

Goals of a Liberal Arts Education at the College of St. Catherine



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* The College of St. Catherine was founded in St. Paul in 1905 by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, with the leadership of Mother Seraphine Ireland. The college is named for St. Catherine of Alexandria, the fourth-century Egyptian lay philosopher who suffered martyrdom for her faith. * * * * *

* In 1917, St. Catherine's earned full accreditation by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In fall 1937, the Phi Beta Kappa Council voted to grant a charter to the College of St. Catherine, making St. Catherine's the third college in Minnesota and the first Catholic institution in the United States to be recognized Phi Beta Kappa. * * * * *

* In all its programs, St. Catherine's offers students from diverse backgrounds a spiritual and ethical grounding that prepares them for lives and leadership roles that make a positive impact on the communities they serve. In September 1998 the college's Board of Trustees adopted a new vision for the college: to be the world's pre-eminent Catholic college educating women to lead and influence. * * * * *

* In January of 2005, the faculty completed a vote on a new set of "Goals of a Liberal Arts Education at the College of St. Catherine." This was the final step in a reaffirmation of the College's commitment to a liberal arts education. These goals are distinctive because they apply to all of our programs at all degree levels and they are derived from and complement our mission and leadership statements. They also recognize the importance of the whole student experience and are the desired outcomes of the combination of the curriculum and co-curriculum. We celebrate the College's one hundredth year with this renewed commitment to power of the liberal arts. * * * * *

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The Goals of a Liberal Arts Education at the College of St. Catherine

The vision of the College of St. Catherine is to be the world's preeminent Catholic college educating women to lead and influence. In its mission the College is committed to the liberal arts as the broad base of learning and to the pursuit of excellence for its students. St. Catherine offers academic curricular and co-curricular programs in an atmosphere that stimulates students to make their lives full and meaningful and provides opportunities, both intellectual and personal, for them to develop leadership abilities, spiritual values, and responsible commitments to society.

Along with the depth of knowledge provided by her chosen discipline, the student at the College of St. Catherine will have opportunities to acquire broad knowledge in a variety of disciplines and transferable skills to serve as a foundation to a life-long process of learning. The College of St. Catherine has identified seven themes of a St. Catherine's education encompassing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that it seeks to develop in its graduates.

Goals of a Liberal Arts Education at the College of St. Catherine

Based on our commitment to women, the liberal arts, and the Catholic traditions of intellectual inquiry and social teaching, an education at the College of St. Catherine emphasizes:

Leadership and Collaboration

The ability to lead and influence for ethical and responsible action and for systemic change; the ability to work well with others, especially in joint intellectual effort.

Students will demonstrate leadership and collaboration by their ability to:

- a) act from a strong self-concept;
- b) transform information into knowledge and knowledge into judgment and action;
- c) make timely and relevant decisions based on sound reasoning;
- d) discern consequences, including ethical consequences, of decisions and actions;
- e) articulate a positive sense of direction and evoke hope;
- f) work well in teams and work groups of diverse composition, building consensus and integrating conflict resolution strategies.

Ethics and Social Justice

The ability to apply ethical standards to judge individual and collective actions; the development of attitudes and behaviors that reflect integrity, honesty, compassion, and justice in one's personal and professional life.

Students will demonstrate a commitment to ethics and social justice by:

- a) understanding principles of ethics and social justice from multiple perspectives;
- b) understanding Catholic Social Teaching and the Catholic commitment to social justice;
- c) applying ethical and justice frameworks to contemporary issues;
- d) exhibiting personal and academic integrity;
- e) practicing social responsibility through community engagement, citizenship and advocacy.

Diversity and Global Perspectives

The ability to understand and analyze the impact of diversity and systems of power and privilege on the individual and society; the ability to decipher and honor multiple and global perspectives in creating mutual understanding; the ability to imagine and take action towards justice.

Students will demonstrate a commitment to diversity and global perspectives by their ability to:

- a) understand the experiences and contributions of women across history and cultures;
- b) recognize the historic and current relationships within and among cultural communities, locally, nationally and globally;
- c) identify and critically analyze the intersections and impact of race/ethnicity, gender, social class, religion, sexual orientation, age, ability and other differences on identity, experience, and systems of power and privilege;
- d) understand how economic, social, religious and political systems interact and how those systems vary across societies;
- e) understand the interrelationships between nature and humans and develop eco-centric perspectives;
- f) increase critical cultural competencies and cultural responsiveness through engaging with multiple communities;
- g) take action to dismantle systems of oppression and build a more just world.

Critical and Creative Inquiry

The ability to gather, analyze and critically evaluate information to develop reasonable arguments, sound judgments, and effective solutions. This ability is founded on a broad knowledge of the achievements of human creativity and of the variety of disciplinary approaches for exploring truths.

Students will demonstrate critical and creative inquiry by their ability to:

- a) locate appropriate information from a variety of sources and evaluate its relevance and reliability;

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- b) organize, describe, interpret, and integrate both qualitative and quantitative information;
- c) shape ideas and discern meaning from experience, observation, imagination, and passion;
- d) analyze complex issues and arguments in various intellectual contexts (scientific, aesthetic, philosophical, etc.) and evaluate the validity and soundness of such arguments.;
- e) develop and evaluate action plans for solving significant social and intellectual problems;
- f) demonstrate breadth of knowledge of the major accomplishments of human endeavors and of the distinct methods of exploring truths (in the natural sciences, social sciences, and the arts and humanities); *
- g) identify and interpret similarities and differences among various disciplinary approaches and examine the relationships among them.

* *Breadth of knowledge applies to all degrees except the graduate degrees, where the focus is on in-depth development of disciplinary skills.*

Discipline-Based Competence**

The ability to demonstrate in-depth knowledge, values and skills in at least one major field of study and to relate disciplinary approaches to those of other fields.

Students will demonstrate discipline-based competence by their ability to:

- a) use in-depth knowledge and engage key ideas in at least one field of study;
- b) exercise disciplinary methods and skills, and carry out research or learn independently in that field;
- c) develop disciplinary perspective and identity, including an understanding of the route to acquiring knowledge in that discipline;
- d) identify and analyze similarities and differences between the student's major field and other disciplinary approaches.

***Discipline-Based Competence applies to all degree programs except the Associate of Arts Degree Program*

Effective Communication in a Variety of Modes

The ability to read, write, speak, view, and listen effectively; the ability to present information in a clear and engaging manner.

Students will demonstrate effective communication by the ability to:

- a) read, view, and listen with understanding and critical discernment;
- b) organize, evaluate, and communicate ideas effectively through writing and public speaking to various audiences;
- c) prepare and present information visually and through the use of technology;
- d) find expression in fine, literary, and performing arts;
- e) develop and put into practice interpersonal, group, and cross-cultural communication skills and listening skills;
- f) show competency in a second language (applies only to bachelor's degree).

Purposeful Life-long Learning

The ability to continue personal and professional development based on ongoing self-assessment, feedback from others, and new learning.

Students will demonstrate a commitment to purposeful life-long learning by:

- a) assuming responsibility for their own learning;
- b) engaging in and reflecting on opportunities that prepare for life after college;
- c) practicing a variety of methods of learning, including reading and research, observing and listening, self assessment and feedback, work and life experience;
- d) developing knowledge and strategies for maintaining a balance of body, mind and spirit;
- e) reflecting on and developing a meaningful, purposeful, and spiritual life.



Mission Statement

The College of St. Catherine educates women to lead and influence. Founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in 1905, the College integrates liberal arts and professional education within the Catholic traditions of intellectual inquiry and social teaching. Committed to excellence and opportunity, the College engages students from diverse backgrounds in a learning environment uniquely suited to women. Education at the College of St. Catherine prepares graduates to demonstrate ethical leadership grounded in social responsibility.

Leadership Statement

The College of St. Catherine is committed to the development of effective, ethical leaders. Through study, practice and life experience, individuals have opportunities to enrich the knowledge, refine the skills and clarify the attitudes essential for responsible action. In varied roles and settings, the College of St. Catherine leader:

- lives a commitment to the values of justice and caring;
- acts from a strong self-concept;
- thinks critically and creatively;
- communicates and interacts effectively within groups;
- takes risks willingly;
- exercises power appropriately;
- articulates a positive sense of direction; and
- evokes hope.

The Roman Catholic Identity Statement

Throughout the history of the College of St. Catherine, founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, we have been dedicated as a campus community to our Roman Catholic heritage and identity. In light of the rich and diverse history of the Church and the vision of Vatican II, we affirm aspects of that identity that are particularly appropriate to higher education. From the Church's intellectual tradition, which has equated the search for truth with true liberation, we value an open atmosphere of critical inquiry, cross-cultural studies and interdisciplinary teaching. From its social tradition, with its consistent commitment to the poor and outcast, we value and reach out to those marginalized by our society and churches, and in particular, we seek to promote women's leadership. From its sacramental tradition, which has emphasized ritual, symbol and the use of material things as signs of grace, we value the integration of the material and spiritual, and the use of creative rituals for prayer and celebration. From the tradition that has stressed both communal participation and the worth of the individual, we value dialogue, respect for diversity and the nurturing of personal conscience. From the call of Jesus himself, that all should be one (John 17:21), we value ecumenism and collaboration among all faiths.

Drawing on those traditions, we seek to promote, through our student services, campus ministry, administration, faculty and staff, a common search for wisdom and the integration of our daily lives and work with our spirituality. Without being exclusive of other ecclesial and spiritual traditions, we will continue to ask ourselves how this Catholic heritage enhances the people we serve and the well-being of our planet.



THE COLLEGE OF
ST. CATHERINE

