

Fall 2023 Strategic Framework update



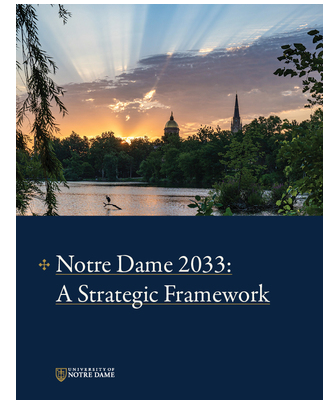
December 18, 2023

Dear colleagues,

Having concluded the fall semester, we write to share with you some updates on the progress we've made on the University's new Strategic Framework.

Much of our progress has been foundational. We've publicly launched the framework, developed procedures for new ways of working together, recruited leaders, established committees, built new cross-campus partnerships, engaged potential benefactors, identified and begun renovating space, and started to determine the metrics by which we will measure our progress.

More needs to be done and we realize how much vital, ongoing work does not fall under the categories listed below. Still, working together we have made significant progress on the goals enunciated in the framework. We need to sustain this focus and shared commitment to help Notre Dame achieve its highest potential in the coming decade.



Engaging campus

Since releasing the framework on August 30, we have engaged the campus community through 20 outreach events, including the President's faculty address; three staff town halls; listening sessions for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students; and presentations to various groups of campus and community stakeholders, including advisory councils, the Holy Cross community at Notre Dame, and a number of divisions, from Athletics to Finance to University Relations. At each presentation, we've been impressed by the level of enthusiasm for our shared vision to be the leading global Catholic research university, on par with but distinct from the world's



best private research universities. And we remain grateful for the many suggestions and questions we've received, particularly those encouraging us to think more as an institution.

Engagement with the framework has remained high throughout the semester, with more than 1,500 paper copies distributed, 5,200 downloads, and continued website activity well beyond the launch date. There were more than 60,000 visits to strategicframework.nd.edu in the first three months, and the number of new visitors across the first 90 days was up 77 percent compared to the same period for the 2014 strategic plan. We recently [added a new section](#) to help share the latest news and progress.

Launching Poverty, Ethics & Democracy

In September, we [announced the directors](#) of the first three University-wide initiatives—on democracy, ethics, and poverty. In the weeks that followed, they assembled executive committees that include deans, department chairs, center and institute directors, and key faculty and staff; met with potential partners; and held kickoff meetings to discuss goals, objectives, and next steps. All three are off to a promising start. You can see the membership of the executive committees and follow their progress on the initiative web pages:



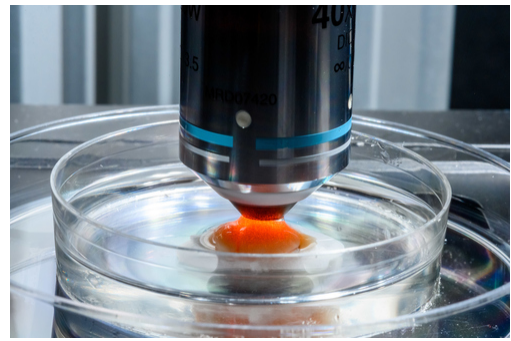
- [Democracy Initiative](#)
- [Ethics Initiative](#)
- [Poverty Initiative](#)

We've received many questions about how to get more involved, so the Provost's Office is planning special editions of the interdisciplinary Connections series this spring focused on the first three strategic initiatives. These events will be opportunities to learn more about the work of the initiatives and connect with other members of the Notre Dame community interested in contributing to the work. Mark your calendars for the dates below and look for more information early next semester.

- Thursday, February 8, 4:30–6 p.m.—Poverty
- Tuesday, March 5, 4:30–6 p.m.—Ethics
- Thursday, April 18, 4:30–6 p.m.—Democracy

Advancing the next initiatives

Planning is also moving ahead on several other University-wide strategic priorities outlined in the framework.



Health and well-being

In November, we worked with the deans of the Colleges of Science and Engineering and the Office of Research to bring in an external facilitator to guide more than 30 of our academic leaders in biomedical research fields in defining the next steps in a bioengineering and life science initiative called BELS. Over two days, faculty and staff from several departments, centers, and institutes discussed the vision for BELS and the infrastructure and activities it will promote. In partnership with the Provost's Office, Deans Patricia Culligan and Santiago Schnell are leading the next phase of this process.

Another facet of our health and well-being initiative focuses on mental health, part of a unique partnership between the Department of Psychology and the Division of Student Affairs aimed at raising the level of mental health care provided to students, enhancing faculty research and graduate training in clinical psychology, and addressing the nationwide mental health crisis through evidence-based interventions. Plans are underway for a new psychology clinic and clinical studies building on Hill Street in South Bend that will unite the work of the William J. Shaw Center for Children and Families, the Suicide Prevention Initiative—Research, Intervention, and Training (SPIRIT), and a new substance use initiative, while expanding the availability of mental health counseling services to residents of the South Bend area in alignment with the framework's commitment to our region.

Climate change and sustainability

As we consider our University strategy around climate change and sustainability, we begin with several advantages. These include the topic's centrality to Catholic social thought—recently reemphasized by Pope Francis—and academic strengths across the University. Relying on assessments made in the theme advisory committee report and white papers submitted by deans from several colleges and schools, we are working with academic leaders across the institution to plot a path forward.

Data and computational science

This month, a task force on Data and Computational Science began developing a plan for data and computational science research and data and digital literacy education at Notre Dame. We are grateful to Dean Sarah Mustillo for agreeing to lead the task force and to the task force members from the Colleges of Engineering, Science, Arts & Letters, and Mendoza, as well as colleagues from the Hesburgh Libraries, the Office of Information Technologies, Notre Dame Research, and the Graduate School.

Humanities

The College of Arts & Letters, through the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts, has announced a call for proposals for an inaugural cluster of [Research Innovation Labs](#), to begin work during the 2024–25 academic year. These labs encourage collaborative research projects that focus either on “big questions” in the humanities approached from transdisciplinary perspectives or cross-disciplinary research questions related to the campus-wide strategic themes of poverty, democracy, and ethics.

Arts

The [Raclin Murphy Museum of Art](#) opened its doors this month, a tremendously exciting moment for Notre Dame, our local community, and our efforts in the arts. The College of Arts & Letters, the School of Architecture, the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, and the Raclin Murphy Museum of Art have collaborated on an awareness campaign and a website, arts.nd.edu, that invites the campus and the community to engage with Notre Dame’s vibrant arts scene. Planning is underway for the next steps in the [Arts Initiative](#).

South Bend and the region

Together, the University and key partners in the South Bend region have taken several instrumental steps to advance a vision for a more prosperous future. At the regional level, final efforts are underway for a \$75 million [Indiana READI 2.0](#) grant request to support millions of dollars of investment in quality of place amenities, infrastructure, and housing. Closer to campus, Executive Vice



President Shannon Cullinan joined South Bend Mayor James Mueller ’04 and several community and business leaders, including developer Devereaux Peters ’12, to announce a collaborative process to envision the future of downtown South Bend.

Animating the vision are several tangible milestones. [The University’s acquisition of the former *South Bend Tribune* building](#) joins nearly \$500 million of new investments underway in downtown South Bend. The first portion of [a new pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly trail between campus and downtown](#) is complete, and the entire project will be finished by next fall. The launch of the [1842 Fund](#), a venture capital initiative associated with the IDEA Center, along with the University’s inclusion in [two new federally funded “Tech Hubs,”](#) represent new channels to attract and grow advanced jobs in our community.

Undergraduate education

Undergraduate education remains the University's greatest strength, and we are moving forward on several related projects outlined in the framework.



- As part of its commitment to on-campus residential life, the University recently announced plans for the construction of two new undergraduate halls on the south side of campus.
- In response to the framework's call to reconceive the required Moreau course for first-year students as a deeper collaboration between the Division of Student Affairs, Office of Undergraduate Education, and the colleges and schools, Bill Mattison, a professor in the Department of Theology, was appointed as the inaugural faculty director of the Moreau Program. As faculty director, Mattison's first months will be spent mapping out the future of the Moreau Program, with a goal of implementing initial changes in the fall of 2024.
- Notre Dame Learning, led by Vice President and Associate Provost Ron Metoyer, has just launched its first Foundational Course Transformation Academy. The goal is to take courses touching hundreds of students—first up is introductory physics—and charge a faculty/staff team to use data analytics, the best pedagogical techniques, and other tools to significantly enhance student learning across multiple sections.
- Our shared mission requires us to ensure that every student has the chance to flourish at Notre Dame, particularly those from under-resourced educational systems and backgrounds. Vice President and Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education Fr. Dan Groody, C.S.C, and Erin Klawitter in the newly created AVP role in the Office of Undergraduate Studies, are coordinating efforts to implement the recommendations of a committee led by Provost Emeritus Tom Burish. In late October, leaders from across the campus representing 26 different projects came together for a kickoff meeting. Some of these student support efforts were already underway, but this new coordinated effort helps to ensure that the time, energy, and resources we pour into this work are allocated in the most efficient and effective way to the benefit of our students.
- These efforts are complemented by the work of the Center for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion within the Division of Student Affairs, which opened its doors in August. The center exists to provide a safe and welcoming environment where students can foster a culture of belonging, collaborate to address issues that are important to them, and enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts at Notre Dame.

Investing in people

Support for students, faculty, and staff

In September, the University announced plans for a new on-site child care facility to provide child care for faculty, staff, and students with children between the ages of 6 weeks and 3 years old. In addition, the University has increased the adoption credit for faculty and staff from \$3,000 per adoption to a maximum of \$7,500, increased parental leave for staff from four weeks to six weeks starting Jan. 1, and developed centralized resources for all family services, including a new family services consultant in Human Resources.



University leaders have been actively exploring various financial aid options to enhance support for our undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral scholars. As one example of our efforts, Graduate School Dean Michael Hildreth recently announced that beginning in the 2024–25 academic year, the University will take a significant step forward to support graduate student families by extending the health insurance subsidy to cover spouses and children for those graduate students who qualify for the subsidy. Hildreth is also working closely with the deans, faculty colleagues, and leaders from the University's Finance Division to study where the addition of postdoctoral researchers in particular areas would best support our growing research aspirations and to explore other opportunities, beyond health care, to better support our Ph.D. students.

Vice President for Undergraduate Enrollment Micki Kidder and colleagues from across the University are also weighing trade-offs and opportunities in undergraduate financial aid. This year, Notre Dame will award more than \$207 million in undergraduate need-based financial aid. We are exploring both need-blind admissions for international students—which would assist our efforts to construct a more global community on our campus—and reducing or eliminating loans in undergraduate financial aid packages.

Communities of practice

As we strive to think and work more collaboratively, communities of practice are a valuable approach. Vice President for Institutional Transformation Hugh Page has been leading the way with the Diversity and Inclusion Practitioners Group, a community of practice dedicated to making Notre Dame a truly inclusive community.

This fall, the Faculty Administration Support and Training (FAST) Community of Practice was launched to create a more supportive system for the University staff members who administer the faculty appointment process. More than 100 individuals are a part of this community designed to share knowledge, enhance skills, and increase collaboration among faculty administration professionals. Other efforts in this vein include communities

of practice organized out of the Provost's Office for academic communications leaders and for academic finance directors.

Looking ahead

Vice President and Associate Provost for Internationalization Michael Pippenger and the members of the deans' council will participate in a two-day January retreat to discuss Notre Dame's global strategy. Informed by the global theme advisory committee report, the college and school plans, and the strategic framework, we will develop specific initiatives that will advance our goal to



become a more global community on campus, develop richer educational experiences that prepare our students for global citizenship, enter into more research collaborations with colleagues outside the United States, and nurture more consequential institutional relationships across the world.



Construction is moving ahead on the second McCourtney building in the East Campus Research Complex for interdisciplinary science and engineering. Faculty and staff from several different departments and institutes will move into the new building when it opens a year from now in January 2025. Roughly 30 percent of the 200,000-square-foot building will remain unassigned and available to support future hires and anticipated growth in environmental and human health research. The Provost's Office is working with the deans and Notre Dame Research to establish a strategy for the best use of that space.

We have much to celebrate. But we are acutely aware of how much we must accomplish. We hope you will join us in thanking all of our colleagues at all levels of the University who are working together to advance our shared vision as the world's leading global Catholic research university. We wish everyone a safe and joyous Christmas holiday and look forward to working with you upon our return in January.

Sincerely,

John T. McGreevy
Charles and Jill Fischer Provost

Shannon Cullinan
Executive Vice President



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