

Bethel University Strategic Plan

Adopted: October 7, 2010

Introduction

Since its beginnings in 1871, Bethel University has known the faithfulness of God. Moving in the same spirit of trust and dependence on His goodness, Bethel's leadership seeks to establish a strong culture of planning at the university with the intent of advancing Bethel's mission in a rapidly changing environment. This strategic plan, which will guide the university for the next three to five years, is integral to that effort. The plan helps to clarify priorities for investment. It will also be used to guide and direct operational planning throughout the university.

While developing this document through conversations across the university, several strategic elements emerged, ultimately coalescing around four themes. First, the university must strengthen its distinctiveness, clearly defining and articulating those things that distinguish it from other seminaries and universities, and then improve and communicate those distinctives, more clearly setting Bethel apart from other institutions. Second, a Bethel education must be extended to more people in more locations, making a Bethel education accessible to a wider variety of learners, whether online, through geographic expansion, or through enhanced and targeted recruiting efforts. Third, the university must intentionally pursue global engagement and diversity as reflection of our Christian commitment and to prepare students and others for the changing world in which we live and serve. Fourth, in order to better meet any of its goals and to demonstrate biblical stewardship, the university will strengthen its human, facility, and financial resources. Together, these four goals will move the university toward achieving its vision.

Mission

Boldly informed and motivated by the Christian faith, Bethel educates and energizes men and women for excellence in leadership, scholarship, and service. We prepare graduates to serve in strategic capacities to renew minds, live out biblical truth, transform culture, and advance the gospel.

Vision

Bethel University will be an educationally-excellent, globally-engaged university that equips its graduates to make exceptional contributions in their life-long service to God and the world.

Specifically, Bethel will:

- Cultivate the Christian intellectual life through innovation and discussion of ideas
- Be culturally diverse and inter-culturally healthy
- Remain purposefully rooted in its irenic, pietistic, evangelical heritage
- Challenge students to exceed the expectations for who they can become

Core Values

We are **Christ-followers** – orthodox, conversionist, and evangelical; rooted in the authority of Scripture.

We are **character-builders** – concerned with personal and spiritual formation and therefore committed to the development of whole and holy persons.

We are **truth-seekers** – recognizing that all truth has its source in God as revealed in creation and Scripture, and personified in Christ.

We are **learners** – committed to academic excellence within a community characterized by teaching, scholarship, and service.

We are **reconcilers** – honoring the worth and dignity of people from all races and purposely seeking to create a community that reflects the diversity of the Body of Christ.

We are **salt and light** – relating to the world and society in culturally relevant ways while being informed by our pietistic denominational heritage and characterized by an irenic spirit.

We are **world-changers** – driven to prepare graduates who will shape and change the world through exemplary leadership in the church and throughout society.

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Goal – Strengthen Distinctiveness

As a leader in Christ-centered, transformational education, Bethel University will articulate and manifest its mission in distinctive and innovative ways.

Objectives

1. Clearly define the distinctiveness of a Bethel University education by articulating the student experience
2. Promote personal and spiritual formation throughout the university
3. Highlight the distinctive contribution of the Christian liberal arts to nurturing the life of the mind
4. Attract and develop faculty and co-curricular professionals who are recognized in their fields
5. Focus on preparing students for success beyond graduation
6. Develop a culture of innovation in order to create and implement new program ideas
7. Regularly assess and prioritize programs and activities, balancing mission and effectiveness for the purpose of resource reallocation
8. Develop a two-year master's degree platform at Bethel Seminary for ministry practitioners
9. Significantly raise the profile of business and economics programs
10. Expand Bethel's presence in strategic areas such as health sciences through a Physician Assistant program and a Doctor of Nursing Practice program

Goal - Extend reach and reputation

Bethel University will increase the availability and reputation of its educational programs, optimizing enrollment and developing necessary relationships and partnerships.

Objectives

1. Achieve defined enrollment targets in all schools by 2015
2. Implement the best developmental models and delivery methods for our educational programs, including online/hybrid models, with particular emphasis on seminary and adult education
3. Increase university impact at sites beyond the main St. Paul campus through innovative and sustainable educational offerings

4. Enrich connections with key constituencies – alumni, parents, churches, donors, and partner organizations – to help fulfill Bethel’s mission

Goal – Commit to Global Engagement and Diversity

Bethel University will emphasize global engagement and increase community diversity in order to prepare students and others for the changing world in which we live and serve.

[Note: For the purposes of this plan, diversity refers to the dimensions of race, gender, ethnicity, age, disability, socio-economic status, and geography.]

Objectives

1. Attract and graduate more students from diverse racial backgrounds
2. Attract and retain faculty, administrators, and staff from diverse racial backgrounds
3. Increase student participation rates in cross-cultural or global engagement experiences
4. Increase the competence of faculty, staff, and students in racially and culturally diverse settings through biblically rooted, developmentally appropriate instruction
5. Establish a university-wide program that focuses on issues of world responsibility and biblical justice

Goal - Strengthen human, financial, and facility resources

Bethel University will strengthen our current and future resources and establish a culture of planning.

Objectives

1. Improve and maintain the elements of the Bethel work environment that lead to high levels of retention and motivation
2. Engage faculty, staff, and trustees in the development of a planning culture
3. Partner with the Board of Trustees to identify and grow the next generation of major donors and move to a new level of philanthropy
4. Establish a sustainable operational model for Bethel Seminary
5. Launch a comprehensive campaign that addresses university priorities and builds the endowment

6. Enhance academic and co-curricular programs and opportunities through the aggressive pursuit of external grants
7. Pursue funding for near-term capital priorities including a fitness center, campus welcome center, seminary accessibility projects, equipment for laboratories and classrooms, and the Bethel Seminary San Diego expansion project
8. Complete a campus master plan to confirm long-term capital priorities such as a sciences building, a new on-campus residence hall, the build-out of the Sports and Recreation Center, additional classroom space, and refurbishment or replacement of residence halls