



# University of San Diego

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# Overview

The purpose of this booklet is to inform faculty, administrators, and staff of the history, the intellectual background, and the religious origins of the University of San Diego. Understanding the University entails knowledge of its history and traditions, its mission and goals, and the spirit which animates and directs its deliberations and aspirations. Insight endeavors to help the reader to understand and to appreciate the University of San Diego's distinctive identity and mission in higher education.



The University of San Diego is a young institution. It was founded in 1949 when Most Reverend Charles Francis Buddy, the first Bishop of San Diego, and Reverend Mother Rosalie Hill, Religious of the Sacred Heart, obtained charters from the State of California for San Diego University and San Diego College for Women respectively. Since classes began in 1952, the institution has consciously fashioned for itself an image both intellectually challenging for its educational mission and aesthetically attractive.

The physical beauty of the University of San Diego campus, known as Alcalá Park, reaches beyond the "eye of the beholder." Mother Hill, founder of the San Diego College for Women, believed in the enhancement of learning through beauty and harmony. Hence, for the University, beauty is a transcendental quality imparted to students as part of their education to truth and goodness—a simple but profound educational philosophy. The University's site on a prominent mesa in the center of the nation's sixth largest city blends graceful architecture, at once stylistically and historically unified in its appearance, with stunning views of the ocean and bay and of the rugged canyons that drop away from the mesa.

Those who are fortunate to study, work, and live amidst the beauty of the campus seek to understand the University's mind and heart. A Carnegie study has noted that those universities which have a welldefined and broadly implemented sense of their own identity will survive and thrive. The distinctive character and educational objectives which flow from USD's identity should be widely understood and shared by members of the University community.

## ISTORY AND HERITAGE of the University of San Diego

The University and its patron, San Diego de Alcalá, trace their origins to fifteenth century Spain. Diego, born in the Province of Seville circa 1400, became a Franciscan brother and served as a missionary in the Canary Islands. He later was infirmarian at the Franciscan Monastery at Alcalá de Henares near Madrid where he died in 1463. The University of Alcalá, founded by Cardinal Cisneros in 1499, opened for teaching in 1508. Its Spanish Renaissance architecture and general setting inspired the design of the University of San Diego.

The Catholic university which, like our city, is named for San Diego de Alcalá, was founded in 1949 by Most Reverend Charles Francis Buddy, D.D., who was also the founding Bishop of the Diocese of San Diego. In establishing the University, he invited the Society of the Sacred Heart under the leadership of Reverend Mother Rosalie Hill, R.S.C.J. to found the San Diego College for Women. St. Madeleine Sophie Barat founded the Society of the Sacred Heart in France in 1800. It was brought to America by St. Philippine Duchesne in 1818. Today it has schools and colleges in Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, and the two Americas. The San Diego College for Women began classes in February, 1952.

The College for Men and the School of Law, the first professional division of the University, both began classes in 1954. Originally sponsored by the Diocese of San Diego, USD became the twelfth diocesan institution of higher education in the United States. It soon became clear that distinct educational advantages would accrue to students if the curricula of these institutions were shared. In July, 1972, the two colleges and the School of Law merged, forming a single, co-educational Catholic university. The governance of the University was transferred from the Diocese to an independent Board of Trustees.

In 1994, USD was reclassified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as a "Doctoral University II" institution. This reclassification recognized the strides the University had made in graduate studies and research. In addition, USD became the center of national attention on October 16, 1996, when it hosted the United States Presidential Debate.

Today the University of San Diego includes the College of Arts and Sciences, School of Business Administration, School of Education, School of Law, and Hahn School of Nursing and Health Science. Contiguous to the campus is St. Francis Seminary for undergraduate men aspiring to the Roman Catholic priesthood, who take their academic work at the University.

The young men and women who share the life of the University of San Diego and contribute to its growth are a multi-talented group who have many options in their life's choices. Students have chosen USD for various reasons: they would like to acquire the power to think clearly and independently, to form sound and discriminating judgments, to satisfy a developing intellectual curiosity, and to accept as their own the values of authentic freedom, openness to change, and responsibility to serve the society in which they live. They attend a Catholic university, and many of them are Catholics who share certain commitments and wish to explore vital religious questions in a free, yet informed way. But a high percentage of faculty, staff, and students of other faiths insures the presentation of a diversity of views, so characteristic of the pluralistic American society.

A friendly campus atmosphere, rigorous intellectual challenges and opportunity for stimulating intellectual exchange between professors and students, class sizes which facilitate personal attention and instructor accessibility, concern for broad professional and personal development of students and employees, emphasis on the role of values and ethics in academic and non-academic programs - such are the elements creating the educational environment at the University of San Diego.

As it completes the first quarter century in its present configuration, the young University of San Diego is poised to foster its goals and objectives as expressed in its strategic long-range plan.

## ISSION AND GOALS of the University of San Diego

#### MISSION STATEMENT

The University of San Diego is a community of scholars committed to the pursuit of truth, academic excellence, and advancement of knowledge in liberal arts and professional programs. Independent and comprehensive, the University of San Diego is dedicated to providing a value-based education to all students in its College and Schools.

A Roman Catholic institution, the University is committed to belief in God, to the recognition of the dignity of each individual, and to the development of an active faith community. It is Catholic because it witnesses to and probes the Christian message as proclaimed by the Catholic Church.

The University welcomes and respects those whose lives are formed by different traditions, recognizing their important contributions to our pluralistic society and to an atmosphere of open discussion essential to liberal education. As a community the University is committed to collegiality, shared decision-making and academic freedom.

Education at the University is holistic, offering opportunities for intellectual, physical, spiritual, emotional, social, and cultural development. Students are challenged to develop knowledge, values, and skills to enrich their lives and to prepare them for careers which will provide service to their global, civic, and faith communities.

#### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO

The goals of the University of San Diego express the values which flow from the mission statement, while the objectives, expressed here in summary form, delineate how those goals will be implemented during the time period of the current strategic plan.

#### ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Academic excellence is an integral part of the liberal arts tradition. The University commits itself to excellence in all its academic and professional pursuits. Its primary goal is to achieve a level of academic excellence in teaching



and scholarship that, both in fact and in reputation, rivals the best comprehensive universities.

The University will strive to develop the human, environmental, programmatic, evaluative, supporting, and financial resources that are necessary to achieve excellence as an institution of higher education whose primary mission is teaching and encouraging research and scholarship supportive of the teaching/learning environment.

*Objectives:* In general, the means to achieve the goal of academic excellence include scholarly environment, provision of funding, recruitment/retention of highly qualified students, development of university personnel, expansion of library/media and computing

services, encouragement of student/faculty interaction, focus on international and multicultural perspectives, and assessment of outcomes.

#### VALUES

The University will continue to emphasize its commitment to the values that characterize the best in American higher education including Roman Catholic higher education. These values include academic integrity, academic freedom, the rigorous quest for understanding and truth, justice, prudence, temperance, fortitude, and compassion. The University's commitment to these values will permeate not only its undergraduate, graduate, and professional academic programs, but all of its programs, activities, and relationships.

*Objectives:* In general, the means to achieve the values goal include dissemination and celebration on campus of the values of the Judaeo-

Christian tradition, promotion of academic freedom and academic integrity, and enhancement of the study and practice of moral/ethical values through instruction, non-instructional ways, and faculty/student research.

#### INDIVIDUAL DIGNITY

The University will continue to promote and implement the principles that are associated with the dignity of the individual human being: individual responsibility; respect for each individual; sensitivity to the value of individual differences; and commitment to the view that a community is enriched by the diversity of viewpoints brought by individuals from a wide variety of cultural, ethnic, religious, and racial background.

*Objectives:* In general, the means to achieve the goal of individual dignity focuses on specific ways to foster an environment which supports and enhances the value and dignity of the individual through education and training programs, accountability, and assessment of outcomes.

#### Holism

Education at the University of San Diego addresses the fullest development of the person, intellectually, physically, spiritually, emotionally, socially, and culturally. The University will promote this goal by providing reasonable opportunities, suitable facilities, and appropriate support services for the holistic growth of all its students, faculty, and staff.

*Objectives*: In general, the means to achieve the goal of holism include provision of opportunities for student involvement with on- and off-campus programs which promote exchange of ideas; reflection on personal growth and collaborative initiatives; opportunities for demonstration of student achievement; and continued conservation of USD's aesthetically pleasing and well maintained campus.

#### CATHOLICITY

The University is committed to its Catholic identity as intended by its founders and mandated by its corporate declaration and the Board of Trustees. It will communicate this identity, and the activities this identity inspires, to its various constituencies. It will continue to support an active Catholic faith community on campus through its university ministry program.

The University believes its commitment to the Roman Catholic tradition in American higher education is not only consistent with, but also supports, the other goals it has set for its foreseeable future and the spirit of ecumenism and tolerance of other religious beliefs those goals imply.

*Objectives:* In general, the means to achieve the goal of Catholicity include academic programs examining the Judaeo-Christian and other religious traditions, recruitment/retention of Roman Catholic students, appointment of employees supportive of the University as Catholic, continuation of the architectural expression of the Catholic tradition, and involvement of alumni, parents, and community in the institution's Catholic mission.

## HE UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO as a Catholic institution

### THE CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL TRADITION

The active presence of an intellectual life is central to the identity of a Roman Catholic institution of higher education. Roman Catholics trace their lineage to those movements in Christian history that understand reason as compatible with faith. A basic challenge to which Roman Catholics have traditionally applied themselves is to use the methods of reason to understand truths about nature and human existence inasmuch as these also witness the Divine origins of all history. A distinctive feature of the Roman Catholic intellectual tradition is thus the broad consensus, even if not unanimity, which can be discerned in most periods and places of Church life that knowledge through reason and knowledge through faith are equally valid and ultimately compatible, even if not identical.

A vigorous intellectual life was implicit in Christianity's very beginning. In the early centuries of Christianity, Christian writings, like the Gospel of Matthew and the Letters of Paul, worked to justify Christianity within the Jewish scholarly tradition. Later writers, starting with Justin Martyr, interpreted Christianity as in agreement with the major philosophies of the day, especially Platonism. In both these attempts, there was an implicit confidence that, to use the phrase of St. Augustine, "The truth is yours, O God, wherever it is found."

The Church's intellectual life has usually been carried out within the human institutions of a particular time and place, and most often these institutions have been the means of education in a society. Monasteries, cathedral schools, universities, and single-purpose institutes have all been loci of the Roman Catholic intellectual tradition. The emergence of the monastery in the early Middle Ages not only provided a focus for the Church's intellectual life, but ensured the continuation of the processes of western civilization itself.

In the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, Roman Catholic scholars invented universities to pursue all types of learning, not least that of science. They not only used the best of classical Greek tradition, but consulted with appreciation Islamic and Jewish scholars. Since these scholars assumed that God is Truth, they felt that there should be no fear nor hesitation in raising honest questions and in searching out truth in all areas and from all sources. The tradition has always welcomed and been enriched by the contributions of other faiths, other philosophies, and other ways of living.

One result of the medieval university heritage was the development of an intellectual tradition of theology in dialogue with, but independent of, the leadership of the Church. Since that time, the Roman Catholic intellectual tradition has not only tolerated, but even welcomed the creative tensions that exist between the leadership of the bishops and Pope and the scholarly investigations of the theologians. Doubtless, these creative tensions have been received with more or less approval by different groups at different times within Catholicism. Serious dialogue is a risky business, and the Church's intellectual life has been carried out in the public forum. But an optimistic pursuit of truth in all areas has remained characteristic of the Roman Catholic intellectual tradition. This tradition has never been monolithic. There has never been a single school of thought within Christianity, not even in the earliest Church. Different ideas and emphases are discernible in the various



communities whose stories are traced in the New Testament. Rival currents of thought have often been in conflict with each other and with Church authority. In short, intellectual diversity is part of the tradition of Roman Catholic thought.

The contemporary Roman Catholic university sees itself as heir to this tradition. Open to free inquiry, enriched by the contributions of all religions and by the significant thought of the culture in which it exists, the modern Catholic university welcomes Catholic scholars and scholars of other traditions, all of whom are essential to the purpose of a Roman Catholic university.

To summarize, certain characteristics are typically displayed where the Church's intellectual life is vibrant:

~ the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian Scriptures are studied carefully in an attempt to explain the themes of the Bible in a contemporary idiom;

~ philosophy and philosophical thinking are embraced, examined, and advanced, since disciplined and systematic thought can help discern significant truths about reality and human existence; ~ established philosophical methodologies are accepted and utilized, for example, elements of Classical Greek thought in early and later medieval times, or Cartesian and Enlightenment canons of reason in modern times;

~ return to primary sources of Catholic intellectual history is continual through reexamination of classical texts, including the works of the fathers and doctors of the Church;

~ there is affirmation of no unbridgeable dichotomy between facts and values, or between the description of reality and the moral life, because the tradition views epistemology and ethics as necessarily interrelated and intertwined;

~ symbolic modes of representation and mysticism are taken seriously because non-literal images provide us with alternative ways of knowing, and mysticism teaches that reality cannot be encompassed entirely by "ordinary" consciousness;

~ faith and culture are discerned to be inextricably linked, necessitating a dialogue between faith and human experience, and calling for care of the poor and the suffering;

multiple expressions of spirituality, human experience, and created existence in literature and the fine arts are engendered;
a deep sense of history is fundamental inasmuch as Christianity, like Judaism, is inherently an historical religion which embraces as fundamental the belief that God has entered into history;
a broad respect for languages is characteristic since preaching the Gospel to the nations implies speaking to people in their own tongues;

 $\sim$  a universal, global vision of human culture is fostered and advanced in a context that emphasizes toleration, knowledge, wisdom, and engagement.

## HE CATHOLIC CHURCH and the University

The modern university as we know it today sprang from the heart and the mind of the Roman Catholic Church in medieval Europe. Universities were first developed in Italy at Bologna and Padua, in Spain at Salamanca and Alcalá, in France at Paris, in England at Oxford. Many of those founded prior to the Protestant Reformation later broke with Roman Catholicism. One of the few medieval institutions to continue to the present day, the university is adaptable to new cultures and places. Though it began as a medieval Catholic European phenomenon, it has been successfully established on every continent and has been influenced by the significant thought of the eras since its inception.

In the New World, the first institutions of higher learning in the thirteen colonies were Protestant, beginning with Harvard College in 1636. But Catholic universities have a history coterminous with the nation itself; in 1789, the first Bishop in the new United States, John Carroll, founded Georgetown College on the banks of the Potomac at a time when Catholics

numbered scarcely one percent of the population. The venture spread to the midwest, with St. Louis College, Notre Dame, St. Mary's College, and the College of St. Thomas, among others, established during the nineteenth century. The first private institution chartered in California was Santa Clara College in 1851. Thus, throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Catholic universities and colleges of all kinds and sizes multiplied throughout the country, most of them founded by religious congregations of men or women, some by dioceses, and a few by lay Catholics. The University of San Diego is unique in that it was co-founded as separate institutions by a diocese and a religious congregation, and merged in 1972 as a partnership between the diocese and the religious congregation. Nationally, there were in 1964 about 295 Catholic colleges and universities, enrolling approximately 570,000 students. Thirty years later, while the number of Catholic institutions

of higher education has declined, the number of students has increased to nearly 700,000 in about 230 such institutions today.

USD remains openly and proudly Catholic and has from its inception welcomed students of every faith. Nonetheless, the expression of its Catholic commitment has changed since the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Vatican II fostered a bold move toward ecumenism within Roman Catholicism; since then, Catholic universities have more fully extended their services to people of different faiths, welcoming them to Catholic campuses. At USD, members of the campus community



mutually share their differing faiths, both intellectually and spiritually, to the enrichment of all. Catholic students and students of other faiths experience their faith in a religiously diverse environment. It is USD's belief that a person's faith intensifies and deepens when enriched by understanding of other religious traditions.

This view has recently been supported by Church pronouncements. In the fall of 1990, Pope John Paul II, after a long period of worldwide consultation, issued *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (From the Heart of the Church), the Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities. In *Ex Corde* the university is recognized as "an incomparable center of creativity and dissemination of knowledge for the good of humanity." The Catholic university, as a university, is an academic community which, in a rigorous and critical fashion, assists in the protection and advancement of human dignity and of a cultural heritage through research, teaching, and various services offered to the local, national, and international communities. It possesses that institutional autonomy necessary to perform its functions effectively and guarantees its members academic freedom, so long as the rights of the individual person and of the community are preserved within the confines of the truth and the common good.

*Ex Corde* then summarizes the role of a Catholic university: "...being both a university and Catholic, it must be both a community of scholars representing various branches of human knowledge and an academic institution in which Catholicism is vitally present and operative."

It is clear in the Apostolic Constitution that the university's identity as Catholic has decisive implications for its academic and community environment. The institution's goals are to be pursued through the formation of an authentic human community whose unity springs from its dedication to the truth, its common vision of the dignity of the human person, and its institutional witness to Christ and His message. Its research efforts, in addition to assisting men and women in the pursuit of truth, ideally include the search for integration of knowledge and the fostering of dialogue between faith and reason. Because knowledge is meant to serve the human person, the moral and ethical implications of each branch of study are to be examined and taught in order to contribute to the student's total development. Students are challenged to pursue an education that combines academic excellence with growth—in the capacity to ask questions; to understand; to make personal judgments; to develop a religious, moral and social sense; and to promote social justice.

#### CORPORATE STRUCTURE

The 1972 merger of the diocesan-sponsored University of San Diego and the Society of the Sacred Heart-sponsored San Diego College for Women brought major changes in the corporate relationships of the University of San Diego. The University remains Catholic by charter, but it is responsible only to its own Board of Trustees, an ecumenical group of about 40 men and women. The founding entities, the Diocese of San Diego and the Society of the Sacred Heart, participate through personnel on faculty, administration, and Board levels according to their academic or managerial qualifications, but the vast majority of University employees are lay women and men who come from various religious traditions.

#### ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Many years ago, the University of San Diego endorsed the statement on Academic Freedom set forth in the *1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* co-authored by the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American Colleges. In its *Policy and Procedure Manual*, USD's discussion of academic freedom makes it clear that academic freedom is essential to teaching and to the pursuit of scholarly activities within an academic community.

Such freedom requires free inquiry, free expression, intellectual honesty, respect for the academic rights of others, and openness to change. The rights and responsibilities exercised within the academic community must be compatible with these requirements. All members of the faculty, in common with all others within the academic community, share the responsibility for maintaining a professional atmosphere in which violations of academic freedom and responsibility are unlikely to occur.

Academic freedom requires that the governance of a Catholic university remain autonomous so that the institution may function effectively. As part of this fundamental commitment to academic freedom there is a responsibility to recognize that the University of San Diego is a Catholic university committed therefore to Catholic principles and values. This places no obligation on faculty, administration, or staff members with regard to their personal beliefs or religious practices, nor does it prevent the statement of personal views which may differ from those held by the Catholic Church. All are, however, in their capacity as University employees, expected to respect Catholicism, just as the University respects the religious traditions, the freedom of conscience, and the religious liberty of each member of its academic community.

#### CONCLUSION

As is true of most Catholic colleges and universities in the United States, the University of San Diego campus community includes many administrators, faculty, and staff from varied religious traditions. Catholics and non-Catholics alike have made, and continue to make, significant and valuable contributions to fostering the identity and mission of the University. Those members of the academic community whose traditions are rooted in the Book of Mormon, Qur'an, New Testament and/or the Hebrew Scriptures, find areas of emphasis which are familiar to them and with which they agree. Moreover, those who profess other religions or no particular faith also have found areas of agreement. Experience has shown that in a Catholic university people can share educational ideals and values without necessarily sharing religious beliefs. What the University of San Diego seeks in faculty, administrators, and staff who form its academic community is that all bear the professional responsibility to recognize and respect its Catholic identity, and to understand and foster its mission and goals.



Thanks are given to Dr. Gary Macy and Dr. Michael Wagner for their contribution to the section on "The Catholic Intellectual Tradition;"

University Librarian Edward Starkey for his research on "The Catholic Intellectual Tradition;"

Dr. Larry Williamson and his faculty colleagues for review and advice; and

to the late Monsignor I. Brent Eagan, former Vice President for Mission and Ministry, and Sister Sally Furay, former Vice President and Provost, for overall direction of the brochure.

Second Edition, 11/99





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