Jan. 6, 2017

Loyola University Maryland to close the Pastoral Counseling Department and programs

Dear Faculty, Staff, and Administrators,

As a community committed to creating a bright future for Loyola University Maryland, we continue to consider carefully how we can be both true to our mission and stand out in an increasingly competitive higher education environment. Particularly in recent years, we have challenged ourselves to identify ways in which we can operate more efficiently and effectively as a university while providing the exceptional education we offer our undergraduate and graduate students.

In the spirit of our ongoing commitment to institutional stewardship and with an eye on positioning Loyola well for the future, I have made the decision to close the Pastoral Counseling Department and all Pastoral Counseling programs. This decision, which was informed by careful research, thought, consultation, and consideration of alternatives, has been made due to the programs’ financial underperformance, declining enrollments, and a shrinking market for new students.

Although this is an extremely difficult decision, it is the necessary and fiscally prudent one. For Loyola to remain competitive and continue to achieve its overall academic mission, we cannot invest in graduate programs that cost significantly more to run than they bring in through revenue from tuition and other sources. Over this past year, we examined Loyola’s full academic portfolio to enable a data-informed approach to this ongoing effort to support our mission and achieve strategic objectives, and it became clear that the Pastoral Counseling Department and programs are not sustainable.

Loyola will teach out the program to the students who are currently enrolled, and later this semester we will release a plan to fulfill that commitment. Additional students will not be admitted. The tenured pastoral counseling faculty will join other academic departments at Loyola, and we trust they will continue to teach and inspire our students. I recognize that the closing of the department will be particularly difficult for the tenure-track faculty, affiliate faculty, administrators, and staff, whose positions will be eliminated as the department winds down during the teach out. They have contributed so much to Loyola and to our students, and we are deeply grateful for their service.

As a university, we take great pride in the teaching and scholarship of our pastoral counseling faculty, as well as the many outstanding achievements and contributions of our pastoral counseling students and alumni in the program’s 40-year history. The master’s, doctoral, and certificate programs offered in pastoral counseling have benefited many Loyola graduates both personally and professionally, and we cannot quantify the number of lives they have touched with their Loyola educations.

Embracing fiduciary responsibility while staying true to our mission can be challenging, but we step forward believing in all Loyola University Maryland is today and will be tomorrow. Even as we face these challenges as a community, I am confident we will also encounter great opportunity in this new year.

Sincerely,

Rev. Brian F. Linnane, S.J.
President