

June 19, 2024

Mission Integration Council

Report to the Board of Trustees

UNIVERSITY OF
SAINT JOSEPH

USJ

Mission Integration Council Members

- **Lynnette Colón, LPC** - Director, Community Engagement & Spiritual Life
- **Sr. Beth Fischer, RSM** – Special Advisor to the President For Mission.
- **Benjamin Peters, Ph.D.** – Professor of Religious Studies and Theology
- **Gerri Roberts, J.D.** – Trustee
- **Fr. Joseph Cheah, Ph.D.** – Professor of Religious Studies and Theology
- **Janet Knecht, Ph.D.** -Associate Professor, Director of Traditional Pre-Licensure Program (Nursing)
- **Kaitlin Walsh, Ph.D.** - Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs, Teaching and Learning Center/Office of Institutional Effectiveness





Mission Integration Core Areas:

Space, Art, Symbolism and Environment

Goals and Outcomes

Space, symbols, art and the physical environment cultivate inspiration of the ever-present Holy and Sacred in ways that reflect our Mission Identity and Story.

Strategic Integration

- Dialogue about and consideration of the contribution to human development and well-being that space, art, symbol and the environment provide are encouraged.
- Periodic Review of environment to enhance symbols, art, space, etc.



Mission Integration Core Areas:

Inclusive Worship, Reflection, and Ritual

Goals and Outcomes

Worship, ritual practices, and reflection are inclusive of all and tie to the ministry identity of the university. Catholic Sacramental life is understood as essential at the university.

Strategic Integration

- Campus Ministry responds to all students, providing liturgical opportunities, prayer, and spiritual reflection including ecumenical and interfaith care for the pastoral and faith journeys of all students.
- Worship, reflection, and ritual opportunities offered for all members of the campus community and reflect a spirit of inclusion.

Tactical Information

Includes prayer and rituals done during Mercy Week activities.

Space, Art, Symbolism, and Environment

- Mercy Crosses
- John J. Stack Teaching Excellence Award
- USJ Core Value Banners
- Chapel
- Art Museum
- Common Theme
- Environment:
 - Embracing our Environment
 - Environmental Science Graduate Certificate
- Undergraduate Awards
- Lectures



Embracing
OUR *Environment*
INTEGRATING THE NATURAL WORLD WITH THE ARTS



Embracing our Environment

- Focused on empowering students' understanding, empathy and connection to the environment.
- Speakers and events of diverse lenses: Sciences, Humanities, Arts, Religion.
- Supports Mercy Mission and Core Values of Respect/Integrity, Multiculturalism/Diversity, and Compassionate Service.

At the Core of a lot of environmental thought is the idea of the Gaia hypothesis which basically states that the planet Earth is in itself an organism and entity and that all of its species- humans, plants, animals, and bacteria are all part of the body of the Earth. And so, if you disrespect any component of the Earth, in essence, you are disrespecting yourself.

- Dr. Kirsten Martin, Associate Professor of Biology



Inclusive Worship, Reflection, and Ritual

- Interfaith Commencement Blessing
- Academic Rituals
 - Commencement
 - Pinnings and Hoodings
 - Blessing of Hands - Nursing
 - White Coat Ceremonies
 - Convocation
 - Investiture
- Faith Formation: NetVUE grant, “Fostering Leadership for Communities of Faith” (\$36,663)



Inclusive Worship, Reflection, and Ritual

- Ecumenical Celebrations
 - Festival of Lights
- Catholic Worship
 - Sunday Evening Masses
 - Adoration Wednesdays (Lent 2024)
 - Ash Wednesday Mass
 - Feast Days: All Saints Day Mass, Immaculate Conception
 - Baccalaureate Mass
- Islamic Celebrations
 - Ramadan Celebrations/Dialogues Panel (2024)
 - Iftar Dinner
- Hindu Celebrations
 - Holi
 - Diwali Celebration



Recommendations

Space, Arts, Symbolism, and Environment

- Voices of Mercy Book
- Sr. Mary Joan Cook Book
- Mercy Cross Focus
- Increased engagement with Art Museum campus sculptures
- More visible USJ historical display, including “explainers” around campus buildings
- Sr. Mary Ellen Murphy Faculty Scholarship Award Display
- PRAISE Awards Display
- CMHE Higher Education Institution Map
- Do an audit of University Archives

Recommendations

Space, Arts, Symbolism, and Environment

- Exploring Mercy Associates & Mercy Volunteers
- Having a Mission Integration Council-sponsored event
- Creating resources on USJ history for student leaders and campus tour guides
- Framed portraits of the McGoverns
- Catherine McAuley Lecture
- Enhanced support for Embracing Our Environment programming





Recommendations

Inclusive Worship, Reflection, and Rituals

- Explore needs from our Jewish community members for additional support/resources
- Increase connections with community faith-based resources and organizations
- Increase or encourage the creation of diverse religious-affiliated groups
- Promote the Multifaith Prayer Room (Mercy 304)
- Identify outdoor spaces that can be used as multifaith gathering sacred spaces.





Questions?

Thank you!

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