



SEMINARY OF THE  
**SOUTHWEST**

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AN EPISCOPAL SEMINARY

# Academic Code

## 2023-2024

THE EPISCOPAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF THE SOUTHWEST

ACADEMIC CODE, SEPTEMBER, 2022

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# THE EPISCOPAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF THE SOUTHWEST

## ACADEMIC CODE, SEPTEMBER, 2023

*Mission Statement: Rooted in the reconciling ministry of Christ, the mission of Seminary of the Southwest is to form people for vocations of ministry, service, and healing.*

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.A. Purpose**

The Academic Code is designed to order the academic life of the community. The academic activities of instructors and students are governed by the Code. In cases when the Code seems inappropriate, a petition requesting an adjustment may be submitted to the Academic Affairs Committee.

#### **1.B. Student Classification**

##### *1.B.1. Regular Students*

Regular students are degree and diploma candidates

##### *1.B.2. Special Students*

Special students are registered for course credits but are not degree or diploma candidates

##### *1.B.3. Auditors*

Auditors are students who do not seek academic credit or evaluation.

##### *1.B.4. Changes in Student Classification*

Changes in student classification are subject to faculty approval, through the Academic Affairs committee, and shall normally take effect in the semester immediately following the one in which they are approved. However, changes from Regular to Special student status may take effect immediately if the request is submitted to the Registrar prior to the date designated as the deadline for adding and dropping courses.

## **2. Academic Requirements**

### **2.A. Registration**

#### *2.A.1. Program of Study*

All students are expected to follow the prescribed program of study for which they are registered. Prior to registration students shall consult with their faculty advisors to discuss course registrations for the following semester to assure that degree requirements are being met. Students who depart from the prescribed order for taking required courses should be warned that scheduling difficulties may develop.

#### *2.A.2. Late Registration*

Those unable to register on scheduled registration days should request postponement from the Academic Dean or the Registrar. A \$35.00 penalty will be levied on all unsanctioned late registrations.

#### *2.A.3. Auditing*

Anyone who wishes to audit a course must register as follows: obtain written permission from the instructor and the Academic Dean; present the permission form to the Registrar; and pay the fee, if any, to the Accounting Office. The professor is responsible for ensuring that all auditors contribute to rather than detract from the experience of students enrolled for credit in his or her course. So that their class participation supports the course learning objectives and adds value for the enrolled students, all auditors are expected to complete all readings and assignments that will be discussed or debriefed in class.

#### *2.A.4. Failure to Register*

When a student enrolled in a program fails to register in a given semester, the Registrar will notify them that they must indicate either to take a leave of absence or withdraw from the program. The Registrar's notification, copied to the student's advisor and Academic Dean, will advise the student of the requirement, in the case of a leave of absence, to notify the seminary each semester of their intention to remain on leave, and of the requirement, in the case of withdrawal, to reapply for readmission. Failure to reply to the Registrar's notification in five business days is, in effect, a withdrawal, and the Academic Dean may then charge the Registrar to close the student's file.

#### *2.A.5. Remaining Enrolled While on Leave of Absence*

Students on leave of absence must notify the Academic Dean, copied to the Registrar, each semester of their intention to remain enrolled. Failing such notification, the Academic Dean may then charge the Registrar to close the student's file at the end of the semester in question.

#### *2.A.6. Time Limit for Leave of Absence*

A leave of absence is granted for no more than 180 days. A student may appeal to the Academic Affairs committee for an extension beyond that time. This appeal must be received no later than 30

days prior to the beginning of the semester in which the extension is to begin. Failure to secure permission for a leave of absence will result in the student having to apply for readmission to the seminary.

## **2.B. Add/Drop Dates**

### *2.B.1. Fall & Spring Term*

Students may add a course until no later than the sixth calendar day following the first class session of the course. They may drop the course or change from credit to audit status or vice versa, until no later than the sixth calendar day following the first class session. Students who wish to make any of these changes after the deadlines may do so only with the permission of the Academic Dean in consultation with the instructor.

### *2.B.2. January & Summer Term*

The deadline for adding or dropping a course is no later than the third calendar day following the first class session of a course. Students who wish to make any of these changes after the deadline may do so only with the permission of the Academic Dean, in consultation with the instructor. For students in the Center programs, the deadline for making any changes mentioned is no later than the third calendar day following the first class session of a course. Students who wish to make any of these changes after the deadlines in any semester or term may do so only with the permission of the Academic Dean, in consultation with the instructor.

## **2.C. Withdrawing**

### *2.C.1. Withdrawing from a Course*

A student planning on withdrawing from a course after the add/drop period must contact the Registrar's office in writing. This can be via hand-delivery, email, or U.S. mail. The *Tuition Refund Policy* and the *Return of Title IV Funds Policy* will be applied.

### *2.C.2. Withdrawing from the Institution*

Students wishing to withdraw from the institution must contact the Registrar's office in writing. This can be via hand-delivery, email, or U.S. mail. If the student applies for readmission, the reasons for withdrawal will be taken into account. If a student who withdrew while on probation applies for readmission, the Academic Affairs Committee will consider the case.

## 2.D. Grades

All students will be graded under the letter grade system. Grade point averages are computed in order to track satisfactory academic progress. Some courses will be graded satisfactory/unsatisfactory. These courses are designated in the course listings of the Southwest catalog as satisfactory/unsatisfactory only.

### 2.D.1. Letter Grading System

- A Outstanding in all respects
- A- Outstanding in most respects
- B+ Proficient in all respects with some elements achieving a higher quality
- B Proficient in all respects
- B- Proficient in some respects but with some clear weaknesses
- C+ Showing development but lacking proficiency
- C Showing a basic level of development sufficient to pass a course but not sufficient to display proficiency in a program
- F Beginning level work that does not display sufficient knowledge to pass the course or assignment. No credit shall be given for a grade of F. A grade of F remains on a student's permanent record. If a grade of F is incurred in a required course, the course must be retaken. An F may not be removed from a student's transcript, except in the event of a successful appeal against the grade having been made according to the Student Academic Grievance Policy.
- AU Audit: course not taken for credit

Please note that while grading is not calculated on the basis of a bell curve, the faculty are committed to using the full range of letter grades, evaluating according to the quality of an individual's work. All professors provide criteria for evaluation on their course syllabi.

### 2.D.2. Pass/Fail System

- S (Satisfactory) shall designate work that satisfactorily meets or exceeds the expectations set for the task
- U (Unsatisfactory) shall designate failure, and no credit shall be given for the course. In no case may a grade of U be changed or deleted from a student's permanent record. If a grade of U is incurred in a required course, the course must be retaken.

### 2.D.3. Other Symbols

W (Withdraw) If a student withdraws after the add/drop deadline, but the professor/instructor is unable to evaluate the student's performance, a grade of W shall be given.

WP/WF (Withdraw Pass/Withdraw Fail) If a student withdraws after the add/drop deadline, but is doing passing work, the grade WP shall be given; otherwise such late withdrawal shall result in a grade of WF being given.

I (Incomplete) is a temporary grade, pre-arranged between the instructor, the student, and the faculty in cases of excusable failure to complete the work of a course (see 2.G. Late Work Policy). IP (In Progress) will be given when a grade and credit for this course has not yet been assigned or the course is continuing into the next semester, with neither grade nor credit being given until the latter semester is completed.

## 2.F. Grade Reports

Grade reports from instructors are normally due within two weeks of the end of the course. For work in field education, practicum courses, or January term courses, the deadline may be extended beyond two weeks, to four to six weeks.

Within one week after grades are received from instructors, the Registrar's office, or instructors will input grades into the online registration system for student's viewing.

## 2.G. Late Work, Extensions, and Incompletes

### 2.G.1 Late Work

Work turned in late without an extension having been granted will lose two percentage points per day on the grade for the assignment. If the student does not contact the instructor within one week after the late assignment is due, the assignments will not be accepted, and it will be given a grade of zero.

### 2.G.2 Extensions

Students may request extensions of deadlines for assignments during the term. The request must be made at least three days prior to the due date for the assignment. The granting of an extension is at the discretion of the instructor. In cases of emergency, instructors may grant an extension request received after the three-day deadline. Extensions may not be granted beyond the last day of the semester (noted on the Registrar's Calendar as "Classes End"). If an extension is granted, there is no penalty as long as the work is turned in by the revised due date.



### *2.G.3 Incompletes*

If a student wishes to request approval to turn in any work after the last day of the semester (marked “Classes end” on the Registrar’s Calendar), the student must make a request for an “Incomplete.” An incomplete is a temporary grade, pre-arranged between the instructor, the student, and the faculty in cases of excusable failure to complete the work of a course by the last day of the semester. To receive an incomplete in a course, a student must make the request in writing on or before the date of the final Academic Affairs meeting of the semester, and decisions will be rendered by the Academic Affairs committee. The Academic Affairs Committee regularly meets on the first Wednesday of the month. It is the student’s responsibility, in conversation with their advisor, to confirm the date of the meeting and to have a request submitted to their advisor at least one day in advance of the meeting. Their advisor will add the request to the Academic Affairs agenda. At the meeting, the faculty will determine whether to grant the incomplete. A student with an emergency may make a request after the last Academic Affairs meeting and up to the last day of the semester. In such a case a decision will be made by the professor in consultation with the Academic Dean. Receiving an incomplete allows a student three weeks to complete their work after the last day of the semester.

For an incomplete received in the spring semester for a student who is graduating, the instructor will set the due date for submission of incomplete work to be no later than the Wednesday before graduation. Any incomplete assignment not turned in by the new due date will be given a zero and the final course grade calculated accordingly. Summer incompletes will be considered at the discretion of the instructor in consultation with the Academic Dean.

For an incomplete received in field education, practicum, or internship whether in a semester or a term, a longer period than stated above may be allowed because of the nature of such courses.

Work is to be evaluated by the instructor and grades are to be submitted to the registrar within one week after the deadline for incomplete work.

### **2.H. Academic Probation**

Students whose cumulative GPA falls below a 2.50 will be placed on academic probation and their status will be reviewed at the end of the following semester. Students whose cumulative GPA remains below a 2.50 in the following semester will be dismissed as a student registered for credit.

If a student’s GPA is such that it would be mathematically impossible to reach the mark of 2.50 after a semester of academic probation, the student will be dismissed as a student registered for credit.

Students who have lost their status as outlined above may appeal their case to the faculty in writing and may be restored by a two-thirds vote of the faculty

## **2.I. Equivalence for Required Courses**

In the event that students desire to take a required course at another academic institution, they may petition the faculty for permission to substitute an equivalent course after consultation with the instructor of the required course. The following procedure shall be observed:

- The student, in consultation with the instructor of the required course, shall determine an equivalent course to be offered in its place. In some cases more than one course may be required to achieve a satisfactory equivalence. Such courses shall be formal classroom offerings of other accredited institutions. Independent study projects will not be considered.
- When an equivalent offering has been decided upon, the student shall submit a written application, endorsed by the instructor of the required course, to the Academic Affairs Committee for consideration. The student shall be responsible for supplying such information as the committee shall deem necessary for making its decision.
- In the case of students in the Master of Divinity (MDiv) program who are members of denominations other than the Episcopal Church, modifications to the MDiv curriculum, which are appropriate or necessary to fulfill denominational requirements of the student's sponsoring denomination, may be made in consultation with the Academic Dean. Episcopal students who are not ordination track may also consult with the Academic Dean regarding modifications to the MDiv curriculum.

When a student fails a required course, and the student and the instructor agree that it is clear that no substantial benefit is to be derived from retaking the course, the student may petition the faculty for permission to substitute an equivalent course. In such cases, the procedure outlined here in 2.H. shall be followed.

A student having failed a required course twice shall not be eligible to repeat it a third time.

## **2.J. Requirements for Graduation**

### *2.J.1. Degree Requirements*

Reference should be made to the catalog for graduation requirements for the degree of Master of Divinity (MDiv), the degree of Master of Arts in Religion (MAR), the degree of Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MHC), the degree of Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation (MSF), and the Diploma in Anglican Studies (DAS).

### *2.J.2. Enrollment Prior to Graduation*

Candidates for the MDiv and the MAR must be enrolled as full-time students during the two consecutive semesters immediately preceding graduation. Exceptions include four year students; and students matriculating with more than 12 hours of transfer credit. Where extenuating circumstances exist, a student

may request relaxation of this requirement by application in writing to the Academic Dean. A student may be permitted by vote of the Academic Affairs Committee to complete in absentia a maximum of six credits, including no more than one required course. Such work must be completed at an accredited institution and in a course of study approved by the faculty.

### *2.J.3. Students Requesting Readmission*

Determination of graduation requirements for students requesting readmission shall be made as follows:

- The number of credits required for graduation shall be that of the catalog in effect at the time the student withdrew from the seminary.
- Course requirements and other prerequisites for graduation which were in effect at the time the student withdrew shall remain in effect only where they continue to be required in the catalog under which the student is readmitted.
- The faculty may impose additional requirements to ensure that deficiencies do not occur as a result of the deletion of required courses or of changes in their content.

### *2.J.4. Dates for Awarding and Conferring Degrees*

The Board of Trustees awards degrees during its May meeting each year. Center degrees are also awarded by the Board of Trustees during their October and February meetings. Degrees and diplomas are conferred during formal commencement services each May.

## **2.K. Timetables for Degree Completion**

The following are the maximum times allowable under which a **full-time** student may receive the degree or diploma for the program in which he or she is enrolled (full-time is considered 12 or more hours; part-time is less than 12 hours).

- Master of Divinity: 4 years
- Master of Arts in Religion: 3 years
- Diploma in Anglican Studies: 1 year
- Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling: see below
- Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation: see below

Leave of absences are not included in the timetable for degree completion.

In cases where circumstances beyond a student's control make completion of a program impossible within these times, an extension may be requested through petition to the Academic Affairs Committee.

The maximum times during which a **part-time** student must earn his or her degree or diploma are as follows:

- Master of Divinity: 7 years
- Master of Arts in Religion: 5 years
- Diploma in Anglican Studies: 2 years
- Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling: \*
- Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation \*

\* Because of the nature of these programs, there are no fixed limits. However, students requiring more than six years to complete their degrees will be assessed by the Academic Dean as to the currency of their studies. If remediation is necessary, such will become a required part of their degree program.

Any student using VA benefits that is temporarily unable to attend class or suspend their studies due to service requirements will be readmitted without penalty regarding timetables for degree completion.

## **2.L. Transfer Credits**

See Transfer Credit Policy in the policy section of the Populi “Files” tab.

## **2.M. Independent Directed Study Course (MDiv, MAR, DAS, MSF)**

An Independent Directed Study (IDS) is a course requested by the student for individual study and is not listed in the regular curriculum. An IDS is supervised by Full-time faculty members only and normally consists of no more than two students.

Proposals are reviewed, approved, or denied by the Academic Affairs Committee in the semester preceding the projected course of study. The proposal, including all required signatures, must be submitted to the Registrar no later than the day before the last Academic Affairs meeting of the semester.

An IDS serves one of two purposes:

- to allow for study of a topic that is of special interest but provision for which is not made in another course. Topics covered in existing electives, therefore, are not eligible for an IDS.
- to allow students to meet their degree requirements in the case of irresolvable schedule conflicts. In all such instances, however, an attempt will first be made to find an equivalent course through Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

Students may take a maximum of one IDS or one SLC during the course of their degree. This limit does not apply to Independent Directed Studies taken to resolve schedule conflicts or to accommodate non-Episcopalians in the Master of Divinity program.

Students in the Master of Divinity program who are non-Episcopalians may take up to three Independent Directed Studies during their course of study to substitute for Anglican-specific courses.

An IDS course cannot be substituted for a required course except in the case of irresolvable schedule conflicts.

Forms are available on Populi in the “files” tab.

#### *2.M.1 Procedure for Course Proposals*

- The student’s choice of faculty supervisor must be approved by both the faculty member and the student’s advisor prior to the submission of your proposal.
- Complete the application form in full (including all signatures) and submit to the Registrar for presentation to the Academic Affairs Committee.
- The application must be submitted to the registrar before the date of the last Academic Affairs Committee meeting in the semester prior to the proposed IDS. It is the student’s responsibility to check the date of this meeting on the Campus Calendar or to inquire of the registrar.
- The Academic Affairs Committee may approve the application as submitted or return it for revision and resubmission.
- Once an application is approved, a copy will be delivered to the Registrar who will notify the student of the committee’s decision, including any specific recommendations.
- The approved application will be returned to the Registrar and kept on file until the final grade is submitted.
- No applications will be considered after the end of the semester preceding the semester of the proposed course of study.

#### *2.M.2. General Rules for Course Proposals*

- The bibliography (and/or list of resources) must cover sufficiently all aspects of the stated goals of the course. The bibliography on the course proposal can be augmented or revised as the course proceeds, but enough resources to sustain the inquiry must be identified at the outset.
- There must be accountability for the progress of the course over its designated time period. There can be great variability in this factor, depending on the nature of the investigation and the length of time involved. For example, in the case of a semester-long course annotated bibliographies or short research reports might be due periodically. Or, if the outcome of the course is to be a term

paper, rough drafts or sections or chapters might be due on particular dates. The objective is to avoid postponing all requirements to the end of the course.

- The number of contact hours between student and faculty supervisor must be adequate to realize the stated goals and to carry out the proposed process of evaluation. There must be a minimum of 14 contact hours with the faculty supervisor and an expectation of at least 112 hours of outside work for the student for the length of the semester, or a minimum of 14 weeks. (Credit Hour Policy, revised 11/11/15)

## **2.N. Student Led Colloquy Course (MDiv, MAR, DAS)**

A Student Led Colloquy (SLC) is one proposed by the student and is not a course listed in the regular curriculum. When the idea of a colloquy is in the beginning phase, being discussed and developed by one or two students, she/he or they will approach a supervising faculty member to solicit his or her support prior to gathering a group of interested students as potential participants. A SLC is supervised by full-time faculty members and no more than three to eight students can be in a colloquy in any semester. Students may take a maximum of one IDS or one SLC during the course of their degree. This limit does not apply to Independent Directed Studies taken to resolve schedule conflicts.

Proposals *must* be presented for approval to the Academic Affairs Committee before the registration date during the semester preceding the projected course of study. Please check with the Registrar's office regarding the date the proposal must be submitted prior to the committee meeting.

### *2.N.1. Procedure for Course Proposals*

- The student's choice of faculty supervisor must be approved by both the faculty member and the student's advisor prior to the submission of your proposal.
- Complete the application form in full (including all signatures) and submit to the Registrar for presentation to the Academic Affairs Committee.
- The application must be submitted to the registrar before the date of the last Academic Affairs Committee meeting in the semester prior to the proposed IDS. It is the student's responsibility to check the date of this meeting on the Campus Calendar or to inquire of the registrar.
- The Academic Affairs Committee may approve the application as submitted or return it for revision and resubmission.
- Once an application is approved, a copy will be delivered to the Registrar who will notify the student of the committee's decision, including any specific recommendations.
- The approved application will be returned to the Registrar and kept on file until the final grade is submitted.

- No applications will be considered after the end of the semester preceding the semester of the proposed course of study.

### **2.N.2. General Rules for Course Proposals**

- The bibliography (and/or list of resources) must cover sufficiently all aspects of the stated goals of the course. The bibliography on the course proposal can be augmented or revised as the course proceeds, but enough resources to sustain the inquiry must be identified at the outset.
- There must be accountability for the progress of the course over its designated time period. There can be great variability in this factor, depending on the nature of the investigation and the length of time involved. For example, in the case of a semester-long course annotated bibliographies or short research reports might be due periodically. Or, if the outcome of the course is to be a term paper, rough drafts or sections or chapters might be due on particular dates. The objective is to avoid postponing all requirements to the end of the course.
- The number of contact hours between student and faculty supervisor must be adequate to realize the stated goals and to carry out the proposed process of evaluation. There must be a minimum of 14 contact hours with the faculty supervisor and an expectation of at least 112 hours of outside work for the student for the length of the semester, or a minimum of 14 weeks. (Credit Hour Policy, revised 11/11/15)

### **2.O. MAR Students**

Master of Arts in Religion students are governed by Academic Code and the MAR Handbook, which is given to each student at the beginning of their matriculation.

### **2.P. Satisfactory Academic Progress**

Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements (“SAP”) are mandated by federal regulation and established by school policy. Each student will be reviewed for SAP at the conclusion of each semester. SAP is based on qualitative as well as quantitative standards:

- Grade Point Average: This qualitative measure requires students to maintain a minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.50 for all attempted courses, including grades earned for preparatory and/or transfer credits accepted by SSW.
- Completion Rate: This quantitative measure requires graduate students to maintain a cumulative completion rate of 67% of the attempted coursework in any semester (including preparatory and/or transfer hours accepted by SSW.) This percentage is determined by dividing the number of hours completed by the total number of hours attempted. Attempted hours are the total number of hours successfully completed (earning a grade of A, B, or C) plus the credits attempted but earning grades of “W”, “I”, or “F”.

See the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for more information.

### **3. Classroom Requirements**

#### **3.A. Assignments**

##### *3.A.1. Syllabus*

During the first week of the term the instructor of each course will provide a syllabus for the course that sets forth its scope, aims, and major assignments.

##### *3.A.2. Extensions*

Instructors may grant extensions beyond the due date for any assignment, provided that there is good reason for postponement and that the request is made 24 hours before the original deadline.

In accord with the same procedure, instructors may also for weighty cause grant extensions beyond the “All Papers Due” date in the official calendar, setting a new date in accordance with the Due Date Guidelines stated in section II.D. Students may appeal an instructor’s denial of their requests for such extensions to the faculty as a whole through the Academic Affairs Committee.

##### *3.A.3. Grading Expectations*

All tests and papers are to be promptly evaluated and returned to students, normally within two weeks for work done during the semester and within one month for final exams or papers. (If this norm has to be modified, students should be advised in advance by the instructor.) The evaluation of work done for academic credit shall include both a grade and a rubric or explanatory comments. The instructor shall either provide this feedback in written form or make appointments with students to deliver them orally.

Students may request and obtain a meeting with their instructors to discuss evaluation of their performance on any assignment.

#### **3.B. Recording and Sharing of Course Material**

Video and audio recording of lectures are allowed only with permission from the professor. When allowed, all recordings of class lectures are the professor’s intellectual property. You may share the recordings with fellow students enrolled in the course, but the recordings may not be publicly disseminated in any way, including postings in any electronic media or communications. You may not make or share recordings of other students without their permission. Foreign students and those with diagnosed learning handicaps will be granted permission to record lectures subject to conditions placed on the use of the recording by the instructor. Extramural use of recordings, verbatim reports, Podcasts, seminary lectures and written material submitted by students depends on permission being granted by the author or speaker.



### **3.C. Visitors**

Visitors to classes are welcome but should be approved by the professor after previous consultation by the student wishing to bring a guest to a class session.

### **3.D. Examinations and Other Written Work**

Instructors shall be responsible for the conduct of examinations in their respective classes. The following points must be kept in mind with regard to examinations:

- During an examination, there is to be no consultation with anyone and no reference to any books or notes, unless explicitly authorized.
- Limited resources allow reference to books, articles, online sources, and/or one's own notes at the instructor's discretion but do not permit consultation with others or their notes.
- When mutual assistance is authorized, it is for research, study, and assigned joint projects. Examinations and assignments submitted over one's own name should represent one's own knowledge and thoughts.
- Students whose first language is other than English or who have diagnosed reading or writing disabilities may be examined in alternate ways.
- In most of the seminary's courses English is the language of instruction and of students' written work. Students who are not native speakers of English, or who have not been educated in English, are therefore required to show competence in English before being admitted, and are expected to do work in English from the time they enroll.
- Students who establish that they have reading and writing disabilities may petition their instructors for permission to demonstrate grasp of the course material by alternative ways of examination or evaluation. The instructors will devise in consultation with the student an alternative method of evaluation that will take into account the student's disability.
- Students who are visually or hearing impaired may be given an alternative, equivalent examination or written assignment after consultation with the instructor.

## **4. Changes in Program**

### **4.A. Special or Diploma Students**

If a Special or Diploma student wishes to enter any degree program, he or she shall apply to the Director of Admissions. The Director of Admissions will ensure that all admission requirements for the requested

degree program are met. Documents submitted or steps taken in connection with admission as a Special student may be used to meet admission requirements for a degree program.

#### **4.B. Degree Students**

If a student in any degree or diploma program wishes to transfer to another degree or diploma program, he or she will need to reach out to the Registrar's office for a *Degree Program Transfer* form. The form must be filled out and signed by all parties and returned to the Registrar's office. The Registrar will ensure that the form is then given to the Academic Affairs Committee. The Registrar will notify the student of the Committee's decision. The student may appeal an unfavorable decision to the Faculty, to be considered at its next regularly scheduled business meeting.

#### **4.C. MDIV Students Changing From a Three Year Program to a Four Year Program**

Students who entered the MDIV three year program may move to the MDIV four program following this procedure: Students must first visit with their advisor to discuss this change. A change form *must* be presented for approval to the Academic Affairs Committee before the start of the next semester. Once approved, the Registrar will make the change in Populi and notify the student, the student's advisor, and the faculty.

#### **4.D. Conditions**

Requests for a change in program will be considered only if the student is in good standing academically, and if the student has met all financial obligations.

Any change of program must be completed soon enough to satisfy any time requirements that may apply in the program to which the student is transferring.

For students who wish to transfer from any degree program to the Master of Divinity program who are not postulants, the Academic Dean will ensure that all admissions requirements for the *Non-Postulant Policy* are met. Once the requirements are met, the Academic Dean will communicate this to the student and Registrar.

#### **4.E. Application of the MAR degree toward the MDiv degree**

Persons who have been awarded the seminary's MAR degree and who wish to apply those credits toward the MDiv degree may do so under the following conditions:

- Application must be made within five years of receipt of the MAR degree.
- A minimum of an additional year of full time work must be completed in residence.
- All requirements for the MDiv in effect at the time of MDiv matriculation shall apply.

- The MAR degree shall be surrendered prior to the award of the MDiv degree.

*All transfers to any program will only take place prior to the beginning of the fall or spring semester.*

## **5. Evaluations**

### **5.A. The Evaluation Process for MDiv Students**

*Approved by the Faculty, May 2009*

#### *5.A.1. Overview*

Students working toward a Master of Divinity degree at Seminary of the Southwest are engaged in a simultaneous process of education and formation. As they are learning their academic subjects, they are developing their identity and gifts as ministers and leaders in the Church. The MDiv evaluation process is designed to help students participate most fully in both processes and through reflection and conversation with the faculty grow in clarity and competence in their vocations.

Through this process, we hope that:

- Students have a way to engage in critical self reflection that allows them to build on their gifts and strengths and develop their ministerial identity and competency within a supportive community over the three-year curriculum;
- Students receive specific helpful information about themselves, the practice of ministry, and the work of the Church;
- Bishops and diocesan committees (or other appropriate judicatories) receive information about students that is honest, relevant, and aimed at building on gifts and strengths while recognizing that formation is a process that happens over time;
- Learning from struggle, mistakes, gaps, and dissonance is affirmed as an essential part of the process of formation and education;
- Students develop habits that will encourage patterns of self-reflection and growth as well as collaboration and accountability within communities of faith;
- Our faculty-student advising system is enhanced;
- The academic and formational aspects of our curriculum are integrated;
- The culture of the seminary as a community benefits from the practice of good communication, transparency, accountability, mutual regard, and trust.

### *5.A.2. Characteristics of the Process*

We seek a process that is characterized by:

- **Transparency:** The process is clear, communicated well to students and consistently followed and supported by faculty. Communication should be honest, respectful and timely.
- **Participation:** Students and faculty, with the help of staff, site supervisors and others involved in the formation process, have particular roles and responsibilities. Each participant is expected to be responsible for his/her actions and to take appropriate initiative.
- **Collegiality:** Although faculty and students are not peers, we are engaged in a common endeavor of serving the Church. Students appreciate the role and responsibilities, perspectives and concerns of the faculty. Likewise, the members of the faculty attend to the different learning needs, styles and situations of students.
- **Respect:** Respect for one another takes into account our differences while recognizing the asymmetrical relationship of faculty to student in terms of power and authority.
- **Accountability:** We are mutually answerable to one another; roles and responsibilities differ but we recognize that our behavior affects each other and the community.
- **Coherence:** The process is built upon an understanding of the interrelationship of academics, the practice of ministry, and vocational development as well as the exigencies of education, learning and formation.

### *5.A.3. Overview of the three-year program*

Every MDiv student participates in an annual review process – juniors and middlers in the spring, seniors in the fall – all following a common format. However, the Canons of the Episcopal Church require the seminary to give annual reports for postulants and candidates for Holy Orders (Canon III.8.5.j) although the format for these reports is only broadly specified. The Seminary's format for making these reports include: a junior report specifying that the student is making academic and personal progress toward ordination; a middler report that elaborates on the student's progress and a senior report that (1) specifies the faculty's affirmation that the student is academically and personally qualified and recommended for ordination; and (2) provides a summary of the student's progress and particular strengths and gifts for ministry. The Seminary, through the Academic Dean in consultation with the student's advisor or the faculty as a whole, may give interim reports regarding individual students to accommodate ordination timelines or when a particular problem or concern arises.

Episcopal students who do not have ecclesiastical standing in the Episcopal Church (i.e. are neither postulants nor candidates) participate in the evaluation process and receive annual reports for the same purpose of vocational development and consultation as do students in the ordination process. However, these reports do not constitute nor should students construe them as an endorsement of a desire for or pursuit of ordination.

#### *5.A.4. Material for Evaluation*

What informs the evaluation process? Whatever contributes to the formation process for a student is also part of the evaluation process. As students write self-evaluations and faculty develop evaluation documents, the following are considered: classroom activities and formal academic endeavors; conversations with texts, peers and teachers; participation in chapel and worship planning; field education; clinical pastoral education; class and community membership and participation; work study; management of fiscal responsibilities; and involvement in communities other than the seminary. How a student conducts themselves in informal and professional settings and in relationships with peers, faculty, administrators, staff, off-campus supervisors (lay or ordained), and visitors to our school gives evidence of one's vocational development.

#### **5.B. Course Evaluation Procedure**

Students are expected to complete an evaluation of each course that they take. An evaluation form is normally distributed electronically at the beginning of each course (and/or attached to the syllabus on the Web). Students may sign the evaluation forms if they wish but a signature is not required. An evaluation form is distributed at the conclusion of the course. The completed forms are collected by a designated student and given to the assistant to the Academic Dean or sent electronically to the assistant to the Academic Dean via the Web. The forms are held until the course grades are submitted to the Registrar. Once grades are complete, the evaluation forms are provided to the course instructor, copies also filed in the Academic Dean's office.