



LOYOLA COLLEGE IN MARYLAND

— 1852 —

August 20, 2008

Dear Members of the Loyola Community:

I write today with some very important and exciting news. The Executive Committee of Loyola's Board of Trustees has voted unanimously to affirm and ratify the full Board's preliminary decision to change Loyola's designation from "College" to "University." The change takes effect on Aug. 15, 2009, in time for the start of the 2009-2010 academic year.

At that time, Loyola's official name will become "Loyola University Maryland." We have chosen this name in order to reaffirm our university's enduring connection to its home state, as well as to underscore the distinctions between our Loyola and those in Louisiana, Illinois and California. In order to enact this change, we will need to submit a letter requesting endorsement by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). We have every reason to believe MHEC will support our planned change.

I am aware that this topic has stirred intense feelings in all areas of the Loyola community, on both sides of the issue. Throughout this process, I have been very gratified by the degree to which Loyola's students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, parents and other friends have become involved in this discussion, since that involvement illustrates the profound connection you have with this university.

I also recognize that some members of our community will be disappointed with the outcome of this discussion. Please let me assure you that this decision has not been made lightly. Over the course of the past few months, I and other Loyola leaders have been engaged in many conversations, on-campus and off, with a variety of constituencies deeply invested in the outcome of this discussion. We have sought feedback from alumni and others with close ties to Loyola. Our decision comes only after careful consideration of these conversations, a critical examination of Loyola's character, history and the nature of the institution we are today, and a thorough review of the extensive, data-driven research we've been conducting with the help of higher education consulting firm SimpsonScarborough. This research underscores a conviction that became clear as we engaged in these discussions—that the time is right for a designation change.

It is clear to the Board of Trustees and to me that Loyola's current designation does not accurately describe the depth, breadth and excellence of its programs, and that this change will be an invaluable part of our ongoing efforts to enable prospective students and other key audiences to understand fully the institution we have become. Since we first began considering the designation change during the past year, I have been steadfast in my assertion that if made, the change would not signify a shift in philosophy or a move away from the sense of community that is a hallmark of a Loyola education, but rather a more complete and accurate description of the institution we already are. Since becoming involved in Loyola governance as a Trustee in 2000, I have been extraordinarily proud of all that this university has become, and my belief in the character and values that define this institution has only deepened in my three years as President. I remain committed to leading Loyola forward, guided by the same principles of Jesuit education that have shaped our achievements for more than 155 years. However, in today's increasingly complex and competitive higher education environment, it is critical for those closest to us and the next generation of the Loyola family to realize all that a Loyola education offers, and a more accurate designation will help immeasurably in this regard.

That being said, the history and enduring value of the “Loyola College” identity remain very important to the Board and to me. I am very pleased to announce that when the designation change takes effect next year, our College of Arts and Sciences will become known as “Loyola College.” This change allows us to preserve the historic “Loyola College” name while the combined university assumes a designation that more clearly defines the nature of its programs.

I do not expect the designation change alone to guarantee Loyola’s continued success. As you know, Loyola is in the midst of crafting its next strategic plan, which promises to lead us into a very exciting and promising phase in Loyola’s long-distinguished history. This process will help us attain even more remarkable achievements in the years to come.

I know that you probably have many additional questions about this change and its next steps, and I am committed to providing as much information as possible throughout this process. We’ve set up a web page, accessible at www.loyola.edu/designation, that addresses some of the most frequently asked questions surrounding this topic. It also includes information on the research findings that reinforced this decision. The page will be updated as additional information becomes available, and I encourage you to visit it often. If you have any specific questions not answered online, please feel free to contact the Office of Public Relations, whose members are prepared to field all questions and concerns related to the designation change, at ext. 5025.

In the coming weeks, I will begin to establish a Designation Change Implementation Team that includes members from a broad cross-section of departments. This team will be charged with considering and addressing the many questions and tasks that will arise as the effective date of the change approaches. I sincerely hope that all those asked to join the team will assist us with the wealth of opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

Thank you again for your ongoing service to Loyola and your deep engagement with the most pressing questions affecting our community today. You have my best wishes for your continued enjoyment of the summer and for great success in the coming academic year.

Sincerely,

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