

Mission Explication

Drake's mission¹ is to provide an exceptional² learning environment³ that prepares students⁴ for meaningful personal lives⁵, professional accomplishments⁶, and responsible global citizenship⁷. The Drake experience is distinguished by collaborative learning among students, faculty, and staff⁸ and the integration of the liberal arts and sciences with professional preparation⁹.

¹ In setting forth this mission statement, we affirm that the principles, aspirations, and promises inherent in it guide every facet of the University's operation, from high-level administrative decision-making and implementation to the day-to-day project of teaching, learning, and advancing scholarship and creative activity among members of our community.

² We aspire beyond relevance and effectiveness, promising excellence in everything we do. We strive to be, and be known as a model of distinction among colleges and universities, both nationally and internationally.

³ Learning is pervasive at Drake. It takes place in classrooms and libraries, living and dining spaces, athletics facilities and locker rooms, offices and service centers. But it also occurs during international travel seminars, fieldwork, internships, volunteer engagement, and technologically mediated interactions. The learning environment comprises both curricular and co-curricular experiences and is sustained by the expertise and dedication of our faculty and staff.

⁴ Our learners come to us from many walks of life with a diversity of backgrounds and ways of knowing. We commit ourselves to fostering in them a deep understanding of their individual identities in relationship to the diversity of human knowledge and experience, not only within their disciplines and professions, but as whole persons. This commitment extends to every member of the communities of which we are a part, including faculty, staff, alumni, and the public at large. In making this commitment, we acknowledge the importance of creating and sustaining welcoming and accessible curricula, co-curricula, and programming of all kinds and to nurturing an inclusive community spirit undergirded by our core principles and values: respect for difference, freedom of expression, and the inherent dignity of each individual.

⁵ We dedicate ourselves to ongoing self-understanding and to fostering it in our students by equipping them with the capacity for reflective, honest, and critical self-examination and discovery. At every stage and aspect of life, we strive to connect our actions to our deepest values, beliefs, and aspirations and to be our best selves in every circumstance. By living with integrity and self-awareness, we reaffirm our values and our value to ourselves and to those whose lives we touch.

⁶ Our graduates thrive in their chosen fields of endeavor beyond graduation, having acquired and honed the skills, knowledges, and habits of mind to meet the challenges and demands of a globalized world. But, more than that, Drake graduates distinguish themselves among their professional colleagues as models of responsible, ethical and collaborative leadership, and are known for their commitment to the greater good, no matter what their vocation.

⁷ We all see ourselves as citizens of the world, and we foster in our students an active awareness of their relationship to the many communities of which they are a part, including the local, regional, national, and international. Our students take seriously their responsibility to advance the causes of justice, prosperity, and peace and take every opportunity to do so. Not only do they graduate with an awareness of the global issues and questions of the day, but, as lifelong learners, our alumni, along with our faculty and staff, continue to inform themselves of developments that affect their local, regional, and international communities.

⁸ We believe that the pursuit of knowledge and understanding is a shared endeavor, and that every individual success is the manifestation of the support, encouragement, wisdom, and expertise of many. We commit ourselves to fostering a sense of inclusive community and mutual responsibility, recognizing that every one of us shares in the twin endeavor of teaching and learning.

⁹ We affirm the importance of the liberal arts and sciences as the basis for fully informed and engaged citizenship and individual self-understanding and development, and we strive to integrate the capacity for profound self-understanding and cultural literacy into the professional competencies our curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities foster. Our students understand the relationship of their chosen professions to larger social, cultural, political, economic, scientific, philosophical, and moral questions, and they strive to put that understanding into action as they pursue their vocations.