



## SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO SEMINARY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

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# Student Handbook 2026-27

## Table of Contents

|                                                      |    |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|
| I. Introduction .....                                | 3  |
| Mission Statement.....                               | 3  |
| Staff and Contact Information .....                  | 3  |
| School of Theological Studies Faculty .....          | 3  |
| II. Academic Degree Programs .....                   | 3  |
| Master of Arts in Theology Programs .....            | 3  |
| Master of Arts in Catholic Health Care Ministry..... | 7  |
| III. Department Policies .....                       | 10 |
| Withdrawal Policy .....                              | 10 |
| Financial Aid .....                                  | 10 |
| Grading Scale .....                                  | 10 |
| Grade Point Average Requirement .....                | 11 |
| Academic Probation and Dismissal .....               | 11 |
| Syllabi and Books .....                              | 11 |
| Turabian Manual of Style.....                        | 11 |
| Learning Disability Accommodation Policy.....        | 11 |
| Course Evaluations .....                             | 12 |
| Attendance.....                                      | 12 |
| Communications .....                                 | 12 |
| Academic Honesty .....                               | 13 |
| Artificial Intelligence Policy .....                 | 13 |
| Academic Freedom .....                               | 14 |

|                                                                 |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Library Resources .....                                         | 14 |
| Graduation .....                                                | 15 |
| Transcripts .....                                               | 15 |
| IV. General Policies.....                                       | 16 |
| Non-Discrimination Policy .....                                 | 16 |
| Promotional Photography .....                                   | 16 |
| Policy Prohibiting Title IX Misconduct.....                     | 16 |
| Grievance Policy .....                                          | 16 |
| Campus Safety .....                                             | 16 |
| Parking and Shuttle Service .....                               | 17 |
| Appendix I: 2026-27 Course Offering Schedule .....              | 18 |
| Appendix II: Grievance Policy and Procedure.....                | 20 |
| Appendix III: Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence..... | 21 |

# I. Introduction

## Mission Statement

The School of Theological Studies (STS) serves the non-seminarian population of St. Charles Borromeo Seminary by providing Catholic theological education through in-person and online Master's-level courses to educators, catechists, parish ministers, religious sisters, and lay persons interested in studying the faith. The STS also assists the intellectual formation of candidates for the Permanent Diaconate and provides an opportunity for ordained clergy to continue their theological education. The STS answers the call made at the Second Vatican Council for Catholic graduate programs to prepare students in conformity with the Church's magisterium and in light of present-day needs.

## Staff and Contact Information

Dr. Carmina M. Chapp, Dean, School of Theological Studies  
Michele Pisano, Administrative Assistant

Office Location: St. Charles Borromeo Seminary  
1400 Evans Road, Ambler, PA 19002

Student Life Center, Floor G1, Suite 001

Email: sts@scs.edu  
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## School of Theological Studies Faculty

The School of Theological Studies is served by the full-time faculty of St. Charles Borromeo Seminary. In addition, competent adjunct faculty assist in teaching when needed.

# II. Academic Degree Programs

## Master of Arts in Theology Programs

The Master of Arts in Theology is a general theology degree covering basic topics of Sacred Scripture, doctrine and morality. It is ideal for those seeking a broad Catholic theology degree that will empower them to teach a wide variety of subjects and to form others in the

Catholic faith. It also prepares the student for future graduate study. Candidates for the Permanent Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia take courses on campus in this program. For more information on the diaconate program, contact the School of Diaconal Formation.

The Online Master of Arts in Theology is identical to the on-campus program in its core course offerings, and can be completed solely online or in conjunction with on-campus offerings. It uses NEO by Cypher Learning as its Learning Management System. Courses are asynchronous, with modules made available to students, and assignments due, on a weekly basis.

The Summer Program is identical to the on-campus program in its core course offerings, in an accelerated six-week summer session with a residency option. Campus life provides the necessary spiritual environment to allow members of religious communities to meet the obligations of their vows and daily prayer life faithfully, including the Liturgy of the Hours, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and daily Mass.

#### *MA in Theology Degree requirements*

The Master of Arts in Theology degree requires thirty-six graduate credit hours, consisting of the following 3-credit courses:

##### *Sacred Scripture*

STS 501 Critical Introduction to Sacred Scripture (Prerequisite for all Scripture courses)  
STS 502 Synoptic Gospels  
STS 539 Johannine Literature  
STS 541 Letters of Saint Paul

##### *Systematic Theology*

STS 601 Fundamental Theology (Prerequisite for all Systematic theology courses)  
STS 602 Christology  
STS 603 Ecclesiology  
STS 606 Theology of Grace and Sacraments

##### *Morality*

STS 701 Moral Theology

##### *Church History*

STS 801 Church History

Two Electives

### *Culminating Assessment*

Students have a choice of taking *Written and Oral Comprehensive Examinations* before a Board or writing a *Master's Thesis* under the direction of a Moderator. Comprehensive exams are offered each July and March. Master's Theses must be completed by March 1.

### *Course Schedule*

The Master of Arts degree can be pursued on either a full-time or part-time basis. Comprehensive examinations are administered in February and in July.

Classes are offered on campus in the evening. All required courses are offered each year within the Fall and Spring semesters. One prerequisite is offered each Fall and Spring.

Online courses are offered in Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. Required courses are offered on a rotating schedule. One prerequisite is offered each semester.

Summer courses are offered on campus during the day. Courses are accelerated in a six-week session. Required courses are offered on a rotating schedule. Prerequisites are offered each summer. Residency is available.

(See Appendix for current course offerings)

### *Transfer of Credit*

Credits accumulated from courses taken more than ten years past at other institutions are not accepted toward the Master of Arts degree. Transferred courses must be approved by the Dean. Credits earned at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary do not expire.

### *Admissions*

New students can enter the program in any semester. Deadlines for submitting applications are:

- April 1 for Online Summer Semester and On-campus Summer Program
- August 1 for Fall Semester
- November 1 for Spring Semester

Prerequisites for admission

- An undergraduate degree (Bachelor of Arts or Science) with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 from an accredited college or university, or equivalent determined by St. Charles Borromeo Seminary

- A minimum of nine (9) undergraduate credits in Theology and/or Philosophy, with a minimum GPA of 3.0

### *Application Process*

Application for the Master of Arts in Theology consists of

An online application form, with a 400-500 word essay explaining the applicant's reasons for pursuing the degree, events that led to this decision, and his or her plans for the future. A fee of \$40.00 is payable online.

Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended sent directly to the School of Theological Studies

Two letters of recommendation attesting to the applicant's academic abilities and good character from individuals unrelated to the applicant, sent directly to the School of Theological Studies

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 programs. Re-admittance for such a student is granted with the same academic status as when he or she left.

### *Academic Advising and Course Registration*

Students meet with the Dean for academic advisement and course selection, then register for classes through Populi.

### *Independent Study*

Candidates for the Master of Arts Degree who have completed eighteen or more graduate credits and have maintained a cumulative grade point average of 3.50 or higher may request to take an independent study to fulfill an elective requirement for the degree. An independent study may be taken to fulfill core requirements, if necessary. An individual student may not enroll in more than one independent study course within a single semester.

To enroll in an independent study course, a qualified student must contact the School of Theological Studies office to ascertain the feasibility of an independent study course and to request the appropriate application material.

### *Single Course for Credit*

Students may take one graduate course before applying to the MA program provided they have a Bachelor's degree or equivalent. Prerequisites apply.

Students who have obtained, or in the process of obtaining, a Master of Arts in Theology elsewhere are welcome to supplement their education with graduate courses in the School of Theological Studies.

### *Auditing a Course*

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. Audited courses do not apply toward the degree.

### *Tuition and Fees*

See St. Charles Borromeo Seminary Catalog

## Master of Arts in Catholic Health Care Ministry

Health care is one of the largest industries in the country, and there is a great need for Catholic health care professionals and chaplains to be well-formed in the Catholic way of approaching health care issues. Most graduate programs tend to emphasize either bioethics or pastoral care. The Master of Arts in Catholic Health Care Ministry at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary's School of Theological Studies takes a more integrated approach, with the goal of empowering the professional and chaplain to be able to discuss bioethical issues with a pastoral heart.

### **Partnership with the National Catholic Bioethics Center**

St. Charles Borromeo Seminary has entered into a partnership with the National Catholic Bioethics Center (NCBC) to provide the bioethics portion of the Program. The NCBC offers a [National Catholic Certification Program in Health Care Ethics](#), which is accepted as nine credits toward the MA in Catholic Health Care Ministry.

## *MA Catholic Health Care Ministry Degree Requirements*

### *School of Theological Studies (27 credits)*

CHCM 501 Foundational Course in Catholic Health Care Ministry  
CHCM 502 The Fullness of the Human Person: Philosophical Contributions  
CHCM 503 Introduction to Sacred Scripture: Practical Applications  
CHCM 504 Introduction to Systematic Theology: Practical Applications  
CHCM 601 Introduction to Moral Theology: Practical Applications  
CHCM 602 Theological Anthropology  
CHCM 603 Pastoral Counseling I: Common Psychological Problems and their Treatments  
CHCM 604 Pastoral Counseling II: Listening Skills, Motivational Interviewing, & Pastoral Counseling  
CHCM 605 Spiritual Accompaniment

### *National Catholic Bioethics Center (9 credits)*

NCBC Certification Program consists of four modules over a calendar year, plus one two-day seminar.

Module One: Foundations of Catholic Health Care & Moral Decision Making  
Module Two: Ethical Challenges at the Beginning of Life  
Module Three: Ethics Committees, Vaccines, AI, and Gender  
Module Four: Ethical Challenges at the End of Life  
Two-day Seminar: Catholic Health Care Ethics: A Tradition of Compassion and Care for the Human Person

## *Course Schedule*

The Master of Arts in Catholic Health Care Ministry is delivered completely online in an asynchronous format, plus one in-person two-day NCBC seminar. Students proceed through the program as a cohort

### *Year One*

CHCM 501 Foundational Course in Catholic Health Care Ministry  
CHCM 502 The Fullness of the Human Person: Philosophical Contributions  
CHCM 503 Introduction to Sacred Scripture: Practical Applications  
CHCM 504 Introduction to Systematic Theology: Practical Applications  
NCBC Certification Program

### *Year Two*

CHCM 601 Introduction to Moral Theology: Practical Applications  
CHCM 602 Theological Anthropology



CHCM 603 Pastoral Counseling I: Common Psychological Problems and their Treatments  
CHCM 604 Pastoral Counseling II: Listening Skills, Motivational Interviewing, & Pastoral Counseling  
CHCM 605 Spiritual Accompaniment  
NCBC Certification Program

### *Admissions*

New cohorts begin each fall semester. Application deadline is August 1.

Prerequisites for admission

- An undergraduate degree (Bachelor of Arts or Science) with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 from an accredited college or university, or equivalent determined by St. Charles Borromeo Seminary.

### *Application Process*

Completion of the Master of Arts in Catholic Health Care Ministry application, which includes a 400-500 word essay explaining the applicant's reasons for pursuing the degree, events that led to this decision, and plans for the future. A fee of \$40.00 is payable online.

Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended.

Two letters of recommendation from individuals unrelated to the applicant, attesting to the applicant's academic abilities and good character.

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 programs. Re-admittance for such a student is granted with the same academic status as when he or she left.

### *Course Registration*

Students register through SCS Populi system for STS classes and directly through the National Catholic Bioethics Center (NCBC) for the NCBC Certification Program portion of the degree.

### *Tuition and Fees*

See St. Charles Borromeo Seminary Catalog

## III. Department Policies

### Withdrawal Policy

Students may withdraw from a course no later than one week before the final examination. To withdraw from a class, an official Withdrawal Form must be submitted to the Dean. Failure to officially withdraw will result in a grade of zero (0.00) on any uncompleted work and may thereby result in an “F” for the course on the student’s transcript.

Refunds of tuition will be made according to the following schedule:

Withdrawal before first class: 100% of total tuition refunded, less \$50 administrative fee.  
Withdrawal before second class: 75% of total tuition refunded, less \$50 administrative fee.  
Withdrawal before third class: 50% of total tuition refunded, less \$50 administrative fee.  
Withdrawal after the third class: No refund.

Student must submit an official Withdrawal Form by the deadline to receive the corresponding refund.

### Financial Aid

For information on Financial Aid, contact Donna Speranza, Financial Aid Coordinator, at 610-785-6582.

### Grading Scale

The following grading system is used for all graduate courses:

4.00 A 93 - 100 Outstanding  
3.00 B 85 to 92 Very Good  
2.00 C 77 to 84 Good  
1.00 D 70 to 76 Passing  
0.00 F Below 70 Failed  
0.00 I Incomplete 0.00  
W Withdrawal (no penalty)

## Grade Point Average Requirement

Students are expected to maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 (B) in courses being taken for academic credit toward the Master of Arts degree. A student will be placed on Academic Probation if his or her grade point average falls below this minimum requirement.

## Academic Probation and Dismissal

A student placed on Academic Probation must obtain the minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (B) within the next three courses taken, with no more than fourteen courses taken toward the degree. Failure to obtain the required grade point average will result in the student being liable to dismissal from the program. The Dean reserves the right to make the final decisions regarding dismissal.

## Syllabi and Books

Course syllabi and book lists are available in Populi two weeks prior to the first day of class.

St. Charles Borromeo Seminary does not have a bookstore. Students are responsible for finding the required books to purchase.

## Turabian Manual of Style

The use of the *Turabian Manual of Style* is required for all written work submitted by students, including term papers, reports, essays, etc. The St. Jerome Library offers assistance with the Turabian Style and its application to ecclesiastical documents and other sources commonly used in the academic study of theology.

## Learning Disability Accommodation Policy

A learning disability or difference (LD) is a neurological disorder that affects the brain's ability to receive, process, store, and respond to information. It is used to describe a person of at least average intelligence who has difficulty in acquiring basic academic skills.

The process by which a student in the School of Diaconal Formation or the School of Theological Studies is evaluated to determine if he/she has a learning disability can begin with the student, through a faculty member, or their respective Dean.

The student is responsible for making the appointment with the evaluator and is to inform the Dean of testing results. Immediately after the results of the testing, and then at the beginning of each academic semester, with the consent of the student, the Dean will inform the faculty members currently responsible for teaching the student regarding the approved and requested academic accommodations in the student's regard.

## Course Evaluations

Students have the opportunity to evaluate courses and faculty at the end of each course. Evaluations are conducted through Populi.

## Attendance

Students enrolled in the School of Theological Studies are required to attend all scheduled and rescheduled classes. They are expected to be present when the class is scheduled to begin. Lateness on more than one occasion may result in a lowering of the final grade.

Weather emergencies may prohibit classes to be held in person. In such cases, classes will be conducted via Teams Meeting during the regularly scheduled time.

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, not the instructor, to obtain class notes and materials (including recordings made with the consent of the professor), learn the subject matter from the missed class, complete assignments, and be prepared for the next class. Absence from more than two classes may result in the lowering of the final grade.

## Communications

All students receive a scs.edu email account, as well as a Microsoft 365 account, which includes Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams, and One Drive.

Due to security protocols, all communications must remain within the SCS system. Students are not to forward their SCS email to any other accounts, nor use their outside personal email accounts when corresponding with faculty or any office of St. Charles

Borromeo Seminary. Teams must be used for any video calls, and OneDrive for saving and sharing documents.

Upon graduation or leaving the program, the student's Microsoft 365, including SCS email, will be deleted on August 31 of that year.

## Academic Honesty

Observance of total honesty in pursuit of one's formal studies is required of each School of Theological Studies student. Academic work that is submitted by the student must be the student's own, original work; 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. Generation of assignments, papers or presentations by artificial intelligence (AI) and presenting it as one's own work is also a form of plagiarism. On the other hand, automated checking of one's own grammar and syntax may be an acceptable use of such technologies, provided that these do not intervene in the organization and overall composition of the written work: i.e., its outline, flow of thought, etc. For further specification, the student is expected to consult and adhere to any and all current policies and guidelines concerning the use of computer assistance or artificial intelligence in completing assignments.

Plagiarism is a violation of academic honesty and, thus, is a serious offense. Plagiarism is defined as presenting either someone else's words or ideas or artificially generated content, in part or whole, as one's own. Activities such as direct copying, paraphrasing, summarizing, or otherwise putting someone else's work into your own words without proper citation constitute plagiarism. Any citations in footnotes or endnotes must be of works that the student has personally consulted, and not those found cited elsewhere, either generated by artificial intelligence (per below) or referenced in other works. Also, any exact verbiage taken from other authors must be duly set off within quotation marks. Plagiarism is not defined by 'intent'; if a student claims he or she did not 'mean' to plagiarize or 'know' what plagiarism is, the student will still face severe disciplinary measures.

If a student is caught plagiarizing, the instructor has the prerogative to give the student an "F" for the course. Further, instructors will immediately report all instances of plagiarism to the Dean, who may impose further disciplinary measures regarding the student's status in the School of Theological Studies, including dismissal from the program.

## Artificial Intelligence Policy

The following uses of AI tools are strictly prohibited, since they go beyond merely supplementary support and risk being fundamentally and objectively deceptive:

1. Ghostwriting: presenting or submitting AI-generated content as one's own original work. This includes using AI tools to compose homilies, reflections, papers, and other forms of written assignments, as well as using AI in the drafting process or to generate an outline.
2. Cheating or Academic Dishonesty: using AI tools to complete assignments, papers, quizzes, exams, etc. intended to assess personal understanding. Such use is strictly prohibited.
3. Misrepresentation of personal research in citations: using AI tools to generate citations that do not exist, that the student has not consulted personally, or that misrepresent sources. All sources must be directly and personally obtained and consulted.
4. Use as a Source: AI, itself, is never to be treated as a source.
5. Exposure of Confidential Data: since user inputs and uploaded documents serve to train AI tools, confidential information must never be entered into publicly available AI interfaces, even anonymously or for the sake of example.
6. Departmental Collaboration: departments may work collaboratively to determine a restrictive approach that would prohibit the use of AI tools entirely within a department.

Other Uses: no use of AI tools is allowed in relation to coursework without the express permission of the professor.

For the full POLICY ON THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, see Appendix III.

## Academic Freedom

The School of Theological Studies promotes responsible academic freedom. Faculty are encouraged, in their teaching function, to address all material relevant to their subject matter, while opposing 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. These legitimate inquiries are engaged with respect for individual dignity and the pursuit of truth and the common good.

## Library Resources

The St. Jerome Library supports the mission of Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary by facilitating its patrons' interaction with recorded knowledge in all its forms. It responds to the curricular, informational, and research needs of students and faculty by acquiring, housing, and providing access to books, periodicals, databases, audio-visual materials,

digital media, and online resources, maintaining an appropriate environment for study and learning.

Located on the ground floor of the Student Life Center, it provides more than 60,000 circulating books, 2,000 audiovisual items, and over 400 journals and newspapers in paper and electronic format.

## Graduation

Students who successfully complete the comprehensive exams or Master's Thesis may participate in the Baccalaureate Mass and Concurus in mid-May. Students who anticipate graduating must register for graduation with the School of Theological Studies by mid-March.

## Transcripts

Transcripts are issued by the Registrar's Office at the written request of the student concerned. Requests through the National Student Clearinghouse are electronically signed by the student who owns the student record. The Registrar's Office releases academic record transcripts in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

No transcript will be released if there are outstanding library or financial holds. There is a \$12.50 per copy fee. The normal period required for processing transcripts is *5 business days*. **Please allow 10 business days during the beginning and close of the semester.**

## IV. General Policies

### 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, veteran's status, or any other criteria protected by applicable law in its educational programs and activities or admissions.

### Promotional Photography

Images of students may be included in photographs and videos for promotional purposes. Students who do not wish to be included may opt-out by contacting the School of Theological Studies.

### Policy Prohibiting Title IX Misconduct

Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary 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 St. Charles Borromeo Seminary property.

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. 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.

### Grievance Policy

St. Charles Borromeo Seminary has a *grievance procedure* to provide for the resolution of student grievances, including allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination, academic challenges of grade, and the denial of reasonable accommodations to person with disabilities. (See Appendix for Grievance Procedure)

### Campus Safety

All students must provide a headshot to the School of Theological Studies and will receive a photo identification card that also serves as a gate and door badge, giving students



access to campus and the Student Life Center during class times. If a student needs to come to campus outside of class time, he/she must call the office they are visiting to gain access.

## Parking and Shuttle Service

Students may park anywhere on campus except those spaces marked Reserved.

St. Charles Borromeo Seminary students may use the Gwynedd Mercy University shuttle service to/from the Gwynedd Valley Train Station, serving the Lansdale/Doylestown SEPTA line. To contact the shuttle, call Public Safety at 215-641-5522.

# Appendix I: 2026-27 Course Offering Schedule

## Master of Arts in Theology

### **Fall 2026**

A Critical Introduction to Sacred Scripture  
Synoptic Gospels  
Christology  
Ecclesiology  
Elective: Liturgy and Worship

### **Online Fall 2026**

A Critical Introduction to Sacred Scripture  
Moral Theology  
Elective: Spiritual Wisdom of the Woman  
Doctors of the Church

### **Spring 2027**

Fundamental Theology  
Theology of Grace & Sacraments  
Church History  
Moral Theology  
Letters of St. Paul  
Johannine Literature

### **Online Spring 2026**

Fundamental Theology  
Ecclesiology  
Church History

### **Summer 2027**

A Critical Introduction to Sacred Scripture  
Fundamental Theology  
Christology  
Ecclesiology  
Letters of St. Paul  
Church History  
Elective TBD

### **Online Summer 2027**

A Critical Introduction to Sacred Scripture  
Theology of Grace & Sacraments  
Letters of St. Paul  
Elective TBD

## Master of Arts in Catholic Health Care Ministry (Online)

### **Fall, 2026**

Foundational Course in Catholic Health Care Ministry  
The Fullness of the Human Person: Philosophical Contributions

### **Spring, 2027**

Introduction to Sacred Scripture: Practical Applications  
NCBC Certification Programming

***Summer, 2027***

Introduction to Systematic Theology: Practical Applications  
NCBC Programming

## Appendix II: Grievance Policy and Procedure

**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 grade, and the denial of reasonable accommodations to person with disabilities. This policy is not applicable to issues of seminary formation or discipline.

**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 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 Appropriated 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 to whom the allegation is being directed.

### *Written 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 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.

## Appendix III: Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence

The purpose of this policy is to offer limits and guidance regarding use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools within the program of intellectual formation of the seminary, ensuring alignment with Catholic moral teaching and the principles of academic integrity.

### *Guiding Principles for the Use of AI*

Within the academic program of the seminary, all use of AI tools should reflect:

1. **Human Dignity:** deeply held respect for human authorship and the intellectual formation of students. Students and educators must remain at the center of education, and all formation must serve "the pressing duty to remain profoundly human" (Pope Leo XIV, *Magnifica humanitas*, no. 15). The purpose of intellectual formation at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary is the intellectual formation of the seminarian or other theology student himself or herself and the ability to "think with the Church," and not merely his or her ability to use tools effectively to produce work that is excellent in itself. (See also MH, nos. 50-53 and 233.)
2. **Truthfulness:** firm commitment to academic honesty and careful avoidance of plagiarism. Any submission of an artificially generated text in an assignment for which the student is responsible, in whole or in part, and including the use of citations of works not actually consulted by the student, is to be considered a form of plagiarism. "School is the place where new generations can learn to seek and love the truth, to reflect on the meaning of life, and to recognize the dignity of every person" (MH, no. 143).
3. **Discernment:** prudence in the use of technology. AI tools should only be employed in those limited circumstances where it is clear that they will enhance the educational experience. "Schools are not called to follow the pace of the digital world, but to offer that which the digital sphere by itself cannot provide, namely a shared time for learning and developing trustworthy relationships" (MH, no. 147).
4. **Integral Formation:** encouraging deep intellectual engagement, rather than replacing the exercise of one's intellectual faculties with automation. The use of AI should never replace the original thought, effort, or authorship of a student or faculty member. Any use of AI must always serve, not hinder, the student's growth in all dimensions of formation.
5. **Personalist Principle:** opportunities for human interaction are always to be preferred over engagement with AI.
6. **Inner Growth:** all formation must promote interior growth through human experiences. "So-called artificial intelligences do not undergo experiences, do not possess a body, do not feel joy or pain, do not mature through relationships, and do not know from within what love, work, friendship, or responsibility mean. Nor do they have a moral conscience, since they do not judge good and evil, grasp the ultimate meaning of situations, or bear responsibility for consequences. They do not understand what they produce, for they lack the affective, relational, and spiritual perspective through which human beings grow in wisdom. Even when these tools are

described as capable of 'learning,' their way of doing so is different from that of a human person. It is not the experience of those who allow themselves to be shaped by life and grow over time through choices, mistakes, forgiveness, and fidelity. Rather, it is a form of statistical adaptation based on data and feedback, which can be very effective, but does not imply inner growth" (MH, no. 99).

Different approaches to the allowance of AI tools in academic contexts can be categorized as follows:

- Restrictive approach: AI tools are entirely prohibited.
- Prescriptive approach:- AI tools are permitted only for specific purposes and require prior permission unless such use is explicitly prescribed in the assignment as given.
- Permissive approach: AI tools are encouraged in the completion of assignments.

Seminary professors may adopt either a restrictive or a prescriptive approach in their courses. Adopting a permissive approach, which is not anticipated in any seminary courses, would require explicit approval from the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA).

#### *Unacceptable Uses of AI*

The following uses of AI tools are strictly prohibited, since they go beyond merely supplementary support and risk being fundamentally and objectively deceptive:

1. Ghostwriting: presenting or submitting AI-generated content as one's own original work. This includes using AI tools to compose homilies, reflections, papers, and other forms of written assignments, as well as using AI in the drafting process or to generate an outline.
2. Cheating or Academic Dishonesty: using AI tools to complete assignments, papers, quizzes, exams, etc. intended to assess personal understanding. Such use is strictly prohibited.
3. Misrepresentation of personal research in citations: using AI tools to generate citations that do not exist, that the student has not consulted personally, or that misrepresent sources. All sources must be directly and personally obtained and consulted.
4. Use as a Source: AI, itself, is never to be treated as a source.
5. Exposure of Confidential Data: since user inputs and uploaded documents serve to train AI tools, confidential information must never be entered into publicly available AI interfaces, even anonymously or for the sake of example.
6. Departmental Collaboration: departments may work collaboratively to determine a restrictive approach that would prohibit the use of AI tools entirely within a department.

Other Uses: no use of AI tools is allowed in relation to coursework without the express permission of the professor.

#### *Possibly Acceptable Uses of AI* (whenever such is in accordance with the present policy)

Any use of AI is generally discouraged. There are some specific uses that may not always be considered academic misconduct, some possible examples of which include:

1. Research assistance, such as searching for sources relevant to a given topic, gaining or enhancing background knowledge on a topic, or exploring varied viewpoints.
2. Grammar, syntax, and spelling refinement that is built into software for identifying and correcting lexical and syntactical errors. Caution should also be exercised regarding overly subservient use of automated checking for spelling, capitalization and usage, since ecclesiastical and theological usage and vocabulary may sometimes differ from general usage in these respects. Theological and philosophical precision may also sometimes require more use of subordinate clauses and longer sentences than may be favored by tools for the automated checking of grammar and syntax.
3. Language translation, principally for assistance in reading sources in modern languages, not for assignments in language classes or classes focusing principally upon English-language usage, style and rhetorical skills. If the student is not a native speaker of the English language, any use of AI tools for translation must be discussed with the professor for his or her approval and reported at the end of the assignment, as mentioned in n. 5 below.
4. Clarification, such as assistance in gaining initial definitions of terms or concepts.
5. Whenever any AI tools are used in completing a written assignment legitimately in accordance with the provisions this policy, a statement is to be made in an appendix (which may be short) at the end of the written assignment describing the precise use that the student has made of them.

In all cases, acceptable uses of AI tools must have the explicit approval of the professor. Similarly, in all cases, students must retain full responsibility for the content, accuracy, and originality of their work.

#### *Guidelines for Faculty Members*

1. Faculty members are encouraged to explore ways of developing and fostering in others intellectual virtues (e.g., studiousness, humility, and honesty) so that they come to understand, appreciate, and evaluate AI as a limited tool, not as a substitute for the formation of the human mind and heart.
2. Faculty members should communicate clear expectations regarding AI use in syllabi and assignments. Every course syllabus is expected to include a statement regarding AI usage. Depending on the nature of each particular course, either a restrictive or a prescriptive approach (defined above) may be adopted.
3. Faculty members may require students to submit, along with a completed assignment, any of the following:
  - earlier drafts (including any native-language drafts if the student is not a native speaker of English);
  - content as it was produced by students prior to the influence of AI;
  - and/or a record of AI interactions.

4. The use of AI in lesson planning, instruction, and assessment creation is discouraged. Any AI-generated materials must be acknowledged as such, and they should be reviewed and tailored before classroom use.
5. It is impermissible for faculty members to use AI tools for assigning grades or providing feedback in an unsupervised manner.

#### *Guidelines for Students*

1. Students are encouraged to develop intellectual virtues (e.g., studiousness, humility, and honesty) so that they come to understand, appreciate, and evaluate AI as a limited tool, not as a substitute for the formation of the human mind and heart.
2. In classes adopting a prescriptive approach, students must strictly limit their engagement with AI tools to those uses expressly permitted by the professor in accordance with this policy.
3. It is always impermissible for students to use AI tools in any way that circumvents the processes of active learning, contemplation, or prayerful engagement.

#### *Review and Oversight*

1. Violations of this policy will be treated as academic misconduct. Any report of inappropriate use of AI tools shall be investigated and reviewed by the VPAA.
2. Violations may result in grade penalties, academic probation, disciplinary, and/or formal review by the Academic Affairs Committee.