

Pacific Lutheran University

Core Themes and Objectives

The University's Core Themes and Objectives are designed to capture our most enduring values and commitments. The three themes are a direct reflection of the elements in our mission and the objectives express the ways in which the mission is embodied in the work that we engage in together.

Theme One: A Challenging Academic Experience

Core Theme One is expressed primarily through the undergraduate and graduate academic programs. The core curriculum, complemented by a strong array of disciplinary and interdisciplinary programs, provides students with an academic experience that is both rigorous and flexible, creating a foundation for their lifelong vocations and career possibilities. Beginning with a purposeful First-Year Experience Program (FYEP), a PLU undergraduate education culminates with senior capstone projects in which students demonstrate integration and application of learning through research and creative projects. Students participate in high impact practices such as internships, community engaged learning, and study away opportunities to reinforce and challenge classroom learning. Graduate programs are offered at the master's and doctoral level in a range of specialized fields. Through this work, PLU educates students for courageous lives: lives of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership, and care—for other people, their communities, and the Earth.

Objective 1.1:

Students demonstrate the knowledge, skills and values identified in the learning objectives for the core curriculum.

1.1 - Indicators of Achievement

Direct assessment of student learning artifacts, data and findings

Indirect assessment of student perception (student interviews and exit survey data)

Objective 1.2:

Students achieve the learning outcomes of their undergraduate majors and graduate degrees.

1.2 - Indicators of Achievement

Direct assessment of student learning artifacts

Indirect assessment of student perception (student interviews and exit survey data)

Program Review data and findings

External accreditation data (where applicable)

Degree completion rates per degree program

Objective 1.3:

Undergraduate and graduate students will engage in one or more high impact practices

1.3 - Indicators of Achievement

Disaggregated participation rates in high impact practices: learning communities, study away, internship and field experiences, service learning, student-faculty research and capstone

Impact evidence (study away, learning communities, NSCI summer research etc..)

Evidence of high impact opportunities in the curriculum

Student perception data (NSSE)

Theme Two: A Community of Care

Our mission calls for members of the community to assume the important responsibility to care for themselves and others, recognizing the interconnectedness of care for people, their communities and the Earth. Care is reflected in our efforts to provide an inclusive environment that welcomes and supports all and fosters a sense of belonging among its members. An accessible and effective support system demonstrates our commitment to the success of our students. We also care for our community by attending to the safety, holistic health and well-being of faculty, staff and students. Collectively, these efforts help the community to flourish, affirming the education of the whole person in body, mind and spirit, our Lutheran tradition, and our mission of care.

Objective 2.1:

Equitable outcomes for students are achieved through the on-going examination of, and response to, the differential impacts of systems, policies, structures and climate.

2.1 - Indicators of Achievement

Student demographic and disaggregated retention data

Student Care Network/Student stop-out and exit data/withdrawal data

NSSE data

Objective 2.2:

Strengthen and support the safety, holistic health, and wellbeing of the campus community in service to student learning and success.

2.2 - Indicators of Achievement

Institutional reports on safety, health and wellness

Student Care Network data and reports

Healthy Minds survey

Persistence and retention data

Degree completion rates

Counseling, health and wellness data
NSSE and local survey data

Theme Three: A Culture of Service and Leadership

We recognize that part of our vocational identity is grounded in our civic commitments and relationship with our community, and is dependent upon our ability to both lead and serve with compassion and conviction. PLU seeks to sustain a culture that models engaged and collaborative service and leadership among faculty, students and staff through shared governance and a tradition of collective decision making. Supported and surrounded by this culture we strive to foster the conditions and opportunities that develop the dispositions, skills and knowledge needed for students to grow into leaders who positively impact their current and future communities.

Objective 3.1:

Shared governance, rooted in Lutheran Higher Education, provides a structure and process by which the mission of the University is upheld and realized.

3.1 - Indicators of Achievement

- Key decisions (e.g change in religious affiliation requirement for President)
- Guiding documents (e.g. strategic plan, D&I plan)
- Curriculum (new and revised offerings)

Objective 3.2:

Students develop and practice the dispositions, skills and knowledge needed for impactful service and leadership through curricular and co-curricular opportunities.

3.2 - Indicators of Achievement

- Co-curricular programs
- Academic programs