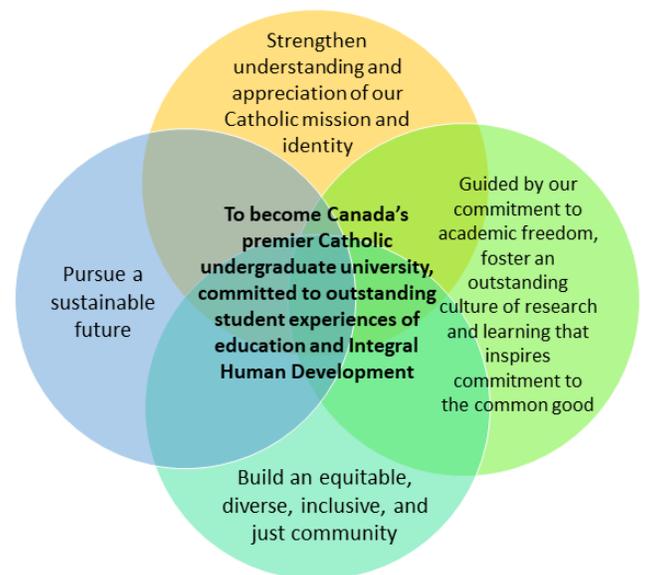


Preamble

The first members of the Congregation of the Resurrection who founded St. Jerome's understood the value of planning and preparation to realizing their goal to provide secondary and tertiary Catholic education in this part of pre-Confederation Ontario. Here, inspired by his students' "enthusiasm for the truth", Fr. Louis Funcken laid the foundation for St. Jerome's University with his plans for a college program that combined service to others with the rigorous academic study and critical inquiry that are hallmarks of the Catholic Intellectual and Liberal Arts Traditions. Federation to the new University of Waterloo, followed by the arrival of the School Sisters of Notre Dame added to this a powerful commitment to the higher education of women and helped to refine the University's mission commitment to learning and academic excellence, to the Gospel values of love, truth, and social justice and to the formation of leaders for service to the community and the Church. It is a mission that has now left its mark on generations of St. Jerome's graduates.

Grounded on the firm foundation of this mission, and on the importance of planning and preparation, St. Jerome's now looks to its future. This Strategic Plan, which will guide us in an age of many uncertainties, asks us to consider the importance of change as it will be essential to defining *how* St. Jerome's will be a Catholic university. Our students today grapple with many of the challenges of social injustice left to them by previous generations, including the increasing gap between rich and poor, the importance of equity, diversity and inclusion, justice and reconciliation for Indigenous people, and sustainability and its implications for the very future of our planet. They are in search of authenticity and community, and of something to believe in and to be a part of in a time characterized by self-interest, polarizing political divisions, and an endemic distrust of leaders and institutions. If we are to serve our mission today, we must do so with an openness to meeting our students 'where they are'. To this end, we can take inspiration from the Church's emphasis on *Synodality* - the process of walking together rooted in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. This calls on us to see the importance of encounter and dialogue to making changes that will be meaningful and lasting.



The Strategic Plan 2022-2027's four main priority areas surround St. Jerome's University's main goal.

In this way, we are committed to Integral Human Development (IHD), an important aspect of Catholic social doctrine focused on preparing leaders who are conscious of the diversity, complexity and richness of the human experience and are formed here to contribute thoughtfully, creatively and positively to the common good of society. IHD also emphasizes how we relate to and think about others, rooted in the importance of vocation - the understanding that each of us has a calling, which attaches meaning and purpose to what we do.

Strategic Plan 2022-2027

IHD underlines the importance of the goal resting at the very centre of this Strategic Plan, our desire to become Canada's premier Catholic undergraduate university. In this way we know that we bring to our valued federation to the University of Waterloo the desire not to 'fit in' but to 'stand out' by understanding the importance of education and human formation together, we seek to bring a Catholic-Christian view of human anthropology to our students, regardless of their background, that emphasizes the importance of their education in the context of a world that desperately needs leaders of vision, conscience and service.

**To become Canada's
premier Catholic
undergraduate university,
committed to outstanding
student experiences of
education and Integral
Human Development**

The plan's first priority underlines St. Jerome's reason for being – its Catholic mission and identity. John Henry Cardinal Newman declared the proper work of a university was to "prepare people of the world, for the world." For Catholic universities this has always meant attending to the needs of the 'whole person' through education and formation. As a model for Catholic universities and colleges that exist in federated or affiliated relationships with public university partners, we seek to bring the best of this mission and identity to the life of the University of Waterloo. In this context, St. Jerome's will *not* define itself by the number of Catholics we count among our faculty, staff and students, but we *will* be a university that is animated and informed by a living Catholic tradition and a mission that is shared in by all members of its community, regardless of their religious or non-religious beliefs.

Our desire to foster an outstanding culture of research and learning is also connected to our commitment to advancing the common good of society. We seek to do this by nurturing a scholarly community that will bring thought leadership to addressing the challenges of the times, and by educating and forming students to become leaders of conscience who will think critically and act ethically. In keeping with our commitment to students as 'whole persons', we emphasize the importance of learning as a complex phenomenon that also takes place in our programs of service and experiential learning, in academic advising and counselling, in campus ministry, in our residence life, and in the other forms of community we celebrate here. Motivated by the pursuit of truth that is fundamental to the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, and by our confidence in the compatibility of faith and reason, the "two wings on which the spirit rises to contemplation of the truth" (*Fides et ratio*, 1998), St. Jerome's is committed to freedom of expression and to the protection of academic freedom. Academic freedom also has a special importance for our Catholic character and identity, which demands that we support our faculty in their "lawful freedom of enquiry and of thought, and of freedom to express their minds humbly and courageously about those matters in which they enjoy competence" (*Ex corde Ecclesia*, 1991).

Building an equitable, diverse, inclusive and just community is a natural expression of St. Jerome's mission identity. Essential to this is the understanding that "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34) and that every human being possesses an inalienable dignity that must be respected regardless of our diversities. We are committed to the importance of dialogue and to creating what Pope Francis has referred to as a "culture of encounter" to overcome the blindness that has allowed structural barriers to full inclusion in our community, and to our responsibility as a Catholic university to Reconciliation with Indigenous people. Aligned with our commitment to the education and formation of leaders, we see the ideal community as a place that nurtures and attends to the intellectual development of students, as well as to their physical, mental and spiritual health. In this way we will create opportunities for students to "learn to be themselves without constraint," and thereby to discover their calling and purpose. For young people at the start of their life journeys, these underscore the difference between making a living and making a life.

Strategic Plan 2022-2027

Finally, in his social encyclical *Laudato si* which addresses “care for our common home”, Pope Francis warns that “[t]he time has come to pay renewed attention to reality and the limits it imposes; this in turn is the condition for a more sound and fruitful development of individuals and society.” This speaks poignantly to the importance of sustainability, in its broadest sense, that runs across all aspects of St. Jerome’s mission. In its most immediate sense, this includes the understanding that all members of our community, who value the privilege of working, studying, teaching and researching here, share in ensuring the University’s future by participating in the responsible stewardship of its mission, vision, and assets. The importance of sustainability also extends to nurturing our federated relationship with the University of Waterloo, through which St. Jerome’s receives its public financial support and serves its diverse educational mission, and to relationship-building across the broad spectrum of networks and partners who help contribute to building our reputation and our visibility, both locally and abroad. That St. Jerome’s both needs and is worthy of support from donors to address its differentiated mission at the University of Waterloo underlines the importance of creating a culture of philanthropy here that will make a compelling case to a variety of existing and potential donors, Catholic and otherwise. In its broadest sense, we see sustainability in the context of St. Jerome’s commitment to ethical investment strategies, as well as to ensuring the future of the planet through our prioritization of renewal, re-use and recycling, and where possible, through our use of renewable sources of energy.

The Strategic Plan for St. Jerome’s University in the University of Waterloo (2022-2027) is truly the ‘work of many hands.’ I want to offer my sincere thanks to the members of the Steering Committee who have guided its work, including Michael Pautler (Board Chair), Mary Ellen Cullen (Past Chair), Jane Nicholas and Ryan Devitt (Academic and Contract Academic Staff Representatives), Cristina Vanin (Interim Vice President Academic and Dean) Carol Ann MacGregor (Vice President Academic and Dean), Sue Brubacher (Registrar), and Katrina Kaczala and Tracy MacDonald (Staff Representatives). We also received valuable feedback and responses from many members of our internal and external communities through surveys and community presentations. Input from alumni, board members, faculty, staff, and students has made this plan much stronger.

In the hope that this Strategic Plan will guide all in our community to find renewed focus and purpose in their work, its effective execution will also need to be the work of many hands. It will require a plan of accountability that will define success and routinely update stakeholders on progress towards our ambitious shared goals that build institutional data infrastructure and rely on best practices in measurement. While this Strategic Plan addresses these specific priorities within the scope of the next five years, its aim is much larger. It proposes a renewal of its identity to emphasize the breadth of its Catholic mission to all, regardless of background, and thereby to service to the common good of society. As the University of Waterloo looks to its one hundredth anniversary in 2057, this plan positions St. Jerome’s University to bring to its federation a renewed commitment to its mission and identity that will strengthen and embolden both universities in the years to come.



Peter Meehan
President and Vice Chancellor
St. Jerome’s University

Our Values

- The Gospel values of love, truth, and justice
- Enthusiasm for learning and discovery in the pursuit of truth
- Collegial, compassionate leadership
- Respect for human dignity, liberty and diversity
- Inclusion and collaboration in working with others

Our Objects

The legislated objects of the University are:

- a) to advance learning and disseminate knowledge in a manner consistent with Roman Catholic tradition and the honest pursuit of wisdom and understanding; and
- b) to encourage the intellectual, spiritual, social, moral, and personal development of the members of the University community and the betterment of society consistent with the ideals of the contemporary Roman Catholic Church.

Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priorities	Goals	Objectives
1. Strengthen understanding and appreciation of our Catholic mission and identity	1.1 Build support for and alignment with our Catholic Mission and identity	1.1.1 Provide opportunities for faculty, staff and students to understand the importance of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition and modern Catholic thought to realizing St. Jerome's Mission, Vision and Values.
		1.1.2 Engage in dialogue with the University of Waterloo about the unique role and value of St. Jerome's as a Catholic university partner.
	1.2 Demonstrate that a commitment to social justice, equity, diversity, inclusion and reconciliation is an integral expression of our faith tradition	1.2.1 Develop compelling ways of articulating that the dignity of all human beings is central to our mission and faith tradition.
		1.2.2 Work with Indigenous communities to advance our commitment to reconciliation.

Strategic Plan 2022-2027

Strategic Priorities	Goals	Objectives
<p>2. Guided by our commitment to academic freedom, foster an outstanding culture of research and learning that inspires commitment to the common good</p>	<p>2.1 Champion the value and importance of mission-driven education in the humanities and social sciences</p>	<p>2.1.1 Communicate SJU’s role at the University of Waterloo as a centre for exceptional humanities and social science research and education.</p>
		<p>2.1.2 In partnership with the University of Waterloo, become an exemplary model of best practice in federated and affiliated university college relations.</p>
	<p>2.2 Enrich students’ learning experience through distinctive and complementary courses and programs</p>	<p>2.2.1 Develop an innovative and attractive Academic Plan for the University that accentuates our course and program offerings, their content and delivery.</p>
		<p>2.2.2 Expand mission and community-oriented experiential and service-learning programming.</p>
	<p>2.3 Invest in and enhance our compelling faculty research in the humanities and social sciences</p>	<p>2.3.1 Develop an Academic Plan that leverages and builds upon existing scholarship, research and creative activities to establish SJU as a centre of excellence.</p>
		<p>2.3.2 Raise the profile of faculty research through a communication plan that works to highlight its quality and significance, and, where possible, its relationship to our mission of service in support of the common good.</p>
	<p>2.4 Elevate our reputation for excellence in teaching and learning</p>	<p>2.4.1 Recognize, communicate and celebrate the University’s commitment to teaching excellence and innovation.</p>
	<p>3. Build an equitable, diverse, inclusive, and just community</p>	<p>3.1 Address structural injustices and seek to achieve equity at the University</p>

Strategic Plan 2022-2027

Strategic Priorities	Goals	Objectives
		recruitment, campus culture and facilities.
		3.1.2 Foster shared purpose at the University among students, staff, faculty, contract academic staff, alumni, board and the community by addressing structural barriers to full and equitable inclusion.
	3.2 Foster a strong sense of community belonging for all	3.2.1 Engender a culture that values the importance of inclusivity, encounter, dialogue, accompaniment and hospitality.
		3.2.2 Support and promote the wellness and mental health of students, staff, faculty and contract academic staff at the University.
4. Pursue a sustainable future	4.1 Develop strategic relationships that will advance SJU's mission	4.1.1 Pursue opportunities for new and strengthened partnership and collaboration with the University of Waterloo, the Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo (AFIW), Catholic education partners, and other community stakeholders.
		4.1.2 Nurture relationships between SJU departments to advance the University's mission and identity.
	4.2 Achieve growth in enrolment, retention, and engagement in our student and alumni population	4.2.1 Grow the number of students who benefit from our distinctive university experience, which is rooted in a commitment to holistic personal formation and development.
		4.2.2 Increase engagement with upper year students, recent graduates, and all alumni.

Strategic Plan 2022-2027

Strategic Priorities	Goals	Objectives
	<p>4.3 Strengthen and demonstrate a mission-driven commitment to caring for the environment</p>	<p>4.3.1 Increase awareness and practice of sustainable initiatives, including energy conservation, the use of renewable sources of energy and reduction, responsible investing, and reuse and recycling within our campus planning and facilities management.</p>
	<p>4.4 Maintain our commitment to mission by ensuring the ongoing financial health of the University</p>	<p>4.4.1 Increase loyalty and generosity to the University by building a culture of philanthropy that will be attractive to donors and other supporters who understand and align with our vision of inclusive Catholic higher education.</p>
		<p>4.4.2 Develop and implement a strategy to diversify our revenue sources and manage our resources responsibly.</p>