Robert & Patricia Gussin
Spiritan Division of Academic Programs

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2018 - 2019 Gussin Spiritan Division Students (partial roster)

Joshua Rodes 2019 Gussin Spiritan Division Student of the Year

Ronald Curry A GSD Student Leader

Joshua Rodes, a sophomore majoring in accounting, has
been selected as the 2019 Gussin Spiritan Division Student of the Year. A Guilford High School
graduate, Joshua is a former resident of Madison, CT. As a high school student, Josh was an
active member of Unity Club and Vineyard Church Youth Group. A self-taught musician,
Josh is the recipient of the Business Administration Alumni Association Endowed Scholarship,
the KPMG/ Joseph T. Senko Endowed Scholarship, and the Duquesne University Academic Scholarship. For the past three
semesters, he has been a Dean’s List honoree.

When asked why he chose to attend Duquesne, Joshua
responded, “Duquesne’s mission – ‘Serving God by serving students’ – is what originally attracted me to the school. In addition, DU offers a vast network of opportunities and internships.”

Joshua is active in Duquesne’s student government
association, where he serves as the chairman of the finance committee and the campus representative to the Pittsburgh Student Government Council. He also serves on the
University’s curriculum overview taskforce, a body charged
with evaluating and revising the University’s core curriculum.

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“Communication is what I love the most about this program,”
Joshua states. “The Program has helped me manage
time as well as better my writing skills.”

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Regarding the Gussin Spiritan Division, Joshua states,
”The GSD transformed my life both academically and personally... The Division has done so much for me, I want
to give back to this program. I believe the GSD cultivated my desire to succeed and for that I am forever thankful.”

After completing his undergraduate studies, Joshua plans to attend graduate school, then take the CPA exam, later move to a corporate setting, and then possibly work for the federal
government.

Ronald Curry

Freshman Ronald Curry is a
hard-working Duquesne student currently double majoring in political science and integrated marketing
communication. Ron is also a proud graduate of Pocono Mountain West High School located in Pocono Summit, Pa. As a high school student, he contributed to his community as a worship leader at Community
Church, and his school as a student leader serving two
terms as the student council president. Here at Duquesne, as the Student Government Association’s vice president of
communications, Ron states, “I have been working on
bettering the connection between the SGA and the student body.”

When asked which GSD staff benefited him the most, Ron
replied, “I would say the staff as a whole, but mainly Mrs. Rizzo
and Dr. Griggs.” Regarding the GSD service which has helped
him the most, Ron stated, “The program has helped me manage
time as well as better my writing skills.”

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Ron’s post-graduation plans include law school and eventually
becoming a U.S. district attorney.

The Gussin Spiritan Division

Robert & Patricia Gussin
Spiritan Division of Academic Programs

NEWSLETTER

Volume 11 Spring 2019 No. 1

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Standing as a hallmark of Duquesne’s dedication to education for the mind, the heart and the spirit, named for the Spiritan congregation and endowed by alumnus, Dr. Robert Gussin and his wife, Dr. Patricia Gussin, the Gussin Spiritan Division of Academic Programs specializes in helping students of varying backgrounds develop their full potential as students and citizens of the world. The Division’s performance-tested system of personal guidance and learning assistance supports the student’s transition from high school diploma to college degree.

The Gussin Spiritan Division helps freshmen and other students new to Duquesne maximize their chances of college success. While there are many factors that will impact that success, chief among them is a solid transition to college life. Successful college transitions are made when the student:

- Adapts to new learning environments and new learning situations.
- Understands the role of personal responsibility in college, career and life success.
- Refines the academic skills necessary for college success—reading, writing, editing and critical thinking.
- Relies on high-quality academic support such as tutoring, counseling and other interventions should problems arise.

The Gussin Spiritan Division of Academic Programs operates on a cohort model. While the Division freshmen are immersed in the same core curriculum as other Duquesne first-year students, Spiritan Core courses are taught by University faculty hand-picked by the Division because of their commitment to the Division’s approach to student development.

The Gussin Spiritan Division student’s transition from high school to college begins with a summer semester during which the student is registered for Core English 101, University 101, Research and Information Skills and Academic Strategies. The student returns to campus for the fall semester with a University transcript showing six earned credits and with an armful of friendships developed during the summer semester.

The academic year continues this development through coursework, academic advisement, tutoring when needed and counseling. It culminates with an end-of-year review during which assessment of academic and affective growth is discussed with the student. Assuming all Division requirements are completed and all prerequisites for the intended major are satisfied, the student transfers to the college or one of the schools to pursue that major. Otherwise, the student is retained in the Division until all requirements and/or prerequisites are met.

That many Division students have gone on to complete their degrees at Duquesne or elsewhere—and some have pursued or are pursuing graduate degrees—attests to the soundness of our approach to academic and affective development. Obviously, the transition Gussin Spiritan Division students make during this first year lays the foundation for their progress toward their degree.

Our work is intended to help the student selected for admission to the Division accept personal responsibility for academic success or failure. Their success is our success.