

North Park University Multicultural Vision Statement

North Park University is a distinctively Christian, intentionally urban and purposefully multicultural Institution. Consistent with the preamble to the constitution of the Evangelical Covenant Church, the sponsoring denomination, the university is committed to reaching across boundaries of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, age and status in the cultivation of communities of life and service. This commitment will permeate every aspect of North Park University, including the leadership, faculty, student experiences, curriculum and co-curricular activities, and ministries.

A key distinctive of the university is its location in one of the most diverse neighborhoods in a world-class multicultural city - Chicago. The university affirms its commitment to transformative education through the inclusive excellence of its Christian heritage, intercultural integration and urban partnerships. Our expectation is that North Park University will be the premier model for intercultural competency and urban engagement among faith-based small and medium size institutions.

◆ Leadership

The leadership of the university (Board of Trustees, administrators, faculty, staff and students) will reflect the diversity characteristic of the Kingdom of God. Each leader celebrating the richness of these cultural differences will serve as the diversity advocate for the University generally and for his/her area of supervision specifically.

◆ Faculty and Staff

To ensure the development of an inter-culturally competent community, faculty and staff will cultivate transformative skills that assist students in developing lives of significance and service. The University therefore commits itself to recruiting intentionally and supporting a diverse faculty and staff of women and men. Faculty and staff will model a commitment to diversity and respect for the dignity of individuals.

◆ Students and Student Life

Students will receive guidance and support in developing intercultural competency through curricular and co-curricular learning. This model of community competence and urban engagement will be rooted in a Biblical understanding of the Kingdom of God. The engagement in community will take place through both formal academic and intentional experiential learning activities. Special attention will be given to first year and general education curricula to insure sufficient orientation to the university's urban intercultural context. However, the University's commitment to a multicultural vision will be evident in all curricula – undergraduate, graduate, and seminarian. Faculty and administrators will be intentional in recruiting a diverse student body—residential and commuter, graduate, undergraduate and seminarian—into the life of the community so that we all will benefit from the rich tapestry of cultural diversity present at North Park University.

◆ Curriculum

The core of the North Park educational experience is the intellectual engagement that takes place in the formal classroom setting. Each School, division and department will be able to demonstrate its commitment to the core identity of the university reflected in departmental mission statements and syllabi learning objectives. It is our vision that faculty will integrate the views, voices, and experiences of non-European peoples and women throughout the curriculum—including the undergraduate majors, general education, and the honors program—as well as graduate and

seminary programs. It is our desire that faculty evaluate and construct courses with an emphasis on critical thinking and multiple perspectives/points of view.

◆ **Co-curricular Activities**

Students' lives are enriched by the diverse co-curricular activities in which they are involved. It is our vision that in these co-curricular spheres support groups within the broader community will model inclusion and express what it means to be enriched by cultural diversity. It is our desire that the student government reflect the diversity of the student body that it serves. It is our desire that athletic programs and teams will intentionally seek to be distinctively Christian, intentionally urban, and purposefully multicultural, enriched by cultural and religious differences, and will present this model of inclusion at all athletic events. Our understanding of multicultural inclusion is broadened by participation in creative and performing arts that include culturally diverse female and male voices. It is our desire that we listen with increasing sensitivity to a greater variety of voices, expanding the story of the minority group who began the NPU story to include chapters about new groups who have also experienced underrepresented status. Being enriched by such expressions of cultural and faith differences will stimulate life-long theological reflection and encourage continual attention to relational bridges that create inclusive communities.

◆ **University Ministries**

At North Park our primary faith dialogue is Christian, with a global scope, respectfully maintaining an evangelical focus. Our dialogue is also ecumenical, allowing both Christian and other faith traditions a legitimate voice on campus. Our faith dialogue extends to our daily witness--our service on our campus, to our neighboring communities, and to the world around us. Our institutional story begins with one minority group of Christians but is constantly expanding the story to include new chapters about other groups. We are theologically reflective regarding all aspects of our lives, individually and communally emphasizing the Evangelical Covenant perspective wherein a focus on Christ is central. It is therefore our vision that Christianity will be forthrightly presented for consideration and evaluation by all—as we are respectful of non-Christian students' faiths and as we welcome their perspectives, we do not retreat from our Christian witness and we ask from them mutual respect for our core spiritual commitments.