

# LMU STRATEGIC PLANNING 2021-26

## PRELIMINARY REPORT

STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE

September 10, 2020

### INTRODUCTION

2020 – the final year of LMU’s current strategic plan, “Forming Leaders Who Transform the World,” and the year chosen for developing its next strategic plan – has proven to be a pivotal moment in the history of LMU, higher education, the United States and the world. We have witnessed LMU’s faculty, staff, and students rise to meet this moment, exhibiting an extraordinary adaptability and resilience in the face of unprecedented challenges. At the same time, we have been presented with some difficult questions to which we have no definite answers:

- How long will the current pandemic and the subsequent economic downturn last?
- How will economic demand and student expectations for our brand of holistic, liberal arts education shift in response to an extended experience with distance learning?
- How vulnerable is LMU’s core business model to the changes that will result?
- How will the nation respond to urgent calls to address systemic racism and injustice, and how significant and sustained will public and institutional responses be to these calls?

In the face of these questions, the often-routinized process of strategic planning has taken on a new sense of salience and urgency. With our institutional bandwidth stretched thin, our resources constrained, and our potential vulnerabilities conspicuous in light of the pandemic and its effects, there is more need than ever before for the benefits that good strategic planning offers. An effective strategic plan can help us create institutional clarity about who we are; what our situation is; what kind of future we envision for ourselves; and what issues we must address head-on to realize that future.

This is a moment for seizing opportunities that may not be available to us indefinitely, for confronting our most significant vulnerabilities, and for setting clear priorities. We cannot equally address all the potential strategic issues that confront us; we cannot undertake all the good ideas suggested during this process; we cannot do all the things we might like to do. We will have to choose our future.

In that spirit, we offer this preliminary report to begin a conversation with campus stakeholders in hopes of arriving at an inspiring shared vision of what LMU can become. More specifically, after reading the report and reviewing our progress to date, we are inviting every community member to share your thoughts by participating in our Community Discernment Groups, which you can sign up for [here](#). We will also visit meetings of various leadership groups across campus to discuss the preliminary report. At this stage, we are particularly interested in receiving input from the community about the “Strategic Issues” and “Vision Statement” sections of the report. Please read the report, reflect on the issues it identifies and the choices it presents, and share your insights with us about which are the most important challenges for us to address and goals for us to embrace together as we chart our future course.

## OVERVIEW

In this document, the [Strategic Planning Steering Committee](#) provides a preliminary report on its work thus far and invites campus feedback on our thinking. This report is organized in the following sections:

- [Strategic Planning Context and Process](#) – Background information on the strategic planning process: what its aims are, how it was initiated, and what has occurred so far.
- [Parameters for the Plan](#) – The guidelines that established the steering committee's charge and scope.
- [Foundational Elements: Mission and Core Values](#) – Our conception of the mission and core values that define LMU and its purpose.
- [Environmental Scan](#) – The main findings of the environmental scan process jointly led by the steering committee and the campus teams.
- [Strategic Issues](#) – Strategic issues LMU will need to engage with in order to succeed, constituting potential focus areas for the strategic plan.
- [Vision Statement](#) – Our draft statement of a strategic vision for LMU's future.
- [Conclusion and Next Steps](#) – Information and thoughts about the road ahead.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING CONTEXT AND PROCESS

- *In this section, we describe the strategic planning process thus far, including the steps taken to this point as well as the parameters which have defined our committee's charge and scope.*

["Forming Leaders Who Transform the World: 2012-20,"](#) LMU's current strategic plan, expires in 2020. In October 2019, President Timothy Law Snyder announced a new planning process to unfold over the course of 2019-20 and appointed a steering committee composed of administrative, faculty, staff, student and trustee members to oversee a yearlong process of institutional self-examination culminating in a new strategic plan for 2021-26.

In November 2019, the steering committee conducted a comprehensive survey of LMU's major constituencies, including students, faculty, staff, and leadership boards, [the results of which were shared with the full campus community](#) on the strategic planning website. With more than 200 faculty responses, more than 300 staff responses, more than 60 board member responses, and nearly 400 student responses, our participation numbers for this planning cycle were nearly double what they were eight years ago.

In January, the steering committee began an environmental scan to assess LMU's greatest strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges. To assist in this task, we commissioned eight [campus teams](#), composed of faculty, staff, and student volunteers, to help us think about the contours of several potential strategic issues facing the university and to brainstorm potential goals and actions related to those issues. The reports of these campus teams were posted on the strategic planning website and shared with the LMU community.

The sudden arrival of COVID-19, with its dramatic impacts on LMU's instruction and operations, as well as its disruption of the lives of the university's students, faculty, staff and other stakeholders, necessitated a pause in the original schedule envisioned for the strategic planning process. With the president's approval, the steering committee postponed release of our preliminary report and initial engagement with the community until September, when we hoped a fuller and more focused conversation would be possible.

The steering committee has prepared this preliminary report for campus input, based on the survey results, the campus team reports, as well as our additional inquiry and reflection. It includes a draft

of our proposed mission, core values, and vision statements, and identifies a set of potential strategic issues that the plan might focus on.

We invite comment from the community as described in the report's final section, "Conclusions and Next Steps."

## **PARAMETERS FOR THE PLAN**

No planning process would be possible without guidelines for how the process should proceed and what its outcome should be. President Snyder, who commissioned the planning process and holds responsibility for presenting the final plan to the board, established at the outset of the process a formal set of parameters for the steering committee's work. Our charge from the president included the following requirements:

- The plan's initiatives must address opportunities that can be "difference-makers" for LMU in its larger strategic context.
- The plan's initiatives should (collectively) answer the question "How can we best prepare our students to reason rigorously, imagine richly and choose discerningly – the world in which we want to live?"
- To ensure a focused plan, the final report must identify at most five top priorities or "spotlight initiatives" as the plan's primary outcomes.
- The plan's additional objectives must align with the overall strategy recommended and directly support the top priorities (not list all actions the university should take).
- The plan's initiatives must be achievable in five years and must be measurable.
- The plan's initiatives should not require major restructuring of the priorities established by the Board of Trustees for the capital campaign.
- The plan should broadly identify implementation responsibilities, timelines, and resources for all initiatives.

In addition to these formal parameters, the committee also identified four additional parameters that we believe are implicit in the president's charge and necessary for a strategic plan to be successful in the context of LMU:

- The plan's initiatives must be consistent with preserving our Catholic, Jesuit-Marymount identity, and our mission of the encouragement of learning, the education of the whole person, and the service of faith and the promotion of justice.
- The plan's initiatives must be consistent with preserving our academic accreditation.
- The plan's initiatives must be budgeted and funded.
- The plan's initiatives must be risk vetted.

The committee excluded from discussion any proposals that could not be rendered consistent with the parameters outlined above.

## **FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS**

- *In this section we consider our foundational elements: how to answer the question "Who are we?" in this moment, including a restatement of our institutional mission and of our institutional core values.*

Strategic planning traditionally begins with a statement of the institution's mission and its core values as the foundational elements in which the rest of the plan's logic is grounded. By reflecting on and

re-stating the institution's mission and core values, the plan identifies those elements that make the institution purposeful and distinctive and focuses its attention on the defining features in relation to which it is most likely to find success.

## Statement of Institutional Mission

In the context of a strategic plan, the statement of mission should reflect the current reality of the institution's work. It should speak to the institution's ideals, but in particular to those ideals that truly describe us and motivate us as we are now.

The steering committee proposes the following draft mission statement for the strategic plan:

### Institutional Mission

Loyola Marymount University embodies the richness of our Catholic, Jesuit, Ignatian and Marymount identity in dynamic conversation with the most pressing issues that face the world today. Our location in the vibrant city of Los Angeles offers diverse cultural, creative, and intellectual wealth and boundless opportunity for encounter and innovation. Through rigorous inquiry and relational engagement, we develop individuals whose reflection, reasoning, imagination, and discernment call forth action for positive change in the world. We continually strive for inclusive community and to advance our mission:

- The encouragement of learning
- The education of the whole person
- The service of faith and promotion of justice.

## Statement of Institutional Core Values

In a strategic planning context, core values are those attributes that constitute the central and enduring features of the institution's identity. They are not the same as the full set of aspirational values the institution wishes to possess: rather, they are values that we already exhibit in our everyday conduct, that distinguish us meaningfully from other similar organizations, and that we believe should take priority in our most-significant choices over other competing values, now and in the future.

The steering committee proposes the following draft statement of core values for the strategic plan:

### Institutional Core Values

Loyola Marymount University embraces the following values as fundamental to our identity and living out our mission:

- **Whole-person learning:** Rooted in our Catholic, Jesuit, Ignatian and Marymount traditions, we recognize that educational excellence is multi-dimensional. We develop well-integrated individuals who exercise critical analysis, creative thinking, ethical reasoning, and compassionate discernment throughout their lives.
- **Community built on relationships:** We are a community of care that supports and contributes to the holistic well-being of each of its members. We affirm that our mission is best achieved in an environment of authentic concern for all persons, characterized by inclusion and respect for human dignity.
- **Education for action:** Inspired by the call to a faith that does justice, we challenge ourselves as a community and as individuals to pursue the more universal good. We are thinkers and leaders driven to engage imaginatively the world's deepest needs and most urgent challenges.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

- In this section, we review the main findings of the environmental scan process we used to identify the internal and external factors most critical to our future success, including the commissioning of Campus Teams of faculty, staff and students to examine specific issues of concern, and the conduct and results of the Steering Committee's analysis exercises to take stock of our major strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

### Campus Teams

Based on the results of the constituency surveys, the Steering Committee identified eight issues that would benefit from examination by teams composed of faculty, staff, and students from a variety of academic and administrative areas. By leveraging the expertise and diverse perspectives of these members, the Campus Teams were asked to assist the Steering Committee in defining the contours of several potential strategic issues facing LMU and to brainstorm potential goals and outcomes, barriers, and actions. Teams were asked to examine their assigned issue using two main lenses – mission and competitiveness:

**Mission:** What will enhance our ability to pursue our three-fold mission of the encouragement of learning, the education of the whole person, and the service of faith and the promotion of justice, in the Catholic, Jesuit and Marymount traditions?

**Competitiveness:** What will enhance our ability to compete effectively as an institution of higher education in a rapidly changing environment – advancing our national and international reputation, helping to recruit and retain our best faculty, staff, and student prospects, and maximizing our comparative advantage as a provider of educational services?

The eight Campus Teams addressed the following issues:

- Access, Affordability, and Enrollment Success (Thomas Poon, Chair)
- Curricular and Co-Curricular Learning (José Badenes, S.J., Chair)
- Diversity and Inclusion (Marne Campbell, Chair)
- Innovative and Inclusive Pedagogy and Curriculum (José García-Moreno, Chair)
- Interdisciplinary and Trans-Disciplinary Academics (Tina Choe and Matt Stefl, Co-Chairs)
- Post-Traditional Education (Rebecca Hong and Magaly Lavadenz, Co-Chairs)
- R2: LMU as a 'High Research Activity' University (Patrick Frontiera and Mary Beth Ingham, C.S.J., Co-Chairs)
- Student Success and Student Resiliency (Terri Mangione, Chair).

The [Briefing Memos](#) for all groups were submitted to the Steering Committee in early March and have been made available on the Strategic Planning website.

### STEEP and SWOT Analysis Exercises

During February and March, the Steering Committee conducted exercises reviewing the major internal and external factors affecting the institution, including two commonly used tools for strategic planning environmental scanning: a STEEP Analysis and a SWOT Analysis.

STEEP Analysis (Social, Technological, Economic, Environmental, and Political factors) is a traditional strategic planning method used to evaluate the spectrum of external forces that are impacting society as a whole and that may affect the institution.

Some of the most significant factors we noted in our initial STEEP analysis included:

- **Social/Cultural:** demographic shifts (“demographic cliff” of fewer U.S. high school graduates beginning in 2025, overall aging of the U.S. population); increasing diversity of U.S., California; greater complexity of inclusion, recognition efforts;
- **Technological:** artificial intelligence and automation (effects on job markets/workforce skills); increase in online education and technology-influenced modalities/pedagogy; information security, data privacy and cyberthreats;
- **Economic:** Changing labor market/job skills; continuing convergence of media and technology sectors in L.A.’s “Silicon Beach”; possible rise in portable competencies, credentialing alternatives, and/or corporate “in-house” education and training;
- **Environmental:** Climate change (impacts globally and in LMU’s coastal location); energy costs and adaptations to alternative energy; risk of earthquakes, wildfires;
- **Political/Legal:** U.S. political polarization; information illiteracy and culture of “fake news”; volatility of regulations affecting higher education (federal/state/local); public policy and regulations affecting admissions, student aid.

Due to the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as nationwide calls to end police violence and address systemic racism, in the late spring the committee revisited our STEEP analysis results to update our findings in light of the changed context for higher education and the nation and world. Reviewing our work in this way increased our collective awareness of:

- **Social/Cultural:** Systemic racism as a fundamental challenge to overcome in our efforts to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice;
- **Technological:** Likely post-pandemic acceleration of trends increasing technology-dependent pedagogies and online and hybrid learning modalities;
- **Economic:** Short-term/potentially long-term economic downturn and increasing economic inequality globally and in U.S.;
- **Environmental:** Risk of infectious disease and other catastrophic disruptive events, and LMU’s vulnerability to losing access to campus and in-person interactions;
- **Political/Legal:** Increased political polarization; racial conflicts and potential backlash; federal/state/local emergency management of pandemic.

Building on the factors identified in the STEEP exercise, the Steering Committee then conducted a SWOT Analysis. SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) is another traditional planning method used to evaluate both internal (strengths and weaknesses vs. competitors) and external and uncontrollable (opportunities and threats) factors affecting an institution.

Some of the key features we identified include:

- **Strengths:** mission and service orientation; L.A. location and beautiful campus; caring community; holistic approach to education; recent enrollment trends;
- **Weaknesses:** tuition dependence/lack of revenue diversification; affordability relative to price point; innovation, relevance, agility of curriculum; brand strength;
- **Opportunities:** Artificial intelligence; anti-racist approach to diversity, equity and inclusion; alternative credentialing; online/hybrid education; “Silicon Beach”;
- **Threats:** Catastrophic disruptive events (pandemic, climate change, earthquake); enrollment environment/“demographic cliff”; doubts about value of four-year degree.

These are representative samples of some of the factors that featured prominently in our discussions. We share a fuller account of the results of these exercises in two charts in the [appendix](#) to this report for readers who would like to understand more fully how we arrived at the nine potential Strategic Issues we identified as most significant.

## **POTENTIAL STRATEGIC ISSUES**

- In this section, drawing on the results of the Environmental Scan, we ask the question, “What issues must we address to achieve the future we want?” We identify nine key issues the Steering Committee believes we need to consider as a community and we invite feedback from all stakeholders on the relative importance of urgency of these issues.

Strategic Issues are significant opportunities and/or challenges that must be addressed in order for the institution to remain viable, achieve its mission, and realize the vision.

The steering committee has identified the following opportunities and challenges as potential strategic issues for the plan to address. Please note: the nine issues are listed alphabetically by short title and are NOT presented in perceived order of importance.

## **ANTI-RACISM, DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

### *Improve Institutional Practices Supporting Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism*

LMU’s diversity of students, faculty, and staff partially reflects the city of Los Angeles that is our home, and it has steadily become more central to our institutional identity and strength. Embracing diversity is also foundational for our educational vision, ranging from offering strong and challenging academic and co-curricular programs that address issues of American identity and difference, to our ambition to broaden our students’ global horizons, to our belief that diversity is the font of human creativity and of enriched interpersonal engagement. Although improving our institutional diversity and equity outcomes has a broad base of support among faculty, staff, and leadership, overcoming systemic barriers to inclusion and success for all members of our community will require sustained effort and strategic choice. Building on initiatives from The [Anti-Racism Project](#) at LMU launched in 2020, we can leverage what we learn from systemic analyses of institutional structures and practices and commit to making LMU a national leader in creating inclusive learning experiences, an equitable work environment, and an exemplary, intentionally pluralist and anti-racist educational philosophy.

Some outcomes we might pursue and actions we might take include the following:

- Expand use of inclusive pedagogies
- Expand curricular coverage of diversity/equity/inclusion-related fields and issues
- Improve faculty/staff/administrative recruitment/retention/success among historically underrepresented groups
- Improve student recruitment/retention/success for historically underrepresented groups
- Improve intercultural awareness and competency by promoting continued internationalization, de-colonialization, and multicultural content of the curriculum
- Create a more equitable and inclusive campus climate and work environment.

## **ENROLLMENT SUCCESS**

### *Assure Sustainable Enrollment Success and Access and Affordability for Potential Students*

Strong and consistent enrollments are vital to our continued success at achieving our mission. LMU’s enrollment outcomes have been robust in recent years, with application numbers, selectivity rates

and diversity outcomes regularly improving. Yet circumstances suggest cause for caution about whether these trends will continue. Notably, the “demographic cliff” looms – a projected dramatic decrease in the total number of U.S. high-school graduates beginning around 2025 – with LMU likely to experience reverberations from intensifying nationwide competition for a shrinking applicant pool and a more active transfer student market. LMU’s relatively high tuition price point and comparatively low discount rate may make us vulnerable to these shifts. With a commitment to serve all parts of the upcoming college-bound student population, LMU will require greater financial aid resources and more competitive financial aid offers in order to recruit a diverse and high-potential prospect pool, nationally and internationally.

Some outcomes we might pursue and actions we might take include the following:

- Mitigate negative effects on access and enrollment success of our relatively high price point
- Set discount rate at preferred/ideal level for our evolving business model
- Control costs in order to limit tuition rises over time
- Maximize value provided by high-touch educational approach
- Stabilize/improve retention and graduation rates
- Build on recent gains to increase the diversity our student body across multiple dimensions
- Improve recruitment, retention and affordability for students from traditionally underrepresented groups
- Create stable enrollments in doctoral programs
- Appropriate mix of graduate/professional/certificate programs.

## **FACULTY/STAFF CAREER DESTINATION**

*Develop a Comprehensive Strategy to Recruit and Retain Top Talents and Make LMU an Attractive Career Destination for Faculty and Staff*

LMU’s core strength is its creative, dedicated and mission-focused faculty and staff. Yet LMU’s Los Angeles location, with its high cost of living and, especially, housing prices, makes recruiting, retaining and appropriately compensating our workforce a persistent challenge. While LMU has taken steps in recent years to begin to make salaries more competitive and to expand options for faculty housing, a considerable challenge remains – one that will only grow more difficult amidst the current economic downturn. Making LMU an attractive career destination for the faculty and staff we need to compete and to fulfill our mission will require strategic choices: determining where our most impactful compensation and benefits gaps are; what areas of faculty hiring need to be prioritized (both subject matter areas and tenure-line/clinical/part-time faculty distributions); what improvements to our institutional diversity need to be highlighted and supported; how to leverage the strengths of our organizational culture and mitigate its weaknesses; how to reimagine flexible and remote work to improve quality of life and potentially mitigate the expense impact of our Los Angeles location.

Some outcomes we might pursue and actions we might take include the following:

- Close our most significant and impactful salary gaps
- Improve faculty housing offerings to mitigate high cost of living in L.A.
- Implement flexible work strategies to attract and retain high-quality employees
- Enhance organizational climate
- Increase recruitment and retention of faculty, staff, and administrators from historically



underrepresented groups.

- Create a faculty staffing plan that appropriately proportions the presence of tenure-line, clinical and part-time faculty, to maximize faculty effectiveness and student success.

## **FIRST-CHOICE UNIVERSITY**

### ***Make LMU a First-Choice University for Potential Students by Strengthening LMU's National Reputation***

LMU, notwithstanding its many enrollment successes, is not yet considered a first-choice university by the majority of our prospective students and their families. Research shows that while LMU is generally well-regarded, especially regionally, it is not yet perceived as an elite or top-choice university by most – a particularly concerning fact given LMU's relatively high price point and comparatively modest financial aid offerings. To thrive, LMU must expand its public visibility and enhance its academic and institutional reputations; improve both the willingness of prospective students to invest in an LMU education as well as the perceived and actual value and cost-effectiveness of that investment; and cement our market position as a nationally renowned, first-choice option for either undergraduate or graduate/professional education.

Some outcomes we might pursue and actions we might take include the following:

- Implement a comprehensive strategy to stabilize our position in national rankings
- Identify specific high-potential focus areas to invest in to enhance LMU's academic and research reputation
- Improve endowed and current philanthropic support for scholarships to make LMU's financial aid offers more commensurate with those of our competitors.
- Invest appropriately in marketing and communications strategies to promote our national prominence and desirability to prospective students
- Invest appropriately in athletics success to strengthen LMU's national reputation.

## **GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION**

### ***Define a Competitive, Mission-Resonant Strategy for Graduate and Professional Education***

LMU's identity has long centered on our undergraduate programs, even while we have sustained achievement in some signature areas of professional education (including law and education) and recently expanded into new doctoral (educational leadership for social justice), master's (data analytics, legal studies) and non-degree/certificate programs. This centrality of the undergraduate experience has sometimes created a tendency to undersell or overlook our graduate programs and their students; it has also led to some degree of identity crisis as we try to reconcile the undergraduate and graduate/professional aspects of our institutional character. With our Carnegie re-classification as a "high research activity institution" and our corresponding "national university" status in rankings, our reputation and public profile will require stable success in key graduate and professional fields. In addition, with our financial foundation in undergraduate enrollments increasingly precarious (see (A)), we are more motivated than ever to seek greater diversification of revenue sources through new graduate and professional degree and non-degree programs.

Some outcomes we might pursue and actions we might take include the following:

- Identify areas for expansion (including select doctoral programs where appropriate) and contraction of current graduate/professional offerings
- Develop and market distinctive online/hybrid offerings to expand reach and impact of

graduate and professional education

- Expand interdisciplinary graduate/professional offerings in key areas of comparative strength and opportunity
- Improve support services for graduate/professional students
- Evolve graduate program governance to incentivize innovation at all levels of the academic hierarchy (provost, dean, program chair/director, faculty).

## **HOLISTIC STUDENT DEVELOPMENT**

### ***Expand Practices that Promote Holistic Student Development and Student Success***

A key part of LMU's signature value proposition is the holistic and profoundly interpersonal educational experience our students receive. Founded in our commitment to the education of the whole person, LMU's special commitment to academic mentoring, rich student life opportunities, and support for student success are a major reason why students and their families choose LMU over other, less expensive alternatives. Yet the cost and complexity of providing this holistic student experience continue to grow – from instruction to campus life to support for physical and mental health and well-being. LMU can sustain and expand its strength in these areas by strategically prioritizing those elements of our student experience most critical to recruitment, retention, academic success and whole-person flourishing and by further building an appropriate infrastructure, programs and practices to support those priorities.

Some outcomes we might pursue and actions we might take include the following:

- Improve student advising practices across the university
- Establish a student-based, university-wide constituency relations management system that allows for coordinated communication and student support processes across schools/colleges/administrative units
- Prioritize student health and well-being by providing comprehensive support structures and staffing and self-help tools
- Expand flexible learning options for students (curricular and co-curricular)
- Enhance academic support services to adequately meet growth in student needs
- Expand curricular and co-curricular offerings that promote student engagement with challenging issues such as systemic racism and political divisiveness.

## **INSTITUTIONAL “NIMBLENESS”**

### ***Enhance Institutional “Nimbleness” to Enable Innovation and Experimentation***

LMU's rapidly changing external environment will increasingly require the ability to adapt to changing technological, demographic, economic and socio-political trends. We aspire to exhibit creativity in our education and shared work, yet our organizational culture and structures do not always nurture innovation or adaptability. As the content and impact of human knowledge changes and as enhanced modes of teaching and learning become available, LMU must improve its flexibility and willingness to update, experiment and take calculated risks. As the world's wicked problems become increasingly complicated and multi-dimensional, LMU must further embrace interdisciplinary approaches of research and teaching and improve our ability to collaborate across functional and disciplinary boundaries. As the university's approach to its future becomes more intentional and strategic, we must enhance our practices of consultation and shared governance to more effectively arrive at clear decisions about long-term priorities and deliberate more inclusively and creatively about our ends and means.

Some outcomes we might pursue and actions we might take include the following:

- Streamline academic review process for new programs in fast-moving fields
- Dismantle or overcome organizational silos
- Improve structures for interdisciplinary collaboration
- Improve adaptability to rapidly changing external conditions (emergency management, environmental responsibility)
- Support and motivate a culture of experimentation, innovation, and risk-taking
- Be more intentional about centralized/decentralized decision-making to promote a more efficiently run organization
- Improve effectiveness of shared governance practices and consultative decision-making.

## **INTEGRATIVE/INTERDISCIPLINARY THINKING**

### ***Establish Curricular and Co-Curricular Excellence in Integrative and Interdisciplinary Thinking***

In a world where more and more functions will be performed by automation or artificial intelligence, there will be increasing need for those distinctively human virtues of mind and character that liberal arts higher education, especially in the Catholic tradition, has always emphasized. LMU has the opportunity to distinguish itself as a university that prepares its students for this ever-evolving future by foregrounding interdisciplinary and integrative thinking as the hallmark of an LMU education. By leveraging existing interdisciplinary strengths, such as the undergraduate core curriculum, as well as expanding interdisciplinary offerings in graduate and professional fields and recruiting faculty in areas of interdisciplinary strength, LMU can affirm its commitment to this approach. Likewise, by further extending opportunities for global learning experiences and by intentionally positioning ourselves as leaders in educating for imagination, creativity, and ethical discernment, LMU can attract and form students with the integrative thinking capacities it will take to solve the world's biggest challenges.

Some outcomes we might pursue and actions we might take include the following:

- Strengthen the curriculum for the digital age by focusing on those uniquely human capabilities that will be in greatest demand during the ongoing AI/automation revolution (i.e. "robot-proof" skills and capacities)
- Imagination- and creativity-focused education
- Educating for ethical discernment
- Leverage interdisciplinary dimensions of core curriculum
- Develop new interdisciplinary graduate and professional programs
- Continue and expand our global-local initiatives in the curriculum and other learning experiences to promote globally conscious perspectives
- Build areas of interdisciplinary excellence directed toward solving the world's most complex and intractable challenges (aka "wicked problems") in issue areas that resonate with LMU's mission and values.

## TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION

### *Leverage the Potential of Technology and Information in Instruction, Student Support, and University Operations*

LMU's ability to appropriately leverage technology to accelerate in strategically desirable directions will determine how quickly the university might realize the ambitions ultimately articulated in this strategic plan. The importance of technology-enhanced education has become something of a higher education cliché, but it remains true that constant and rapid technological change has become to a considerable extent the defining feature of our age. LMU boasts many advantages in this respect: a comparatively strong technological infrastructure; a culture of using academic technology that is increasingly active and inventive; and strong academic and partnership connections to new media enterprises in L.A.'s Silicon Beach corridor, anchored by our new Playa Vista campus. LMU has the opportunity to turn a promising but not yet fully realized strength into a true area of distinction by leveraging our 2020 experiences with online instruction to support technology-enhanced instruction as an ongoing feature of LMU's signature academic excellence and whole-person education. Our graduates, in order to achieve their dreams and impact the world for good, will increasingly need to navigate the new literacies of the digital age. By committing to an ongoing technological revolution in our academic content, pedagogy and purpose, we can prepare those students for the ever-changing world they will encounter. Technology also presents the potential for significantly better collaboration and information sharing across organizational units and an improved experience of all members of the community with the "digital university."

Some outcomes we might pursue and actions we might take include the following:

- Expand online/hybrid offerings in graduate education
- Expand online/hybrid capabilities in undergraduate instruction
- Improve faculty and student effectiveness in employing technology-assisted pedagogies
- Expand curricular/co-curricular opportunities for students to engage with the new literacies of the digital world
- Scale across the university technology implementation and improvement approaches that place the needs of the end users at the center of solution considerations
- Ensure appropriate investment in IT, media services, professional development and course and program design to support all forms of technology-enhanced education.

## VISION

- In this section, considering all that has come before, we address the question, "Who do we want to become?" We offer an initial and provisional answer in the form of a draft Vision Statement for the strategic plan. As with the Strategic Issues section, we are particularly soliciting feedback from all community stakeholders on the draft Vision Statement: how well it captures or does not capture a compelling vision of the future LMU we aspire to become, and what elements may need to be added or refined to sharpen and enhance that vision. Please note that we fully expect to revise this statement based on campus input and the selection of specific focus areas for the draft plan.

A **Strategic Vision** is a description of what an institution will look like if it achieves its full potential. It expresses the value the institution provides to the larger world and articulates how the institution can fulfill its mission and values in a way that differentiates the institution from its competitors.

Thus, the Strategic Vision provides coherence to the institution's struggle to address its Strategic Issues. It articulates a story about where the institution is going and shows how the institution must

seize specific opportunities and overcome specific challenges in order to reach that destination.

- Statement of Strategic Vision

- The steering committee proposes the following draft statement of a strategic vision for the plan:

### **Vision Statement**

Located in the City of Angels, Los Angeles, California, Loyola Marymount University embodies our Catholic heritage in the Jesuit-Marymount traditions in a liberal arts undergraduate education grounded in faith, service, and social justice with a commitment to outstanding graduate and professional programs. LMU will prepare students to achieve lives of purpose, character, and integrity through a robust curricular and co-curricular education. Students will be able to respond effectively to a rapidly changing global-local community with integrative and interdisciplinary thinking informed by ethical discernment and intellectual and creative imagination to address the world's greatest needs with impact. These accomplishments are enlivened by an innovative and collaborative faculty, staff and leadership team; a commitment to be an antiracist organization that celebrates diversity, equity and inclusion with a focus on access and opportunity—and an understanding that diversity is the font of creativity and human enrichment. Such will be the hallmark of our success and national recognition: demonstrating the enduring and increasing value of a holistic education in the LMU informed traditions for a world in need of compassion, healing, and formation for social transformation.

## **CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS**

- In this section, we describe our outreach efforts to obtain community feedback on the preliminary report during September 2020 and sketch the steps ahead as the process of drafting and approving a strategic plan moves forward.

Throughout September, we will engage the community through a series of outreach efforts to elicit responses to the draft vision statement and to help us zero in on the highest priority strategic issues. In particular, we will invite community members to participate in our online communal discernment sessions, in which facilitators will guide small-group conversations using adapted Ignatian discernment techniques to elicit responses to the draft vision statement and help us zero in on what should be the highest priority strategic issues. Additionally, Steering Committee members will visit leadership groups of faculty, staff, administrators, students and other stakeholders to gain insights from the diverse perspectives offered by those groups.

This feedback on the preliminary report will assist the Steering Committee in producing a draft plan that will prioritize the most important strategic issues for LMU and to formulate goals and actions that will help us address them. We intend to share a draft of the plan with the full community by the end of the fall semester.

## APPENDIX

### **STEEP Analysis**

STEEP Analysis (Social, Technological, Economic, Environmental, and Political factors) is a traditional strategic planning method used to evaluate the spectrum of external forces that are impacting society as a whole and that may affect the institution.

Through this exercise, the Steering Committee identified the factors in the chart below as those most relevant to LMU's current situation:

#### **Social/Cultural:**

- Demographic shifts (especially the “demographic cliff” of fewer U.S. high school graduates beginning in 2025 and the overall aging of the U.S. population)
- Continuing Latina/o population growth and its impacts on the college age population
- Increasing U.S. diversity across many dimensions
- Increasing complexity of inclusion and recognition amidst growing pluralism
- Systemic racism in U.S. culture and institutions
- Continuing/increasing globalization (of everything)
- Questioning of the value of a four-year/liberal arts college degrees
- Stronger reliance on/expectations for mental health support
- Gender fluidity/LGBTQ+ recognition
- Increasing secularization in U.S. – fewer Catholics, more “nones”

#### **Technological:**

- Artificial intelligence/automation: effects on job market (changes in job types/skill requirements)
- Artificial intelligence/automation: effects on LMU workforce (changes in job types/skill requirements)
- Social media
- Expectations for “seamlessness” (wireless, navigation, packaging, delivery, and automatic response)
- Rising demand for technology skills
- Changes in learning and teaching modalities/pedagogy (and training needs for faculty)
- Increase in online education across higher education
- Networking and infrastructure changes (e.g. 5G, bandwidth, etc.)
- Information security/data privacy
- Cyberthreats/cyberwarfare
- Technological interdependence, internationalization

#### **Economic:**

- Recent economic downturn/recession
- Increasing inequality – globally and in U.S.

- Labor market changes, new desired skills for graduates
- Increasing prevalence of portable competencies/credentialing alternatives (e.g. “badges”)
- Continuing convergence of media and technology sectors in L.A.’s “Silicon Beach”
- Rising tuition (across higher education and at LMU-like institutions, relative to higher education more broadly)
- Rising expense of LMU’s interpersonal style of education (e.g. small class-sizes, competitive compensation, health care and benefit costs, etc.)
- Changes in West L.A. property values/costs of living
- More aggressive admission/financial aid competition among universities
- Potential rise in corporate “in-house” education/training
- Potential efficiencies from outsourcing services

**Environmental:**

- Climate change effects: global impacts
- Climate change effects: LMU’s coastal location
- Risk of infectious disease
- Risk of major earthquake
- Fires
- Energy costs and requirements
- Adaptations to alternative energies
- L.A. urbanization and traffic
- L.A. homelessness

**Political/Legal:**

- Intensified U.S. political polarization
- Information illiteracy/culture of “fake news”
- Expanding regulations affecting higher education (L.A., California, and U.S.)
- Title IX applications and compliance
- Volatility of legal/regulatory parameters
- Increased risk from individual and class-action litigation
- Student aid legislation
- Government subsidy of public education
- Changes to admissions/financial aid regulations (federal, NACAC, test-optional admissions practices, etc.)
- Immigration politics/policies/patterns
- Legislative gridlock
- Aftermath of 2020 election

## SWOT Analysis

SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) is another traditional planning method used to evaluate both internal (strengths and weaknesses) and external (opportunities and threats) factors affecting an institution. Building on the factors identified in the STEEP exercise, the Steering Committee conducted a SWOT analysis exercise and identified the factors in the chart below as those most relevant to LMU's current situation:

### STRENGTHS

- Campus and Operational Infrastructure
- Caring Community
- Diversity of Student Body
- Enrollment Successes
- "High Touch" Interpersonal Experience
- Holistic Approach to Education
- Los Angeles Location
- Mission and Ignatian Tradition
- Professional Preparation
- Service and Social Justice Orientation

### WEAKNESSES

- Affordability Relative to Price Point
- Brand Strength and Market Positioning
- Costliness of "High Touch" Approach to Education
- Innovation, Relevance and Agility of Curriculum
- Mental Health and Well-Being (Increasing Challenges in Meeting Student Needs)
- Online Education (Market Positioning of Signature Graduate Programs)
- Proliferation of Initiatives/Lack of Strategic Focus
- Risk Averse Culture
- Tuition Dependence/Lack of Revenue Diversification

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Alternative Credentialing and Modular/Non-Degree Programs
- Artificial Intelligence (Ability to Improve Work Modes)
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Opportunity for Leadership Role)
- Graduate Programs
- Imagination and Creativity-Focused Education
- Innovative Pedagogies
- Institutional Adaptability
- Interdisciplinarity
- Internationalization and Immigration
- Los Angeles Location
- National University/R2 Status
- Online/Hybrid Education
- Silicon Beach/Playa Vista Engagement

### THREATS

- Admissions Environment and the "Demographic Cliff"
- Artificial Intelligence (Impact on Job Markets)
- Catastrophic Disruptive Events (Climate Change, Pandemics, Etc.)
- Economic Downturn
- L.A. Cost of Living
- Political Polarization (U.S.)
- Remote Work and Remote Learning (Potential Culture Shift)
- Reputation and Rankings (Vulnerability to Shifts In)
- Tuition Rises (With Increasing Costs)
- Devaluing of Higher Education (Doubts About in Broader Culture)