

Overview of Dordt College

Principles and Purposes

Dordt College owes its existence to a community whose faith commitment demands obedience to biblical principles in all of life. This religious commitment, historically known as the Reformed faith, has always been the basis of education at Dordt College.

The Dordt College community confesses that the Scriptures are the Word of God. As God's infallibly and authoritatively inspired revelation, the Bible reveals the way of salvation in Jesus Christ, requires a life of obedience to the Lord, and provides the key to understanding, interpreting, and finding purpose in life.

In various documents, over its half-century of existence, Dordt has articulated its mission as an institution in the Reformed theological tradition, committed to promoting student learning for life-long Christian service. From the early statements of Dordt's founders to the college's current statement of purpose, each has consistently sounded the same theme. That theme was described most concisely in our mission statement, which guides the work of the institutional planning committee:

Dordt College is an institution of higher education committed to the Reformed Christian perspective. Its mission is to equip students, alumni, and the broader community to work effectively toward Christ-centered renewal in all aspects of contemporary life. We carry out our educational task by:

- *developing a biblical understanding of creation and culture*
- *discerning the pervasive effects of sin throughout our world*
- *celebrating and proclaiming the redemptive rule of Christ over all of life and creation*
- *nurturing a commitment to challenging the forces that distort God's good creation and all human activity*
- *offering academic programs, maintaining institutional practices, and conducting social activities in a visionary, integrated, biblically-informed manner*
- *fostering a climate in which discipleship becomes a practiced way of life both on and off campus.*

A Kingdom Perspective Scripture and creation reveal to us a sovereign God. Nothing exists without him; all things are under his control and find their goal and purpose in his glory. The creation is God's kingdom. The Bible also tells us that God created humankind in his image. People are covenantally bound to their creator by his law that calls for loving obedience.

After Adam and Eve's fall into sin, humankind, though called to develop and care for God's world, began to treat it as an object of exploitation. Rather than serving the King, people abandoned themselves and the rest of creation to division and strife, misery and death.

But God came to us with his Word of grace. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has reclaimed what had been deformed and distorted by sin. Even though the effects of the fall continue, Christ has rescued the creation from the curse of sin and reigns as King over all. He summons those he has redeemed to work for the expression of his kingdom everywhere.

Serviceable Insight Our mandate to be busy in Christ's kingdom requires that we study, examine, and understand his world. Christian educational institutions must work to gain and transmit insights into the created order.

The Christian's understanding of God's handiwork is distorted by centuries of secularization. Dordt College is faced with the challenge of developing genuine Christian insight — an understanding of the creation illumined by the liberating light of the Scriptures.

Christians in a technological and secular civilization need the ability to distinguish sharply, to think critically, and to judge wisely. Dordt College must provide the kind of insight that enables Christians to carry out their tasks effectively in a complicated world.

Such insight is not merely theoretical. While Christian insight reflects an understanding of the structure and workings of God's created order, it includes other dimensions as well: the practical ability to carry out one's task in loving obedience and service and the desire to function effectively as a kingdom citizen.

A Christian Curriculum The curriculum is central to the implementation of the educational task of Dordt College. It functions as a basic means for encouraging student learning and transmitting serviceable insight. Those fields of investigation form the backbone of education at Dordt College. A curriculum of various academic disciplines, such as language, natural science, and social science, make up the foundation of every student's education at Dordt.

Students at Dordt are also required to study history, philosophy, and contemporary issues in order to gain insight into how mankind has responded to God's call to service within his creation. Through this requirement, students are challenged to discern the spirits of the age and to work for genuine reformation in culture and society.

Dordt seeks to provide insight into the nature and demands of the various vocations and professions. Majors and pre-professional programs form another essential part of the curriculum.

Throughout the curriculum, students are helped to develop the analytic, communicative, artistic, and physical skills that are essential for effective Christian service.

Education for the Whole Person The co-curricular aspects of the college also play a vital role in the implementation of the educational task of Dordt College. Therefore, Dordt seeks to provide a wide range of opportunities that develop and enhance serviceable insight.

Dordt College cannot count itself truly successful if its graduates possess knowledge and skill, yet lack the desire to carry out their tasks in service and loving obedience. The college works to foster this attitude by promoting social and devotional activities. Such activities are not considered mere additions to the academic task; Dordt College attempts to integrate them into a total pattern of curricular and co-curricular activity, all of which provide the student with serviceable insight.

History

Dordt College had its beginning in 1937 with the circulation of proposals and recommendations among mid-western Christian Reformed Churches regarding the establishment of a Christian college. World War II put an end to these discussions; however, after the war, the movement gained new impetus due to the critical shortage of qualified teachers for Christian schools in the area.

The college was organized in 1953 as the Midwest Christian Junior College. Under this name, instruction began in September 1955 with 35 students and five faculty members. In 1956, the name of the college was changed to Dordt College.

In 1961, the decision was made to expand to a four-year college. In 1963, the junior class was added, and in 1965, the first class of students received the B.A. degree.

Dordt College grew rapidly in the 1960's and 1970's. By 1965, enrollment had topped 500 and continued growing steadily to an enrollment of 1,218 by 1978. In the same period, the campus grew from one to more than a dozen buildings. Today, Dordt enrolls more than 1,350 students and occupies a well-equipped, 115-acre campus.

Dordt also has expanded its offerings over the years. Founded primarily to train teachers, Dordt was graduating students in a number of the liberal arts by the late 1960s. In 1969, the first courses in business administration were offered, marking a move toward combining a "liberal" education with "practical" instruction. Others that followed this precedent were agriculture, engineering, nursing, and social work. In 1993, Dordt College added a master of education degree to its associate's and bachelor's degree offerings. The current curriculum includes more than 90 programs, taught by more than 70 faculty members.

Accreditation

Dordt College is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) as a four-year, bachelor degree granting institution. Dordt's HLC accreditation dates from 1971, with the most recent renewal in 2001. The college also gained HLC approval in 1994 to offer a graduate program leading to the master of education degree.

The Iowa Department of Education has approved Dordt's program of teacher education. Graduates of the teacher education program are recommended for the first level of licensure granted by the state of Iowa. Approval has also been granted to offer a master of education degree.

The Dordt College social work program has been accredited since 1986 by the Council on Social Work Education.

The Dordt College engineering major has been accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) since 1991. The applied science and technology major and engineering science major have not been examined or accredited by ABET.

The Dordt College nursing major has been accredited since 2007 by the Commission on College Nursing Education (CCNE).

The college is also approved to train veterans under Public Law 550, war orphans under Public Law 634, and students from foreign countries.

Policy of Nondiscrimination

The commitment of Dordt College to nondiscrimination on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, national or ethnic origin, or race in the administration of its admissions, education, and employment policies is consistent with the requirements of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Iowa Civil Rights Act of 1965. Inquiries concerning compliance should be directed to the vice president for business affairs at the business office, 712-722-6010.

Accessibility for Students with Disabilities

Dordt College is committed to offering equal access to people with disabilities. The college has established the position of Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities (CSSD) in order to assist students with disabilities desiring to enroll at the college. A student with a disability should contact the coordinator approximately six months before the start of the semester of admission or as early as possible to ensure the accessibility of classrooms and housing and the availability of auxiliary aids. The student will be asked to provide appropriate documentation of the disability that is no more than three years old so that the current impact of the disability is addressed. The coordinator uses the documentation to develop an individual plan with each student, implementing necessary services and accommodations. Accommodations may not lower course standards or alter degree requirements but provide students with disabilities an equal opportunity to learn and demonstrate their abilities.

Certain facilities on campus are not fully accessible to people with disabilities, but Dordt College does adhere to the accessibility standards of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 by ensuring the student's program and learning environment, when viewed in their entirety, are accessible to people with physical disabilities.