

# **The Ann Ida Gannon, BVM, Center for Women and Leadership**

## **Strategic Plan 2005 - 2010**

### **Foreword**

The Ann Ida Gannon, BVM, Center for Women and Leadership, emerged from the desire to honor the heritage of Mundelein College in educating women and from the longing of Loyola women to strengthen academic opportunities for women.

In 1991, a committee chaired by Sr. Carolyn Farrell, BVM, and comprised of Loyola faculty, generated initial plans for the creation of center that focused on women's academic work and highlighted research and programming. These initial ideas evolved into the Institute for Women and Leadership and the Women and Leadership Archives. In 1993, the Gannon Center was established to support these operations and to strengthen ties with Loyola's Women's Studies Program.

During the past 12 years, these units focused on their individual missions, while maintaining a spirit of collaboration. The Women's Studies Program adheres to the academic standards and policies of the College of Arts and Science and will continue to review and strengthen its offerings as it moves into the future. The Women and Leadership Archives remains connected to the University library and will review and refine its mission when appropriate. The work of the Institute for Women and Leadership is overseen by the Director of the Gannon Center and is often identified by the general title of the Center.

As a distinct and identifiable space, the Center consolidates energy and resources around women's education and concerns. The Director of the Gannon Center for Women and Leadership coordinates the joint work of the three units, and interest from the Center's endowment supports different activities and programs offered by each area. The success the Center has achieved in addressing relevant issues and concerns demonstrates both the commitment of each unit and the strength of the collaboration.

The Strategic Plan for the Gannon Center for Women and Leadership--presented in the pages that follow--sets the direction for the general administration of the Gannon Center and for the Institute for Women and Leadership.

I am most grateful to the Strategic Planning Task Force for their generous offering of talent, time and expertise in the completion of this important task. Karen Szymanski deserves abundant recognition for the facilitation of the project and the written report. Also, I offer a word of gratitude to Associate Provost John Frendreis for requesting a Strategic Plan and for his support through the process. Given the work of the Task Force and the Associate Provost's support, the Gannon Center for Women and Leadership has a clear direction for the next five years.

Carolyn Farrell, BVM

## **Strategic Plan 2005 - 2010**

### **Introduction**

In mid-2004, Carolyn Farrell, BVM, Associate VP and Director of the Ann Ida Gannon, BVM, Center for Women and Leadership, determined the need to develop a strategic plan for the Center. Guiding the Center since 1993, Farrell spent the first 8 years of her directorship focused on three strategic areas:

- Ensuring the survival of the Center through the raising of a substantial endowment, funded in large part by Mundelein College alumnae.
- Building the foundations of the Center, so that it could operate successfully within the environment of Loyola University and in the larger community.
- Negotiating an agreement for renovating Piper Hall and making it the new home of the Gannon Center.

By 2004, the Gannon Center had achieved substantial success in all areas.

- The Center's endowment has reached \$4.5 million.
- The Institute for Women and Leadership has sponsored a number of creative projects and programs.
- Loyola's Women's Studies Program has developed strong ties with the Center and receives support for the Gannon Fellows and for limited programming.
- The Women and Leadership Archives has established a strong core collection.
- By mid-2005, the Piper Hall renovation will be complete, and the Gannon Center will be able to relocate into its new home in that building.
- The Gannon Center has become a focal point on the campus, so talented faculty and students, as well as resources, can address critical issues of concern to women.

The Director, Loyola administrators, and the Strategic Planning Task Force are now looking to the future. Their long-range vision is to create a Center of Excellence for Women and Leadership in the Midwest. Such a vision will take some time to realize, and it will require a clear strategic direction, substantive planning, and consistent execution. The first step in this process is to develop the Gannon Center's first 5-year strategic plan.

In developing this plan, the Strategic Planning Task Force chose a 5-year timeframe. During this period, solid progress can be made in developing the Gannon Center as a Center of Excellence. Strategic goals, as well as supporting tactics and plans, will be easier to accomplish and measure within a contained span, and it will be easier to maintain focus and coordinate critical activities. At the same time, the plan allows for flexibility and adaptation so that new realities and opportunities can be addressed successfully.

## Participants and Methodology

Farrell invited a team of 7 individuals from Loyola University Chicago and the surrounding educational community to assist in developing the plan:

Senior faculty members included Anne Figert (Sociology), Ann Harrington (History, Asian Studies), Susan Ross (Theology), and Jasmine Tata (Management).

Kent Stucky, Associate VP for Advancement, represented administrative staff.

Mundelein Alumna included Mary Dwyer, Ph.D. (President, IES), and Karen Szymanski, Ph.D. (President, Gateways Learning). Dr. Szymanski also designed and facilitated the strategic planning process.

The Strategic Planning Task Force met several times between September 2004 and February 2005, working through a process that helped them assess the current status of the Center, contrast that with the vision for a Center of Excellence and identify four strategic areas to close the gap between the two. The team worked as a whole, in small groups and individually. Deep conversation throughout the process fostered exploration and consensus-building.

The strategic planning process included:

- Identifying major areas/activities the Center should engage in between 2005-2010 to make significant strides toward the long-term goal;
- Sorting these recommendations into logical groupings, and separating core strategic elements vs. tactics and operations-oriented items;
- Developing SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound);
- Developing preliminary tactics to accomplish each of the goals;
- Conducting a TOWS analysis (Threats, Opportunities, Weaknesses, Strengths) to better understand the challenges and opportunities facing the Center as it moves forward, as well as the resources and strengths it can draw from to reach its goals.

This report describes the results of this planning process and provides a roadmap for the Center to achieve its goals.

## The Gannon Center's Strategic Goals (2005-2010)

A series of exercises and conversations, involving both the full team and smaller groups, revealed strong consensus about the strategic course for the Gannon Center through 2010.

These areas of focus provided the impetus for crafting five "SMART" goals for the Gannon Center:

*Specific*                      Concrete description of the goal's "essence" and core components

<i>Measurable</i>	Quantifiable (percentage, number) or otherwise verifiable
<i>Attainable</i>	Reasonable and doable within 5 years
<i>Relevant</i>	Supportive of the long-term vision for the Gannon Center
<i>Time-Bound</i>	5-year framework; may or may not require 5 years to complete; may need to be implemented in sequence

These strategic goals provide the "pathways" that link the present to future. To implement the shift from "here" to "there," however, takes consistent action and follow-through. Fundamental tactics support this process. Consequently, members of the strategic planning team also assessed each goal and developed preliminary tactics for achieving them. Each of these tactics, in turn, will need to be assessed and detailed into working plans, specific actions, accountabilities, and timelines.

*Goal 1: Align the Mission/Identity with the future vision of the Gannon Center*

The team viewed the first goal as central to all the others. Having a clear Mission and Vision — one aligned with the long-term goal of becoming a Center of Excellence — makes it easier to craft the other goals in an integrated and coherent manner. Consequently, the team committed to achieve this goal in the context of its planning process, and the results are presented below.

**Mission**      **The Gannon Center** educates and fosters women leaders to transform their environment for the common good.

**Vision** A Center of Excellence for

- Preparing women leaders in all walks of life — local to global
- Promoting innovative and interdisciplinary research
- Advocating new, diverse models of leadership
- Advancing dialogue on compelling issues affecting women's lives

**Promise**      Preparing women to lead extraordinary lives.

*Goal 2:      By fall of 2006, develop a strong research focus for the Gannon Center, which will sustain it as a Center of Excellence within the University.*

To become a Center of Excellence, the Gannon Center will need to clarify its focus through a clearly articulated research program. Doing so will make it easier to support faculty research, pursue outside grant funding, and develop distinctive programming and outreach. With time, the Center will become known for specific areas of expertise that will distinguish it from similar organizations around the country.

## **Tactics**

Create a cross-disciplinary task force that will explore possibilities and provide recommendations for the Gannon Center's research path, given its vision of becoming a Center of Excellence for Women and Leadership.

Formalize and advertise the scholarly opportunities available through the Gannon Center in appropriate media and invite applications for the following: a visiting scholar (with stipend), a collaborative interdisciplinary research project for Loyola faculty, related to women's issues; a doctoral student whose research focus is women.

Structure the faculty fellows program to integrate it into the university leave program, ensuring cooperation with respective deans and chairs.

Every other year, starting in 2007, invite a speaker from outside the US in coordination with the appropriate departments, schools, or research agenda to ensure the global scope of the Gannon Center. In addition, organize and coordinate an interdisciplinary academic conference that includes international speakers and participants.

*Goal 3: Develop compelling programming that is linked to the Center's research path and meets the needs of both academic and community constituents.*

The Gannon Center currently supports a range of programs, which have emerged on an *ad hoc* basis. This goal creates a connection between the Center's research focus — the expertise for which it wishes to become known — and all programs and related services that are offered. Doing so will provide greater coherence between research and outreach. It will also be easier to develop communications about the Center's work and build its reputation in different, but interrelated, communities of interest.

## **Tactics**

Restructure the current Gannon Advisory Committee to establish guidelines for a broad-based membership, to identify the number of members, and to select term limits for members.

Create an *ad hoc* committee for Program Planning to assess current offerings and make recommendations for the future, based on the Center's Mission, Vision, and Promise. Modify or eliminate as needed.

Develop innovative programs and formats (e.g., lecture series) that connect to the Center's research agenda.

Promote awareness of the Center and its work by creating new audiences and opportunities. For example, programs targeted to the professional schools and leadership luncheons for external constituents.

Increase the number of participants in Center activities marketing to targeted audiences, and coordinating with the University's Public Relations staff.

Monitor the Gannon Scholars program with staff, as outlined in its handbook; enhance or modify the program when appropriate.

Continue collaboration with science faculty to strengthen the WISER Women in Science Enabling Research program.

Establish a working relationship with the Office of Student Leadership and Development.

*Goal 4: Expand philanthropic and research funding to sustain growth for the Gannon Center.*

Since its founding, the Gannon Center has relied primarily on Mundelein College alumnae to fund its work and future. These graduates have been very committed and generous, as evidenced by the \$4.5 million endowment that provides a strong economic foundation for the organization.

Moving forward — and becoming a true Center of Excellence — will require an expanded model for fundraising and support. The planning team believes that an approach designed to sustain the Gannon Center over time is critical, so in Goal 4, the aim is to implement a new model that expands from a "charitable giving" framework to include both philanthropic and research funding.

This new model, launched within the next two to three years, will begin opening more diverse revenue streams to the Center. The result is an expanded and more varied donor base, and will ensure the Gannon Center's future — linked to its past and sustainable into the future for the value it brings.

### **Tactics**

Maintain and strengthen connections with the University's Advancement staff.

Shift the Gannon Center's funding profile, so by 2010, the breakdown will be

50% - Mundelein alums

10% - Friends of the GC

40% - Research and corporate grants

Develop and execute plans to increase "active contributors" from 13% to 15% of the Mundelein alum population, focusing on estate planning and related activities.  
Conduct research to understand better the current "Friends of the Gannon Center (including Loyola alums) in order to attract similar contributors. Develop activities to increase participation and support.  
Support faculty in securing research grants for projects that support the research focus of the Center.

*Goal 5: Develop and execute a succession plan by 2010 that ensures future leadership and growth of the Gannon Center.*

Since becoming the Gannon Center's Executive Director, Carolyn Farrell has focused her talents and energies on key initiatives: ensuring the financial survival of the Center and establishing the relationships and programmatic foundations that make the Center viable. In very fundamental terms, Farrell has guided the Center through its launch and initial organization-building stage.

Looking to the future — the evolution of the Gannon Center into a well-known Center of Excellence — leadership with different talents will be called for. This goal, therefore, is anticipatory: it looks ahead and begins envisioning what will be needed and then lays the groundwork for sound succession.

### **Tactics**

Write a job description for the new Director by 2006.  
Attract a strong academic leader with a sound research record, administrative experience, and perhaps a connection with a women's college, who can fully implement the strategic direction of the Gannon Center.  
Establish long-term leadership stability by granting a faculty appointment to the next Gannon Center Director in an academic department at Loyola  
Hire an assistant director by 2008 to sustain and expand creative programming

### **Next Steps**

Implementation of the Gannon Center Strategic Plan into action will begin during the summer of 2005 (see timeline below).

To assist with the implementation, Farrell will identify participants to assist in the process:

Restructure the Advisory Committee of the Gannon Center,  
Volunteers (perhaps willing alums) matched to address specific projects.

Through the TOWS analysis (Threats, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Strengths) and subsequent conversations, Farrell has also identified some key actions that support the goals overall:

Inserting the new Mission, Vision and Promise in all communications.  
 Updating the website and publications to increase awareness of the new strategic goals and generate interest in their implementation.

Goal	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>1</b> <i>Mission/ Identity</i>	—					
<b>2</b> <i>Research Focus</i>	—	—  - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - - >
<b>3</b> <i>Internal/ External Programs</i>		—	—	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - - >
<b>4a</b> <i>Funding</i>	— Ad	— vancement	— Campaign	—	—	—
<b>4b</b> <i>Funding</i>		— Research &	— Corporate	— Funding	—	— >
<b>5</b> <i>Succession Planning</i>	—  —	—  -	- - - - -	—		

|—| Core tasks to accomplish goal

- - - - - > Periodic assessment, ongoing refinement and adaptation