



General Information

Academic Program

Pacific Lutheran University uses a 4-1-4 calendar, which consists of two 15-week semesters bridged by a four-week January term. The January term's intensive, four-week format is designed to offer students a unique pedagogical opportunity. It supports study away, in-depth focus on a single theme or topic, and the use of student-centered and active-learning pedagogies. The January term's intensive format also supports other pedagogical activities that contribute to building an intentional culture of learning inside and outside the classroom. It offers an opportunity for an intensive First-Year Experience Program that combines rigorous academic study with co-curricular activities that serve the goals of the First-Year Program – thinking, literacy and community. Further, the January term offers the opportunity to orient students to PLU's mission, support them in understanding how they position themselves within the PLU community and the world, and support them as they embrace their role as active citizens.

Course credit is computed by semester hours. The majority of courses are offered for four semester hours. Each undergraduate degree candidate must complete a minimum of 128 semester hours with an overall grade point average of 2.00. Departments or schools may set higher grade point requirements.

Degree requirements are specifically stated in this catalog. Students are responsible for becoming familiar with these requirements and meeting them.

Accreditation

Pacific Lutheran University is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (8060 165th Avenue NE, Suite 100, Redmond, WA 98062-3981), an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and/or the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

In addition the following programs hold specialized accreditations and approvals:

Business

The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International)

Computer Science (B.S.)

Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET

Education

National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education

Marriage and Family Therapy

Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

Music

National Association of Schools of Music

Nursing

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education and Washington State Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission

Physical Education, B.A.P.E. Degree

National Council on Accreditation of Teacher Education

Social Work

Council on Social Work Education

Any current or prospective student may, upon request directed to the president's office, review a copy of the documents pertaining to the university's various accreditations and approvals.

Certification

Chemistry

(including certified Biochemistry and Chemical Physics Options) - American Chemical Society

Enrollment

3,354 full-time students; 298 part-time students (as of September, 2008).

Environ

Located in suburban Parkland, PLU has a picturesque 126-acre campus. The university's geographical setting affords students a wide variety of both recreational and cultural entertainment options. Recreationally, the grandeur of the Pacific Northwest encourages participation in hiking, camping, climbing, skiing, boating and swimming.

The two most notable natural features in the area are Mt. Rainier and Puget Sound. The distinctive realms of the Cascade and Olympic mountain ranges and forests of Douglas Fir complete one of the most naturally tranquil environments in the United States.

Students can also enjoy the aesthetic offerings of nearby Seattle and Tacoma. These city centers host a variety of performing and recording arts and provide dozens of galleries and museums as well as unique shopping and dining experiences.

Faculty

230 full-time teaching equivalent faculty; approximately 33 part-time faculty (as of September 2008, per IPEDS definition).

History

Pacific Lutheran University was founded in 1890 by a group of mostly Norwegian Lutherans from the Puget Sound area. They were led by the Reverend Bjug Harstad, who became PLU's first president. In naming the university, these pioneers recognized the important role that a Lutheran educational institution on the Western frontier of America could play in the emerging future of the region. They wanted the institution to help immigrants adjust to their new land and find jobs, but they also wanted it to produce graduates who would serve church and community. Education—and educating for service—was a venerated part of the Scandinavian traditions from which these pioneers came.

Although founded as a university, the institution functioned primarily as an academy until 1918, when it closed for two years. It reopened as the two-year Pacific Lutheran College, after merging with Columbia College, previously located in Everett. Further consolidations occurred when Spokane College merged with PLC in 1929. Four-year baccalaureate degrees were first offered in education in 1939 and in the liberal arts in 1942. The institution was reorganized as a university in 1960, reclaiming its original name. It presently includes a College of Arts and Sciences; professional schools of the Arts and Communication, Business, Education, Nursing, and Physical Education; and both graduate and continuing education programs.

PLU has been closely and productively affiliated with the Lutheran church throughout its history. It is now a university of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), owned by the more than six hundred congregations of Region 1 of the ELCA.

Many influences and individuals have combined to shape PLU and its regional, national, and increasingly international reputation for teaching, service, and scholarship. A dedicated faculty and staff have been extremely important factors. The school has enjoyed a strong musical tradition from the beginning, as well as noteworthy alumni achievements in public school teaching and administration, university teaching and scholarship, the pastoral ministry, the health sciences and healing arts, and business. At PLU the liberal arts and professional education are closely integrated and collaborative in their educational philosophies, activities, and aspirations.

Late-Afternoon, Evening and Saturday Classes

To provide for the professional growth and cultural enrichment of persons unable to take a traditional college course schedule, the university conducts late-afternoon, evening, and Saturday classes. In addition to a wide variety of offerings in the arts and sciences, there are specialized and graduate courses for teachers, administrators, nurses and persons in business and industry.

Retention of First-Year Students

The retention of entering first-year students has been monitored since 1972. Retention in this context means continued registration or degree completion. The data for the past seven years are present in the following table.

First Fall	Second Fall	Third Fall	Fourth Fall
2001	80.6%	71.2%	67.6%
2002	83.1%	77.8%	74.4%
2003	82.0%	74.1%	71.8%
2004	81.5%	71.5%	68.5%
2005	81.7%	73.8%	71.1%
2006	84.0%	75.8%	
2007	84.8%		

