



Opportunity Profile Dean of the Seminary

The Board of Trustees of North Park University (NPU) and the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC) announce the search for the next Dean of North Park Theological Seminary (NPTS).

North Park Theological Seminary: An Overview

NPTS dates to 1891 when courses in theological study were initiated by the ECC. The seminary's formal mission statement follows:

North Park Theological Seminary, as the seminary of The Evangelical Covenant Church, participates in the mission of the Triune God by educating whole persons with the whole gospel for the whole world, producing evangelical scholarship, and serving Christ's church.

Students at the seminary receive an integrated education of academic rigor, spiritual formation, and applied learning. Additionally, the shaping role of lived-community encompassing students, faculty, and staff is a high value. NPTS seeks to cultivate among all students personal holiness, apostolic identity, intellectual integrity, evangelical witness, and ethical commitment.

NPTS has seen a solid advance in the past decade in faculty and degree offerings. Roughly 250 full- and part-time students are enrolled in degree programs (approximately 200 on campus and 50 distance learners), reflecting ethnic and gender diversity. FTE enrollment has fluctuated in the past decade between 100 and 120 students annually, with recruitment supported in recent years by two major scholarship programs. While most of the students have an ECC connection, many other church backgrounds are represented in the NPTS student body.

In addition to a Master of Divinity, NPTS offers focused master's degrees in Ministry, Christian Formation, and Theological Studies. Dual degree programs, particularly in business and nonprofit management, enable students to earn graduate degrees from the seminary and the university. A Doctor of Ministry in preaching is awarded through a cooperative program with area seminaries.

Alumni of the seminary serve with distinction in a variety of vocational ministries including as pastors, educators, missionaries, youth pastors, camp directors, and administrators in congregational, parachurch and nonprofit settings. The seminary's full-time faculty is comprised of 15 highly qualified individuals across the full array of seminary disciplines.

The Seminary in the Context of North Park University

The seminary is a dimension of and is situated on the campus of North Park University in Chicago. At NPU programs are rooted in a common mission and vision through which students prepare “for lives of significance and service.” The core identity of NPU is characterized as “distinctively Christian, intentionally urban, and purposefully multicultural.” The seminary shares the university’s mission and core identity and also has a particular mission statement (see above) to support its refined focus.

NPU is governed by a Board of Trustees who oversees all programs and is elected by the ECC. The Dean of the Seminary reports to the university President and is a member of the university’s senior leadership team. Working alongside the university President, the Dean of the Seminary leads development and implementation of a strategic vision and direction for the seminary. NPU is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association, and NPTS is further accredited by the Association of Theological Schools.

NPTS reaps many intellectual, cultural, and spiritual benefits by its university context and campus aesthetic, as well as its setting in a world-class city. Additionally, the university historically has provided financial support for the seminary. In turn, through its various programs and the expertise of faculty, staff, and students the seminary enhances the overall program and life of the broader university.

The seminary is housed primarily in a three-story building in the center of the 35 acre award winning university campus. Students at NPTS enjoy many of the university’s amenities and services including academic facilities, student residences, an undergraduate and graduate library, technology and media services, and recreation facilities.

The Seminary in the Context of the Evangelical Covenant Church

North Park was founded by, and remains integrally connected to the ECC, a rapidly growing multi-ethnic denomination of some 800 churches in the United States and Canada, with partnerships in more than 30 countries. NPTS embraces students from a variety of ecclesial backgrounds while 60% have an ECC connection.

The Dean of the Seminary has an important role in connecting the seminary with the larger mission of the ECC. The Dean serves as the primary liaison between the seminary and the ECC in areas related to the education of ministerial candidates. The Dean sits on the ECC Council of Administrators (a senior leadership group) as well as the Board of Ordered Ministry, the ministerial credentialing body of the ECC. The Dean is formally called to the position by the ECC Annual Meeting. One requirement for the position is ordination in the ECC.

Leadership Direction and Challenge

NPTS is rooted in the Pietist heritage of the Evangelical Covenant Church. We are passionate about the integration of study, spirituality, and service. This expresses itself in commitment to Scripture as God’s word to all, to forming vital Christian character and devotion, and to practical expression of love for God and neighbor.

The new Dean of the Seminary will lead NPTS in re-imagining theological education in a way that embodies its heritage and values for the 21st century. He or she will lead in creating a renewed story for the institution that will galvanize faculty, staff, and students to walk a new road together. He or she will inspire the change needed to align NPTS more fully with new patterns in the church’s participation in the mission of God.

At NPTS we are encouraged with exciting new opportunities, including those presented by the recent growth of the ECC, its dramatic ethnic diversification, and its current 'Organizing for Mission' project. As with many other seminaries, the changing face of theological education also presents NPTS with significant challenges, not the least of which is fiscal sustainability. Other challenges include those of faculty profile, curricular structure and program delivery, student recruitment and graduate placement.

Leadership Role and Responsibilities

As the senior administrator responsible for the seminary and as the principal public face of the seminary, the Dean of the Seminary is responsible to:

- lead in articulating, promoting, and aligning the mission, vision, and identity of the seminary;
- lead the faculty in educational program development in the seminary;
- oversee the financial and operational management of the seminary;
- collaborate with the university president, the CFO, and the vice president for development to assure the ongoing strengthening of the seminary's financial foundation to sustain long-term operational, capital, and endowment needs;
- foster the seminary's relationship with the ECC, other churches, the broader university, global partners, and the wider communities of our urban context;
- collaborate with the vice president for enrollment and marketing and other personnel in student recruitment to achieve enrollment expectations;
- promote gender, ethnic, and cultural diversity and inclusion in the seminary community and curriculum in a manner reflective of the mandate of the gospel, the university's urban context, and the growing diversity of the ECC;
- provide oversight for organizational development and change and for the building of dynamic faculty/staff teams; and
- represent NPTS as appropriate with ATS and provide oversight for accreditation processes.

The Dean of the Seminary is assisted by other administrative positions as necessary. Additionally, in collaboration with the University President, the Dean serves as the administrative liaison to the Seminary Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Desired Attributes of the Dean of the Seminary

The Dean of the Seminary should present a combination of personal and professional qualities that directly address the leadership needs presented above. He or she will fully embrace the mission of the university and seminary and the distinctive identity of NPTS within the broader context of the NPU educational community.

The nominee for this position will be a deeply spiritual follower of Jesus Christ with a vibrant faith; be a mature, confident, congenial, humble, and authentic person; and have ministerial credentials in the ECC (or be willing to transfer credentials as appropriate).

It is critical that the successful candidate:

- demonstrate and articulate a dynamic vision for the future of theological education;
- combine strong capabilities as a team-builder, change agent, and strategic and generative thinker;
- clearly understand, avidly support, and have personal experience in church ministry in multiple cultural and ethnic communities and genuinely appreciate developing expressions of evangelicalism; and
- be passionately committed to the world-wide mission of the church and its implementation by the ECC.

Additionally, the candidate will be expected to

- have a graduate degree from an accredited seminary comparable to North Park, and hold an earned doctorate (Ph.D. preferred);
- have teaching, pastoral and administrative experience in both church and educational contexts;
- demonstrate an affinity and ability to raise funds and embrace doing so on behalf of NPTS;
- possess business and management skills to oversee the seminary's financial and organizational affairs effectively;
- demonstrate a love for empowering people to reach their potential;
- exhibit personal and professional integrity, leadership transparency, and deep appreciation for community within the work setting; and
- understand, embrace, and articulate the seminary's place within the broader university context as a benefit to student learning.

The Nomination and Application Process

The Seminary Leadership Search Committee welcomes nominations and applications for the position of Dean of the Seminary. To nominate an individual send his/her name and a brief background statement to the committee chair, Mr. Paul Hawkinson, via Ms. Karen Mears at kmears@northpark.edu.

To apply, candidates should submit the following materials:

- a letter of candidacy responding to the four critical descriptors identified above;
- a complete résumé or vita;
- brief essays (2-3 pages each) on the following topics:
 - your personal journey of faith;
 - your commitment to and support for the mission and educational program of NPTS and its relationship to the ECC worldwide;
 - your perspective on and vision for the future of theological education generally, with application to the specific context of NPTS;
 - your understanding of and personal commitment to the three-fold core institutional identity of NPU (as “distinctively Christian, intentionally urban, and purposefully multicultural”) and your personal life experiences and expertise which will assist you to advance this identity as Dean of the Seminary;
- names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of five references (for future contact as involvement in the search process develops), all of which will be held in full confidence.

Preferably these documents will arrive for committee review by December 9, 2011, though applications will be received and considered until an appointment is made. Our expectation is that the person selected will be approved by the NPU Board of Trustees in the spring of 2012 and by the Annual Meeting of the ECC in June 2012. Ideally the new Dean of the Seminary will assume the appointment on July 1, 2012.

All application materials should be submitted electronically to the committee chair, Mr. Paul Hawkinson, via Ms. Karen Mears at: kmears@northpark.edu.

Applicants may locate additional information on the university, seminary, and church at the following web locations:

www.northpark.edu

www.northpark.edu/seminary

www.covchurch.org

Supporting materials of interest to candidates are available at:

www.northpark.edu/About/Office-of-the-President/Seminary-Leadership-Search.aspx