

Working Group One--Mission

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ANALYSIS

The Working Group examined various data and information collected from surveys pertaining to the Mission of Xavier. We paid particular attention to the main focus of Xavier's Mission, the promotion of a more just and humane society. Therefore, the Strategic Planning Committee surveyed students and asked them "Do you think that Xavier University promotes a more just and humane society?" From this, 47 (61.8%) said *yes*, 22 (28.9%) said *no*, and 7 (9.2%) were *undecided*. We found it significant that nearly 40% of the students answered "no" or "don't know."

Some students believe that Xavier does not always do what is in its power to promote a more just and humane society. According to our survey, students who did not think Xavier promoted a more just and humane society reported a disparity between what they perceived the University does or does not do for its students and the Mission of the University. Some students perceived inequities in resources between departments, and between students, staff and faculty. Other students felt they were not treated fairly based on their academic background and/or on personal issues with which they were dealing. Additional students reported an imbalance in the way the University serves its own community and the way it extends its services to surrounding communities. Students who were undecided on the issue reported similar perceptions.

We emailed faculty and staff and asked them to respond to the question "Is it the ultimate goal of Xavier University to promote a more just and humane society? Why or why not?" We had 25 responses, and of these only 3 answered "no." Thus faculty seem to believe that the ultimate goal of Xavier is to promote a more just and humane society. These results suggest a disparity between student and faculty perceptions.

We wanted to know if Xavier lives up to its Mission by educating students from poor socio-economic backgrounds. From 2003 to 2006, the average percentage of Xavier Freshmen with Pell support was 57.98%. According to Dr. Scheye, most schools have fewer than 10% of their students qualify for these grants. We wanted to know if this remarkably high percentage of students who qualified for need based grants could be found in all of our programs, including the more popular programs such as Pharmacy and pre-Med. It turns out that approximately 50% of Xavier students across the board qualify for Pell Grants, regardless of major.

More importantly, however, we wanted to determine whether we are really educating students, especially those from poor socio-economic backgrounds. Perhaps the best way to do this would be to look at our students with low ACT scores and then track their success. If such students succeed in future schooling, that would fit well with the Mission. Unfortunately, this data is difficult to obtain as graduates often do not respond to contacts from Xavier. Therefore, we tracked College of Arts and Sciences students who were required to take developmental courses and determined how many of these students graduated and how many graduated with honors. We compared this group to students who were not required to take developmental courses. Data was

gathered for those College of Arts and Sciences students entering Xavier from 1999 to 2003. Of those students entering with developmental courses in 1999, 33% graduated (without honors), 2.1% graduated cum laude, 0.3 % graduated magna cum laude, and none graduated summa cum laude (64.6% did not graduate from Xavier University). Of those students who *were not* required to take developmental courses in 1999, 35.9% graduated (without honors), 13.2% graduated cum laude, 5.7 % graduated magna cum laude, and 4.4% graduated summa cum laude (40.8% did not graduate from Xavier University). Of those students entering with developmental courses in 2000, 27.2% graduated (without honors), 2.3% graduated cum laude, none graduated magna cum laude, and none graduated summa cum laude (70.6% did not graduate from Xavier University). Of those students who *were not* required to take developmental courses in 2000, 39.6% graduated (without honors), 11.1% graduated cum laude, 5.3 % graduated magna cum laude, and 3.6% graduated summa cum laude (40.3% did not graduate from Xavier University). Data from 2001-2003 is comparable to the 1999 and 2000 data (see Tables 1 and 2 below). Note, however, that graduation rates appear to decline in more recent years. This is due to the fact that many students graduate in five or six, not four, years.

Table 1: Developmental Students Progression to Graduation

First Term	reg	cum laude	magna cum laude	summa cum laude	did not graduate	Grand Total
199908	33.0%	2.1%	0.3%		64.6%	100%
200008	27.2%	2.3%			70.6%	100%
200108	29.0%	1.6%	0.3%		69.1%	100%
200208	16.1%	1.4%		0.3%	82.3%	100%
200308	5.6%	0.6%	0.3%		93.4%	100%
Grand Total	22.1%	1.6%	0.2%	0.1%	76.1%	100%

Table 2: Non-Developmental Students Progression to Graduation

First Term	Regular graduate	cum laude graduate	magna cum laude graduate	summa cum laude graduate	did not graduate	Grand Total
199908	35.9%	13.2%	5.7%	4.4%	40.8%	100%
200008	39.6%	11.1%	5.3%	3.6%	40.3%	100%
200108	34.5%	10.7%	3.3%	4.9%	46.6%	100%
200208	27.0%	11.0%	5.0%	3.5%	53.5%	100%
200308	17.7%	7.9%	7.1%	3.8%	63.5%	100%
Grand Total	30.8%	10.8%	5.3%	4.0%	49.0%	100%

Overall this data suggests an inequity in general graduation rates across both groups of students. General graduate rates, without honors, of developmental and non-developmental students appear comparable for 1999 and 2001. However, there is a minimum 10% difference across non-honors graduation rates for all other years examined. There is also a difference, across the two groups of students, as related to graduating with honors. Approximately 99% of summa cum

laude graduates are students not taking developmental courses, as are approximately 98% of those graduating magna cum laude and approximately 91% graduating cum laude. In addition, the overall graduation rates from Xavier over the time span examined is 51% for non-developmental students and 23.9% for developmental students. This data suggests that Xavier should pay close attention to better serving students taking developmental courses. The overall *non*-graduation rates of those taking, versus not taking, developmental courses suggests that Xavier should explore why students who take developmental courses do not complete their degree at Xavier.

We were also interested to see how the university buys into the Mission. For example, we were curious to see how many faculty and students participate in Service Learning. During the 2006-2007 academic year there are only 10 faculty members (slightly more than 6% of 165 full time faculty members) and 235 students (less than 10% of 3012 students based on Fall 2006 enrollment) participating in service learning according to the Center for Student Leadership and Service. The Center recognizes that there are more courses being offered as service-learning, however, these professors and/or departments have not reported this information to the Center for Student Leadership and Service. In addition to service-learning, community service must also be considered when examining how the university buys into the Mission. During this academic year the Center for Student Leadership and Service reports approximately 40% of the student body participating in community service programs sponsored the University. It is estimated that each volunteer registered with Volunteer Services will complete a minimum of 78 hours in one academic year. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, however, these numbers were twice as high.

We were also curious to see if our grants and funding are designed to promote a more just and humane society. According to Ann Smith, Associate Director of the Office of Sponsored Programs, all grants funded through her office are by definition connected to the Mission of the University. According to Dr. Francis, Xavier grants impact the economic and social stability of New Orleans and the state of Louisiana. They bring large amounts of federal funds to reduce health disparities in the city and the state and train better teachers for their school systems (Annual Report, 2005; 2006; 2007). Research funding plays an important part in engaging students in research projects, exposing them to career options in their fields, and encouraging them to pursue a graduate education. These grants serve to provide Xavier students with cutting edge knowledge in their fields and promote quality courses and academic programs. However, Hurricane Katrina disrupted grant activity between 2005 and 2007. According to the summary of award activity between 2005 and 2007, a significant decline in awards occurred after 2005 (see Table 1). Further, an examination of the Annual Reports (2005-2007) also suggests that a gap in funding remains between the sciences and the humanities and social sciences. This discrepancy may be due in part to the fact that research activities in the sciences are fund driven, while this is not the case as much in the humanities and the social sciences.

Table 1: Summary of Award Activity in FY 2005-02006-2007

Funding Category	2005	2006	2007
Research	\$19,238,824.67	\$30,506,387.72	\$12,666,666.00
Community Outreach	\$707,745.60	\$1,458,900.00	\$2,768,851.75

Operations	N/A	\$11,340,000.00	\$11,324,166.00
Education & Related Support	\$7,801,944.00	\$13,433,080.00	\$7,338,614.00
Pre-College Education	\$326,189.00	\$426,189.00	\$426,189.00
Total Funding	\$28,074,703.27	\$57,164,556.72	\$34,524,486.75

ISSUES

Xavier was founded to educate a group of students who could not receive an education elsewhere due to segregation and racism. Today the circumstances have changed to a degree, in that African American students attend every college in this country. Yet, other institutions take African American students with the resources to pay the high cost of education. Today Xavier focuses more than most schools on disadvantaged students. For the 2006-2007 academic year more than 89% of our freshman students who applied for financial aid were determined to have financial need based on federal standards. Ninety-eight percent of those determined to have need received some type of financial aid in the form of grants, scholarships, and/or loans. More specifically, 82% of the freshmen class received need-based scholarships or grants based on these federal standards. Additionally, the most recent figures available for comparison to peer HBCUs indicate that during the year 2005-2006 undergraduates at Xavier received financial aid at a higher percentage than the average of our peer competitors. Moreover, the amount of federal grant aid received by Xavier students was less than the average of our peer competitors.

Institution Name	Percentage receiving any financial aid(SFA0506)	Percentage receiving federal grant aid(SFA0506)	Average amount of federal grant aid received(SFA0506)
Xavier University of Louisiana	96	81	\$3,706.00
Howard University	73	36	\$3,356.00
Morehouse College	96	54	\$4,838.00
Spelman College	82	61	\$6,099.00
Dillard University	91	60	\$3,846.00
Average	85.5	52.75	\$4,534.75

NCES IPEDS Peer Analysis Tool

Thus our niche at Xavier has changed, as once we sought to promote social justice by educating African American students who could not be educated elsewhere, and now we promote social justice by educating more economically disadvantaged students. This does not make good financial sense, as a better business model would be to recruit students with more resources. Yet, educating students without resources fits in well with Xavier's historic Mission.

Another issue is the degree to which the University realistically promotes a more just and humane society. These ideas about social justice are lofty, but do we really achieve this, and if so, how? As previously stated, nearly 40% of Xavier students were not sure that the University was doing enough to promote a more just and humane society. Students perceive social injustice on and off campus. On campus, they feel that they are at times treated like children and they do

not think that they always receive appropriate services when needed. Off campus, they report insufficient University involvement in assisting communities in dire need. Some of these negative perceptions come from their first-hand experiences with on-campus services. Others may be based in part from students' lack of knowledge about the University's financial operations and actual involvement with the larger community. Nevertheless, the situation could be improved. Finally, there is at times ambiguity regarding the connection between the Core Curriculum of Xavier and the school's Mission. Some faculty and many students seem to view the core classes as less important than the courses in their major fields.

ACTION PLANNING

This Working Group recommends the following actions:

1. Make slight changes to the University's Mission Statement to more accurately reflect the nature of the University. The current Mission Statement reads as follows:

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.

We recommend the following revised Mission Statement:

Xavier University of Louisiana, founded by Saint Katharine Drexel and her Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, is Catholic and historically Black. The ultimate purpose of the University is to contribute to the promotion of a more just and humane society by preparing its students to assume roles of leadership and service in a global society. This preparation takes place in a diverse learning environment that incorporates all relevant educational means, including community service and research.

We felt that any statements concerning Xavier's history, identity, and mission ought to reference Saint Katharine Drexel. We also looked at the evolution of the idea of a just and humane society and we believe that our revision to the second sentence more accurately reflects Xavier's contribution to social justice. We felt that all modern universities have pluralistic teaching environments so we removed that phrase and replaced it with diverse, and then added the word global before society. We also reversed the order of "research" and "community service" to highlight the importance of service.

2. Increase ownership of the Mission Statement. We learned from discussions in our classrooms and from surveys that students are dissatisfied with Xavier's Mission because they believe that we do not live up to it. Many of Xavier's policies do not correspond to the Mission, mostly because there is a problem communicating with students. For example, policies like W\$ and deregistration need to be better clarified, as often warnings are sent to student's Xavier email addresses which the students do not check. Moreover, we need to make faculty, staff, and students more aware of the Mission of Xavier. Currently faculty in the tenure process must reflect on how their teaching reflects the Mission, but we need to do more of this. We need to examine how the Mission is manifest in our daily routines. We could invite speakers to cover the topic of just and humane society. We could also better feature our Mission Statement in media

relations and on the website. Moreover, in conjunction with the ongoing assessment of Xavier's core curriculum, we need to ensure that the core classes individually and the core as a whole directly reflect the Mission of Xavier, and that faculty and students are made aware of the connection between a Liberal Arts education and Xavier's Mission.

3. Connect classrooms to society and Mission. Instead of talking about making the world a more just and humane society, we need to directly do more of it. Expanding Service Learning is one way that this could be achieved. We need to encourage more faculty to participate in Service Learning. We also need to continually examine our courses, programs, grants, and the Core Curriculum to make sure they promote the Mission and create leadership opportunities for students. Also exploring such things as reopening Boldon Childcare and partnering with a public school in the area would help fulfill the Mission in that these two actions would promote a more just and humane society, and also connect Xavier with the surrounding community.

4. Continue to achieve Mission despite financial pressures. If our only goal was to make a profit, the current Mission statement would be meaningless. Xavier's initial Mission was to make the world more just by educating students that others would not. Now, however, African Americans can attend any university. Thus our promotion of justice has more to do with educating students from lower socio-economic groups, students that many other institutions are ignoring. Perhaps we should further explore the needs among these groups, regardless of ethnicity. In addition, because students taking developmental courses, compared to those not taking such courses, are less likely to graduate from Xavier, we should further explore means to retain students who are required to take developmental courses.

5. Increased funding in research, community outreach, educational and related support, as well as pre-college education is warranted to fill the gap in funding left by Hurricane Katrina. A similar increase in funding in non-science programs would help bridge the gap between science majors and non-science majors in receiving a state-of-the art education. Our current goal in the area of funding is to engage faculty and staff in seeking major grants to continue to support the Mission of the University in reducing social and economic disparities for our students and for the communities they aim to serve. This could be achieved by having the Office of Sponsored Programs take a more active role in communicating state and federal funding availability to academic programs in the Humanities and the Social Sciences.

METRICS

1. Measure the baseline of how faculty, staff, and students perceive the core curriculum. The current debate among faculty on blackboard gives us insight into this issue. Following the survey, we would create a plan designed to increase ownership of the core. This might mean substantially revising the core. It might also mean finding ways to get groups to appreciate the link between Xavier's Mission and a Liberal Arts education. After the implementation of the plan, we would measure again to see if ownership of the core increased. We would also hope to increase the number of departments and programs who state explicitly in their goals that they are working to promote a just and humane society.

2. Increase the availability of information regarding service learning programs. The Center for Student Leadership and Service could develop an in-house public relations campaign to educate faculty on the definition of service learning, the importance of service learning, how it relates to

our Mission, and how service learning can be incorporated into courses. If such a campaign is developed a baseline of those courses involved in service learning (not only how many courses but also specifically how the courses are engaged in social learning) could be taken. To determine whether the public relations campaign is effective in increasing the number of faculty who teach courses involving serving learning a post-measurement could be taken three years from now. Currently faculty may be engaging in service learning independently of The Center for Student Leadership and Service. Thus a survey of faculty, specifically their course components related to survey learning, would provide a better idea of the extent to which faculty are currently engaging in service learning. Finally, the specific forms of service learning engaged in should be examined. This could occur via the previously mentioned survey.

3. As related to recruitment: Take baseline of current students, assessing economic need and ethnicity. Conduct a survey of regions that have been the focus of past recruitment to determine which groups to target as a function of economic need. Then, development and implement an advertising campaign to target groups previously not targeted. Continue the advertising campaign for (at least) four years. Assess students according to economic need and ethnicity five year after the implementation of the original advertising campaign. As related to retention: Continue to track retention/graduation rates of those students required to take developmental courses. Compare these retention/graduation rates to those students who are not required to take developmental courses. In addition, track initiatives implemented by the Office of Academic Enhancement to determine which initiatives are more, versus less, effective in retaining those students required to take developmental courses.

4. Secure more grant funding in the areas of research, community outreach, educational and related support, as well as pre-college education, and increase funding in the Humanities and Social sciences programs by doing the following: (1) Increase the number of faculty/staff attendance to grant writing workshops, and (2) Increase communication between academic departments and the Office of Sponsored Programs through informational emails, departmental visits, and/or campus-based workshops on grant writing.

Appendix One: Former Mission Statements (*aka* Aims, Objectives)

1916-1917

You may ask, "For what does Xavier University stand? How does it compare with other institutions of learning in its power to fit for life?"

The object of "Xavier" shall be to give to its students a refined and Christian education.

An idea of the extent and thoroughness of the Course of Study may be formed after reading the pages that follow.

Practical and thorough courses of instruction are given in the various branches of science and art. Since virtue, however, is the chief end of education, the formation of character is of greater importance than the mere acquisition of knowledge. Therefore, every effort is made by the Sisters to implant in the hearts of those entrusted to their care such principles as will guide them through life and lead them to the highest standard of true Christian manhood and of true Christian womanhood.

The Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament ever strive for the realization of Reverend John Lancaster Spalding's definition of education, namely, "the soul's response to God's appeal to make itself like unto Him--self-active, knowing, wise, strong, loving and fair."

1925

The object of the College is to offer young men and women of the Colored race an opportunity of receiving a thorough liberal education; an education which will develop all the faculties of soul and body and find expression in clear thinking and right acting. To this end the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament aim to supply an atmosphere favorable to the development of a sense of responsibility and upbuilding of character. For this purpose also the College offers courses carefully drawn up covering all the standard requirements for Academic degrees--a scholarly corps of instructors, ample library facilities, well-equipped science laboratories, spacious halls and well-ventilated classrooms, modern in every detail.

1926-1927

The aim of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament in conducting Xavier College is to offer to young men and women of the colored race an opportunity of receiving a thorough, liberal education; an education which will develop all the faculties of soul and body and find expression in clear thinking and right acting. A trained mind and a critical judgment, although essential to happiness and success, are of little avail unless controlled by a strong will and directed by a keen moral sense. Hence the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament aim to supply an atmosphere favorable to the development of a sense of responsibility and the upbuilding of character. Consequently, in the form of discipline and the method of teaching, they lay due emphasis on moral and religious agencies, ever striving for the realization of the Most Reverend John Lancaster Spalding's definition of education, namely, "The soul's response to God's appeal to make itself like unto him--self-active, knowing, wise, strong, loving and fair."

1961-1962

The objective of Xavier is to seek truth, to recognize truth when it finds it, to broaden the confines of existing truth, to preserve it and to apply it to the forming of Christian intelligence, and to the needs of private and public life. In striving to attain this objective the University aims to produce men and women with developed minds, extended and elevated by the ultimate and unerring view of faith, with a will reinforced in its sense of duty toward neighbor and country by the strength of charity.

By its educational policy the University aims to impart a trued education, one unswervingly focused upon the end of man, a God-centered education. The University understands this education not as a passive process wherein the student is molded to the will of another, but rather a process in which a student acquires clear-cut and enduring patterns of thought and action; in a word, the intellectual and moral virtues. The University seeks to promote the highest personal development of the student and the most effective use of his talents in the various fields of learning, research, and vocational endeavors, thereby aiding him to serve his particular community and to provide his own

personal economic security. The curriculum provides for a liberal education which prepares the student for advanced study in graduate and professional schools, for teacher certification on secondary and elementary levels, for special fields of art, music, business, medical technology and pharmacy. To this end the University imparts, carefully cultivates and promotes learning, and encourages and furthers study, research and self-development in the College of Arts and Sciences, in the College of Pharmacy, and in the Graduate School.

1970-1971

Xavier, a Catholic university serving a predominantly Black student body, commits itself to the following goals:

To provide the environment most conducive to the development of the human person, so that each student may realize his own fullest potential as an individual;

To provide such academic support as is necessary for each student to achieve maximum success in the realization of his own educational goals;

To provide such opportunities of general, special and professional education as will make it possible for each student to develop sensitivity to beauty in all its forms, responsibility for the attainment of a more humane and just society, and the abilities and skills needed to make his contribution to that society;

To accept fully its responsibility as a university existing within a larger society, recognizing the priority of claims from or relating to the Black community.

1982-1984

It is a Catholic University serving a predominantly Black student body that Xavier has its reason for being. In reaffirming its Black heritage and its Catholic character, the University if guided by its mission to provide each student with a liberal and professional educational experience in a pluralistic environment for the ultimate purpose of helping to create a more just and humane society.

1990-1992

Xavier is a Catholic University serving a predominantly Black student body. In reaffirming its Black heritage and its Catholic character, the University is guided by its mission to provide each student with a liberal and professional education. To insure the excellence of its programs, all relevant means, including teaching, research, and community service are utilized in a pluralistic environment for the ultimate purpose of helping to create a more just and humane society.

1994-1996

Xavier is an historically Black University with a unique Catholic character. In reaffirming its African American heritage and its Catholic tradition, the University is guided by its mission to provide each student with a liberal and professional education. To insure the excellence of its programs, all relevant means, including teaching, research, and community service are utilized in a pluralistic environment for the ultimate purpose of helping to create a more just and humane society.