



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## CLAREMONT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY SIGNS AFFILIATION AGREEMENT WITH WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY IN SALEM, OR.

CLAREMONT, CA— It is with pleasure and excitement that we announce that the Boards of Trustees at both Willamette University and Claremont School of Theology have jointly approved an affiliation agreement, the next and critical step towards a shared future.

This formal affiliation agreement brings together two institutions that share a common mission to educate students and prepare them for lives that contribute to and transform their communities.

Willamette seeks to be the Northwest's premier liberal arts university, educating leaders for their region and the world by building distinctive programs that leverage collaborative partnerships between its undergraduate and graduate schools. Claremont School of Theology (CST) aims to position itself as the foremost theological school in the western United States by providing transformative ecumenical and inter-religious theological education that engages local and global communities.

Together, the two institutions will have immediate opportunities for improving and enhancing student experiences in existing programs. CST students will have the advantage of additional student support services available at a larger university, and Willamette students will have a greater breadth of curricular offerings. But most exciting will be entirely new opportunities for joint and collaborative work in areas of great interest to faculty and students from both institutions.

CST will incrementally move its programs to Salem, and collaborative activities of the two institutions will increase. Work will continue on CST's planned sale of its California campus, as well as on obtaining the necessary legal, regulatory, and accreditation approvals. The entire CST faculty is committed to the relocation. However, first to arrive to Salem will be several CST faculty and staff members, who will serve about 120 students in the hybrid (online, low-residency) and residential Master's programs during the 2019-20 academic year. A much larger relocation of people and programs is planned for the 2020-21 academic year. Active planning has begun for the relocation of the core of CST's library resources. More information is available [here](#).

The relocation of the internationally-renowned programs of CST to Salem also promises to fundamentally reshape progressive theological education throughout the Pacific Northwest, deepen Willamette's connection to the diverse faith communities of the region, and strengthen CST's commitment to serving the western United States. Together, the combined institutions have the potential to add value not only to the experiences of students, but also to society and the communities in which their graduates live and work.

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Established in 1885, Claremont School of Theology is fully recognized and approved as one of thirteen official theological schools of The United Methodist Church, with close relationships with other Protestant denominations, as well as many interreligious partnerships. CST offers graduate level programs, including Master of Arts, Master of Divinity, Doctor of Ministry, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in religion and practical theology.

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