

Gannon University's Seven Strategic Goals: 2002 – 2008

Revised October 2005

The Mission of Gannon University

Gannon is a Catholic, Diocesan, student-centered University which provides for the holistic development of undergraduate and graduate students in the Judeo-Christian tradition. As such, it offers each student outstanding teaching and a value-centered education in both liberal arts and professional specializations, in order to prepare students for leadership roles in their careers, society and church. The University faculty and staff are committed to excellence and continuous improvement in teaching, learning, scholarship, research and service. The University's environment is to be one of inclusiveness and cultural diversity.

I. Advance the academic excellence of Gannon University by creating undergraduate and graduate learning environments that are distinguished by high quality academic programs, engaged faculty and actively involved students (*Primary person with lead responsibility for implementation: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs*)

Primary Objectives:

Academic Programs

- a. Complete all requirements to receive Middle States Accreditation and specialized disciplinary accreditations.
- b. Develop and plan new interdisciplinary programs and new course offerings, especially in the liberal studies core, while simultaneously modifying current programs through continuing program evaluation with particular attention to increasing diversity across the curriculum.
- c. Internationalize the curriculum by strengthening both language study and study abroad, and provide more student and faculty opportunities for domestic and international exchanges.
- d. Develop and implement a comprehensive campus technology plan that provides appropriate information and communication technology to improve the academic and administrative operations of the University.
- e. Develop an information/technology plan that addresses classroom, distance learning and administrative objectives.

- f. Develop more partnerships with industry, local educational agencies, medical and legal facilities, colleges and universities, and community organizations.
- g. Assess continually all academic requirements, through program review, for enrollment into and completion of undergraduate and graduate didactic and experiential coursework for students; and implement and establish mechanisms to evaluate academic programs and student performance through outcomes assessment and program evaluation processes.
- h. Advance degree programs in collaboration with select high schools.
- i. Gain national recognition, from reputational ratings and reviews, among Gannon's institutional peer groups.
- j. Support instructional innovation by expanding creative or non-traditional methods of delivering instructional content, courses, and programs (e.g., through distance learning, the use of technology in teaching, outreach courses, workshops, experiential learning, co-op placements, service learning, non-traditional scheduling [block, weekends, nights, summers], off-campus programs, collaborative agreements or alliances for distance learning, new pedagogical techniques, campus-hosted conferences, seminars, and three-year degrees that combine on-campus courses with distance-learning courses.)

Faculty

- a. Continue to attract and retain a diverse faculty and staff who are committed to student participative learning and who will increase students' intellectual abilities, writing, leadership and critical thinking skills, and civic engagement.
- b. Increase the number of faculty with terminal degrees to 70% of total full-time faculty.
- c. Increase the percentage of full-time faculty to 85% by 2006.
- d. Increase the diversity of the faculty by implementing strategies which will attract them to Gannon and retain them at the University.
- e. Develop endowed chairs in selected academic programs by 2004.
- f. Establish an academic "venture capital fund" to enhance faculty members' scholarly and creative development.
- g. Establish a Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning to assist faculty in applying new technologies and pedagogies to the teaching/learning process.

Students

- a. Give appropriate academic and personal attention to both undergraduate and graduate students.
- b. Increase the diversity of the student body by implementing strategies which will attract students to Gannon and retain them at the University.
- c. Ensure that the intercollegiate athletic program supports the image and values of the University and that student-athletes entering in Fall 2004 graduate at a rate of 75% and those entering in Fall 2006 graduate at a rate of up to 85%.
- d. Increase the number of students who apply for and are selected for Fulbright, Rhodes, Truman, and similar programs by developing a plan to prepare students for these opportunities.
- e. Develop an ongoing funding source for the Undergraduate Research Scholars Program.
- f. Fully integrate the “Life Core” concept into the academic life of students and create a freshman experience to develop students more fully and holistically.
- g. Define academic advising as an essential element of teaching so that students and faculty regularly communicate outside of the classroom.
- h. Ensure that students have the opportunity to express their opinions and recommendations on University life and encourage their involvement.
- i. Increase the quality of incoming students with proven academic and community service records.
- j. Develop distance learning graduate courses to access potential students outside the Erie area without need for off-site classes.

II. Promote Gannon University’s Catholic Identity (*Primary person with lead responsibility for implementation: Vice President for Mission*)

- a. Promote the Catholic Identity of the University as an important component of the holistic development of students and in keeping with the motto of the University – “Soundness of Mind, Knowledge, and Holiness of Life.” This identity calls for a commitment to both the specifically Roman Catholic focus of our mission, as well as the readiness to welcome students and faculty from diverse faith traditions.
- b. Ensure the smooth implementation of *Ex corde Ecclesiae* in the context of community discussion and collaboration.

- c. Identify ways in which the liberal studies core and professional specializations infuse the Catholic Identity into the curriculum.
- d. To better educate students on issues of justice and Catholic social teaching, specifically by helping students find appropriate volunteer placement and by helping faculty to incorporate service-learning into the curriculum.
- e. Develop Gannon as the Diocesan hub for the continuing education of priests, deacons, women religious, Catholic school educators and Catholic-based organizations by hosting conferences and workshops; collaborate with the education of students in Catholic schools.
- f. Establish a Catholic Institute or Christian Speakers Series that sponsors lectures by Catholic and Christian intellectuals and scholars from various disciplines to speak on topics of critical importance to society, the local and national Church, and the community-at-large.
- g. Engage a committee, chaired by the Vice President for Mission, that includes faculty, staff, administrators, students, alumni, and trustees, to generate concrete suggestions for implementing Gannon's core values. The primary references will be *Ex corde Ecclesiae*, its Application for the United States, and a continually updated version of Gannon's *On Catholic Identity*.
- h. Establish a meaningful and strategic consortium with other Catholic, Diocesan colleges and universities to share ideas and find additional ways of collaborating to enhance Gannon's Catholic Identity, its academic excellence, and its outreach to social service and religious organizations.
- i. Enhance the program of orientation and ongoing development of faculty and staff regarding Gannon's mission.
- j. Encourage faculty members to incorporate course material that makes students aware of Catholic achievements and the Church's influence in social justice, health care, education, the fine arts, literature, etc.
- k. Explore the feasibility of developing an interdisciplinary Catholic Studies Program.

III. Increase alumni involvement and other revenue from additional external resources and the capital campaign to ensure maintenance and growth of the University (Primary persons with lead responsibility for implementation: Vice President for University Advancement and Vice President for Finance and Administration)

- a. Develop fundraising initiatives to support student scholarships and fellowships, endowed chairs, faculty development in teaching and scholarship, and educational enhancements, such as increased library resources.

- b. Increase giving by alumni and alumnae by 10% over the next five years to reach a 28% giving-rate.
- c. Increase the current endowment to a total of \$27 million by 2007 by effective endowment management. Additionally, the successful completion of a campaign will raise \$13 million in cash and pledges for the endowment.
- d. Increase the number and amount of major grants by 20% per year from base year 2002.
- e. Increase endowed scholarships to enable Gannon to reduce its discount rate and to increase financial flexibility.
- f. Continue to enhance campus facilities.
- g. Acquire more land to further define and expand the campus by converting property within those limits.
- h. Increase and diversify the University's traditional sources of revenue by identifying more friends and corporate benefactors and by exploring innovative means of generating auxiliary funds.

IV. Strengthen the teaching and scholarly development of faculty and the professional development of staff (*Primary persons with lead responsibility for implementation: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice President for Finance and Administration*)

- a. Establish more opportunities for individual development of faculty and staff.
- b. Develop a five-year compensation plan that matches other private Master's I Comprehensive universities in the region of Gannon's size and academic programs.
- c. Establish lecture series for faculty, staff, students, and visiting speakers to discuss their scholarly and creative research.
- d. Develop a plan to offer a designated number of sabbaticals to faculty until sufficient resources are available to award these on a regular basis to all eligible faculty.
- e. Review and, where necessary, make changes in workloads and teaching schedules to enhance production of scholarship, while maintaining emphasis on outstanding teaching and service.
- f. Increase faculty development funds and develop a program for the continuing professional enhancement of staff.

V. Expand Gannon's involvement in and service to the local and regional community (*Primary persons with lead responsibility for implementation: Vice President for Mission and Vice President for Finance and Administration*)

- a. Promote the volunteer services of students, faculty and staff through the Center for Social Concerns, Leadership Erie, and other departmental and University programs.
- b. Develop more relationships with local school systems, the Diocese of Erie schools, business and industry, and health care and social service organizations.
- c. Develop business incubator programs to train employees, support entrepreneurial development, and create new businesses through the Small Business Development Center and other on-campus entities.

VI. Increase Gannon's enrollment and the quality of students admitted to the University (*Primary person with lead responsibility for implementation: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs*)

- a. Continue to increase the academic quality of Gannon students by recruiting academically-talented students as indicated by high school GPA's, ACT and SAT scores, and leadership in co-curricular activities (i.e., academics, athletics and community service); increase the number of students in the top 25% of their high school classes; increase the number of high school valedictorians; recruit more students in and beyond the region; gradually increase admissions criteria until the average SAT is between 1000 and 1150.
- b. Achieve an acceptance rate of 85% or lower for first-year students by 2003, while maintaining the University's mission to provide opportunities for students with varied academic and creative talents.
- c. "Increase the University's first-year retention rate, which currently averages above 80%, to 84% or higher for the students entering in Fall 2007 and to 85% for students entering in Fall 2009."
- d. Increase the University's four-year, five-year, and six-year graduation rates.
- e. Increase the University's total undergraduate and graduate enrollment to 3,700 by Fall 2008, with additional increases annually to achieve a total enrollment of 4,000 in subsequent years.
- f. Develop an enrollment structure that makes optimal use of technology and person power to answer strategic questions about target markets and recruitment. Decisions should be based on a thorough analysis of data, including statistical models of prospects as well as known best practices and anecdotal data from our own student and faculty surveys.

- g. Focus on new markets in major metropolitan areas and repeat the University's success in Pittsburgh and surrounding areas with similar penetration in Cleveland, Buffalo, and other regional areas.

VII. Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of information technology services and communication processes at Gannon University (*Primary persons with lead responsibility for implementation: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice President for Finance and Administration*)

- a. Enhance information technology services.
- b. Ensure universal access to computer technology by all constituencies of the University.
- c. Integrate the use of technology into all University processes where it is appropriate to do so, and especially into instruction, so that it becomes truly ubiquitous.
- d. Reinvent all processes for the Web.
- e. Provide computer network connections in every classroom, office, and dormitory room and, ultimately, in every University campus building.
- f. Increase the proportion of classrooms with computer projection capabilities to 50% or more by Fall 2007.
- g. Develop the full potential of technology as a tool for internal and external communication.
- h. Develop the full potential of technology as an instructional tool by providing support for the use of technology in courses and by significantly increasing the number of courses using technology for distance learning by 2007.
- i. Develop measures to assess communication and marketing effectiveness and devote strategic planning efforts to attaining significant improvements in these areas.