

Contributors

Patricia Anderson served as Provost and Academic Vice President at Fresno Pacific University from 2002-2006

D. Merrill Ewert is President of Fresno Pacific University

Rod Janzen is Distinguished Scholar and Faculty in History at Fresno Pacific University

Michael Kunz is Faculty in Science at Fresno Pacific University

David Alan Thompson is Faculty in Science at Fresno Pacific University

Stephen Varvis is a Director in the Advancement Office and Faculty in History and English at Fresno Pacific University

Appendix

THE FRESNO PACIFIC IDEA

The Fresno Pacific Idea reflects the university's interpretation of what it means to be a community of learners committed to a distinctive vision of Christian higher education. The Idea serves as a center for reflection and action and as a guide for forming a vision of the future. Rooted in the past and continuously re-shaped by the present, the Idea provides a foundation for the university's understanding of itself and of the mission to which it is called.

In pursuing this mission, the university affirms the significance of knowledge which is a foundation for wisdom and virtue. As a Christian liberal arts community, Fresno Pacific University is an integral part of the mission of the church. From this Christian and liberal arts center, the university seeks to engage members of its community in a collaborative search for knowledge and experience which lead toward a perceptive and creative relationship with God, humanity and the natural world. On this foundation, the university seeks to build and to extend the Kingdom of God by enabling persons to serve church and society.

The Fresno Pacific Idea articulates the university's primary identity, its vision of community and its relation to the larger world. The parts of the Idea are not mutually exclusive, but complementary. Together, they form an organic whole.

Fresno Pacific is a Christian University

Fresno Pacific University seeks to be a collegium centered upon Christ and His church. It is committed to the ideals of God's Kingdom and to the perspective of the liberal arts in which integration of faith, learning and action is a primary goal.

With others in the Anabaptist-Mennonite and believers' church tradition, the university encourages voluntary acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God, of the triumph of God's Kingdom, of the presence of God's Spirit in the life of the church and of the Lordship of Christ in all of life.

As an extension of the educational mission of the Mennonite Brethren Church, the university affirms the authority of the Bible over all matters of faith and life; the church as a community of redeemed people; a life of discipleship leading to holiness, witness and service; the call to serve Jesus by ministering to human need and alleviating suffering; the practice of reconciliation and love in settings of violence, oppression and injustice; and the development of spiritual maturity through disciplines such as prayer, study and meditation.

All authentic knowledge and experience are unified under God. All aspects of reality are understood to be parts of a larger whole. There is no contradiction then between the truth of revelation, of scholarly investigation and of action. The university encourages members of the Fresno Pacific University community toward a reflective and critical perspective on the nature of humanity and its relation to the world. Thus, the liberal arts enlarge the foundation for life-long learning and for advanced study in a discipline or profession. The university affirms that wisdom grows out of commitment to Christian faith and the integrative perspective of the liberal arts. Both are essential to developing a holistic view of God, self and the world.

Since education is understood to be a life-long process, university programs include a variety of academic and professional baccalaureate, graduate and non-degree programs. Each program builds on the integrative foundation of the liberal arts, encouraging thoughtful reflection on those beliefs and values that contribute to personal and societal wholeness. The intersection of Christian belief, the liberal arts and an ethic of service provides an educational perspective that leads to an examined understanding of God, self and the world that unites theory with practice.

Fresno Pacific University is a Community of Learners

Fresno Pacific University recognizes the importance of the interpersonal dimension of the learning process. The university believes that community grows out of common commitments and that learning is the result of interaction between persons, ideas and experiences. Thus, the university seeks to provide settings in which individuals can achieve such interaction within a community committed to learning and service. It believes that as individuals become more responsible with and accountable to one another, they are better able to understand themselves and to make thoughtful commitments to God, the church and the world.

The university seeks to accept each member of the community as unique, with purpose and value. Ethnic and religious identity is affirmed as a basis for respectful pluralism. While acknowledging individual differences, the university also holds to the believers' church expression of community as a body that transcends individualism and those cultural, national and ethnic boundaries which separate and alienate.

Believing that the Gospel transcends the limitations of all cultures and ideologies and that inclusiveness enriches community, Fresno Pacific University welcomes those of different cultural, national, ethnic and religious backgrounds to participate in its educational experience. The university invites those from other church traditions, both as faculty and students, to enter into dialogue and faithful practice with those in the Anabaptist-Mennonite and believers' church tradition in following Christ and in sharing the university's mission. In keeping with its voluntaristic church tradition, the university affirms the community formed as individuals relate to God and does not discriminate against students who cannot freely and honestly make such a commitment. The university encourages persons to serve across cultures and throughout the world as compassionate disciples of Christ and as constructive members of society.

The university believes that knowledge and understanding are formed in community; that learning takes place through dialogue and discourse between people who have different experiences and perspectives and that such wisdom begins with humility. These understandings join teachers and students as partners in a mutual search for truth and wholeness.

The university's belief in community expresses itself in patterns of leadership and governance that are servant oriented and participatory and which lead toward consensual decision making.

The university seeks to carry out its educational mission through faculty, students, staff and board members who participate in church and society, share a mutual respect for educational goals and community standards and are committed to enhancing the quality of the educational experience for all its members.

Fresno Pacific University is Prophetic

Fresno Pacific University believes that to be prophetic is to serve the church and society by engaging in dialogue with and critique of contemporary culture and practice. The university encourages informed reflection on personal, institutional and societal values which contribute to developing a vision for wholeness, justice and reconciliation. It offers leadership to the church and the world by enabling persons to extend perceptive, creative and skillful responses to current issues; to illuminate darkness with light and dispel ignorance with wisdom and understanding. It seeks to bring an integrative, Christian ethic and perspective to present day thought and experience and to a common search for the better way.

Fresno Pacific University understands learning to be a journey; a journey of exploration, reflection and transformation; a journey toward deepened meaning and faith growing out of creative encounter with Christ and the world. The university believes that such learning may be nurtured through many different modalities and in many different settings and that it should be encouraged to continue throughout life. Thus, the university values imaginative, experimental and innovative ways of engaging students and faculty in the process of learning even as it seeks to remain faithful to its core values and identity.

Fresno Pacific University is a deliberate and continuing attempt to realize the vision expressed in the Fresno Pacific Idea. The Idea gives the university reason for existence, courage for growth and stimulus for adventure.