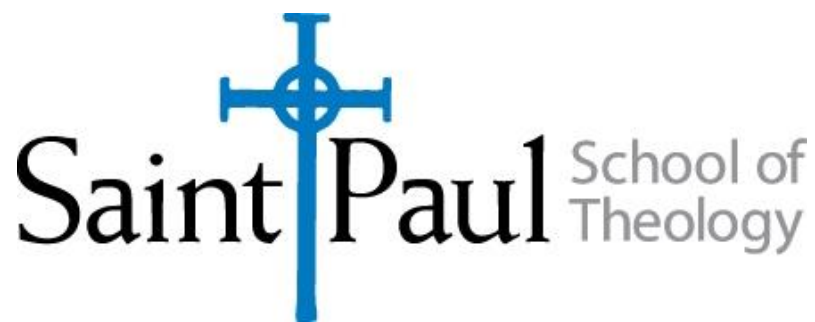


EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Seminary of Intentional Relationships
Delivering Theological Education
For the 21st Century



The Strategic Planning Team of Saint Paul School of Theology was created and called into being by the Board of Trustees in October of 2014. The team approached the Strategic Planning process as a “labor of love,” with a commitment to hold sacred the values, traditions and culture of Saint Paul, while accepting the responsibility of looking at all aspects of the seminary, including the past, present and future. A challenge was put forth early in our time together by Dr. Alice B. Hunt, President of Chicago Theological Seminary. “What if we, today, began to think of ourselves as founders, not merely as inheritors, or worse, survivors?” Our journey began with this challenge and we approached our work thinking about theological education *for* the future.

The team was stretched further by many others who spoke, by those who shared their thoughts and visions, as well as by those who shared their grief of the past and dreams for the future.

What is presented in this document is a compilation of many aspects of the work of the team, a deliberate and inclusive process involving not only the fourteen members of the Strategic Planning Team but also a host of others from within and outside the community of Saint Paul. The executive summary contains the “heart” of the plan, followed by a more comprehensive document containing additional information, and accompanied by background and supportive detail.

The Strategic Plan is not the end of the work of Saint Paul School of Theology but the beginning. There will continue to be challenges ahead, and changes in theological education will continue. Saint Paul must be ready for these changes and adapt, as it must – and so it shall! Our prayers are for it to passionately, yet deliberately, move forward into its vision, embracing the possibilities for the future.

The Strategic Planning Committee expresses great appreciation to the Board of Trustees and its Chair, the President of the Seminary, faculty, students, administrators, staff, alumni, donors and supporters, and other stakeholders who shared their expertise, experiences and time to the development of this plan. It has been a privilege to be on the journey with all of you.

On behalf of the Strategic Planning Team,

Nancy Brown
Chair

LEARNING, TEACHING, AND LIVING FAITHFULLY IN GOD'S FUTURE

A SEMINARY OF INTENTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS CREATED IN AND SERVING THE HEARTLAND

This plan describes a seminary of intentional relationships, set apart in the Heartland, established specifically to serve the Church between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains; a seminary that has grown to encompass students in two primary locations (Kansas City and Oklahoma City), and is moving toward a mix of relationships that provide for students in contexts online, in classrooms, and linked beyond the Heartland.

With the knowledge that a Strategic Plan must see into an undefinable future, the Board of Trustees established the Strategic Planning Team and set in motion the process that produced this Plan for Saint Paul School of Theology, a seminary of intentional relationships created in and serving the Heartland. This Plan is rooted in the identity of Saint Paul and expressed through its purpose, mission, vision, and values.

The PURPOSE of Saint Paul School of Theology: From its beginning, the purpose of Saint Paul School of Theology has been to form people for transformational ministry in congregations, faith communities, and the world in which we live, especially in the Heartland, so that they are equipped to carry out the mission of the Church: making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Saint Paul's unique role in preparing persons for that vital work is described in its institutional mission, vision, and values.

The MISSION of Saint Paul School of Theology: Centered in Christ and rooted in the Wesleyan tradition, Saint Paul School of Theology is a seminary of intentional relationships committed to the formation of people for innovative, creative ministry through rigorous academic life; the exploration of Scripture, tradition, and ministry and practices; and diverse, contextual experience.

The VISION of Saint Paul School of Theology: Saint Paul School of Theology, a seminary in the Heartland, aspires to be a creative network of collaborative learning relationships where students, clergy, lay professionals and laity are equipped to serve congregations, the church, the city street, the country road, the public square, and the academy, in an ever and rapidly changing world.

VALUES of Saint Paul School of Theology:

Saint Paul School of Theology is:

- *Christ-centered, prophetic and evangelistic,*
- *Formed in justice, integrity, and faithful experience,*
- *Contextual, diverse, relevant, and multicultural, and*
- Committed to
 - The integration of academic excellence and faithful practice,
 - The creation of community in the challenges of emergent contemporary contexts,
 - The promotion of peace and justice through theological dialogue, and
 - The use of multiple platforms and approaches in academic life.

SUMMARY OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

This plan recommends that Saint Paul School of Theology becomes a seminary of intentional relationships with an identity within – but clearly beyond – any of its operational locations, with administrative staff and faculty located in proximity to instructional space and other facilities in flexible settings.

In addition to this recommendation, the Strategic Plan consists of a step-by-step outline of ten (10) goals spanning four (4) strategic directions for the continued growth of Saint Paul. This outline details steps to be taken through the year 2025 to improve what Saint Paul can offer, the method and manner in which those services are offered, the efficiency with which it is run and organized, and the overall adaptation of Saint Paul in the ever-changing worlds of religion, technology and culture in the 21st Century. The Plan further details how the outcome of these efforts will be judged and offers guidance for strategic planning in the future.

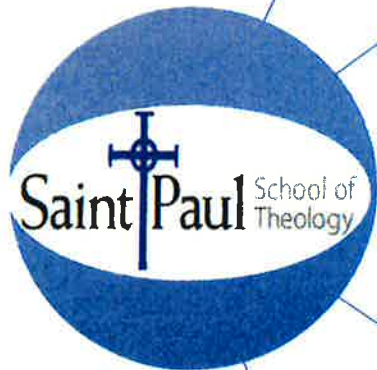
In the spirit of transparency, these pages also contain a review on how this team was established, what information was gathered, how that information was analyzed and applied to the ideas herein, and acknowledgements of all of those involved in the effort.

Throughout its work, Strategic Planning Team looked at a variety of options, and has concluded that the organizing principle of intentional relationships is ideal for the 2017-2025 time span, and is the most vital approach at this time.

As a seminary of intentional relationships, Saint Paul may enter into many different types of relationships. Some of these are already in place, and some are envisioned as part of this Strategic Plan. Expressed graphically, Saint Paul provides a hub around which radiate the relationships that help shape the seminary and its future.

A Seminary of Intentional Relationships Created in and Serving the Heartland

- Collaborations*
- Partnerships
- Special Partner Relationships
- Business Relationships
- Affiliations



- Oklahoma City University
- Kansas Wesleyan University
- Others to be developed



- The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection
- Trinity Community Church
- Church of the Servant
- Fellows Sponsors
- Others to be developed



- Great Plains Conference
- Missouri Conference
- Oklahoma Conference
- Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference
- Iowa Conference
- Arkansas Conference
- Others to be developed



- The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection
- Oklahoma City University
- Avila University
- Fox Hill Office Park
- Others to be developed



- Association of Theological Schools
- Higher Learning Commission
- United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry
- United Methodist University Senate
- Association of United Methodist Theological Schools
- Kansas and Oklahoma State Boards of Regents
- US Department of Education
- Others to be developed

* See Section on Clarification of Terms.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND GOALS

The heart of this Plan is contained in the four (4) Strategic Directions and the ten (10) Goals associated with them:

THE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1. ***Strengthening the Educational Enterprise:*** Preparing people for ministry within the changing faith dynamics of the 21st Century
2. ***Creating a Community for Theological Learning, Training Dialogue and Research in the Heartland:*** Bringing together the Church, the City Street, the Country Road, the Public Square and the Academy
3. ***Advancing the Presence of Saint Paul:*** Promoting Saint Paul's vision in compelling and productive ways
4. ***Shaping the Future of Saint Paul with a Strong Foundation:*** leadership governance, and planning in support of theological education for the future

1. **STRENGTHENING THE EDUCATIONAL ENTERPRISE:** *PREPARING PEOPLE FOR MINISTRY WITHIN THE CHANGING FAITH DYNAMICS OF THE 21ST CENTURY.*

Goal 1: Saint Paul will offer degrees, certificate programs, and learning opportunities, which reflect the unique mission, vision, and values of Saint Paul: which are offered in face-to-face and on-line settings; which address the changing religious environment of the 21st Century; which respond to the needs of students, clergy, lay professionals, and laity; and which are specifically designed to attract diverse demographic groups.

Goal 2: Saint Paul will have a carefully recruited and selected student body of which a significant proportion are persons of color, and which represents geographic diversity, excellent academic capacity, and diversity in its vocational aspirations.

Goal 3: Saint Paul will employ a faculty which reflects the mission and vision of Saint Paul, which reflects and engages the changing demographic makeup of students attracted to theological education, and which has the capacity, individually and collectively, to reflect and respond to changing faith communities and dynamics in the 21st Century.

2. **CREATING COMMUNITY FOR THEOLOGICAL LEARNING, TRAINING, DIALOGUE AND RESEARCH IN THE HEARTLAND:** *BRINGING TOGETHER THE CHURCH, THE CITY STREET, THE COUNTRY ROAD, THE PUBLIC SQUARE, AND THE ACADEMY.*

Goal 4: Saint Paul's instructional space and support facilities will be flexible, while attending to the critical issues of technology-friendly instructional space, student-faculty interaction access, community and worship space, and other critical learning spaces, as well as sufficient administrative and support facilities.

Goal 5: Saint Paul will create an environment of cultural awareness, diversity, equality, and social justice on its campuses and other learning environments; its curricula will reflect cultural diversity and social justice values, as will its policies and procedures. Saint Paul relationships with the broader community will promote diversity and social justice.

Goal 6: Saint Paul will establish multiple forums, symposia, and on-going dialogues with individuals and groups in order to increase student and faculty access to diverse views, experiences, and centers of expertise; to promote and model interactional, shared learning; and to capture and disseminate that learning widely throughout the academic and religious communities.

3. ADVANCING THE PRESENCE OF SAINT PAUL: *PROMOTING SAINT PAUL'S VISION IN COMPELLING AND PRODUCTIVE WAYS*

Goal 7: Saint Paul will conduct a wide variety of development, fund raising, communication, and promotional activities that will ensure a well understood and supported, high quality learning environment led by world-class faculty resulting in well-equipped graduates whose average seminary-related debt reflects a steadily declining trend.

Goal 8: Saint Paul will maintain an internal and external communication system that engenders openness, transparency, trust and community-building among students, faculty, staff, trustees, alumni, donors, accrediting agencies, and The United Methodist Church, with particular attention to effective communication with Collaborators, Partners, Affiliates, and those with whom Saint Paul has Business Agreements.

4. SHAPING THE FUTURE OF SAINT PAUL WITH A STRONG FOUNDATION: *PROVIDING INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND PLANNING IN SUPPORT OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE.*

Goal 9: Saint Paul will engage, explore, and facilitate the highest levels of institutional leadership, administrative effectiveness, and future-oriented planning, within an environment of transparent, shared governance.

Goal 10: Saint Paul will be adept and flexible in its approach to education by identifying and cultivating collaborations, partnerships, and special partner relationships, with seminaries, colleges, universities, churches and other organizations.

The Strategic Planning Team presents this Executive Summary of the Strategic Plan to the Board of Trustees with the prayer that it will prove helpful in guiding Saint Paul of School of Theology into a meaningful and fruitful future grounded in its history, faithful to its tradition, mindful of the changing world, and devoted to the discipleship of Jesus Christ.

* * * * *