



WHAT IS THE WENDT CHARACTER INITIATIVE?

The *Wendt Character Initiative* promotes a campus culture of excellent moral character and purposeful lives.

We have a presence in the core curriculum and in co-curriculum programs and activities.

Specific programs include:

- Wendt Character Scholars—60 scholarship students committed to Wendt programming, community service, and practicing excellent character
- Community lecture series
- Faculty character-project support
- Book discussion groups
- Character and ethics library collection

WHAT IS CHARACTER?

Character is about excellence as a whole human being in every aspect of one's life. It's about being the best person one can be—being all God created us to be. Our goal is to be excellent persons:

- People of *integrity* whose lives are characterized by truthfulness, honesty and stewardship;
- People of *justice* who treat all people fairly, respect diversity, and practice Christian love;
- People of *compassion* who live by the Golden Rule in service of others.

WENDT CHARACTER INITIATIVE MISSION STATEMENT

Centered in the University's *Mission and Values* and consonant with its Reformed Christian identity, the Initiative engages the university community in a cooperative and spirited effort to foster intellectual understanding of and personal commitment to leading ***lives of purpose*** and ***excellent moral character***.

HOW TO BECOME A WENDT CHARACTER SCHOLAR

For information on applying to be a Wendt Character Scholar, visit us online at <http://wendt.dbq.edu/Applying.cfm>. Applications for the program are open from December 1 - January 31.

WHAT IS EXCELLENT MORAL CHARACTER?

Wendt Character Initiative seeks to develop a culture of character at the University of Dubuque. Our goals are to help all members of the U D Community be people of character leading lives of purpose. But just what is “excellent moral character”? What is a “culture of character”? What is a person of character?

The Greek work that is often translated “virtue” means “excellence.” So, to be a person of character is to be excellent as a person. It is not about making sure one doesn’t violate some ethics code. It is not about mediocrity. Character is not about being good enough. Character is about **excellence**. It is not just about being excellent in one area, such as in one’s profession, or in one’s personal life, or even in one’s religious devotion. It’s about being excellent as a whole human being. It is about being excellent in every aspect of one’s life. It is about being the best person that one can be. It is, in short, to be all that God created us to be.

That is what we seek to be and to help our students to be: excellent persons. As Christians, we realize that every single one of us falls short of the excellence that God intends for us. Yet, in God’s grace, we strive toward the goal of excellence. Our goal is not just to do good things but to be good people. For character is not just about what a person **does**, it is about what a person **is**. As Jesus suggests, it is the state of one’s **heart** that determines whether what flows into one’s life is good or evil. As Paul says, we are to be “transformed by the renewing of our **minds**.” Our goal, then, is to help form hearts and minds out of which flow acts of human excellence, acts of virtue. The Wendt Initiative, in particular aims to help students, faculty and staff at the University of Dubuque become people of integrity, justice and compassion.

- People of integrity whose lives are characterized by truthfulness, honesty and stewardship;
- People of justice who treat all people fairly, respect diversity, and practice Christian love;
- People of compassion who live by the Golden Rule in service of others.

In class and community, the Wendt Character Initiative invites the UD community to explore issues of moral character. We want to grow in our understanding of character issues so that we can be excellent people, serving our communities well as God’s children.

