

Mercyhurst College Mission Statement

Vision Statement

Mercyhurst College seeks to be a leading higher educational institution that integrates excellence in the liberal arts, professional, and career-path programs, and service to regional and world communities.

Mission Statement

Consistent with its Catholic identity and Mercy heritage, Mercyhurst College educates women and men in a culture where faith and reason flourish together, where the beauty and power of the liberal arts combine with an appreciation for the dignity of work and a commitment to serving others. Confident in the strength of its student-faculty bonds, the College community is inspired by the image of students whose choices, in life and work, will enable them to realize the human and spiritual values embedded in everyday realities and to exercise leadership in service toward a just world.

Core Values

We are . . .

Socially merciful,

Mercy restores human dignity, liberates our social relations, and empowers us to reach out in compassion to others.

Globally responsible,

Globalization challenges us to learn how to steward the resources of the Earth wisely and to act in solidarity with its diverse peoples.

Compassionately hospitable,

Mercy hospitality begins with self-acceptance, welcomes peoples of different faith, ethnic, and cultural traditions, and thus builds communities that transcend mere tolerance.

Intellectually creative,

Generous, inquiring, and critical habits of mind encourage us in our lifelong search for what is true, good, and beautiful and support the aspirations for excellence manifested within the academic community.

Reflectively aware,

Our Christian environment encourages self-reflection and contemplation of human behavior, promotes balance of mind, body, and spirit, and ultimately offers the opportunity to develop a moral compass for authentic living.

Ambassadors of service.

An Affirmation of the Mercyhurst Mission

Approved by the board of trustees – Oct. 30, 2008

Preamble

The search for truth is a defining quality of Catholic higher education. Likewise, the freedom of inquiry and the free exchange of ideas are constitutive elements of the academic community. These freedoms are not absolute, however. At Mercyhurst, they must be viewed through the lens of the college's commitment to those principles and values inherent in its Catholic identity and Mercy heritage. The college therefore welcomes opportunities for our students to gain a greater understanding of complex ideas, issues, and values through public discourse; but as a private, value-based institution, the college reserves the right to limit advocacy of counter values.

The Mission Statement of Mercyhurst College shapes the responsibilities and rights afforded to all members of the Mercyhurst community. The college, founded in 1926, is a medium-sized liberal arts institution conducted in the Catholic and Mercy traditions. The college is committed to upholding its traditions and principles as articulated in its Mission Statement and Core Values. (2007)

The college's educational program strives to give students a foundation for clear thinking and expression. This goal responds to the charge outlined by the Second Vatican Council. "Students are challenged to pursue an education that combines excellence in humanistic and cultural development with specialized professional training. Most especially, they are challenged to continue to search for truth and for meaning throughout their lives, since the human spirit must be cultivated in such a way that there results a growth in its ability to wonder, to understand, to contemplate, to make personal judgments and to develop a religious, moral and social sense." (*Guadium et Spes* [Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World], no. 59); in Walter M. Abbott [ed.], *The Documents of Vatican II* (Herder and Herder, 1966, p. 265).

"By its very nature, a University develops culture through its research, helps to transmit the local culture to each succeeding generation through its teaching and assists cultural activities through its educational services. It is open to all human experiences and it is ready to dialogue and learn from any culture." (John Paul II, *Ex corde Ecclesiae* [On Catholic Universities], no. 43 USCC 1999). "Catholic universities will seek to discern and evaluate both the aspirations and the contradictions of modern culture in order to make it more suited to the total development of individual and peoples." (John Paul II, *Ex corde Ecclesiae*, no. 45).

Therefore, Mercyhurst College, in its commitment to achieve excellence with accountability, affirms the following:

1. The college will strive to ensure that each member of this community receives respect.
2. The college has the responsibility to educate members of this community about the beliefs and moral values that make us Catholic.
3. Mercyhurst College is committed to open dialogue about challenging issues. Further, it believes that this public dialogue enhances its commitment as a Catholic college and promotes the institution's dedication to learning.

4. The college welcomes diversity in cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds in its students, board of trustees, faculty, administration and staff.
5. The college will provide in-class and extra-curricular opportunities for discussion and debate.
6. The speakers or programs presented to the Mercyhurst College community must be sponsored by a recognized student organization or college department.

Guidelines Regarding Student Organizations and Activities

Companion piece to “An Affirmation of the Mercyhurst Mission”

For implementation by the administration of Mercyhurst College Nov. 1, 2008.

Mercyhurst College cultivates an atmosphere dedicated to teaching and learning. The college recognizes that these activities occur both inside and outside of the classroom. With that commitment it proposes the following **Guidelines for Student Organizations and Activities** to guide the activity and product of every organization at Mercyhurst College.

Together with the document titled **Affirmation of the Mercyhurst Mission**, these **Guidelines** will be annually disseminated by the Office of Student Life to all student clubs, groups and organizations at Mercyhurst College, as well as to faculty members, staff and administrators.

- The **Mission Statement**, **Core Values** and **Affirmation** represent who we are at Mercyhurst and how we respect our Catholic and Mercy mission and tradition. These three documents treasure the creative tension that is a necessary part of the college environment.
- All members of the college community are called to assess their activities using the standards established in the **Mission Statement**, **Core Values** and **Affirmation**. These documents serve as a guideline for the editorial policies, practices and processes of every organization on campus.
- If any organization has unresolved concerns about the application of any policy (e.g. *Student Handbook*, *RSCO Handbook*, *The Merciad*), its members are invited to take these issues to the **Review Board** for discussion and resolution.
- In the event that an organization bypasses the Review Board and then produces a publication or presentation in conflict with the Affirmation and these Guidelines, the actions of that organization may be subject to formal action by the Review Board, such as an official warning, probationary status, or in very serious offenses, decertification of the organization.

Review Board composition --Vice President for Mission Integration (Chair), Vice President for Student Life, College Chaplain, Director of Center for Student Engagement and Leadership Development, President of the Faculty Senate or designee, and President of Student Government or designee.