

# **MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY**

## **AT THE CENTENNIAL**

**1908 – 2008**

In close to 100 years of existence, Montclair State University has achieved distinction in a multitude of ways. Montclair State is the second largest university in New Jersey. The faculty is exceptionally talented and dedicated to its joint role of teacher and scholar. The University has developed a comprehensive array of distinctive undergraduate and graduate programs, and has begun development of doctoral programs. Its programs in education are recognized nationally as exemplars in the field, and, within the State, the University has been recognized as a center of excellence in the arts. The University is committed to providing high quality programs for students who have the potential for high achievement and who are broadly reflective of the population of New Jersey. Montclair State has developed a rich array of global initiatives and partnerships in education and research and counts representatives from more than 135 countries among the members of the campus community. Closer to home, the University maintains an active agenda of service to the State that engages students, faculty, and staff in important issues confronting the communities of New Jersey. The University is committed to sharing its rich intellectual, cultural and athletic life with area residents. A broad array of co-curricular programs at the University contributes significantly to the personal growth of students and the development of critical life skills that will serve them throughout their lives. A strong team of professionals and staff members enhances the quality of the learning environment and assures the efficiency and effectiveness of the administrative operations of the University.

As the University plans for the future, it does so within a framework of values and traditions that have evolved over time and that have provided the foundation for the University's achievements. These values and traditions include:

- Unreserved dedication to the highest quality in teaching, scholarship, creativity, and research;
- An understanding that the liberal arts and sciences form the core of the undergraduate program and the foundation of a robust general education program;
- An understanding of the critical role University programs play in fostering logical and quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, effective communication, aesthetic appreciation, and competence in interpersonal relations;
- A commitment to accessibility and affordability;
- A commitment to maintaining a campus community that reflects the diversity of New Jersey;
- A commitment to the creation, application, and sharing of knowledge in a climate characterized by respect for, and openness in, the exploration of ideas;
- A history of embracing institutional change and renewal in anticipation of the changing needs of society;
- An understanding that, as a public institution, the University plays a key role in preparing students to be active citizen-participants in a democracy;

- A commitment to build and maintain an environment conducive to teaching and learning and the development of the full potential of all members of the University community;
- An understanding that the University has an important role to play beyond the campus community, interacting and collaborating at the local, State, national and international levels to extend the horizons of students and to create positive change in society; and
- A commitment to providing a dynamic living-learning community that involves students in a multitude of diverse and enriching experiences.

These values and traditions have served the University well in the past, and they will continue to provide the foundation for future distinction at Montclair State University.

While it is tempting to suggest that the University needs only modest in-course adjustments as it prepares to celebrate its Centennial in 2008, there are several developments that compel consideration of more basic and lasting changes. The most immediate is the need for a significant increase in capacity in New Jersey's historically under-built system of higher education. With its knowledge-driven economy, New Jersey can no longer afford to have the highest net out-migration of baccalaureate-seeking students in the nation. Exacerbating this already significant lack of capacity, the number of New Jersey's high school graduating seniors will increase by 21% over the next six years. Unless capacity is increased, the State risks losing approximately 60% of its talented students, many of whom will never return to the workforce in New Jersey. Given its already existing quality and size, Montclair State University has an important role to play in retaining this intellectual capital for the State and in assisting New Jersey in the development of public higher education opportunities that are aligned with the needs of the State and the region in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. New Jersey is ranked 44<sup>th</sup> nationally in the number of seats per State resident available in public colleges and universities. This ranking has an adverse impact on access to higher education for many residents. It also inhibits the ability of New Jersey's colleges and universities to attract talented students from other states and to meet the need for a workforce that is well educated, productive, and equipped to adapt to new developments and challenges. Lack of capacity is an issue at the post-baccalaureate level as well; particularly at the doctoral level where the number of degrees granted per-capita is consistently lower than in comparable states in spite of the educational demands that New Jersey's knowledge-based economy places on its workforce.

Not only is the pool of potential undergraduate and graduate students in New Jersey getting larger; it is becoming racially, ethnically, and linguistically more diverse, encompassing both the traditional college-age population and the increasing number of older students seeking admission to the University. As the student body becomes more diverse, so, too, do the needs and aspirations of students. Many of these changes are driven, in turn, by the changing needs of the organizations and agencies that employ the University's graduates.

Increasing societal demands for technological expertise, the growing technological literacy of the University's students, and the opportunities that technology offers for enhancement of teaching, learning, research, and outreach require that the University continue the aggressive development of its technological infrastructure. In conjunction with that development, the University must also provide opportunities for its faculty and staff to continue to upgrade their skills in the use of technology, and it must assure that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed in acquiring fluency with information technology.

Finally, the University must recognize the necessity of providing a global perspective to its students. Isolation is not an option in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In keeping with the University's commitment to a strong liberal arts and science tradition, Montclair State's students must be prepared to be citizens of the world, to recognize and understand cultures and societies different from their own, and to be ready to participate in an economy that knows no boundaries.

While there are many forces shaping the University, these are the key driving issues as it enters the new century and prepares to celebrate its Centennial in 2008. In consequence, the University has identified the following goals.

➤ **The University will be a recognized center for excellence in teaching and learning.**

In all of its educational efforts, Montclair State University will seek to provide students with the means and desire to lead productive and rewarding lives as critical and engaged members of society. Guided by the clear and compelling vision of excellence that has evolved over almost a century, the University will ensure academic rigor in its programs at all levels and ensure that the knowledge and abilities imparted by the liberal arts and sciences will provide the bedrock for the discipline-specific knowledge characteristic of applied programs. Instruction will continue predominantly to be provided by full-time faculty in relatively small class settings, and students will have ample opportunity to engage in active learning and collaborative inquiry. Where respected national program accreditation standards exist, the University's programs will meet those standards. The University, which is currently classified by the Carnegie Foundation as a Master's College and University I, intends to meet the Carnegie criteria for classification as a Doctoral/Research University-Intensive institution.<sup>1</sup>

At the undergraduate level, the University's goals will be:

- The continual renewal and refocusing of existing programs to reflect the evolution of the traditional disciplines and the development of new knowledge;
- The establishment of new programs, particularly those that cross disciplinary boundaries, as new ways of knowing and understanding evolve;
- The infusion of all programs with opportunities to develop logical reasoning, critical thinking, research, and effective communication skills;
- The infusion of all programs with a global perspective;
- The active engagement of students in the learning process;
- The use of technology in all programs as a means of enhancing teaching, learning, and information literacy; and
- The expansion of collaborations with other institutions that will result in:
  - The ability to offer more specialized programs on a regional basis;
  - The provision of seamless pathways from two-year institutions; and
  - The provision of pathways for students to post-baccalaureate professional programs.

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<sup>1</sup> The Carnegie Foundation defines a Doctoral/Research University-Intensive as an institution that typically offers a wide range of baccalaureate programs, and that is committed to graduate education through the doctorate. During a three-year review period the institution must award at least 10 doctoral degrees per year across three or more disciplines, or at least 20 doctoral degrees per year overall. The Doctoral/Research Universities-Intensive in New Jersey at the current time are New Jersey Institute of Technology; Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, Newark Campus; Seton Hall University; and Stevens Institute of Technology.

At the master's level, the University's goals will be:

- The review of existing programs to ensure that they are current and responsive to the needs of the students served and the larger community;
- The development of new programs that address the changing needs of students and the State and region, with emphasis on the development of professional master's programs that combine work in several disciplines to meet the unique needs of working professionals and address newly developing fields of knowledge;
- The assurance of flexibility and applicability as key characteristics in all programs; and
- The provision of academically rigorous programs that will prepare students as professionals or for further study at the doctoral level.

At the doctoral level, the University's goals will be:

- The development of doctoral programs that:
  - Emphasize knowledge areas that are of importance to the State of New Jersey and for which there is a regional need;
  - Build on existing strengths at the University;
  - Have an applied or professional focus; and
  - Are designed to serve working professionals as well as more traditional graduate students.
- The development of a scholarly environment and a research support network that are consistent with those at doctoral/research intensive universities.

In addition to degree programs, the University offers a broad selection of credit-bearing certificate programs for which the goal will be:

- The development of short-term and highly focused programs that meet the changing needs of business, government, public schools, and communities for specialized training.

While all of Montclair State's programs exhibit unique strengths and provide the foundation for its comprehensive instructional program, several areas provide exceptional opportunities for growth and investment over the next several years because of their alignment with the needs and interests of the region we serve or the potential for external funding. Among the areas is teacher education, where the University's programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels are well known and highly respected nationally as well as within the State. These programs, which form a link to the earliest years of the institution, will continue to be a hallmark of the University. The University's existing strength in the basic sciences and mathematics positions it well to serve the State's growing reliance on basic and applied research and the need for highly trained professionals, especially in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and environmental fields. Building on its designation as a center of excellence in the arts, thoughtful identification of new faculty specializations and investment in new facilities as well as close proximity to the unexcelled professional talent and arts activities found in New York City have ensured that Montclair State will remain a center of distinction in the arts in the State. The opportunities to build excellence are available throughout the performing and visual arts. Reflecting the need to understand and to respond more creatively and effectively to the increasingly complex social issues facing the State, the applied social sciences – particularly psychology and cross-disciplinary areas such as justice studies and child advocacy – are especially well positioned for

growth. Recent events have highlighted the need to move beyond language familiarity to language proficiency, and, concurrently, to a deeper understanding of cultures other than our own. The need to develop new approaches to language acquisition and cross-cultural understandings and to establish programs in global area studies provides opportunities for programs in world languages and linguistics and other programs in the humanities and social sciences. Finally, given our location adjacent to a major center of international economic activity, our experience in sponsoring highly regarded conferences focusing on issues related to international business, and the breadth of international expertise represented on our faculty, the University is well positioned to become a major resource supporting the international business community in the region we serve. With a mix of vision, initiative, external resources, and University support, these and similar programs, as well as new programs that evolve over time, can yield programs that make a discernable difference both in the region we serve and beyond.

➤ **The University will be a source of new knowledge and the application of knowledge.**

While instruction will remain a key commitment of members of the Montclair State faculty, the University recognizes that the generation of new knowledge and understanding through the scholarly, research, and artistic activities of the faculty serves two important functions. Such activities keep members of the faculty current and connected to their colleagues in their disciplines, thereby ensuring the vitality of the University's instructional programs and the exposure of students to contemporary ideas within the disciplines for its students. Secondly, such activities, especially those that focus on the application of knowledge, make important contributions to knowledge, to the vitality of society and the economy, and to addressing problems and issues of importance to the region served by the University. These activities will be accomplished within the framework established by the University's revised definition of scholarship and the Faculty Scholarship Incentive Program designed to encourage the development of a faculty of teacher/scholars. In achieving this goal the University will:

- Aggressively recruit and retain full-time faculty with the very strongest academic credentials and a deep commitment to the pursuit of their own development as teachers and scholars;
- Seek significant increases in external funding for research and program support and provide enhanced services for faculty who seek and acquire such funding;
- Increase the proportion of undergraduate and graduate students who become actively engaged in scholarship, research, and artistic endeavors with members of the faculty;
- Develop new approaches by which existing facilities and programs and consortial arrangements can be used to extend the research opportunities available for students and faculty members; and
- Based on recommendations from departments and deans, establish "Foci of Excellence" within the colleges and schools of the University to ensure depth of scholarly engagement and excellence within the context of the overall program.

➤ **The University will provide expanded opportunities within a richly diverse setting.**

As a public university, Montclair State is responsible for addressing at least a portion of New Jersey's significant shortfall in higher education capacity, as well as for providing the type of programs and facilities that will encourage an increasing proportion of State residents to remain in New Jersey for their university experience. In meeting this goal the University will:

- Increase the size of the student body to at least 18,000 by 2008. At that time the mix will include approximately 13,500 undergraduates (11,000 full-time and 2,500 part-time) and 4,500 post-baccalaureate students (1,000 full-time and 3,500 part-time);
- Develop a strategic enrollment management plan for undergraduate and graduate students that will integrate the needs of academic departments with the larger enrollment goals of the University;
- Increase opportunities for students to take coursework and pursue majors at times and in venues that are compatible with their individual schedules;
- Attract an undergraduate student population of predominantly recent high school graduates who will attend full-time and have strong potential for high achievement, allowing admission to the University to continue to be moderately difficult (on the Peterson's scale of very difficult, moderately difficult, minimally difficult, non-competitive);
- Attract a highly qualified graduate population that includes both working professionals and full-time students and expand the graduate assistantship program;
- Ensure that the University population, including students, faculty, and staff, are reflective of the richly diverse population in New Jersey;
- Diversify the experiences and perspectives of the student population by increasing recruitment efforts for out-of-state students and international students; and
- Maintain graduate student enrollment at approximately 25% to 30% of the total student enrollment.

➤ **The University will provide the resources to accommodate the planned expansion.**

In order to support the growth in the size, scope, and quality of the University's programs, the University will:

- Selectively increase the size of the tenured/tenure-track faculty by approximately 100 lines by 2008;
- Augment, as necessary, the number of managerial, professional, and support staff and librarians to ensure the successful implementation of the strategic plan;
- Increase library resources to support teaching, learning, and scholarship at all levels;
- Expand and improve its physical facilities by providing additional capital facilities, such as:
  - Two large University parking structures;
  - A new academic building that will serve as the home of the College of Education and Human Services, a major classroom resource for the campus, the University's technology hub, and a campus conference center;
  - New residential life facilities to accommodate at least 40% of the undergraduate student population, as well as to provide opportunities for graduate student housing;
  - A 500-seat performance space;
  - A New Jersey Transit train station and parking garage;
  - A Children's Center to house a significantly enlarged Child Care Center and Psychoeducational Center;
  - A recreation center to serve the campus community;
  - Improved athletic facilities;
  - Major renovations of existing campus buildings; and

- A comprehensive upgrading of the University's utilities infrastructure.
- Embark on a concerted effort to generate enhanced and sustained support for the implementation of this strategic plan from:
  - The State;
  - The Federal government;
  - Foundations;
  - Corporations;
  - Alumni; and
  - A major Centennial capital campaign.

➤ **The University will embrace the pervasive and transforming use of technology.**

With the opening of the new academic building, the University has the opportunity to take full advantage of the ability of technology to transform the learning process. Technology will allow faculty members to become, primarily, learning mentors in a process that will require students to accept more responsibility for learning and to be active partners in the process. The University will engage strategically in distance learning where doing so will expand the accessibility or quality of the University's programs. However, the University will place greater emphasis on combining the best of both face-to-face and virtual learning in blended courses. In order to achieve this goal the University will:

- Provide technical and design support for faculty who incorporate technology into courses with the intent that a majority of the faculty will be at least occasional users and 40% will be regular users of technology in the classroom by the time the new academic building, with its technologically advanced classrooms, opens in 2005;
- Provide incentives for faculty to embrace new pedagogies made possible by technology;
- Identify a small number of large-enrollment lower division courses for course-wide application of technology to provide a uniform enhancement of learning and a more effective utilization of learning resources;
- Implement a requirement that all students possess a computer at the time the new academic building is opened; and
- Ensure that the technological infrastructure will provide robust systems and data to support teaching, learning, research, and administrative activities.

➤ **The University will become a center for global study and understanding.**

The University has made great strides in recent years in introducing a global perspective into its programs. The accelerating pressures of globalization underscore the need for students to gain a fuller understanding of the world from historical, socio-economic, political, and cultural perspectives; to be conversant with current events around the globe and their impact at home and abroad; and to gain additional facility in communicating in languages other than English. In order to achieve this goal the University will:

- Continue to expand opportunities for both faculty and student exchanges;
- Develop partnerships with selected institutions, where partnership would offer significant advantages to Montclair State students, faculty, and staff and where Montclair State has the potential to have a significant impact on the partner institution;

- Utilize technology to expand the number of students, faculty, and staff able to interact directly with their counterparts across the globe, recognizing that many students will not have an opportunity to participate directly in an overseas experience;
- Expand the teaching of languages with a deepened focus on the ability to communicate effectively in a language other than English; and
- Develop a consortial approach to instruction in strategic, but low-demand, languages and area studies.

➤ **The University will foster a vibrant sense of community in which each student will be challenged to attain her or his full potential.**

The student experience at Montclair State extends well beyond the classroom. In particular, the University will provide extensive opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, social responsibility, independence and inter-dependence, and a sense of values that will be as important as the knowledge and skills learned in the classroom in helping them craft a meaningful and satisfying life. In order to achieve this goal the University will:

- Provide significantly more opportunity for students to have a residential experience on campus;
- Extend and enhance services designed to retain students, allowing them to attain their full potential through:
  - Universal enrollment in the Freshman Experience course for undergraduates;
  - Increasing collaboration among curricular and co-curricular departments to provide a solid foundation for the integration of student learning models and activities;
  - Developing of the Student Center and its programs and activities to become the focus of campus life for undergraduate, graduate, commuter, and non-traditional students, as well as faculty and staff;
  - Strengthening the academic advising program for undergraduates;
  - Expanding support services to evening and weekend hours;
  - Enabling undergraduate students to complete required basic skills courses prior to, or during, their first semester at the University; and
  - Providing effective ESL testing, instruction, and continuing support for non-native speakers of English as appropriate and needed.
- Provide co-curricular experiences that help students think critically and make effective and socially responsible decisions and lifestyle choices;
- Implement the Action Plan developed in response to the report of the Presidential Task Force on Student Achievement as part of a concerted effort to increase retention and graduation rates;
- Expand the size and scope of the Honors Program;
- Provide additional opportunities for students to participate in intra-collegiate sports and other recreational activities; and
- Continue the development of the University's inter-collegiate athletic program.

➤ **The University will serve as a resource for the local and regional community.**

The University has regularly sponsored a wide variety of programs for the community and served as a venue for intellectual and cultural activities to which members of the community have been invited. While these activities will continue, the University is in a position to become an even more valuable resource to the urban/suburban community currently served and a new resource throughout the New York/New Jersey metroplex and the region beyond. In order to achieve this goal the University will:

- Set a high priority on enhancing community relations by maintaining high institutional visibility and developing closer relationships with community leaders and elected officials;
- Expand its role as a regional center for artistic, intellectual, and athletic activities;
- Develop public/private partnerships where they will benefit both the University and the community;
- Expand partnership activities with public school districts and other agencies serving children, especially those in urban areas;
- Develop mechanisms by which local, state, and regional governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, the business community and the community at-large can benefit more directly and regularly from the expertise of faculty and the resource represented by students;
- Expand non-credit educational opportunities in the North Jersey area via Professional and Continuing Education; and
- Expand opportunities for community and school-based learning to include service learning, internships/cooperative education, professional field experiences, and applied research projects.

➤ **The University will adopt a plan to measure its progress in meeting its key goals.**

The University exists within a national context of strong models of public universities. While no single institution stands as an exact model for Montclair State University's aspirations, the following institutions have been identified as incorporating a number of the characteristics central to the University's mission and plan:

- Ball State University, Indiana
- Bowling Green State University, Ohio
- East Carolina University, North Carolina
- George Mason University, Virginia
- Miami University, Ohio

The University will consider best practices in these and other national public universities and adopt appropriate measures to assess its progress in meeting the goals established in this strategic plan and its performance in comparison with benchmark institutions.

*Endorsed by the Board of Trustees in Public Session on October 31, 2002*