



RSO Application Questions and Responses

Please provide a brief statement explaining why your organization desires to become an RSO of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod:

At its December 6, 2024, meeting in Denver, the Board of Regents of Luther Classical College (LCC) voted to apply for RSO status with The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. LCC is not a Synod college like the Synod's Concordias, but it is sponsored by over 320 LCMS patrons and 197 LCMS congregations. The members of LCC's governing Board and faculty are required to be members of Synod by LCC's governance policies, and all of LCC's current incoming students are members of LCMS congregations. LCC holds to the highest confessional Lutheran standards in its doctrine and practice.

LCC is the first congregationally founded confessional Lutheran college in decades. LCC desires to become an RSO of Synod in order to formalize LCC's churchly relationship to the congregations of Synod and the ecclesiastical supervision of its doctrine and practice. RSO status would also allow LCC to benefit from services provided by various agencies of Synod, such as Concordia Plans Services, Lutheran Church Extension Fund, and Lutheran Foundation.

Please provide a brief statement explaining how your organization relates to the mission and ministry of the LCMS:

"Luther Classical College educates Lutherans in the classical, Lutheran tradition and prepares them for godly vocations within family, church, and society, fostering Christian culture through study of the best of our Western heritage." (LCC Mission Statement)

"The Synod, under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions shall...Aid congregations to develop processes of thorough Christian education and nurture and to establish agencies of Christian education such as elementary and secondary schools and to support synodical colleges, universities, and seminaries" (LCMS 2023 Handbook, Constitution, Article III "Objectives", 5).

The recovery of the Western, Christian heritage of classical education has been growing in the United States since the 1990s, beginning among Lutherans with a few classical schools and the first conferences of the Consortium for Classical Lutheran Education (CCLE), which will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2025. The movement is now growing rapidly among LCMS schools and homeschools.

From its beginning, the classical Lutheran education movement in the LCMS sought to find and recruit classically trained pastors, teachers, and headmasters. For the past quarter-century Lutheran

schools and parents have contemplated the need for a Lutheran classical college in which Christian doctrine, philosophy, history, literature, the classical languages, and mathematics are thoroughly integrated and incorporated into the life of the home, church, and community. LCC offers a B.A. in Classical Liberal Arts with tracks for teaching, pre-seminary, and parish music which are intended to help address the need for classically trained pastors, teachers, and church musicians in the Synod's churches and schools.

The successful start of Luther Classical College, which has generated (1) extensive interest throughout the LCMS, (2) over 30 (and counting) student applications for the 2025-2026 academic year, (3) generous financial support, and (4) the appointment of a quality and well-respected faculty, indicates the strength of the classical education movement in the LCMS. LCC extends the educational course of classical education into college and strengthens the efforts to distribute the blessings of a rich classical Lutheran education into Lutheran homes and congregations. These efforts are in complete alignment with the mission and ministry of the LCMS.

LCC is resolutely a college of the church – founded by a local LCMS congregation, receiving ongoing encouragement and ecclesiastical supervision from the Wyoming District of the LCMS, and being supported financially by 197 LCMS congregations nationwide as of this writing.

BRIEF HISTORY

Luther Classical College (LCC) was founded in 2020 as a mission of Mount Hope Lutheran Church (LCMS) with the goal of establishing a conservative, classical, Lutheran college in Casper, Wyoming, where students would study the best of the Christian Western heritage in preparation for godly vocations within family, church, and society. Since 2020, a Board of Regents consisting of LCMS clergy and laymen, as well as a growing number of staff and faculty, have worked to prepare LCC to open its doors to the first cohort of students in 2025. Significant accomplishments and milestones include:

- ◇ 16 acres of land in Casper, Wyoming, acquired for building the college campus.
- ◇ Construction begun on the first on-campus student house. (2024)
- ◇ An endowment from the Walter C. Dissen Charitable Trust to establish a Chair at LCC. (2024)
- ◇ Over 320 LCMS patrons providing financial support.
- ◇ 197 LCMS supporting congregations.
- ◇ Over 30 (and counting) student applications for the 2025-2026 academic year.
- ◇ Rev. Dr. Maj (ret) Harold Ristau appointed to serve as LCC's first President. (2024)
- ◇ Dr. Ryan MacPherson appointed to serve as LCC's Academic Dean. (2023)
- ◇ Dr. Caleb Karges appointed to serve as LCC's Dean of Students. (2024)
- ◇ Rev. Joshua Hayes appointed to serve as LCC's Dean of Chapel. (2024)
- ◇ Publishing of LCC's *Christian Culture* magazine, established in 2021.
- ◇ Establishment of the annual Christian Culture Conference hosted by LCC in Casper, Wyoming, since 2023.
- ◇ Academic library established in 2023, containing thousands of donated books.
- ◇ Publishing of LCC's first Academic Catalog. (2024)
- ◇ Appointment of faculty for LCC's inaugural year, including:
 - Rev. Dr. Maj (ret) Harold Ristau
 - Dr. Ryan MacPherson
 - Dr. Gene Edward Veith, Jr.
 - Dr. Caleb Karges
 - Rev. Joshua Hayes
 - Dr. William Lipke

MISSION STATEMENT

Luther Classical College educates Lutherans in the classical, Lutheran tradition and prepares them for godly vocations within family, church, and society, fostering Christian culture through study of the best of our Western heritage.

VISION STATEMENT

Luther Classical College offers both B.A. and A.A. programs in which students learn the truth of the Christian faith as professed in the Lutheran Confessions; are encouraged in genuine Lutheran culture; and are prepared for life in the home, the church, and the community – cherishing the Western corpus of literature, philosophy, music, art, scientific discovery, and Christian theology, and preserving the use of classical languages.

INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. To cultivate confessional Lutheran theology, liturgy, hymnody, and heritage through chapel worship, classroom instruction, and public performances and exhibitions that showcase the Gospel message of salvation in Christ.
2. To transmit the greatest insights of the Western liberal arts tradition to the next generation through a robustly classical core curriculum required of all students, including Latin readings for all B.A. students.
3. To instill in the rising generation of Lutherans the priority of Christian marriage, family, and piety, through instruction in the doctrine of vocation and virtuous examples of faculty, staff, and administrators.
4. To equip students to serve those whom God will entrust to their care in the family, the church, and the community by offering distinctive programs of study suitable to a wide range of vocations.

PROGRAMS OFFERED & PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Core Program Objective: To provide a common foundation in confessional Lutheran theology and the classical liberal arts tradition for all students through the required general education core curriculum.

1. A.A. Program Objectives

General Track: To provide students with a two-year curriculum in Lutheran theology and the classical liberal arts, especially appropriate for the vocation of Christian motherhood and for careers requiring neither a bachelor's degree nor specific trade skills.

Trade Partnership Track: To prepare students for a well-rounded set of vocations that includes gainful employment in a skilled trade, through relationships with Casper College and local businesses.

2. B.A. Program Objectives

General Track: To provide students with a four-year curriculum in Lutheran theology and the classical liberal arts, instilling a passion for family life, deepening one's appreciation for the church, and cultivating a broad skill set appropriate for many careers.

Pre-Seminary Track: To prepare students spiritually, morally, and intellectually for enrollment at a confessional Lutheran theological seminary in preparation for ordination into the pastoral office.

Teacher Certification Track: To prepare students to teach in classical Lutheran schools, through completion of the certification requirements of the Consortium of Classical Lutheran Education (CCLE).

Parish Music Track: To prepare students to support the church musically with instrumental accompaniment, conducting, composition, and the fostering of congregational part-singing.

BOARD OF REGENTS

Name	Church Body Affiliation	Term
Mr. Justin Benson	LCMS	12/7/2020 - Present
Rev. Paul Cain	LCMS	12/7/2020 - Present
Mr. Micah Christensen (Treasurer)	LCMS	12/7/2020 - Present
Mr. Larry Harrington	LCMS	12/7/2020 - Present
Rev. John Hill	LCMS	12/7/2020 - Present
Rev. Christopher Maronde (Vice-Chair)	LCMS	12/7/2020 - Present
Rev. Jon Olson	LCMS	12/6/2024 - Present
Rev. Dr. Christian Preus (Chairman)	LCMS	12/7/2020 - Present
Rev. Andrew Richard (Secretary)	LCMS	12/7/2020 - Present
Rev. Reed Shoaff	LCMS	12/7/2020 - Present
Mr. Jeffrey Snyder	LCMS	12/7/2020 - Present
Mr. Tim Wood	LCMS	12/7/2023 - Present
Dr. Scott Yenor	LCMS	6/3/2024 - Present

CALLED ROSTERED WORKERS ON STAFF

Name	Affiliation	Title
Rev. Dr. Maj (ret) Harold Ristau	LCMS	President; Professor of Theology
Dr. Caleb Karges	LCMS	Dean of Students; Associate Professor of Humanities
Rev. Joshua Hayes	LCMS	Dean of Chapel; Assistant Professor of Theology & Classical Languages
Rev. Thomas Obersat	LCMS	Advancement Officer

AFFILIATIONS & CONNECTIONS

Wyoming District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

The Wyoming District of the LCMS provides ecclesiastical oversight over the rostered faculty and staff of the college to ensure the theological integrity of Luther Classical College. The District also collaborates with the college in the development of library resources and the placement of B.A. Teacher Certification Track students in classical Lutheran schools for field experience. Additionally, the District assists LCC in placing B.A. Teacher Certification Track graduates in teaching positions and in interviewing B.A. Pre-Seminary/Biblical Languages Track students for admission to LCMS seminaries.

Mount Hope Lutheran Church – Casper, Wyoming (LCMS)

LCC was founded with the support of Mt. Hope Lutheran Church as its first sponsoring congregation. The Board of Elders of Mt. Hope participates in the process of nominating candidates to serve on LCC's Board of Regents, and the congregation extends concurrent calls to rostered workers who are hired as faculty or staff at LCC. The Senior Pastor and one Elder of Mt. Hope are ex officio members of LCC's Board of Regents.

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church – Casper, Wyoming (LCMS)

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Casper is a supporting congregation of LCC and will serve as the instructional site for the college's 2025-2026 academic year. The Board of Elders of Trinity also participates in the process of nominating candidates to serve on LCC's Board of Regents, and the congregation extends concurrent calls to rostered workers who are hired as faculty or staff at LCC. The Senior Pastor and one Elder of Trinity are ex officio members of LCC's Board of Regents.

Classical Lutheran Schools

The following Lutheran schools have agreed to serve as field experience sites for LCC students in the B.A. Teacher Certification Track. They are listed in sequence of proximity to LCC.

- ◇ Mount Hope Lutheran School – Casper, Wyoming
- ◇ Trinity Lutheran School – Riverton, Wyoming
- ◇ Martin Luther Grammar School – Sheridan, Wyoming
- ◇ Immanuel Academy – Sheridan, Wyoming
- ◇ Trinity Lutheran School – Cheyenne, Wyoming
- ◇ Immanuel Lutheran School – Alliance, Nebraska
- ◇ Trinity Lutheran Classical School – Miles City, Montana
- ◇ Concordia Lutheran Elementary School – Riverton, Utah
- ◇ Immanuel Lutheran School – Roswell, New Mexico
- ◇ Zion Lutheran School – Nampa, Idaho
- ◇ Wittenberg Academy – Online

Concordia University Nebraska (CUNE)

LCC maintains active communication with administrators at Concordia University Nebraska (CUNE) regarding transfer of credit for graduates from LCC's A.A. General Track who wish to pursue a specialized major at CUNE. The two colleges are pursuing an alignment between LCC's A.A. Core Requirements and CUNE's "Living Pathways" general education requirements.

Consortium for Classical Lutheran Education (CCLE)

The Consortium for Classical Lutheran Education (a LCMS RSO) has developed “Marks for Excellence” for teachers, school administrators, and schools in the classical Lutheran tradition. As a CCLE Classical Lutheran Teacher Preparation Program, LCC’s B.A. Teaching Certification Track prepares students with a portfolio of experiences in and beyond the college classroom so that they can submit a successful application for Classical Lutheran Teacher Certification to CCLE. LCC faculty regularly attend and present at the annual CCLE conference. CCLE-affiliated schools also serve as host sites for student field experience.

Lutheran Institute of Regenerative Agriculture (LIRA)

The Lutheran Institute of Regenerative Agriculture (LIRA), located in southern Iowa at Legacy Farms, provides summer work and apprenticeship opportunities for Lutheran young people, while also hosting conferences and retreats. LCC students have opportunities to work, to learn, and to teach, with subject matter ranging from regenerative farming techniques to the Lutheran liberal arts.

Trade Schools

LCC’s A.A. Trade Partnership Track requires at least 3 credits to be completed in a skilled trade course; upon graduating with an A.A. at LCC, students complete a trade certificate by taking additional courses at a trade school. LCC assists students in finding a trade school and selecting trade courses that suit individualized plans. LCC is in active communication with faculty and administrators at the following trade schools:

- ◇ Casper College – Casper, Wyoming
- ◇ Tarkio Technology Institute – Tarkio, Missouri

FUNDRAISING POLICY

In support of its mission the College seeks to receive gifts and donations in an upright manner before God and man. The purpose of this policy is to address how this process will be carried out in accordance with biblical standards and other policies of the College. This policy will also comply with applicable federal and state laws and professional standards.

1. Definitions

Gifts and Donations: A gift or donation is an irrevocable transfer of money, property, or other consideration from a donor for which the donor receives no goods, services, benefits, or quantitative tangible value in exchange.

- In-kind gifts: In-kind gifts are any gifts of goods or services rather than money and may include, but are not limited to, professional services, real property, personal property, or literary collections.

Real property: Land, buildings, or other fixed property.

Personal property: Vehicles, furniture, and other movable property.

- Other non-cash gifts: Gifts that are neither money, goods, nor services and include, but are not limited to, stocks and securities.

Pledges: Written commitments by a donor to give a specified dollar amount at or over a specified time period without donor-imposed contingencies or conditions.

2. Financial Development

In pursuit of the stated mission of LCC, the organization seeks financial support from donors to establish, grow, and enrich a stable and continuing future for this educational institution and its students. In seeking such support, the personnel of LCC will employ scriptural wisdom and hold themselves to the highest ethical and godly standards.

3. Gift Solicitation & Acknowledgement

All solicitations for gifts and donations will be coordinated by the Director of Development and overseen by the President. The Director of Development is responsible for donor relations with all current and future donors. Of paramount importance is ensuring the intent of the donor is honored in the use of the gift. In addition, donor relations will be maintained by appropriate acknowledgement and recognition of donors. Personal acknowledgment of donors will be made, and documentation of the gift received will be provided in a timely manner in accordance with IRS guidance. The documentation of the gift received may be a simple form (name of person or entity making donation, date, items received, statement of “no goods or services provided other than that of intangible religious value,” signature of receiver, etc.) or other forms required by IRS regulations depending on the nature of the gift. [Note: it is the responsibility of the donor to determine the value of an in-kind gift and therefore no value is listed on the documentation of such gifts received]. Recognition may also be made for some donors at the discretion of the Director of Development while always respecting the privacy of donors and honoring the wishes of anonymous donors to remain anonymous.

4. Gift Acceptance

Certain types of gifts must be reviewed prior to acceptance due to the special liabilities they may pose for the College. Examples of gifts which will be subject to review by the Director of Development, along with the President and CFO as necessary, include gifts of real property, personal property, stocks, securities, and other in-kind gifts.

The College, through the Director of Advancement, retains the right to refuse any gift in conflict with the College’s mission, or if the gift is not suitable. The Director of Advancement and the management team will evaluate any potential liabilities or maintenance considerations associated with a gift in deciding whether to accept or refuse the gift. In addition, these considerations will be evaluated when deciding whether to retain an accepted gift or liquidate it. All gifts whether monetary, in-kind, or non-cash, will be properly recorded in the records of the College.

OFFICE LOCATIONS

Instructional Site

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
1240 S Missouri Ave
Casper, WY 82609

Administration & Library

Lutheran Ministries Center
2400 Hickory St
Casper, WY 82604