

ABUNDANCE & GRACE:

A Blueprint for Flourishing in Faith and Hope



COLUMBIA
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

ABUNDANCE & GRACE: A BLUEPRINT FOR FLOURISHING IN FAITH AND HOPE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In joyful anticipation of the one-hundredth anniversary of the Seminary's move to Decatur in 2027, and the two-hundredth anniversary of its founding in 2028, Columbia Theological Seminary, as an educational institution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), is boldly moving forward in pursuit of our mission and vision, grounded in gratitude and appreciation for the abundance of our rich history, present gifts, and future opportunities. We give thanks to God for God's abundance and grace, displayed in Columbia's world-class faculty and library, groundbreaking Center for Lifelong Learning, exemplary staff, inspiring regional, national, and global alumni, and resilient students from diverse denominational, national, racial / ethnic, cultural, and gender identities.

Abundance & Grace: A Blueprint for Flourishing in Faith & Hope is an incremental plan for living into the prayers of our Vision Statement, *A Prayer for Vision in Columbia's Bicentennial Season*, which call us into the hard and holy work of becoming a house of prayer for all people. It was written through a process of deep listening and communal dialog and represents the collaboration of passionate and dedicated Seminary partners, including students, faculty, trustees, administrative staff, and alumni. Approved in May of 2023, this blueprint will provide the substance for the Seminary's annual plans and assessments for the next four academic years and focuses on enacting the prayers of our vision statement in four areas of institutional life: *Academic Pedagogy, Campus Culture, Administration, and Governance*. In each area, strategic directions and prioritized goals organize the Seminary's efforts to maintain our distinctive strengths and to create new opportunities for student flourishing as we participate with the church in the formation of pastors and servant-leaders for the sake of the church and the world.

Here we go! We pray for the faith to both risk and trust at this moment: to follow the Spirit's leading, to join in God's work, and to be witnesses to Jesus in resurrection hope. We need not fear the future because our future belongs to God – so let us step boldly into the dance, ready to move, innovate and grow—to be who we need to be for this time on God's earth.



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Mission

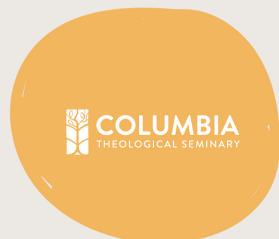
Columbia Theological Seminary exists to educate and nurture faithful, imaginative, and effective leaders for the sake of the Church and the world.

Vision

We offer these vision prayers, which are excerpted from Columbia's Vision Statement: *A Prayer For Vision in Columbia's Bicentennial Season*, as an expression of our collective intention to follow where the Spirit leads so that Columbia may become a house of prayer for all peoples.

- We pray that Columbia's students will be educated, equipped, and nurtured to become a new generation of pastoral leaders for the Church and the world.
- We pray that Columbia's community will embody the welcome, hospitality, justice, and belonging of the reign of God.
- We pray that Columbia's partnerships will bring vibrant spiritual, cultural, and academic exchange, with opportunities to generate new ideas and knowledge, create connections, and engage in experiential learning.
- We pray that Columbia will join boldly in the new thing God is already doing among us and in the world, enabling us to learn, teach, serve, and live joyfully in God's holy house of prayer and in God's good creation.

COMMUNAL BELONGING & BECOMING
GATHERING BECOMING
MENTAL BECOMING
HOSPITALITY
INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY
UNIVERSITY
COMPASSION
INNOVATION
PERFECT EXCELLENCE
GRATITUDE



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Core Values

Like a constellation of stars, each of Columbia's Core Values shines with the light of Christ, and when taken together, they reveal the seminary's distinctive character:

Gratitude: Our response to the abundance and grace of God is, first, gratitude. Abiding gratitude for gifts freely given equips our mission, advances our vision, prompts wise stewardship, engenders joy and repentance, and makes clear the path of call.

Mutual Respect: Grounded in the recognition that all people are formed in God's image, mutual respect moves us to appreciate the unique gifts and contributions of every person.

Excellence: Striving for excellence commits us to challenge ourselves to utilize our God-given gifts -- intellectual, social, physical, spiritual, and ethical.

Compassion: Exemplified in the life and ministry of Jesus, compassion compels us to stand with and embrace others in their suffering that, together, we may experience God's liberating and healing presence.

Innovation: To chart inventive paths forward, Columbia embraces a bold willingness to risk following the Spirit's leading, the humility to learn from failure, and the courage to try a new path.

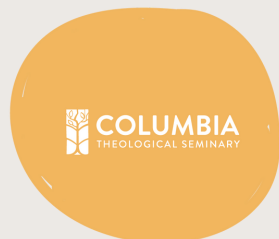
Hospitality: Hospitality means making space for an unexpected visitor, a surprising idea, a fresh insight, or even a disturbing question or challenging opportunity. Welcoming another may not result in agreement, but it requires listening and a readiness to reconsider.

Inclusive Community: Columbia Seminary strives to create and maintain safe learning spaces; fosters a climate that is open and welcoming to diverse people, ideas, and perspectives; and promotes a constructive discourse on the nature of diversity and equity.

Belonging & Becoming: The Spirit's work can be seen in the synergy and creative tension between belonging and becoming. All people are embraced, welcomed, and valued as they are, and invited to grow, stretch, and be transformed.

Communal Engagement: The call of Christ demands reaching beyond ourselves to become engaged in the life of the world around us. Columbia seeks to be a good neighbor to Decatur, Atlanta, and our global community, using our voices and resources to participate in God's kin-dom.

COMMUNAL ENGAGEMENT
BELONGING & BECOMING
HOSPITALITY
COMPASSION
MUTUAL RESPECT
INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY
INNOVATION
EXCELLENCE
GRATITUDE



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIZED GOALS: ACADEMIC PEDAGOGY

Strategic Direction

Building on Columbia Seminary's excellence in theological inquiry, critical thinking, and innovation, we will provide theological leadership for the Church and the world by educating and equipping faithful, imaginative, and effective pastoral leaders through degree and non-degree programs, contextual education, research, and lifelong learning.

Prioritized Goals

- **AP - Goal #1** Enhance the relevance and strength of our degree and certificate programs and determine in which formats Columbia will offer them in the next decade.
- **AP - Goal #2** Enhance the configuration of faculty and program leaders to promote the Seminary's formation of pastoral leaders and support innovation and collaboration.
- **AP - Goal #3** Optimize current and future resources to support the faculty's pedagogical development, scholarly engagement, and service to the Seminary, Church, and community.
- **AP - Goal #4** Enrich and foster partnerships that align with Columbia's educational commitments.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIZED GOALS: CAMPUS CULTURE

Strategic Direction

Expanding on Columbia Theological Seminary's residential campus, we will develop and implement the framework for a campus culture of Christian worship, hospitality, and belonging that exists on our campus and extends translocally and globally.

Prioritized Goals

- **CC - Goal #1** Pursue an ambitious and inspiring enrollment strategy that is informed by data, rooted in Columbia's core values, and emphasizes the academic preparedness and vocational discernment of applicants.
- **CC - Goal #2** Building upon the Becoming Project, students, faculty, and staff will participate in Christian community that honors and promotes intercultural intelligence, diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- **CC - Goal #3** Optimize support services to promote the holistic well-being of students, staff, and faculty in a safe and inclusive environment for people of all genders, races, and identities.
- **CC - Goal #4** Cultivate adaptive leadership skills and attitudes that prepare students, faculty, staff, and alumni to sustain a life in ministry in their present and future contexts.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIZED GOALS: ADMINISTRATION

Strategic Direction

Enriching Columbia Theological Seminary's exemplary workplace culture, we will pursue excellence in our policies, procedures, and practices, stewarding the resources of the seminary and building mutually beneficial relationships with external partners at the local, regional, and global levels.

Prioritized Goals

- **AD - Goal #1** Shape and direct systemic efforts to promote, nurture, and restore existing relationships with alumni, congregations, donors, and denominational bodies.
- **AD - Goal #2** Identify and build new and emerging constituent relationships by sharing our vision and inviting others to participate in our mission.
- **AD - Goal #3** Develop and sustain strategies that address student financial insecurity.
- **AD - Goal #4** Optimize seminary space utilization and facilities to provide for the mission of the seminary, foster connection with the surrounding community of Decatur and Atlanta, and promote accessibility and ecological sustainability.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIZED GOALS: ADMINISTRATION

- **AD - Goal #5** Maximize employee growth by enhancing workplace satisfaction, efficacy, and accountability.
- **AD - Goal #6** Enhance communication infrastructure and build communication patterns with internal and external constituencies that are timely and consistent.
- **AD - Goal #7** Prepare for and launch a Comprehensive Campaign to equip the seminary for its third century.



Strategic Blueprinting Team

The Strategic Blueprinting Team was chartered in August of 2022. The members of this team include:

Victor Aloyo
Lucy Baum
Mark Douglas
Richard DuBose
Jane Fahey
Israel Galindo
Brian Henderson
Chris Henry
David Huffine
Katina James
Jihyun Oh
Matt Rich
Rebecca Spurrier
Erin Tolar
Jeffery Tribble

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIZED GOALS: GOVERNANCE

Strategic Direction

Strengthening Columbia Theological Seminary's vision of inclusion and commitment to diversity, we will engage, explore, and facilitate the highest levels of institutional leadership and effectiveness, organizational justice, and future-oriented planning within an environment of transparent, shared governance as we join boldly in the new thing God is already doing among us.

Prioritized Goals

- **GG - Goal #1** Enrich engagement, trust, accountability, and ownership in our shared governance models by clarifying roles and expectations among students, faculty, staff, alumni, President's Council, and Trustees.
- **GG - Goal #2** Review, revise, and integrate our practices and policies related to shared governance.
- **GG - Goal #3** Ensure faithful financial stewardship in support of the Seminary's mission and vision long-term.
- **GG - Goal #4** Continue to build a Board of Trustees who reflect and honor the diversity of the Church and seminary constituencies.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIZED GOALS: GOVERNANCE

- **GG - Goal #5** Position the seminary for thriving by actively engaging trustees in leadership and fiduciary oversight of strategic directions.
- **GG - Goal #6** Equip and enhance the seminary's discerning and decision-making bodies to create equitable, inclusive, and just spaces.



Implementation Team

To assist the seminary in reaching these strategic goals, a cross-sectional Strategic Implementation Team was chartered in August of 2023 and charged with developing the accountability and assessment measures that will guide the seminary in the accomplishment of its strategic goals. The members of this team include:

Dana Abu Gazaleh
Ann Clay Adams
Victor Aloyo
Lucy Baum
Jenn Carlier
Jennifer Cuthbertson
Jane Fahey
Wendy Dewberry

For more information, contact
bauml@ctsnet.edu

Abundance & Grace:

A Timeline for Flourishing In Faith and Hope

Spring 2023

- Approval of Strategic Blueprint
- IDI Pilot Program
- Launch of Quality Enhancement Plan
- Development of new degree program administration model
- Approval of guidelines for Study & Research Centers and MOU template
- Lunch Pilot Program in Refectory
- Selection of Campus Master Planning Architect



Fall 2023

- Implementation of new Student Information System
- IDI program expansion, JEDI mapping
- Launch of new Remote Work Policy and Professional Development program for employees
- Addition of new Connectors to Vocational Outreach team
- Selection of Shepherding Committee for Campus Master Plan



Spring 2024

- Implement new recruitment and enrollment goals
- Approval of MOUs with regional and global partners
- Rollout of JEDI initiatives on campus
- Expansion of financial literacy workshops for students and staff
- Revision of Board Policies Manual
- Development of conceptual designs for Campus Master Plan



Fall 2024

- Launch of MA in Marriage and Family Therapy and Graduate Certificate in Intercultural Chaplaincy
- Finalization of 10 new MOUs with colleges, universities, and denominational offices.
- Completion of Campaign Feasibility / Planning Study and Campaign Communications Plan
- Re-launch of Ombuds Program



Abundance & Grace: A Timeline for Flourishing In Faith and Hope

Spring 2025

- Approval of custom Composite Financial Index targets
- Expansion of SIS implementation
- Adaptive Leadership events with students
- Expansion of financial literacy workshops for students and staff
- Approval of exchange MOUs in Asia and Latin America



Fall 2025

- Full implementation of new MDiv curriculum
- Comprehensive review of job titles and compensation packages
- Full endowment of Catto Scholarships
- Implementation of new Communications Toolkit
- Approval of new immigrant, intercultural, and multi-ethnic ministry sites



Spring 2026

- Approval of exchange MOUs in Africa. Implementation of student health insurance subsidies
- Campus Master Plan enters construction planning phase.
- Launch of reimagined alumni council
- Enhancement of Partners in Ministry events



Fall 2026

- Endowment of new full scholarships
- Identified opportunities to reduce soft costs where doing so is consistent with Core Values.
- Assessment of organizational effectiveness
- Begin development of new Bicentennial Strategic Blueprinting process for AY 2027-2028



These projected milestones are a targeted selection of tactics, tasks, and metrics. To learn more, see the complete strategic blueprint on our website.