 29.

⁵ "Statement of Dignity," University of Dayton. Available at udayton.edu/studev/about/commitment_to_community/statement_dignity.php.

⁶ *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* in Vatican II, the Basic Sixteen Documents, Austin Flannery, O.P. (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Co., 1996), 26.

⁷ Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 158, May 24, 2015. Available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_encyclica-laudato-si.html (Accessed February 27, 2018).

⁸ John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* [Encyclical Letter on Social Concern], sec. 38, accessed February 13, 2015, <http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/index.html#encyclicals>.

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

COMMITMENT *to* COMMUNITY

Catholic and Marianist Learning and Living

The University of Dayton's Catholic and Marianist mission calls us to develop our character and integrity as leaders committed to building community in our world.

WE ACCEPT THIS CHALLENGE AND MAKE THE FOLLOWING PLEDGE:

We commit ourselves to learn in and through community.

We commit ourselves to respect the dignity of every person in thought, word and action.

We commit ourselves to practice solidarity in order to promote the common good.

We commit ourselves to recognize and value a diversity of people, perspectives and ideas.

AS A CONTRIBUTING MEMBER OF THIS EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY:

I will treat myself and every person with respect and compassion.

I will speak up when I witness behaviors that harm or demean people and damage community, such as vandalism, discriminatory behavior and harassment.

I will be honest and truthful and will live with integrity.

I will develop a life of faith and/or reflection and will respect the religious traditions of others.

I will integrate what I learn with how I live.

I will seek opportunities to learn about and engage with diverse people, perspectives and cultures.

I will take responsibility for myself and my community.

I will practice service in leadership.

Together, we promise to strengthen our role in building communities of hope, respect, peace and reconciliation in our world.

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University
of Dayton