

2020-23 Enrollment Strategies and Initiatives



Concordia
Seminary
ST. LOUIS

***Our ongoing commitment to the congregations and people of
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod***

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis provides Gospel-centered graduate-level theological education for pastors, missionaries, deaconesses, scholars and other leaders in the name of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). The Seminary also provides theological assistance to LCMS partner churches and missions around the globe, produces resources and sponsors continuing education events for church workers and laity.



The 156-foot Luther Tower, designed by Charles Klauder, rises above the campus and features a 49-bell carillon, which chimes before chapel services and on special occasions.

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of time, the Lord of the harvest has provided workers for the field. “Then (Jesus) said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest’” (Matt. 9:37-38 ESV). Raising up workers has always been and will remain the Lord’s work for the salvation of His people. Since we know our God to be one who works through means, it is not surprising that the Lord has invited His co-workers in the fields (1 Cor. 3:5-9) to help raise up more workers. As Paul once instructed Titus, “This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you” (Titus 1:5 ESV). In confident trust in our risen Lord Jesus and His directives in the Scriptures, Concordia Seminary thus continues in its strategic plan to accomplish its mission.

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis’ 2018-20 strategic plan was created with input from and a focus on the needs and desires of our Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregations, their members and the church at large. The plan features four strategic priorities, which will guide our daily work during the plan years, but more importantly, also set a path forward for Seminary operations long-term.

Of the four priorities, recruiting is No. 1. While many of the individual initiatives under this priority in the 2018-20 plan have already been undertaken and are now producing fruit, the strategy of growing enrollment remains important, relevant and needed for Concordia Seminary to accomplish its mission. The church needs more church workers and we are committed to finding and forming them!

Contained within this document is our 2020-23 plan for addressing the recruitment and enrollment priority before us. These initiatives draw from and substantially build on those outlined in the full plan.

As in all things, we go forward trusting fully in Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, who leads us forth victoriously in this important work.

To read or download a copy of our full strategic plan, please visit csl.edu/strategicplan.



Seminarian PJ Aarsvold listens during a service in the Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus.

STRATEGY NO. 1:

Recruitment and Enrollment

Recruit qualified ministry candidates and leaders in sufficient quantity to meet the demands of the church in today's world.

INITIATIVE 1

Create an internal culture of enrollment management at all institutional levels of the Seminary so there is measurable improvement in Concordia Seminary's enrollment.

MEASUREMENT

❶ Finish admissions work for the fall 2020 entering class with at least a 20% increase in the M.Div. Program over fall 2019 enrollment.

❷ By fall 2020, the Associate Provost will create and implement a process for continuous improvement of recruitment and admissions across all sectors of campus administration.

❸ By summer 2020, the Associate Provost will begin an annual survey of the incoming class about the admissions experience. A similar survey will be developed to learn from those congregations and districts that send us the most students.

❹ By fall 2020, involve faculty in the recruitment and admissions process in the following ways:

- Commission two faculty communication pieces each year for the next three years (sermons, Bible studies, Divine Service resources, e-book, master class online, etc.).

- Create stipend positions for faculty on the Admissions Committee with responsibilities and measurable ways to be held accountable (phone calls, make presentations to and fellowship with visiting prospective students).

❺ By fall 2021, define optimal enrollment for each program and for the Seminary overall.

❻ Starting with fall 2021, set incoming enrollment goals for each program to grow at least 10% annually until optimal enrollment is reached.

❼ By fall 2021, the Associate Provost will create and implement a process for continuous improvement of student success and retention across all sectors of campus administration.

❽ By fall 2021, create an advisory group of nonwhite students who can discuss the nonwhite student experience and help to devise strategies for increasing retention among Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT), Center for Hispanic Studies (CHS) and non-Anglo residential students (tutoring, lease-to-own pre-programmed laptops, improving mentoring, etc.).

❾ By 2021, create an integrated communications plan that incorporates strategies for digital recruitment (search engine optimization, creation of digital theological content, lead magnets, social media sharing, etc.).



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Professor of Practical Theology Dr. David Schmitt addresses attendees of the 2019 Theological Symposium.

⑩ By 2022, create a comprehensive enrollment management strategy that especially monitors student retention across several segmented populations.

⑪ By 2022, conduct a full analysis of financial aid strategies across all programs to optimize effectiveness.

INITIATIVE 2

Increase multiethnic enrollment across Concordia Seminary's programs.

MEASUREMENT

① By fall 2020, create an awareness campaign to encourage diverse enrollment in the M.Div. Program, especially among urban minorities and second-generation immigrants.

② By fall 2020, develop a plan for the Associate Provost and Director of Recruitment to visit mission and ministry conferences held by various ethnic groups across the Synod.

③ By fall 2020, the Director of Recruitment will work with program directors to create a plan to meet enrollment targets for the Center for Hispanic Studies and the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology.

④ By October 2020, the Associate Provost will give a report to the Board of Regents concerning financial aid in support of this initiative (including scholarships for urban minorities and immigrants).



INITIATIVE 3

Hire and lead a recruitment and admissions staff to achieve stated enrollment growth.

MEASUREMENT

① By May 2020, institute continuous learning among Enrollment staff by group reading and discussion at team meetings.

② By May 2020, begin hiring Student Recruitment Ambassadors and have all in place by fall 2020.

③ By fall 2020, begin using a customer relationship management (CRM) software in order to manage and communicate with prospective students.

④ By January 2021, implement a regular communication strategy targeted to prospective students (e-blasts, text messages, newsletters, etc.).

⑤ By February 2021, in preparation for the annual budget cycle decision-making, each member of the Enrollment staff will submit a continuing education plan for the following academic year.

⑥ By May 2021, gather Student Recruitment Ambassadors annually at the Multiethnic Symposium for continuing education and ongoing training.

INITIATIVE 4

Expand the pool of Ministerial Formation candidates. This requires Synod-wide collaboration including engagement of other LCMS institutions.

MEASUREMENT

① By May 2020, the Associate Provost will present a plan to Concordia Seminary's Alumni Council members that enlists their assistance and support of recruitment strategies.

② By fall 2020, the Associate Provost and Director of Recruitment will visit and establish working relationships with leaders of the many pools of prospective students (LCMS International Center staff, Concordia University System schools, Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs), immigrant and ethnic ministry organizations, LCMS Youth Gathering, Higher Things, LCMSU, Lutheran high schools, National Lutheran Outdoors Ministry Association (NLOMA) camps, National Education Association (NEA), etc.).

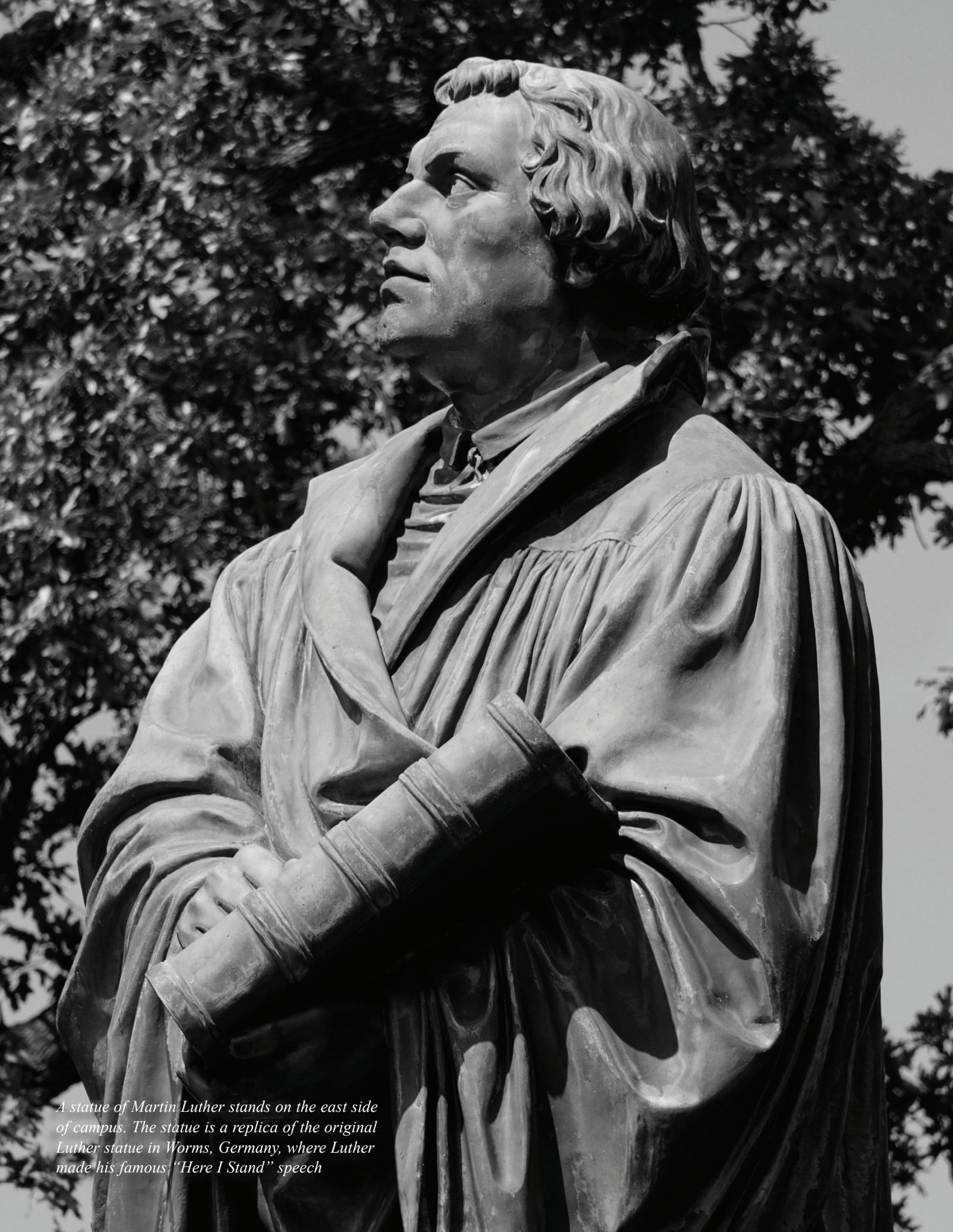


③ By fall 2020, the Director of Recruitment will create a “how to” resource for parish pastors, commissioned ministers and lay leaders to help encourage people to consider the vocation of pastor or deaconess for distribution at the 2021 LCMS district conventions.

④ By fall 2020, the Director of Recruitment will obtain lists of high school and college students from LCMS partner organizations in order to market programs to prospective students.

⑤ By fall 2021, the Director of Recruitment will conduct a full analysis of recruitment visitation events and, in collaboration with the LCMS Youth Ministry and Campus Ministry offices and local congregations, propose a new strategy to dramatically increase participation of youth and young adults.

⑥ By fall 2021, in collaboration with the Synod's church worker recruitment initiative and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., implement a plan to increase diverse enrollment and student success across all Seminary programs.



A statue of Martin Luther stands on the east side of campus. The statue is a replica of the original Luther statue in Worms, Germany, where Luther made his famous "Here I Stand" speech



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