

Stephen E. Waers, Ph.D.

Prior to accepting the call to become Milligan University's 16th president, Stephen Waers distinguished himself as an innovative educator and administrator. Waers has spent the last three years serving as chief academic officer and chief information officer at Point University in Georgia. He held teaching appointments at Point and Manhattan Christian College in Kansas before moving into an administrative role at Point. Stephen and his wife Katie were married in May of 2007. Katie is a graduate of Georgia Tech with a degree in chemical and biomolecular engineering. Stephen and Katie have two daughters, Vivian (10) and Ellie (8). The family also has a black lab named Shadow.

EDUCATION

- 2016 Ph.D., Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI
Religious Studies – Historical Theology Dissertation: Monarchianism and Origen's Early Trinitarian Theology
- 2010 M.Div., Emmanuel Christian Seminary, Johnson City, TN
Concentration: Church History
- 2007 B.A., Point University, West Point, GA
Humanities and Biblical Studies (Dual Major)

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- 2021-pres. Chief Academic Officer and Chief Information Officer
Point University, West Point, GA

Significant Accomplishments:

Faculty Culture

Collaboratively developed three core markers of faculty culture: 1) formation of whole students; 2) intentional faculty community and collegiality; 3) recognition of a diversity of gifts and callings beyond what is on one's CVs. This revamp of faculty culture was meant to align faculty work more fully with the mission of Point—and make it clear that mentoring and student formation were key parts of equipping the next generation of Christian leaders.

Revamped key areas of faculty governance to align 1) faculty evaluation criteria; 2) faculty rank and promotion criteria; 3) faculty contracting

process. Faculty and administration coalesced around what things were most important in faculty work and changed evaluation procedures to match. Faculty in all disciplines are now ready to answer the question: “How are you ministering to your students in the name of Jesus both inside and outside the classroom?”

Program Portfolio Overhaul

In consultation with faculty and administration, he led the process of program evaluation based on enrollment, financial health, market demand, and mission fit. Today, Point has a more focused, missionally-aligned, and lean set of programs.

Digital Transformation

Architected digital transformation at Point University that moved the campus from a fragmented patchwork of systems to a tightly integrated digital ecosystem.

1. Led the transition of our student information system from Anthology Student to Ellucian Colleague SaaS
2. Transitioned from legacy, on-premises systems to native cloud solutions (active directory, file storage servers to SharePoint, finance and accounting software to cloud-hosted)
3. Introduced modern, adaptive security protocols for increased cyber-security compliance and added information security
4. Overhauled digital learning infrastructure:
 - a. Changed learning management system from legacy system (Sakai) to modern market-leader (Canvas) during the summer of 2020
 - b. Introduced AI-driven retention software in online programs to aid student retention (Dropout Detective)
5. Brought real-time data-analytics to the forefront of administrative decisioning:
 - a. New system of dashboards and analytical tools including a subscription dashboard that combined business data and student data to deliver analytical insight into the health of a rapidly growing online program
 - b. Introduced data-governance model
 - c. Implemented Coursedog suite to modernize the academic operations infrastructure using the power of AI

6. Built technological infrastructure for subscription “startup” that grew to \$6 million in annual revenue in the first year
 - a. Introduced CRM for direct-business sales
 - b. Built a series of custom programs to translate data between third-party systems and vendors and our SIS. Deployed as serverless applications in the Azure Cloud
7. Moved all service departments into a ticketing system (Zendesk) to improve customer service and increase administrative visibility. Created real-time dashboards for leaders to track customer service in their departments.

2020-2021 Chief Academic Officer
Point University, West Point, GA

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Point University

“BBS 102: The Drama of Scripture;” “HIS 201: Church History;” “THE 405: Christ, Culture, and Career;” “THE 490: Trinity, Incarnation, and Ministry;” “OTS 490: Studies in the Old Testament – Reading the OT with the Church Fathers”

Emmanuel Christian Seminary

“TH 7950: Theology of Food.” (Summer 2018)

Manhattan Christian College

“BIB 330: Advanced Biblical Interpretation;” “THE 341: Systematic Theology 1;” “THE 342: Systematic Theology 2;” “THE 435: Christian Ethics;” “THE 430: Christian Theology Through the Centuries;” “THE 431: Contemporary Theological Trends;” “THE 432: Christ in Film and Contemporary Culture” “THE 450: History and Theology of the Early Church”

Marquette University

“THEO 1001: Introduction to Theology” (Fall 2015)

Milligan University

“BIBL 471: Christ and Culture” (2010-2011)