



# ACADEMIC HANDBOOK

SAINT CHARLES BORROMEEO SEMINARY

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

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## INTRODUCTION

The School of Theological Studies (STS) serves the non-seminarian population of Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, providing Catholic theological education at all levels, from non-credit catechesis to graduate work.

Though the primary mission of Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary is the formation of Catholic priests, it is dedicated to the education of lay leaders in the Catholic community by offering academically challenging and theologically orthodox programs for the study of Catholic theology through STS. Curricula are developed and students are taught by the same quality faculty who educate the seminarian population. The aim of STS is to form future lay ministers to work collaboratively with future priests, each respecting the other's unique role in the Church.

The Graduate Program of STS offers a Master of Arts Degree in Theology. The Undergraduate Program offers two Certificates: the Roman Catechetical Diploma (which is granted with the approval of the Congregation for Clergy of the Holy See), and the Certificate in Pastoral Ministry to Black Catholics (MBC). In addition to these certificate programs, students may enroll in further college level studies in Liturgy, Youth Ministry, Christian Initiation (RCIA), Marriage and Family, and Religious Education.

The Catechetical Institute provides non-credit Catholic catechesis for adults and training for catechists and Catholic school teachers. All programs serve to enable a student to gain a deeper understanding of the faith that contributes to the growth of his or her relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Church Ministry Institute is three-year program of study set in a small-faith community environment that includes prayer, faith sharing, retreat days, theological reflection, ministry projects, book sharing, and pastoral skills formation.

STS offers a residential Summer Program for Religious which provides academic formation for Religious Orders. Room and

Board are provided alongside studies towards an MA in Theology or towards an Undergraduate Certificate.

The STS Division is an evening program on the campus of Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary and at various satellite locations throughout the Philadelphia area. Some programs are also available from anywhere in the world in a completely online format.

# GENERAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES

## 1. School of Theological Studies Faculty

The School of Theological Studies is served by the full time Faculty of St. Charles Seminary. In addition, competent adjunct faculty assist in teaching when needed. The Theology Division Faculty and the STS Academic Affairs Committee act as advisory bodies in order to assist the Academic Dean in the administration of the Academic Programs of the School of Theological Studies. One particular role of the Faculty is to serve as that body with which the Academic Dean ordinarily consults or from which he receives advice regarding the curriculum and operation of the Academic Programs of the School of Theological Studies.

## 2. Academic Honesty and Integrity

Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary presumes that all School of Theological Studies students come to Saint Charles with a desire to embrace the demands of intellectual formation and study. They take upon themselves the desire to grow in wisdom and knowledge of the faith and its development. As they enter into the realm of academic life they seek to fulfill all the requirements with honesty and seek excellence in their work.

Accordingly the policy of the School of Theological Studies, is as follows: “Observance of total honesty in the pursuit of one’s formal studies is required of each STS student. No instance of plagiarism, cheating, or falsification of research work, examinations or academic records will be tolerated and will make the student liable to dismissal.”

## 3. Academic Probation

All students pursuing the Master of Arts degree must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00 (B) to remain in

good academic standing. If a student's GPA falls below the requirement, the student will be placed on Academic Probation. A student placed on Academic Probation must obtain the minimum cumulative GPA within the next three courses taken, with no more than fourteen courses taken towards the degree. Failure to obtain the required GPA will cause the student to be subject to dismissal from the program. The Academic Dean reserves the right to make final decisions regarding dismissal.

#### **4. Audits**

To audit a class, an official Audit Request Form must be submitted to the Academic Dean before the fourth class period. Auditors must have permission to audit from both the instructor and the Academic Dean. Normal tuition and fees apply when auditing courses, unless otherwise stated in the Registration Packet.

#### **5. Books**

Students must obtain their books from third-party vendors as the Seminary does not have a bookstore.

#### **6. Course Syllabi**

A course syllabus is to be generated by the professor for each accredited course taught in the School of Theological Studies. The syllabi are distributed to the students in the beginning of each class and should provide them with the following information: a description of the course, expected outcomes of the course, the methods used for evaluation of the seminarian's learning, a schedule of topics to be covered in the course, a list of the expectations for the students and a bibliography for further reading.

## **7. Credit Hours**

Course sessions are described in terms of credit hours. In the School of Theological Studies, a class is normally a three-credit course. Normally, three credit classes meet once a week in 3 hour sessions during the Fall and Spring semesters, and twice a week in 3 hour sessions during the Summer semester. A total of at least 42 rigorous classroom hours of instruction is achieved for each 3 credit course, not including exam hours. Normally, this means 14 regular class sessions per semester at 3 hours per session plus a 15<sup>th</sup> meeting for a final exam, or some other means of final assessment outside of the classroom (take home exam, research papers, etc).

## **8. Computation of GPA**

The grade point average (GPA) is formulated in the following manner.

First, the course mark value (A=4.00; B=3.00; C=2.00; D=1.00; F=0; I=0; W is not included) is multiplied by the number of credit hours for each course.

Second, the total value for all the courses is calculated.

Third, this figure is divided by the total number of credit hours resulting in the grade point average.

## **9. Course Evaluations**

Course evaluations are completed every semester for all accredited courses taught in the School of Theological Studies. STS uses the Student Instruction Report II of Educational Testing Services, Inc. Each class is given the last fifteen minutes of the penultimate class of each course to complete the evaluation. When the course evaluations are completed, the forms are returned to the Academic Dean. At the conclusion of the semester all the reports

are sent to ETS for processing. When the evaluation reports are returned to Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, the Academic Dean distributes them to each professor with a complete set being sent to the Rector and Vice Rector.

## **10. Records Policy**

All current academic records are kept on file in the STS Office. Pertinent records are transferred to the Office of the Registrar when a student either completes all the degree programs for which he is registered or if he leaves the graduate program. The records are retained permanently through the Registrar's Office. Student records are considered private and St. Charles complies with FERPA regarding privacy of student records.

## **11. STS Style Sheet**

The General Faculty of Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary has elected to use *Turabian Manual of Style* as the "style sheet" for all written work submitted by students. The style sheet is to be used as the basis of all term papers, reports, essays, etc. Students are encouraged to be familiar with the guidelines in this text.

## **12. Transcripts**

Students may request copies of official transcripts at any time from the Registrar.

## **13. Transfer of Credit Policy**

### **Master of Arts Transfer of Credit Policy**

A student may transfer a maximum of six credits from other accredited graduate programs. No courses will be accepted in transfer that were taken more than eight years before the request is made or in which a grade of "B" or higher has not been attained. To obtain transfer credit, the student must apply in writing to the Academic Dean.

## **Undergraduate Certificate Transfer of Credit Policy**

A maximum of six undergraduate credits in Catholic theology from other colleges and universities may be accepted towards the certificate. Courses taken more than six years before the request is made or in which a grade of at least “C” has not been attained will not be accepted in transfer. Requests to transfer credits should be directed to the Academic Dean.

Many undergraduate courses fulfill requirements for multiple certificates. Students may apply a maximum of six credits to two certificate programs. Up to six credits earned toward one certificate may be applied to one other certificate with no more than six credits per student being applied to multiple certificates. Credits transferred from other institutions can be applied to only one certificate.

### **14. Attendance Policy**

Students enrolled in the School of Theological Studies are required to attend all scheduled and re-scheduled classes. They are expected to be present when the class is scheduled to begin.

#### **LATE**

Lateness on more than one occasion may result in a lowering of the final grade.

#### **ABSENT**

Exceptional circumstances may necessitate that a student be absent from a class. Students are permitted two absences from class during each semester. They are required to notify the faculty member prior to the start of class from which they will be absent.

In the event of an absence, it is the responsibility of the student to: obtain class notes and materials; complete assignments; learn the subject matter from the missed class; and be prepared for the next class. This is not the responsibility of the faculty member. Absence from more than two classes may result in the lowering of the final grade.

## **15. Parking**

Parking is regulated by the Security Office. Permits are required for student vehicles. For all questions related to security policies and procedures, students should inquire with the Security Office for more information.

## **16. Persons With Disabilities**

In accordance with Section 504 of the rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary provides services for students with documented disabilities to ensure equal access to programs, facilities, and activities. All applicants to the School of Theological Studies are reviewed through the admissions process and the applicant's qualifications and record of achievement are considered without regard to a disability.

## **17. Service Member Re-Admittance Policy**

Any STS student who serves in a branch of the US military and is called away from formal schooling by the military may not be denied re-admittance to the program. Re-admittance for such a student is granted with the same academic status as when he/she left. A student who is dismissed from the program for disciplinary or academic reasons is not eligible for re-admittance.

## **18. Policy against Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment and Stalking**

### ***Introduction***

Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary (“SCS”) is committed to promoting a safe and healthy environment for all members of its community. All students, faculty, staff and visitors have the intrinsic right to remain free from any form of sexual violence, sexual harassment and stalking at all times, but especially while on SCS property. SCS considers any form of sexual violence, sexual harassment and stalking, and any attempt to commit such acts, to be serious misconduct that may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion or termination of employment. In addition, acts of sexual violence, sexual harassment and stalking could violate federal, state and local laws, and perpetrators of such acts may be subject to criminal prosecution.

SCS has adopted this policy against sexual violence, sexual harassment and stalking (“Policy”) in order to educate its students, faculty, staff and visitors about the various forms of sexual violence, sexual harassment and stalking, and to prevent any such acts from taking place on campus or involving members of the SCS community. This Policy outlines the steps SCS takes to prevent and respond to any incidents of sexual violence, sexual harassment and stalking that occur within the campus community.

### ***Prohibited Conduct and Definitions***

SCS prohibits any form of sexual violence, sexual harassment and stalking from taking place on its campus.

- A. Sexual Violence can take many forms and includes a range of behaviors in which an act of a sexual nature is taken

against another person without the individual's consent or when the individual is unable to consent. Examples of sexual violence include, but are not limited to: sexual assault, rape and sexual exploitation.

Sexual Assault is defined as having committed, or attempting to commit, any physical sexual contact through the use or threat of force, violence or any other form of coercion or intimidation. Sexual assault may also include physical sexual contact with an individual who cannot provide consent to engage in the contact due to incapacity or mental or physical impairment. An individual may be considered “incapacitated” or “impaired” if s/he is under the influence of alcohol or drugs or is too young to consent to the sexual contact.

Rape is a form of sexual assault that involves the forced penetration of another person’s oral, anal or genital opening with a body part or any object.

Sexual Exploitation is an act or omission to act involving one person taking sexual advantage of another person in a non-consensual, unjust, humiliating or abusive manner, for the benefit of himself or for another individual, but not for the benefit of the victim.

Consent to any sexual contact must be explicitly communicated, through words or actions, by all parties involved. Consent must be informed, voluntarily and freely given by all parties. Consent may not be inferred from an individual’s silence, passivity or lack of resistance, but instead must consist of an outward demonstration that an individual has freely chosen to engage in the sexual contact. Consent to any sexual contact may not be obtained through any form of coercion, intimidation and/or harassment.

An individual’s consent to one form of sexual activity does not mean that s/he consents to other forms of sexual activity,

nor does a current or previous dating, marital, or sexual relationship mean that an individual consents to any additional sexual activity. Assent shall not constitute consent if it is given by a person who because of youth, physical or mental disability, intoxication or other condition is unable to lawfully provide consent.

B. Sexual Harassment consists of any form of unwelcome sexual conduct, including sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or any other behavior that is of a sexual nature. An individual engages in sexual harassment when s/he makes submission to such sexual conduct a term or condition of another person's employment and/or education. Sexual harassment encompasses sexual conduct that unreasonably interferes with a person's professional and/or academic performance, or creates a hostile work and/or learning environment for the individual.

C. Stalking is when an individual engages in a repeated course of conduct that is directed at specific person(s) that would cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her safety or the safety of others, and/or suffer significant emotional distress. Stalking may be conducted face-to-face or through the use of electronic means such as email, the internet, social media, cellular telephones, blogs, or other similar applications and/or devices.

### ***Reporting Procedures***

If you feel that you have been the victim of sexual violence, sexual harassment and/or stalking, then you are strongly encouraged to report the incident to the SCS Department of Safety and Security at 610-785-6238 immediately. Victims of sexual violence, sexual harassment and/or stalking are also strongly encouraged to preserve any evidence related to the incident. SCS encourages and

recommends that all victims of sexual violence, sexual harassment and/or stalking to report the incident(s) to local law enforcement or to the District Attorney in the county in which the unlawful act took place.

All SCS employees who bear a responsibility for student welfare and/or who are in a position of authority are required to report any incident of sexual violence, sexual harassment and/or stalking that involves a SCS student, employee, faculty member or visitor to the Director of Security who will refer it to the Director of Investigations for the Archdiocese, whether or not the alleged act took place on or off campus. This reporting requirement does not apply if the individual who learns of the alleged incident is required to maintain the confidentiality of the communication by law. Additionally, employees who have been advised that they are considered “campus security authorities” under the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (“Clery Act”) are also required to report any such incidents to the Department of Safety and Security.

All SCS personnel are expected to comply with all applicable laws with respect to the reporting of allegations of sexual abuse of minors to civil authorities and shall cooperate in any investigation that follows from the making of such a report. SCS expressly prohibits retaliation against any individual who makes a good faith report of suspected child abuse or neglect in accordance with this policy and applicable state law. In addition to mandatory reporting required by Pennsylvania law, all SCS personnel are expected to promptly report allegations of a cleric's sexual abuse of a minor to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia’s Director of Investigations, unless the information is received by a priest within the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Other clerics and religious working at the SCS are expected to cooperate with the process. The Archdiocese shall take all appropriate steps to protect the good name and reputation of all persons involved in this process.

a) Child abuse consists of a variety of wrongful acts committed upon children that include but are not limited to sexual abuse, physical injury, mental injury, and neglect. The term “child abuse” as used in this Policy shall have the same definition as set forth in the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law. See 23 Pa.C.S. §§ 6303 and 6304.

b) A child is any individual under the age of 18. In all cases of suspected child abuse, mandated reporters, as defined below, are required to report the suspected abuse to ChildLine, the 24-hour statewide system operated by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare to receive such reports (1-800-932-0313) (toll free). In addition to the telephonic report, a CY 47 form must be submitted to the Children and Youth services in the county where the suspected abuse occurred within 48-hours of making any report to ChildLine.

In all cases of suspected child abuse, Pennsylvania law and Archdiocesan policy state that mandated reporters are required to:

- Immediately call ChildLine toll free at 1-800-932-0313.
- Within 48-hours of the telephonic report, submit a CY 47 (Appendix F) to the Children and Youth services in the county where the suspected abuse occurred. A CY-47 may be completed electronically at <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS>
- Notify the person in charge of the institution, unless that person is the suspected abuser. If the person in charge of the institution is the suspected abuser, then the mandated reporter must contact the Archdiocesan Office of Investigations toll free at 1-888-930-9010.

In cases where the suspected abuser is a member of the clergy or is a Church official, employee or volunteer:

- Immediately Call ChildLine toll free at 1-800-932-0313.
- Within 48-hours of the telephonic report, submit a CY 47 (Appendix F) to the Children and Youth services in the county where the suspected abuse occurred. A CY-47 may be completed electronically at <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS>
- Notify the person in charge of the institution, unless they are the suspected abuser.
- The person in charge of the institution must notify the Archdiocesan Office of Investigations toll free at 1-888-9309010. If the person in charge of the institution is the suspected abuser the mandated reporter must contact the Office of Investigations.

You may also contact the Office of Investigations by writing to:

Office of the Director of Investigations  
 222 North 17th Street  
 Philadelphia, PA 19103

It is Archdiocesan policy to immediately refer any conduct that could constitute a crime (such as suspected child abuse) to law enforcement. Victims reporting abuse will be assigned a Victim Assistance Coordinator to work with them who will explain available mental health services.

c) Mandated reporters.--The following adults shall make a report of suspected child abuse, subject to subsection (b), if the person has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse:

1. A person licensed or certified to practice in any health-related field under the jurisdiction of the Department of State.
2. A medical examiner, coroner or funeral director.

3. An employee of a health care facility or provider licensed by the Department of Health, who is engaged in the admission, examination, care or treatment of individuals.
4. A school employee.
5. An employee of a child-care service who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
6. A clergyman, priest, rabbi, minister, Christian Science practitioner, religious healer or spiritual leader of any regularly established church or other religious organization.
7. An individual paid or unpaid, who, on the basis of the individual's role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, accepts responsibility for a child.
8. An employee of a social services agency who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
9. A peace officer or law enforcement official.
10. An emergency medical services provider certified by the Department of Health.
11. An employee of a public library who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
12. An individual supervised or managed by a person listed under paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (10) and (11), who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
13. An independent contractor.
14. An attorney affiliated with an agency, institution, organization or other entity, including a school or regularly established religious organization that is responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or control of children.
15. A foster parent.

If any other member of the SCS community, such as students or visitors, learns of such an incident involving a minor, they are also encouraged to report the matter to ChildLine. This reporting requirement does not apply where the SCS employee is a priest and he learned about the alleged abuse in the course of a confidential communication.

The Department of Safety and Security will take every measure possible to ensure that it responds to all complaints of sexual violence, sexual harassment and/or stalking promptly and thoroughly. Any individual who feels that his or her complaint did not receive a prompt and/or adequate response should contact the Office or the Rector at (610) 785-6200.

### ***Rights of Complainants and Confidentiality***

At the time a report is made to SCS, the complainant need not specify the course of action that s/he wishes SCS to take in response to his or her complaint. SCS supports a complainant's right to report an alleged incident of sexual violence, sexual harassment and/or stalking to either the Department of Safety and Security or local law enforcement. SCS is committed to providing the complainant with an environment in which s/he feels safe and free to make an informed choice among the available options and services. As such, complainants may contact SCS counselors, clergy and/or health care personnel who will respect the complainant's confidentiality and anonymity in accordance with their professions and to the extent permitted by law.

When a complaint of sexual violence, sexual harassment and/or stalking is made, SCS will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of the complainant to the extent permitted by law. While SCS may be able to maintain the confidentiality of the complainant in some instances, it may be required to disclose the fact that such an incident took place for statistical reporting in accordance with the requirements of the Clery Act and other applicable laws.

Complainants should be aware that their desire to maintain confidentiality may limit SCS's ability to conduct a thorough investigation, and to pursue disciplinary action against the alleged perpetrator.

### ***Policy Against Retaliation and Making of False Reports***

SCS expressly prohibits retaliation against any student, faculty, staff and/or visitor who makes a good faith report of sexual violence, sexual harassment and/or stalking in violation of this Policy. Members of the campus community, who take any adverse action against, intimidate, threaten or otherwise engage in any act of retaliation against someone who has made a good faith report under this Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of their employment or expulsion from SCS.

Additionally, SCS prohibits members of the campus community from making a false report of a violation of this Policy. Members of the campus community who knowingly and intentionally make a false report of an alleged act of sexual violence, sexual harassment and/or stalking in violation of this Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of their employment or expulsion from SCS.

### ***Resources for Victims of Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment and Stalking***

SCS Department of Safety and Security	610-785-6238
Office of the Rector	610-785-6200
ChildLine	800-932-0313
Lower Merion Police Department	610-649-1000
Attorney	610-278-3144
Montgomery County Rape Crisis Hotline	610-277-5200 888-521-9083
Montgomery County Office of Children and Youth	610-278-5800
Women's Center of Montgomery County	800-773-2424

## **19. Academic Freedom Policy**

The School of Theological Studies in its purpose is a teaching institution, which values research primarily for advancing the scholarship of the faculty and the education of its students.

The accredited programs of the School of Theological Studies require specific courses and some elective courses in order to achieve its programmatic goals in the field of Catholic theology.

The School of Theological Studies promotes responsible academic freedom. STS also encourages the Faculty, in their teaching function, to address all material relevant to their subject matter but, opposes the promotion of propositions and values contrary to Catholic teaching. This in no way impinges on true academic freedom, as the Catholic Church accepts all that is true and rejects all that is false.

Students should not be intimidated, harassed, or discouraged from voicing legitimate academic inquiry, when appropriate to the context and structure of a specific course, and within the framework of the goals of the program in which they chose to enroll. STS and faculty should engage these legitimate inquiries with respect for individual dignity and the pursuit of truth and the common good.

## **20. Grade Appeal Procedure**

An appeal of a final course grade must be made within two weeks of the issuance of grades. A student must first discuss the matter directly with the professor. If this step does not result in a satisfactory explanation or resolution of the perceived problem, the student may then bring the matter to the attention of the Academic Dean. Documentation supporting the student's appeal must be provided. The decision of the Academic Dean is final.

## **21. General Grievance Policy**

See Appendix I on page 26.

## **22. Non-Discrimination Policy**

In compliance with state and federal laws, the School of Theological Studies does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, age, disability, or veteran's status (or any other criteria protected by applicable law) in its educational programs and activities, or admissions.

## **23. Undergraduate Program Diploma or GED verification Policy**

Any student who is required to prove that he or she has earned a high school diploma or GED must do so with a formal high school transcript or verification of GED completion in order to be accepted.

# MASTER OF ARTS IN THEOLOGY

## DEGREE PROGRAM

### 1. Program Description

The Master of Arts degree is designed as an academic degree that investigates the theological disciplines in an in-depth manner focusing on speculative and historical aspects of knowledge received in the various courses offered in the Theology Division. The program is open to Seminarians who have already earned the Master of Divinity degree and have met all other program prerequisites. Students from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia who meet the prerequisites for the Master of Arts degree program are expected to complete the requirements for the Master of Arts degree program. Exceptions may be given, only for serious reason, by the Academic Dean, Theology Division after consultation with the Vice Rector and the Rector.

### 2. Degree Requirements

The following is a description of the Master of Arts Degree requirements:

#### Admissions Requirements:

1. An undergraduate degree with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00 from an accredited college or university.
2. A minimum of eighteen undergraduate c r e d i t s in Theology and/or Philosophy, with a minimum grade point average of 3.00.

Degree Requirements:

1. Successful completion of 36 credits of graduate theology with a minimum grade point average of 3.00.
2. Passing the written and oral Comprehensive Examinations.

### **3. Comprehensive Oral Examination**

#### **A. Description of the Comprehensive Oral Examination**

Master of Arts degree candidates are required to take both written and oral comprehensive examinations. The comprehensive examinations are designed to:

1. Foster the student's ability to synthesize the content of the various courses in the Master of Arts Degree Program.
2. Provide the student an opportunity to demonstrate the scope of his/her knowledge.
3. Encourage in the student a scholarly attitude, critical thinking, and a sustained personal commitment to independent reading within the field of Catholic Theology.

Students are eligible to enroll for the comprehensive examinations only after the completion of at least thirty-six and no more than forty-two graduate credits in which a minimum grade point average of 3.0 has been maintained. Written and oral comprehensive examinations are scheduled in February and in July.

Preparation for the comprehensive examinations should be aimed toward integrating and expanding one's knowledge. Each student is provided with a Comprehensive Exam Study Guide based upon coursework and a common list of required readings.

The grading of the comprehensive examinations is based upon mastery of the material, ability to synthesize rather than merely memorize information, and clarity/organization of presentation. Both the written and oral examinations are graded by two professors. The two grades from the written examination are averaged for the final written examination grade; the two grades from oral examination are averaged for the final oral examination grade; the average of the written and oral examination grades must be 85 or above.

STS maintains the written and oral comprehensive examination as an essential component of the Master of Arts Degree Program. Neither extra course work nor a research paper are acceptable substitutes for this examination.

## Appendix I: Grievance Policy

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this academic and non-academic grievance procedure is to provide for the resolution of candidate grievances, including allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination, academic challenges of grades, and the denial of reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities. This policy is not applicable to issues of seminary formation and discipline.

### **Grievance Procedure**

#### *Informal Resolution*

Before initiating a formal grievance, a candidate should discuss the matter in dispute with the person against whom the candidate has a grievance and seek a mutual resolution of concerns. The candidate may be encouraged to return to this informal level of resolution at any time during this procedure.

#### *Initiation of Complaint*

If an informal resolution does not result, the candidate must submit a complaint form to the Appropriate Administrator to initiate a formal grievance. While initially a candidate's concerns may be communicated orally; a written grievance must be submitted before any review or other action takes place. This complaint should be submitted soon after the candidate is aware of the subject problem. The complaint must specify the policy, procedure or norm violated, and specifically set forth all relevant factual details. The Appropriate Administrator will first determine whether the complaint's allegations warrant implementing the remainder of the grievance procedures. If sufficient criteria are not met, the Appropriate Administrator will inform the candidate in writing and copy the Rector. With sufficient criteria, the Appropriate Administrator will forward a copy of the complaint to the respondent who the allegation is being directed.

#### *Witness Response*

The Respondent shall be given five working calendar days from receipt of the complaint to return a written response to the Appropriate

Administrator. Necessary extensions may be granted by the Appropriate Administrator.

#### *Review by Designated Party*

The Appropriate Administrator with the consent of the Rector may initiate a reasonable investigation into the matter. The investigation may include, but is not limited to, meeting with the parties, talking with witnesses, and reviewing any supporting documents.

#### *Recommendation to Rector*

Within a reasonable time, the Appropriate Administrator shall make a recommendation to the Rector based on the written complaint, response and any other information deemed relevant.

#### *Decision*

A final decision will be rendered from the Appropriate Administrator with the approval of the Rector. Grievant and Respondent shall be notified in writing of the decision. A copy of the written decision shall be retained in the office of the Appropriate Administrator for one year after the final decision was issued.