



The Call Toward Tomorrow  
*UST Integrated Planning Process*

**2018 – 2023 Call Toward Tomorrow  
Interim Working Draft Report**

April 2, 2018

## University of St. Thomas Mission

The University's mission as reflected in the statement below and explained in detail on the UST website was considered during the strategic thinking process. It was enthusiastically reaffirmed without revision or alteration. The following statement of the University of St. Thomas' mission was deemed a given, starting point for the process:

*We are the University of St. Thomas, the Catholic university in the heart of Houston. We are committed to the Catholic intellectual tradition and the dialogue between faith and reason. By pursuing excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service, we embody and instill in our students the core values of our founders, the Basilian Fathers: goodness, discipline, and knowledge.*

*We foster engagement in a diverse, collaborative community. As a comprehensive university grounded in the liberal arts, we educate students to think critically, communicate effectively, succeed professionally, and lead ethically.*

## The University of St. Thomas' Values and Motto

The Basilian Fathers' values remain inspiring and universally embraced by the University. A fourth value that embodies the Catholic character of community has been part of the University's values for a long time. All of these values are reaffirmed in this process. The University motto is unchanged and clearly sets a guide star for the future.

Goodness, discipline, and knowledge – and community

*Crescamus in Christo*  
May we grow in Christ

## Core Characteristics

First, the Strategic Thinking Oversight Committee worked to articulate the top operational and spiritual core characteristics that reflect the guiding principles in the daily life of the University of St. Thomas. It is important to note that the core characteristics reflect not aspirations or desires for the future, but the reality that is lived in the current life of the University.

It should be noted that the core characteristics are summary statements that touch upon key beliefs of the University. At the same time, these core characteristics are not exhaustive as to the totality of the University's ethos. The University has many characteristics beyond these core characteristics listed below; however, these are understood to be the uppermost in practical work of the University today.

### **Operational Core Characteristics**

1. **Learner-centered:** at the heart of our work are our students
2. **Catholic:** we are universal; seeking to encounter all
3. **Inclusivity:** we welcome and respect the dignity of each person
4. **Community:** unity, dialogue, and belonging are important
5. **Holistic:** our approach is to accompany the whole person – body, mind and spirit

### **Spiritual Core Characteristics**

1. **Hope:** we long for the best and anticipate the best
2. **Servant leadership:** service not authority is our priority
3. **Vocation/call in life:** we believe in lives of purpose with each one's gifts brought to flourishing and freely shared
4. **Love:** God's love of us motivates our own love and concern for others
5. **Sacrifice:** we give of ourselves and lay down our lives in service day by day

### **Core Purpose**

After articulating the core characteristics in light of our Catholicity, the Strategic Thinking Oversight Committee turned its attention to the core purpose, which is the enduring reason for the existence of the University of St. Thomas. Here the Strategic Thinking Oversight Committee sought to reach into the mission and motto to articulate why the University exists. The opportunity was to answer the question, "Why will it be important for the University of St. Thomas to exist 100 years from now, even if market conditions suggest that it should not exist?" The core purpose statement that was articulated during the process is:

***To lift and inspire through education, community, and service.***

### **Vision Statement or BHAG (Big, Holy, Audacious Goal)**

Flowing from this two-step process of articulating the core purpose (*enduring singular purpose of the University that will stand the test of time*) and core characteristics (*essential principles*), the Strategic Thinking Oversight Committee went on to develop a transformational goal to be realized over the next five years – by 2023.

Characterized as a BHAG (Big, Holy, Audacious Goal), this statement is intended to elevate expectations, planning, and performance throughout the University. A successful BHAG will challenge an organization and serve as a catalyst for planning and action. It is intended to be transformational while remaining true to the mission and identity of the University of St. Thomas

The following BHAG or vision statement was developed for the University of St. Thomas by the Strategic Thinking Oversight Committee:

***By 2023, University of St. Thomas will be known for having  
a fearless culture embracing positive change.***

A shorthand version of the BHAG which is intended to make this vision easier to remember is:

***To be a fearless culture embracing positive change***

Throughout the strategic thinking process, the BHAG will be used to test the relevance and validity of strategic goals as they were proposed

### **A Summary Quotation**

Often it is helpful to have some external affirmation of the significance, insight or validity of a BHAG. Sometimes this takes the form of a Scripture quote, a philosophical aphorism or a statement from folklore. The following quote is derived from Blessed John Henry Newman, cardinal and one of the representative voices of late 19<sup>th</sup> century English Catholicism. In his masterful work, An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine, Blessed Cardinal Newman wrote:

*“In a higher world it is otherwise, but here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.”*

Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine 1.1. Part 7

## Strategic Issues

The Strategic Thinking Oversight Committee determined that there are five strategic issues that should be addressed as the University works to realize its new BHAG. These strategic issues represent both obstacles and opportunities that should be overcome or seized in the implementation of the strategic thinking. These strategic areas include:

1. **Ethos / Culture / Spirit:** The broad category that includes language, behaviors, attitudes, and mindsets that impact relationships of the University community.
2. **Academics & Organizational Structure:** The broad category that includes governance, accountability, how-to achieve agreement and consensus, decision-making, and policies.
3. **Enrollment:** The broad category that includes undergraduate and graduate enrollment, online learners, students, and retention.
4. **Infrastructure:** The broad category that includes facilities, campus, technology, and systems.
5. **Awareness:** The category that includes, but is not limited to, marketing.

In the formulation of these strategic areas, the Strategic Thinking Oversight Committee charged the Work Groups with identifying a number of possibilities for implementation of these areas through specific strategic goals, or SMART goals.

## Guiding Questions

The following descriptions and guiding questions are not exhaustive. These are intended to help frame and launch Work Group conversations. Please recall always that our reference point is the BHAG.

### **Ethos / Culture / Spirit**

1. How would you define or understand each term: ethos, culture, and spirit?
2. What do you include within the purview of these heading: language, behavior, mindset, and code?
3. Why is this topic so important it ranks among the top five strategic issues?
4. What do our programs assume about the way the world is?
5. What do our programs assume about the way the world should be?
6. What is necessary or would promote a fearless culture of positive change?
7. How would you define the desired culture for the university community and what are the characteristics of this culture?
8. What obstacles must be addressed and how should they be realistically addressed?
9. Fearless cultures have highly connected people, how do we promote connectivity?
10. What would be our common narrative about our desired culture?
11. How does this apply to graduate and undergraduate students and faculty?
12. How do we best achieve the desired culture, ethos, or spirit?

### **Academic Programs and University Structure**

1. What do we mean by “academic programs” and “university structure”?
2. What does the structure of our university make easier?
3. What does it make difficult?
4. How should governance and decision making be changed to meet the BHAG?
5. How can each undergraduate and graduate program be evaluated according to the BHAG?
6. What academic program changes or university structure improvements are needed to achieve the fearless goals of 5,000 undergrads and 2,000 graduate students and 20,000 learners by 2023?
7. Where or how does the University structure support research and development relative to academic programming?

### **Enrollment**

1. What do we mean by “enrollment”? What do we include – admissions, retention?
2. What is the scope of this work group relative to graduate programs and undergraduates?
3. Who do we fail to retain/graduate, when we lose students at the undergraduate and graduate level, and what factors influence students’ decision to leave?
4. What can we do to creatively address retention/graduation rates at UST and retain those students who we enroll? And, why is retention important to creating a fearless culture embracing positive change?
5. Why is enrollment important to creating a fearless culture embracing positive change?
6. How does this BHAG impact the narrative we use for recruiting students?
7. What does admissions and the admission process look like in this culture?
8. What inhibits our ability to recruit and retain undergraduate and graduate students?
9. What do we need to do to achieve the fearless goals of 5,000 undergrads and 2,000 graduate students and 20,000 learners by 2023?

### **Infrastructure**

1. We have briefly described infrastructure as including facilities, technology and systems. What else should we specifically address or include under the topic of infrastructure?
2. What kinds of infrastructure improvements are needed to foster this BHAG: a fearless culture of positive change?
3. Where does our infrastructure fall down, break or fail? How does this happen?
4. What additions to our infrastructure are needed to meet the expectations of the BHAG.
5. What infrastructure (facilities, technology, and systems) will be needed to support the fearless goals of 5,000 undergrads and 2,000 graduate students and 20,000 learners by 2023?

### **Awareness**

1. Awareness appears to be the outcome or byproduct of direct and indirect marketing, what do we mean by awareness?
2. How would awareness be different under the BHAG of being known for having a fearless culture of positive change?
3. Without writing the new narrative, how should the new narrative be informed or shaped by the BHAG?
4. Using 21st Century social media, how do we demonstrate our fearless culture embracing positive change?
5. What does admissions and the admission process look like in this culture?
6. What inhibits our ability to create the awareness of the University of St. Thomas locally, regionally, nationally?
7. What marketing strategy is needed to support the fearless goals of 5,000 undergrads and 2,000 graduate students and 20,000 learners by 2023?



## Work Group Membership

The following is the composition of each of the Work Groups assigned to a particular strategic issue. As of the date of printing, the membership of each Work Group is still fluid. These lists will be updated as they are finalized.

### **Ethos / Culture / Spirit**

**Chair:** Prof. Tom Crow, *History*

**Co-Chair:** Fr. Kevin Storey, CSB, '11 *Board Member*

Dr. James Clarage, *Physics*

Dr. Richard Ludwick, *President*

Dean Sandy Magie, *Graduate School of Theology*

Sr. Theresa Marie Nguyen, OP, *Undergraduate Theology*

Dr. Thomas Osborne, *Philosophy*

Dr. Hans Stockton, *Center for International Studies*

Dr. Michael Sullivan, *School of Nursing*

Michelle Almaguer, *Office of Undergrad Admissions*

Kristin Burch, *VP for Institutional Advancement*

Shundeez Faridifar, *Student Activities*

Lily Swan, *International Student & Scholar Svcs*

Dr. Bert Edmundson '69, *Board Chair*

Daniel Garcia '01, *Board Member*

Greg Pirolli, *Student Government Association*

### **Academics & Organizational Structure**

**Chair:** Dean Poldi Tschirch, *School of Nursing*

**Co-Chair:** Lee Holm, *Director of Advising*

Dean Chris Evans, *School of Arts and Sciences*

Dr. Jack Follis, *Mathematics*

Dr. Maia Larios-Sanz, *Biology*

Dr. Robert LeBlanc, *School of Education*

Dr. Mirela Oliva, *Center for Thomistic Studies*

Dr. Daniel Perez, *Economics and Finance*

Dr. Nevine Sultan, *Clinical Mental Health Counsel*

Dr. Nicole Walters, *School of Education*  
Fr. Christopher Valka, CSB, *Center for Faith and Culture*  
Dr. Rick Young, *Political Science*  
Karen M. Bautista, *Office of Undergrad Admissions*  
Spencer Conroy, *VP for Finance*  
Gabrielle Kay, *Registrar*  
BJ Taylor, *Residence Life*  
Curtis Huff, *Board Vice Chair*

### **Enrollment**

**Chair:** Arthur Ortiz, *VP for Enrollment Management*  
**Co-Chair:** Dr. Jo Anne Meier-Marquis, *Psychology*  
Msgr. James Anderson, *Board Member*  
Dr. Shivas Amin, *Biology*  
Dr. Ulyses Balderas, *Center for International Studies*  
Dr. Sidika Bayrum, *Cameron School of Business*  
Dr. Ana-Lisa Gonzalez, *School of Education*  
Dr. Sujin Horwitz, *Management & Marketing*  
Dr. Kristina Leyden, *School of Nursing*  
Michael Acosta, *Admin Compting & Inst Research*  
Nathan Dugat, *Registrar*  
Stephanie Manning, *Marketing & Enrollment Management*  
Lynda A. McKendree, *Scholarships and Financial Aid*  
Lindsey McPherson, *Office of Student Success*  
Geny Moreno, *School of Nursing*

### **Infrastructure**

**Chair:** David Harvey, *Board Member*  
**Co-Chair:** Dean Beena George, *Cameron School of Business*  
Dr. Richa Chandra, *Chemistry*  
Edward Nam, *Biology*  
Dr. John Palasota, Chair, *Chemistry & Physics*  
Nicolas Castellanos, *Beran Library*  
Michelle Clayton, *Facilities Rental*

David Garcia, *Computing Infrastructure Services*  
Chief H.E. Jenkins, *University Police*  
Anissa D. Jones-Thomas, *School of Education*  
Ana Alicia Lopez, *Residence Life*  
Coach Anthony Medina, *Athletics*  
Nakisha Paul, *School of Nursing*  
Richard D. Shuman, *Business Office*  
Amanda Villanueva, *Campus Life*  
Cynthia Riley, *Alumnus*  
Stanley Paur, *Board Member*

**Awareness**

**Chair:** Jeff Olsen, *VP for Marketing & Communications*  
**Co-Chair:** Dr. Shuoyang Zhang, *Cameron School of Business*  
Dr. Livia Bornigia, *Communication*  
Dr. Steven Jensen, *Philosophy*  
Dr. John Story, *Management & Marketing*  
Brenda J. Banegas, *Center for Faith & Culture*  
Muffy Buvens, *Institutional Advancement*  
Kedrienne Day, *Institutional Advancement*  
Sara Johnson, *Office of Undergrad Admissions*  
Darnell L. Miller, *Marketing & Enrollment Management*  
Todd Smith, *Athletics*  
Sandra Soliz, *Marketing & Enrollment Management*  
Paula Hansen, *Board Member*  
Rosa Sotelo, *Student Government Association*  
Aaron Stryk, *Alumnus*

## Strategic Thinking Oversight Committee (STOC)

The following is the membership of the Strategic Thinking Oversight Committee:

Curtis Huff - Chair, <i>Board Member</i>	Coach Anthony Medina, <i>Athletics</i>
Dr. Richard Ludwick, <i>President</i>	Dr. Jo Anne Meier-Marquis, <i>Psychology</i>
Dr. Shivas Amin, <i>Biology</i>	Sr. Chau Nguyen, <i>Undergraduate Theology</i>
Dr. Sidika Bayrum, <i>Cameron School of Business</i>	Jeff Olsen, <i>VP for Marketing and Communications</i>
Kristin Burch, <i>VP for Institutional Advancement</i>	Arthur Ortiz, <i>VP for Enrollment Management</i>
Denise Castillo-Rhodes, <i>Board Member</i>	Nakisha Paul, <i>School of Nursing</i>
Dr. Richa Chandra, <i>Chemistry</i>	Stanley Paur, <i>Board Member</i>
Spencer Conroy, <i>VP for Finance</i>	Cynthia Riley, <i>Alumnus</i>
Professor Tom Crow, <i>History</i>	Sandra Soliz, <i>Marketing &amp; Enrollment Management</i>
Bert Edmundson, <i>Chairman of the Board</i>	Dr. Hans Stockton, <i>Center for International Studies</i>
Dean Chris Evans, <i>School of Arts and Sciences</i>	Fr. Kevin Storey, <i>CSB, Board Member</i>
Dr. Mauro Ferrari, <i>Board Member</i>	Dean Poldi Tschirch, <i>School of Nursing</i>
David Garcia, <i>Computing Infrastructure Services</i>	Fr. Christopher Valka, <i>CSB, Center for Faith and Culture</i>
Dr. Ana-Lisa Gonzalez, <i>School of Education</i>	Amanda Villanueva, <i>Campus Life</i>
Paula Savage Hansen, <i>Board Member</i>	Dr. Nicole Walters, <i>School of Education</i>
David Harvey, <i>Board Member</i>	Fred Zeidman, <i>former Board Member</i>
Ana Alicia Lopez, <i>Residence Life</i>	