Our Mission

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, ministry practices, and diverse, contextual experience.

God has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8, NRSV)

Saint Paul School of Theology's 2025-2028 strategic plan seeks to promote justice, kindness, and humility by striving for "beloved community," responding to the changing needs of the church, diversifying our enrollment, and providing the financial resources necessary to prepare our students for "innovative, creative ministry." Recognizing that all strategic plans rely on the time, energy, and creativity of faculty, staff, and trustees, the Executive Leadership Team will assess annually progress on each point in the plan and share the results of that assessment with those constituencies. In consultation with these groups and with the approval of the Board of Trustees, this plan may be revised annually as a result of those assessments. Data from the 2023-2024 academic year will be utilized as the baseline for measuring progress. Similarly, as work on the plan progresses and objectives are attained, new items may be moved into the appropriate goal for pursuit and implementation. The "Lead" for each strategic priority will develop a plan for meeting the timeline and the identified objectives, and provide information for the indicators of effectiveness. The Lead will develop an appropriate collaborative approach that reflects the mission and values of Saint Paul. Using this methodology, Saint Paul will move closer to becoming a community of justice, kindness, and humility.

Goal #1 - Saint Paul School of Theology is committed to cultivating a culture of Belonging, Accessibility, Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion as essential expressions of our mission, our theological commitments, and our aspiration to become a Beloved Community.

Strategic Priorities

a. Engage outside expertise to assess SPST's organizational culture, with particular emphasis on sense of belonging, advocacy, justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion; develop and implement an action plan to address concerns and engage regular assessment processes. (Lead: Director of Human Resources)

Cost and/or Allocation Method: SPEC Fund Timeline: Spring 2026 Engage expert AY 2026-2027 Assessment Fall 2027 Implement plan	Indicators of Effectiveness • Modern Think contract in place • Annual reporting toward goal showing improved culture (first report Fall 2028)

b. Appoint a task force to develop a new mission statement that is concise and represents Saint Paul's theological commitments. (Lead: President)

Cost and/or Allocation Method: SPEC Fund Timeline: Fall 2025 Appointment of task force Summer 2026 Draft of mission statement to BOT	Indicators of Effectiveness • Community-wide support for and use of new mission statement AY 2026 - 2027

c. Cultivate a culture of belonging, accessibility, advocacy, justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion for a diverse student body through innovative services and programs that promote emotional intelligence, intercultural competence, and "beloved community." (Lead: Associate Dean of Student Affairs)

Cost and Allocation Method: SPEC / budget Timeline: AY2025-2026 Identify assessment measures; AY2025-2026 Implement new or revised services or activities and means of assessment; AY2026-2027 Implement new or revised services or activities and means of assessment.	Indicators of Effectiveness • Improved measures as identified in annual Student Affairs Report (2026, 2027, 2028)

Goal #2 – Saint Paul's educational programs will address and respond to the changing contexts of the church and world.

Strategic Priorities

a. ***Realign the institution's credit-hour policies (1hr, 2hrs, 3hrs) and instructional time requirements with ATS and HLC accreditation expectations while maintaining academic quality and curricular integrity.***
(Lead: Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean)

Cost and/or Allocation Method: SPEC Funds, EQ Lilly Grant Timeline: Fall 2026 - MDiv and MACM Curriculum Revision Implemented. Fall 2028 DMin Curriculum Revision Implemented	Indicators of Effectiveness • Improved Student Learning (2027 and 2028 SLO achievement report) • Completion of Program review recommendations (Degree Program Review Progress Reports 2026, 2027, 2028) • Increased Enrollment, Retention and Persistence (Educational Effectiveness Report (2026, 2027, 2028, 2029)

b. Hire and retain full-time faculty who have the capacity to reflect upon, respond to, and engage with changing faith communities at a number that can adequately cover the needs of curricula and other faculty responsibilities. (Lead: Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean)

Cost and/or Allocation Method: Budget Timeline: Search and hire two faculty positions in AY 2025-2026-COMPLETE Search and hire one faculty position in AY 2026 – 2027- COMPLETE	Indicators of Effectiveness • Improved new faculty retention • Increased faculty satisfaction • Full and equitably distributed workload among faculty (Work of the Faculty Report 2027, 2028, 2029)

c. Assess and develop priorities for the future of the Oklahoma campus in relation to Saint Paul's mission. (Lead: President)

Cost and/or Allocation Method: SPEC funds Timeline: Fall 2025 Appoint Study Group; Spring 2026 Begin Study; March 2027 Release Report	Indicators of Effectiveness • Completion of report with thorough analysis and data-based recommendations

d. Undertake search for Saint Paul's next Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean.

Cost and/or Allocation Method: Budget Timeline: Fall 2026 Appoint Search Committee; Recruit Candidates; Interview semi-finalists. Spring 2027 Interview Finalists.	Indicators of Effectiveness • Appoint New VPAAD

Goal #3 – Saint Paul will strengthen our enrollment management processes to reflect our commitment to diversity and growth.

Strategic Priorities

a. **Increase new student enrollment year over year to reach stable enrollment of 125 students.**
(Executive Director of Admissions and Communications)

Cost and/or Allocation Method: SPEC Fund Budget Timeline: Fall 2025, Fall 2026, Fall 2027	Indicators of Effectiveness • Increased new student headcount (Enrollment Report 2025, 2026, 2027)

b. Increase enrollment of degree-seeking students from traditionally racially and ethnically minoritized groups. (Lead: Executive Director of Admissions and Communications)

Cost and/or Allocation Method: SPEC Fund Budget Timeline: Fall 2025, Fall 2026, Fall 2027	Indicators of Effectiveness • Increased headcount (Enrollment Report 2025, 2026, 2027)

c. Increase non-UM denominational diversity in the student body. (Lead: Executive Director of Admissions and Communications)

Cost and/or Allocation Method: SPEC Fund Budget Timeline: Fall 2025, Fall 2026, Fall 2027	Indicators of Effectiveness • Increased non-UM headcount (Enrollment Report 2025, 2026, 2027)

d. Develop innovative student services and activities to increase enrollment by improving student retention and persistence rates. (Lead: Associate Dean of Student Affairs)

Cost and/or Allocation Method: SPEC Fund Budget Timeline: AY2025-2026, 2026-27, 2027-2028 launch new/revised services/activities	Indicators of Effectiveness • Increased retention rates (Educational Effectiveness report 2025, 2026, 2027) • Increased persistence rates (Educational Effectiveness report 2025, 2026, 2027) • Meet benchmarks in student affairs benchmarks (Student Affairs annual report) • **Review Faculty Committee Structure and Consider Academic Resource Committee (Fall 2026)**

Goal #4 - Saint Paul will engage in a variety of development, fund raising, communication, and promotional activities to support the mission of the seminary.

Strategic Priorities:

a. Expand the donor base at all levels of giving. (President)

Cost and/or Allocation Method: TBD Timeline: Fall 2026: Engage external review of fundraising structure and operations (Fall 2026) AY2025 – 2026, 2026 – 2027, 2027 - 2028	Indicators of Effectiveness • Increase in donation dollars (Annual Financial Report 2025, 2026, 2027) • Increase number of donors (Annual Development Report 2025, 2026, 2027)

b. Develop vibrant alumni network and annually increase alumni engagement. (Lead: President)

Cost and/or Allocation Method: Timeline: Restructure Alumni Relations Position (Fall 2026) AY2025-2026 establish means of tracking engagement; AY2025-2026, baseline number of Alumni events	Indicators of Effectiveness • Increase in alumni engagement (annual alumni report TBD) • Increase in number ESQ responses on referrals from alumni

c. Develop a written plan describing the structures, procedures, and policies for external and internal communications. (Lead: Executive Director of Admissions and Communications)

Cost and/or Allocation Method: Timeline: Fall 2026 Plan completed; Spring 2027 implementation	Indicators of Effectiveness • Positive annual feedback on implementation (annual report TBD)