



# World Dignity University

## Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies

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# Part I:

## Building Equal Dignity through Excellence in Scholarship

*This section describes how the notion of “equality in dignity” inspires the efforts of **Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies** and its vision of developing a **World Dignity University**.*

### **Dignity, Peace, and Survival**

Today, working for equal dignity is not only crucial to our efforts to reduce human suffering, it is an essential pathway to peace and thus the survival of humankind.

For the last decade, the **Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (HumanDHS)** network has brought together distinguished scholars and practitioners dedicated to advancing peace through dignifying dialogue and collaborative action. We work to end humiliating practices that lead to violence while building “right relationships,” relationships *rooted in the principle of equal dignity for all*.

In every step of its efforts, HumanDHS strives to fully realize the first article of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”

“Equality in dignity” not only informs our HumanDHS vision of a better world, it is the core ethical standard of practice that shapes everything we do as a community. All of our efforts and all of our interactions are inspired and guided by this fundamental principle.

Working as a global community of diverse voices has made us keenly aware that equal dignity is not something one gives to others; *it is a way of being in relationship*. Thus, it needs to be cultivated through thoughtful relational actions that consistently communicate mutual respect and build mutual understanding across human differences over time.

The study of human dignity and its violation, humiliation, has led us to formulate and implement a uniquely relational approach to advance equal dignity in the world. We do not focus on changing individuals; we focus on changing relationships—relationships at all levels, e.g., interpersonal, social, and international—and this changes everything we do!

We put the quality of relationships first in all of our work! This is not an idealistic approach; it is a profoundly practical approach. When we make dignifying relationships the priority (i.e., the process and our daily practice), our efforts to advance equal dignity fall into place and move forward more effectively and efficiently.

The formation and development of dignifying relationships is a necessity for constructive, sustainable social change. Equal dignity needs to be woven into the relational fabric of our lives and into our institutions, yet it is largely an ideal that is overlooked or marginalized in the very institutions that offer the most potential for advancing dignity in the world: academia. Moreover, the growing trend of self-serving corporate and nationalistic interests influencing many, many educational institutions appear to be silently and systematically undermining the realization of equal dignity in the world.

Consequently, the HumanDHS network has come to believe that there is an urgent need for a leading educational alternative in which the relational infrastructure of the institution is designed around and characterized by the practice and advancement of “equality in dignity.” We envision this new educational system as an independent **World Dignity University (WDU)**, offering partnerships with and services to all national universities. We see a WDU as a powerful and enterprising vehicle for realizing a future of equal dignity that leads to greater peace in the world.

This paper introduces the HumanDHS community and describes its vision of a **World Dignity University** that creates not only new possibilities for peace, but possibilities for ensuring the survival of generations of human beings, now and in the future.

## **The HumanDHS Community**

The HumanDHS network is a global transdisciplinary network of concerned academics and practitioners. We are a community of 1000 personally invited members, which includes a Global Advisory Board of over 250 distinguished scholars, leaders, and activists. Our website is the top ranked site for “humiliation studies” as identified by Google. Each year it is visited by up to 40,000 people from more than 180 countries.

The work of HumanDHS is independent of any religious or political agenda. At the core of our work is the use of transdisciplinary, integrative approaches to generate and disseminate knowledge about human dignity and humiliation.

Humiliation has been described as a “nuclear bomb” of emotions. A growing body of research points to humiliation as one of the most powerful forces that disrupts and damage relationships at all levels of society, from the interpersonal to the international.

*“If I’ve learned one thing covering world affairs, it’s this: The single most underappreciated force in international relations is humiliation.”*

— Thomas Friedman, author of *“The World is Flat”*

More than anything else, humiliation—in all of its insidious forms—is a fundamental obstacle to peace in our time. One only has to open the newspaper to find examples of intractable conflict that are rooted in humiliating trauma, mistreatment, poverty, or injustice. A quote from Faisal Shahzad, the suspected attempted bomber of New York’s Times Square (May 1, 2010), describes how humiliation contributed to his motivation to engage in a terrorist act:

*“Everyone knows how the Muslim country bows down to pressure from the west. Everyone knows the kind of humiliation we are faced with around the globe.”*

— Faisal Shahzad, suspected terrorist

As a collaborative community, we strive to advance peace by identifying and challenging humiliating practices and by working together to promote equal dignity.

Our research focuses on dignity and humiliation as its violation, or, more precisely, we emphasize respect for equal dignity for all human beings. This is not only our research topic, but also our core value, which is in line with Article 1 of the *Human Rights Declaration* that states that every human being is born with equal dignity (that ought not be humiliated). We believe that good scholarship is not only essential to the development of positive social change, it is also critical for raising awareness in general.

*“I have always believed that good scholarship can be relevant and consequential for public policy. It is possible to affect public policy without being an advocate; to be passionate about peace without losing analytical rigor; to be moved by what is just while conceding that no one has a monopoly on justice.”*

— Shibley Telhami, Anwar Sadat Professor of Peace and Development, HumanDHS Global Advisory Board

As a result of our ongoing efforts, HumanDHS has become the world’s leading source of information about the theory and impact of humiliation. We have created a “virtual library” of papers, articles, case studies, book chapters, and other resources that we make accessible to all people at no charge. This is why we are Google’s top-ranked website for “humiliation studies,” “humiliation research,” and “humiliation theory,” but we want to do more!

## Toward a World Dignity University

We not only want to do more, we feel that there is an urgent need for us to do more to advance dignity that leads to peace in the world.

Therefore, we ask: ***Why isn't there a World University dedicated to the human rights ideal that all humans deserve to live dignified lives?***

One reason this type of institution has yet to materialize may be our tradition of taking a highly individualistic, often fragmented, approach to academic achievement. Though many would agree that all humans deserve to live dignified lives, we are only beginning to appreciate that dignity is co-created in relationships, relationships characterized by mutual empathy and mutual respect. While Western social science has traditionally emphasized the “self” as the unit of study, our work with HumanDHS has helped us appreciate the *centrality* of “relationships” in the development of equal dignity and peace in the world. We strive to establish and advance “right relationships,” relationships that support the growth and well being of all involved (Miller & Stiver, 1997; Miller & Savoie, 2002).

The latest neuroscience research findings emphasize that strong and healthy connections (as opposed to the Western emphasis on “rugged individualism”) are *essential* to the growth and development of *all* people (Banks & Jordan, 2007; Jordan & Hartling, 2002; Putnam, 2000). HumanDHS challenges scholars to apply a relational approach to the study of human experience. In particular, we ask, “What are the specific qualities of relationships that promote peace in the world?”

We are convinced that cultivating healthy connections rooted in an unshakeable belief in equal dignity may be the most important pathway to peace in our time.

*My father taught me that promoting dignity instead of humiliation will go a long way toward cultivating peace in the world.*

—Kim Stafford, Ph.D., son of William Stafford, Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress, Peace Activist, and WWII Conscientious Objector (2010)

As a community of witnesses and survivors of international conflict, the members of HumanDHS have learned that there is no more important goal of education today than educating for peace. To achieve this, we need to educate for equal dignity.

Though HumanDHS has already shared a wealth of research, information, and experience from around the globe, we want to make our intellectual contributions and resources even more widely accessible to a global community that is hungry for education on the

dynamics of equal dignity and humiliation. Therefore, we are proposing to work in partnership with others to establish the first **World Dignity University**.

### Why a World Dignity University?

One of the most insidious and debilitating forms of humiliation anyone can face is not being able to gain a decent, complete, or fulfilling education. While there are many reasons why this occurs, we are particularly troubled by the recent evidence that suggests academia is being driven and shaped by corporate and national interests (Bok, 2003; Hersh & Merrow, 2005; Horrobin, 2001; Lewis, 2006). Today the line between academia and business has become blurred. This seriously jeopardizes academic integrity, free inquiry, and educational opportunity.

Now is the time for an alternative approach. Global interdependence requires humankind to face global challenges, both ecological and social, as shared responsibilities that have to be shouldered jointly. Our aim is therefore to invite academics from around the globe into the joint responsibility of leading the world away from intractable divides (often fueled by corporate and nationalistic interests) that could cost our species its survival. We are living in a time when nothing short of global cooperation can successfully address the dire problems developing in the world today.

The growth of the HumanDHS network serves as an example of the hunger for a *higher* education, an education informed by a vision of equal dignity for all. A **World Dignity University** would realize this vision by harvesting the wisdom of diverse cultures and by bringing together leading scholars and peace workers.

### A New Model of Global Academic Cooperation

We are not envisioning another locally based physical institution. Rather, we are looking to build partnerships through the use of emerging technology to generate a new model of cooperative global education. This would be a highly flexible, highly responsive integrative system easily useable by existing universities and colleges, as well as individuals and communities around the world. It will incorporate the latest developments in self-directed learning and multi-centered studies to advance the complex knowledge and skills essential to the global proliferation of dignity and enduring peace.

A **World Dignity University** must respect and draw from wisdom globally. Our vision is all about connecting across cultures, disciplines,

and institutions, serving the important goal of creating “*unity in diversity*.” Technology allows us to easily build cyber-bridges across cultures, disciplines, and institutions, opening the door to new possibilities and innovative ideas.

The work of HumanDHS is one successful example of this approach. The HumanDHS has taught us that we all need to learn from each other. No one in the world has a monopoly on understanding, knowledge, or constructive solutions. We need the participation of a global community of scholars and practitioners from diverse backgrounds and experiences to address the urgent social, political, and ecological problems we are facing today. Therefore, we envision **World Dignity University** as an academic “network of networks,” a unity of universities, linked together by a shared commitment to dignity and peace.

# Part II:

## World Dignity University — Creating a “Network of Networks”

*This section describes the intended beneficiaries of the WDU initiative, the HumanDHS contribution of intellectual resources, promising partnerships, and global allies.*

### Who Will Benefit from this Vision?

The WDU will network universities and academic organizations around the planet that share a common vision, that is, educating for peace and equal dignity. It will both facilitate and be a global role model of intellectual leadership and international collaboration, transcending corporate and nationalistic interests and transcending infighting between academic camps and between peers seeking institutional status and dominance.

The **World Dignity University** initiative will depend on the synergetic support and accumulated knowledge of all member institutions, especially all institutions that integrate peace and conflict resolution as a priority in academic achievement. In particular, we want to develop partnerships with universities and other academic institutions that actively pursue the educational advancement of underserved and marginalized populations. The work of these institutions merits more recognition throughout the world, and a **World Dignity University** is one path to achieve this.

### Building on the Work of the HumanDHS Network

The HumanDHS community offers a logical starting point for bringing together the expertise and knowledge we need to form a **World Dignity University**. HumanDHS is connected to more than a 1000 personally-invited global members, has several thousand supporters, and 40,000 people from 180 countries visit the website each year. Further, it has more than 250 distinguished scholars and practitioners on its [Global Advisory Board](#). Members of HumanDHS have well-established connections with colleges, universities, and other institutions around the world.

The richness of the HumanDHS transdisciplinary approach is illustrated in the backgrounds and experiences of its leadership team:

- **Founding President Evelin Lindner, M.D., Ph.D. (Dr. med.), Ph.D. (Dr. psych.),** who chooses to live as a world citizen to develop a global understanding of dignity. She is one of the world's leading scholars on the experience of humiliation and humiliation theory.
- **Director Linda Hartling, Ph.D.,** who conducted the earliest research assessing the experience of humiliation, is an expert on relational-cultural theory. She is the past Associate Director of the Jean Baker Miller Training Institute at the Wellesley Centers for Women at Wellesley College (Boston, Massachusetts), the largest women's research center in the United States.
- **Business Director Richard Slaven, Ph.D.,** former Business Administrator for the Martin Fisher School of Physics at Brandeis University (Boston, Massachusetts), with decades of experience managing millions of dollars in grants and operating budgets.
- **Director of Technology and Communications Ulrich (Uli) Spalthoff (Dr. rer. nat.),** former Director of Advanced Technologies at Alcatel-Lucent in Germany and France, mentoring start-ups and consulting high-tech companies in IT, telecommunication and semiconductor industries from countries all over the world.
- **Director of Global Appreciative Culturing Michael Britton, Ed.D., Ph.D.,** a practicing psychologist and scholar who conducted interview research with retired U.S. military commanders/planners who had dealt with nuclear weapons during the Cold War, exploring their experience of the moral responsibilities involved. He has lectured internationally on the implications of neuroscience for our global future, and provides training for conflict resolution specialists on applications of neuroscience to their work.

For detailed information about the project team, please visit <http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/whoweare.php> and see the attached curricula vitae. For information about the members of the HumanDHS Global Advisory Board, please visit: <http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/board.php>.

## Working Partners

This initiative is strongly committed to:

1. making sure the development of the WDU is globally inclusive, and
2. avoiding duplication of the achievements of others who have already worked with similar issues.

Rather than competing with existing institutions, our goal is to join hands in the spirit of mutual respect and *equality in dignity* to create something much more powerful than what we would accomplish if we worked independently. We already have connections with highly regarded academic institutions through our network of scholars on our Global Advisory Board.

### **The University in Oslo**

In January 2010, our Founding President, Evelin Lindner, started talks with Vice-Rectors Inga Bostad and Doris Jorde of the University of Oslo (UiO). The University of Oslo is an ideal partner for our initiative. Norway is a highly respected, credible peacemaker around the world. It has a long-standing cultural tradition of equality in dignity (*likeverd*). In most world regions the emergence of human rights ideals of equality in dignity is a rather recent phenomenon, while these ideals are a cultural treasure of Norwegian culture with long-standing historical roots and wide embeddedness in Norwegian culture (Lindner, 2008).

### **University of Massachusetts Center for Rebuilding Sustainable Communities After Disasters**

In August 2010, we began working with Professor Adenrele Awotona at the University of Massachusetts on an online course entitled “Human Dignity, Human Rights, and Sustainable Post-Disaster Reconstruction.” This course will be an example of how technology can be used to create innovative educational partnerships. It will incorporate an understanding of dignity, humiliation, and human rights to explore how post-disaster reconstruction can be an opportunity to implement innovative and sustainable solutions that support the healing, health, and dignity of all people involved..

## Potential Global Allies

As noted above, our aim is to make sure this initiative is globally inclusive from start to finish and not to duplicate the achievements of others who have already worked with these issues for much longer than we have. It is at the core of dignity to join hands in mutual respect

and equality in dignity. We are committed to teamwork in the spirit of solidarity as our mode of working with others, guided by the principle of unity in diversity. This has consistently helped us avoid the humiliating rank-driven bureaucracy that often generates uniformity or division.

In this spirit, we have embarked on finding similar ideas and initiatives worldwide. Here is a small selection of a growing group of scholars, globally (some of whom we are in touch, others we will still have to contact) that share related ideas:

### **International Association of Universities**

The International Association of Universities (IAU) was founded in 1950 as the UNESCO-based worldwide association of higher education institutions. It brings together institutions and organizations from some 150 countries for reflection and action on common concerns and collaborates with various international, regional, and national bodies active in higher education.

Within its strategic plan (2006), the IAU further pledges to continue to work in collaboration and partnership with others in order to:

- Contribute to the development and protection of knowledge, higher education, and research in the public interest;
- Strengthen and encourage academic solidarity which aims to reduce inequalities among higher education institutions and promote cooperation rather than undue competition;
- Promote equitable access and equal opportunities for student, researchers, and faculty members in higher education;
- Seek to understand and harness the opportunities being brought to the sector by the market, for example through public-private partnerships, while limiting the negative impact of increasing commodification and commercialization of education with its narrow vision of higher education as a service to be bought and sold on the open and competitive market...(www.iau-aiu.net/association/rtf/assoc\_mission.rtf)

### **Technology-Based University Programs**

Examples of technology-based university programs (many traditional brick-and-mortar universities have established virtual branches or are at least providing virtual courses):

- Open University ([www.open.ac.uk](http://www.open.ac.uk))
- The Canadian Virtual University ([www.cvu-uvc.ca](http://www.cvu-uvc.ca))
- The Intercultural Open University ([www.ioufoundation.org](http://www.ioufoundation.org))
- Rasmussen College ([www.rasmussen.edu](http://www.rasmussen.edu))
- The Syrian Virtual University ([www.svuonline.org](http://www.svuonline.org))
- The Virtual University of Pakistan ([www.vu.edu.pk](http://www.vu.edu.pk))
- The Virtual Global University (VGU, [www.vg-u.de](http://www.vg-u.de))
- The American International University-Bangladesh ([www.aiub.edu](http://www.aiub.edu))
- The IMA Virtual University-IMA Indian Management Academy India ([www.ima.edu.in](http://www.ima.edu.in))
- The World Federation of Scientists ([www.federationofscientists.org](http://www.federationofscientists.org))
- Study@Virtual University ([www.apnimarzi.com/study-at-virtual-university](http://www.apnimarzi.com/study-at-virtual-university))
- Hong Kong Virtual University ([hkvu.ust.hk/hkvu](http://hkvu.ust.hk/hkvu))
- One Laptop Per Child ([laptop.org/en](http://laptop.org/en))
- “European Resource Center on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Intercultural Education” at the “European Wergeland Center” ([www.theewc.org](http://www.theewc.org))
- Networks of Excellence ([www.ipr-helpdesk.org/documents/Network-Excellence\\_0000000188\\_00.xml.html](http://www.ipr-helpdesk.org/documents/Network-Excellence_0000000188_00.xml.html))
- World Wisdom Council ([www.clubofbudapest.org/wwc.php](http://www.clubofbudapest.org/wwc.php))
- Asia Society Partnership for Global Learning (PGL, [www.asiasociety.org/education-learning/partnership-global-learning](http://www.asiasociety.org/education-learning/partnership-global-learning))
- Scholars at Risk ([www.scholarsatrisk.org](http://www.scholarsatrisk.org))

- The Network for Education and Academic Rights (NEAR, [www.nearinternational.org](http://www.nearinternational.org))
- The Open University of Catalonia, UOC, Spain ([www.uoc.edu](http://www.uoc.edu))
- Academic Impact ([academicimpact.org](http://academicimpact.org))
- Netherlands organization for international cooperation in higher education (Nuffic, [www.nuffic.nl](http://www.nuffic.nl))

### **The Global Virtual University**

See, furthermore, *The Global Virtual University* (Tiffin & Rajasingham, 2003) by John Tiffin and Lalita Rajasingham ([www.sim.vuw.ac.nz/staff/lalita-rajasingham.aspx](http://www.sim.vuw.ac.nz/staff/lalita-rajasingham.aspx)). Lalita Rajasingham's area of research and teaching has been in the application of information technology such as the Internet, virtual reality and HyperReality and artificial intelligence to human communication, particularly to education in multicultural settings. She is widely published internationally and has presented several keynote addresses and plenary papers at national and international conferences. Lalita Rajasingham's co-authored book titled *In Search of the Virtual Class: Education in an Information Society* (Tiffin & Rajasingham, 1995) has helped to pioneer future directions in education for the next decade in many parts of the world, and introduced the concepts of virtual classes, HyperClasses, virtual universities, and virtual learning on the Internet. Her co-authored book, *The Global Virtual University*, similarly breaks new ground, and sketches a philosophical foundation for the future of the university in an era of rapid technological change and globalization. Based on material gathered from research in the USA, Japan, UK, Taiwan, Brazil, Malaysia, Australia, and New Zealand, this book is about the shift from the modern university of the nation state to the global university of the future, and presents a paradigm from which it might be constructed.

### **The Norwegian Education Commission**

See also the Norwegian Education Commission that was established in 2007 and headed by Inga Bostad. In its 2009 report (Dannelsesutvalget, 2009), Bernt Hagtvet documents the growing unease, in the United States, with the current trend toward commercialization in the educational sector. See also, for example, the views expressed by Harvard's former president Derek C. Bok, *Universities in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education* (Bok, 2003).

The Norwegian Education Commission report draws on a wide range of literature (among others, Adorno, 1959; Bloom, 1987; Bok, 2003; Bok, 2006; Dewey, 1902; Dewey, 1916; Donoghue, 2008; Etzioni, 1995; Gadamer & Smith, 1986; Heidegger, 2006; Hersh & Merrow (Eds.) 2005; Humboldt, 1993; Humboldt, 2002; Kant, 1790, Kant & Rink, 1803; Koblik & Graubard (Eds.) 2000; Kronman, 2007; Lewis 2006; Mill, 1873; Mill, 1859; Nussbaum, 1997; Pascarella et al., 2005; Putnam, 1995; Readings, 1996; Rorty, 1979; Shapiro, 2005; Skjervheim, 2002; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995; Walzer, 1992 ; Wilshire, 1990; Yudkin (Ed.) 1969).

# Part III:

## Action Plan

*This section describes our goals, objectives, plans for action, proposed budget, and evaluation of outcomes.*

### **World Dignity University: Goals and Objectives**

Building an academic “network of networks’ under the unifying title of the **World Dignity University** is a complex and demanding endeavor. This proposal is for a one-year foundational phase of that endeavor, organized to assemble three critical components for making success possible:

- 1. Conduct Exploratory Research:**  
Using “dignifying dialogue” and “appreciative enquiry” as methodologies (see [www.humiliationstudies.org/research/appreciativeenquiry.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/research/appreciativeenquiry.php)), we will gather insights, feedback, and recommendations about developing a WDU from a diverse pool of scholars and practitioners working in a variety of academic and other relevant organizations.
- 2. Identify and Connect with Strong Partners**  
We will establish links to universities and other institutions, which are interested in including WDU courses and materials in their curricula.
- 3. Design a Fluid Technology-Based Structure:**  
We will develop an initial plan for an Internet-based learning platform through a website and other sources.

### **Action and Activities**

#### **Goal #1 – Conduct Exploratory Research**

- Since the beginning of our work with HumanDHS, we have learned about the value and power of mutual learning through the practice of “appreciative enquiry” and “dignifying dialogue.” We will use these methodologies to engage a global group of “expert partners” to explore how a **World Dignity University** can best unite a network of universities beyond nationalistic and corporate interests.

- We will use a variety of methods for connecting and gathering feedback from experts, including:
  - HumanDHS Founding Director Evelin Lindner and other members of the WDU project team will continue making personal connections with individual experts around the world to gain a global perspective on how a WDU can advance academic cooperation and collaboration.
  - We will host an invited dialogue to discuss WDU at the upcoming HumanDHS *Workshop on Transforming Humiliation and Violent Conflict* at Columbia University in New York City, December 9-10, 2010. This invitational meeting is attended by scholars, practitioners, social activists, and academic leaders from across the United States and around the world. Please see: <http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/annualmeeting16.php>
  - We will invite feedback about the WDU project from more than 260 members of the HumanDHS Global Advisory Board and other distinguished scholars using email and personal conversations. This will provide us with a global-reach input net as the core of a branching-investigatory strategy, proceeding then to contact scholars/practitioners/universities they suggest, and then those suggested by this second tier, expanding the reach of our input-gathering net in global scope and diversity.
  - We will use FlashMeeting and Skype technology to have “real time” conversations and conference calls to explore how a WDU could benefit existing academic systems and the world community as a whole. We will also explore the use of Wiki collaboration.
- We will integrate and summarize the feedback and recommendations from our exploratory conversations with experts to direct the next phase of our project: developing strong partners.

## **Goal #2 – Identify and Connect with Strong Partners**

- Because the University of Oslo has already demonstrated an interest in this project, the WDU

development team will meet with Vice-Rectors Inga Bostad and Doris Jorde from the University of Oslo. At this meeting we will summarize and discuss the feedback and recommendations gathered from our exploratory dialogues with scholars and other experts and begin formulating how to best use technology to realize the vision of a WDU. This meeting will be the centerpiece of our project development.

- Based on the ideas formulated and shaped in our meeting at the University of Oslo, the project team will begin establishing connections with specific university representatives who might be interested in participating in the WDU project and network.
- We are particularly interested in building strong partnerships with academic institutions that are underserved and on the frontlines of social problems, such as poverty, conflict, and human rights.
- Based on the knowledge and insights gathered through exploratory dialogues and from initiating partnerships, we will set specific goals for WDU that will help us formulate how technology can support this “network of networks.”

### **Goal #3 – Design a Fluid Technology-Based Structure:**

- Under the guidance and direction of technology expert, Ulrich Spalthoff, we will integrate recommendations from our research with identified project goals to design and develop a fluid and flexible technology-based structure for a WDU.
- We will implement and develop a website that will function as an initial electronic platform for the WDU. This platform will facilitate the ongoing interactive process of clarifying academic priorities that realize the overarching goal of sharing knowledge beneficial to the WDU member universities and the global community as a whole.
- We have already secured two domain names for this initiative:
  - worlddignityuniversity.org
  - worlddignityuniversity.com

- Evaluation: At the end of our project the project team will complete a report to:
  - Summarize the feedback and recommendations from our exploratory conversations with experts,
  - Identify and describe strong partner institutions, and
  - Describe the design of a WDU electronic platform that can continue to be advanced into the future.

### **Duration of the Project**

WDU is intended as an ongoing, ever-evolving collaborative project. This proposal describes the “startup phase” of the WDU. We expect this phase to be completed in 12 months.

### **Outcomes and Evaluation**

The work of this yearlong project will produce two measurable outcomes, both representing the culmination of the research, relationship development, and technology planning undertaken during the year, and—most importantly—serving as steppingstones toward making the **World Dignity University** a reality:

- First, the project team will complete a report summarizing recommendations, identifying continuing partnerships, and describing the initial design of an electronic platform that will serve and provide for the growth of the WDU network into the future.
- Second, the project team will implement and develop the nucleus of a fluid electronic platform for continuing the growth of this collaborative global “network of networks.”

These crucial first steps will ensure the successful ongoing development of this initiative.

### **WDU: A Dignifying Approach to Excellence in Scholarship**

Ultimately, we envision the WDU as a model of global academic collaboration built on a relational infrastructure that keeps “equality in dignity” at the core its curriculum! Unlike any other network, it will provide a platform for a world community of scholars united in their efforts to realize equal dignity through a global approach to excellence in scholarship. Most of all, it will offer an innovative and urgently

needed new pathway to peace based on co-created learning that dignifies the lives of all people.

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