

**A BOLD AND FAITHFUL WITNESS**  
*Keeping the Promises of Our Mission*

**The Strategic Plan of Luther Seminary**

*If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved....But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent?... So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.*

Romans 10:9, 14-15, 17

*Luther Seminary educates leaders for Christian communities called and sent by the Holy Spirit to witness to salvation through Jesus Christ and to serve in God's world.*

The Mission Statement of Luther Seminary

**PART 1: VOCATION & VISION**

**1.1 God's Call and Our Calling**

As the first decade of the twenty-first century comes to a close, we confess that the Holy Spirit is calling and sending the church of Jesus Christ into apostolic mission for the sake of God's world.

**Apostolic Mission**

The church is apostolic as it bears confident witness, with the apostles, that in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ the love and mercy of God have been poured out for the world (Luke 24:45-48).

The church is apostolic as it faithfully confesses, with the church of all ages, the nature and work of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as defined in the Apostles' Creed.

The church is apostolic as it is "sent" (*apostellō*) by the Holy Spirit into all the world to participate in the mission of the triune God.

This call comes at a time of significant cultural change that presents the church with distinct challenges and opportunities. Among these, two were named by our constituencies as particularly important for Luther Seminary to address: (1) the lack of clarity about the relevance of the Christian message and (2) the growing search for spirituality, community, and intimacy. Other pressing challenges were also identified, including the plurality of belief systems that offer competing claims to truth and meaning; the deterioration of structures that have traditionally taught the Christian faith; the radically altered nature of the communities and world in which our graduates will serve because of patterns of worldwide immigration and the globalization of the economy; threats facing the environment; and the worsening physical and emotional health of many of our trained leaders of the church. In this changed and ever changing context, the "old, old story" of the gospel must be interpreted anew for the sake of the world, as we prepare students for ministry and as graduates enter into ministry, for, while the times may have changed, God's call to apostolic mission remains constant.

Luther Seminary responds to this call in at least three ways:

- members of the seminary community respond through their congregations and as individuals, carrying out their witness and their vocations in the world as people of God;
- the seminary community itself bears witness to the mission of God in the world through its work and worship, its convictions and confession, and its life together in the spirit of the gospel;
- as its primary work, the seminary, through the cooperation of faculty, staff, students, boards, and supporters, educates leaders for Christian communities called into apostolic mission.

As disciples of the crucified and risen Lord, and committed to the distinct vocation entrusted to us, we believe that God has blessed Luther Seminary with the gifts and commitments to educate leaders to serve God’s church and world. We also recognize that though we may hear God’s call, we cannot know with certainty the path ahead, and so we are eager to learn from any who will teach us how best to offer in this time and context a lively confession of the hope that has been given to us in the gospel. Accordingly, we acknowledge that we do not do this work alone, but in essential partnership with others committed to the mission of the church and the seminary: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its synods; the Western Mission Cluster of the ELCA; the Minnesota Consortium of Theological Schools; the ecumenical agencies and church bodies increasingly present among us as supporters, students, and teachers; our partner seminaries and other academic institutions throughout the world; and the congregations, pastors, and leaders of the church who send us students and support us with prayers, counsel, and gifts.

Relying on the mercy of God, confident of the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and thankful for our partners in this work, we offer this strategic plan in order to make plain our response to what God has called us to do. Building on the curricular, institutional, and strategic commitments of the last two decades, this plan is divided into two sections. The first outlines our vision for mission by sharing the vocational identity and convictions that underlie our sense of mission and lead to the enduring institution-wide goals to which we are committed. The second section outlines our plans to implement our vision by amplifying our goals, naming our long-term strategies, and identifying concrete action steps that will be revised annually. A constant thread throughout this plan is the commitment to listen – to congregations, to graduates, to partners and allies, to constituents and supporters, and to the needs of the world – and a willingness to change in response to what we learn for the sake of greater fidelity to God’s calling.

## 1.2 Identity and Convictions

### *Identity*

Luther Seminary is a community that understands itself called by God to prepare public evangelical leaders to respond to the challenges of the day and witness boldly to the gospel and the work of God in the world.

#### **Public Evangelical Leaders**

A public evangelical leader is one who is called by the church to provide leadership for Christian communities by giving voice to the gospel of Jesus Christ (the “evangel”), by teaching and confessing faith in the triune God, by entering into God’s mission and service in the world and leading others in that work, and by demonstrating the skills needed to gather a community around this mission.

Among the institutions of the church, a seminary – this seminary – is called to think theologically about gospel and church, witness and mission, God and world, and to teach students to do the same. Three

adjectives in particular define and describe our theological identity as a seminary in the evangelical Lutheran church:

### **Biblical**

First and foremost, we recognize that we are called to listen carefully and attentively to God's word of law and gospel in the Scriptures. We are, at heart, a community created and sustained by the word, and we believe that our hopes will be realized and fidelity measured to the extent that we attend to that word. We acknowledge the canonical Scriptures to be the written word of God, the source and norm of our faith and life; most important, the Scriptures point to God's living Word, Jesus Christ, the center of our proclamation, teaching, and life together. We commit ourselves to diligent reading and careful study of the Bible as we plan the work of Luther Seminary, and we affirm our call to teach students to do the same in order that they might lead communities in discerning who God is calling them to be and what God is calling them to do in this day and age.

### **Confessional**

Our reading of Scripture and practice of ministry is shaped by the Lutheran confessional writings and the ecumenical creeds and faith they affirm. At the heart of this theological heritage is the good news that in and through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ we have been justified by grace through faith and set free to love and serve our neighbor and the world. Because of the centrality of this confession to our mission, we attend carefully to the insights of the evangelical Reformers so that our current confession in word and service may be informed and guided by their witness. Toward this end we commit ourselves to teaching, learning, and scholarship that harvest the riches of the past in service to the future to which God is calling us. We commit ourselves further to interpreting and confessing the work of God in the world today and to teaching our students to do the same, as the Spirit gives us the ability.

### **Missional**

The biblical and confessional heritage we receive and confess leads us, under God, to participate in the mission of the triune God in and to the world: to preach and teach, to heal and serve, to create and sustain, to love the neighbor and confront evil, to promote peace and justice, to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to announce the forgiveness of sins and the possibility of abundant life in Jesus' name. To prepare students for this work, we attend carefully to the heritage that forms us, to the multiple contexts in which we find ourselves, and to the needs and conditions of the world, always with the intent to discern the means by which to bear witness to Christ and the work of God in a manner that is both relevant and persuasive. Faithful responsiveness to the current context for the sake of proclamation is the evangelical impulse that informs our teaching and drives all reform. Toward this end, we commit ourselves to sensitive and thorough engagement with our contemporary settings and cultural contexts, to ongoing dialogue with partners from around the globe who can best teach us about the needs of the world, and to a willingness to assess and adapt our efforts in service to greater fidelity to the gospel of God.

### *Convictions*

Our shared sense of call and theological identity have helped Luther Seminary faculty, staff, and students to discern six core convictions that we hold to be normative for our life together as a seminary community. We desire and endeavor that the following convictions, and the biblical and theological beliefs they profess, increasingly mark our lives together as a particular community of faith in Jesus Christ. We also pray for the courage of these convictions so that our life together may serve as a witness to God's ongoing work in the world through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

### **Ethos of Excellence**

We cultivate an ethos among faculty, staff, and students that pursues excellence, integrity, truth, and authenticity in everything we do for the sake of effective teaching and honest proclamation of the gospel.

### **Transformative Learning**

We value a rigorous and stimulating teaching and learning environment, the lifelong pursuit of intellectual and faith-filled inquiry and innovation, and the imaginative ideas that arise from cross-disciplinary theological dialogue, all making us better equipped to respond to God's call in service to neighbor and world.

### **Fellowship and Communion**

We strive to nurture a community that is grounded in and modeled on Christian fellowship, forgiveness, and reconciliation; a community made possible through our gathering around word and sacrament and nurtured through regular worship, prayer, and the breaking of bread together. Experiencing the joys and strengths, as well as the strife and conflict, of any human community, we seek opportunities for mutual encouragement, support, and appreciation, as well as other means to live more fully into the way of Christian discipleship.

### **Hospitality and Friendship**

We regard the gift of intentional hospitality as a mark of a compassionate community grounded in the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who revealed God's mercy and grace for the world. With generosity and mutual love, we strive to welcome all as Christ would welcome them. We embrace all brothers and sisters in Christ as full participants in our shared community of faith and as true friends in the body of Christ.

### **Diversity and Openness**

Recognizing the diversity of God's world and church, we celebrate the gifts, perspectives, and experiences of all God's children. We are committed to encouraging an environment that rejoices in a vibrant and diverse community of faith, where different voices are recognized and respected as strengthening this seminary's response to God's call. We seek diversity in the seminary community that reflects God's church, strengthens Christian fellowship, and equips graduates to serve in the diverse communities to which they are called.

### **Thanksgiving and Stewardship**

We give thanks to the God of grace and love—made manifest in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ—for all we have been given and for all that has been entrusted to us. We embody this gratitude in benevolent response by being faithful stewards of God's mysteries. We seek to mirror God's abundant gifts of love, life, salvation, time, talent, and treasure by caring for God's creation, for ourselves and our resources, and for one another.

### **1.3 Institution-Wide Goals**

This sense of our mission, identity, and convictions leads us to adopt the following institution-wide goals. While they surely do not name everything we may undertake over the lifespan of this strategic plan, they nevertheless set a clear direction for the seminary and provide useful criteria by which to evaluate any and all opportunities and decisions:

**Goal 1: Luther Seminary will produce graduates who will lead Christian communities in apostolic mission for the sake of God's world.**

**Goal 2: Luther Seminary will attract and support people with the character, capacity, and commitment to further the seminary's mission.**

**Goal 3: Luther Seminary's facilities will be transformed to support the teaching, learning, and community that take place on campus and around the world.**

**Goal 4: Luther Seminary will foster a culture that supports our common mission.**

**Goal 5: Luther Seminary will be a responsive learning organization supported by a culture of assessment and accountability.**

## **PART 2: IMPLEMENTATION**

### **2.1 Background and Rationale**

The five goals named above work together to enable us to respond to God’s call and to realize our vision for mission. The first goal clearly identifies the overarching aspiration and reason-for-being of this community. The second through fourth describe the particular means by which we will achieve the first goal. The fifth goal names our unswerving commitment to listen, learn, adapt, and change in order to be faithful to the promise of our mission and in this way enable us to achieve the other four goals.

Taken together, these five goals enable us to see our current situation in terms of opportunity rather than threat, in terms of abundance rather than scarcity, and in terms of hope rather than despair. Taken together, they orient us to the future God is preparing by building on a tradition of faithful learning and adaptation that has taken shape in three distinct phases at Luther Seminary over the last two decades.

*Curricular Revision:* In 1993, the faculty adopted a curriculum that recognized the church’s need for leaders capable of purposeful action in service to evangelical mission. It is an incisive and innovative curricular strategy that leads from learning the Christian story to interpretation and confession and then to leading in mission in order to strengthen Christian discipleship. This curriculum continues to serve as the foundation for the seminary’s teaching and learning.

*Mission Statement:* In 1995, the seminary adopted a mission statement affirming the curricular strategy of the faculty by highlighting Luther Seminary’s primary calling to “educate leaders for Christian communities.” Through its trinitarian shape, this statement also recognized and affirmed the centrality of witness to the gospel and of service to God’s world. The mission statement continues to stand at the center of the seminary’s self-understanding.

*Serving the Promise of Our Mission:* In 2000, the seminary adopted a groundbreaking strategic plan that focused the resources of an entire institution on preparing leaders for apostolic mission in an age of many faiths and cultures. It outlined ambitious goals and standards and led to a number of significant and strategic initiatives that continue to shape decision-making at all levels.

The present strategic plan stands as an affirmation of the impulses and insights represented in these closely connected events and is designed to keep the promises and realize the potential they embody. At the same time, this plan also represents an eagerness to learn from those positioned best to teach us – our graduates, constituent congregations, partners and supporters, and others we do not yet know – about how best to accomplish our calling to prepare public evangelical leaders for a church in apostolic mission. The plan seeks therefore:

- to anticipate the needs of the church and world and devote our best efforts to meeting those needs;
- to listen attentively to those we serve and encounter with regard to the outcome of our best efforts; and also
- to be willing to reconsider our assumptions and practices in light of what we discover and adapt our efforts accordingly.

Establishing and maintaining this continuous cycle of listening and response is the only way, we believe, to continue to grow in our fidelity to the trust God has placed in us.

Given the emphasis in this plan on assessment, it is important to name briefly the impetus for and the mechanisms of our evaluation:

- externally, our partners and constituencies press us to prepare graduates up to the task of mission in the present world – leaders who can preach and teach, serve and guide, lead worship and provide pastoral care, counsel and administer faithfully and well, foster the faith and vocations of the laity, envision and lead transformational processes; accrediting agencies increasingly demand the ability to demonstrate such accountability;
- internally, the Reformation principle of *semper reformanda* (“always reforming”) pushes us continually to reexamine every aspect of our work for the sake of faithful and effective witness to the gospel, recognizing that it will never be sufficient simply to repeat past tradition and accepted practices but that the tradition must always be made new and practices must always be retooled to meet the challenges and opportunities of changing contexts;
- assessment will inevitably mean specific evaluation, using graphs and numbers, percentages and demographics; we will employ the best tools available to enter into this process completely and well;
- assessment is finally not primarily about numbers, since the things we regard as most important (mission, gospel, faith, service) are not quantifiable; thus, for a seminary, assessment requires honest mutual conversation and public accountability, transparent to one another and open to the Spirit; we will join this conversation fully, humbly, and expectantly.

## 2.2 Strategies and Action Steps

The institution-wide goals we have named are ambitious, and we do not undertake them lightly. We recognize that the challenges facing us in accomplishing them will be significant and that missteps and failures are inevitable. But faith that the God who creates out of nothing and raises the dead to life is active even in such everyday affairs as seminary planning gives us the ability to face obstacles with confidence and hope. We are called to plant and to sow, breaking new ground or plowing long familiar fields as the Spirit leads, trusting always in God for a harvest.

We turn now to amplifying our understanding of these goals and identifying the long-term strategies and annual action steps we will employ to achieve them.

**Goal 1: Luther Seminary will produce graduates who will lead Christian communities in apostolic mission for the sake of God’s world.**

*Single-minded focus on our primary mission to educate leaders will draw us into new ventures, partnerships, and practices.*

Luther Seminary will seek out, develop, educate, and equip persons to be leaders of Christian communities, witnesses to and participants in God’s ongoing work to love, bless, and redeem the world. As evangelical public leaders, graduates will persuasively articulate the relevance of the Christian message in light of the distinct challenges and opportunities of today’s world. All who study here with commitment and diligence will gain the theological acumen and the necessary ministry and leadership skills to serve as leaders in the various places and contexts to which they are called.

The primary means by which we achieve this goal is through the curriculum developed and employed by the faculty. The three inter-related movements of the curriculum, viewed within the seminary’s overarching curricular commitment to foster discipleship to Jesus Christ, work together to educate leaders for Christian communities. The first movement of the curriculum, “*learning the story*,” immerses students in the biblical witness, the history of the church and its doctrine, and the story of Christian practices through the centuries. The second movement, “*interpreting and confessing*,” prepares students to interpret

the Christian story in light of both tradition and contemporary context in order to confess it anew. The third movement of the curriculum, “*leading in mission*,” equips students to think theologically in light of their distinct ministry context in order to employ classic and contemporary arts of ministry toward purposeful action for the sake of the gospel. Taken together, these three inter-related curricular movements not only serve as the primary means by which to accomplish our mission but also provide internal criteria by which we assess and evaluate our progress.

In addition to these curricular criteria, we also recognize the need for outcome-based measures. As a part of this strategic planning process, the faculty identified several capacities it desires all graduates possess. These capacities provide us with an initial set of outcome-based criteria by which to assess and adapt our teaching and curricular strategies in light of the actual results we observe in the ministry of our graduates. We therefore publicly articulate the aspiration and commitment that Luther Seminary’s graduates who serve in congregations and other Christian communities will strive to:

- proclaim God’s saving work in Jesus Christ persuasively and compellingly;
- faithfully interpret the Scriptures and equip those they lead to do the same;
- listen deeply to the context and thoughtfully confess the Christian faith in the public arena;
- think theologically about life and ministry and equip those they lead to do the same;
- lead congregations through change with wisdom and courage for the sake of God’s mission; and
- pursue physical, spiritual, and vocational health.

Undergirding these criteria and commitments is the pledge to support faculty and staff in their efforts to achieve our goals. Faculty and staff development; support and celebration of research, scholarship, and service to the church; and promoting our resources and publications for the sake of mission and the wider church are a central part of this pledge.

***Long-Term Strategies Toward Goal 1***

1. Develop criteria and assessment processes for the formation of evangelical leaders in apostolic mission for each of the five educational processes (education leading to ordained clergy, education leading to lay professionals, graduate theological education, lifelong learning, and professional development of faculty and staff) (2007-2009).
2. Develop processes for the continual development of the curriculum in order to form evangelical leaders in apostolic mission in response to ongoing assessment and feedback with local congregations and the systems that serve them (2008-2010 and ongoing).
3. Develop the lifelong learning and contextual educational programs into ongoing feedback and assessment processes that form learning communities with and among local churches (2008-2009 and ongoing).
4. Address the nature of discipleship and spiritual formation for the development of evangelical leaders in apostolic mission (2008-2009).

***2007-2008 Action Steps for Goal 1***

Timeframe	Action Step	Leaders
<b>GOAL 1</b>	<b>Luther Seminary’s graduates will be prepared to lead the church in apostolic mission.</b>	
November 2007	Form a committee of faculty, administrators, and students who have primary responsibility for leading the seminary in developing a comprehensive system of academic assessment.	Academic Dean; Associate Dean

November 2007-April 2008	Build on work from curriculum strategy (1993), as well as reports from strategic planning teams (2007) to articulate explicit learning outcomes for each educational process.	Academic Dean; Associate Deans
February-May 2008	Articulate the evidence needed to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes for each educational process.	Academic Dean; Associate Deans
February-May 2008	Identify present assessment-related activities related to the agreed-upon learning outcomes for each educational process.	Academic Dean; Associate Deans

**Goal 2: Luther Seminary will attract and support people with the character, capacity, and commitment to further the seminary’s mission.**

*We are only as good as our people.*

Our human resources stand as our major asset and are critical to fulfilling our mission. Building on and continuing to nourish and support our strong and committed faculty, staff, and board, and in the hope of bearing witness to the gospel of God to all people, we will identify, attract, develop, and retain excellent colleagues who represent the diversity of gifts, Christian traditions, and cultural and ethnic backgrounds that will advance our mission. Similarly, building upon the strength of our student body, we will recruit, enroll, and educate a diverse and talented group of women and men to serve as capable, passionate, and dedicated evangelical leaders.

Our commitment to mission leads us to two commensurate commitments:

(1) We are committed to excellence. God calls us to offer the best of our intellect, abilities, and passion to the proclamation of the gospel and service to the world in Christ’s name. For this reason, we are committed to attracting, developing, and supporting the most capable people we can find as we seek to bear witness to God’s ongoing work in the world. Through our compensation and scholarships, faculty and staff development, student recruitment, recognition of achievement, and the culture and ethos we promote, we commit to creating and sustaining an environment that will attract the finest faculty, staff, and students.

(2) We are committed to diversity in service to a common confession and mission. God calls us to witness to the gospel to all people and in all the world, and God calls our graduates to serve in communities that are increasingly ethnically and ecumenically diverse. For this reason, we are committed to attracting, developing, and supporting women and men from a variety of ecumenical, theological, and ethnic backgrounds who, sharing the mission we have described here, can help us prepare leaders for the Christian communities graduates will be called to serve.

Behind this commitment to diversity stands the recognition that to be a community of the crucified and risen Christ is to welcome all who come into our community as brothers and sisters for Christ’s sake. This means moving beyond treating newcomers as guests or visitors to demonstrating a genuine hospitality that seeks to include the gifts, perspectives, and experiences all persons bring and a willingness to invite all to participate in and shape our shared community.

Historically, Luther Seminary has been strengthened by a diversity of theological viewpoints bound by a common confession of the triune God and of the crucified and risen Christ. More recently, we have made significant strides with regard to calling and developing women and persons from a broad ecumenical

spectrum of Christ's church as our students, faculty, and staff, and we are committed to persisting in these efforts. We continue to strive to attract persons of diverse ethnic backgrounds to be full partners in the mission of this seminary, and we commit to intentional progress in this area through our recruitment strategies and by creating an environment that recognizes and welcomes the contributions all Christians can make to responding to God's call to bear witness to the gospel to all nations.

***Long-Term strategies toward Goal 2***

1. Develop and implement an aggressive recruitment plan leading to a diverse and talented student body of 1000 by 2011-2012 (2007-2008 and ongoing).
2. Attract, retain, and develop an excellent faculty and staff whose education, experience and diversity strengthen our ability to prepare evangelical leaders in apostolic mission (2007-2010 and ongoing).
3. Develop financial resources for scholarship assistance to students and for support for faculty and staff adequate to achieve strategies one and two (2007-2008 and ongoing).
4. Identify and communicate a truthful, powerful and compelling public identity for Luther Seminary that enhances the seminary's ability to attract and support the students, faculty, staff, and friends it needs in order to fulfill its mission (2007-2008 and ongoing).

***2007-2008 action steps for Goal 2***

<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Leaders</b>
<b>GOAL 2</b>	<b>Luther Seminary will attract and support people with the character, capacity and commitment to further the seminary's mission.</b>	
September 2007-June 2008	Strive to significantly increase the diversity of the faculty and staff by actively identifying, encouraging, and inviting into every search process qualified candidates representing the diverse communities and world to which our graduates are called and sent.	Academic Dean, VP for Administration and Finance
September 2007-June 2008	Set meaningful, measurable, and challenging goals with regard to attracting faculty, staff, and students that represent the diverse world and communities to which are graduates are called and sent.	Academic Dean, VP for Administration and Finance, Dean of Students
October 2007-April 2008	Manage the faculty development plan in conversation with the divisions, the Committee on Diversity, and the Educational Leadership Committee (ELC) in order to respond to enrollment targets and curricular strategies, paying special attention to issues of gender, ethnicity, ecumenical and theological breadth, as well as resources required to implement the plan.	Academic Dean
September 2007-June 2008	Ensure that every faculty and staff search process lifts up the school's mission, identity, and values.	Academic Dean, VP for Administration and Finance
October-November 2007	Authorize a team to manage the enrollment matrix paying particular attention to the synergy of enrollment, tuition, and scholarships.	Dean of Students
November - December 2007	Set recruitment targets for 2008-2009 in light of the 2010-2011 targets paying special attention to quality of students, strength of the M.Div. class, underrepresented groups, and ecumenical students.	Director of Admissions, Dean of Students

November-December 2007	Identify the resources, existing and new (including scholarships as well as personnel and other necessary resources), that will support the achievement of the enrollment goals.	Dean of Students, VP for Seminary Relations, VP for Finance and Administration
January 2007-May 2008	Build a comprehensive plan to promote the professional education and development of faculty and staff.	Academic Dean, VP for Administration and Finance
February 2008	Authorize a team of faculty, staff, students, board members, donors, and alumni/ae to work with an outside consultant to identify and articulate a compelling public identity for Luther Seminary.	President; VP for Seminary Relations
February - May 2008	Conduct a campaign feasibility study to determine potential philanthropic support for current and endowed scholarships as well as current and endowed support for faculty, staff, and programs and begin to develop a fundraising campaign that responds to the results of the feasibility study.	VP for Seminary Relations
July- August 2008	Evaluate the effectiveness of the Western Mission Cluster Lilly grant vis-à-vis recruitment goals.	Dean of Students

**Goal 3: Luther Seminary’s facilities will be transformed to support the teaching, learning, and community that take place on campus and around the world.**

*The right facilities promote excellence in teaching, learning, and our life together; extend the reach of our faculty and curriculum; and support leaders in apostolic mission.*

Our facilities provide the primary environment in which we carry out our mission. In light of our strategic commitments and the changing realities of theological education, we will transform our facilities in order better to support the preparation of leaders. Recent and anticipated technological changes, increasing demands for distributed learning, Luther Seminary’s expanding global reach, and a desire for spaces that reflect our commitment to hospitable community and concern for God’s creation require many different types of facilities. These improvements may include a new library building, transformed student housing, and the development of the lower campus. The vision and rationale for reshaping our facilities is described in the Facilities Master Plan developed in light of and along with this strategic plan.

All plans and decisions made with regard to our facilities will conform to three overarching commitments: (1) to foster community and hospitality, (2) to create an environment conducive to sound and lively teaching and learning for residential and distributed students, and (3) to model intentional and effective stewardship of God’s creation.

***Long-term strategies toward Goal 3***

1. Develop and implement a campus facilities master plan that responds to identified educational and administrative needs (2007-2008 and ongoing).
2. Develop our imagination, commitment, and technological capacity and infrastructure to support residential and distributed learning (2007-2009 and ongoing).
3. Build or renovate a community learning center/library (by 2012 or earlier as resources are available).
4. Build or renovate other facilities identified as strategic priorities to accomplish our mission, in accord with the three commitments named above (2008-2012 and ongoing).

*2007-2008 action steps for Goal 3*

<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Leaders</b>
<b>GOAL 3</b>	<b>Luther Seminary's facilities will be transformed to support the teaching, learning, and community that take place on campus and around the world.</b>	
July – October 2007	Articulate and prioritize facility needs: educational, social, residential, and distributed.	VP for Finance and Administration
September 2007-June 2008	Audit existing technological capacities for providing distributed education and identify needs (e.g., personnel, hardware, software, other infrastructure)	Associate Dean; VP for Finance and Admin.; Information Technology staff
November 2007-January 2008	Explore a variety of solutions to the facility needs; select and prepare a detailed recommendation for the Boards.	VP for Finance and Administration
February 2008	Boards approve Campus Facilities Master Plan (CFMP)	Boards
February – May 2008	Prepare budget and timeline for CFMP.	VP for Finance and Administration
February-May 2008	Review and revise CFMP, as necessary, with internal and external stakeholders (e.g., faculty, staff, students, boards, donors, neighbors, city, county)	VP for Finance and Administration
February-May 2008	Hire architect and builder for CFMP.	VP for Finance and Administration
February-May 2008	Continue conversations with potential commercial partners regarding development of Eustis Street property resulting in alternate revenue streams.	VP for Finance and Administration
February-June 2008	Prepare budget and timeline for upgrading technology and identify resources	Associate Dean; VP for Finance and Admin.; Information Technology staff
February-May 2008	Conduct campaign feasibility study to determine potential philanthropic support for proposed facilities and make recommendation to the boards regarding the size, timing, and goals of a capital campaign (see also action steps for Goal 2 above)	VP for Seminary Relations
May 2008	Boards authorize capital campaign	Boards

**Goal 4: Luther Seminary will foster a culture that supports our common mission.**

*The character of our life together influences the quality of leaders we send out.*

In order to educate women and men who can lead in apostolic mission, the culture of Luther Seminary needs regular attention. This community includes faculty and staff, along with residential, commuter, and distributed learners. The seminary is committed to fostering an environment that is inviting, hospitable, and conducive to learning. The widespread search for authentic spirituality, community, and intimacy that was discovered in our listening is not only a phenomenon of the wider culture, but characterizes our own community as well. By tending to the culture of Luther Seminary, we model the forms of Christian

leadership which foster healthy communities characterized by bold and faithful witness to the gospel and service in God’s world.

“Culture” is never a static thing, but is always being shaped and formed. For this reason, we must constantly deliberate the question of what kind of community we desire to be. Among the many aspects of our culture that we want to affirm and promote is a recognition that we live and minister in a global context. Building on strong international partnerships and a history of hosting students and faculty from churches around the world, we seek, therefore, to foster a culture and community that is hospitable to Christians from all over the globe in order to enrich and deepen our understanding of and commitment to God’s mission to proclaim the gospel to all the nations.

***Long-term strategies toward Goal 4***

1. Initiate and sustain institution-wide conversation about our shared convictions and commitments in the service of our lives together in mission (2007-2008).
2. Support a diverse seminary community that shares a common identity as confessional Christians (2007-2008 and ongoing).
3. Strengthen and deepen relationships with partner institutions throughout the world and promote the possibilities these partnerships afford among faculty, students, and staff.
4. Learn from others how to create a culture and ethos that supports the shaping of apostolic leaders in apostolic mission in a changed and changing world (2007-2008 and ongoing).
5. Ensure that all personnel searches and assessment processes attend to issues of culture and ethos (2007-2008 and ongoing).

***2007-2008 action steps for Goal 4***

<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Leaders</b>
<b>GOAL 4:</b>	<b>Luther Seminary will foster a culture that supports our common mission.</b>	
October 2007	Authorize a year-long Task Force on Values and Convictions to design and implement a conversation process based upon the values report done this summer, resulting in recommendations to the cabinet about formation and support of desired culture and ethos.	President
October 2007	Authorize an ongoing Committee on Diversity to follow up on the work of the task force on diversity and similar predecessor groups so as to focus the attention of the seminary community on issues of diversity/identity and to make recommendations to the cabinet, as appropriate, that support the creation of a diverse seminary community that is centered in our common confession and mission.	President
June 2008	Assess the conversation process about values and convictions in terms of what was learned about how to function as a learning community and what changes would be made if the process were repeated.	President
September 2007-June 2007	Promote existing opportunities for fellowship and conversation with international students and their families and nurture their full participation in the community.	Director of GMI, Dean of Students
September 2007-June 2008	Produce materials describing all international partnerships and opportunities for international study that include protocols for participating in partner-sponsored activities, and distribute these to faculty, students, and staff.	Academic Dean, Director of GMI, Director of Cross-Cultural Study

**Goal 5: Luther Seminary will be a responsive learning organization supported by a culture of assessment and accountability.**

*At Luther Seminary, we have a lot to teach – and a lot to learn.*

To accomplish our mission, we must become a responsive learning organization that actively and consistently anticipates the needs of the church and world, assesses our efforts to meet those needs, monitors change in the church and society, and adapts and responds faithfully to what we learn about ourselves and the world in light of our mission. We will, therefore, promote such practices as internal and external listening posts, focus groups, and regular conversations about our work in order to enlarge our circle of conversation partners and gather concrete data about our performance, and we commit ourselves to revise and adapt our practices based upon what we learn.

We do not yet know where this kind of listening and learning will lead us. Believing that it is God’s Holy Spirit that leads us, we trust that the comprehensive assessment at the heart of the following strategies will enable us to discover what is working and can be strengthened, what is not and must be adapted or drawn to a close, and what we have not anticipated. Equipped with this kind of feedback, we then can create and tend an environment in which innovation and experimentation will lead faculty, students, staff, and partners to new insights, commitments, and practices.

***Long-term strategies toward Goal 5***

1. Focusing on the formation of evangelical leaders in apostolic mission, develop a comprehensive and systematic plan to cultivate a learning community through experimentation and innovation in Luther Seminary and among its constituencies (2007-2008 and ongoing).
2. Develop a process for integrating this learning into the life and work of the seminary (2008-2009 and ongoing).
3. Develop a program that engages congregations in measuring student/graduate learning (2008-2009 and ongoing).
4. Develop an academic and institutional administrative structure to support the thriving of such a learning culture (2008-2009).

***2007-2008 action steps for Goal 5***

<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Leaders</b>
<b>GOAL 5</b>	<b>Luther Seminary will become a responsive “learning organization” supported by a culture of assessment.</b>	
November 2007	Form a committee of faculty, administrators, and board members to develop an administrative structure, budget, and position description(s) to support and oversee institutional research and assessment. Include representatives from the Contextual Leadership Initiative and Center for Lifelong Learning in order to explore how we can more effectively engage congregations in our assessment processes.	President
November-December 2007	Develop and implement processes to ensure that academic and institutional assessment committees are in conversation with one another.	President

November-December 2007	Engage outside consultant(s) to work with assessment committees – both academic and institution-wide – to develop assessment systems.	President
January - June 2008	Begin searches for appropriate personnel to implement the plans developed by both committees	President

**2.3 Conclusion**

Grounded in the witness of the Scriptures, and strengthened by the fidelity of previous generations of committed Christians, we believe that Luther Seminary is well positioned to answer God’s call to prepare those who will lead the church in apostolic mission in the twenty-first century. As we move toward this goal and future at Luther Seminary, we do so humbled by and grateful for all those who have confessed Jesus Christ before us and mindful of our calling to take our stand in this time and place, for the good of the communities and people we serve. Therefore, it is with trust in God’s grace, hope in the future to which God has called us, and belief in the gospel of God for the sake of the world that we put forward this Strategic Plan of Luther Seminary. *Soli Deo Gloria.*