

*Implementing and Sustaining Foundations  
of Excellence Programs around a  
Prevailing University Theme: A Unique  
Case Study with Transferable Practices*



## ***Implementing and Sustaining Foundations of Excellence Programs around a Prevailing University Theme: A Unique Case Study with Transferable Practices***

### **Overview:**

Indiana Wesleyan University utilized the Foundations of Excellence (FOE) program to build both capacity and quality in its first-year program. The interactively engaging format of this session will utilize IWU's case study as a springboard for campus planning. This session will assist institutions in looking at themes related to their missions in the FOE process. For IWU, its guiding theme of "life purpose" surfaced as part of the Philosophy Dimension and became foundational for the other dimensions. IWU's FOE task force also operationalized some key aspects of its final report, which also helped garner Board and Administrative support and serves as the fulcrum for an upcoming accreditation visit. Participants will be encouraged to share major "themes" prominent on their campuses and will explore strategies for connecting the FOE process with those themes. Participants will discover transferable steps for completing and implementing FOE principles.

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## Our Institution and Its Students:

Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU) is a comprehensive, private university with its main campus in Marion, Indiana. IWU's mission is to produce students prepared and committed to engagement in world changing endeavors. An evangelical Christian commitment permeates the university's programming and culture and guides an institutional focus on encouraging student's to pursue their life purpose. IWU enrolls almost 8,000 full-time undergraduate students and 5,000 graduate students. The undergraduate population is 61.5 % female and 38.5 % male. Of those enrolled in traditional undergraduate programs, 96.75% are age 24 and under. Minority students include African Americans (.83%), Hispanics (.97%), Asian Americans (.37%), and Native Americans (.23%). Retention rates at IWU continue to climb as the first-year experience program becomes more firmly integrated into the campus culture through collaborative efforts of the College of Arts and Sciences, Student Development, Residence Life, Student Support Services, and the Center for Life Calling and Leadership. With the advent of increased emphases on first-year programming, IWU retention rates have risen from 65% in 1996 to 82% in 2005, and five-year graduation rates have risen 30% since 1991, to 66%.

### Contents:

Philosophy Guiding the First-Year Experience .....	3
Financial Impact of Increased Retention of Traditional Students .....	5
The Life Calling Model .....	10
Strengths-Based Assessment .....	11
A Letter Home .....	12
I Have A Dream .....	13
An Act of Kindness .....	14
Personal Mission Statement .....	15
Three Metaphors .....	16

### Appendices:

- A Life Calling Conceptual and Developmental Model (Millard, 2007)
- Developing Life Purpose: Retention Success in a Leadership Course at Indiana Wesleyan University (Gross, Millard, Pattengale and Reynolds, 2005)

## **Philosophy Guiding the IWU First Year Experience**

### **Organizational Commitment: Intentional Program Design**

- Intentional (pursued as a strategic, central effort for first-year students rather than just an auxiliary issue)
- Comprehensive (addresses all aspects of student life)
- Coordinated (in contrast to undesigned occurrences that autonomously spring up in various programs and are operated on their own)
- Collaborative and integrated in nature
  - Between Academic Affairs and Student Development
  - Among academic divisions and disciplines
  - Among various student support agencies.

### **Individual Focus: Gifts, Talents, and Needs**

- Both global and individual
  - Global: Impacts every first-year student (a “no first-year student left behind” approach)
  - Individual: Sensitive to personal developmental progress and unique needs
- Contextualized in creating in students an overriding sense of a unique personal life purpose
  - centered in Christ and Christian values
  - developed within a world-changing commitment
  - explored in community service

### **Outcome Orientation: Seeking and Fulfilling Life Purpose**

- Academically oriented toward:
  - expanding exploration (in contrast to narrowing focus of study, which will come later)
  - instilling a desire of scholarship and learning, and providing the skills to accomplish this
  - an exposure to and appreciation of the liberal arts
- Student Developmentally oriented toward:
  - building a sense of community and connection
  - development of character and leadership

### **Using the Exit Report for Leverage**

- With key stakeholders
- Board of Trustees (e.g., case of IWU’s chairperson)
- Administrative Council (e.g., highlighting centers of excellence at IWU, such as the Center for Life Calling and Leadership and the first-year seminar)

**Working with Internal Budgeting Processes**

- The benefit to students, assessment reports and planning
- Practical value: marketing division, admissions (e.g., IWU's financial impact via retention—annual report to the Lilly Foundation).

**In Strategic Planning for Research and Curricular Changes**

- Strategic research of efforts: IU/IWU collaborative to study “purpose” in curriculum; \$2.5



## Financial Impact of Increased Retention of Traditional Students 2006 Report

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6
Incoming Class Year	Actual number of students Enrolled as first-time full-time freshmen	Number expected to graduate at baseline retention percentage	Actual number of students from column 1 graduating in five years or less	Percentage of students from column 1 graduating in five years or less	Number of graduates gained by increased efforts	Financial impact on Indiana Wesleyan University
1996-1997 Baseline	376	135 <sup>1</sup>	210	56%	75	\$517,953 <sup>2</sup>
1997-1998	406	146	237	58%	91	\$682,879
1998-1999	520	187	275	53%	88	\$677,539
1999-2000	568	204	347	61%	143	\$1,570,889
2000-2001	553	199	331	60%	132	<b>\$1,485,858</b>
2001-2002	574	207	356 <sup>3</sup>	(62%) Final % is not available until August graduation	149	<b>\$1,797,734</b>
2002-2003	617	222				
2003-2004	654	235				
2004-2005	702	252				
2005-2006	733					
2006-2007	(750) <sup>4</sup>					
2007-2008						
<b>Total Impact To-Date</b>						<b>\$6,732,852</b>

E.G., The **\$6,732,852** serves as one of many positive indicators related to the student success initiatives at Indiana Wesleyan University—stemming from the original retention grant, the basis of this report. This grant served as the first of our many grants with The Endowment, and continues to have significant impact throughout our campus and more importantly in the lives of hundreds of students who would likely have failed to graduate without some of the interventions and preventions. We also continue to strive to help other universities along with the lay readers to benefit from our research. A few of our recent publications will reach you under separate cover. Any additional document is available upon request. This has been a full and overwhelmingly positive year for student success at IWU. Jerry Pattengale, 7/15/06

1. IWU's benchmark five-year retention rate for this program is 36%, based on our 1991 first-year cohort. Our benchmark study would look like the following:

1991-1992 Baseline	352	127	125	36%	---	---
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2. **FORMULA BASED ON INCREASED NUMBER OF GRADUATES IN FIVE YEARS (75):** The formula for obtaining a financial impact amount is based on student tuition, student room and board fees, and faculty salary package for that given year. For example, for 1996-1997:

TUITION INCOME (\$569,430) + ROOM & BOARD INCOME (\$93,750) – ADDITIONAL FACULTY SALARIES (\$145,227).

1996 Tuition Income = 1996 tuition, \$10,260 per student, minus 26% in average scholarship package (\$2,667.60) = **\$7,592.40 per student**;

1996 Room & Board Income = **\$1,250 per student** income

1996 Additional Faculty Salaries = 1996 faculty salary package for each additional 25 students. The average package (including all levels) was **\$48,409.20** (i.e., \$38,420 x 26%)

The formula for the totals of the 2000-01 and 2001-02 cohorts are as follows. As noted, the latter year is not complete until the August graduation. However, this affords a reasonably good look at the progress:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cohort Year	No. of graduates gained by increased retention	Tuition Income (tuition x students gained)	Tuition Income (tuition - average scholarship package of 26%)	Room and Board (x students gained)	Additional Faculty Salaries (students gained /25=)	Financial Impact (Columns 4 + 5, - 6 =)
2000-2001	132	\$12,250 x 132 = \$1,617,000	\$1,617,000 – 26% = <b>\$1,196,580</b>	\$4,740 x 132 = <b>\$625,680</b>	\$42,475 + \$13,592 (32%) x 6 = <b>\$336,402</b>	\$1,196,580 + \$625,680 - \$336,402 = <b>\$1,485,858</b>
2001-2002 <i>(note: this year not complete until August graduation)</i>	149	\$12,740 x 149 = \$1,898,260	\$1,898,260 – 26% = <b>\$1,404,712</b>	\$4,940 x 149 = <b>\$736,060</b>	\$43,313 + \$13,860 (32%) x 6 = <b>\$343,038</b>	\$1,404,712 + \$736,060 - \$343,038 = <b>\$1,797,734</b>
<b>Subtotals</b>	281	\$3,515,260	\$2,601,292	\$1,361,740	\$679,440	<b>\$3,283,592</b>
<b>Total Financial Impact: '01-02</b>						<b>\$3,283,592</b>

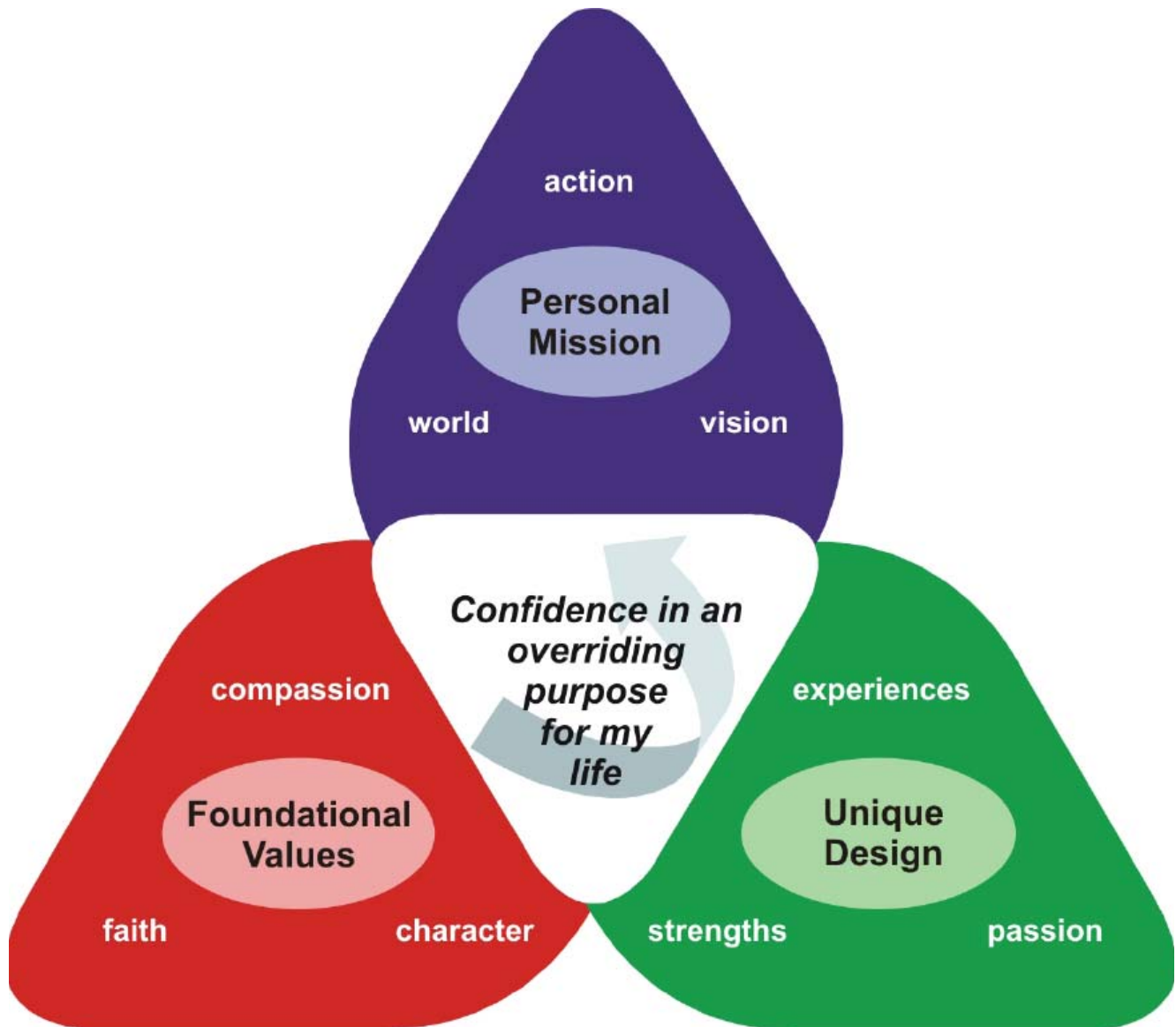
3. The five-year graduation numbers for this year are not available until our August graduation, 2006: 356/574 students have graduated in four years. This number is already 149 higher than the baseline percentage of 36%. *The impact calculation is in the chart under point 2 above.*
4. This number is tentative, but indicates the steady enrollment increases at our traditional campus (based on summer pre-registration and deposits—including a registration held last week). Our fall semester begins the day after Labor Day each year, and available living quarters limit our enrollment. Past reports have shown steady additions to residential units as we approach 2600 on-campus beds. We opened three “lodges” to house 236 students, and are currently constructing another residential hall next to these—after removing the tennis courts. In order to facilitate better the student development needs of our students, more tennis courts are being added (a total of twelve) along with an expansive indoor athletic training facility (similar to the addition at Anderson and Taylor universities). One of the key differences is that our additional facilities are for our athletic teams, thereby freeing are relatively new athletic facilities in the center of campus for intramurals and general health and recreation. This move reflects our student success studies through the years. You might recall that the current facilities were built two years earlier than scheduled due to our original student success research as part of this grant. Facility updates are available on our website: [www.indwes.edu](http://www.indwes.edu). The current master plan, much in discussion during the past two years, calls for several more dorms and growth on the residential campus to over 3,000 traditional-age residential students. With the addition of the residential halls has come additional student development staff.
4. The financial impact of the first-year course, “Becoming World Changers: The Christian Faith and Contemporary Issues” saves an additional \$45,000-65,000 annually. During the 2005 fall semester, the projected savings was \$46,500, and made the cumulative savings over \$300,000 since the course’s inception. In addition to the retention impact, the course structure includes large sections once weekly, freeing funds for multiple touch points with faculty in smaller sections and mentoring components. We designed this course early in the Lilly Special Retention Initiative, and the retention gains showed a strong correlation with its introduction. We continue to include the “Financial Impact of Increased Retention” chart in our annual Fact Book, using the same chart included in this report (p. 1). We also include an auxiliary chart showing how the structural design of the course saves the school significant funds annually and helps to sustain the overall first-year programming. The savings was \$221,131.56 for the first four years alone.
5. Last year we reported on the considerable national attention we received due to our selection in the Foundations of Excellence program (listing us among the top 24 programs nationally for first-year students). This recognition reflects the work that was, in large part, supported by this grant and sustained afterwards. IWU was among the schools highlighted at the 2006 national conference for the Higher Learning Commission. A large poster was on display throughout the conference highlighting IWU’s accomplishments in this area. The poster is too large to include in this report, though the information sheet attached to it is enclosed in the appendix. We have continued our qualitative and quantitative assessments of various aspects of our student success program, available upon request.

6. We have partnered with the *Strengths Quest* curriculum/project via the Gallup organization. This is part of our comprehensive whole-person development approach. It builds upon our strong “purpose-guided” approach, and is administered through our growing and highly successful Center for Life Calling and Leadership. A more detailed update of the Strengths Quest program will follow in Dr. Bill Millard’s report with the TEV grant. These grants have served as excellent complements to one another.
7. A team of scholars from IWU, Taylor, Anderson and Huntington have just finished an in-depth collaborative research seminar (12 months) on “Intellectual Virtues among First-year Students.” Numerous publications are forthcoming. This project was funded from our Lilly Intellectual Capital grant for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, again, an excellent complement to this grant. A more thorough reporting on this will come with the respective grant report.
8. Our First-year team has developed a “First-year portal,” dedicated to helping students in transition. This is contracted with our Information Technology department, and is still under construction. However, some aspects are available for incoming students. We will be in a place for a full report on this portal in late September if requested, and a shared url. Our research shows the interest among millennials for connectivity, and thus a blog with other new students is being established, with a student monitor involved.
9. The First-year course was restructured this year, arranging it around the basic philosophical format of the Life Calling Model with use in our center. It has helped to have a more coherent first-year philosophy.
10. Campus is experiencing considerable construction to assist student needs, as noted in the above conversation about the athletic facilities. In addition to the new dorm at the site of the old tennis courts, another town house has been added with plans for an additional dorm. The master plan shows various housing additions. Perhaps one of the most striking and exciting additions is the expanded (third edition) to our student center. As noted in various campus reports, the very design and location of our student success initiatives reflects our research. The student center is among the more functional and attractive in the nation. More importantly, its design is a manifestation of our philosophy of student success. The Center for Life Calling and Leadership has a key location in the new section, and the Office for Multicultural Programs now has a prominent central location.
11. This year we “upgraded” the profile of Student Support Services, now called the Aldersgate Center. It was given an expanded office area as well. The new director, Dr. Todd Ream (Ph.D., Penn State) studied with Lee Upcraft, among the leaders in the student success research on assessment.
12. We added an Associate Dean of Mentoring and Accountability, and an Assistant Director of Multicultural Programs. These position hires reflect our continued commitment to our original goals of this grant. While we are realistic in our understanding that not all grants have such sustainability and impact, this one has had tremendous long term and institution molding ramifications. With the solidification of our mission around world changers, and a student success philosophy around purpose, the student success efforts have become inextricably linked with all aspects of our campus.
13. During the two weeks prior to this report, though in no way tied to the timing of this report, our administration has been finalizing a new position: Associate Dean for Student Success. Suffice it to say, that we have stated this in earlier reports as a key goal, and it’s about to come to fruition. This is a major step forward, and once again, a key

commitment to the goals and original intent of this grant. It also shows an endorsement of our new president, Dr. Henry Smith, to these endeavors. It also reflects tangible outcomes from past items in these reports, such as the “Talking Paper to the Advisory Committee of the IWU Board” last year, along with the “Exit Report for the Foundations Project Assessment.”

14. IWU continues to contribute to the knowledge base in student success studies. IWU faculty members have contributed to numerous local, state, regional, national and international conferences and on other campuses. We are actively engaged with student success projects with Purdue, IUPUI, Indiana Wesleyan University, the four colleges in our Intellectual Virtue study, the College Board (via arrangement with Don Hossler), and the National Resource Center (USC) and the Policy Center (Brevard). These relationships are both formal and informal with various levels of research. You will find enclosed examples of one of the presentations resulting from our research. The presentation on “Millennials and the Pop Culture” has been requested from numerous conferences and campuses, including the central offices of Ivy Tech (presentation delivered last month, with others forthcoming). Forthcoming books/articles of interest by our researching faculty related to student success:
  - a. Various submissions on intellectual virtues among first-year students, principal author, Todd Ream, and Brad Garner, Bill Millard, David Riggs, Mary Brown
  - b. “Forward” and conceptual design of *Student Development in the First College Year: A Primer for Educators*, JP
  - c. Multiple presentations on millennials, JP & Scott Burson
  - d. “Student Success or Student Non-Dissatisfaction,” *Growth Journal*, spring 2006, JP
  - e. *Exploring the Evidence*, section, Brad Garner, Bill Millard & JP
  - f. *The Dream Needs To Be Stronger than the Struggle*, McGraw-Hill Publishers, in press, first draft available upon request, JP
  - g. *Sophomores* (working title), John Gardner, JP, et al, Jossey-Bass (final review/app. stage)
  - h. Sophomore summit research group, Colgate University, JP
  - i. Conference sessions on retaining adult students, Cheryl Flemming and Cynthia Tweedell
  - j. “Discovering Life Purpose” research brief, Indiana University IPAS project brief, and paper from AIR conference, Bill Millard & JP
  - k. *Leading the Way Out of Poverty*, NPR film & DVP (WIPB), emphasis on the role of education and “purpose,” JP & Bill Millard
  - l. *The Forgotten Student: Understanding and Supporting Sophomores*, USC teleconference, participation and contribution, JP
  - m. *Ten Myths about College*, Franklin Films, Bill Millard
  - n. Presentations at Nursing conferences on student retention: Pam Harrison and Karen Hoffman (nursing professors)

*Jerry Pattengale*  
*Assistant Vice President for Scholarship and Grants*  
*Indiana Wesleyan University*



# The Life Calling Model

## Strengths-Based Assessment

**A**t this point in the semester, you should have received an identification code allowing you to participate in taking the Strengths Finder assessment. The Clifton StrengthsFinder is a 30-minute, web-based assessment that measures the presence of 34 themes of talent. After you complete the assessment, a personalized web site will be built around your top five themes. Your Clifton StrengthsFinder assessment is a key starting point for your use of the many available StrengthsQuest resources:

- A personalized version of the book *StrengthsQuest*, which will feature insights and strategies customized to your Signature Themes. You'll be able to download and print full and condensed versions of the personalized book.
- The StrengthsQuest Learning Center, which will give you the opportunity to explore each of the 34 themes in an interactive learning format and test your knowledge of each theme. You'll also be able to create a personalized action plan based upon your Signature Themes.



### Action Steps:

1. If you have not yet done so, complete the StrengthsFinder online assessment ([www.strengthsquest.com](http://www.strengthsquest.com)). This activity should take no longer than 30-40 minutes to complete. We believe that you will enjoy this experience and the feedback that you receive.
2. When you have completed the assessment and have received feedback on your top five themes, email this information to your Breakout Leader and your Residence Director (They will provide you with their email addresses for this purpose).
3. Over the course of the semester, in the large group lecture and the Breakout Groups, we will reference the 34 themes of talent included in the StrengthsFinder assessment.
4. Talk with your roommate(s) and friends about their Signature Themes.



# A Letter Home

**D**uring your first semester at Indiana Wesleyan University, you will begin to experience and acknowledge slight refinements in the direction and strength of your beliefs. Part of this process is developing the ability to think about, organize, and effectively communicate what you believe. These abilities — to know what you believe and how to communicate those beliefs effectively — are critical to becoming a world changer. More subtly, these abilities require that you adjust your communication style based upon your intended audience and purpose. The “Letter Home” provides practical experience in communicating the basics of your Christian faith to someone who knows you “up close and personal” and has seen your life and beliefs from that perspective.

## The Assignment

Think of someone from home that knows you well—a relative (e.g., father, mother, brother, sister), friend, neighbor, or former teacher or coworker. You decide whether your letter should be written to someone who is a believer in Jesus Christ or someone who isn’t a believer. Write a letter to that person from your perspective as a first-year student at Indiana Wesleyan University. Address the following elements in your letter, reflecting your faith position in relationship to subjects that you address:

- The nature of your relationship with this individual
- Your beliefs about God, Jesus, sin, salvation, and the experience of being a believer in Jesus Christ
- Issues that intersect your life now and in the future
- Your reasons for choosing to attend a Christian university
- Your aspirations for the future as a Christian and future university graduate

## The Format

Your letter should be typewritten (i.e., 12 pt. font, 1” margins, double-spaced) and in the format of a personal letter (i.e. include date, salutation, greeting, body [*see above stated issues to include*] closing, and signature). Your letter should be from 3-4 pages in length. If you choose to reference Scripture in your letter, make sure that you appropriately connect it to your topics and discussion. The following rubric gives guidelines that will be used by your Breakout Leader to assess your letter.



## Postscript

Consider the possibility of actually mailing your letter to the intended participant.

## “I Have A Dream”

**O**n August 28, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his immortal “I Have A Dream” speech before a crowd gathered at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. This was a pivotal event in the Civil Rights movement and captured Dr. King’s vision of a world where people live in harmony and celebrate their unique qualities and differences. In this remarkable speech, Dr. King managed to articulate his “dream” in a mere 1,550 words. This heartfelt speech, with well-crafted and organized content, combined with his extraordinary oratorical skills, resulted in a memorable point in our country’s history.

When you think of this world in five, ten, or twenty years, what do you visualize? What would your dream for the future be? Is your dream focused on human rights, economic prosperity, remarkable medical discoveries, or a worldwide spiritual revival? It is critical for world changers to maintain a prayerful focus on their vision for the future. Changing the world is a viable goal for each student in this class through prayer, attention to God’s direction in our lives, the assistance and guidance of others, and a motivation to make a difference.

### The Assignment

**Your assignment is to craft a statement that summarizes your vision for the future of our world.**

**Your assignment directions:**

- Typewritten, double-spaced, 12 point font, 1” margins.
- The key guideline for this assignment is that you use no more than 1,550 words in articulating your dream (i.e., the same number of words used by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.).
- Identify the audience for your vision statement.
- The components and timeframe relating to your vision are your choice.
- Include a clear position statement and a strong conclusion.
- Include examples and support for your ideas.

**Some guiding questions to consider as you work in this project include:**

- Who is the audience for my vision statement and do I need to answer any questions for them to understand my dream?
- What will be the role of Christianity in changing the world?
- What will be the relationships between people groups that have traditionally been at war with one another?
- As you think about the calling that God has placed in your life, what role do you wish to play in crafting a changed world?
- What will be the status and treatment of groups of people who have, in many instances, historically been mistreated or disenfranchised? (e.g., people with disabilities, women, children or the elderly in various cultures and countries)
- What will be the economic status of the world in regard to making resources available to all people?
- What will be the role of governments around the world?



# An Act of Kindness

**“Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.” (1 Peter 4:9-11 NIV)**

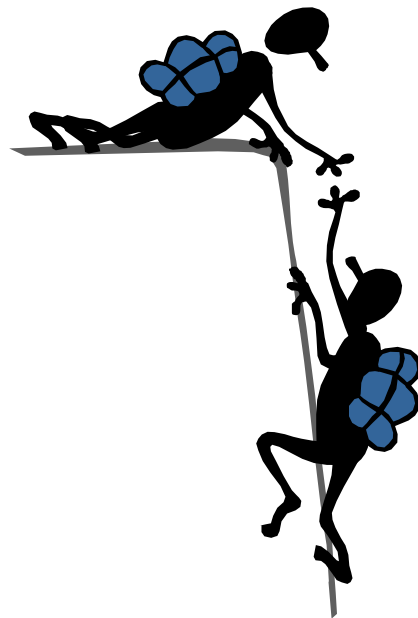
## Why An Act of Kindness?

**T**he Bible teaches us to have a servant’s heart, a desire to be a source of help and encouragement to others. These acts are undertaken without any expectation of reward, notice, or acclaim. Sometimes the most powerful acts of service to others are done in a manner that is completely anonymous. We believe that it takes practice and diligence to become a servant. This begins by looking at the world with a prayerful attitude:

“Lord, what can I do today to be of some service to others? Give me an awareness of times and places in which I can use my gifts and talents. Take away any leanings toward selfishness or self-centeredness. Give me the willingness to go out of my way to show your love to another through my words and actions. Remove any need for recognition as I serve in your name. Let my heart be pure as I seek to serve you, other people, and my community with love. I ask these things in your name. Amen.”

## The Assignment

Perform an act of service for some other person (or group) of your choosing. The recipient or beneficiary of your act of service should not be aware that you are the person who served them. Provide a written description (i.e, 2 pages in length) of the act of service that you performed and your reactions to this experience. Include at least three Scripture references to reinforce the biblical principle of service.



# Personal Mission Statement

**A**s a culminating activity for this semester, you are to create your own “Personal Mission Statement.” In preparation for completing this activity, you are encouraged to spend time in prayer and reflection, thinking about the things that you have learned



The following are some guiding questions to assist you in this process of reflection:

What are some things that you have learned about yourself this semester (e.g., strengths, areas of needed growth, challenges, successes)? What are some of the dreams, noble causes, and purposes that you have identified for yourself as you look toward the future?

Reflect on the criteria for a world changer as they relate to the future that you see for yourself:

- A world changer is not satisfied with the world as it is. What are some of these areas/issues of the world that resonate with you?
- A world changer distinguishes truth from non-truth. Are there truths that can be communicated through the example of the ways in which you live your life?
- A world changer pursues noble causes. What are some noble causes that ignite your passion to see things change in the world?
- A world changer determines what they are willing to bet their life on. What are those things for you? Where you willing to invest your time, energy, gifts, and resources?
- How have you grown spiritually (i.e., How has your faith grown this semester? Which of your foundational values are growing intensity and importance as guiding principles in your decision-making? What are the personal evidences of God’s presence in your life?)
- Areas of further study and activity to which you are feeling drawn (i.e., what are your passions)?

## The Assignment

**Complete the following statements by writing a paragraph on each topic:**

- My personal mission is to ...
- I am called to pursue this mission because I value ...
- To fulfill this personal mission statement, I will ...
- A verse that speaks to me in regard to my personal mission is ...

Submit your personal mission statement electronically to your breakout leader by the specified due date. A rubric has been included to assist you in better understanding the expectations for this assignment.

Our intention is to return a copy of this Personal Mission Statement to you during your final year at Indiana Wesleyan University.

**Return this form to your Breakout Leader on the designated date**

# Three Metaphors

