Educating to Ensure Success for All Learners
A wealth of diversity enriches our PreK-20 classrooms but also challenges us as educators. Striving for academic excellence is vital, but not enough. To ensure success for all learners, we must also be inclusive in our approach and embrace the simple construct that all students can succeed.

For the LMU School of Education, inclusion plays to our strengths – as a Jesuit institution committed to social justice and education of the whole person, and as an SOE that has cultivated strong partnerships with PreK-20 stakeholders. Our success in these endeavors continues to win accolades. In U.S. News & World Report’s latest “Best Graduate Schools” listing, LMU ranked 62nd out of approximately 1,500 schools, colleges and departments of education nationwide, and among the top three Jesuit institutions nationally. GraduatePrograms.com placed three SOE programs in its national top 25: Counselor Education, Elementary Education and Secondary Education.

But our work is far from complete. We remain steadfast in our resolve to prepare the next generation of leaders in PreK-20 education – leaders who will create inclusive environments where all learners can thrive.
The diversity of learners in the PreK-20 education system represents both opportunities and challenges. More than ever before, properly preparing educators to work in diverse settings – across race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language and all ability levels – requires embracing an educational model that is inclusive, and that enables all children to achieve their full potential. Guided by a nearly 500-year Jesuit tradition of values and ethics, the LMU School of Education is dedicated to addressing this challenge while celebrating the many manifestations of what it means to be human.

That commitment was recognized in February when the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education presented SOE with a 2016 Best Practice Award in Support of Multicultural Education and Diversity. “All of the education programs at Loyola Marymount University are grounded in principles such as the promotion of social justice, cultural responsiveness, inclusion, value and respect for all individuals, and leadership that is moral, intellectual, responsible and caring,” the AACTE stated in presenting the award. “Their effectiveness is evident in the conceptual framework, curriculum, commitment of faculty and staff, and the culturally and linguistically diverse teacher candidates and students throughout the programs.”
At SOE, the concept of inclusive education means acknowledging that every person carries a variety of social and identity markers, and that educators must consider the intersectionality of these in teaching and learning. It demands that schools include and serve traditionally marginalized groups, respecting the dignity of each student. Inclusivity builds bridges between general education and special education while addressing the needs of all learners. These notions, grounded in Catholic social teaching and the Jesuit view of inclusion, are embedded in SOE’s mission and vision.

More than 25 years after the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act became law, the work of preventing discrimination based on disability remains incomplete. In early 2016, SOE hosted an interactive, traveling multimedia exhibit designed to break down barriers in education for people with disabilities. “Allies for Inclusion: The Ability Exhibit,” promoting awareness of and respect for people with disabilities through photo displays, computer surveys, videos and other media, was part of SOE’s increased commitment to inclusive education.

SOE continues to seek new ways to advance inclusive education as it implements its strategic plan. One initiative with national implications focuses on bridging the historic divide between special education and general education. Through the University of Florida’s CEEDAR (Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability and Reform) Center, LMU is one of six California universities participating in a joint effort to bring special education into the core curriculum in both teacher preparation and leadership.

“We have an opportunity to reimagine educator preparation in a new and profound way that puts all youth – with the multiple differences, similarities and intersectionalities that they bring – at the center of our work,” says Shane P. Martin, SOE dean. “We think of our SOE as a professional learning community, committed to continuous improvement, and we are constantly seeking new and better ways to put what we learn about inclusion into practice.”

“Every adult performs a critical role to believe in and support the academic and social-emotional potential of all learners – newly arrived immigrants, special education students, foster, homeless, gifted and English learners, to name a few. Inclusive education means that every parent, educator, labor partner, business, civic leader and community-based organization has a defined role and is practicing their role to guarantee that today’s students are equipped to succeed as tomorrow’s working professionals.”

— Michelle King, Superintendent
Los Angeles Unified School District
In a strong endorsement of the programs, partnerships and research that make LMU’s Center for Catholic Education a powerful force in furthering the mission of Catholic schools in Southern California and across the country, the National Catholic Educational Association has bestowed the CCE with the prestigious Dr. Karen M. Ristau Innovation Award.

The award recognizes the CCE for its innovation in providing instruction, leadership and support for Catholic education and for its comprehensive scope and scale – the CCE is one of the largest preparers of Catholic educators in the country. NCEA also honored Sr. Mary Angela Shaughnessy, SCN, the CCE Distinguished Fellow, with the prestigious C. Albert Koob Merit Award for her contributions to Catholic education as one of the foremost experts on Catholic school law in the country.

“Catholic schools operate in environments that are constantly changing, and innovation in the face of change is essential to ensuring that these schools continue to thrive,” says Fr. Robert Walsh, SJ, CCE’s executive director. “To receive affirmation from the NCEA of the value of our work in support of Catholic education is very heartening.”
PLACE Corps Expansion

For more than 15 years, PLACE (Partners in Los Angeles Catholic Education) Corps has brought talented, idealistic and faith-filled young teachers to under-resourced Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles as they pursue a master’s degree and credential while serving as full-time teachers and living in spiritually based community with other cohort members. Now the program, housed in LMU’s Center for Catholic Education, has expanded to serve the Diocese of Orange and the Diocese of San Bernardino, starting in the 2016-17 academic year.

“Programs this phenomenally successful typically don’t stay secret,” says Fr. Robert Walsh, SJ, CCE’s executive director, who notes that more than 80 percent of Los Angeles PLACE Corps graduates continue to teach beyond their two-year commitment, providing the Archdiocese of Los Angeles with an annual infusion of bright and enthusiastic educators and future leaders. “The Catholic school leadership in Orange and San Bernardino recognized the value of PLACE Corps and wanted those same benefits for their dioceses.”

Journal of Catholic Education

“Latinos, Education, and the Church” was the topic of the first-ever special issue of the Journal of Catholic Education, the leading peer-reviewed journal on Catholic education, hosted since 2013 at LMU’s Center for Catholic Education. Guest edited by Antonia Darder, SOE’s Leavey Presidential Chair of Ethics and Moral Leadership, and Luis Ricardo Fraga of the University of Notre Dame’s Institute for Latino Studies, the special issue was motivated by evidence that the Church and Catholic schools need to find ways to better serve this large and growing population.

“This is one of the first efforts to consolidate scholarship that critically examines the history and relationship between Latino communities, education and the Church,” Darder says. “At the heart is a call for the Church to advocate for the just education of Latina and Latino students, whether they are enrolled in Catholic schools or other school settings.”

Online Certificate in Catholic School Administration

For mission dioceses across the country unable to provide professional development to their Catholic school leaders because of cost and distance barriers, SOE’s online Certificate in Catholic School Administration offers the ideal remedy. But the value of the program, currently educating its fourth cohort through a partnership between SOE’s Catholic School Leadership Academy and Catholic Extension, goes well beyond the graduate-level education it provides to approximately 15 geographically disbursed principals and aspiring leaders each year.

While learning about mission-focused, organizational and instructional leadership in Catholic education, members of the virtual cohort develop a close-knit professional learning community that can serve them well beyond the program’s completion. Explains Anthony Sabatino, the SOE clinical associate professor who leads the program: “When these leaders take the knowledge, skills and disposition for Jesuit pedagogical practice and Ignatian spirituality back to their mission, they have a national network of peers available for support and exchanges of ideas.”

“Catholic schools have made great strides with regard to including students of all backgrounds, and we view educating all in the faith as part of our mission. Since we don’t receive public funding to support the additional resources required for students with learning differences, we greatly rely on our partners in the LMU SOE to assist and support principals, teachers and students in this noble work.”

— Kevin Baxter, EdD
Senior Director and Superintendent of Catholic Schools
Archdiocese of Los Angeles
Antonia Darder

Antonia Darder, SOE’s Leavey Presidential Chair of Ethics and Moral Leadership, received the 2016 Paulo Freire Democratic Project Social Justice Award from Chapman University’s College of Educational Studies. Darder’s work focuses on political, pedagogical and ethical concerns linked to racism, class inequalities, language rights, critical pedagogy, Latino education and social justice. Her scholarship has been strongly influenced by Paulo Freire, the world-renowned Brazilian educator and philosopher.

Martha McCarthy

Martha McCarthy, SOE’s Presidential Professor of Educational Leadership, was named a 2016 Fellow of the American Educational Research Association and received the 2016 AERA Division A Excellence in Research Award. AERA recognized McCarthy for “exemplifying the highest standards of educational excellence through accomplishment, professionalism and commitment.” McCarthy also received the 2016 Legacy Award from the Journal of Educational Administration in recognition of her contributions to the field of educational leadership.

Elizabeth C. Reilly

Elizabeth C. Reilly, SOE professor and chair of Educational Leadership, received the American Educational Research Association’s 2016 Leadership for Social Justice Bridge People Award. The award recognizes Reilly for her commitment to inclusion and community, and for creating a bridge to others through scholarship and community. Known for her work on women in leadership and organizational culture and change, Reilly has collaborated with numerous government leaders and educational organizations around the world.

Sponsored Research & Contracts
Fiscal Year 2016

$6,696,175

This total represents sponsored research and contracts for the School of Education and the university’s education unit.
David Sapp

Supported by a Fulbright grant, David Sapp, SOE professor of Educational Leadership, spent the summer consulting with faculty at the Universidad del Norte in the República de Colombia. Sapp led workshops on internationalizing curricula and assessing global partnerships, worked with leaders to develop professional development opportunities, and delivered a public lecture titled “The Foundations of Global Partnerships for Solidarity and Justice: Benefits for English Language Learners.”

Selected Faculty Book Publications 2015-2016


Edmundo F. Litton

Edmundo F. Litton, SOE professor and chair of Specialized Programs in Urban Education, traveled to the Philippines in the summer thanks to a Fulbright Specialist Award. At the University of Pangasinan, Litton led teacher-training workshops at the Summer Institute of Teach for the Philippines. Under Litton’s leadership, LMU has an ongoing collaboration with Teach for the Philippines and the University of Pangasinan.

“Inclusive education means educating students multi-modally. It assumes diverse learning styles, which I believe is reflective of our SOE classrooms. It requires accessing different paradigms of teaching and using a range of pedagogical interventions, then executing them with a student-centered practice focused on the unique needs of every learner.”

— Fernando Estrada, PhD
Assistant Professor of Counseling
LMU School of Education
innovation in digital education
iDEAL Institute

No one disputes technology’s potential to transform learning, but few schools have the capacity to prepare teachers and administrators to harness that vast potential in PreK-12 classrooms. SOE’s iDEAL (Innovation in Digital Education and Leadership) Institute is filling that void by preparing teachers and administrators to become specialists who can assess technology needs, plan digital systems and implement classroom programs that combine online learning with traditional instruction. Through school partnerships and a one-year certificate program for technology integration specialists – one of the first such programs in the country – the institute works with teachers and administrators to choose appropriate hardware and software, then integrate technology into instructional practice in blended learning environments.

The iDEAL Institute launched its blended learning initiative more than a year ago with funding from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Specialty Family Foundation and Shea Family Charities, working with three partner schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles: Holy Name of Jesus School, Immaculate Conception School and St. Aloysius Gonzaga School. The schools are participating in two years of ongoing professional development, as well as blended learning and technology certification and training. The institute is also assisting the schools in fostering a classroom culture that promotes a college-going mindset, with students taking ownership of their learning. “Our first goal was to close the achievement gap,” says Shannon Tabaldo, the iDEAL Institute’s founding director. “We helped the schools find software programs that would address their academic needs, trained them in their use, and then showed them how to effectively implement blended learning.”

Tabaldo explains that a blended learning classroom, in which students work both by themselves and in collaborative groups using computer software that adapts to their pace, gives teachers the flexibility to personalize each student’s experience. The program provides real-time data on performance so that teachers can differentiate learning – giving students struggling with a concept more time, and ensuring that those who quickly master material can move on to more challenging work.

“Too often, students graduate without actually being prepared for the next level,” Tabaldo says. “They lack some of the building blocks, and ultimately that can lead to academic struggles. We are using the technology to determine where each student’s needs are and then focusing individually rather than teaching to the middle. The personalized and blended learning model that we are implementing at the iDEAL Institute gives all learners the opportunity to excel, on their own level. It’s changing the conversation from being about grades to being about growth.”

“Inclusive education has changed drastically since I began in the Archdiocese 16 years ago; now, technology provides personalized learning pathways.
An important component of inclusive education is training the teachers to enable them to reach all students, whether they are English language learners, students with learning disabilities, or advanced students ready for a challenge. SOE is providing hands-on support for teachers who want to implement a more inclusive curriculum.”

— Heather Murphy-Garcia
Vice Principal and Curriculum Director
Immaculate Conception School
Center for Math and Science Teaching

Amid a national push to ensure America’s future competitiveness through investment in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education, SOE is playing a leadership role—both in supporting the goal of preparing more well-qualified STEM teachers, and in developing innovative teaching practices that improve the STEM literacy of all learners.

As SOE’s first STEM teaching demonstration site, Playa Vista Elementary School serves as an anchor for new STEM education strategies implemented through SOE’s teacher preparation program. An innovative curriculum developed collaboratively by SOE and PVES faculty emphasizes preparing students to be analytical and critical thinkers. SOE recently established a formal partnership for a second teaching demonstration site at WISH Charter School, and will begin to work with WISH faculty to build STEM capacity at the school.

SOE is also building capacity through the Mathematics Leadership Corps, a partnership that improves math instruction by focusing on teacher leadership and systemic organizational change. MLC was recently recognized by the California Council on Teacher Education with the Award in Advancing Current Pedagogy for the Common Core Standards.

For these and other efforts, SOE representatives were invited to the White House last fall to participate in a summit for 100Kin10, the ongoing national effort to reach a goal of 100,000 STEM teachers by 2021. The summit served as both a celebration of the initiative’s progress and a discussion of next steps that can be taken to create and support more excellent STEM teachers.
Center for Equity for English Learners

SOE’s Center for Equity for English Learners is continuing to collaborate with partners in an effort to ensure that a 2013 California law intended to provide increased and improved services for the state’s 1.4 million English Learners fulfills its promise.

California’s Local Control Funding Formula gives school districts more flexibility in how they use state funds while assigning them the responsibility of strengthening services to three historically underserved populations: ELs, low-income students and foster youth. The law requires districts to prepare a Local Control Accountability Plan describing how they intend to address students’ needs and allocate funds in support of stated goals. But when CEEL and the statewide advocacy coalition Californians Together analyzed a sample of LCAPs in districts with large numbers or percentages of ELs after each of the first two years of the law’s implementation, they found that there is room for improvement when it comes to addressing ELs’ needs.

“California is leading the nation on fiscal reform in education that holds great promise to help English Learners, but this is still an evolving story,” says CEEL executive director Magaly Lavadenz, who is part of a statewide research collaborative that continues to analyze LCFF implementation. “More needs to be done to maximize this opportunity to develop comprehensive research-based approaches to raising the level of language and academic growth for English Learners.”

Upward Bound

When Carlos Cruz received his diploma at LMU’s graduation ceremony last spring, it was also a special moment for dozens of high school students enrolled at Westchester Enriched Sciences Magnets barely a mile away. Cruz was the first LMU graduate who was an alumnus of the university’s Upward Bound program, which started in 2007 at WESM. The federally funded program provides services to promising high school students from low-income families in which neither parent has a college degree. Approximately 55 WESM students each year benefit from academic advising and workshops, assistance with the college and financial aid application process, and a residential summer school experience on the LMU campus. “When current UB students get to see graduates who are going to college in their own backyard, it’s very motivating,” says Norma Romero, the program’s director. Ten UB graduates are currently enrolled at LMU. Meanwhile, Cruz has started the PhD program in mathematics at Arizona State University, with plans to become a college math professor.

“Inclusive education is a commitment to welcoming all children into socially just classrooms, to truly demonstrate that when we value the strengths and support the needs of our diverse population, our children will grow up to build communities, businesses and activities for all. It is an opportunity for us to live what we believe and model for all kids and families that all people are valuable.”

— Shawna Draxton, PhD
Executive Director, WISH Charter School
“Inclusion means that all students are general education students first, including those with disabilities. SOE’s focus on inclusion provides a great opportunity for faculty and staff to come together and share expertise across disciplines in a way that models what we would find in PreK-12 schools. Our graduates who understand how to implement inclusive education help to fulfill the mission of SOE and contribute to a more inclusive society.”

— Victoria Graf, PhD
Professor, LMU School of Education

development & alumni relations

SOE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Since its launch in 2015, the LMU School of Education Alumni Association has engaged in a series of events and outreach activities, including the first SOEAA Day of Service, where volunteers assisted in beautifying Emerson Avenue Community Garden, a public educational space shared by Wright Middle School STEAM Magnet and WISH Charter School. With LMU’s Career and Professional Development office, SOEAA also hosted a networking event attended by students, alumni, community partners and recruiters representing local districts and nonprofit organizations. SOEAA’s aim is to ensure the continued excellence of SOE and assist alumni on their journey in social, professional and intellectual experiences.

FUNDRAISING

SOE exceeded its fundraising goal for fiscal year 2016 through a campaign that raised $4,875,170 in funds to support student scholarships, expand research opportunities and foster innovative programs throughout Southern California and across the state.
Guided by a centuries-old Jesuit/Marymount tradition, our SOE integrates inclusive education and academic excellence. We strongly believe that these two goals, sometimes viewed as separate or even opposed, are in fact inextricably linked. By fostering inclusive environments wherein all learners can fulfill their potential, we promote inclusive excellence. Amidst an ever-changing educational landscape, it’s not easy, requiring constant reassessment and continuous improvement. But for the success of our youth and ultimately for a more prosperous and humane society, we should accept nothing less.

Shane P. Martin, PhD
Dean and Professor