



Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean Job Description

Campus Locations:

Leawood, Kansas, and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Job Overview and Summary:

The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean serves as the Chief Academic Officer of Saint Paul School of Theology and provides strategic and administrative leadership for the Seminary's academic mission across its Kansas and Oklahoma locations and online learning environments. Reporting to the President and serving on the senior leadership team, the VPAAD/Dean provides leadership across faculty, curriculum, academic policy, assessment, accreditation, academic planning, and educational quality.

Working collaboratively with the faculty and through established structures of shared governance, the VPAAD/Dean advances an academically rigorous, contextually responsive, and distinctly Wesleyan vision for theological education. The VPAAD/Dean also works collaboratively with the President and other institutional leaders to align academic priorities with enrollment, financial resources, institutional strategy, and the evolving needs of the Church and communities SPST serves.

Scope of Authority:

Responsibility for academic programs, faculty, academic policies and standards, curriculum implementation, academic rigor, and academic planning consistent with faculty governance and Board authority.

Primary Responsibilities:

Academic Leadership and Faculty Governance

- Leads and implements an excellent unified academic vision across SPST's Kansas and Oklahoma Campuses and online programs.
- Ensures curricular excellence, innovation, and contextual relevance in graduate theological education (e.g., MDiv, MACM, and DMin degree programs), as well as Course of Study and any new academic programs that respond to the needs of the Church and world.
- Promotes integration of academic study, spiritual formation, and practical ministries grounded in the Wesleyan tradition, committed to holistic theological education, and supported by rigorous engagement with Scripture, tradition, and theological diversity.
- Takes responsibility for the academic calendar, course scheduling, faculty teaching assignments, academic policy publication and implementation, faculty workload, equity, adjunct faculty recruitment and supervision, academic program review recommendations, academic program and catalog matters, and academic budget planning and management.

A United Methodist Seminary

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Faculty Leadership and Development

- Supervises, supports, and evaluates the faculty (and academic staff) in fulfilling their educational ministry, and actively works with them to facilitate their ongoing formation and development, with particular attention to mentoring newer faculty members.
- Facilitates faculty curriculum development informed by United Methodist Ordination requirements and diverse ministries.
- Supports and facilitates faculty discernment on academic policies, curricular reviews and revisions, and the implementation of changes.
- Models relevant theological administrative skills and competence in maintaining and strengthening high-quality theological education and demonstrates the ability to build a collaborative community team.
- Works to advance innovation in asynchronous and synchronous course offerings, as well as being intentional about contextual learning models.
- Ensures the seminary's presence across UMC Conferences, especially Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and the Great Plains Conferences, and builds a positive, intentional relationship with the Church of the Resurrection (Resurrection), where the Seminary is housed.
- Fosters a productive collaborative culture that unites the two campuses in Kansas and Oklahoma.

Academic Quality, Assessment, and Accreditation

- Facilitates self-study reports with the Director of Assessment in compliance with the Association of Theological Schools and the regional Higher Learning Commission standards across all campuses and delivery modes of teaching and learning.
- Implements and oversees academic policies, program reviews, and student learning outcomes generated by the Faculty Council.
- Cooperates with the academic assessment plan and fosters continuous improvement by maintaining a culture of assessment and equipping faculty.

Student Academic Success

- Collaborates with the Associate Dean of Student Affairs on enrollment and retention strategies; ensures that academic programs support recruitment, matriculation, persistence, and retention; addresses accessibility needs, international student advising, and early intervention for student learning issues; and supports student learning across in-person and online environments.
- Ensures equitable student advising and academic support across campuses.
- Trains faculty and staff to advise international and local students to ensure holistic learning and success in collaboration with designated institutional personnel responsible for immigration and student compliance requirements.
- Collaborates with student services in integrating vocational discernment, formation, and academic life across campuses.
- Collaborates with the Registrar to analyze program needs and develop the course schedule to ensure it accommodates diverse degree requirements and plans, specializations, and graduation goals, with attention to needed delivery modes and course rotations.

Institutional Leadership and Partnerships

- Works closely with the business office, campus leaders, and program directors to coordinate scheduling, staffing, and academic operations across campuses.
- Assists the Director of Institutional and Academic Assessment by observing and implementing compliance with regional HLC and ATS standards, and working collaboratively with faculty, staff, and the President.
- Communicates and works closely with the President to advance the institution's mission, values, and Strategic Plan in relation to The United Methodist Church.
- Strengthens relationships with all collaborative partners, including United Methodist Conferences and Resurrection, Boards of Ordained Ministry, and contextual ministries in rural and urban churches while working collaboratively with the President and external relations staff.

Qualifications and Competencies:

- Strong integrative leadership across campuses and online environments.
- Gifted community-building and communication that support interpersonal relationships and collaborative governance.
- Strategic, innovative curricular leadership addressing and responding to the changing contexts of the Church and world.
- Strong denominational connection to The United Methodist Church and faithfulness exemplified through pastoral and spiritual mentoring for the institution.
- Ability to adapt to innovative technological resources used for administration and teaching/learning in higher education, as well as experience with multi-campus, hybrid, or online educational modalities.
- Excellence in classroom teaching, productive scholarship (evidenced by a strong record of research and publications), and a passion for academic leadership, as well as ecclesial experience.
- Commitment to social justice and supportive of a variety of cultural and theological perspectives in the pursuit of theological education.
- Detailed organizational leadership to facilitate committee work and implementation of seminary policies, academic budget management, accreditation standards, and compliance requirements.

Education:

- The VPAAD will hold a Ph.D or equivalent in a theological discipline.