Our Mission.
Our Vision.
Our Values.

It is difficult to convey in words the human warmth of spirit, love of teaching and dedication to student success that resonates throughout Benedictine University. Our mission, our vision and our values express a great deal about the motivating spirit found at this University.

Our mission has evolved as a result of years of forward-thinking, goal-setting and character-building as an expression of what our community members strive to instill in each student. It is based on a long and rich Benedictine tradition of learning, as well as personal and spiritual growth.

St. Benedict introduced a vision of lifelong learning more than 1,500 years ago. That vision was enhanced when Fr. Cosmas Vesely, O.S.B., helped form this University into a leading institution in the field of science. Our modern-day leaders seek to improve and move us forward while keeping the strength of our Benedictine tradition alive. Our vision statement helps to articulate what has come about as a result of these many years of enlightenment.

Without our values, our mission and our vision would not stand out. Our values-based education is an important part of what sets us apart. The essential Benedictine values taught and lived out at this University seek to aid all students and community members in maintaining a life filled with purpose and meaning.

For more information, visit Benedictine's Center for Mission and Identity at www.ben.edu/cmi.
Our Mission.

Benedictine University dedicates itself to the education of undergraduate and graduate students from diverse ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds. As an academic community committed to liberal arts and professional education – distinguished and guided by its Roman Catholic tradition and Benedictine heritage – the University prepares its students for a lifetime as active, informed and responsible citizens and leaders in the world community.

Benedictine’s mission reflects our devotion to helping students become responsible persons who will make positive contributions to society.

The Benedictine University community provides instruction, counsel and life experiences which help students acquire enduring knowledge and cultivate skills to:

- Communicate effectively across cultural and religious boundaries.
- Reason and make informed judgments.
- Identify and solve problems independently and cooperatively.
- Develop a sense of intellectual curiosity and a desire for lifelong learning.
- Understand the content, methodology and interrelationships of specific areas of study.
- Pursue and communicate the truth.
- Confront and resolve ethical issues and contribute to the work of social justice.
- Benefit from diversity of opinions and cultures.
- Value the interdependence of cultures and nations.
- Exhibit stewardship toward self and environment.
- Strive for a life lived in balance.
- Foster appreciation and individual development of creative expression.
Our Vision.

Benedictine University is a Catholic University in the Benedictine Tradition that Provides a Values-Centered Liberal Arts Education Enriched by Our Excellence in Science.

The University’s vision statement can be found in the printed word and in the hearts of our community members. At this Catholic and Benedictine institution, our primary goal is teaching and learning. Our teaching does not stop with the current trends in pedagogy or technology. It builds on our moral and ethical Catholic tradition and our values-driven Benedictine heritage.

The Catholic and Benedictine tradition of our institution provides the basis for a values-centered education. We at Benedictine University firmly believe that success requires a body of knowledge founded in the social and humanistic values that are common to all people, which in accord with our liberal arts curriculum (of which science is a subset), helps to create a balance between the needs of the common good and the interdisciplinary connections among branches of knowledge.

Our new undergraduate Inquiry Curriculum uses a Modes of Inquiry approach that emphasizes the various ways of knowing and questioning that characterize the academic disciplines, while at the same time requiring students to draw on different fields of knowledge to solve problems and experience the world. Within this curriculum, two interdisciplinary seminars required of all students are organized around the Catholic and Benedictine intellectual tradition and the theme “Human Dignity or the Common Good,” allowing students to connect the hallmarks and values of faith with a wide range of issues. The Inquiry Curriculum also includes requirements for global and sustainability classes, engaged learning (service, internship, study abroad) and participation in a learning community, giving our students the skills and experiences that will empower them to act ethically and make a difference in today’s global society.

Our Catholic tradition emphasizes:

- The worth and dignity of each person.
- The solidarity of the human race and the social nature of human existence, which is oriented toward God and not limited to this life.
- The goodness of creation and its sacramental potential for disclosing the transcendent.
- The interconnectedness of truth, and the compatibility of faith and reason in the search for the truth.
Our Values.

Benedictine University is grounded in the spirit of our founders, who based their lives and work on St. Benedict’s "Rule for Monks" written in the early sixth century. The University continues to build its educational life on the same values that have aided all Benedictine men and women in living a fulfilled life:

- A search for God by oneself and with others.
- A tradition of hospitality.
- An appreciation for living and working in community.
- A concern for the development of each person.
- An emphasis on a life lived in balance.
- A dedication to responsible stewardship of all things.
- A commitment to academic excellence.

The University has a uniqueness and a strength that allows us to offer our students quality majors anchored in a rich, integrated liberal arts base which is further enhanced by our traditional strengths in the natural and social sciences. As evidenced by our mission, our vision and our values, we at Benedictine are dedicated to providing the necessary tools to help our students succeed in their future professions.
Our History.

The Benedictine monks of St. Procopius Abbey founded Benedictine University in 1887 as St. Procopius College. The Benedictine Order bears the name of St. Benedict, born in 480, who is acknowledged as the father of western monasticism. In 528, he established the famed monastery of Monte Cassino. Standing in that long tradition of learning, the Benedictines of St. Procopius Abbey founded the College in the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago, securing its charter from the state of Illinois in 1890.

The first building on the Lisle campus was dedicated in September 1901. That building was expanded into the 1920s, with new buildings added in 1950. The University was originally founded to educate men of Czech and Slovak descent, and in the early years most of the students were from those ethnic groups. The University became coeducational in 1968.

Recognizing the social, economic and building changes taking place around the University community (which in its earliest days had a significant agricultural character), the University added necessary buildings and facilities to accommodate the needs of contemporary students: residence halls, independent apartment living, a fitness center and state-of-the-art athletic fields. In 2000, the University took a big step into the future by erecting two new academic buildings, including a library with a variety of study spaces that serve the needs of students.

The University has gained national and international recognition through major partnerships. In 2003, Benedictine and Springfield College in Illinois partnered to bring Benedictine programs and services to the state capital. Today, the Benedictine University at Springfield branch campus serves more than 1,000 students. In 2004, Benedictine collaborated with Shenyang University of Technology and Shenyang Jianzhu University in China to bring Master of Business Administration and Master of Science in Management Information Systems programs overseas where demands for American business programs increase. Also in 2004, the University joined forces with the Village of Lisle to construct the Village of Lisle-Benedictine University Sports Complex, a multi-purpose facility featuring lighted athletic fields with a nine-lane track. Benedictine opened the Margaret and Harold Moser Center in Naperville in 2006 to meet the needs of adult students and area businesses. In 2012, the University partnered with the city of Mesa, Ariz., to establish a branch campus in that community. Benedictine University at Mesa welcomed 93 students into its inaugural class in September 2013.

Today, undergraduate enrollment has grown to more than 3,800. Total enrollment is more than 10,000 with one associate, 55 bachelor’s, 17 master’s and four doctoral programs. Most Benedictine students are from the Chicago area and Illinois, although 50 states and more than 17 foreign countries are represented.
Our Catholic Heritage.

Benedictine University is guided by the Roman Catholic intellectual tradition and the tenets of “Ex Corde Ecclesiae,” Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities.

The Roman Catholic intellectual tradition – which extends back to the age of the Fathers of the Church, the monasteries of the Middle Ages and the eventual rise of universities – emphasizes the worth and dignity of each person; the solidarity of the human race and the social nature of human existence, which is oriented toward God and not limited to this life; the goodness of creation; and the interconnectedness of truth and the compatibility of faith and reason in the search for truth.

In fidelity to that tradition, the University is committed to investigating questions that address the ultimate purpose of life; to the dialogue between religious and secular cultures; and to the promotion of ecumenical, inter-religious and cross-cultural understanding. This type of education is designed to broaden and deepen a person’s vision of reality, to help all understand the dignity and uniqueness of each human person, and at the same time to place an emphasis upon the demands of freedom and social responsibility. Benedictine encourages openness to all reality, acceptance of truth wherever it is found and the personal effort to integrate learning as a basis of wisdom for life.

The Apostolic Constitution identifies four characteristics that distinguish every Catholic university as Catholic: a Christian inspiration not only of individuals but of the university community; a continuing reflection in light of the Catholic faith upon the growing treasury of human knowledge to which the university seeks to contribute by its own research; fidelity to the Christian message as it comes to us through the Church; and an institutional commitment to the service of the people of God and of the human family in their pilgrimage to life eternal, the journey which gives meaning to life.
We are Benedictine.

A group of Benedictine monastic men and women were charged by the Association of Benedictine Colleges and Universities with developing a set of “hallmarks” that distinguish Benedictine colleges and universities from institutions guided by secular groups and other religious orders. These individuals developed a set of 10 “hallmarks,” characteristics that make a Benedictine institution “Benedictine.”

The 10 hallmarks which make a Benedictine institution “Benedictine” are: prayer, obedience, stability, discipline, stewardship, humility, community, hospitality, conversatio and love.

- **Prayer** can be manifested through meditation and mindfulness or by participation in worship with others. Prayer is encouraged on all levels through all religious affiliations. Prayer can include the Jewish use of a formal prayer book and the Islamic practices of “salah” or reading of the Qur’an.

- The Latin root of the word **obedience** comes from “audire,” which means “to listen.” It is essential that all members of the Benedictine community find time to listen to God, to listen to oneself, to listen to others and especially to listen to those in need.

- **Stability** is the commitment to the daily life of the place in which we live.

- **Learning and freedom are not possible without discipline**, which is respect for others and the structure of community which make learning and freedom possible.

- **Stewardship** is the caring and respect for the beauty and goodness of creation.

- Appreciation of living and working in community stresses the need for accountability for one’s actions. This appreciation and accountability require **humility**, which makes honest interaction between people possible.

- Living in **community** includes the search for the common good and respect for the individual.

- By welcoming the stranger, we open our arms and our hearts to God. Through **hospitality**, we become closer to God and ultimately to truth.

- Through the process of **conversatio**, we are formed and transformed.

- Christ said, “Love God above all and love thy neighbor as thyself.” The Catholic tradition emphasizes the worth and dignity of each person. Only by recognizing the solidarity of the human race and the social nature of human existence, the goodness of creation and its potential for explaining the transcendent, and through **love of Christ and neighbor** can we understand the connectedness of faith and reason in the search for truth.
Central to the Benedictine tradition is the celebration of community as a gathering of people who share a commitment to a common mission. Benedictine University strives to develop an academic environment that supports each person in the pursuit of knowledge and personal development. This undertaking is achieved through a life enriched by an atmosphere in which the individual’s interest is tempered by concern for the common good.

The University also attempts to bring students and faculty into harmony with the contemporary world, hoping to inspire students to recognize their responsibilities as members of the world community and to become involved in its everyday life.

Benedictine graduates see themselves not merely as residents, but as citizens of their communities who know that the lives of all people, regardless of social position, education or age, are entwined. Individual and collective contributions are decisive in integrating the spiritual, intellectual and economic components of daily life.
Benedictine University’s commitment to academic excellence traces its roots to St. Benedict, the son of noble parents, who as a young man transformed his life into a quest for knowledge, understanding and love. In the early sixth century, Benedict wrote a Rule to guide believers who had banded together in communities for the same noble purpose. Intended primarily for the men who followed him in the monastery he founded in Monte Cassino, the Rule of St. Benedict provides a model for the education and personal development of both children and adults. In the centuries that followed, Benedictine educational activities expanded as monasteries grew and made new foundations; some of these activities included copying manuscripts and amassing extensive libraries.

Over time, Benedictine involvement in education expanded to include universities and secondary schools. Today, there are numerous Benedictine colleges, universities and high schools in the United States, Canada, Europe and South America. These institutions draw upon 1,500 years of tradition in order to prepare students for lives of personal fulfillment and social responsibility.

The University is committed to excellent teaching in the liberal arts, science, business, education, health services, and adult and professional studies. A liberal arts core prepares all undergraduate students to participate fully within a diverse and dynamic society by balancing their rights and duties as individuals with the demands of the common good. Building on this liberal arts foundation, professional education at both the undergraduate and graduate levels is multidisciplinary in nature and is values-centered. We prepare students for lives of leadership, social responsibility and balance.
A Life Lived in Balance.

Members of the Benedictine University community are encouraged to achieve a balance in their academic, social and professional lives. They come to understand the “self” as an integrated physical, intellectual and spiritual being. While the University values the dignity of work, it recognizes that balance with leisure and prayer is equally important. Living a life in balance helps to enrich one’s personal and spiritual life while fostering friendships and relationships that span a lifetime. The Rule of St. Benedict indicates that people should strive to be content with living simply and finding balance in work, prayer, study and leisure.

As our Benedictine University motto states, "that in all things God may be glorified," all things in life are to be done with a spirit of moderation.
Benedictine University is located in Lisle, Illinois just 25 miles west of Chicago, and has branch campuses in Springfield, Illinois and Mesa, Arizona. Founded in 1887, Benedictine provides 55 undergraduate majors and 17 graduate and four doctoral programs. Forbes magazine named Benedictine among “America’s Top Colleges” for the third consecutive year in 2013. The Chronicle of Higher Education ranked Benedictine as the No. 1 fastest-growing campus in the country among private nonprofit research universities between 2000-2010.

For more information, call the Enrollment Center at (630) 829-6300, email admissions@ben.edu or visit ben.edu.