

**SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY**  
**FACULTY HANDBOOK**  
**SECTION 1.1**

## 1.1 History

On January 12, 1777, six months after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, two Franciscan padres, Tomas de la Peña and Jose Antonio Murguia, founded the eighth of California's original 21 missions, calling it the Mission Santa Clara de Asís. The Franciscans ran it as a school and religious center for Indians and early settlers, teaching trades and farming to the men, music and reading to the boys, and weaving and sewing to the girls. Withstanding floods, earthquakes, and persecution, they maintained their settlement under three flags— Spanish, Mexican, and United States—until the Santa Clara Mission was transferred to the Jesuit order in 1851.

In that year, after laying the groundwork with fellow Jesuit Michael Accolti, Father John Nobili opened a college at the mission. Starting with 12 students, Santa Clara College offered courses in reading, writing, and foreign languages.

A decision made in 1854 by the Jesuit Province of Turin, Italy, to adopt California as a permanent mission field marked a turning point in Santa Clara's history. As a consequence, the Jesuits of Turin provided the college with the faculty and support that it needed to grow. The following year, Santa Clara College received a charter of incorporation from the State of California. In 1857, the College conferred its first collegiate degree, a Bachelor of Arts diploma, on Thomas I. Bergin. This was the first diploma granted by any institution of higher learning in the State of California. By 1858, new scientific apparatus arrived from Paris so that integrated courses in science as well as in the classics and in commercial subjects could be offered.

Slow and steady growth followed, and distinguished graduates became prominent members of California life. It was not until 1912, however, that Schools of Law and Engineering were founded. In that same year, courses in the humanities and the sciences were expanded, and the College became a University. Meeting the demands of urban growth in the San Francisco Bay Area, the University's School of Business and Administration was founded in 1926 and courses in commerce and finance were also expanded. In that same year, the old mission church was destroyed by fire. The present structure, an enlarged replica of the original, was completed in 1928.

From the 1930's through World War II, the University's enrollment was relatively stable. The return of many veterans resulted in an enlarged student body and new resources. In 1947, for the first time in the University's history, enrollment broke the one-thousand mark. From the postwar period to the present, the face of the campus has been changing and expanding. In 1957, the University permitted women studying at O'Connor Hospital's School of Nursing to take liberal arts courses at Santa Clara. Four years later, in 1961, the University announced a major change in policy and accepted women as

undergraduate degree candidates for the first time in its 110-year history. Santa Clara became the first Catholic coeducational institution of higher learning in California.

In 2001, one hundred fifty years after its founding, the University enrolled approximately 4,500 undergraduates and 3,200 graduate students. In its sesquicentennial academic year, the University offered undergraduate degrees in more than forty fields and graduate degrees in Law, Business, Engineering, Counseling Psychology and Education, and Pastoral Ministries.

As an independent University supported by tuition, endowment, and gifts, Santa Clara has been able to accomplish change in ways that reflect its traditional concern for the individual student.

Today, Santa Clara University, the first institution to offer classes in higher learning in California, continues its mission heritage of service by helping its students equip themselves with advanced knowledge and humanistic values. Academic excellence in a well-balanced human being is the University's goal.