

Ingenuity, Energy and Perseverance
Strategic Plan for Mercyhurst University, 2022-2025; extended to 2027

“To instruct is an easy matter, but to educate requires ingenuity, energy and perseverance without end.” Frances Warde, Sister of Mercy

The objective of this plan is to position Mercyhurst University for the future. We will work purposefully to enhance our financial position, and we will establish a clear, concise, and appealing value proposition. We will identify and strengthen areas of academic excellence, key elements of the student experience, and complementary programming, which will advance mission through organizational culture and service to the larger community.

1. Goal: Fortify our INSTITUTIONAL VITALITY across all essential dimensions.

1.1 Initiative: Increase revenue

- 1.1.1 Action: Strategically invest in, maintain, and divest from institutional programs and offerings.
- 1.1.2 Action: Increase fundraising outcomes through all fundraising channels.
- 1.1.3 Action: Launch a comprehensive centennial campaign consistent with this strategic plan.

1.2 Initiative: Optimize enrollment

- 1.2.1 Action: Identify and execute recommendations regarding academic program investment, maintenance, and divestment.
- 1.2.2 Action: Ensure competitive pricing, considering tuition and fee structure, financial aid packages, and room and board policies.
- 1.2.3 Action: Increase rates of retention and persistence to graduation.
- 1.2.4 Action: Consider the impact of the academic calendar on enrollment.

1.3 Initiative: Develop operational structures, policies, and practices that support effective and efficient resource allocation.

- 1.3.1 Action: Deploy data strategies in support of data-informed decision-making.
- 1.3.2 Action: Establish a robust financial infrastructure.
- 1.3.3 Action: Develop a master facility plan that includes means of preserving our physical plant.
- 1.3.4 Action: Consider opportunities for discontinuing, outsourcing, sharing, or insourcing support functions and operations.

1.4 Initiative: Attract and retain employees.

- 1.4.1 Action: Develop a clear and equitable position level system reflecting job requirements and establishing compensation ranges.
- 1.4.2 Action: Develop a comprehensive campus-wide wellness program, building on current wellness activities and events.
- 1.4.3 Action: Implement alternative work arrangements for staff and administrators, ranging from fully remote to hybrid to fully in-person.

2. Goal: Enhance the Mercyhurst STUDENT EXPERIENCE through mission-grounded programming, experiential learning, and the personal, academic, spiritual, and civic development of each student.

2.1. Initiative: Continue to support and develop graduate, undergraduate, and non-degree academic programming to educate our students for purposeful lives and careers.

2.1.1. Action: Expand and promote 2+2, 3+1 and 4+1 offerings with on-the-ground and online options.

2.1.2. Action: Create interdisciplinary microcredentials that are mission- and market-driven.

2.1.3. Action: Increase flexibility for students, with online, evening, and weekend options for programs, courses, and support services.

2.1.4. Action: Expand and promote co-curricular programming to enrich student experiences on and off campus.

2.2. Initiative: Expand our commitment to student wellness.

2.2.1. Action: Develop a comprehensive campus-wide wellness program, building on current wellness activities and events.

2.2.2. Action: Explore opportunities in intramural and club sports.

2.2.3. Action: Utilize annual student surveys to inform decisions related to student health and well-being.

2.3. Initiative: Develop and support best practices to improve student outcomes.

2.3.1. Action: Develop a comprehensive student outcomes dashboard to continuously monitor retention rates, graduation rates, and career/graduate school placement rates by student cohort and subgroups.

2.3.2. Action: Utilize outcomes data to make improvements in academic and non-academic programming.

3. Goal: Support an ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE grounded in practices of inclusion and inquiry.

3.1. Initiative: Operationalize the commitment to Dignity and Solidarity.

3.1.1. Action: Charge the Committee on Dignity and Solidarity to develop a D&S strategic plan.¹

3.1.2. Action: Expand neurodiversity programming to include more AIM students, more CREATE participants, and executive education for employers hiring neurodiverse individuals.

3.2. Initiative: Encourage a culture of inquiry by increasing material support for scholarship and scholarly activities across the university.

3.2.1. Action: Increase external research grants by increasing support for faculty in identifying and exploiting grant opportunities.

3.2.2. Action: Explore flexible faculty workload options to create time for research.

¹ Operationalizing the D&S strategic plan will result in additional actions under this initiative.

3.3. Initiative: Enhance the university commitment to campus- and community-wide environmentally sustainable practices in light of the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy.

3.3.1. Action: Leverage university-wide committee on environmental sustainability to develop a comprehensive plan to enact our *Laudato si'* commitment.²

² Operationalizing the LS strategic plan will result in additional actions under this initiative.