



1.2 Mission Statement and Core Values

Mission Statement

We are a contemporary Catholic university, grounded in the liberal arts and anchored along an international border, advancing academic excellence to create a more inclusive, sustainable and hopeful world.

Vision

Strengthened by the Catholic intellectual tradition, we confront humanity's challenges by fostering peace, working for justice and leading with love.

Core Values

We embody this vision and mission through the following six values.

- **Academic Excellence**

Recognizing free inquiry and academic freedom as fundamental to the Catholic intellectual tradition, we pursue excellence in teaching, research and creative expression, at the service of local, national and international communities. We value the complexity of the human mind and strive to optimize the intellectual potential of every learner. Our students receive a holistic education which promotes democratic, global citizenship as well as ethical leadership, and — through beauty, goodness, and truth — awakens in each a desire to transform the world.

- **Catholic Identity**

As a Catholic university, we offer a values-based education attentive to the full flourishing of all members of our community. We cherish our Roman Catholic heritage and the institutions which founded USD, the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Diocese of San Diego. Inspired by the Second Vatican Council, we foster faith, engage the world with hope, promote ecumenical and interfaith community, and work in solidarity to create justice and peace.

- **Human Dignity**

We believe that a diversity of people, ideas, beliefs, languages, approaches to learning, and other forms of difference, are essential for education. We affirm the dignity of every person and strive to create a culture of respect and inclusivity. This conviction grounds our efforts to ensure that all members of our university community are able to thrive in every dimension of their lives.

- **Care For Our Common Home**

The message of Laudato Si' frames our care for creation. We acknowledge our location on Kumeyaay land and we embrace our singular placement on the San Diego-Tijuana border, a uniquely diverse — both culturally and biologically — environment. As an anchor institution, we build reciprocal partnerships with our Indigenous, local, national and global partners and we integrate environmentally, economically and socially responsible practices.

- **Ethical Conduct and Compassionate Service**

We value the study of ethics as a distinguishing characteristic of a Catholic university; engage with the imminent social issues of our time in order to enhance the common good; and educate leaders able to discern and commit to pathways that elevate fairness and equity. Convinced of the need for reflection to steady us, we serve with compassion, ever conscious of others' contexts and assets. We seek to grow in wisdom as we work to create a more inclusive, sustainable, and hopeful world.

- **Inspired and Meaningful Lives**

We are committed to preparing our students to lead inspired and meaningful lives. We work closely with students — in the classroom and beyond — to expand their capacity to think critically, solve complex problems, use data and technology responsibly, and express informed insights with courage and conviction. Our graduates are equipped with the preparation necessary to be innovative Changemakers, to achieve professional success, and contribute to their communities.

(Approved by the Board of Trustees on May 5, 2023.)