



UNIVERSITY OF
**DETROIT
MERCY**

Build A Boundless Future

STRATEGIC PLAN

2019 - 2024

Edited January 4, 2021

University of Detroit Mercy – Leadership Roster

Administrative Team

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Provost and VP for Academic Affairs	Pamela Zarkowski, J.D., M.P.H.
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VP for Enrollment Management & Student Affairs	Deborah Stieffel, M.S.
VP for University Advancement	Arnold D'Ambrosio, M.A.L.S.
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Executive Assistant to the President	Lisa MacDonnell, M.A.L.S.
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Associate VP for Marketing & Communications	Gary Erwin, M.F.A.
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Director of Public Safety	Joel Gallihugh, B.S.

Deans

School of Architecture	Daniel Pitera, M.Arch.
College of Business Administration	Joseph G. Eisenhauer, Ph.D.
School of Dentistry	Mert N. Aksu, D.D.S., J.D., M.H.S.A.
College of Engineering & Science	Katherine Snyder, Ph.D.
College of Health Professions & McAuley School of Nursing	Neal Rosenburg, Ph.D., M.S., R.N.
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College of Liberal Arts & Education	Mark E. Denham, Ph.D.
University Libraries/Instructional Technology	Jennifer L. Dean, Ph.D.



Dear Detroit Mercy Colleagues, Students, Alumni, Friends and Trustees:

University of Detroit Mercy achieved many positive outcomes in its 2012-2017 five-year Strategic Plan and the subsequent bridge plan of 2017-2019. You may recall that the 2012-2017 plan focused on the following five goals: Drive Academic and Institutional Excellence; Increase Enrollment, Retention, and Graduation of Students; Heighten the Distinction of the University; Create a Culture that Fosters Effective Management and Strong Financial Health; and Amplify the University's Dynamic Community Engagement. As we begin a new decade, we want to strengthen the University even more for long-term viability. Thus, I am very appreciative to the many members of the Detroit Mercy community who developed an ambitious strategic plan: ***Boundlessly Forward: Detroit Mercy 2019-2024***. The Board of Trustees approved the plan in June of 2019 because *Boundlessly Forward* reinforces and energizes the University's mission and the heritage of our founding sponsors - the Society of Jesus and the Religious Sisters of Mercy.

Achieving the Strategic Plan's three goals and implementing the ten strategies of the plan will require continuous involvement from all campus and external stakeholder groups - administrators, faculty, students, alumni, and community partners - to create **Detroit's "College Town," Deliver Relevant and Dynamic Academics, and Passionately Serve Students and Each Other**. The individual and collective support that you provide will help us to surpass our goals. In the 319th year of the city of Detroit, Detroit Mercy is playing an active role in revitalization projects around all of our three campuses. Flourishing partnerships, engaging alumni, increasing donations, and a growing student population are all signs that Detroit Mercy will continue to play a major role in educating students in an urban environment unlike any other institution. As we work together on implementing the strategic plan, we will be defined by our collaboration, innovation, and bold actions.

Thank you again to the Team who met often and developed this plan. I am confident that we will achieve as much success with this plan as we have accomplished in the others over the last nine years.

Sincerely,

Antoine M. Garibaldi, Ph.D.
President



UNIVERSITY OF
DETROIT MERCY
Build A Boundless Future

MISSION

University of Detroit Mercy,
a Catholic university in the
Jesuit and Mercy traditions,
exists to provide excellent
student-centered undergraduate
and graduate education
in an urban context.

A Detroit Mercy education seeks
to integrate the intellectual,
spiritual, ethical and social
development of our students.

VISION

University of Detroit Mercy,
will be recognized as a premier
private university in the
Great Lakes region,
distinguished by graduates
who lead and serve
in their communities.

Boundlessly Forward: Detroit Mercy 2019 - 2024



Approved by the Board of Trustees, June 2019

Plan Development

The Detroit Mercy 2019-2024 Strategic Plan - *Boundlessly Forward* - builds on our recent accomplishments and serves as a framework to empower all stakeholders to work together to create the best possible future for the University. The plan was authored by the Detroit Mercy community, through numerous workshops and forums. More than 435 staff members, administrators, faculty, and students, from all three campuses, contributed to the creation of this shared vision.

Plan Purpose

Boundlessly Forward is a living document that serves as a touchstone for Detroit Mercy's ongoing quest to fulfill its mission. It also supports and reinforces major elements of the Detroit Mercy Brand: *academic excellence, a values-based education, excellent future outcomes, and a thriving urban setting.*

This strategic plan emphasizes enrollment growth, greater efficiency, return on investment, and prosperity for the institution by:

- focusing university efforts on building a more vibrant campus that attracts, engages and transforms students;
- offering dynamic and relevant academic programs that are mission-focused; and
- enhancing the pride and loyalty felt by the Detroit Mercy community through excellent customer service and a discerning corporate culture.

These efforts are aimed at ensuring financial sustainability of the institution. The plan serves as a guidepost for resource allocation, fundraising efforts, and alternative revenue sources.

Mission Alignment

The three primary goals, along with the ten supporting strategies, reinforce the University's mission and the heritage of our founding sponsors, the Society of Jesus and the Religious Sisters of Mercy, in order to maintain our commitment to the *cura personalis* for each student who chooses to pursue his or her educational goals at Detroit Mercy.

Goal 1: Create Detroit's "College Town"

- Enhance student engagement
- Improve student-centered facilities
- Connect to and enhance the surrounding community

Goal 2: Deliver Relevant and Dynamic Academics

- Establish a process for ongoing and comprehensive academic program evaluation
- Support the academic enterprise with alternative revenue streams
- Coordinate marketing and recruitment with academic goals
- Invest in effective and high-quality teaching, advising, and mentorship

Goal 3: Passionately Serve Students and Each Other

- Create a culture of exceptional customer service to students
- Ensure that every student knows they are cared for
- Create a culture of respect and collaboration among employees

Key Performance Indicators for All Three Goals

- **Student Enrollment Measures**
 - number of accepted students
 - number of newly enrolled students
 - full-time equivalent headcount of all enrolled students
- **Student Retention Rate Measure**
 - first-to-second year retention rate (target > 84%)
- **Student Graduation Rate Measure**
 - five-year graduation rate (target > 70%)

GOAL 1: CREATE DETROIT'S "COLLEGE TOWN"

Detroit Mercy will enhance the student experience and the University's standing in the region through a recommitment to the improvement of our facilities and programming.



Achieving our institutional mission requires a commitment to serving our local urban community and providing an outstanding context where our students and staff can live and grow together, integrating all aspects of development. The concept of embracing and enhancing the place you are is important in the Mercy and Jesuit traditions. According to Catherine McAuley, "every place has its own particular ideas and feelings, which must be yielded to when possible." Ignatian spirituality places great emphasis on discerning God's presence in the everyday activities of ordinary life "in the world."

As the City of Detroit's premier private university, Detroit Mercy envisions a vibrant collegiate environment with inspiring physical spaces that support student engagement. There is a unique and timely opportunity to extend the "college town" atmosphere by helping to enhance the quality of life in the surrounding University District and LIVE6 Alliance neighborhoods by contributing to their attractiveness.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of students participating in all extra-curricular and co-curricular activities
- Amount of funding committed to capital improvements related to student housing and general campus-wide physical improvements
- Number of community members participating in events on campus
- Number of students engaging with businesses and events in the surrounding community
- Student satisfaction with student life and campus facilities

Goal 1 Strategies

Strategy 1.1: Enhance Student Engagement

All current and future extracurricular and co-curricular student services and programs will be evaluated by a team directly affiliated with student programming of all types, such as the Dean of Students, Director of Residence Life, and Director of University Recreation, along with robust student input, to create a comprehensive improvement plan for student activities, services, and engagement.

Strategy 1.2: Improve Student-Centered Facilities

In order to attract and retain students, the physical environment must create the feeling that Detroit Mercy's campus is a place you want to be and a place you want to stay. To ensure that the quality of life for students is enhanced and that fiscal resources are effectively utilized, all facility enhancements should be planned and designed with significant end-user participation and all investments in facilities should be prioritized.

Strategy 1.3: Connect to and Enhance the Surrounding Community

In addition to improving Detroit Mercy's physical environment to foster community participation on campus, the University has a unique opportunity to leverage investment occurring in the surrounding neighborhood by extending the atmosphere of Detroit's "College Town" beyond the campus. Priority should be given to this once-in-a-generation opportunity for Detroit Mercy to be an active partner in the development of the surrounding neighborhood.

Partial List of Action Plans

- Provide 24/7 Student Life
- Include Community Events
- Adopt a Sustainable Campus Initiative
- Improve Social and "Intellectual Commons" Spaces
- Improve Student Housing and Support Spaces
- Create a Multi-Purpose Community Event Space
- Enhance Exterior Spaces
- Enhance the McNichols Campus Perimeter & Fitzgerald Greenway Connection
- Engage Local Businesses
- Create a Detroit Orientation Program

GOAL 2: DELIVER RELEVANT AND DYNAMIC ACADEMICS

The University will create and sustain a culture of academic excellence, program relevance, and positive outcomes to ensure that degree programs produce graduates who are responsive to the needs of employers and society and who enhance the University's reputation and identity.



Competence and compassion employed in service to others remain hallmarks of the Mercy and Jesuit traditions. University of Detroit Mercy reaffirms its commitment to the development of students by providing the core academic and experiential learning opportunities that empower graduates to pursue life-long learning, and to lead and serve in their communities.

The University will recommit to the mission of assisting all students, graduate and undergraduate, to find their calling and to connect their talents, strengths, and passion to their sense of purpose and abilities needed for a lifetime of meaningful work in their communities. The University will enhance and capitalize on the integrated themes in the core curriculum that serve as the connective tissue that bind together the Detroit Mercy experience for all undergraduate students.

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of student majors per program (target ≥ 20)
- Student/faculty ratio
- Allocated capital for relevant and dynamic teaching and learning spaces
- Sponsored research awards and alternative revenue streams
- Media/social media engagement rates
- National rankings, accreditation recognition, and benchmarking comparison measures with peer institutions
- Student satisfaction rates with respect to academics, teaching, and faculty

Goal 2 Strategies

Strategy 2.1: Establish a Process for Ongoing and Comprehensive Academic Program Evaluation

The University will thoughtfully evaluate academic programs and delivery methods with consideration to the shifts in the landscape of higher education and the demographic context, as well as financial viability.

Strategy 2.2: Support the Academic Enterprise with Alternative Revenue Streams

The University will increase its efforts to identify and secure alternative revenue streams, including the development of innovative business partnerships, expanded sponsored research, expanded external funding for student scholarships, and intrapreneurial endeavors. Revenue streams beyond tuition and traditional fundraising will enhance the University's financial health and secure it well into the future.

Strategy 2.3: Coordinate Marketing and Recruiting with Academic Goals

A robust, well-planned, coordinated, and well-funded marketing and recruitment program is essential to spread widely the academic focal points to prospective students and potential external partners.

Strategy 2.4: Invest in Effective and High-Quality Teaching, Advising, and Mentorship

By featuring academic excellence as a key institutional characteristic, a high-quality student experience must continue to be delivered. Continuous improvement, therefore, will require additional investment to support excellence in teaching, mentorship, and faculty development.

Partial List of Action Plans

- Invest in Strategic Data Collection and Establish School and College Growth Targets
- Create a Comprehensive Academic Program Evaluation Process at the Academic Leadership Team (ALT) Level and Enhance the Program Review Process at the Faculty Assemblies Level
- Support and promote the generation of alternative revenue streams, e.g., sponsored programs, research, student fellowships, etc.
- Promote Externally-Accredited Programs and Nationally-Ranked Programs
- Support Hands-On Experiential Learning & Co-ops

GOAL 3: PASSIONATELY SERVE STUDENTS and EACH OTHER

The University will initiate programs and processes to ensure that we always deliver on our promise of being student-centered. We will also create a campus-wide culture for all University employees that is collaborative, supportive, and respectful.



Service is at the heart of the work of the Sisters of Mercy and the Society of Jesus. Building on our tradition of care for the whole person, we will intentionally recommit ourselves to serving the needs of students and all employees.

Our students should receive the high level of personalized support that is a core attribute of Detroit Mercy being a national private university. We will identify and enhance processes to eliminate barriers to providing excellent customer service to students, while simultaneously forging a culture of appreciation and accountability to those who serve our students.

Our employees should experience a campus culture that fosters a discerning environment where each unit becomes more integrated with other parts of the university and contributes to the growing health of the university.

Goal 3 Strategies

Strategy 3.1: Create a Culture of Exceptional Customer Service to Students

Students deserve to experience exceptional and personalized service in all of their encounters on campus with food service, financial aid, public safety, the registrar's office, athletics, the fitness center, the library, the student success center, and all academic administrative offices. "The Titan Way" equates to providing high quality service and support to each student. We value a diverse student population and extend a special welcome to all new students.

Strategy 3.2: Ensure That Every Student Knows They Are Cared For

Central to the Mission of the University, we are committed to the intellectual, spiritual, ethical and social development of our students. Providing students with support to navigate the challenges and opportunities in life is consistent with our Detroit Mercy Catholic identity.

Strategy 3.3: Create a Culture of Respect and Collaboration Among Employees

A campus community known for its service to students should also model a healthy and supportive campus environment for employees. Embracing a campus work culture established on principles of mutual respect, civility, appreciation of diversity and diverse perspectives, healthy communication, and effective conflict resolution, enables us to better serve each other and our students.

Key Performance Indicators

- Levels of student satisfaction regarding service by using customer service feedback
- Levels of awareness and appreciation for the University's mission and Jesuit and Mercy heritage among students by using University-wide student surveys
- Levels of employee satisfaction by using exit and stay interviews
- Employee retention and turnover rates
- Student retention rates for all student levels

Partial List of Action Plans

- Initiate Effective Performance and Feedback Mechanisms
- Provide Ongoing Customer Service Training to all Employees
- Establish a Student Ombudsman in Each College/School
- Hire A Diversity Officer and a Director of Training, Development, and Customer Service
- Enhance Advising, Mentoring, and Vocation Development
- Reinforce the Work of University Ministry
- Launch a University-wide Climate Committee
- Develop Programs to Provide Recognition for Excellence

2019-2020 Strategic Planning and Budget, Facilities, and Safety Team

Amy Smith*	Associate Dean for Operations, Law School
Anthony Neely	Associate Professor, School of Dentistry
Arnold D'Ambrosio	Vice President, University Advancement
Dan Pitera	Dean, School of Architecture
Dave Vandelinder	Director, Facilities Operations & Construction Management, Construction Planning
Don DiPaolo	Professor & Coordinator for the Leadership Minor Program, College of Liberal Arts & Education
Gnanada Joshi	Professor of Biology, College of Engineering and Science, and MFA Representative
John Hitchings	Athletics Administration
Karen Lee	Associate Vice President for Academic Administration
Kimberly Koelb	Associate Vice President for Finance & Controller
Megan Novell	Head of Circulation, McNichols Library
Pamela Zarkowski	Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs
Robert Vowels	Athletic Director, Athletics Administration

Note: *Fall 2019 only

2018-2019 Strategic Planning and Budget, Facilities, and Safety Team

Amy Smith	Associate Dean for Operations, Law School
Anita Klueg	Director, University Ministry
Anthony Neely	Associate Professor, School of Dentistry
Arnold D'Ambrosio	Vice President, University Advancement
Barraka Baber	Systems Administration - Network
Dave Vandelinder	Director, Facilities Operations & Construction Management, Construction Planning
Debbie Stieffel	Vice President, Enrollment Management & Student Affairs
Don DiPaolo	Professor & Coordinator for the Leadership Minor Program, College of Liberal Arts & Education
Gregory Grabowski	Professor of Biology, College of Liberal Arts & Education, and MFA Representative
Kim Koelb	Associate Vice President for Finance & Controller
Pamela Zarkowski	Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs
Robert Vowels	Athletic Director, Athletics Administration
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