

# **Dominican University of California**

## **Strategic Institutional Plan**

**Approved, Board of Trustees**  
**June 1, 2006**

The Strategic Institutional Planning Committee met over a period of six months. University and outside sources were used to provide comparative data and analyses. The Plan was reviewed and major input was given at the Board Retreat on March 16 and 17, 2006.

The plan addresses nine major areas of university functions. Strategic initiatives are specified to provide direction, goals, and timetables for future change and development.

### **1. STUDENT PROFILE AND ENROLLMENT**

Current enrollment at Dominican University is 1,937 consisting of 1,391 undergraduate and 546 graduate students. The student body is 77% female, 23% male. At present, approximately 91% of students come from California; 5% of students come from out-of-state, while 4% of the student body is from other countries. High school GPAs for current students is 3.2 that is below both the California and national average of 3.27 and 3.30 respectively. The average SAT score for DU freshmen is 1024.

- 1.1 Prioritize increase in student ability rather than growth in enrollment numbers.
- 1.2 Increase undergraduate student selectivity by raising the average cumulative Grade Point Average for freshman to 3.50, and the SAT/ACT composite score requirement from the current level of 1024 to 1200.
- 1.3 Strive to achieve a balance in the student body to reflect California's changing demographics.
- 1.4 Expand Dominican's reputation as a leading national and international campus with a 5-year increase in out-of-state students to 20% including 8% in international enrollments.
- 1.5 Increase the undergraduate student graduation rates as follows: four year from 44% to 47%; six year, from 51% to 55%.
- 1.6 Expand off-campus enrollment by 25% in five years.

- 1.7 Limit growth of student body on the San Rafael campus to 2,400 students with a mix of two-thirds undergraduate and one-third graduate enrollment.
- 1.8 Achieve an undergraduate gender mix of 60% female 40% male.
- 1.9 Continue to develop the University's degree programs for non-traditional students increasing student enrollment by 100% within the next ten years.
- 1.10 Raise the percentage level of full-tuition freshmen to 20% of the entering class.
- 1.11 Flatten or lower the overall University discount rate from 30% to 25%.
- 1.12 Raise the level of undergraduate residence students from 35% to 50%.

## **2. STUDENT LIFE**

Dominican University is a campus rich in student-life programs that serve to enhance the co-curricular experience. At the same time a number of areas exist for improvement. A primary goal of the university should be to enhance the quality of student life through expanded co-curricular programming for the entire student body. Student Life should be expanded in the areas of varsity athletics, intramurals, career and internship services, events management, social events, club activities, interfaith services, community service, spiritual activities, and training programs.

- 2.1 Establish a baseline of student satisfaction and raise overall student satisfaction annually.
- 2.2 Increase student internships, community-based research and service-learning assignments by 50% over the next five years.
- 2.3 Develop and implement Graduate Admissions Agreements (GAA) with selective law, medical, and graduate schools.
- 2.4 Increase the number of students granted post-graduate scholarships and fellowships.

- 2.5 Increase co-curricular programming and University-wide co-curricular activities.
- 2.6 Revise the Campus Events Management Plan to increase the number and types of campus events in support of student life.
- 2.7 Develop a fitness/wellness program for all students.
- 2.8 Increase services provided in Career and Internship Services to assist all students in preparing for meaningful careers and lives.

### **3. ATHLETIC PROGRAMS**

Campus athletics have been enriched substantially in recent years with construction of the new Conlan Center. The primary goal of intercollegiate athletics at Dominican University of California is to develop the student-athlete as a total person. The Dominican athletics program distinguishes itself by valuing the student-athlete as a learner, citizen, and competitor. The University fields 10 competitive teams including basketball, soccer, golf, lacrosse, softball, volleyball, and women's tennis. Between 100 and 150 students participate annually in team competition sports at DU. While the University offers intramural programs, there is currently a shortage of qualified staff and resources to provide development and supervision for increased programs. The university needs to hire a full-time Athletic Director and Sports Information Director (SID) as it moves forward with its athletic programs.

- 3.1 Expand the current intramural programs.
- 3.2 Elevate the University athletic programs and facilities to meet requirements for admission to NCAA II.

### **4. CURRICULUM**

The University's core business is its academic life. Academic programs must be of the highest quality, distinctive, cost effective, meet market needs and prepare students to participate effectively in a global environment. The curriculum must continue to emphasize the learner-focused pedagogy, active service-based learning, community-based research and undergraduate research.

- 4.1 Annually increase financial support and student quality in signature undergraduate and graduate programs with an emphasis on business and leadership, communications, education, psychology, sciences, and health sciences.
- 4.2 Assess academic programs on a regular basis to assure that all DUC programs meet the prevailing national and international standards of the disciplines.
- 4.3 Limit new program development to programs that will provide new revenue streams, serve DUC's markets, and meet the prevailing national and international standards of the disciplines.
- 4.4 Restructure the School of Business, Education, and Leadership into the School of Business and Leadership and a School of Education within the next year with the goal of achieving Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation for the School of Business and Leadership within the next seven years.
- 4.5 Utilize marketing research data to direct the University's exploration of new signature program options.
- 4.6 Increase enrollment in adult education programs by 5% annually.
- 4.7 Continue strong emphasis on undergraduate research which sets Dominican apart from other undergraduate institutions.
- 4.8 Expand collaborative community partnerships, and external funding for faculty research and scholarly activities by 5% annually.
- 4.9 Increase the number of courses with international components with the goal of meeting the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE)-sponsored American Council of Education (ACE) Project, "Assessing International Learning," that defines the knowledge, skills and attitudes of globally competent students.
- 4.10 Maintain the level of support required to ensure that the liberal arts and general education programs support the student-learning outcomes of University academic programs.
- 4.11 Enhance information and data resources by funding acquisitions as well as by developing collaborative partnerships.

- 4.12 Develop a faculty-student community-based research program (CBR) that will serve the research and/or information needs of community organizations while raising the University's profile locally and nationally.
- 4.13 Continue to expand service-based learning and leadership opportunities by a minimum of an additional 25 placements per year.
- 4.14 Explore opportunities for doctoral program partnerships with appropriate doctoral-accredited universities.

## 5. FACULTY AND STAFF

It is imperative that the University maintains a favorable student/faculty ratio of 15 to 1 in support of its academic mission. It is also extremely important to maintain a professional staff that supports the University's efforts to serve its students.

- 5.1 Increase full-time faculty headcount from 26% to 50% of total faculty.
- 5.2 Affirm the importance of diversity to the University by ensuring that its processes and practices contribute to the creation of a University community that is balanced and inclusive.
- 5.3 Expand opportunities for faculty and staff development funding for academic programs, professional enrichment, and community involvement.
- 5.4 Increase financial, material, and technical support for faculty to incorporate information technology effectively in their teaching.
- 5.5 Increase institutional grants, collaborative community partnerships, and external funding of research and scholarly activities for faculty on an annual basis.
- 5.6 Support the recruitment of faculty and staff by implementing a faculty-staff hiring plan that includes incentives such as differential salaries, housing assistance, and endowed chairs.

- 5.7 Support working practices that will earn the University a place on the North Bay Business Journal's "Best Places to Work List."

## 6. IDENTITY AND BRANDING

It is important for Dominican University of California to develop an integrated marketing plan that will result in accurate perceptions of the University by the Marin community. University identity and branding need to be top priorities.

- 6.1 Conduct broad marketing research to establish a baseline of community perceptions of Dominican University of California identity.
- 6.2 Determine the key characteristics and strengths of Dominican University of California and incorporate these attributes into the University's brand and identity campaigns.
- 6.3 Portray Dominican University of California clearly.

## 7. CAMPUS BUILDINGS AND REAL ESTATE

The present campus is 80 acres with 19 buildings including resident rooms to accommodate 550 dormitory students. Although a new center for science and technology is under construction and will provide 325 new classroom seats, the University must address the overall quality and configuration of its classrooms, athletic facilities, and student life and service areas.

- 7.1 Current Master Plan
  - a. Complete the new Science and Technology Center in 2007.
  - b. Renovate Albertus Magnus and the third floor of Guzman Hall (where the current science labs exist).
  - c. Build an all-purpose synthetic athletic field with required parking.
  - d. Investigate purchasing any adjacent properties to the University.
  - e. Renovate the Edgehill mansion in a manner that preserves its historical status.
- 7.2 New Master Plan
  - a. Construct a new residence hall to accommodate 200 beds

- b. Analyze academic facility needs for major construction and/or restoration.
- 7.3 Complete a project that includes a chapel/spiritual center and a student center.
- 7.4 Align on-campus parking planning with the best practices of transportation demand management (TDM).
- 7.5 Establish a Campus Facilities Development Committee to review campus facility needs and develop a new master plan that addresses those needs and the future use of the 18-acres at the north end of the campus.

## **8. FINANCES AND INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT**

The university needs to diversify its revenue sources through increased gifts, grants, contracts, and community support. University annual operating expenses approximate \$30,000,000. The current endowment is approximately \$16,000,000, or 35% of one year's operating budget. Recent annual budgets have been set and accomplished to result in an annual surplus or a balance between income and expenses.

- 8.1 Conduct a comprehensive feasibility study to assist us in determining whether we can successfully complete a \$50,000,000 capital campaign for facilities, programs, scholarships, and the general endowment with one-half of funds raised allocated to the general endowment fund. Follow this with a second campaign tied in to the University's 125 anniversary year in 2015.
- 8.2 Broaden annual support from alumni from 20% to 35%.
- 8.3 Obtain funding for distinctive programs and endowed chairs from community businesses, organizations, foundations, and individuals.
- 8.4 Increase the level of giving and the role of giving of trustees in fund-raising activities.

- 8.5 Implement a tuition plan for the next five years that will support the academic mission and enhance the recruitment and retention of students with high academic ability.
- 8.6 Double the amount of revenue generated from auxiliary enterprises over five years through the creative use of the campus, its facilities and its programs.
- 8.7 Refine fiscal models on a continuous basis to ensure that the University operates with a budget that results in annual surpluses over the next ten years.
- 8.8 Increase institutional grants in support of faculty research and scholarly activities.

## 9. GOVERNANCE

A significant asset of Dominican University is its governance by independent citizens rather than government. It is important to continue this form of governance and to insure that new and continuing trustees are knowledgeable and well informed on matters that impact their institutional oversight responsibilities.

- 9.1 Recruit new trustees who are leaders of their groups and organizations and who are involved nationally and internationally, who will attend meetings regularly, and who will contribute significantly to the capital and endowment needs of the university.
- 9.2 Align the overall profile of the Board of Trustees to reflect more closely concurrent University programs, diversity, and development needs.
- 9.3 Orient new trustees to board responsibilities through annual updates to The Board of Trustees Handbook and an expanded orientation program to include person-to-person meetings with key administrators and a personal tour of all campus areas.
- 9.4 Increase on an annual basis the level of current trustee involvement in contributing both personal effort and funds to ongoing annual, endowment and capital campaign programs.

- 9.5 Appoint a SIP Oversight Committee, composed of a Chair and the Chairs of the four standing committees of the Board of Trustees, to periodically review the progress of the SIP.