

SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY®

Presidential Prospectus



President Leadership PROFILE

Poised for Opportunity

The Saint Leo University Board of Trustees invites applications and nominations for the position of president. The new president will succeed Dr. Edward Dadez, who first joined Saint Leo University in 2000, became president in 2022, and is retiring. President Dadez's leadership has provided stability and enhanced financial sustainability.

Saint Leo University has a long history of innovation and adaptation. It has developed new partnerships, including dual enrollment programs. It has quickly established programs such as nursing, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence and robotics, which align with workforce needs and represent significant opportunities for further growth. The University has been a leader in distance education and a pioneer in the development of online programs. It is located in a region that is growing rapidly. The demographics are favorable.

The University is ready to grow and continue to innovate, living out its mission of providing high-quality education, rooted in the Catholic Benedictine tradition, to new generations of students.

After enrollment challenges that resulted in accreditation probation, for financial reasons, from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, the University's probationary status was removed in December 2024. The University's restructuring included improvements to enrollment management practices to enhance revenue accompanied by significant reductions in expenses. The University ended FY2024 with a net operating surplus and is operating with a balanced budget for FY2025.



PRIORITIES

for the Next President

Vision and Leadership

Saint Leo University needs a president with a fresh perspective who can articulate an inspiring and unifying vision for the future of the University.

The president will be a good listener and communicator who can mobilize the University's board, alumni, faculty, students, staff, donors, business leaders, and community leaders to adapt and achieve that mission. The president will demonstrate a commitment to shared governance, respecting faculty expertise and engaging stakeholders in conversations about how the University serves out its mission.

The president must have a positive mindset to consistently see opportunity and give stakeholders confidence in the institution's prospects.

The president will think strategically, and with agility, so that the vision can be realized with the effective use of human and financial resources.

Financial Sustainability

The president's top priority will be to enhance the financial condition of the University through high-quality programs that attract and retain students, effective marketing and enrollment management strategies to increase enrollment and revenue, planning and oversight of the University's budget and financial resources, partnerships with businesses, and active development of philanthropic support.

Catholic Mission in the Benedictine Tradition

The president will be responsible for embodying and preserving the University's identity as a Catholic Benedictine institution. The University's Catholic Benedictine identity is one of its core strengths.



Enrollment Growth

The president will identify and implement opportunities to increase the University's enrollment and net student revenue. Such opportunities would include marketing and admissions strategies, leveraging the Catholic identity, new programs to attract students and net revenues, forms of degrees and credentials that would appeal to different kinds of students, courses delivered through a variety of modalities, lifelong learning, more extensive use of online delivery, improved retention, dual degree programs, and other possibilities.

Student Success

The president will focus attention on improving student satisfaction, retention, and degree completion, in continuing and new programs, through academic, social, and financial support. Students will be able to grow not only academically, but also personally and professionally. Saint Leo University serves a significant population of first-generation and at-risk students.

Philanthropy

The president will enhance and build relationships with current and potential donors and partners in order to increase the financial resources available to the University and to fulfill its mission and enhance its financial condition. The University seeks to be less reliant on tuition alone to support its work. There are significant opportunities for the president to raise resources.

Desired ATTRIBUTES

The next president will be expected to

- Be a strategic thinker and innovator, particularly when it comes to identifying opportunities to improve the University's enrollment, culture of philanthropy, cost effectiveness, and financial sustainability.
- Embrace the mission, purpose, and values of the University, including its Catholic Benedictine tradition. Prior experience with a religiously affiliated or sponsored institution is desirable.
- Demonstrate a willingness to set priorities and make thoughtful decisions and possess an ability to balance risk and reward.
- Demonstrate a record of leadership success in a complex organization with multiple constituencies. Experience in a turnaround situation would be very helpful.
- Demonstrate compassion, empathy, and humility.
- Embody and articulate strong ethical values.
- Focus on student success, including retention.
- Be skilled at the use of multiple modalities for delivering academic programs and student services.
- Have a comfort with and appreciation for the opportunities represented by technology.
- Be an exceeding good listener and a transparent communicator.
- Be able to secure philanthropic support for the University.
- Possess a terminal degree in an academic or professional field.



ABOUT Saint Leo University



COURAGE LIVES HERE

Saint Leo University is a Catholic Benedictine university dedicated to helping learners of all backgrounds and ages gain the competence and courage to be more. Offering more than 55 degree programs to more than 13,000 students each year, the nonprofit University is known for providing a values-based education in the liberal arts tradition and a community of belonging for those who seek a greater purpose in life. Saint Leo is regionally accredited and offers a campus in the Tampa Bay area of Florida, regional education centers, and several online programs. The University is home to more than 106,000 alumni.

Learn More

Watch the **University Brand Anthem** video to learn about our community.



A HISTORY

Rooted in Courage

Saint Leo University became Florida's first Catholic college in 1889 after the Order of Saint Benedict of Florida received state legislative authorization.

Establishing a Catholic college in what is now eastern Pasco County was a courageous move as not everyone in the community was welcoming. The college faced anti-Catholic bigotry and racism for teaching minorities during a time of segregation.

Those early years laid a foundation for the University to move forward with courage, making many bold moves throughout its history. From starting degree programs on military bases for servicemembers in the early 1970s to being one of the first to launch an online learning program more than 25 years ago, Saint Leo is known for breaking boundaries to meet learners where they are.

Today the University is continuing this focus by building degree programs in partnership with businesses and organizations to address staffing shortages in high demand fields and by launching learning opportunities to help working professionals quickly learn new skills.

Mission

Saint Leo is an inventive global Catholic liberal arts university that fosters a personal and inclusive community which educates, prepares, and develops students for success and consists of diverse learners who boldly confront the challenges of our world through service to others.

Core Values

Community
Excellence

Integrity
Personal Development

Respect
Responsible Stewardship

Learn More

Watch the [Our Courageous History](#) video to see the university's full history.



Points of **PRIDE**

Saint Leo University is a place of belonging for all those in pursuit of a greater purpose in life.

Here, we courageously pursue truth and knowledge, put people first, make learning accessible, and let our Catholic faith lead us forward.

Catholic Heritage and Timeless Values

Saint Leo University is Florida's first and oldest Catholic institution of higher education and the largest Benedictine Catholic university in the nation. Our core values of excellence, respect, integrity, personal development, community, and responsible stewardship resonate with students of all generations, faiths, and backgrounds.

Innovation

Throughout its history, Saint Leo University has innovated to meet the evolving needs of learners and the workforce. More than 50 years ago, the University opened education centers to make it convenient for working professionals, military personnel, and veterans to earn degrees and was among the first to launch a flexible online learning program in 1998. Today, the University is continuing this history of innovation by collaborating with businesses and organizations to develop unique programs that provide a pipeline of skilled professionals.





Points of PRIDE

Practical Learning

Saint Leo University prepares students for personal and professional success. Students benefit from small class sizes (18-to-1 student/faculty ratio) and receive dedicated support from staff and faculty advisors. The University offers more than 55 undergraduate and graduate degree programs that expose students to a variety of real-world scenarios, hands-on learning experiences, and intensive internship opportunities. From the university's interactive crime scene house and nursing patient simulators to live avatars, cutting-edge technology prepares students to face the challenges of today's workforce.

Close-Knit Community

Saint Leo University offers hundreds of opportunities for students to connect with others and grow outside of the classroom. Whether studying online, at an education center, or on campus, students have the opportunity to join more than 60 clubs and organizations, participate in daily Mass and weekly Bible study groups, play in several intramural sports teams, and cheer on the University's 17 NCAA Division II sports teams.

Academic Program HIGHLIGHTS

Education

Saint Leo's Para-to-Pro Program is helping to address the critical need for teachers in Florida schools. The program helps paraprofessionals (teacher's aides and others) pursue a flexible path to earning bachelor's degrees in education and full-time teaching jobs within their school districts. Many of the courses are taught at the school or online. More than 900 teachers have graduated from the program, which has expanded over the years to more than 20 public, private, and charter schools.

Nursing

In 2021, a bachelor's degree program in nursing was launched in response to the critical need for nurses in Florida. As part of the program, the University formed a partnership with local hospital AdventHealth Zephyrhills, which offers an innovative Dedicated Education Unit to prepare and train future nurses and possible employees. Saint Leo nursing students receive intensive hands-on experience in multiple areas and specialties and are paired with a nurse mentor, who students work alongside. The first class of students from the program graduate this May.

Cybersecurity

Students in the university's cybersecurity program learn how to combat the world's cyberattacks inside the University's impressive Cyber Lab. Highly credentialed faculty provide students with real-world perspectives on the critical analysis, security policies, and mobile architectures changing the way global markets think about and protect information. Designated by the U.S. National Security Agency and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Saint Leo University is a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education.





Theology

Through its Master of Theology degree program, Saint Leo University is preparing future ordained deacons, as well as lay ecclesial ministers. The University currently maintains partnerships with the Catholic dioceses in St. Petersburg, FL; Orlando, FL; Savannah, GA; and Charleston, SC, providing deacon candidates with the education they need for their new roles. Additionally, the University offers a doctoral program in applied theology for those currently engaged in ministry.

Accounting

Saint Leo University's undergraduate and graduate accounting degree programs are STEM-designated programs that prepare students for entry-level and leadership accounting positions. Students in the bachelor's degree program receive support in becoming certified as a CPA, CMA, or CFE and have the opportunity to gain hands-on experience at top accounting firms. The master's degree program prepares students for advanced careers such as CPA, controller, analyst, and consultant across any industry.

“I never thought I would get the degree my father wanted so badly for me. I thank God every day that I was blessed to find this program, and I pray Saint Leo will continue to offer this option to others like me.”

— Mary Gianfrancesco '19
online accounting



At a **GLANCE**

We are Saint Leo University

University Campus

Our residential campus, set within beautiful Spanish Mission architecture, sits on 275 acres. It includes a new wellness center, four academic buildings, 12 residence halls, a student community center, coffeehouse, and several athletic facilities.

Education Centers

Our five education centers make it convenient for working professionals to pursue their educational goals, offering classes in the evenings and on weekends. Centers are located in Key West, FL, Savannah, GA, Tampa, FL, on MacDill Air Force Base, and at University Campus.

Center for Online Learning

We were among the first to launch a flexible online learning program in 1998. Today the Center for Online Learning offers more than 30 undergraduate and graduate degree programs to learners across the globe.





2023 – 2024 ENROLLMENT

UNDERGRADUATE

Online	3,900
University Campus	2,199
Education Centers	717
World Campus	2,393
Online Consortium of Independent Colleges and Universities	589
Course Sharing Partnerships	376

GRADUATE 2,715

DOCTORAL 409

TOTAL **13,298**

ACADEMICS

Degree Programs	55+
Minors	55+
Specializations	15+
Academic Colleges	4

ALUMNI

Living Alumni	106,000
Alumni Countries	91

ATHLETICS

Student-Athletes	500
Sunshine State Conference Championships	32
NCAA DII Championship Appearances	130

STUDENT LIFE

Clubs & Organizations	60
Competitive Teams	5
Residence Halls	12

EMPLOYEES

Faculty (including adjuncts)	869
Faculty with Terminal Degrees	113
Staff	466

Make Tampa Bay HOME

While Saint Leo University serves students across the globe, its home base is in East Pasco County — just a 45-minute drive north of Tampa, FL. Area residents enjoy quick access to some of the best beaches in the U.S., beautiful public parks, premiere shopping centers, and more than 240 days of sunshine. Walt Disney World, Universal Studios, and other theme parks in Orlando are just about an hour's drive east of campus.

- Tampa was named one of the world's greatest places by *TIME* magazine.
- Tampa Bay has the fourth-hottest job market in the country according to a *Wall Street Journal* report.
- Florida has routinely been ranked as the No. 1 state for higher education by *U.S. News and World Report*.



APPLICATIONS, Nominations, and Expressions of Interest

Mr. Larry Ladd and Dr. Sally Mason, representing AGB Search, will be assisting the Saint Leo University Presidential Search Committee. Prospective nominators or potential candidates are encouraged to contact Mr. Ladd or Dr. Mason directly by email prior to submitting materials.

Application materials must be submitted electronically and should include:

1) a letter of interest that addresses specifically how the candidate's experiences and qualifications intersect with Saint Leo University's priorities and desired attributes as outlined in the Leadership Profile; 2) a curriculum vitae; and 3) the names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses of five references for future contact. Please also include your professional relationship with each reference listed. The references will not be contacted without prior permission granted by the candidate. All candidate names will remain confidential.

For best consideration, applications should be submitted by June 2, 2025, to the AGB Search Portal: **Saint Leo University President**

Nominations and expressions of interest are encouraged. Please direct them to **SaintLeoPresident@agbsearch.com** or to the AGB search consultants listed below:

Larry Ladd, Executive Search Consultant
larry.ladd@agbsearch.com

Dr. Sally Mason, Senior Executive Search Consultant
sally.mason@agbsearch.com

**AGB
SEARCH**





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Saint Leo University has a strong commitment to principles of equal employment opportunity and equal access to education. Saint Leo University does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, ethnic origin, genetic information, sex, gender, national origin, race, religion, or veteran status, or any other category protected by federal, state, or local law in its educational programs, admissions policies, financial aid, employment, or other school administered programs.

The policy is enforced by Saint Leo University and by applicable laws such as Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VII and Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act, Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992.