



DRAFT Academic Strategic Plan: 2022 – 2025

Preamble

A hallmark of Ignatian spirituality and pedagogy is the iterative cycle of critical self-examination, reflection, and action – all predicated on an informed understanding of our historical and contemporary contexts, and the specific institutional and environmental experiences that influence them. Engaging in regular academic strategic planning throughout the University is, for Jesuit universities, a fundamental expression of that cycle.

Inspired by the [Jesuit Apostolic Preferences](#) for 2019-2029 (developed by the Society of Jesus' General Congregation 36 and approved by Pope Francis), Saint Louis University's Division of Academic Affairs has developed a three-year Academic Strategic Plan (ASP).

Institutional Priorities

This plan identifies four strategic priorities that will particularly guide our work over the next three years. These priorities do not constitute an exhaustive list of things we care about as an institution. Rather, they are a subset of institutional priorities that – *at this particular point in SLU's history, in this particular higher educational landscape, and for the next three years* – warrant and will receive our strategic attention and planning.

Of course, these priorities should not detract from important commitments that transcend any strategic plan. We will continue to advance our new University Core Curriculum, which seeks to nourish undergraduate students' minds, hearts, souls and well-being, and guide them in discerning how to use their talents for the good of others and to find God in all things. We will continue to strengthen our engagement with area high schools to ensure our student body increasingly reflects our St. Louis region and that we are increasing access to a SLU education. We will continue to deepen our relationships with our alumni, creating community and lifelong learning for and with our larger Billiken family. And we will continue to embrace our responsibility to be good neighbors and partners in midtown St. Louis, in ways that align with our Catholic, Jesuit values.

Structure and Components

Identified under each of this plan's four Strategic Priorities are several **Strategic Goals** that articulate *what we aim for SLU to be, or to have achieved, by the end of the 3-year ASP timeline*. Goals are intentionally written to a) operationalize the commitments set forth by the four Strategic Priorities; and b) be observable/measurable (qualitatively and/or quantitatively) in order to foster accountability from institutional leaders. It is important to note that the Goals and Priorities are not separate items from one another; in many instances, they intersect with and support other Goals and Priorities within the plan.

The Goals selected for inclusion in this plan represent only a small fraction of the hundreds of ideas offered by SLU faculty, staff, and students who participated in this plan's development. As we finalized Strategic Goals, we had to consider which of the ideas and initiatives suggested by institutional stakeholders were:

- Academic
- Strategic
- Actionable
- Achievable (over three years)

Ultimately, the Goals we set are ones whose achievement will depend upon completion of a range of activities, most of which were recommended by the community during the initial information-gathering phase. For each Strategic Goal, then, we will develop a set of associated **Strategic Actions**. In some cases, the necessary Strategic Actions (or at least starting points) will be obvious. In others, a range of possible actions may work to advance achievement of the Goals, and we will invite faculty, staff, and student ideas and projects to advance achievement of the Goals. We anticipate learning through implementation that some actions will not work as originally designed, or should be replaced by other, alternate actions. We are open to experimentation and pilot-testing of actions, and will support, as we are able, faculty and staff initiatives to change what is demonstrably not working.

Institutional Commitments

The priorities and goals set forth in this plan are ambitious – and the work to achieve them will happen alongside other important work of the University that cannot falter. Yet, we recognize and respect the limits on faculty and staff time, and our limited institutional resources, that in turn limit the scope of this plan.

We pledge that available institutional resources – human and financial – will indeed be invested in the advancement of the Priorities and Goals articulated in this plan. More specifically, the Provost, as well as all Deans and Vice Presidents reporting to the Provost, share in their commitment to ensure that major decision-making throughout the ASP's implementation period (2022-23 through 2024-25) is conducted in alignment with, and to intentionally advance, this ASP. Their shared commitment will drive resource allocation, hiring, operational planning, and other key activities and decisions within Academic Affairs.

2022-2025: *Living our Institutional Vocations*

Strategic Priority 1: Teaching and Learning

We will prioritize inclusive, evidence-based, and learning-centered instruction in the Ignatian tradition.

To advance this priority, we must achieve these **Strategic Goals**:

- 1.1 Recognize and reward inclusive, evidence-based, and learning-centered instruction and curriculum design.
- 1.2 Establish shared responsibility across the entire SLU community for holistic student success.
- 1.3 Expand/enhance experiential learning for both graduate and undergraduate students.
- 1.4 Develop strategic technology priorities for enhancing teaching and learning.

Strategic Priority 2: Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work

We will prioritize research, scholarship, and creative work that enhances our areas of scholarly strength and advances equity, justice, and environmental sustainability.

To advance this priority, we must achieve these **Strategic Goals**:

- 2.1 Expand research, scholarship, and creative work that advances the University-articulated Areas of Scholarly Impact.
- 2.2 Expand opportunities for undergraduates to engage in faculty-led scholarship and research experiences.
- 2.3 Identify and eliminate institutional obstacles to continued research growth.
- 2.4 Develop strategic technology priorities for scholarly and research growth in our areas of scholarly strength.

Strategic Priority 3: Advancing Well-Being and Equity

We will prioritize creating a culture of holistic well-being and equity for students, faculty, and staff.

To advance this priority, we must achieve these **Strategic Goals**:

- 3.1 Begin implementing the [Student Well-being Task Force recommendations](#).

3.2 Prioritize equitable academic success of all students as we continue to increase the diversity of the student body.

3.3 Create a shared understanding of and responsibility for diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging among all faculty and staff.

3.4 Advance equity in the evaluation and reward of faculty work in all its forms as we continue to increase the diversity of our faculty.

3.5 Increase the diversity of our staff in ways that reflect our increasingly diverse student body and contribute to more inclusive, equitable decision-making.

3.6 Increase resources and support for graduate and professional students.

Strategic Priority 4: Expanding Access and Reach

We will prioritize our obligation to lead the expansion of access to Jesuit higher education, including our preference for serving vulnerable and marginalized communities.

To advance this priority, we must achieve these **Strategic Goals**:

4.1 Invest in and leverage the strengths of the Madrid campus to advance American Jesuit higher education internationally.

4.2 Establish a permanent secondary campus in the southwestern US to meet the growing need for Jesuit, Catholic higher education focused on the health sciences.

4.3 Partner with Jesuit Worldwide Learning (JWL) provide Jesuit higher education to those living at the margins internationally.

4.4 Expand distance education offerings in programs of strength, where pedagogically appropriate and aligned with our Catholic, Jesuit identity.

4.5 Incentivize and reward development of innovative, revenue-generating programs that expand SLU's educational impact locally, nationally, and/or internationally.