MARXE Strategic Plan

Marxe Mission and Values Statements Outreach
A Summary of What We Heard

OVERVIEW

The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) engaged with students, faculty, staff and alumni in the spring 2023 to learn about our community's opinions of the Marxe School's mission and values. We sent out an online survey to all community members and conducted an in-person open house called the Marxe Planning Café where we presented information on large, printed boards and collected input from attendees. Both the online survey and the Marxe Planning Café collected information through a set of three exercises. A total of 77 people participated in this phase of the outreach, including 34 students, 18 faculty, 13 staff, 11 alumni, and 1 did not identify.

MISSION AND VALUES EXERCISES

Both the online survey and the open house boards asked participants to read background information on the Marxe strategic planning process, then complete three exercises related to the Marxe mission and values.

Exercise #1 Marxe Mission: The first exercise asked participants to read the current Marxe mission statement and rate how well it reflects our school's purpose.

Table 1: Summary of Responses to Exercise #1

To what extent do you think the current mission statement reflects our school's purpose?

Rating	**Open House** Number and Percent of Respondents	**Online Survey** Number and Percent of Respondents	**Total**
Perfectly	1 (4%)	4 (10%)	5 (8%)
Very Well	20 (80%)	25 (62.5%)	45 (69%)
Somewhat	4 (16%)	11 (27.5%)	15 (23%)
Not Very Well	0	0	0
Not At All	0	0	0
Total	**25**	**40**	**65**

Exercise #2 Mission Priority: The second exercise asked respondents to provide their top three priority themes to include in the mission statement. 117 unique comments were received for Exercise 2.

Exercise #3 Hopes and Aspirations: The third exercise asked participants what ***five*** themes or phrases define their hopes and aspirations for the Marxe School. 171 unique comments were received for Exercise 3.

ANALYZING THE VALUES EXERCISE DATA

The Strategic Planning Committee's Working Group on Marxe Values met twice over the month of April 2023, first to decide which values to propose and second to discuss draft values language. Working Group (WG) members included Cristina Balboa (chair), Hilary Botein, Jonathan Engel, Young Ha, Frank Heiland, Ying Huang, and Tiffany Lewis.

The WG employed word clouds and manual categorization techniques to summarize comments from the online survey and the open house exercises. Data from both Exercise #2 and #3 were used to develop Marxe value statements.

Word Clouds: Word clouds give a pictorial summary of the data, with the size and color of each word in the cloud indicating the frequency of that word in the data set.

Figure 1 presents the word cloud of data collected under Exercise #2 where respondents were asked to provide the top three priority themes for the Marxe mission. Some of the most frequently mentioned words related to the mission priority are *Public*, *Knowledge*, *Leaders*, *Engage*, *Empower*, *Advance*, *Effective* and *Inclusive.*

Figure 1: Mission Statement Priority Word Cloud



Figure 2 presents the word cloud of data collected under Exercise #3 where respondents were asked to provide five themes or phrases that define their hopes and aspirations for the Marxe School. Some of the most frequently mentioned words related to participants' hopes and aspirations for the Marxe School include *Equity, Service, Community, Excellence, Inclusion, Courage, Public, Students, Justice, and Diversity, and Policy.*

Figure 2: Hopes and Aspirations Word Cloud



Coding and Categorizing Data: After visualizing the data in word cloud format, the WG coded and categorized the data. Fourteen value themes emerged and were categorized into three levels – major, midrange, and minor. Table 2 shows the three major value themes, four midrange value themes, and seven minor value themes.

Table 2: Categorization of Fourteen Value Themes

Category	Value Theme
Major	DEIJ, Rigor & Excellence, Leadership
Midrange	Collaboration, Service, Innovation, Humanity & Respect
Minor	Practical, Value & Flexibility, Change, Ethical Focus, Deliberation & Openness, Empowerment, and Curiosity

Reviewing Peer School's Plans: A final input to developing the Marxe Values statements was a review of peer schools' strategic plans. The WG reviewed value statements from the following schools.

- Rutgers SPAA
- Evans School
- University of Arizona
- O'Neill School
- Portland State University
- NYU
- Baruch College Values

The WG discussed how there was a fair amount of overlap among value statements from other universities. The statements seemed to reflect the same collection of values but were tailored differently for the meaning given by each individual institution. The WG discussed the purpose of these value statements as both internal (i. e. decision-making) and externally focused (i.e. reputational).

The WG came to a general consensus on seven themes to be addressed by the value statements:

- Service for the Public Good ("put something good in the world")
- Effectiveness/Competence ("get results")
- Inclusion ("open our doors wide")
- Equity (to mirror our IDEA statement "break down barriers to inclusion")
- Collaboration ("work across disciplines and sectors")
- Global Perspective ("understand issues from both local and global perspectives")
- Adaptability ("ready for the changing world")

The WG could not decide between "Effectiveness" and "Competence".

PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF MARXE VALUE STATEMENTS WITH EXAMPLES

For each value, the WG suggested definitional language, a pithy catchphrase or shibboleth (perhaps for marketing purposes), and links to examples of how each value operates at our school. After discussion and feedback from the Strategic Planning Committee as a whole, they revised the statements. The complete value statement content developed by the WG is shown below.

Service for the Public Good ("put something good in the world")
All who choose to be part of Marxe, whether as students, faculty, or staff, embrace an ethos of public service in which they try to have a positive impact on the broader world while pursuing their individual goals. To this end, we teach environmental sustainability, democratic participation, ethical decision-making, responsible fiscal stewardship, and long-term investment in infrastructure and people as we prepare our students to lead.

Examples:

- Alumni testimonials.
- MIA Alumni.
- We support current and future nonprofit professionals through research, education, and public engagement at the Center for Nonprofit Strategy and Management.
- Lillie and Nathan Ackerman Lecture Series on Equality and Justice

Effectiveness ("get results")
We are a school committed to instilling the skills, judgment, and knowledge that our students need to be effective professionals. In support of this effort, we regularly evaluate our curriculum, assess our teaching, update our syllabi, and support the professional development of our faculty. We also regularly seek feedback from alumni and employers to better understand the most valued competencies for successful careers in public and nonprofit management, international affairs, the private sector, and higher education administration.

Examples: We offer support out of the classroom to ensure our graduates have fluency in quantitative analysis and writing for public affairs.

Inclusion ("open our doors wide")
We foster an environment in which all students, staff, faculty, and administrators can thrive. We work to ameliorate the effects of past and present discrimination that marginalized groups face as they pursue careers in the public and private sectors and academe. As a public university, and as heir to a tradition of social mobility fomented by CUNY and its predecessor colleges, we commit ourselves to opening our doors wide to provide educational and professional opportunities to the largest possible range of students.

Equity ("break down barriers to inclusion")
As we train administrators, analysts, and leaders for our schools, government and nonprofit agencies, and the private sector, we strive to correct for the discriminatory and inequitable effects of government and nonprofit programs and policies, hiring practices, and professional standards on varied groups of stakeholders. We are aware that the roots of inequities are sometimes subtle and elusive and that we must be sensitive, insightful, and vigilant to address them effectively.

Examples: DEI committee, DEI Fridays, IDEA statement,

Collaboration ("work across disciplines and sectors")
Our founding document emphasizes a commitment to collaborating across disciplines and sectors. Our faculty embrace opportunities for thoughtful public-private partnerships, seeks synergies across disciplines, and choose to conduct research among colleagues from a rich array of disciplinary and professional backgrounds. We prepare students for collaborative problem-solving in an array of careers and expect them to study, learn, and work together during their time at Marxe.

Examples:

- Interdisciplinary Research Centers, work across disciplines and with practitioners to offer innovative research methods training for our students
- Where our graduates work: https://marxe.baruch.cuny.edu/about/graduation-data/

Global Perspective ("understand issues from both local and global perspectives")
As policy problems increasingly transcend traditional boundaries, we commit to integrating global perspectives into our teaching and research and connecting students with opportunities that reflect our complex world. Our students and alumni work in agencies that cross borders and serve stakeholders and constituents from around the globe.

Examples:

- Global Initiatives,
- Marxe Global Insights - A Focus on Key Global Issues Lecture Series,
- Washington Semester,
- MIA curriculum

Adaptability ("ready for the changing world")
The world is dynamic and demands of us flexibility and creativity. We embrace and accommodate new technologies, political realities, information, and data as we build our curriculum, update our courses, plan our research, and advance our pedagogy. We also create change through innovative research and by equipping our students and alumni with the skills they need to be effective forces for the public good.

Examples:

- Marxe faculty and students are part of Baruch's Initiative on Climate, Research, Teaching, and Collaboration;
- Marxe Faculty push the knowledge frontier by developing better ways to measure Poverty, predict how Climate Change will affect Migration, document how COVID-19 has affected NY's poorest, …