



Santa Clara
Mission and Ministry

Center for Spirituality and Faith Rationale

The Center for Spirituality and Faith (CSF) is a reimagination of Campus Ministry with a primary mission: develop creative and innovative directions to meet the rapidly evolving context of religious and spiritual life at SCU as a Jesuit, Catholic university with a diverse and multi-faith student body. This new Center is a key component of the first mission priority (see below) emerging from the extensive [Mission Priority Examen](#), which launched in December 2024 and concluded in January 2026.

Campus Ministry has been a stalwart component on Jesuit, Catholic campuses for decades. It has been a home to receive students who came to SCU having grown up in a Catholic context, often from Catholic schooling and/or with an active Catholic parish life. Over the years, Campus Ministry also expanded to offer support for the formation of students from other faith traditions, and at times also supported the intentional formation of students together who shared different faith experiences. The student body had a critical mass of students who identified with faith traditions, especially Catholicism, and Campus Ministry served those who came through its doors. The programming was tried and true across peer institutions, and the staff could draw on their own personal experiences in college – often as engaged Catholics themselves – to inform and drive the work.

This generation of students is different and we need to respond more strategically to support them, guided by our [Mission Priority Examen](#). The majority of students do not identify with any religious tradition, and in many cases have not been exposed to faith-based experiences prior to arrival at SCU. There is not a foundation of a common language nor a general pre-existing sense for the value of spiritual and religious exploration and formation. Nevertheless, the students also have a deep hunger in the search for meaning and a connection to something greater. They thirst for deeper connections to peers built on a set of values that draw them into community with one another and a sense of belonging and purpose in life.



Excerpt of Mission Priority 1 taken from the [Mission Priority Examen Self-Study Report](#)

Mission Priority 1: Promoting Greater Depth in Living our Mission

Our first mission priority aims to promote opportunities for greater depth of engagement with our Ignatian mission and guiding values, and with their roots in our Jesuit, Catholic traditions and identity. To achieve this, we have developed a set of six key “Jesuit values” that can be consistently named and celebrated, and that can serve as touchstones for our ongoing work. These six values are: Seeking God in All Things, Reflection and Discernment, Cura Personalis / Care for the Whole Person, Faith that Does Justice, People For and With Others, and Care for Our Common Home. To aid in naming and celebrating these values, new banners have been developed and placed prominently on campus, and these are regularly being referenced in speeches and publications.

In addition, we especially will seek to offer the possibility for deeper exploration of spirituality and faith, across traditions and backgrounds, with a special focus on Ignatian, Jesuit, and Catholic approaches. In doing so, we will seek to engage our members of our community where they are. This will involve giving special attention to the large number (a majority) of members of our community who come with diverse faith backgrounds, or increasingly, with no organized faith background. We believe our Ignatian spirituality is especially suited to this, and can open doors to deepening the other Jesuit values that are already well established in our community. At the same time, we will commit time and resources to accompanying students who come to us with significant faith commitments to deepen their living of those faiths. Our Catholic students are especially eager to have richer experiences of Catholic liturgy, retreats, theology, and formation opportunities, and we see great opportunities for these to serve both them and the whole community.

Concretely, achieving this goal will involve several initiatives—all of which are clear, achievable, and verifiable, and strongly aligned with the University’s Impact 2030 Strategic Plan. Formation programs, already well developed for newly arriving students, faculty, and staff, will be expanded to accompany each community member’s progression across their time at Santa Clara. We will also explore ways to recognize and celebrate the living of mission by faculty and staff, and we will draw on these leaders ever more fully to support mission animation across the university. Importantly, we envision creating a standing cross-university committee on Mission, led by the vice president for mission and ministry and with members from each of the schools and other units, to regularly share ideas and to function as an ongoing “mini-examen” body for our living of our mission. At the same time, we foresee significant positive changes coming to Santa Clara through a reorganization and reimagining of our current Campus Ministry office—a term which is not well understood by many students—into what might be called an Office of Spirituality and Faith. Likewise, we see great opportunities for synergies and collaborative ministry and formation through the relocation and integration of the Jesuit School of Theology, currently located in Berkeley, to the Mission Campus.