

ABOUT NORTH PARK

Statement of Mission, Vision, Core Values and Educational Ideals

Mission

The mission of North Park, as an intentionally Christian university of the Evangelical Covenant Church, is to prepare students for lives of significance and service through education in the liberal arts, professional studies, and theology.

Our vision, building on our core institutional identity—Christian, urban, multicultural—is to fashion a university of uncommon character and enduring excellence where faith, learning, and service meet.

Core Values

The University's challenging academic programs and supportive learning environment are molded by three core institutional values. Our learning community is:

Distinctively Christian – We nurture faith, balancing commitment and freedom, affirming the historic Christian faith of the Church worldwide shaped by the ethos of the Covenant Church, even while we welcome students from all faith traditions.

Intentionally Urban – We engage Chicago as our dynamic place of learning and service; Chicago is our classroom and all Chicagans are our teachers.

Purposefully Multicultural – We embrace and value all people, celebrate the complex global cultural tapestry, and engage the reconciling mandate of the Christian gospel.

We claim these three as intersecting values which shape a cohesive learning community based on the Christian faith, our social setting, and respect for one another. North Park University is increasingly recognized as a thought and action leader in American faith-centered higher education for how these three values are integrated in curricular and co-curricular programs and reflected in the lives of graduates.

Educational Ideals

Reflecting the core values which shape our distinctive learning community, students at North Park University experience an education that:

Is rooted in and committed to the Christian faith and its sacred text, the Bible

Engages Chicago as a dynamic context for learning and service

Embraces all people and celebrates the richness of cultural difference

Affirms learning in all its forms—in the classroom and beyond—as a gift, a joy, and a sacred obligation

Encourages dialogue as a means of learning where open inquiry, integrity, and civility guide our life together

Seeks to form and transform the whole student (intellectually, socially, and spiritually)

Values each student for who he or she is and who they will become

A Small University in a Great Metropolis

Located in a multiculturally diverse residential neighborhood on the northwest side of Chicago, North Park's beautiful 33-acre campus

complements the surrounding urban community. The principal classroom and administrative buildings are set off by spacious lawns and brick-lined walkways, and bordered by residence halls. The North Branch of the Chicago River runs through the campus. In the North Park experience, the school has cultivated the academic and social values of a small university. With an undergraduate enrollment in the fall of 2011 of approximately 1,930 students and a total enrollment of approximately 3,250, North Park offers the advantages of small classes with professors who are committed to teaching, not only in their classrooms, but also in their offices, in chapel services, on stage, and in the residence halls. North Park subscribes to the principle that education addresses the whole person, including faith and values. This calls for a genuinely personal commitment from those who teach and those who learn. We hold the conviction that the small, highly residential, and liberal arts-based college or university is the best setting for this process.

A Christian Comprehensive University

As a Christian school North Park University seeks to link the intellectual and spiritual development of its students. We hold that one's understanding of life is fragmentary unless ultimately joined by an understanding of the spiritual nature of all persons. To support this educational experience, North Park recruits and fosters a highly competent full-time faculty of men and women who are committed Christians. We also seek to embrace the whole Christian church in its various expressions of belief and practice. Thereby, our faculty and staff together reflect the breadth and depth found in the worldwide Christian community and work to relate the enduring values and understandings of the Christian tradition to the academic fields they represent.

Our student body also reflects an array of religious tradition and spiritual commitment. Though a quarter of our undergraduates come from the school's founding church, the Evangelical Covenant Church, other students reflect the broader Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox Christian traditions, other world religions, and students without any formal religious background or experience. The spirit of North Park's community is one of acceptance; students are admitted without regard to their religious creed and given the freedom to inquire and develop within a community distinctively shaped and defined by the Christian tradition. North Park, thereby, encourages all students, whether Christian or otherwise, to consider questions and topics of faith in their intellectual development.

North Park also holds that an education should prepare students for significant, morally responsible lives and equip them with the intellectual and social skills necessary to succeed in any vocation or pursuit. To serve this end, the University's undergraduate program is anchored in a general education curriculum that introduces students, usually in their first and second years, to the liberal arts disciplines. Within these areas of study students learn how to research, to reason, to evaluate and value, and to communicate—skills as important as the knowledge learned in these courses. Within this “core” curriculum, breadth of understanding and versatility of response are the underlying objectives; and when combined with advanced study in a major program, often including several courses with a professional or career focus, we believe a general education is an optimal foundation to prepare students for a continually changing society and the career opportunities it develops and offers.

Yet an education at North Park extends beyond the classroom. As students engage the campus community and the city of Chicago they take part in opportunities to build community, serve, worship, and develop leadership

skills. Under the planning and guidance of North Park's department of University Ministries, the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Programs, the Office of Student Development, and other program centers, a variety of programs and activities are built on the premise that young adults are best served when given the opportunity to make constructive life choices and take advantage of resources offered to them.

Throughout, Chicago plays a major role in a North Park education. Courses in every discipline are enriched by the University's larger Chicago "classroom." Each year hundreds of North Park students volunteer through our nationally recognized Urban Outreach program—providing tutoring to disadvantaged children, food to the hungry, and shelter to the homeless; visiting the ill and the elderly; counseling in youth organizations; and reaching out to those in need in our community. Our Global Partnership program, and options for study abroad, offer students both short- and longer-term opportunities to travel and learn worldwide.

A Place of Achievement and Preparation

North Park prizes its tradition of high accomplishment by students, faculty, and alumni. Our Honors Congress is designed to bring students and faculty into a learning community that promotes academic excellence, rigorous intellectual development, community involvement, campus and community service, leadership development, and vocational direction. A major goal of the North Park University Honors Program is to prepare students for acceptance into graduate schools and for competition for graduate school fellowship programs. Honors Congress students are encouraged to apply for awards and fellowships both in their individual disciplines and in competitive national programs to serve and learn beyond the undergraduate years. Honors Congress students are assigned mentors to assist them in creating an undergraduate portfolio that will enhance these applications starting in the first year of study. Academic achievement at North Park is also recognized through numerous scholarship and departmental honors that are awarded annually to students demonstrating excellence in the classroom.

Student achievement is also found in extracurricular activities. We compete in what many regard as the finest NCAA Division III intercollegiate athletic conference in America, the College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin (CCIW). The men's basketball team has achieved national prominence with five NCAA championships since 1978, and North Park has produced approximately 70 All-Americans with nearly 100 awards in a wide range of sports. The North Park women's rowing team has taken gold, silver and bronze medals at national regattas, men's soccer and baseball are recent conference champions and national tournament qualifiers. The Gospel Choir and University Choir tour extensively in the United States and abroad. North Park's Outreach Ministries program has received regional and national recognition as a model campus initiative for involving students in voluntary service. It is not surprising then that *U. S. News & World Report* has repeatedly named North Park one of the top regional master's institutions in the Midwest.

North Park is a place where achievement is encouraged; it is also a place where future achievement is planned. One step in this process is the educational/career advising, testing, and internship selection available in our Center for Career Planning Services. Another path to the future is through one of our many professional programs. Accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, North Park also has accreditation by the Association of Theological Schools, Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education, National Association of Schools of Music, Illinois State Board of Education (teacher certification programs), Commission on

Accreditation of Athletic Training Education, and the American College of Sports Medicine (endorsement – exercise science).

Career preparation at North Park emphasizes the complementary relationship between a liberal arts foundation and specialized study on an advanced level. Because we are interested in the whole person, we prepare our students not just for making a living, but for leading meaningful and creative lives. Consequently, the curriculum our students follow—general education, major, and electives—has been shaped to provide graduates with those skills and values fundamental to success in every aspect of life. At graduation, North Park students are prepared vocationally for entry into a career or for further study in graduate school. Some will begin work as teachers, nurses, community workers, or business persons. Others will seek advanced training for professions in medicine, higher education, law, Christian ministry, or the arts. Including but also extending beyond their careers, North Park students are encouraged to view their lives as a gift from God and to find their fulfillment in the utilization of this gift in meaningful service to others.

The Campus

North Park's learning resources extend throughout the city of Chicago, including all that one of the world's great metropolises has to offer. The North Park campus, however, provides a comfortable, secure setting as a "base of operations" within the wider world of the city, and includes its own array of buildings and environments to support students' learning. The northeast corner of the main campus incorporates an interconnected series of facilities including the original University gymnasium, now Hamming Hall, used for social events such as campus dinners and receptions; Carlson Tower and Wikholm Labs, a 67,500 square-foot, six-story structure comprised of classrooms, laboratories, and faculty and academic administration offices; a 430-seat auditorium/theater, the home of North Park's drama program; an art gallery; and indoor athletic facilities: a 2,000 seat gymnasium, weight and locker rooms, and the campus bookstore. Moving west along Foster Avenue and the front lawn of the campus, another series of facilities is arrayed including Old Main, built in 1893 as the school's original building and restored to house the offices of the president, the senior vice president, the provost, undergraduate, seminary, and graduate admissions, business, and human resources; Wilson Hall, a 9,500 square-foot facility dedicated to the arts—offices, classrooms for drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics, photography and music; Anderson Chapel, the campus's worship and music performance center, an elegant and intimate setting accommodating up to 550 for the University's weekly chapel services, as well as other special events such as the popular Chamber Music at North Park series; Hanson Hall, a facility which supports North Park's excellent music programs; and Ohlson House, a 136-bed residence hall. The western boundary of the campus is formed by student residence and parking facilities: Sohlberg Hall, a 90-bed residence hall, with student lounges, classrooms, and the University Ministries office; and seminary apartments.

The Paul and Bernice Brandel Library and Learning Center, opened in 2001, anchors the southwest corner of the campus north of the river. This 71,000 square-foot facility houses a combined collection of over 225,000 books and 800 journal subscriptions. Through over 50 online databases the library provides an additional 20,000 journals. The library has reciprocal borrowing agreements with many Chicago area academic libraries resulting in direct access to over three million books and periodicals. Media services and archives of North Park University, the Evangelical Covenant Church and the Swedish-American Historical Society are also located in the library. The University's curriculum is further supported by a science library, the education and nursing laboratories, and a close working relationship with the Swedish-American Historical Society.

In the center of the campus is the Student Services Center, housing Student Administrative Services, Residence Life, Student Care, Career Services, Enrichment Services, and the Dean of Student Development. Caroline Hall is home to the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Programs, faculty offices, and the academic and administrative computing centers. Nyvall Hall, the academic home to North Park Theological Seminary, the graduate theological seminary of The Evangelical Covenant Church, is also located in the center of the campus.

The North Branch of the Chicago River runs through the campus. South of the river is more student housing, including dorms, apartment buildings, and theme houses; Burgh Hall and Anderson Hall, two 210-bed residence halls, one of which offers a spectacular view of the Chicago skyline from its upper story windows and roof-top sundeck; and the Magnuson Campus Center, which includes a 500-seat dining room, meeting rooms, classrooms, and student government offices. Park North is a completely renovated apartment building on Kedzie Avenue with 35 studio apartments. Sawyer Court is North Park's newest living area. It is a living learning community consisting of four-person apartments.

Helwig Recreation Center houses a state-of-the-art workout facility; a 200 meter, indoor track; a 35-yard practice turf; a climbing wall; coach's offices; athletic training facilities; and classroom space. On the eastern periphery of the main campus are located a physical plant building, and parking facilities.

Two short blocks east of the main campus is Holmgren Athletic Complex. It is among North Park's most functional and heavily used facilities.

The complex includes the Ted Hedstrand softball, baseball, soccer, and football fields, designed for both practice and play for recreational and intercollegiate use. The field features a state-of-the-art, injury-reducing artificial turf system, new bleachers, and a press box. Field lighting enables the complex to be used into the evening hours, providing more flexibility in programming. To the south of the complex and just across the North Branch of the Chicago River, the school shares the track and field and soccer facilities with the City of Chicago and the Chicago Park District.