# Transformative Experiences and Learning Resources

Santa Clara University is committed to the education of the whole person in the Jesuit and Catholic tradition, with a vision of developing people to be leaders of competence, conscience, and compassion. The undergraduate program is designed for students who seek an education that integrates Jesuit values and learning that prepares them for 21st-century challenges in a primarily residential setting. Varied educational experiences encourage students to value differing ways of knowing and being in the world, different forms of knowledge within established disciplines, and new knowledge as well as that which preceded it.

Santa Clara’s concept of the “whole person” inevitably embraces our social nature. When he inaugurated Santa Clara’s sesquicentennial year in 2000, Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, then superior general of the Society of Jesus, noted that “Tomorrow’s ‘whole person’ cannot be whole without an educated awareness of society and culture with which to contribute socially, generously, in the real world.” Affirming that the Jesuit educational standard must always “educate the whole person of solidarity for the real world,” he explained: “Students, in the course of their formation, must let the gritty reality of this world into their lives, so they can learn to feel it, think about it critically, respond to its suffering, and engage in it constructively. They should learn to perceive, think, judge, choose, and act for the rights of others, especially the disadvantaged and the oppressed.” Since then, Santa Clara University has revised the Core Curriculum, implemented a new Integrated Strategic Plan, extended the impact of its Centers of Excellence, and enhanced the University’s co-curricular programs, all with the goal of educating students who will apply what they are learning to constructive engagement with the gritty realities of the 21st century.

The Santa Clara undergraduate program offers courses and other learning experiences whose content and patterns combine the acquisition and creation of knowledge with the quest for meaning and purpose. Santa Clara’s learning environments encourage students to make connections across the Core Curriculum, the academic major, elective courses, and co-curricular experiences. Students are encouraged to relate their classroom learning with out-of-classroom learning through community-based education, Residential Learning Communities, Campus Ministry, a wide variety of student organizations, athletics and recreation, and other experiences. In a more general way, the undergraduate program nurtures students’ ability to knit the intellectual, social, moral, spiritual, creative, and behavioral aspects of life into a coherent and meaningful whole.