



## CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY STRATEGIC PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Candler School of Theology sits at the heart of Emory University. Programmatically as well as physically, Candler is poised to be a, if not the, *centering institution for Emory, a world leader in theological education and religious studies, a molder of the church's social conscience, and an agent of reconciliation within and beyond the Atlanta community*. By 2015 Candler will have secured this leadership position through plans to renew all of its instructional, administrative, and library facilities, to endow new chairs, to underwrite its community-outreach programs, and to secure adequate scholarship resources.

Candler's aspirations for itself are enhanced and supported by Emory University's distinctive intellectual and programmatic profile. At Emory, the study of religion, religious practice, ties with specific religious communities, and the study of theology have found and continue to find themselves in a place that is religiously pluralistic and intellectually complex. The pivotal role of the study of religion at Emory, unparalleled in top-flight research universities, creates opportunities for ethically engaged and inquiry driven conversations that simply are not possible elsewhere. This positions Emory in general and Candler in particular to be leaders in public conversations about religion in the U.S. Candler's strategic plan charts the leadership role that Candler will have in those conversations, and the University plan identifies religious study as one of the several cross-cutting themes to be given privileged attention in the decade ahead.

Candler School of Theology is one of a very few theological schools in the world with equally strong commitments to the church and the academy, to the preparation of ministers and other religious leaders, and to the education of outstanding academic scholars in religion. The church trusts Candler to train excellent leaders; the academy looks to Candler and Emory for leading research scholars. The naming of these two commitments as the first goals in our strategic plan affirms Candler's steady and enthusiastic resolve to support them, to strengthen them, and to continue to allow them to be mutually enriching.

Candler as a whole with its incredible faculty strengths across the spectrum from the classical through the practical fields plays pivotal roles in connecting Emory to Atlanta and its congregations and care institutions, to the religious communities across the world, and to the United Methodist Church. Our vision statement well expresses our goals for ourselves and the crucial role we intend to play in the accomplishment of Emory University's vision. Our vision combines attention to first-rate education with a commitment to strengthening the public witness of the churches for the positive transformation of church and world.

As we look toward the future, we anticipate building on our manifold ties with the Emory College Religion Department and the Graduate Division of Religion in our doctoral venture in religious practices and practical theology (supported by grants from the Lilly Endowment, Inc.). The Pitts Theology Library serves the hundreds of faculty across the University with research and teaching interests in the religious traditions that have shaped Western and world cultures. Its new facilities, one of the central goals of the strategic plan will make it a world-class research center. Similarly, Candler faculty and programs engage the various university departments, particularly in the humanities and social sciences, which attend to the cultures touched by Christianity and Judaism (for instance,

Classical, Middle Eastern, African American, African, and Women's Studies; History; Philosophy; Anthropology).

Recent developments illustrate the breadth of interest in religion across Emory. The Carlos Museum and Candler are reclaiming old relations based in both of our investments in the biblical world. Candler and Law have quite extraordinary "law and religion" connections, both instructional and scholarly, and we are both intending to continue to build on that strength. The Ethics Center, with whom Candler has had and continues to enjoy a close partnership, has relocated to our sector of campus and reinforces our new relations with the health sciences and bio-medical enquiry. Our joint degree programs with Business, Law, and Public Health offer exciting possibilities that we look forward to exploring. These developments establish the foundations upon which the Candler School of Theology can exercise leadership roles within the University, in theological education and religious studies generally, across the Atlanta community, and globally.

A vital part of an internationally ranked research university, with strong educational programs, a world-class theological library, a superb faculty with an impressive record of research and publication, a diverse student body, alumni serving in leadership positions around the world, and a stimulating setting in a vibrant, culturally rich city, Candler School of Theology aspires ***to be the best in theological education, a shaper of the community's conscience, a reconciling agent for church and society, and a leader for Emory.***