

MENU ▾

## Guiding Values and Strategic Priorities

The committee developed initial definitions for Guiding Values and Commitments and Strategic Priorities. These definitions were reviewed in a series of listening sessions and via a survey during fall 2020. Over 380 community members participated in one of 15 scheduled listening sessions, and over 75 members responded to the survey. The language for the values and priorities have been refined based on consensus feedback.

## Guiding Values and Commitments of the Strategic Plan

The Guiding Values and Commitments are the grounding qualities that guide and inform the creation and content of the strategic plan. They reflect USF's identity, values, and attributes that support USF's Vision, Mission, and institutional thriving. The Guiding Values and Commitments should serve as a lens for working groups to think through and then apply when developing and deciding on objectives. Strategic objectives should reflect a level congruence with these Guiding Values and Commitments.

### JESUIT IDENTITY

Distinctive Catholic, Jesuit tradition, principles, and values inform and guide our identity, decisions, and actions. Specifically, we:

- Lead with and accompany others in the creation of a more humane and just world [people for and with others].
- See the inherent dignity and holistic potential that exists in all people [Cura Personalis].
- Apply compassionate curiosity, mindful questioning, and suspended judgement with intent to better understand the experiences, perspectives, and needs of people and communities [Discernment].
- Respectfully acknowledge differences of perspective and preferences and seek common understanding and interests in order to cultivate collaboration and relationship building.
- Value courageous self-reflection, creativity, and innovation as qualities essential for excellence and transformational problem solving [Magis].
- Focus on the interconnection and interdependence within humankind and with the natural world [God in all things].
- Practice engaged citizenship and stewardship in service to the institution and its mission as an entity manifesting care for all people and greater good in the world [Cura Apostolica].

### DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Our community and the broader world are enriched by the inclusion of people of different abilities, ages, colors, creeds, cultures, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, family models, gender identities, gender expressions, health statuses, nationalities, political and religious views, spiritual and philosophical beliefs, socioeconomic statuses, educational backgrounds, and veteran statuses. Specifically, we:

- Believe our differences provide the broad perspectives and creativity needed for problem solving and innovation in academic and professional disciplines and the creation of a more humane and just world.
- Recognize and take actions to dismantle and combat policies, practices, and structures that create or perpetuate historical and present-day racism and

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#### OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Lone Mountain Building  
Rossi Wing, 4th Floor  
2130 Fulton St. San Francisco,  
CA 94117

 [\(415\) 422-6762](tel:(415)422-6762)

 [\(415\) 422-2303](tel:(415)422-2303)

inequities.

- Work toward mutual understanding, appreciation and belonging of all people.

## **GLOBALLY FOCUSED AND RESPONSIBLE**

We commit to the principles of sharing a world with all people, holding it in trust for future generations and fostering global perspectives and relationships. Specifically, we:

- Recognize and challenge the university's role and position in the world.
- Engage in ongoing mutual and respectful collaborations with international partners.
- Adopt environmentally just practices.
- Strengthen ethical decision-making.
- Educate students for global citizenship, equipped with the knowledge, skills, and self-awareness they need to succeed as persons for and with others.
- Recognize and support the global expertise of members of the USF community.
- Encourage the international engagement of our faculty, librarians, staff, students, and alumni.
- Support a robust offering of global educational experiences.
- Sustain active engagement in a broader global network of Jesuit Catholic institutions.

## **WITH AND IN COMMUNITY**

University of San Francisco students, faculty, librarians, staff, and alumni strive to be in community and connected with others. Through authentic community partnerships, we:

- Develop mutually enriching relationships that work toward more just and equitable communities and transformative learning.
- Contribute to the health, vitality, education, and economic strength of the community by responding to community-identified needs, in solidarity with the community.
- Are integral participants in the diverse, entrepreneurial, innovative city of San Francisco and the uniqueness of San Francisco becomes embodied in USF's community, enabling our students to take this community-informed San Francisco Bay Area experience with them wherever they may go.

## **RESILIENCE AND RESPONSIVENESS**

Our increasingly changing and uncertain world requires us to move quickly towards opportunities that enhance the university's resilience and responsiveness to challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. We strive to:

- Face adversity with nimble creativity and sustainable strategies to recover, adapt, and grow.
- Engage all stakeholders – both at the university and in the community – to expand flexibility and adaptability through continuous examination of our curriculum, infrastructure, finances, organization, and culture to determine preparedness.

- Use data and critical discernment to drive decision-making that is dynamic and adaptable in constantly evolving local and global environments.
- Re-imagine a 21st century higher education both in and outside the classroom, delivering the core skills needed in today's industry and tomorrow's enterprises while underscoring the importance of accompaniment, service, and advocacy at the heart of a Jesuit liberal arts education.

## Strategic Priorities

The Strategic Priorities are areas of focus identified as highly important to develop action plans for improvement or achievement in based on overlapping themes that emerged from recent evaluation and planning efforts (such as WSCUC reaffirmation, the Magis Project, Campus Climate Survey, and the USF 2028 planning document) and consideration of the current realities and environment USF is operating in. The descriptions of the Strategic Priorities reflect the Guiding Values and Commitments and articulate aspirational attributes for working groups to support in the strategic objectives they propose.

### ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

The Jesuit value of Magis calls us to strive for excellence, innovation, and pursuit of the greater good. In this striving we:

- Re-imagine, strengthen, and grow academic programs that propel students ability to think critically, ethically, and globally.
- Enable learners to develop and apply their values, knowledge and skills to address the world's challenges and opportunities with intention to create an equitable, just, and responsible world for all.
- Develop curricula that leverages USF's location, interdisciplinary breadth, Jesuit liberal arts core, and community and industry relationships.
- Invest in and promote dynamic, diverse, and innovative pedagogy, technology, teaching and learning practices, outstanding libraries.
- Embrace emerging interdisciplinary structures, content and delivery modalities to meet the evolving needs of students seeking to be lifelong learners.

### STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND SUCCESS

Students are a legacy of the university and essential to the realization of its mission and vision. A USF educational experience is co-created with students, resulting in their holistic development, wellbeing and academic success. A USF education must ensure:

- Curricular and co-curricular programs that propel students to fully integrate and apply their knowledge, values, and skills in the pursuit of personal and professional fulfillment, and the creation of a more humane and just world.
- An intensely personal education that is intellectually demanding and emphasizes creativity, critical analysis, academic excellence, achievement, and transformative experiences.
- An educational environment where all students feel a sense of belonging and ability to thrive as their whole selves.
- Pedagogy and experiences that deepen understanding and appreciation for diversity, and student motivation to lead in the effort to achieve racial justice

and the equity and inclusion of marginalized identities and groups within the university community and the broader world.

- Underrepresented, first generation, and students from marginalized groups who outperform their predicted graduation rates and post-college expectations as professionals, leaders, social change agents, and creators.

## **FACULTY, LIBRARIANS, AND STAFF EXPERIENCE AND SUCCESS**

We cultivate a culture that inspires confidence and satisfaction in work through investment in scholarly and professional development, pathways for career advancement, and resources for cutting-edge research and production of knowledge. Specifically, we:

- Offer paths of career advancement opportunities, tools for skill development, and resources for cutting-edge research and production of knowledge.
- Promote and develop shared governance structures to ensure effective communication and inclusive faculty, librarian, and staff input in decision-making.
- Create and maintain a workplace and university culture where all people can contribute to and feel a sense of belonging and the ability to thrive within a climate free of exclusionary, intimidating, offensive, and hostile conduct.
- Support, promote, and celebrate research, artistic and scholarly excellence and work-place skill development and acquisition of knowledge through interdisciplinary and community connections, innovative approaches, social impact, and active dissemination.
- Uphold diversity, equity, and inclusion within the faculty, librarians, and staff through commitment to hiring and promotion practices aimed at offsetting inequities of opportunity for those from historically underrepresented groups.

## **EXTENDING OUR OUTREACH AND ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY**

Our relationships and engagement with local, national, and global communities and our alumni who come from and live within them, amplifies our ability to lead as a socially engaged Jesuit Catholic university with global perspective, working with and in communities to create an equitable, just, and sustainable world for all people. In this effort we:

- Invite and accept opportunities to create and maintain new and existing community partnerships aimed at mutually beneficial collaboration on social, educational, economic, and environmental innovation and problem solving that values all people and includes those who are most vulnerable, marginalized, and underserved.
- Build and steward lifelong relationships with our alumni and provide opportunities to deepen their connections with the university.
- Accompany our alumni as they continue their journey in pursuit of knowledge, personal growth and the living of our mission.
- Encourage and facilitate active involvement of our alumni in mentoring students, advocacy within their own networks and communities, and meaningful philanthropic partnerships to strengthen USF and support its priorities.

## INTEGRATED & UNDERLYING AREAS

The Integrated and Underlying areas are essential and intertwined with each of the confirmed strategic priorities. Attention to these areas is necessary for the integrity and viability of the action plans that emerge from the strategic planning process. They also reflect the Guiding Values and Commitments and characteristics for strengthening a healthy and vibrant community moving forward.

### CULTURE OF TRANSPARENCY AND COMMUNICATION

We support a culture of trust and optimal exchange of ideas through transparency and community-wide participation and input. Through our collective responsibility, we:

- Invite free and open discussion on challenging issues and opportunities.
- Acknowledge and respond to faculty, librarian, staff, and student perspectives and preferences.
- Maintain humility and ability to change our minds and admit mistakes.
- Create structures to ensure shared and inclusive governance for the good of the university.

### SUSTAINED INSTITUTIONAL FINANCIAL HEALTH

To ensure the university is positioned to realize its mission now and into the future, financially sustainable operations are essential. To that end, we:

- Continue to identify, create, and support new academic programs as well as professional certificates to grow diverse and responsive revenue streams.
- Manage expenses to align with revenues through realistic enrollment projections, budgets, and prudent spending policies and practices.
- Fund adequate contingency reserves to address unexpected expenses and maintain an operating surplus.
- Invest in new resources as well as redirect existing ones in support of priorities and emerging opportunities.
- Commit to providing transparent, ongoing, and regular outreach to university stakeholders regarding the university's financial status.
- Invite ongoing review of the university's budgets, and solicit and consider feedback from its stakeholders.
- Adapt to changing trends in developing a 21st century business model of higher education.

### PHYSICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

We design, build and upgrade university facilities to support and be responsive to the changing needs of our teaching, residential, and work environments. We:

- Ensure our physical assets are optimally maintained during their life cycle and exceed governmental safety requirements and standards.
- Review and recommend capital projects and resources that serve the university's mission, align with its master plan, and are financially sustainable.
- Utilize technology to extend USF's reach, enrich various learning environments, enhance student engagement as well as support institutional operations and decision-making.

- Employ advancements in instructional technology to improve the quality of education in the classroom by providing a mix of in-person, online, hybrid, and remote educational modalities to interconnect with our contemporary world.
- Educate and develop faculty and staff engaged in technology enhanced instruction and support of students.
- Make upgrades to increase the accessibility of our infrastructure.