

Faculty Senate Council Meeting (June 5, 2013)

On May 24, 2013 the Provost sent an email to all faculty introducing a draft of an elaborated educational vision for Santa Clara University. Faculty members were invited to provide feedback through an online survey. The Provost is interested in hearing your responses to the following three questions regarding the draft.

Questions for Discussion:

1. To what extent does the following vision statement accurately reflect the distinctive character and identity of Santa Clara University?
2. To what extent is the statement aspirational and inspirational?
3. What constructive critiques do you have?

Elaborating the Educational Vision of Santa Clara University

Inspired by a 450-year old tradition of Jesuit education and rooted in a history that began in 1851, Santa Clara University moves into the future guided by the following values and vision.

VALUES. As a university, we prize free intellectual inquiry of every kind. We are dedicated to depth of thought, a contemplative spirit, a taste for beauty, and exacting scholarship. For us, the bridge between the secular and the sacred is short. We encourage questions that open into a search for greater purpose in life, a thirst for justice and a deepening of responsible citizenship. When all is said and done, we hold that success and personal accomplishment are to be sought not for one's own glory but for a greater good that transcends the achievement of any individual.

As an academic institution, we regard bold and compassionate engagement with the world as a core value. We urge students, alumni, faculty, and staff to invest themselves, whole and entire, in their communities. Within our own community we cherish diversities and seek to model dialogue that contributes to the promotion of justice and respect for human dignity even in the face of disagreement.

Our philosophy of education is ever ancient, ever new. Founded as a Jesuit, Catholic university on the site of a mission church, Santa Clara has always embraced the religious dimensions of the human experience and opened wide its doors to students from many backgrounds. With a deep commitment to accessibility and inclusivity, we train forward-thinking citizens to become leaders of their communities.

Our living tradition compels us to form the whole person: men and women distinguished by intellectual rigor, moral character, mature faith, and ability to make ethical discernments. We find ways to cultivate a feeling for humanity, the earth, and all fellow creatures. We teach persons of diverse cultures, ways of life, and faiths both to analyze complex societal problems and to accompany people in a spirit of humility and dignity. Finally, we strive to graduate men and women with the courage to respond to the needs of our times with intelligence, generosity, and a daring that is open both to take risks and to love.

VISION. These values call Santa Clara University to become more. At the heart of Silicon Valley, we are poised to make distinct contributions to the global enterprise of higher education.

The University aspires to form students who will in turn transform the world. We shall send forth alumni possessed of skill, creativity and courage to gain ground for justice and the flourishing of peace. Through excellent teaching and research, we shall prepare global citizens who will advocate for the common good through the adaptation and renewal of social, economic, educational, and political systems. We shall educate agents who will build trust in a pluralistic world and advance current practices in science, technology and commerce.

The University will promote initiatives that help fashion a more humane, just, and sustainable world. Because of our concern for the greatest needs of society, we shall find ways to contribute to its intellectual, economic, and cultural vitality. We shall form champions for the healing of our planet by promoting a more sustainable use of resources and the cultivation of an inner sense of connectedness. We shall create opportunities for our students to listen to the experience of those with least access to power and privilege, so that together we might apply individual talents and collective intelligence for the flourishing of all.

The University will integrate the entrepreneurial spirit of Silicon Valley with the humanistic, ethical processes of discernment characteristic of the Jesuit tradition. Both on campus and beyond, we shall boldly deploy new tools that move our educational mission forward. With a deep appreciation of human systems, we shall link our regional advantages to the global network of Jesuit and other mission-aligned institutions. Acknowledging that the use of technology is fraught with perils as well as possibilities, we shall challenge the world to imagine new social benefits as well as to understand the complex relationships between people and products of innovation. In this way, through multiple disciplines we shall advocate for the well-being of many, especially those whose voices are seldom heard.

The University will serve the broader church. In addition to deepening Catholic theological inquiry, we shall promote mutual understanding and dialogue among people of different faiths and all searchers. We shall be recognized regionally and globally as providing leadership for the integration of faith, justice, and the intellectual life. Finally, we shall actively promote ministry, Catholic education, Ignatian spirituality, as well as other spiritual practices in the context of our educational mission.

Emboldened by this vision, Santa Clara University advances with hope, confidence, and courage.