

FAQs Re: CST's Sustainable Future

On July 6, 2017, CST President, the Rev. Dr. Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan, announced that Claremont School of Theology is in the early stages of exploring the possibility of embedding within Willamette University, in Salem, Oregon. Below, you will find our expanding list of Frequently Asked Questions provided to update our students, staff, faculty, alumni/ae, donors, and friends as the process evolves. Please check back periodically. Any updates will be shared here as well.

1. Why is CST considering embedding in another University? Shortly after Pres. Kuan's arrival as CST's seventh president, the School's leadership – including student, faculty, and alumni representatives – unveiled a strategic plan (2015) that focused on three primary goals:

- Promoting Transformative Education;
- Engaging Local and Global Communities;
- Achieving Long-Term Institutional Sustainability.

Embedding within Willamette University helps insure long-term institutional sustainability. CST's groundbreaking approach to theological education is leading the way; however, our endowment has never been particularly robust. With an aging campus and the rising cost of higher education, we are running a budget deficit. Many free-standing seminaries are experiencing this problem, too. One way of ensuring a healthy future is to embed in a like-minded university.

For more background on CST's current financial situation, please visit our "Update from the President" page at <https://cst.edu/update-from-the-president/>

2. Why Willamette University? Willamette is one of a few United Methodist-related universities in the western U.S., which makes it possible for CST to retain both its affiliation as a United Methodist seminary and its reputation as an excellent academic program with a renowned Ph.D. program and library. Also, partnering with Willamette provides a number of interesting opportunities to strengthen both institutions. Willamette's core commitments mesh nicely with CST's commitment to create a difference for the world we live in, such as:

- Pursuing academic excellence in teaching, research, and student learning
- Fostering a diverse, vibrant, and intellectually stimulating learning and social community
- Preparing global-minded students for meaningful lives of professional achievement and civic contribution

The partnership has the potential of expanding academic programs at both institutions – including dual degree programs and even joint degree programs with Willamette's current graduate schools (Atkinson Graduate School of Management and the College of Law), as well as coursework for Willamette undergraduates.

CST has always met challenges with courage – from its founding in 1885 in San Fernando Valley to its



affiliation with and later break from University of Southern California, to its 60 years in Claremont – CST's mission has always survived. Embedding within Willamette allows us the opportunity to thrive in a new way.

3. Why is Willamette the best option at this point? Pres. Kuan and CST's Board of Trustees have examined every possible resource and angle regarding staying in Southern California. Without an infusion of \$50 to \$90 million, our current location is cost prohibitive. Embedding within Willamette University is our best chance for not only surviving, but thriving as a provider of theological education. Willamette's faculty is very supportive of this idea, as are our faculty members. We are each bringing something the other partner would like.

4. What is the timeline for this move? We're working on it. The current plan is to start all programs on the Willamette campus in the Fall of 2019. It is expected that in the transition, some classes will still be taught on the Claremont campus through the spring of 2021. Our last Commencement in Claremont is tentatively scheduled for May 2020.

5. Will Claremont School of Theology retain its name? Yes. Claremont School of Theology enjoys a world-renowned faculty and a way of doing theological education that is essential to who we are and who studies at CST. Founded by Methodists, we value our Christian roots while learning alongside our brothers and sisters of all faiths and traditions. Our graduates are prepared to lead with their minds and their hearts. In a world divided by opposing worldviews on religion, race, sexuality and gender, climate change, poverty and privilege, CST prepares graduates to become agents of transformation and healing in churches, mosques, temples, local communities, schools, non-profit institutions, and the world at large.

6. What about CST's ecumenical and interfaith/interreligious partners? Are they moving with CST? CST will maintain its diversity and mission which includes many ecumenical and interreligious partnerships. All of our partner organizations and academic centers have been brought into these discussions.

7. What is going to happen to the current CST campus? CST is proceeding with its plan to sell the property once a lawsuit against Claremont University Consortium is successfully resolved. For more background on this situation, please visit our "Update from the President" page at <https://cst.edu/update-from-the-president/>

8. If I am a donor, what happens to the money I give? Contributions are used to provide high quality theological education to fulfill the mission of CST. As a donor, you may designate any special funds, scholarships and programs to which you would like to direct your donation. Moving forward, donations to CST will remain with CST.

9. If I am a student, what does this mean for:



My degree? No matter what physical form CST takes, our students will be well cared for. As an institution of higher learning, we follow the laws set forth by the Department of Education to ensure that arrangements are always in place so that all enrolled students can either complete the course of study or transition to a mutually agreed course at no disadvantage to the student. Students currently enrolled will have the opportunity to complete their degree in Southern California by May 2021 or relocate to WU.

My on-campus program? Should the partnership move forward, both Willamette and CST would like to give as much time as possible to transition CST from California to Oregon. Any fulltime student who begins a program in Fall 2018 should be able to finish required coursework in Claremont, California.

My hybrid/online program? We are committed to continue offering diverse ways to complete your studies, including on-campus/face-to-face classes, hybrid classes, and online classes. Presently, the M.Div. and the D.Min. degrees are offered in the hybrid/online format.

10. What is the status of on-campus housing? For the academic year 2018-2019, we can affirm that any signed leases will be honored through May 30th, as is standard procedure for our campus. As this potential embedding process unfolds, we will update you as soon as possible as the status of on-campus housing.

11. What does this mean for staff and faculty? This is a very important question and it is important to your CST leadership as well. Some of the CST faculty and staff will relocate to WU to continue the tradition of CST into the future.

12. What will happen to our CST Library contents and staff? Willamette University is very impressed with and interested in maintaining all that our library has to offer. Thanks to the work of our Dean of the Library, Thomas Phillips, much of what we do is already online.

13. Is there a possibility the partnership won't happen? As with any potential partnership, there is always a possibility that things won't work out. In our case, we feel that is a very unlikely scenario but that is exactly what the due diligence process provides. Our Board's Sustainable Future Task Force will continue, through the due diligence process with Willamette, to explore options to ensure a strong, viable, and sustainable future for CST.

14. What can I do to help?

- Stay in touch. Focus on our good news and pray for more.
- Join our biannual scholarship appeals at <https://cst.edu/giving>. Any monies you give will go directly toward supporting our incoming scholars.
- Sign up to be a CST Ambassador. We will need your assistance in the coming months to help share our new vision and answer questions. Contact Les Lungren, Director of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving, at **909-447-2545, llungren@CST.edu**