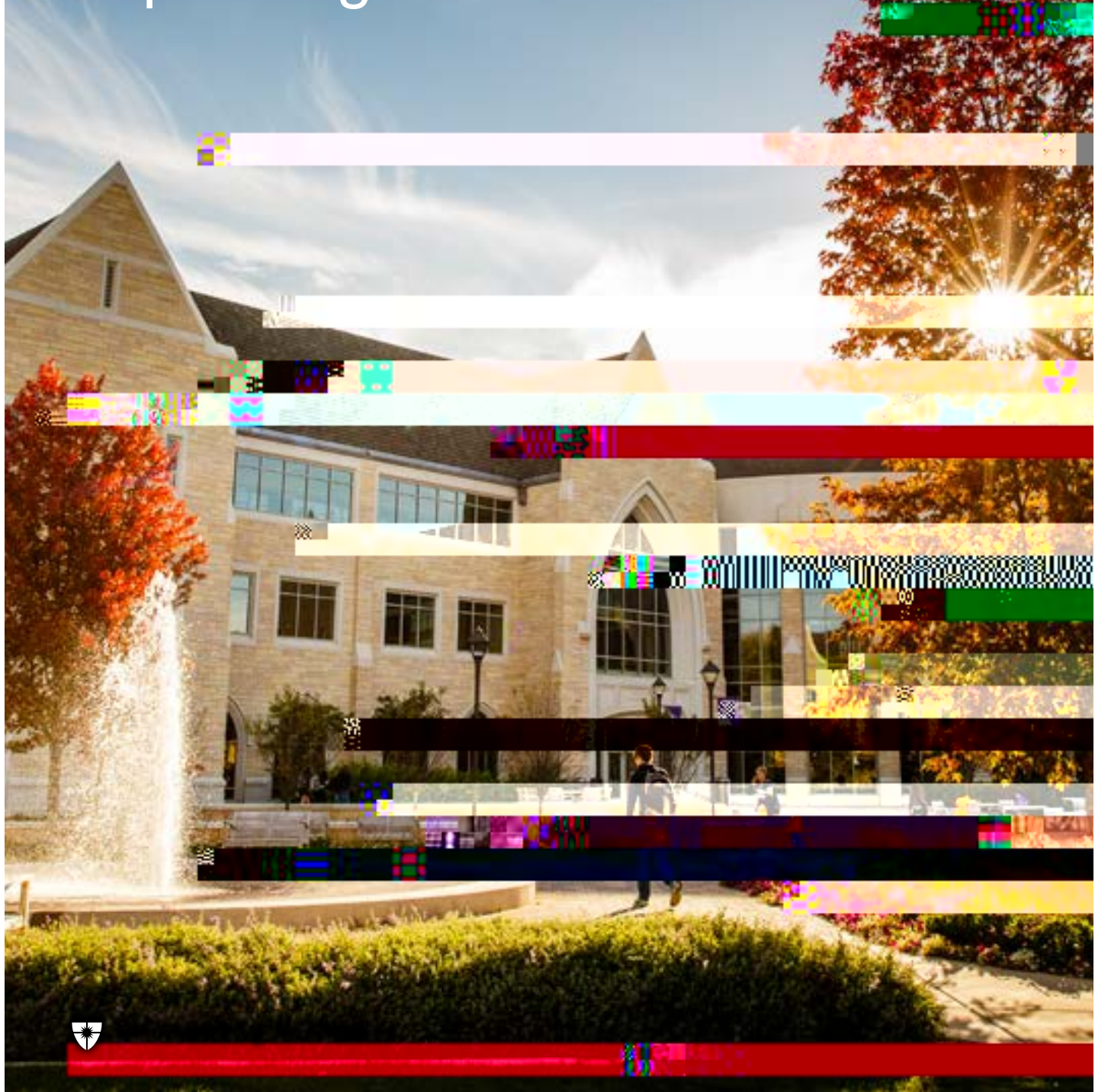


# St. Thomas 2020: Living Our Mission, Expanding Our Horizon





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The strategic plan will enhance our strengths, increase our visibility and position us to better prepare students for the complexities of the contemporary world.

— Dr. Julie Sullivan, President

The plan is a bold and entrepreneurial approach to strengthening our programs by building upon what we value as the essential components of a St. Thomas education.

— Dr. John Morrison, Chair,  
Board of Trustees

# Our Vision, Our Mission, Our Convictions

We create a culture among faculty, students and staff that recognizes the power of ideas and rewards rigorous thinking.

— St. Thomas conviction on academic excellence

## Grounded in Our Mission

The University of St. Thomas is a Catholic, comprehensive, urban university that has served its church and community by educating students for professional competency and academic excellence. As higher education changes to meet the needs of the contemporary world, St. Thomas also needs to constantly adjust to fulfill our mission in evolving contexts. We do this by staying grounded in our foundational identity but flexible in our appropriation of best practices for academic excellence.

Our strategic plan is grounded in our identity as a Catholic university. We affirm our mission statement:

“Inspired by Catholic intellectual tradition, the University of St. Thomas educates students to be morally responsible leaders who think critically, act wisely, and work skillfully to advance the common good.”



ART HURSTON JOHN HILLIARD  
1836-1918  
BIOGRAPHER, EDUCATOR, STATESMAN

ART HURSTON JOHN HILLIARD was born in 1836 in the town of Hilliard, Ohio. He was a prominent educator and statesman. He served as the 11th Governor of Ohio from 1881 to 1885. He was also a member of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. He was a strong advocate for public education and the arts. He died in 1918 in Hilliard, Ohio.

We also affirm our seven convictions:

- Pursuit of truth: We value intellectual inquiry as a lifelong habit, the unfettered and impartial pursuit of truth in all its forms, the integration of knowledge across disciplines, and the imaginative and creative exploration of new ideas.
- Academic excellence: We create a culture among faculty, students and staff that recognizes



The plan will keep us grounded in our foundational identity and give us the flexibility to develop new practices for academic excellence.

— Dr. Richard Plumb, Provost and

# Strategic Themes

The themes are challenges identified by stakeholders and our research as areas for revision or improvement.

The university has identified five areas where change is key to achieving this vision. While some strategic plans call for these goals, we have chosen to name them “themes” instead, because they do not serve as isolated goals in and of themselves. They are more properly the specific challenges that various stakeholders and our own research repeatedly identified as areas calling for revision or improvement.

We chose the term “theme” because most of our strategic priorities address more than one of these areas. We view the plan as a complex whole, with interlocking elements. These elements then function more as themes in a larger symphony, where each one may take the lead at various points in the strategic plan, but where each is necessary for the overall success of the plan.

One major principle that came up repeatedly across all units of the campus is the desire to function more deliberately as a unified university. Our self-study noted that one challenge we face is the growing complexity of our university structure. While the complexity is good, we do not want to lose our sense of being an interconnected university whole. This desire for a more unified university also underlies our strategic choice of priorities that will have impact across the university and out into the broader world.

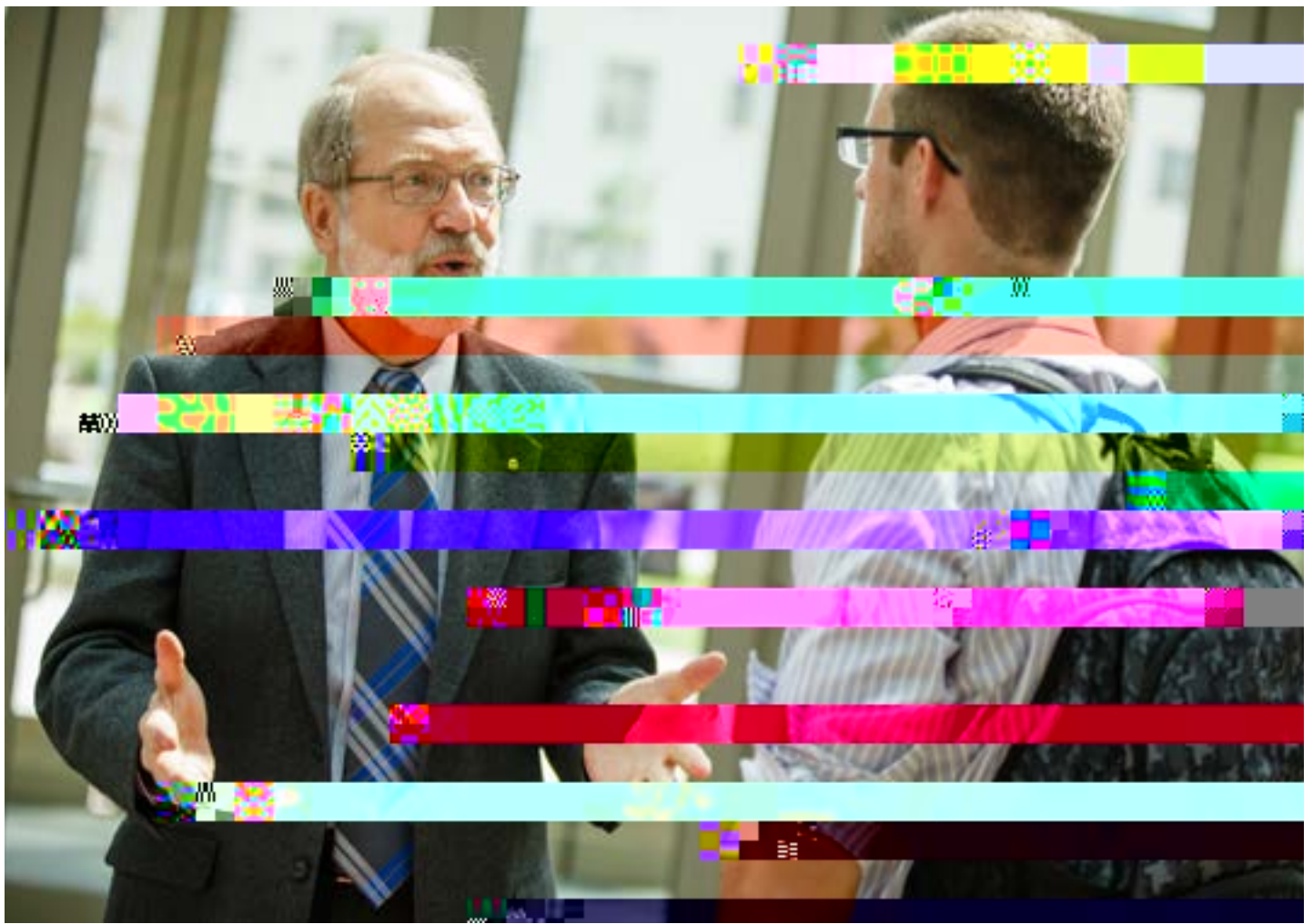
Rather than tie strategic priorities to single themes, we have chosen to list all of the themes first, and then show how each priority addresses one or more of these themes. In this way, our plan models the vision of the university as an integrated community, realizing a common mission in distinct ways.





the strategic themes are:

- Excellence in Learning and Student Engagement
- Education informed by Catholic Mission
- Diversity and Inclusive Culture
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We will support skills necessary for developing entrepreneurial and creative problem solvers.

— Excellence in Learning and Student Engagement

engagement of its community in the work toward a more just and civil society; the commitment to sustainable stewardship of environmental resources; and the concern for the development of the whole person, including support for the spiritual formation of its community members.

### Diversity and Inclusive Culture

**Theme:** The University of St. Thomas will be known for its strong commitment to developing and sustaining an inclusive culture, founded on principles of mutual trust, respect and empathy. This culture will attract, support and retain a diverse community of students, faculty and staff, and will infuse the curriculum, enhancing academic excellence and relevance.

**Rationale:** With a commitment to the full dignity of all human persons, we support an inclusive culture characterized by the connectedness of all human endeavors, principles of mutual trust and mutual respect, and cultivation of a spirit of empathy. An inclusive culture integrates various aspects of identity to enhance academic excellence in light of the complexities of the contemporary world.

### Globalization

**Theme:** The University of St. Thomas will actively promote global engagement in teaching, learning, research and service in an ethical and socially responsible manner. We will accomplish this goal by developing global and intercultural awareness across the university; integrating global knowledge, skills and perspectives into the curriculum; enhancing study-abroad and on-campus learning opportunities; attracting international and ethnically diverse domestic students; and supporting a globally engaged faculty and staff.

**Rationale:** We live in an increasingly globalized world, marked by social, cultural, political, technological and economic interdependence and integration across local, national and international boundaries. Understanding and integrating global knowledge, perspectives and intercultural competencies into teaching, learning, research and service is essential to living, working and serving in an increasingly interconnected world.

### One University

**Theme:** The University of St. Thomas affirms that we are a unified community of diverse students, faculty, staff and alumni working together to fulfill the mission of the university. As one university, we recognize the entire St. Thomas community serves as the foundation for achieving our vision for a better world. We will create formal and informal structures that support a system of collaboration and integrated decision-making for all units on campus as well as a campus culture where meaningful relationships develop among people otherwise separated by role, profession, discipline, geographical location or organizational structure.

**Rationale:** The University of St. Thomas has become an increasingly complex organization as it has evolved over time, with greater academic and nonacademic programs and services. With the challenge of this complex environment, we actively seek both formal and informal opportunities for us to function as one university. Respecting the needs of individual units within the university to pursue their unique missions while committed to the principles of shared decision-making, the university as a whole provides avenues to all of its diverse members to contribute to the overall mission of the University of St. Thomas.



We will actively promote global engagement in teaching, learning, research and service in an ethical and socially responsible manner.

— Globalization

While the vision and the themes have delineated the areas that we want to prioritize as we adapt for the contemporary world, the strategic priorities identify specific programs and objectives we will pursue to approach our vision.

Each strategic priority is complex, requiring multiple initiatives to achieve, often involving units across the campuses to collaborate, and sometimes necessitating organizational and financial changes. Eight task forces will develop initiatives that address and achieve the eight priorities.

These priorities are:

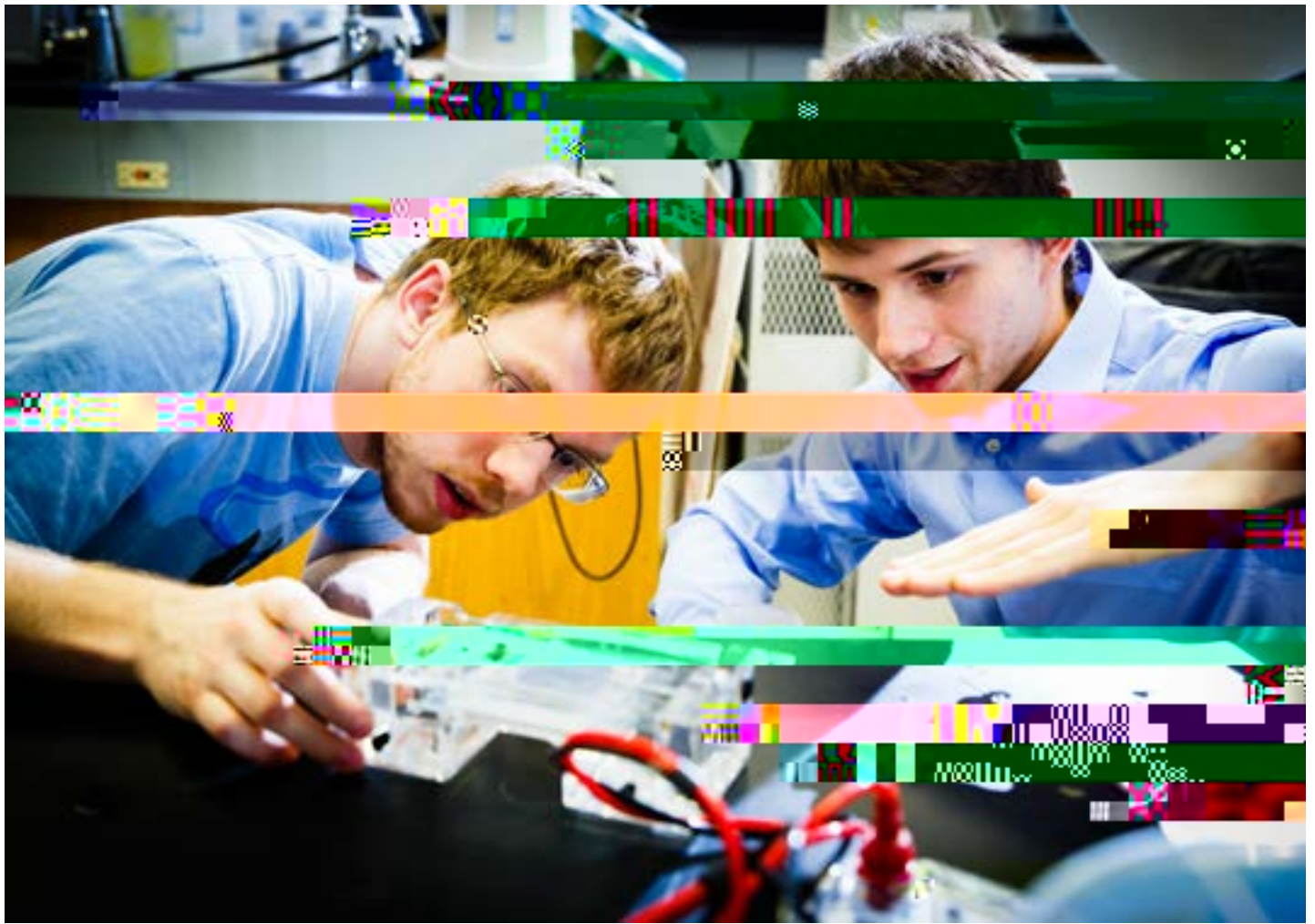
- Educating for the Future
- Flexible Pathways into UST, Within UST and to Job Market
- Enhanced Visibility and Profile
- Global Connections
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We need to constantly ask if we are providing students with the skills necessary for a lifetime. — Educating for the Future

opportunities within our various graduate programs, as well as within our undergraduate program. This might include undergraduate programs such as “Take UST Home for the Summer” where key courses in both the core curriculum and in the majors are offered in hybrid, blended or online formats, as well as hybrid and fully online programs within our graduate curricula.

- Providing a full complement of courses year-round (both general requirements and courses for the majors) so that students can complete an undergraduate degree in three years, with a comparable compression at the graduate level where appropriate. This will require flexibility in thinking about faculty contracts, current academic term configurations and current course sequencing.
- Expanding internship programming across the university and effectively engaging alumni and businesses, especially within the Twin Cities.

This strategic priority addresses the following themes: Excellence in Learning, Diversity and Inclusive Culture, and Globalization.

#### Enhanced Visibility and Profile

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- Develop a marketing strategy and a financial aid strategy with the objective of expanding graduate enrollment

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- Develop initiatives to increase enrollment of international students in all of our degree programs
- Actively engage international alumni as partners in our various global initiatives

is strategic priority addresses the following themes: Excellence in Learning, Catholic Mission, Diversity and Inclusive Culture, Globalization and One University.

### Embracing our Differences as One Human Family

As a Catholic institution, the University of St. Thomas recognizes the basic human dignity of all persons and will work to create an environment of radical hospitality premised on the development and flourishing of every community member. We seek to increase the diversity of our student populations. We also strive to support better the diversities within our community, broadly defined. This includes not just racial/ethnic diversity, but also creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status or economic social status.

The university recognizes that diversity needs to be reflected not just in our curriculum, but also in our student, faculty, administrative and staff populations, in our culture and in our organizational structures. Some of these elements include:

- Create a more robust Office of Institutional Diversity appropriately staffed and resourced for a university of our size, prominently situated within the university's overall structure
- Actively seek to attract, retain and develop faculty, staff, administrators and students from all backgrounds, and employ best practices for enhancing the diversity of our learning community, with a particular eye toward outreach to historically under-represented and underserved populations. Included in the plan will be guidelines for assessing progress and benchmarking results relative to peer institutions.
- Actively develop our students' capacity for engaging in and growing from a broad range of world views, values and life experiences, thereby realizing our mission to prepare them for the increasingly diverse world they will encounter after graduation. The learning environment in both the graduate and undergraduate programs will value, attract, support and be formed by a diversity of perspectives. For the undergraduate program, this may include a two-course diversity requirement, practicum components focused on diversity issues, and/or a global engagement requirement.
- Enhance and coordinate our interdisciplinary programs that support diverse perspectives such as Women's Studies, American Culture and Difference, International Studies, Justice and Peace Studies, Catholic Studies, and the human diversity requirement; identify and expand resources for interdisciplinary teaching and research, such as the 400-level theology courses; and support the development of area studies, such as Latin American Studies



We seek to increase the diversity of our student populations and create an environment of radical hospitality premised on the development and flourishing of every community member.

— Embracing our Differences  
as One Human Family

- Provide avenues and incentives for faculty to collaborate in the creation of interdisciplinary programs at the graduate level

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human life, social justice and peacebuilding. It will promote basic service to neighbors in need locally and globally consistent with its educational mission.

- St. Thomas will cultivate an ethic of the care for God's creation through curricular and co-curricular activities aimed at environmental stewardship and sustainability.
- We will advance Catholic intellectual tradition through support for faculty research and professional engagement that engages the intersection of the church in the world as well as the complementarity of faith and reason.
- We will live out our Catholic mission by addressing unjust inequities in our world through our teaching and our engagement with the local and global communities.
- The university will recognize its responsibility to sustain interreligious and ecumenical dialogue by supporting and enhancing existing programs while constantly seeking new opportunities to engage people of all faiths on our campuses and in the broader community.

This strategic priority addresses the following themes: Excellence in Learning, Catholic Mission, Diversity and Inclusive Culture, Globalization and One University.

#### Integrated and Expanded Health and Wellness Programs

As the job market continues to expand in the health and wellness fields, but St. Thomas has yet to develop comprehensive programs to meet these needs. While we have isolated programs that address different areas of health and wellness, we lack undergraduate majors and graduate programs in areas of growing need and an integrated engagement with global health initiatives. We seek to assess, coordinate and expand into these areas as an opportunity, but to do so in a way that embodies our commitment to Catholic social teaching, with its concern for the marginalized and underserved, and that defines health and wellness in terms of the dignity of the whole person. We seek to provide an interdisciplinary approach that would address systemic problems in health care systems both locally and globally.

To do this, we first must take an inventory of existing programs and resources in order to explore the best opportunities for coordination and expansion of these programs. Such a review may lead to:

- Undergraduate and graduate programs in global health that are interdisciplinary in approach.
- Interdisciplinary undergraduate and graduate programs that address growing disparities and needs within health care systems, with special focus on access, integration, and efficiency for the overall well-being of the whole person and whole community.
- The possible creation of a College of Health and Wellness that actualizes our mission and convictions. This would mean a College of Health and Wellness that is built on the five themes of



the strategic plan, embodying the principles of social justice, global engagement, engagement with local underserved communities and is interdisciplinary in its approach.

is strategic priority addresses the following themes: Excellence in Learning, Catholic Mission and Globalization.

### Integrated Planning

Quality planning is an integral feature of any successful organization. The University of St. Thomas will implement a holistic planning model and understand the extent to which this plan is successful both from a short- and long-term perspective. As good stewards of our resources, and with special attention to the financial challenges facing higher education today, we must think deliberately about our allocation of all resources, including but not limited to land and technology.

To accomplish this task, the university will integrate academic, resource and facilities planning in accordance with the mission, vision and convictions of the university. Further, integrated planning will become an ongoing and iterative process at the institution.

All planning efforts will be assessed through the evaluation of unit objectives using key performance and accountability measures for all initiatives. Integrated planning requires at least the following elements:

- Develop and maintain a culture of integrated planning and budgeting used to inform the strategic and operational decision-making processes at the university.
- Create a master plan to develop a vision and strategy for the best use of the university's lands, including plans for new buildings and other facilities necessary to achieve our educational goals.
- Implement and maintain a comprehensive technology plan that addresses needs across various units of the university.

is strategic priority addresses the following themes: Excellence in Learning, Diversity and Inclusive Culture, Globalization and One University.

Our seventh conviction of gratitude states, “We celebrate the achievements of all members of our community in goals attained and obstacles overcome.” is especially true with respect to the development of this strategic plan.



### **Strategic Plan Steering Committee (2014)**

Tony Andrade-Vera, graduate student

Dr. Bernard Brady, Geology

Dr. Corrine Carvalho, Geology (co-chair)

Dr. Michael Cogan, Institutional Effectiveness (co-chair)

Dr. Monica Hartmann, Economics

Dr. Marty Johnston, Physics

Lisa Keiser, Non-Exempt Staff Council

Dr. Daryl Koehn, Ethics and Business Law

Mariann Kukielka, undergraduate student

Dr. Terence Langan, Arts and Sciences

Dr. Paul Lorah, Geography

**Subcommittees continued**

Nora Fitzpatrick, Law

Cynthia Fraction, Excel! Research Scholars Program

Dr. Kendra Garrett, Social Work

Bryan Gates, Admissions

Dr. Camille George, Engineering

Dr. Matthew George, Music

Jordan Graf, undergraduate student

Josh Hengemuhle, Dean of Students Office

Christina Hilpipre-Frischman, International Admissions

Sharon Howell, Dean of Students Office

Eric Hsu, undergraduate student

Dr. Ann Johnson, Faculty Development

Karen Julian, Enrollment Services

Dr. Adam Kay, Biology Department

Vern Klobassa, Student Engagement

Dr. Jennifer McGuire, Biology

Dr. Sue Myers, Geology

Dr. Mark Neuzil, Communications and Journalism

Dr. Lucy Payne, Academic Assessment and Accreditation

Lisa Schiltz, Law

Kimberly Schumann, Disability Services

Megan Smith, Campus Ministry

Dr. David Steele, Grants and Research Office

Rob Vischer, Law

Dr. David Williard, History

Carey Winkler, Social Work

Bill Woodson, Business

Amanda Wright, graduate student



[www.stthomas.edu/strategic-planning](http://www.stthomas.edu/strategic-planning)



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