Wisconsin's Oldest College

In 1841, settlers living in the Wisconsin Territory community of Prairieville established the academy that five years later would become Carroll College. Soon after its founding, Carroll affiliated with the Presbyterian Church and adopted the motto, "Christo et Litteris," which means "for Christ and Learning." The University's early patrons believed that higher education would serve as an instrument for civilizing the wilderness, spreading the Gospel and planting the roots of democracy deep in the prairie soil. They also sought to provide for the prosperity of their children and future generations. As Wisconsin's oldest institution of higher learning, Carroll is known today as the "Pioneer College." Carroll became Carroll University in 2008.

Throughout its history, the hallmarks of the Carroll educational experience have been teaching excellence and individualized attention. These values find expression in The Mission Statement and The Four Pillars of a Carroll University Education.

Carroll University Mission Statement

“Carroll University provides a superior education, rooted in its Presbyterian and liberal arts heritage, and draws upon its Christian tradition to prepare all students for vocational success, lifelong learning and service in a diverse and global society.”

The Four Pillars of a Carroll University Education

Today, the institution draws upon its rich liberal arts tradition to prepare students to achieve their full potential in our ever-changing society. The University's educational philosophy is sustained by the four pillars of integrated knowledge, lifelong skills, gateway experiences and enduring values.

Integrated Knowledge is the very foundation of a quality liberal arts program. The Carroll curriculum emphasizes breadth and depth of learning. Our purpose is to encourage students to recognize the interrelationships among ideas. We believe that students with this understanding will continue to learn, grow and succeed long after they leave the campus.

Lifelong Skills help students prepare for life and work in a world of rapid and constant change. We believe that graduates will continue to evolve and contribute to their communities long after they earn their degrees. To that end, our mission is to help students learn to think critically and creatively, adapt to changing technologies, work efficiently and effectively, collaborate with others, and communicate clear, compelling ideas.

Enduring Values help students to consider always the impact of their actions on the world around them. We believe that effective leaders draw their inspiration from strong personal value systems. Our goal, therefore, is to offer students multiple opportunities to make decisions and then to reflect upon their consequences.
Gateway Experiences occur both upon entering and upon leaving Carroll University. We believe that our educational responsibility extends beyond the classroom into every aspect of our students’ lives. That is why we place a special emphasis on preparing incoming students for university life and on helping graduates make successful transitions into their first jobs, or graduate and professional schools.

The four pillars undergird all that we do at Carroll University. They are integral to our undergraduate curriculum and guide our post-baccalaureate and graduate programs. In other words, they provide the broad inspiration for the Carroll experience and the many relationships we nurture with other organizations and institutions.