

2017-2021 GANNON UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN

CONTINUING THE MOMENTUM

PROMOTING **LEARNING BY ENGAGEMENT**
ADVANCING **ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH**
CREATING **PUBLIC IMPACT**



Believe in the possibilities.

2017-2021 GANNON UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

PROMOTING LEARNING BY ENGAGEMENT

ADVANCING ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

CREATING PUBLIC IMPACT

OUR MISSION

Gannon is a Catholic, Diocesan university dedicated to excellence in teaching, scholarship and service. Our faculty and staff prepare students to be global citizens through programs grounded in the liberal arts and sciences and professional specializations. Inspired by the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, we offer a comprehensive, values-centered learning experience that emphasizes faith, leadership, inclusiveness and social responsibility.

OUR 2017-2021 VISION

Gannon University will be a Catholic, multi-cultural university nationally recognized for educating socially responsible global citizens through dynamic learning experiences that transform the learner and their communities.

OUR CATHOLIC TRADITION

Our Mission is inspired by the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, a way of thinking and a way of engaging the world in the pursuit of what is good, true and beautiful. We live this through the virtues of faith, hope and love in a lively commitment to our students and our colleagues to foster an environment in which all may pursue the fundamental question, “How shall I live my life?” We seek to continue the dialogue within our campus communities and with our local, regional and global community to reflect upon what it means to be a Catholic university and how to live this out.

As Gannon embraces and bolsters our emerging role as a thriving multi-cultural university, we celebrate the Christian inspiration found in so many members of this community, and embrace the many members of our Gannon family who are called to follow their own faith tradition. The diversity and intercultural dialogue within the Gannon community provides the opportunity to practice respect for the religious freedom and the learned wisdom of all people. This practice is necessary for Gannon to meet its responsibility to its students and constituencies, and to maintain and strengthen its Catholic Identity.

Every member of our University community contributes to the developing appreciation of the good that each culture has to offer. *Our defining traits of respect, sacramentality, service, community, and the dialogue between faith and reason continue to be a lived reality on the campuses of Gannon University.*

CONTINUING THE MOMENTUM

HIGHER EDUCATION WITHIN THE U.S. CONTINUES TO BE CHALLENGED TO IMPROVE ACCESS, AFFORDABILITY AND OUTCOMES. GANNON HAS BEEN BLESSED WITH SUCCESS IN ADDRESSING EACH OF THESE CRITICAL CHALLENGES AND IN DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISE OF THE VALUE OF QUALITY HIGHER EDUCATION.

The Erie region is experiencing significant economic and community challenges, yet encouraging plans and opportunities are emerging that will require leadership and action to produce immediate and sustained success. Predicted shifts in demographics in the northeastern U.S. are being realized, and changes in our local and regional urban communities have direct impact on prospective student markets as well as on personal and professional opportunities for our graduates. Programs, services and resources that will flow from this strategic plan are designed to meet the evolving needs of current and future students and the communities we serve. Population growth, along with the need for post-secondary education and talented graduates, also exists in other regions of the U.S. and globally.

Our continued efforts to attract students from a changing regional population and progress in broadening our reach nationally and globally are inevitably and intentionally bringing greater ethnic and socio-economic diversity to the Gannon student body. Gannon's strong enrollment trends, including an increasingly global student mix, are fueling robust institutional financial health, capital investments and extensive opportunities for innovation and outreach. Strategic development efforts in Erie's West Bayfront neighborhood, the historic launch of our new campus in Ruskin, Florida, and expansion of recruitment and partnerships in dozens of countries across the world reflect early successes in adjusting to our environmental challenges, serving our growing communities, and acting on opportunities to reach learners with high-quality educational programs.

In this environment, the need for fostering innovation, engaging in the community and developing a worldview remain just as important today as when they were set as strategic goals almost four years ago. The 2017-2021 Strategic Plan builds from that previous plan with a keen eye toward the essential dimensions of the higher education value proposition; *our new strategic goals have a refreshed focus on promoting learning by engagement, advancing organizational health and creating public impact.*

Student leadership and success, faculty excellence in teaching and scholarship, community engagement and global competence are pillars that have guided our recent plans and actions. Execution of our plans has earned national recognition as a best value university, an institution committed to community engagement and a great place to work. The strategic threads of this plan reinforce those pillars, continue our momentum and take us one step further in living our Mission and achieving our vision.

PROMOTING LEARNING BY ENGAGEMENT

ADVANCING ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

CREATING PUBLIC IMPACT

Amid rapid change and increased political, social and economic activism, Gannon University looks with optimism for opportunities to grow, to improve, to build connections between people and experiences, and to build bridges among regional, national and global communities. Our students, faculty, staff, alumni and community partners will play important roles in building lasting connections and fostering progress in the enlivened communities we serve. Each of us as members of the Gannon family, have reaped the benefits of learning and serving as we executed the strategies and tactics laid out in the previous strategic plan. The development of this 2017-2021 Strategic Plan began with a broad review of the local, national and international horizons. The framework, as noted, focuses on the experiences of the students we serve, the faculty and staff who support and serve our students, and the communities where we live and serve.

This **2017-2021 Strategic Plan**, highlights these heightened commitments to our students, employees and communities, aligns with our Mission and vision, builds logically on the previous strategic plan, and emanates from the defining traits of our Catholic Identity. This thoughtful alignment and integration leads us to clearly prioritized strategies and tactics whose impact will be revealed in measured progress toward our strategic goals:

1 PROMOTING LEARNING BY ENGAGEMENT

Design dynamic environments and engaging learning experiences that intentionally align to prepare students for personal and professional life after graduation.

2 ADVANCING ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

Empower and incentivize employees to examine individual and institutional practices, including development and use of human, financial, physical plant and technology resources to further improve the quality of the experience for students, employees and alumni, and the health of the University.

3 CREATING PUBLIC IMPACT

Encourage the linkage of scholarship, service and learning experiences with community needs through programs and partnerships to facilitate transformative change in Gannon's communities.

Our plan reflects our understanding that each of us must live fully and do our part consistent with the ideals of interconnectedness, living harmoniously in community and acknowledging our responsibility for each other. We are a community of faculty, staff and administrators contributing our talent and skills to create and deliver a transformational experience that allows our students to “recognize, develop and use the gifts God has given them.”¹ This is accomplished through engagement across our campuses and within our neighboring and global communities.

¹Gannon University's Statement on Catholic Identity, 2016.

PROMOTING LEARNING BY ENGAGEMENT

DESIGN DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENTS AND ENGAGING LEARNING EXPERIENCES THAT INTENTIONALLY ALIGN TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE AFTER GRADUATION.

With the understanding that each student is unique, we will sharpen our focus on how we teach and how our students learn. Our Mission, with its commitment to the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, is the driving force behind the Gannon experience we create for our students in that true education is not separate from character formation and the cultivation of virtue. The primary focus of this goal is the intensive review and invigoration of curricula and programming to maximize learning and instill the tenets of faith, leadership, inclusiveness and social responsibility. Our students will develop laudable knowledge of and competency in their disciplines along with personal values and insight that are critical for successful employment, advanced education, civic engagement, and service on local and global levels.

The student experience includes three components: **professional/vocational** aspirations of students, **personal development** of students and student connections with our **campus communities**. The **professional/vocational** aspirations will be brought to life through the discipline-specific curricula; applied experiences such as internship, research, global learning and service learning; and academic enrichment such as career exploration and learning support. The faculty and staff providing these experiences will be challenged to use a variety of engaging and innovative teaching tools and methods to enhance and individualize learning for each student.

The teaching and learning approach will support **personal development**, including participation in service, wellness (physical, mental and financial), spiritual development and Mission integration activities. Participation in activities such as Alternative Break Service Trips; intercollegiate, intramural and club sports; fitness classes; celebration of Mass and ecumenical services; clubs and organizations; and other enrichment programming will help students answer the question “How will I live my life?”

Our **campus communities** are an important part of the student experience; our students contribute to and learn from the communities that exist on our campuses as well as those that surround our campuses. The combination of our ever-strengthening partnerships in other countries and the neighbors near our campuses creates the perfect opportunity for students, along with faculty and staff, to embark on building bridges across cultures and across communities. With our Mission, defining traits and Catholic Intellectual Tradition as the foundation, the bridge building will be extended by the burgeoning interfaith initiative and dialogue across the campuses.

Students will define and follow their unique Gannon experience with guidance and support from their faculty, staff, mentors, supervisors, alumni and peers. The entire community will take responsibility for supporting individual learning and development for the good of the student and our communities.

SUCCESS MEASURES

Our success in creating the desired student experience will be measured by: achievement of Liberal Studies Core outcomes and graduate outcomes; achievement of discipline-specific outcomes; acquisition of a global perspective; integration of elements of Catholic Intellectual Tradition; graduation rate; substantial employment; satisfaction with advising and the Gannon experience; participation in personal development and Mission integration activities; participation in wellness activities and athletics; retention rate; average debt; loan default rate; employment on campus, being civically engaged and informed citizens; achievement of interfaith outcomes; and student engagement in groups.

ADVANCING ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

EMPOWER AND INCENTIVIZE EMPLOYEES TO EXAMINE INDIVIDUAL AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES, INCLUDING DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF HUMAN, FINANCIAL, PHYSICAL PLANT AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES TO IMPROVE BOTH THE QUALITY OF THE EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS, EMPLOYEES AND ALUMNI, AND FOR THE HEALTH OF THE UNIVERSITY.

Our employees are our greatest and most valued institutional resource. “Systems and processes are the structural engine of an organization, but the people are the fuel.”² To position our employees to have the largest possible impact on students, alumni, colleagues and our communities, we will develop, empower and incentivize them toward examining, assessing, planning and improving the Gannon experience and ultimately our organizational health. This will entail creating incentives and rewards, developing programming and training, refining review processes and feedback systems, and improving institutional communications and outcomes reporting.

Organizational health encompasses three components, including the **skills and talents** of employees, the **life and wellness** of employees, and **institutional vitality**. We will offer targeted programming and development opportunities to enhance job-related **skills and talents**, as well as to increase overall awareness and competencies related to globalization and civic engagement. Faculty and staff will have opportunities to develop skills that support universal learning (flexible approaches that can be adjusted to meet individual needs) and that enhance the effective utilization of technology and best practices. Orientations, appraisals and improvement processes will focus attention on understanding and promoting assessment, planning, student development, success and retention, Catholic Identity and organizational operations. Improving communication institutionally and by way of the individual and unit review processes will help employees identify specific paths and actions they can take to enhance their impact on our students and our organizational health.

In addition to their professional development, Gannon is committed to establishing an environment that encourages and supports employee behavior that results in an improved quality of **life and wellness**. These will include Mission integration, service, and spiritual development activities; physical and emotional wellness initiatives; and competitive compensation.

In keeping with our Catholic Identity, this combination of skill enhancement and attention to well-being enables our employees to “come to the full measure of their humanity”³ and be living examples of our Mission for our students. Well-developed and well-cared for human resources are the essential foundation for the optimal use and further development of our financial, physical plant and technology resources through which we strengthen our **institutional vitality**.

Institutional vitality includes soundness of operations and overall financial health of the institution. It requires maintaining organizational and financial strength; being vigilant, agile and flexible when responding to enrollment growth opportunities through programs and delivery methods; optimizing operations; and identifying alternative revenue streams.

SUCCESS MEASURES

Our success in advancing organizational health will be measured by: employee diversity; student enrollment; financial ratios; grants funding and auxiliary revenue; alumni and donor engagement; skills and knowledge of employees; evaluation by employees; Catholic Identity assessment; participation in Mission-integration, wellness, global awareness, service and community building activities; employee retention; and compensation ratios.

²Leadership Tips by Carter Campbell. Pg. 22.

³Gannon University’s Statement on Catholic Identity, 2016

CREATING PUBLIC IMPACT

ENCOURAGE THE LINKAGE OF SCHOLARSHIP, SERVICE AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES WITH COMMUNITY NEEDS THROUGH PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS TO FACILITATE TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE IN GANNON'S COMMUNITIES.

As a primarily urban university, the vibrancy of the Erie community plays a significant role in the experiences of Gannon's students and employees. With our neighbors, we will build on the momentum of the Erie-GAINS programmatic initiatives and reinforce our assistance by supporting and facilitating the transformation of the Our West Bayfront community.

The neighborhood's transformation will address housing, safety and security, public spaces, health, business and more. These areas align well with providing our students and employees a safe and healthy environment in which to live, work, learn and play. Our students, faculty and staff will enjoy the benefits of a vibrant neighborhood while learning from and contributing to the improvement of this community through engagement in service, experiential learning, research, leadership and programming. It is mutually beneficial for Gannon to invest resources to help the community flourish.

Our communities extend to Ruskin, Florida and across the globe. We will partner in similar fashion with regional partners, alumni and organizations to ensure Gannon students and employees, regardless of their location, enjoy a safe and healthy environment and that our enterprises are well integrated with each community's plan for growth and improvement.

Beyond our campuses, Gannon "sees itself as belonging and contributing to the worldwide community."⁴ We will continue our concerted efforts to expand engagement in learning and service abroad. We will also embrace the opportunity that exists in both Erie and Ruskin's large refugee and immigrant populations as well as in our growing global student and alumni populations.

Our commitment to our communities involves two primary components of collaborative work: **infrastructure development**; and **program analysis, design and implementation**.

The **infrastructure development** component will be driven by the implementation of the Our West Bayfront plan. Gannon will facilitate and work cooperatively with the nascent neighborhood organization to improve the physical environment as well as the associated security and health infrastructure in the West Bayfront neighborhood. Plans for engagement in the Ruskin community around housing, wellness and auxiliary enterprises will also be developed and launched.

The **program analysis, design and implementation** component of this work will be driven by mutually identified needs of the community. Faculty, staff and students will make thoughtful, powerful and lasting interconnections between those needs and their research, scholarship, courses, curricula, experiential learning and service activities.

SUCCESS MEASURES

Our success in committing to our communities will be measured by: community investments; economic and community impact; employee participation in community outreach; student participation in community outreach; and response of community partners.

⁴Gannon University's Statement on Catholic Identity, 2016.

2017-2021 GANNON UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN

GOALS AND INITIATIVES

Each of our colleges and divisions will refine and implement plans that align with the goals and components of the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan. Monitoring the implementation and assessing the outcomes of these plans will ensure our University's success in meeting our strategic goals. We will extend the tradition of living our Mission and secure Gannon's place as a Catholic institution recognized for **Engaged Learning, Organizational Health and Public Impact.**

GOAL ONE
PROMOTING LEARNING BY ENGAGEMENT Design dynamic environments and engaging learning experiences that intentionally align to prepare students for personal and professional life after graduation.
STRATEGIES
<p>Professional/Vocational Redesign courses and curriculum to ensure integration and alignment of our Catholic Intellectual Tradition, liberal studies core curriculum, discipline-specific curricula, internships/applied experiences, global experiences and service learning experiences Orient and educate advisors, faculty, student supervisors and employees to guide students through their Gannon experience, maximizing their success and retention to graduation Develop, implement and assess college and program plans that are responsive to the current environment and include continuing efforts to: foster innovation, engage in the community and develop a worldview Assess the graduate student experience, and develop and implement plans to enhance it</p> <p>Personal Expand and assess programming for wellness, service, Mission integration and faith/spiritual development Engage every student through one or more deep connections with the Gannon community (a connection could be a faculty member, an advisor, a resident director, a commuter advisor, a work/study supervisor, a coach, an alumni mentor, etc.) Review and adjust operations and policies to keep student debt manageable</p> <p>Campus Communities Develop, implement and assess the plan and outcomes for the interfaith initiative Incorporate cross-organizational community building into the goals for student organizations, club sports, Athletics and Greek life</p>
SUCCESS MEASURES
<p>Professional/Vocational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement of Liberal Studies Core outcomes and graduate outcomes • Achievement of discipline-specific outcomes • Acquisition of a global perspective • Integration of elements of Catholic Intellectual Tradition • Graduation rate • Substantial employment • Satisfaction with advising and overall Gannon experience <p>Personal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in personal development and Mission integration activities • Participation in wellness and athletics • Retention rate • Average debt • Student loan default rate • Students employed on campus • Civic engagement and being an informed and active citizen <p>Campus Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement of interfaith outcomes • Student engagement in groups

GOAL TWO
ADVANCING ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH Empower and incentivize employees to examine individual and institutional practices, including development and use of human, financial, physical plant and technology resources, to further improve the quality of the experience for students, employees and alumni, and the health of the University.
STRATEGIES
<p>Institutional Vitality Improve communication at the institutional level and within the employee and unit review processes Continue efforts to foster innovation by further developing financial resources via recruitment (including international and ESL), retention, alternative deliveries (including online and additional locations), auxiliary enterprises, fundraising and grants Continue efforts to develop a worldview by implementing the globalization plan Further develop and optimize the use of technology, equipment and physical plant including mid- and long-range planning for capital projects, deferred maintenance and equipment replacement Diversify revenue with auxiliary enterprises such as housing, mixed use space, wellness and real estate holdings Increase the engagement of alumni and donors</p> <p>Skills and Talents Develop human resources through investments in training and development for job required skills, assessment, planning, institutional operations, wellness, Catholic Identity, Catholic Intellectual Tradition, student development, global competencies and universal design learning Incentivize well aligned initiatives with success potential Assess and improve student satisfaction with services of administrative offices, teaching and university events</p> <p>Life and Wellness Expand wellness programming to an outcomes-based platform Advance workplace satisfaction, including employee friendly policies and total compensation</p>
SUCCESS MEASURES
<p>Institutional Vitality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee diversity • Student enrollment • Financial ratios • Grants funding and auxiliary revenue • Alumni and donor engagement <p>Skills and Talents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in skills and knowledge of employees • Evaluation by employees • Catholic Identity assessment <p>Life and Wellness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in Mission-integration, wellness, global awareness, service and community building activities • Compensation ratios • Employee retention • Evaluation by employees

GOAL THREE
CREATING PUBLIC IMPACT Encourage the linkage of scholarship, service and learning experiences with community needs through programs and partnerships to facilitate transformative change in Gannon's communities.
STRATEGIES
<p>Infrastructure Development Integrate Our West Bayfront into the master plan and campus wayfinding implementation Coordinate with community partners, such as government authorities, HANDS and Habitat for Humanity to improve the housing stock Assist with organizational development and execution and securing funding for implementation of the Our West Bayfront plan Develop auxiliary enterprises such as housing or multipurpose spaces that integrate with Our West Bayfront implementation Implement the Ruskin plan for physical plant expansion and auxiliary enterprises to accommodate program growth and community development</p> <p>Program Analysis, Design and Implementation Continue efforts to engage in the community by collaborating with partners to meet community needs with applied student and employee engagement activities Develop academic programs that meet market demand, align with institutional strengths and provide support for the community's educational needs Collaborate with community partners to support the Erie Catholic Diocese, local K-16 education and community/neighborhood service delivery</p>
SUCCESS MEASURES
<p>Infrastructure Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community investments • Community impact • Economic impact <p>Program Analysis, Design and Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee participation in community related outreach • Student participation in community related outreach • Response of community partners



Believe in the possibilities.