

University of Louisville Identity, Values, and Principles

In the fall of 2017, the Provost's Budget Advisory Committee (BAC), which was widely representative of all campus constituencies, prepared this articulation of UofL's identity, values, and principles. The objective was to clearly state what we took to be central to UofL's identity for the purpose of giving direction to structural budget decisions. The idea behind this document is that identity and values should drive budget decisions, rather than letting budget decisions determine our identity and values.

The BAC is no longer a functioning committee. In the absence of the BAC, the Faculty Senate has finalized and endorsed this articulation of UofL's identity, values, and principles.

UofL's Mission

The University of Louisville pursues excellence and inclusiveness in its work to educate and serve its community through:

1. teaching diverse undergraduate, graduate, and professional students in order to develop engaged citizens, leaders, and scholars,
2. practicing and applying research, scholarship and creative activity, and
3. providing engaged service and outreach that improve the quality of life for local and global communities.

The University is committed to achieving preeminence as a nationally recognized metropolitan research university.

Identity: What is Our Self-Understanding?

What does this mission mean in practice? To answer this, it is useful to be clear about UofL's self-understanding of what we do. The University of Louisville's identity as a premier metropolitan research university is anchored in engagement with community, beginning from our local community and extending to the Commonwealth, the nation, and the world. We understand the purpose of community engagement to be "the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good."¹

Putting Identity into Practice: Elements of Excellence

University of Louisville's engagement with local to global communities is manifested by striving for excellence in both its academic aims and its ethical practices. Through the articulation of what academic and ethical excellence means for UofL, this document aims to function as guide for strategic resource allocation, for both new and existing resources.

There are nine specific ways we strive for excellence in two domains:

Enacting **academic excellence** means:

¹ Swearer Center for Public Service at Brown University. (2017). Defining Community Engagement. Providence, RI. Retrieved August 3, 2017 <https://www.brown.edu/academics/college/swearer/carnegie-classification>

1. Creating a learning environment that promotes student success – success in academic, personal, and civic dimensions, and over the learning continuum.
2. Providing opportunities for experiential learning that integrate student learning with the wider world.
3. Emphasizing education and scholarship that bridge local to global contexts.
4. Educating a workforce for the 21st century
5. Producing new knowledge and understandings through scholarship, research, and creative activity – especially in tying this work to student success in academic, personal, and civic dimensions, and over the learning continuum.

Enacting ***ethical excellence*** means:

6. Enacting social justice, diversity, and inclusion – which is a necessary dimension of the engagement with community and valuing people, both inside and outside the university
7. Developing partnerships that promote community service and engagement
8. Consistently committing to solving the problems, and meeting the needs, of the Louisville community.
9. Practicing responsible and ethical stewardship, and developing new resources and revenue streams available for achieving academic and ethical excellence.

What Makes UofL Distinctive?

The essential question is: What makes the University of Louisville distinctive? The answer will inform us about how the University of Louisville can achieve excellence in its own unique way in the nine elements of excellence identified above. The ways we are, or can be, distinctive will integrate multiple elements of excellence from above. UofL has a foundation for building or enhancing excellence in the following areas:

1. Engagement with local to global communities, with a focus on the city of Louisville
2. Programs that provide an outstanding and holistic experience for students that weave together exemplary teaching, unique academic curricula, campus life, and student engagement
3. A vibrant campus life that involves a metropolitan experience
4. Academic programs and research in health care with a special concern for health equity. These involve both an external dimension focused on the metropolitan area, and an internal dimension with award-winning wellness programs
5. Graduate and professional programs that effectively translate research, scholarship, and creative activity into academic excellence in the training of the next generation of scholars and professionals.
6. A serious commitment to access, inclusion, and equity for historically under-represented populations. This is especially a concern given our metropolitan location and mission.

Resourcing for Distinction

The next step was to construct an instrument useful for applying this self-understanding of our distinctiveness to resource allocation. This was accomplished in the late fall of 2017/winter of 2018.