

# The University of Scranton Strategic Plan 2020

**Purpose Statement:** Deeply committed to our mission as a **Catholic and Jesuit** institution, The University of Scranton, in the spirit of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, answers the challenging signs of our times by building on our strengths as we embrace **innovative** new ways of proceeding. We plan for the future with confidence inspired by our past success and by a shared sense of ownership displayed by the entire campus community. We draw upon the successful *Mission Priority Examen, Middle States Self-Study*, and strategic enrollment planning, and are informed by the Universal Apostolic Preferences<sup>1</sup> from the Society of Jesus. Through our plan, we will work together wholly and collaboratively to bring greater understanding and recognition of the value of a Scranton education.

The foundation of our strategy and plan is – *our community, our core and our commitments*. Guided by our mission, we act on these key themes through the following goals and objectives:

- 1) Ensure that the Scranton student experience is transformational, integrated and grounded in the **humanities** as a pathway to understanding the human experience in its many dimensions.

*To achieve this goal, we will:*

- a. Reaffirm and reinvest in our liberal arts core through a reinvigorated general education curriculum, new signature academic programming, and expanded interdisciplinary offerings.
- b. Define and integrate principles of the humanities, including those that emphasize ethical, cultural, and global awareness, across all academic disciplines – arts, sciences, and professional - and within programs that welcome and support students throughout University life.
- c. Complement this academic foundation with curricular and co-curricular initiatives emerging from the interdisciplinary Humanities Initiative and new Gail and Francis Slattery Center for Humanities.
- d. Engage in scholarship and intellectual exchange inside and outside of the classroom, welcoming contributions from guest faculty, scholars, and regional, national, and world leaders, especially those that explore the unique connections between the humanities and Jesuit education.
- e. Lead the national conversation about the value and impact of the liberal arts in contemporary higher education, demonstrating through conversation, presentation, and publication the benefits of the humanities to students’ academic preparation in any field of study, and the ongoing enrichment of their professional lives.

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<sup>1</sup> The Universal Apostolic Preferences, adopted by the Society of Jesus in 2019, are intended to guide the efforts of the Society of Jesus and its works, including Jesuit colleges and universities, for the next ten years. The four preferences are: “(1) To show the way to God through the Spiritual Exercises and discernment; (2) To walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice; (3) To accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future; (4) To collaborate in the care of our Common Home.” Several of the Preferences are cited within selected objectives.

- 2) Engage students as individuals through personal attention that helps them explore their **faith**, discern their **purpose** and pursue their **passion**, as they work to create a more just and sustainable world.

To achieve this goal, we will:

- a. Support student success by strengthening onboarding and first-year experiences, advising and early alert processes; expanded and integrated academic and career development services; and programs that promote student well-being, self-efficacy, and resilience.
- b. Ensure that all students have opportunities to apply curricular and co-curricular learning in practical, collaborative settings through a broadened, well-supported, and marketed portfolio of residential learning, experiential learning, and other High Impact Practices.
- c. Enrich the spirit of mission in campus life, articulating mission-related outcomes for all programs; strengthening relationships between mission-related offices to better serve students, faculty, and staff; and reinvigorating the connection of mission in hiring, orientation, and leadership development practices.
- d. Cultivate programs that enable students and other members of our community from various faith traditions to explore and develop their relationship with God, to build respect for other faiths, and to “walk with the excluded<sup>2</sup>,” expressing their faith in the reflective service of others.
- e. Engage every Scranton student in understanding contemporary issues of social justice and environmental sustainability in both curricular and co-curricular programming, preparing them as ethical leaders and advocates for positive change in the “care of our common home<sup>3</sup>.”

- 3) **Advance** the University into the future by challenging ourselves to educate and support an ever-changing, diverse landscape of students in ways that are **affordable**, **relevant** and **innovative**.

To achieve this goal, we will:

- a. Build a University-wide academic master plan to guide innovations, cohesion, and flexibility in the delivery and development of existing and new educational programming; learning spaces, modalities, and technologies; student formation and success initiatives; and faculty development.
- b. Implement a holistic process for strategic enrollment management that is mission, student, and market sensitive, and serves as a catalyst for improved student recruitment, retention, and success.

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<sup>2</sup> The Preferences outline the intentional commitment of Jesuit institutions to engage with the gritty realities of the world, understanding and walking with the poor and others in the margins of society.

<sup>3</sup> The Preferences outline the commitment of Jesuit institutions to protect and care for the natural world and our environmental resources.

- c. Improve our understanding and support of the unique needs and educational pathways of graduate, transfer, and non-traditional students, and students enrolling in remote learning activities, improving access and completion through tailored services and expanded opportunities to experience the mission and life of the University.
  - d. Pursue initiatives to make a Scranton education more accessible and affordable for students and their families, sharing the value and impact of the University's transformational education.
  - e. Expand and solidify the financial capacity and sustainability of the University, supporting our mission through disciplined approaches to resource management and stewardship that rely on collaborative, data-informed decision making in the review and allocation of resources and the management of our infrastructure.
- 4) Reflect and understand the **diversity** of the world by demanding that diversity be a priority as we build an **inclusive community and campus culture**, develop and deliver our education and shape our student experience.

To achieve this goal, we will:

- a. Implement an institutional plan for diversity and inclusion, drawing from a comprehensive review of University departments, organizations, spaces, and processes that provide and support inclusion and diversity-related education and programming, ensuring that these collaborative efforts are appropriately aligned and effectively resourced.
- b. Grow our capacity to model and support diversity through strategic recruitment, hiring, and retention practices that increase representation and improve retention of diverse populations across the spectrum of the University community, with special emphasis on hiring for diversity amongst our faculty and staff.
- c. Develop culturally relevant and responsive curricula and learning experiences throughout academic and student life that build intercultural competencies and promote social and educational equity, expanding resources to support faculty in inclusive scholarship and teaching practices.
- d. Expand both required and in-time orientation, training and leadership programming and resources for students, faculty, and staff that promote inclusion and cultural understanding, furthering our collective ability to be a more welcoming and respectful campus community.
- e. Broaden employee and student experiences with the diversity of our city, region, and world through experiential and service engagements that cultivate and celebrate impactful dialogue and intercultural exchange.

- 5) Invite and inspire our alumni, parents, friends and community to be **partners** in the mission of the University.

To achieve this goal, we will:

- a. Advance the mission and capacity of the University through the successful completion of a new capital campaign that emphasizes financial support for students and their families, investments in faculty and student research, and other academic initiatives.
- b. Cultivate avenues for our students to grow in knowledge while engaging as citizens through community-based learning and research, internships, and other direct experiences.
- c. Connect students with University alumni, broadening alumni participation in academic life, drawing on their breadth and depth of talent and experience, and their special role as ambassadors of Jesuit education.
- d. Build partnerships with K-12 and higher education institutions, employers, and corporate entities to expand opportunities for members of the local and regional community to take part in the life of the University of Scranton, and pursue their own professional and personal educational goals.
- e. Collaborate with local and regional leadership to identify, prioritize, and address the challenging educational, social, and spiritual issues facing our community, in pursuit of our shared goal of improving the lives of the citizens of Northeastern Pennsylvania.



End of Strategic Plan.

Enumerations for organizational purposes only. These do not indicate an order or ranking.