

Mission Priority Examen Self-Study Report

Executive Summary

April 2020

Marquette University

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Pre-Examen Jesuit Mission Priority Emphases

Currently, Marquette University's mission priorities are identified and expressed through our:

- Mission statement, which articulates our purpose — why we exist.
- Vision statement, which explains how we seek to deliver on our mission.
- Guiding Values statement, which specifies characteristics we commit to as individuals and as an organization to develop a culture that delivers our mission and executes our vision.

These pronouncements provide the framework for all major planning and curricular initiatives on campus, including our strategic plan, *Beyond Boundaries*, and the recent revision of the Marquette Core Curriculum.

The Marquette community has celebrated the mission through Mission Week programming and displays the “Pillars” of the mission statement (Excellence, Faith, Leadership and Service) on banners at every significant university event. More importantly, the mission animates every element of campus life: from the urban setting of the campus, allowing for significant engagement with local business, civic and social service agencies, to a variety of academic and professional programs, attracting faculty and practitioners at the top of their fields. Marquette remains dedicated to educating the whole person, preparing graduates to be ethical leaders in service to others.

Liturgical celebrations, all-university programs, and a wide array of services for Catholics and non-Catholics are coordinated by the Office of Mission and Ministry, through Campus Ministry for students and the Faber Center for Ignatian Spirituality for faculty and staff. To ensure that offices across campus have ownership of and can confidently contribute to the mission, the Office of Mission and Ministry also coordinates the Marquette Colleagues Program (MCP), a campus-based program that parallels the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities' Ignatian Colleagues Program (ICP). MCP is a semester-long program that provides historical and contemporary readings on Ignatian spirituality and Jesuit education and includes a service component. To date, over 400 Marquette employees have completed the MCP; 37 present and past employees have participated in the ICP. Additionally, all new faculty and staff participate in the University's Mission Convocation as part of their onboarding process.

Jesuit Mission Priorities Proposed in the Self-study

Priority #1: Formation for Staff, Faculty and Board of Trustees

By intentionally focusing on formation, from hiring and supervising for mission, to a robust board formation, all levels of the campus community will be fully invited into and invested in the mission. This attention to mission is intended to ensure that significant leadership decisions will be made using Ignatian values and will result in a transparent decision-making framework.

Priority #2: Student-focused Programming

The process of the Mission Priority Examen (MPE) demonstrated a clear need for additional consistent programming for students at all levels. Regular assessment of student needs and interests must be conducted to ensure changing demographics and other realities are accurately reflected in opportunities for student outreach and formation.

Priority #3: Diversity and Inclusion

The process of the Mission Priority Examen has underscored the importance of the university's commitment to diversity and inclusion. The Steering Committee felt very strongly about this as well, adding it as a Focus Area during the MPE. This commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion encompasses gender expression, racial and religious identities. Mission and Ministry staff will work in tandem with other campus offices to increase formation around cultural competence.

Priority #4: Office of Mission and Ministry Staffing and Structure

In the face of leadership transitions across the university, the MPE process has surfaced the need for structural and staffing enhancements in the Office of Mission and Ministry, and more broadly throughout the Division of Mission and Ministry. The university is committed to providing Mission and Ministry with the resources necessary to ensure mission integration at Marquette.

Plans for Implementation

As newly installed Vice President for Mission and Ministry James Voiss, S.J., begins this administrative role, his charge includes determining which of these priorities are already underway and which need more direction from Mission and Ministry. For example, the “Formation of Hearts and Minds” subcommittee of the university’s strategic plan, *Beyond Boundaries*, has made significant progress in prioritizing hiring and supervising for mission as well as providing structure for a comprehensive outcomes assessment for student formation.

Marquette fully embraces the Jesuits’ Universal Apostolic Preferences for 2019-2029. How best to actualize those preferences, however, requires a thorough “soul searching” of the university at all levels to evaluate what we are doing well and where we are in need of improvement in terms of mission and mission integration. This Mission Priority Examen process has been the soul search we needed.

It is our belief that this self-study and subsequent peer visits and evaluations provide guidance for Marquette in the years to come, by providing direction in which to make informed and strategic decisions about how Marquette can best show the way to God, walk with the poor, accompany young people, and care for our common home in a manner consistent with the best aspects of our past and our noblest aspirations for the future.

Feedback on the Seven Themes of *Some Characteristics of Jesuit Colleges and Universities: A Self-Evaluation Instrument*

CHARACTERISTIC 1: LEADERSHIP’S COMMITMENT TO THE MISSION

Marquette University is exemplary as a Jesuit institution in terms of the development of leadership that is expressed in service to others. Communicating and enlivening identity that is distinctly Catholic, however, remains challenging amid an increasingly diverse and secular university community.

CHARACTERISTIC 2: THE ACADEMIC LIFE

Marquette has made and continues to make intentional efforts to ensure its Catholic, Jesuit mission is prominent in discussions about and within the academic life of the university. Significant emphasis on servant leadership and inclusivity, however, can obscure the degree to which academic programs are distinctively informed by the university’s Jesuit and Catholic character to a degree that differentiates them from those at public and secular private institutions.

CHARACTERISTIC 3: A CATHOLIC, JESUIT CAMPUS CULTURE

Marquette offers an abundance of opportunities for faith exploration and spiritual development among students, faculty and staff. As noted in *Some Characteristics of Jesuit Colleges and Universities*, however, the connection between many of these opportunities and the philosophical and theological traditions that gave/give them meaning has been obscured, presumably to accommodate growing numbers of uncatechized Catholics and increasing religious and moral diversity on campus.

CHARACTERISTIC 4: SERVICE

Marquette provides a remarkable number of service opportunities for students and supports those experiences with a curriculum designed to instill a deep and lasting commitment to humanitarianism. To what extent this service experience is “rooted within the inspiring Christian narrative from which the Jesuit, Catholic university finds its meaning and purpose” and thus distinguished from service programs at other faith-based and secular colleges and universities, however, is unclear.

CHARACTERISTIC 5: SERVICE TO THE LOCAL CHURCH

Since its founding in 1881 by the Society of Jesus and Milwaukee Archbishop John Henni, Marquette University has been an instrumental part of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and the city. Serving the local population intellectually, spiritually and physically, Marquette and the archdiocese experience “mission overlap” in numerous areas, maintaining a productive relationship based upon dialogue, spirituality and service. Ambiguous understandings of concepts like Catholic identity, academic freedom and inclusivity, however, can at times introduce tension between our two missions.

CHARACTERISTIC 6: JESUIT PRESENCE

Marquette remains proud of its Jesuit founding and tradition. This is demonstrated in our marketing, campus aesthetic, commitment to service, and the affection and respect we show members of our Jesuit Community. A diminishing Jesuit presence and shifting campus priorities, however, combine to obscure this tradition and its relevance in the minds of students, faculty and staff.

CHARACTERISTIC 7: INTEGRITY

Marquette University’s mission integrity is directed by our 2014 Guiding Values statement that asserts, “In accordance with the Catholic, Jesuit mission and vision of Marquette University, we hold that all people and things are created to praise, reverence and serve God in our community and throughout the world, and thus every aspect of the university’s lifeblood and work holds this principle and foundation as its beginning and end.” Unquestionably, university management and administration strive to advance the mission and preserve Marquette’s Catholic, Jesuit identity, but these are challenging efforts that continually require additional support and development.

FOCUS AREA 1: INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Marquette continues to be a leader in offering study abroad opportunities for students and helping to fortify the Jesuit international network. Greater attention needs to be paid, however, to ensuring that Ignatian spirituality is a primary formational component in the student international experience rather than mere cultural exposure.

FOCUS AREA 2: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY

Marquette’s campus is enriched by the multiplicity of lived experiences and cultures of those in our community. We recognize diversity as an asset to the learning environment: It expands our world view, helps us become more receptive and empathetic to others, drives innovation, helps us to become more effective problem-solvers, and ultimately prepares us to become better servant leaders in the community. Conversations about diversity and inclusivity throughout the MPE process, however, revealed the need for continued mission-centered leadership in the area of diversity and inclusion.