



Strategic Plan 2015-2020



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The Lourdes University strategic plan for 2015 to 2020 flows from our Mission and must be focused on the success of our students.

Our Mission states:

Lourdes University, rooted in Catholic and Franciscan traditions, provides a values-centered education that enriches lives and advances academic excellence through the integration of the liberal arts and professional studies.

With higher education facing many external challenges as well as additional scrutiny by accrediting bodies and federal and state governments, Lourdes University has a heightened need for excellence in student achievement to become the central concern of the strategic plan. The goals for this strategic plan may seem modest, but it is necessary at this moment in the history of the University to focus on changing our peer group and on attaining results in the area of student success to position the University at the median of comparative schools.

The following five key metrics measuring student success must be central to everything done at Lourdes:

1. first to second year retention rate,
2. four and six year graduation rates,
3. average student debt at graduation,
4. student loan default rate, and
5. the rate at which graduates of Lourdes obtain a job in their field or go on to graduate school.

These metrics encompass the full cycle of student success. Students who are recruited must be academically and financially able to succeed. Lourdes must offer an excellent educational and co-curricular experience. Several foundational assumptions undergird this strategic focus:

- ▶ Residential higher education will remain a central feature of higher education as students and families want more out of the undergraduate experience than content and credentials.
- ▶ Specific segments of the higher education marketplace (i.e., residential direct from high school, graduate, online, undergraduate commuter, etc.) react differently to changing economic conditions; therefore, having a diversified portfolio of student types helps protect against major fluctuations that remain outside of the University's control.
- ▶ Academic reputation builds relatively slowly, and, therefore, it requires significant time to develop or to change.



Student Success



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- ▶ Athletic recruitment delivers immediate enrollment results since coaches have to fill a roster in order to compete.
- ▶ Recruiting students is an expensive step in the enrollment cycle, and retention is thereby essential to maintain a viable financial model for a university.
- ▶ The long-term (50-100 year) success of a university depends on its graduates giving back to their alma mater. For this to occur, graduates must succeed in their careers and believe that the education they received played a role in their success.
- ▶ Graduate and online education will continue to grow as a percentage of credit consumption in higher education.

The Key Goals

Goal #1

Heighten the awareness and understanding of Lourdes mission as a Franciscan University focused on academic excellence.

- Improve regional awareness of Lourdes as a residential option with excellent academic programs
- Enhance the understanding of the Franciscan charism among employees and students
- Demonstrate a strong commitment to our Catholic and Franciscan mission and values

Goal #2

Deliver an excellent education in and outside the classroom.

- Enhance academic programs and evaluate effectiveness
- Deliver academic programs in formats that address the needs of unique student populations
- Offer a vibrant student life experience for all students

Goal #3

Improve student outcomes in the classroom and in terms of retention, graduation and success after graduation.

- Improve persistence rates
- Improve four and six year graduation rates

Goal #4

Improve the financial strength of the University.

- Improve net revenue
- Complete the capital campaign
- Become an employer of choice

Goal #5

Clearly connect budgeting to the strategic plan and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic plan on a yearly basis.

- Review yearly the effectiveness of the strategic plan
- Review budgets in light of the strategic plan
- Create dashboards to enhance decision making



Student Success

