**Module 1 Lecture 1**

**IFT-501  
Welcome to GCU**

**Objectives**

* To Understand the Origin of Grand Canyon University
* To Review the Vision and Mission Statements
* To Review the Values of Grand Canyon University
* To Review the Guiding Principles of Grand Canyon University

**Readings  
  
  
Introduction**

**Welcome to Grand Canyon University!**

Grand Canyon University (GCU) is Arizona's private university. Based in Phoenix, the regionally accredited, private, non-denominational Christian university offers online and campus-based bachelor's and master's degree programs through the Ken Blanchard College of Business, College of Education, College of Nursing, College of Arts and Sciences, College of Fine Arts and Production, and College of Doctoral Studies. The school is ranked as one of the top online education programs by OEDb (Online Education Database)1 and as one of the top five online colleges for entrepreneurs by Fortune2. With a total enrollment of approximately 40,000 students, GCU emphasizes individual attention for both traditional undergraduate students as well as the working professional.

1.1  
**Origin of GCU**  
  
**The Origin of GCU**  
  
Grand Canyon College was born in the wake of World War II as the realization of a dream long held dear by the tiny congregations of Southern Baptists that called the Arizona mission frontier their home. In the fall of 1946, the Baptist General Convention of Arizona voted to organize a college. A few months later, the Convention selected the first trustees for the college, who soon secured an abandoned armory building in Prescott, Arizona, as Grand Canyon's first campus.  
  
  
1.2  
**Vision and Mission Statements**

**Vision Statement**

Grand Canyon University is the premier Christian university educating people to lead and serve.

**Mission Statement**   
  
Grand Canyon University, one of the leading Bible colleges in the USA, prepares learners to become global citizens, critical thinkers, effective communicators and responsible leaders by providing an academically challenging, values-based curriculum from the context of our Christian heritage (GCU 2010).

The curriculum at GCU is designed to prepare students with the skills and knowledge needed in the contemporary job market. Students are challenged to develop these tools and to push their intellectual limits in order to become successful in their careers.   
  
In addition, the curriculum fosters personal discovery so that students realize within themselves the elements of compassion and accountability. A uniquely important element of the GCU mission statement is the defining attribute of its Christian heritage. The GCU community defines its culture by the way its members reflect a committed relationship with Christ and creates the GCU experience in a manner that reflects His teachings to support students and graduates through a successful life journey.   
  
These normative Christian values are integral to the development, maturity, and education of ethical and morally respectable citizens who continue on the path of life-long learning. Each element or objective of the GCU mission statement is uniquely addressed in the GCU curriculum and by the GCU culture, which shapes a rich learning environment from which students graduate with professional and life skills.   
  
When learners graduate from GCU, our expectation is that they will be global citizens, critical thinkers, effective communicators, and responsible leaders (GCU, 2010).

**Values**

Grand Canyon University is grounded in Christian theology with the idea that students are created in the image of God. Students are offered a values-based education emphasizing Community, Character and Citizenship in the context of a Christian worldview. The curriculum is designed to offer a framework through which learners examine their present values and assess their behaviors and beliefs. Through structured learning opportunities, students are challenged to examine their beliefs and discover who they are and to learn to examine situations and life from a variety of perspectives. A values-based education, by its name, suggests that there is a certain set of ideas and actions that are more desirable for humans to possess over others. As a community, the GCU faculty and staff strives to model these values through the Fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Socrates stated, "the unexamined life is not worth living (GCU, 2010, para. 4)." At GCU, we strive to help students examine their lives and grow as individuals.

1.3  
**Guiding Principles**

**Guiding Principles**

*Integrity and Ethics*

* Consistently demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior congruent with Christian values in all transactions and relationships
* Adheres to the regulatory and legal environment of higher education
* Is openly accountable for actions and decisions

*Student-oriented*

* Interacts cooperatively and constructively with all students and constituencies.
* Exhibits the highest standards of dedication and commitment to quality service to meet or exceed student requirements.
* Consistently conveys a positive attitude toward students and constituencies.
* Demonstrates continual focus on student-centered learning and learner needs.

*Communication*

* Demonstrates effective verbal and written communication.
* Communicates vertically and horizontally throughout the organization.
* Listens to others to ensure understanding.
* Contributes meaningful information during meetings.

*Action-oriented*

* Relates expectations to overall mission and vision of GCU.
* Displays and encourages a sense of commitment.
* Devotes resources to *what is important now.*
* Consistently meets deadlines.

*Self-Leadership*

* Assumes responsibility for understanding the business and the individual and departmental roles in supporting the business; takes responsibility for actions of self and others, including direct report employees.
* Gains respect of others while respecting others and treating every one fairly.
* Demonstrates commitment to continuous improvement of quality, processes, self, and others.
* Effectively copes with change and is comfortable working with uncertainty.

**CONCLUSION:**

Now that you have an overview of the programs offered at Grand Canyon University, please proceed to the remaining readings and activities in Module 1.

**REFERENCES:**

Grand Canyon University (2010). *Bible colleges in the USA*. Retrieved from <http://www.gcu.edu/?page=mission>