

# **XAVIER UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA**

## **LONG-RANGE PLANNING DOCUMENT**

**August 2003**

Xavier University was founded in 1925 by Saint Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, a religious community dedicated to providing educational opportunities to Black and Native Americans. Spurred by its mission, Xavier produces leaders grounded in a spiritual and moral tradition.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Xavier University of Louisiana is Catholic and historically Black. The ultimate purpose of the University is the promotion of a more just and humane society. To this end, Xavier prepares its students to assume roles of leadership and service in society. This preparation takes place in a pluralistic teaching and learning environment that incorporates all relevant educational means, including research and community service.

So that they will be able to assume roles of leadership and service, Xavier graduates will be:

- prepared for continual spiritual, moral and intellectual development;
- liberally educated in the knowledge and skills required for leadership and service; and
- educated in a major field so that they are prepared to complete graduate or professional school and to succeed in a career and in life.

Xavier has been successful in attaining its mission, growing through its challenges. The university's graduates serve society in diverse fields, from the arts, humanities and teaching to the political, social, religious, and health arenas, to the sciences. Xavier places more African Americans in medical school than any other university.<sup>1</sup> It has graduated about 20% of the Black pharmacists practicing in the United States. Xavier ranks first nationally in the number of

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<sup>1</sup> *Association for American Medical Colleges*

African American students earning undergraduate degrees in the physical sciences and in the biological sciences.<sup>2</sup>

However, Xavier's ability to attain its mission is affected by changing national political and policy trends. Conflicts over diversity and affirmative action directly affect Historically Black Colleges and Universities such as Xavier, which may well be educating even larger numbers of African American students turned away by schools or court orders rejecting diversity programs. Congressional reductions in financial aid grants place a burden on students, especially those from low-income families. Although some states, including Louisiana, are giving students more financial assistance, the average debt for undergraduates is increasing, challenging access to education. This is a special problem for Xavier's students.

The cost to educate students is rising rapidly, partly because of the high cost of technology, increased student expectations, and increased costs of construction and maintenance. Although tuition levels have risen, they have not kept up with increases in costs, which have forced institutions of higher education to seek increased funding from outside sources. For historically Black schools, that means going beyond the traditional sources of governments, foundations and alumni to seek additional assistance from individuals and corporations.

Information technology has had a dramatic impact upon all of society, including universities. Xavier realizes that in order for students to be leaders, they must be able to use all methods of communication, including information technology. In addition, in order for students to be educated in their major field, they must be able to use the technology that is appropriate to their discipline. Information technology has permeated management functions, including registration, fiscal services, human resources, and the transmission of information. The cost of this constantly changing technology is one of the major economic forces impacting Xavier.

The parameters of faculty employment are also changing. The system of tenure has been under review at some schools, as other institutions examine non-tenure track positions and post-tenure review. Increased use of part-time and non-tenure track faculty is driven by concerns of cost and flexibility. Xavier continues to limit the use of part-time faculty, but has adopted non-

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<sup>2</sup> *Black Issues in Higher Education*, June 5, 2003.

tenure track positions for some clinical faculty in the College of Pharmacy and has approved selective use of non-tenure track positions in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Methods of teaching and learning, especially at the undergraduate level, are changing. There has been some movement away from lecture as the sole method of teaching. Faculty are encouraging more group interaction and more use of technology. Service Learning, with students learning from the application of academic concepts through courses requiring community service, has become more widespread.

The public is turning to institutions of higher education to help with societal problems, such as education in the grades K-12, health care reform, crime, poverty, housing, and environmental cleanup. From its inception, Xavier has been concerned with teacher education, and was the first private university in Louisiana to receive NCATE accreditation. Xavier also plays a strong role in community revitalization through programs that address pressing needs in the New Orleans area.

As the world becomes smaller through more effective methods of communication and travel, internationalization becomes increasingly important. Xavier's Study Abroad program sends students to study in countries across the globe. Faculty are internationalizing their courses by addressing international topics. University-wide forums are conducted to introduce students, faculty and staff to international issues. In order for Xavier's students to be leaders, they need to be global citizens.

In the midst of these outside forces, Xavier steers its course by reliance on its mission as the nation's only historically Black and Catholic college or university. Xavier is more than a simple combination of its Black and Catholic identities. It is a diverse institution that refuses to accept limitations of race, religion, or financial hardship. Xavier lives its mission, focusing on justice for all by preparing its students to be leaders with a strong spiritual and moral foundation.

Xavier derives strength from its Black and Catholic cultures, which converge to encourage nurturing of the entire person, including the intellect, spirit, and moral nature. Both its Black and Catholic heritages push Xavier to recognize and fulfill its responsibilities to the community. Xavier has responded through its large cadre of student, faculty and staff volunteers as well as through its structured programs to assist the New Orleans area.

However, Xavier faces additional challenges. Because some entering Xavier students have come from impoverished schools, it is essential that the university provide an excellent support system. Every member of the faculty and staff is reminded of his/her individual importance in educating students. As a Catholic institution, Xavier adheres to the high standards of its Christian heritage. The values of its founder, Saint Katharine Drexel, reaffirm Xavier's mission to enable African Americans to become leaders, holistically educated and grounded in a tradition of service to humanity.

### **Xavier's Students**

Xavier's enrollment continues to grow at a steady rate; enrollment management has held recent annual increases to under 3%. Fall 2002 enrollment was 3,994, with most students (3,116) in the undergraduate College of Arts & Sciences. During the 2002-2003 academic year, 56% of the undergraduates majored in the natural sciences and mathematics. The majority of these majors were in biology, with 1,132 majors.

Enrollment in the College of Pharmacy has been controlled to allow the College to accommodate its students in a space-limited facility. The 2002 enrollment was 485. Currently, the entry-level Doctor of Pharmacy degree is the sole degree offering in the College.

Enrollment in the Graduate School fluctuates; enrollment in 2002 was 325. Although Xavier has phased out its master's program in Nurse Anesthesiology, the university retains its master's programs in the Division of Education (Educational Administration and Supervision, Curriculum and Instruction, Counseling) and in the Institute of Black Catholic Studies (Theology).<sup>3</sup>

The level of preparation of Xavier students continues to be at or near the national average for all students. In 2002 the average ACT score of entering Xavier freshmen was 20.5. The national average for African Americans was 16.8 and the overall national average was 20.8.<sup>4</sup>

Twenty-five percent (25%) of Xavier's enrollment is male. Eighty-four percent (84%) of the enrollment is African American. Thirty-six percent (36%) of Xavier's students are from the

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<sup>3</sup> Enrollment information comes from the *University Profile 2002 – 2003*.

New Orleans area; 15% are from the rest of Louisiana.<sup>5</sup> Twenty-four percent (24%) of Xavier's freshmen are Roman Catholic; 33% are Baptist.<sup>6</sup>

The six-year graduation rate for Xavier's freshman class of 1996-97 was 56%. The percentage of bachelor's degree graduates attending graduate/professional school has fluctuated but remained high. Forty-nine percent (49%) of the 2001-02 graduates attended graduate or professional school the fall semester following graduation.<sup>7</sup>

### **Xavier's Faculty**

As Xavier's enrollment increases, so does the number of faculty. Xavier limits the use of part-time faculty; hence, increases have come in the number of full-time faculty. The number of full time faculty was 226 in the fall of 2002, including 194 in the College of Arts & Sciences and 32 in the College of Pharmacy.

The University's student faculty ratio was 15.6 in 2002. The student faculty ratio in the College of Arts and Sciences was 16.0; the student faculty ratio in the College of Pharmacy was 13.0.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The Xavier average includes students admitted on restricted status. If those students are excluded, the average ACT was 20.7.

<sup>5</sup> *University Profile, 2002-2003*

<sup>6</sup> *Freshman Profile, Xavier University Office of Admissions*

<sup>7</sup> Information comes from the Office of Institutional Research. Graduation rates are based on freshmen in 4-year programs.

<sup>8</sup> *University Profile, 2002-2003*

## GOALS

In light of Xavier's current status, the university community has developed the following long-range goals. The first four goals are direct consequences of the mission statement. The last three goals support the first four goals. For brevity, few objectives have been included in this document. Other goals and objectives of equal importance are found in the planning documents of the various offices and departments of the university.

- Goal 1. To provide an appropriate academic setting to ensure a liberal and professional education for Xavier's graduates
  - Subgoal A. To offer academic programs that effectively prepare students for roles of leadership
  - Subgoal B. To make appropriate pedagogical use of information technology
  - Subgoal C. To strengthen and enhance the training of the professional educator, counselor, and administrator
  - Subgoal D. To use planning and assessment to ensure that academic programs are successfully preparing students
- Goal 2. To manage the size and composition of Xavier's student body and to encourage attendance at graduate/professional school
  - Subgoal A. To manage enrollment to ensure the optimum student body for the university's capabilities and resources
  - Subgoal B. To increase the retention and graduation rates
  - Subgoal C. To increase the number of students who enter and successfully complete graduate/professional school
  - Subgoal D. To ensure that all graduates are prepared to enter the workforce
- Goal 3. To educate students in the knowledge and skills required for leadership and service
  - Subgoal B. To strengthen co-curricular activities to promote learning, leadership and service
  - Subgoal C. To coordinate and enhance the link between academic work and community service
- Goal 4. To support spiritual development and service to others
- Goal 5. To provide the necessary support for students, faculty and staff in order to achieve Xavier's mission
  - Subgoal A. To increase the ability of Xavier's library to provide access to information
  - Subgoal B. To support faculty and staff development
  - Subgoal C. To support and strengthen the academic and managerial uses of technology
  - Subgoal D. To evaluate all programs and to use the results of evaluation for improvement
- Goal 6. To provide sufficient physical facilities for Xavier to achieve its mission
  - Subgoal A. To provide adequate academic facilities

Subgoal B. To provide adequate facilities for students, including dormitories, dining facilities, and recreational facilities

Subgoal C. To continue to maintain and improve all facilities

Goal 7. To provide the financial means for Xavier to achieve its mission

Subgoal A. To conduct a comprehensive fund raising campaign

Subgoal B. To expand financial support from the Catholic community, from individual major donors, and from alumni and trustees

Subgoal C. To restructure the corporate partnership program and the foundation relations program to broaden financial support to further Xavier's mission

Subgoal D. To strengthen fiscal management policies and procedures