

# Mission and Goals

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## Mount Mercy University Mission and Goals

Mount Mercy is a Catholic University that provides student-focused education in the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy and welcomes people of all beliefs to join our community in pursuit of baccalaureate and graduate education and compassionate service to those in need. We strive for excellence in accomplishing our mission through four interdependent goals:

### Using reflective judgment

The ability to think clearly and carefully, argue coherently, and evaluate competing truth claims critically are fundamental to a college education.<sup>1</sup> Reflective judgment requires a knowledge of basic fact, examination, and evaluation of assumptions; adequate justification for drawing a conclusion; and understanding the implications of drawing that conclusion. With these skills, individuals can solve problems creatively and integrate knowledge across disciplines.

### Engaging in strategic communication

Strategic communication requires selecting from a range of options to accomplish a chosen goal in an ethical manner.<sup>2</sup> These options include construction and interpretation of messages in the written, oral, and aesthetic forms using appropriate technology.

### Serving the common good

The common good is at the heart of Catholic social teaching. Because people are social by nature, every individual's good relates necessarily to the common good, the sum of social conditions that allows all people to reach their human potential more fully.<sup>3</sup> It includes respect for, and ethical interaction with, every person and the natural environment and, in the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy, service for the well-being of all humanity and action in the cause of justice in the world.

### Promoting purposeful living

A liberal education enables students to achieve a greater degree of freedom upon which to act purposefully. Since development of purpose entails planning for life based on a set of priorities,<sup>4</sup> Mount Mercy University provides opportunities for spiritual growth, intellectual engagement, vocational clarity, social development, physical well-being, emotional maturity, and responsible community leadership.

1 P. M. King, and K. S. Kitchener, *Developing Reflective Judgment: Understanding and Promoting Intellectual Growth and Critical Thinking in Adolescents and Adults* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994).

2 S. Morreale, R. Rubin and E. Jones, "Speaking and Listening Competencies for College Students"; available from National Communication Association website, [http://www.natcom.org/Instruction/assessment/CollegeComp/college\\_competencies.htm](http://www.natcom.org/Instruction/assessment/CollegeComp/college_competencies.htm); Internet; accessed 07 March 2005.

3 Catechism of the Catholic Church (Washington, D. C.: United States Catholic Conference, 2000), sections 1905-1912.

4 Arthur Chickering and Linda Reisser, *Education and Identity* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993), 50.

## Our Values

*As members of the Mount Mercy University community, grounded in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy and our Catholic identity, we are committed to:*

**Lifelong learning and education of the whole person** We believe that education is a lifelong experience where learning empowers the whole person, intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

**Pursuit of truth and dignity** We foster free inquiry in a compassionate culture where our dedication to faith, truth and Mercy supports the dignity of each person within the human community.

**Commitment to students** We acknowledge and affirm that our students' needs are central to decisions that affect community life.

**Justice** We advocate for equality by actively creating just and healthy relationships in our learning community and in our global society.

**Gratitude** We celebrate with humility all gifts and talents bestowed by God and faithfully share these blessings with the wider community.

**Hospitality** We accomplish our work in the spirit of Catherine McAuley's graciousness and inclusion that welcomes all people and perspectives.

**Service** We instill a sense of responsibility and caring that calls us to serve the common good.

Approved by Board of Trustees April 28, 2007

Amended by Board of Trustees August 17, 2010