



Office of the Vice President for Mission

TO: The Gonzaga Community
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SUBJ: Moment for Mission
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Breaking down the Mission Statement – Exemplary Learning Community

Gonzaga is an exemplary learning community. There was much debate over this statement in the meetings of the University Mission Statement Committee. Does it sound too forward or presumptuous? What is the experience of our students, staff and faculty? Does our community view us as exemplary? How does Webster define exemplary? For us, learning is a two-way dialogue. Students learn from professor and one another and professors learn from students and one another.

After many hours of mulling and discussing we decided, yes, Gonzaga truly is an exemplary learning community. We are exemplary precisely because of our community. Visitors are often told about the sense of community that is so prevalent on campus but it is not until they actually encounter it that they truly understand what we mean. It can be likened to someone describing a delicious ice cream cone on a hot summer day but, once experienced, words fail to describe the delight.

We recently had a group on campus holding a workshop. In this workshop they presented a table with two columns, one column, “What **do** you want to tell about your community” and the other “What **don’t** you want to tell about your community.” Participants were given post it notes and asked to post on the board in both columns. When the posting was done, there was nothing in the “don’t” column and those hosting the workshop were astounded. Never had they been to a place in which no one put a single thing in the “don’t” column.

Gonzaga is that place. Because of each one of us, Gonzaga is not a place of “don’t,” rather it is a place of excellence, it is a model and an ideal of Jesuit education, and it is a home. And just like a home, we never leave it behind but carry it with us wherever our own exemplary lives lead.

Gonzaga University Mission Statement

Adopted: February, 2013

Gonzaga University is an exemplary learning community that educates students for lives of leadership and service for the common good.

In keeping with its Catholic, Jesuit, and humanistic heritage and identity, Gonzaga models and expects excellence in academic and professional pursuits and intentionally develops the whole person – intellectually, spiritually, physically, and emotionally.

Through engagement with knowledge, wisdom, and questions informed by classical and contemporary perspectives, Gonzaga cultivates in its students the capacities and dispositions for reflective and critical thought, lifelong learning, spiritual growth, ethical discernment, creativity, and innovation.

The Gonzaga experience fosters a mature commitment to dignity of the human person, social justice, diversity, intercultural competence, global engagement, solidarity with the poor and vulnerable, and care for the planet. Grateful to God, the Gonzaga community carries out this mission with responsible stewardship of our physical, financial, and human resources.