



Student Handbook 2026-2027

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	1
Calenders.....	3
Mission Statement.....	5
Conversation Covenant.....	5
Core Values.....	5
Chapel Information.....	6
Events.....	7
Faculty and Staff Contacts.....	10
Office of the Dean and President.....	10
Office of the Academic Dean.....	10
Administration and Finance.....	10
Center for Writing and The Arts.....	11
Loise Henderson Wessendorff Center for Counseling and Spirituality.....	11
Office of Advancement and Communications.....	11
Brand Guidelines.....	12
Information Technology Services.....	12
Accounting and Billing.....	12
Housekeeping and Maintenance Requests.....	13
General Ordination Examinations and Canonical Exams.....	13
NCE and CPCE Exams.....	13
Housing.....	13
Pool and Gym Facilities.....	14
Lost and Found.....	14
Mailboxes.....	14
Meal Program.....	14
Notary Public.....	15
Parking Permits.....	15
Classroom and Guest Suite Reservations.....	15
Registering for Classes.....	16
Veterans Affairs (VA) Education Benefits.....	16
Auditing a Course.....	16
Graduation Declaration Procedure.....	17
Financial Aid Information.....	18
Work Study Information.....	18
Parish and Diocese Forms.....	18
Around Campus.....	19
Near Campus.....	20
Bishop Dena A. Harrison Library.....	21
Bookstore.....	23

Councils & Committees of the Seminary.....	24
Student Organizations & Activities.....	25
Student Clubs and Involvement.....	25
SPOTS (Spouses/Partners of The Seminary).....	25
Student Council.....	25
Soul by Southwest.....	25
Emergency Procedures.....	27
Trauma Kit Location Schedule.....	27
Maintenance Emergencies.....	27
Pastoral Emergencies and Spiritual Support.....	27
Emergency Policies.....	28
Policies and More.....	28
Health Insurance Requirement.....	29
Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.....	29
Memorandum Regarding Directory Information.....	30
Constitution of the Student Body.....	31
Student Handbook Disclosure.....	36

Calenders

To stay informed throughout the academic year, students should regularly use the following resources:

- **Academic Calendar:** Visit the Seminary website to view the current Academic Calendar for important dates, including registration, holidays, breaks, and academic deadlines.
- **Course Schedule:** Log in to Populi to view the current class schedule, course meeting times, and classroom locations.
- **Campus Calendar:** Students are encouraged to add the **Campus Calendar** to their SSW Google Calendar to receive the most up-to-date information about campus events, community gatherings, lectures, and other activities. For questions about adding the Campus Calendar, please contact helpdesk@ssw.edu.

2026 - 2027 Official Calendar

August 2026

3-14 Asynchronous online NSO class (all programs)
 14 MHC & MSD NSO Retreat
 15 NSO Orientation (All programs)
 15-20 Registration for all new students
 15-22 New Student Orientation class (MDIV, DAS programs)
 23 Matriculation Service and Dinner
 24 Fall classes begin

September 2026

7 Labor Day Holiday – offices closed

October 2026

6 Board of Trustees Meeting
 6 John Hines Day
 12-16 Fall Break

November 2026

18 Alumni Convocation and Blandy Lectures
 9-13 Spring Registration
 24-27 Thanksgiving Break – no classes
 25-27 Thanksgiving Holidays – offices closed

December 2026

11 Classes end
 13 Christmas Holidays through January 1– offices closed

January 2027

4, 5, 6 General Ordination Examination
 4-23 January Term
 18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday – offices closed
 25 Spring classes begin

February 2027

3 Board of Trustees Meeting

March 2027

1 Summer Registration
 15-19 Spring Break
 23 Payne & Harvey Lecture
 26 Good Friday
 28 Easter

29 Easter-Monday - offices closed / Reading Day

April 2027

12-16 Fall and January term registration

May 2027

7 Classes end

18-19 Board of Trustees Meeting

18 Commencement Eucharist

19 Commencement

31 Memorial Day Holiday – offices closed

June 2027

1 Summer classes begin

19 Juneteenth Holiday - offices closed

July 2027

5 Independence Day Holiday – offices closed

30 Summer classes end

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.

Conversation Covenant

A seminary community is a school of inquiry and interpretation: inquiry into the mystery of God in Jesus Christ and interpretation, in both action and reflection, of God's creative and redemptive love. Frank, confident, and trustful conversation is an essential part of our common learning. Often, though, we are led into difficult, even disturbing, conversations as we bring the length and breadth of our assumptions, hopes, opinions, and certainties, into the formative power of Christian faith. Avoiding the issues around which passion and disagreement reside might well be an easier path, but commitment to remaining in conversation with one another despite our differences is part of our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ.

In order to mark both our commitment to conversation and our recognition of the challenges, we affirm...

- that we are all made in the image of God and must, therefore, treat one another with respect and dignity
- that we are free to explore different ideas and beliefs as well as to grow and change theologically that we share a common sinfulness and, therefore, will understand only partially and be mistaken frequently
- that we do not have to agree in order to love one another
- that our conversations, even our most passionate disagreements, take place in the Spirit whom we seek not to grieve

And we strive...

- to approach conversation with a willingness to listen and learn, acknowledging the value of opposing views
- to treat one another as honest inquirers, attempting to discern God's truth in a complex world
- to engage ideas without attacking or dismissing those that hold them
- to acknowledge the limited perspective of our own experience and opinions, and be open to the possibility of our views changing; to consider the possibility that we might be mistaken, secure in the knowledge of the love and forgiveness we have all received in Christ
- to challenge one another while seeking not to give offense
- to consider challenges from others while striving not to take offense too readily
- to serve reconciliation by sharing when we have been offended
- to acknowledge stereotypes, ask for clarification in order to avoid misunderstandings, and make room for complexity

Core Values

Our core values describe what we stand for and believe in.

- Hospitality: creating a common life that welcomes difference and ensures that all voices are heard
- Conversation: listening to and critically engaging a variety of cultural and religious voices in order to commend the Christian tradition and discover fresh wisdom
- Mutuality: nurturing a collaborative environment that promotes mutual inquiry and accountability
- Respect: cultivating the virtues of patience, justice, and charity, so as to affirm the dignity of every member of the community
- Rootedness: embodying the richness of the Episcopal and Anglican traditions in particular contexts, especially that of the American Southwest and its Hispanic cultures
- Celebration: glorifying and enjoying God in worship, prayer, study, service, and fellowship, so as to create a community of gratitude and gift

Chapel Information

As an Episcopal community of formation, we gather regularly to share our life of prayer. All members of the Seminary community are welcome to attend Chapel, regardless of degree program or vocational path. Though corporate prayer occurs several times a day, we do not intend that everyone will be present for each service. However, all students preparing for ordination are expected to develop a personal pattern of attendance at Chapel, keep that pattern faithfully, and adjust it when necessary. We have found that the most successful patterns include attending at least one worship service each day that one is provided, including the Monday service with assembly.

Students preparing for or intending to return to ordained service in the Church should expect that their pattern of worship and its role in their formation will be a topic of conversation with their advisers and be a significant source of material for annual reviews. All students preparing for ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church are expected to participate in Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Vigil services.

Prayer Requests

You may email public prayer requests to the chapel sacristans at sacristans@ssw.edu and they will be prayed at every Eucharist service for the remainder of the week. You may also write them in the book displayed in the narthex of Christ Chapel.

Chapel Schedule: The basic structure of chapel worship is that of three services a day.

Monday

9:00 a.m. Morning Prayer

11:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist and weekly assembly

5:00 p.m. Evening Prayer, Spanish/English

Tuesday

9:00 a.m. Morning Prayer

11:45 a.m. Spanish/English Holy Eucharist

5:00 p.m. Choral Evensong

Wednesday

9:00 a.m. Choral Morning Prayer

11:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist

5:00 p.m. Evening Prayer

Thursday

9:00 a.m. Morning Prayer, Spanish/English

11:45 a.m. Noonday Prayer

5:30 p.m. Community Worship Service: Holy Eucharist with an Order of Worship for Evening

Friday

9:00 a.m. Morning Prayer

11:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist

5:00 p.m. Evening Prayer

Events

Throughout the academic year, Seminary of the Southwest offers a variety of lectures, worship services, and community events beyond the classroom. More information about each event will be shared with the community closer to the event date. Students wishing to suggest new events in connection to the seminary are encouraged to speak with our Dean of Community Life.

August

New Student Orientation

A Mandatory New Student Orientation day for all students is held each year before the semester begins. New Student Orientation includes information about Financial Aid, SSW Policies and Guidelines, a chance to meet SSW Academic Administration and Faculty, and other important information to help orient students to this community for success. In addition to this main gathering, there will be other required and optional orientation activities and meetings scheduled throughout the following week.

Matriculation

As part of the New Student Orientation concluding events, a Matriculation service for all new students, friends and family, and the SSW community is held on the Sunday before the semester begins. The SSW Matriculation service will take place in Christ Chapel, on campus, and will offer a chance to officially welcome new students to the SSW community. New students have the opportunity to sign the “Matriculation Book” that many of our alumni have signed at the beginning of their academic journey, which has been an SSW tradition for decades.

September 15 - October 15

Hispanic Heritage Month

Each year the seminary highlights some aspect of the history, national backgrounds and cultures of U.S. Latinos, some of whom represent family generations going back to Spanish colonization of the Southwest. The celebrations at Southwest are always lively, colorful, and informative. Hispanic Heritage Month culminates with All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day on November 1st and 2nd, including a community celebration of Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead).

November

Blandy Lectures and Alumni Convocation

The Alumni Association established the Gray M. Blandy Lectures in 1967 in appreciation and honor of the Very Reverend Gray M. Blandy for his 15 years of ministry and work as the first dean of Seminary of the Southwest. These lectures are scheduled annually in the fall and are coordinated by the Steering Committee of the Alumni Association alongside the seminary’s Advancement & Communications department. As the first dean of Seminary of the Southwest, from 1951 to 1967, Gray Blandy was a visionary, builder, and innovator. Past Blandy Lectures have featured scholars, theologians, and pastors from throughout the Church.

Community Thanksgiving Meal

There's a community Thanksgiving meal for those staying in Austin who wish to participate. The seminary provides the turkey and participants provide the sides and desserts.

Día de los Muertos

The liturgical observance of Dias de Los Muertos takes place annually in Christ Chapel and provides a conclusion for Hispanic Heritage Month. There is an Ofrenda, an altar dedicated to the memory of the dead, where all members of the community are invited to add photos or mementos of loved ones.

Polity Bowl

The Polity Bowl is an annual flag-football game between Southwest and Austin Seminary. The game is followed by a social gathering with both teams and their supporters.

February

Black History Month

Black History Month is a time for the seminary and surrounding Austin community to celebrate and honor cultures of the African Diaspora. During Black History Month, Southwest engages in educational and life-giving conversations around diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and belonging. The Black History Month planning committee comprises a chair, students, faculty, staff, alums, trustees, and religious leaders and partners from the community. The committee sets goals and objectives for Black History Month events and programming every year and seeks to increase its reach annually by adding programs throughout the academic year.

March

Payne-Harvey Lecture

Hosted by Seminary of the Southwest's Board of Trustees and supported by student leadership, the Payne-Harvey Lecture remains a cornerstone of the seminary's commitment to bringing timely, diverse, and visionary voices to its campus. Named in honor of The Rt. Rev. Claude E. Payne—former bishop of the Diocese of Texas and longtime chair of the seminary's board—and the late Dean Hudnall Harvey, who served as Southwest's dean until his untimely death in 1972, the lecture focuses on mission, leadership, and contemporary issues facing the church.

March or April

Holy Week and Triduum

During Holy Week, the seminary holds liturgies for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Vigil, planned by the Director of Community Worship and the sacristans, and supported and attended by all MDiv and DAS students and other members of the community. Students also plan other events related to Holy Week such as: Tenebrae service on Tuesday, Agape Meal on Thursday, Thursday night prayer vigil or Altar of Repose, Stations of the Cross on Friday, organizing commemorating altar flowers, organizing a bonfire for the Easter Vigil service, and an Easter Gala on Saturday night. All faculty, staff, students, and family members are invited to participate in each of these events.

May

Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Each May, the seminary celebrates Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander cultures, contributions, and influence through a special community Eucharist. The service creates space to honor the diversity of these communities and reflect on their experiences and witness. Following worship, the community gathers for a shared meal featuring Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander cuisines, continuing the celebration through fellowship.

MHC & MSD Graduation Reception and Dinner

Held on the Wednesday before graduation, students in the MHC and MSD programs gather for an evening to celebrate their accomplishments through their programs. There is a dinner, presentation from the alumni community, fun, and ritual to celebrate and mark the occasion, and it is hosted by the Advancement & Communications department with guidance from faculty members.

MDiv, DAS & MAR Luncheon

Held before Commencement, Advancement & Communications puts together a small program and luncheon for soon-to-be graduates and their spouses/partners.

Last Gathering

Held before Commencement, Last Gathering includes dinner and entertainment, with comedy skits to roast the graduating seniors, faculty, and staff. Spouses or partners are presented with honorary degrees in appreciation of their support.

Commencement

Commencement at Southwest takes place over two days in May. First is an evening Eucharist in Christ Chapel followed by a reception. The following day, is the larger Commencement ceremony with breakfast, photography, and a celebratory reception.

**On-Going
Community Hour**

Community Hour is scheduled on most Monday afternoons from 4:00 pm to 4:50 pm. There are a variety of forms that this takes, from socializing to formal presentations, to times to visit with guests on the campus. It is an opportunity for faculty, staff, and students to share time together. Refreshments are served.

Faculty and Staff Contacts

Students are encouraged to become familiar with the faculty and staff who support their academic and co-curricular experience. A full directory of faculty and staff is available on the institution's website.

SSW Faculty

SSW Staff

In most cases, students should begin by contacting their assigned academic advisor, who serves as the primary point of guidance for academic planning, course selection, and program progress. The Academic Dean is also available for additional academic support and guidance when needed. The Dean of Community Life is also a key resource for student engagement, community involvement, and co-curricular life. For spiritual and personal formation support, the chaplain is available as a resource for students.

For administrative and student support needs, the following contacts are most commonly used:

- **Registration questions:** Begin with your academic advisor and may also be addressed through the Registrar's Office: registrar@ssw.edu
- **Billing and account questions:** Accounting - deirdre.nelson@ssw.edu
- **Student services (financial aid awards, housing, and work-study):** [Student Services Questions and Concerns Form](#) and/or Beth Jordan - beth.jordan@ssw.edu
- **Badges, IT Support:** helpdesk@ssw.edu
- **Maintenance and Pest Control Requests:** maintenancerequest@ssw.edu
- **Parking Questions and Concerns:** evp@ssw.edu
- **Chaplain:** The Rev. Trawin Malone - trawin.malone@ssw.edu
- **Dean of Community Life:** Dean Marlon Johnson - marlon.johnson@ssw.edu
- **Academic Dean:** The Rev. Ben King, PhD - ben.king@ssw.edu
- **Loise Henderson Wessendorff Center for Counseling and Spirituality:** Dr. Gena St. David - gena.st.david@ssw.edu
- **Writing Center:** writing.center@ssw.edu
- **For academic accommodations:** Academic Dean's Office - laurel.schlueder@ssw.edu
- **For physical and environmental accommodations:** Executive Vice President's Office - evp@ssw.edu

Students are encouraged to reach out to the appropriate office early when questions arise, and to use these primary contacts as their first point of entry for support.

Office of the Dean and President

The Rt. Rev. Diane M. Jardine Bruce, D.Min., D.D. is Interim Dean and President of the Seminary.

Office of the Academic Dean

The Rev. Benjamin King, Ph.D. is Academic Dean. Laurel Schlueder is Executive Assistant to the Academic Dean. The Academic Dean is responsible for the coordination and oversight of all academic programs. The office oversees student files and writes student evaluation letters, and also authorizes academic accommodations through the Student Disability Accommodation Policy and approves financial assistance for therapeutic counseling through the Therapeutic Counseling Policy.

Administration and Finance

Mr. Frederick L. Clement, Executive Vice President and CFO. This office is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the seminary. He oversees the work of the accounting office, bookstore, physical plant, facilities management, and a variety of other management responsibilities.

Center for Writing and The Arts

Students are introduced to the Center for Writing and the Arts (CWA) as a key academic and creative support resource at the institution. The CWA offers space and support for writing tasks and projects of all kinds, including coursework assignments and longer-term personal or creative writing projects.

Support services include one-on-one consultations, long-term writing partnerships, and occasional topical workshops. These consultations are tailored to student needs and are designed to support both academic writing and broader creative expression. The CWA also encourages conversation around spirituality and the arts through special programs and publications.

The Center is staffed by student work-study consultants, with assistance from resource librarians, under the supervision of Dr. Claire Miller Colombo, Director of the CWA. Members of the CWA team can be contacted at writing.center@ssw.edu.

Please review the [CWA Overview Document](#) to learn more about services, scheduling options, and current programming.

Loise Henderson Wessendorff Center for Counseling and Spirituality

The mission of the Loise Henderson Wessendorff Center for Counseling and Spirituality at Seminary of the Southwest is to support students in discerning what it means to respond faithfully to a vocational call to provide spiritually competent services in professional counseling, and spiritual formation. Through its vocational degrees, the Center provides educational opportunities for students of all backgrounds to strengthen their knowledge of spiritual, ethical, and religious values and integrate these competencies into their professional practices.

Please [follow this link](#) to access current documents and other information needed for current MHC students, found on Populi. For more information or questions, you may contact Dr. Gena St. David, Director of the Loise Henderson Wessendorff Center for Counseling and Spirituality and Professor of Counselor Education, at gena.st.david@ssw.edu

Office of Advancement and Communications

The Office of Advancement and Communications oversees fundraising initiatives, donor stewardship, alumni relations, and all communications, media relations, and marketing. The department also manages the seminary's website, social media, institutional internal and external email communications, branded swag, and printed publications.

On the communications side, we help share and coordinate information about what is happening across campus. Students can stay connected by:

- Reading the weekly "This Week on Campus" and "Campus Announcements" emails which provide information on the weekly menu, campus visitors, and important updates on upcoming events. Included in the Campus Announcements email is a [form](#) you can fill out to let us know of upcoming events you'd like us to promote on and off campus!
- Checking out the seminary's monthly newsletter - Good News From Austin. This newsletter is packed with stories highlighting the seminary community from featured stories, promoting faculty work, spotlighting alumni, and highlighting our students and the work they do at seminary. If you're ever up to something cool, let us know! We love to share student stories.
- Follow us on social media: @myssw for Instagram and Seminary of the Southwest on Facebook

Reach out to [Tatiana Suggs-Perea](#), Director of Communications, for stories to share, questions, or any of your communications needs.

Brand Guidelines

You must obtain approval from Seminary of the Southwest's Office of Advancement and Communications prior to the use of the seminary's logo for promotional usage and/or advertising in any medium, both internal and external.

For the official Seminary of the Southwest Brand Guidelines and other resources, please visit this [section found on Populi](#).

Information Technology Services

The Information Technology (IT) Office is here to help you stay connected and supported throughout your time at Seminary of the Southwest. Whether you have questions about your account, campus technology, Wi-Fi, printing, classroom technology, or your personal device, the IT team is happy to assist.

The best way to request support is by emailing helpdesk@ssw.edu to submit a Help Desk ticket. The IT Office is located on the second floor of the Harrison Library.

Helpful technology resources:

[Security Access Card Policy](#)

[Campus Wifi Information](#)

[Wireless Printing](#)

[Harrison Library One-Button Studio Tips](#)

[Technology Move-In Info Single-Family Residences](#)

[Technology Move-In Info College Court Apartments](#)

[Technology and Registrar Orientation Manual](#)

Accounting and Billing

The Accounting Office is here to help you manage your student account throughout the year. Whether you need to make a payment, check your balance, request a reimbursement, or have a billing question, you'll find the resources below helpful.

To make a payment there are a few options. [Student Online Bill Pay](#) Credit card link to pay a one time expense. Populi has a "make a payment" option on the financial dashboard (with a credit card processing fee). You can also pay via ACH or check. For more info please contact deirdre.nelson@ssw.edu

Student Payment Due Dates

- Sep 8: Fall tuition and fees due, Loan disbursement begins - if you are taking a student loan, no payment is due until the loan is funded
- Nov 6: Fall bookstore balance due
- Nov 9: Spring registration begins

- Dec 1: Last day to request a student loan for fall
- Feb 8: Spring loans begin, spring tuition due
- Apr 16: Spring bookstore balance due
- Apr 19: Fall registration begins
- May 1: Last day to request a student loan for spring. (No summer loan option)

[Authorization Agreement for Direct Deposits](#) due to banking rules this form has to be submitted in person or via mail or fax. Come by the 3rd floor of Rather House.

View Billing Information in Populi by clicking My Profile > Financial. Students can view their current balance, charges, and credits “By term”, see the breakdown of all financial aid and awards information, and their history of transactions

Housekeeping and Maintenance Requests

We're committed to helping keep our campus and student housing clean, safe, and well maintained. If you need assistance, please use the appropriate email below so your request can be addressed as quickly as possible.

- **Housekeeping** – For housekeeping questions or requests, email housekeeping@ssw.edu.
- **Maintenance Requests** – To report a maintenance issue or request a repair, email maintenancerequest@ssw.edu.

General Ordination Examinations and Canonical Exams

The General Ordination Examinations (GOEs) are administered by the Episcopal Church through the General Board of Examining Chaplains. Canonical Examinations are administered by individual dioceses. Candidates for Episcopal ordination take either the GOE or a specialized canonical examination at the choosing of the candidate's diocese.

NCE and CPCE Exams

All MHC students are required to complete both of these examinations in their last year of the program. A passing score on the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) is required in order to graduate from the MHC program. A passing score on the National Counselor Examination (NCE) is required to pursue licensure after graduating. Students will be given more information in their final year of coursework on how to access these exams. Students are also encouraged to speak with their advisor regarding any questions about these exams.

Housing

Seminary of the Southwest offers a variety of on-campus housing options, including apartments and single-family homes located near campus. Seminary housing is available for eligible, currently enrolled students and their immediate family members.

On-campus housing is subsidized by the Seminary as a form of institutional financial aid for student lease holders. Housing assignments are based on availability, with priority consideration given to MDiv and DAS students due to the degree requirements of those programs. MHC, MSD, and MAR students are also welcome to join the housing waitlist and will be considered as space becomes available.

The [Housing Information](#) document provides important details about the housing process, including:

- Available housing options and eligibility requirements
- The annual housing assignment process and timeline
- Housing forms and next steps
- Housing Frequently Asked Questions

- Information about the housing waitlist

If you have housing questions, please submit the [Student Services Questions and Concerns Form](#). Student Services will help guide you through the next steps.

Pool and Gym Facilities

Students are welcome to enjoy the pool on campus and gym facilities through Austin Seminary. Please see below for access information and guidelines.

Pool Information - The seminary has a pool located on our campus for student use. The pool is located between the two College Court apartment buildings. Here are the guidelines for our pool use:

- Pool hours are 6am-10pm.
- No glass containers are allowed in the pool area.
- No smoking in the pool area.
- No pets within the fenced area.
- Please clean up after yourselves.
- For propane refill on the grill, please send a request to maintenance@ssw.edu
- The code for the pool gate is 1728

Only Seminary of the Southwest and Austin Seminary students, faculty, staff, and guests may use the pool. Please report any unauthorized pool use to Tigh Walters (tigh.walters@ssw.edu).

Gym Information - Students at Seminary of the Southwest are welcome to use the gym/weight room at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, 100 E 27th St, at no cost. To access APTS's gym please use your SSW email to email the McCord front desk at mccord_desk@austinseminary.edu they will respond with a door code and an agreement to be signed for using their gym equipment.

Lost and Found

Found personal items are held at the Reception Desk at Rather House.

Mailboxes

Staff and faculty mailboxes are located in the Rather House mailroom.

Meal Program

Meal program details, including meal plan options, pricing, and availability, will be shared with students at the beginning of each term.

If you are a full-time MDiv, DAS, or MAR student, you will automatically be enrolled in the required meal plan unless an exemption has been approved.

If you are a part-time student or are enrolled in the MHC or MSD program, you are not automatically enrolled in the meal plan. However, you are welcome to purchase available meal options, just as faculty and staff do, if you would like to participate in campus dining. Please respond to the meal program email with your meal plan selection and registration information by the deadline provided.

Students requesting a meal plan exemption should review the [Meal Program Exemption Policy](#) for eligibility requirements and instructions on how to submit an exemption request.

Notary Public

Laurel Schlueder is a Notary Public. For notary public services schedule an appointment and be prepared to show a valid government issued ID.

Parking Permits

All students, staff, faculty, administration, and others authorized to use seminary parking areas must obtain and display on the windshield of their vehicle a seminary parking permit. Seminary parking permits are in the form of a decal and are available at no charge.

Incoming students: please complete the [Parking Sticker Form](#) and pick up your parking sticker at the Rather House front desk during the first week of classes.

Current students may request new stickers, updates, or changes by emailing frontdesk@ssw.edu.

Parking decals are to be placed in the upper left, upper right, or center (under rear view mirror) locations on the front windshield of automobiles and trucks, and in a visible place on motorcycles.

Parking permits allow parking in specified areas. Students may park in the lower parking lot at Duval Street and 32nd, but not in spaces assigned to staff or faculty. There are specific parking decals for residents of College Courts to park in the College Court parking lot. Electric vehicle (EV) parking spaces are reserved exclusively for electric vehicles while charging. Vehicles without permits parked on seminary property are subject to being towed at the owner's expense. Should you sell or trade a vehicle, please inform the front desk so that changes to records can be made and new permits issued.

Street parking near the seminary is restricted to those with special residential parking permits. Parking in the street without the designated street parking permit during a restricted time may result in a parking ticket from the City of Austin.

Vehicles illegally parked on a fire lane, marked by a red curb or red line on the pavement, are subject to a parking ticket from the City of Austin and may be towed, either or both at the owner's expense. Vehicles illegally parked in a reserved parking space signed for handicap access only are subject to a parking ticket from the City of Austin and may be towed, either or both at the owner's expense.

To report a parking issue or concern, please email evp@ssw.edu

Classroom and Guest Suite Reservations

Classroom and Meeting Spaces

Students may reserve available classrooms and meeting spaces for approved events and activities. To request a reservation, contact Laurel Schlueder at laurel.schlueder@ssw.edu. All reservations require approval.

Guest Suites

For guest suite reservations and pricing information, please contact the front desk at frontdesk@ssw.edu. Students may book available guest suites for visiting friends or family. No pets are permitted in guest suites.

Registering for Classes

As you prepare for your first semester at Seminary of the Southwest, you will become familiar with the registration process and how to access course information through Populi, the Seminary's student information system.

Please review the registration overview video and the resources below to learn more about registering for courses in Populi. During orientation, you will have the opportunity to meet with your advisor to discuss course planning, degree requirements, and your first semester schedule.

After reviewing the registration information, you may register for your fall courses if you feel confident about your selections. If you would prefer to speak with your advisor before registering, you will have the opportunity to do so during orientation. Your advisor is a resource to help you navigate your academic journey and determine next steps.

Registration Resources

- [Registration Overview Video](#)
- Populi Knowledge Base: [How do I register for courses in Populi?](#)
- [Technology and Registrar Orientation Manual](#)

Current Schedules and Materials

[Course schedules](#) and [registration materials](#) - These links direct you to the student information system in Populi, where course schedules and registration information are maintained and updated by the Registrar's Office.

Veterans Affairs (VA) Education Benefits

Seminary of the Southwest supports students who are eligible to receive Veterans Affairs (VA) education benefits. Students who plan to use VA benefits should contact the Registrar's Office, the Seminary's VA School Certifying Official, for information about the certification process, required documentation, and available resources.

The [VA Education Benefits Shopping Sheet](#) provides information to help students understand estimated educational costs, financial resources, and available VA education benefits.

Students using VA education benefits are responsible for completing all required steps with both the Seminary and the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure timely processing of their benefits.

For questions regarding VA education benefits, contact the Registrar's Office.

Auditing a Course

Students who wish to audit a course should review the Seminary's auditing policy. Any course may be audited, subject to class availability, instructor approval, and any conditions established by the instructor. Auditors do not receive academic credit, and participation in classroom discussion and evaluation of work are at the discretion of the instructor.

Full-time students and their spouses or partners may audit one course without charge with permission from the instructor and the Academic Dean. All auditors must register for the course through the Registrar's Office.

Graduation Declaration Procedure

Students intending to graduate must declare their intent to graduate by completing and submitting the Graduation Declaration Form to the Registrar's office by the beginning of the academic year in which they intend to graduate. The Graduation Declaration Form can be found [here](#).

Financial Aid Information

The Financial Aid Office is here to help you understand your financial aid options and complete any required forms. All students requesting a federal student loan must complete the FAFSA each year. MHC, MSD, and MAR students requesting a Seminary tuition grant must also reapply using the Student Application for Institutional Financial Aid form annually.

Graduate students applying for federal student aid, including federal student loans, must meet all eligibility requirements promulgated by the U.S. Department of Education. Among other eligibility requirements, a graduate student must either have (i) an undergraduate degree from an accredited institution of higher education or (ii) if not an undergraduate degree, then a minimum of 72 credit hours from an accredited institution of higher education, whether at the undergraduate or graduate level.

All students are responsible for ensuring that they have adequate resources in place to finance their seminary education.

Helpful resources:

- [Financial Aid Information](#) – Find financial aid forms, information, and instructions in one place.
- [Viewing Financial Aid Awards in Populi](#) – Learn how to view your financial aid awards and eligibility in Populi.
- [Populi Screenshots for Viewing Financial Aid Awards](#) – Step-by-step visual guide to finding your financial aid information.
- [Student Services Questions and Concerns Form](#) – Have a question or need assistance? Use this form to contact Student Services about financial aid questions and concerns.

Work Study Information

Work Study is an important part of the Seminary experience and helps support the daily life and operations of our campus community.

For students in the MDiv, DAS, and MAR programs, completing required Work Study hours is part of the institutional tuition grant requirement. Your student account will show the work-study portion of your tuition as tuition due. The Seminary's Tuition Grant covers 90% of your tuition. The remaining 10% is your work-study contribution, which you pay at the beginning of the semester. As you complete your assigned work-study hours throughout the semester, you will earn wages that reimburse this amount. Please refer to your student account for the current semester payment amount and payment deadline.

Students in the MHC and MSD programs are not required to participate in work-study to maintain their tuition grant. However, they are welcome to explore the available on-campus employment opportunities. For roles in the library, front desk, writing center, or faculty research assistant, students should reach out directly to those departments.

The [Work Study Information](#) document provides important details about the Work Study process for MDiv, DAS, and MAR students, including:

- Completing the Work Study Survey
- Required hours and expectations
- Scheduling and communication with supervisors
- Recording Work Study hours in Paycom
- Tracking Work Study progress in Populi
- Frequently Asked Questions

[Student Services Questions and Concerns Form](#) – Have a question or need assistance? Use this form to contact Student Services about work study questions and concerns.

Parish and Diocese Forms

Students preparing for ordained ministry (MDiv and DAS) should submit the required Parish and Diocese support forms to their respective parish and diocesan offices for completion.

The most current forms, instructions, and deadlines are available on the [Seminary of the Southwest website](#) under the Admissions and Financial Aid tabs. Please refer to the website each year to ensure you are using the latest versions and following the current submission requirements.

Around Campus

[Click here](#) for a campus map.

Bookstore

The Bookstore is a student-operated business. Hours of operation are posted at the bookstore and more information about the bookstore can be found further in this handbook.

Christ Chapel

The chapel was designed by award-winning Austin architect Arthur Fehr. With its glass walls and the cross located outside the chapel itself, the building serves as a reminder that Christ died outside the city and that worship is never a retreat from the world.

College Courts Apartments

College Court efficiency apartments are available across from the seminary on Duval Street. The pool ("Episcopool") between the north and south buildings at College Court is for the use of all seminary students and families. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a parent. There are student managers for each building to answer questions and assist with minor problems. Only College Court residents may park at College Court, and residents are limited to one car per unit. All other cars must be on the street or in the parking lot in front of Rather House.

Iona Collaborative

The Iona Collaborative, headquartered on campus, is a learning community of educators dedicated to helping leaders and small congregations thrive by offering local formation certificates and continuing education opportunities for rural priests, deacons, and lay leaders, as well as spiritual direction tools and training for individuals and congregations. Founded in 2012 as the Iona Initiative, the Iona Collaborative was incorporated into the Seminary in 2017. Please visit iona.ssw.edu for more information.

Diocese of Texas

The Diocese of Texas, headquartered in Houston, maintains the Austin Diocesan Center (ADC) on campus for the administration of the West Region of the diocese. The building is located between Christ Chapel and the McDonald building. The Rt. Rev. Kathryn "Kai" M. Ryan, Bishop Suffragan of Texas, serves as the Regional Executive for the West region. The ADC also provides hospitality space for various visitors to the campus as well as conference room space for area congregation evening meetings and weekend Vestry Retreats. Please visit <https://www.epicenter.org> for more information.

The Cynthia Briggs Kittredge Motte

The tree covered green space at the center of Southwest's campus known colloquially as "the motte" was dedicated and named as the Cynthia Briggs Kittredge Motte in May 2024, honoring 25 years of distinguished service on the faculty and simultaneously a final eleven years as Southwest's eighth Dean and President.

The Scott Field Bailey Center at Rather House

The family of Charles and Ella Rather gave their 1910-era home and its five acres to establish the seminary campus in 1952. Both Rather daughters, Ethel and Alma, attended the University of Texas and eventually married professors. Alma and Frederic Duncalf and Ethel and Ernest Villavaso and son Ernest "Bebe" Villavaso, Jr., lived in the family house. Bebe died in 1947 after a tragic accident. The property was given in his memory. A Wayman Adams portrait of Bebe Villavaso hangs over the mantel in the All Saints Room on the first floor. Nicholas R. Brewer portraits of Charles and Ella Rather hang in the Georgia Lucas Room, also on the first floor. The Rather House became Southwest's administrative center in 2008 and has since borne Bishop Scott Field Bailey's name.

The Marta Weeks Campus Center

The Weeks Center, which houses the Knapp Auditorium, Howell Dining Hall, and the Maddux Lounge, was made possible by a gift from Marta S. Weeks, MDiv, 1991. Many other persons and congregations

also contributed to the building of the center.

Howell Dining Hall is named in honor of Paul W. Howell. Paul was a life-long member of the Church of St. John the Divine in Houston and a leader in Diocese of Texas affairs. He also served on the Development Board of Seminary of the Southwest. The gift for the dining hall was given by John and Dela White of San Antonio, family friends of the Howells.

Knapp Auditorium is named in honor of Alfred Knapp and Doris Hebard Knapp and was the gift of David and Lynda Knapp Underwood of Houston. The auditorium is used as a classroom and as a venue for campus events such as the Blandy and the Payne-Harvey Lectures.

Maddux Lounge bears the name of Elizabeth H. Maddux of San Antonio, who provided the gift for the lounge. The lounge is an informal gathering place for students. It serves as the student lounge and is also the venue for the weekly Community Hour.

Near Campus

This section is designed for new students, whether you are new to Austin or already live in the area. It serves as a practical guide to what is located near Seminary of the Southwest and highlights nearby options for daily needs, including food, coffee, study spaces, recreation, and essential services within close proximity to campus.

The listings included are suggestions only and are not official recommendations or endorsements from the Seminary. They are intended to provide a general starting point for exploring the neighborhood around campus. Students are also encouraged to connect with upper-level classmates and peers for additional local recommendations and personal favorites.

Located at 501 E. 32nd Street, the Seminary sits near Hyde Park, the University of Texas area, and central Austin neighborhoods, offering convenient access to a wide range of walkable and short-drive destinations.

Please review the "[Austin Guide](#)" as a helpful starting point for becoming familiar with the areas and resources located near campus.

You can also use this QR code to access the guide:



Bishop Dena A. Harrison Library

Librarians

Alison Poage, Library Director
 Duane Carter, Assistant Director and Electronic Resources Librarian
 Marlon Patterson, Access Services Librarian

Contact Information

Phone: 512-478-5212 Fax: 512-472-4620
 Email: library@ssw.edu Webpage: <https://ssw.edu/library>

HARRISON LIBRARY STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The library is a study and meeting space, a collection of information resources, and a central point of library instructional services for the people being formed through Southwest for vocations of ministry, service, and healing.

LIBRARY POLICIES

The librarians request that all students read the [Library Policies](#). The policy sections include:

- 1.00 Seminary of the Southwest Mission and Vision
- 2.00 Library Statement of Purpose
- 3.00 Acronyms and Definitions
- 4.00 Library Accounts
- 5.00 Library Items: Circulation Rules
- 6.00 Library Collection Development and Access
- 7.00 Building Access Policy
- 8.00 Library Environment

LIBRARY FACILITY

The Bishop Dena A. Harrison Library is a modern space that reopened in the fall of 2023 after a full renovation. The library features study rooms, conference rooms, video recording equipment, and a variety of seating space for both collaborative learning and quiet reading. The library has a controlled access system and your Seminary of the Southwest student ID card is needed to swipe into the building.

LIBRARY CARDS

Seminary of the Southwest ID cards also serve as student library cards and swipe cards to enter the library building. Please do not transfer Southwest ID cards to another person. Report lost ID cards to helpdesk@ssw.edu.

LIBRARY HOURS OF OPERATION

Hours of operation are posted on the [library's Google calendar](#). Typically, if there is class in session on campus, the library is open to Southwest students. Hours vary throughout the year when class is not in session.

INFORMATION RESOURCES

The library collects information resources supporting the academic and formational work of its students and faculty. The library offers a growing number of electronic resources, including ebooks, *ATLASerials PLUS*, *ATLA Scripture Search*, *JSTOR Journals*; *Mango Languages*, *PsycBooks*, *PsycTests* and *PsycArticles*. For a full list, visit the library's [Electronic Resources page](#).

SEARCHING THE LIBRARY COLLECTIONS (AND MORE)

Students can search and access the full breadth of the library's resources through [Seeker, the library's search engine](#). *Seeker* even shows you results from journals and collections the library currently does not subscribe to. In those cases, you can request these resources for your research. Please be sure to do so in advance of your due dates, because obtaining the resources takes time. Please refer to the [Accessing e-Resources LibGuide](#) for instructions on accessing e-resources with a Seminary of the Southwest student Google Account.

[Koha is the library's online catalog](#). Think of *Koha* as an index of everything that resides physically in both the Harrison Library and the Wright Center (the nearby library at Austin Seminary). To quickly see if we have a book, use *Koha*. For a more robust search of e-resources for a research project, *Seeker* remains the best option.

The librarians have created many instructional [LibGuides](#) to help students discover books, course assigned textbooks, and library instructional material. Several pre-recorded library tutorials are available on the library's [webpage](#).

The Course Reserves Collection includes the current semester's items assigned for reading or viewing. Physical items are shelved in the library and ebooks are linked from the [Course Reserves LibGuide](#).

COMPUTERS AND PRINTING

The library has PCs, printers, and scanners available for student use. The KIC Bookeye 4 scanner is a specialized book-scanning device that quickly creates Optical Character Recognition (OCR) PDFs. Wireless internet and printing from mobile devices is also available. The wireless password is posted on the library's bulletin boards. Read more about the library's printers on the [Guide to the Library for Southwest Students](#).

All printing and scanning must comply with the Seminary of the [Southwest's Copyright and License Agreement Compliance Policy](#).

THE LIBRARY STAFF

The [librarians](#) are available to assist with in-depth reference inquiries. For help with research, review the options on the [Guide to the Library for Southwest Students](#). During the evenings and on the weekends, the library is staffed by student workers trained to assist students with accessing library resources.

LIBRARY PARTNERSHIPS

Bishop Harrison Library collaborates closely with the Wright Learning and Information Center at Austin Seminary (APTS), just a few blocks away. Students and faculty of each seminary enjoy full borrowing privileges at both libraries. Bishop Harrison Library also participates in TexShare, a program which allows students to get a library card at the UT Austin Libraries, Austin Public Library, and many more Texas libraries. Read more about these options on the [Guide to Austin Libraries](#).

LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

During the academic year, the library staff sends a regular e-newsletter to students, faculty, and staff called *What's What? The Update from the Harrison Library*. It includes news about library resources, programs, workshops, and hours of operation. Be sure to read it so you can take full advantage of the library's space, resources, and services!

SUGGESTIONS

The library staff wishes to hear from Southwest students! Suggestions about any aspect of the library's space, resources, or services, including suggestions for book purchases, may be emailed to the librarians at library@ssw.edu, or made anonymously in the fall library survey emailed to all Southwest students every November.

Bookstore

The bookstore is non-profit and student-operated. Business hours vary and will be published at the beginning of each semester. The bookstore can be reached at bookstore@ssw.edu. The bookstore sells course books, community interest and community authored books, and seminary branded merchandise. They accept major credit cards, and charges to student accounts. Cash is not accepted. The bookstore “holds” books for one week only.

Except for special orders, refunds and exchanges are possible only **within the first thirty days of purchase**, with the receipt. The bookstore issues statements of individual charge accounts periodically. Payment in full is expected prior to registration for the next semester and/or prior to graduation. If the bookstore is closed, payments may be delivered to the Accounting Office. No further charges to an account shall be made when the balance exceeds \$750. For questions please contact the Executive Vice President and CFO.

The Bookstore welcomes suggestions for books to stock. Please leave suggestions with any Bookstore team member or send to the bookstore email.

Councils & Committees of the Seminary

Faculty and Administrative Council (FAC)

The Faculty and Administrative Council serves as the seminary's principal decision-making body. The committee defines charters and assigns resources for ad-hoc committees, task forces, or projects; considers matters of policy affecting the whole community; maintains policies and standards for faculty and administration; receives reports from the Academic Affairs, Assessment and Evaluation, Community Life, Safety, and Worship committees; and discusses the needs of particular students.

Academic Affairs Committee (AAC)

The Academic Affairs Committee oversees all academic programming, maintains and modifies the curriculum, maintains academic code, receives reports from the Theological Faculty and MHC Team meetings, approves modifications to individual study programs, and conducts required student evaluations.

Assessment and Evaluation Committee (A&E)

The Assessment and Evaluation Committee oversees all assessment and evaluation for the seminary.

Community Life Committee (CLC)

Community Life Committee (CLC) functions as the connection point for our social, cultural, and communal life in the seminary. The CLC gathers leaders from Student Council, Class Reps, Sacristans, SPOTS, Counselors for Social Justice, and other programming groups to discuss upcoming activities, to collaborate in resolving community concerns and needs, and to foster unity between marketing and coalition building within the seminary community.

Diversity Committee

Committed to the seminary's core value of hospitality, the Diversity Committee works to make the seminary a place of greater welcome. The committee oversees the seminary's diversity and inclusion efforts, being attentive to issues of race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and disability. Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, and Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month celebrations are overseen by this committee. The Diversity Committee reports to the Community Life Committee.

Harvey Lecture Planning Committee

The Harvey Lecture Committee has the duty to plan, organize, and facilitate all activities in connection with the Harvey Lecture Series in the Spring semester. The Harvey Lecture Committee is comprised of Southwest students.

Safety Committee

The Safety Committee addresses safety concerns around campus and coordinates onsite emergency response trainings. The committee generally meets at least once per long-session semester.

Student Organizations & Activities

The existence of student organizations depends on interest and need and therefore may vary from year to year. Participation is open to all.

Student Clubs and Involvement

Student life at the Seminary extends beyond the classroom and offers many opportunities to connect, engage, and build community. The groups below provide ways for students, and in some cases their families or partners, to participate in campus life. Students are encouraged to explore areas of interest and reach out to get connected.

A variety of student clubs and organizations are available to support connection, community, and shared interests outside the classroom. These groups offer opportunities for engagement across different areas of student life.

Students interested in learning more or getting involved should contact the Dean of Community Life, who can help connect students with the appropriate group or leader.

Community Life Committee (CLC)

Community Life Committee (CLC) functions as the connection point for our social, cultural, and communal life in the seminary. The CLC gathers leaders from Student Council, Class Reps, Sacristans, SPOTS, Counselors for Social Justice, and other programming groups to discuss upcoming activities, to collaborate in resolving community concerns and needs, and to foster unity between marketing and coalition building within the seminary community.

SPOTS (Spouses/Partners of The Seminary)

The SPOTS group provides a welcoming community for the spouses and partners of students. It offers opportunities to build relationships, participate in social events, and engage in community life throughout the academic year, with a special focus on welcoming new families at the beginning of each semester.

Student Council

Student Council supports the student body by funding and organizing student events, supporting outreach efforts, managing a discretionary fund for students in crisis or bereavement, and representing students to the Seminary of the Southwest Board of Trustees and in matters of Community Life. The Student Council is an entity separate and apart from the seminary; it is controlled by students elected to its governing body. Events organized and conducted by the Student Council are not official seminary events.

For information about upcoming events or to learn more, please contact: student.council@ssw.edu

Students are represented by council members announced each year.

Soul by Southwest

In the spirit of fostering communal artistic expression, seminary students created *Soul by Southwest*, the seminary's literary and visual arts journal, in 2013. The journal — familiarly known as "Soulby" — has been published annually by the Center for Writing and the Arts ever since. Each year, the works of contributing artists and writers from the seminary community, the Austin area, and the wider church are celebrated at a festive gathering that includes an art gallery, live music, readings, and an open mic. All community members and those in their networks are invited to submit works to the journal. To learn more, email soulbysouthwest@ssw.edu or writingcenter@ssw.edu.

Emergency Procedures

If you are experiencing a medical emergency, fire, or need immediate police assistance:

- Call 911 first.
- After contacting emergency services, notify a Seminary staff member.
- During business hours, call the Seminary's main number at 512-472-4133 and ask for the Executive Vice President Frederick L. Clement.

After business hours, contact a Seminary staff member in the following order:

- Frederick L. Clement, Executive Vice President – 512-619-3648 (cell) | 512-439-0339 (office)
- Tigh Walters, Director of Facilities – 512-838-1699 (cell)
- Beth Jordan, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services – 512-497-9714 (cell)

Trauma Kit Location Schedule

Maintenance Emergencies

If you are experiencing one of the maintenance emergencies listed below:

- Inform a staff member in the order listed below.
- College Court residents should also contact the College Court Manager.

During business hours, call the Seminary's main number at 512-472-4133 and ask for Tigh Walters, Director of Facilities.

After business hours, contact a Seminary staff member in the following order:

- Tigh Walters, Director of Facilities – 512-838-1699
- Frederick L. Clement, Executive Vice President – 512-619-3648 (cell) | 512-439-0339 (office)
- Beth Jordan, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services – 512-497-9714

Examples of maintenance emergencies include:

- Broken water lines
- Fire
- Electrical outages
- Gas leaks
- Break-ins
- Lockouts when a College Court Manager cannot be reached
- A toilet that cannot be cleared after reasonable effort
- Heating or air conditioning failures during periods of extreme weather

Routine maintenance requests, such as burned-out light bulbs, leaking faucets, or slow-running toilets, should be submitted to maintenancerequest@ssw.edu.

Pastoral Emergencies and Spiritual Support

If you are experiencing a pastoral emergency or would like spiritual support, please contact:

- The Rev. Trawin Malone - 512-820-0133 (cell)

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, please contact:

- Integral Cares Mental Health Support Line: 512-472-4357 (HELP) / TTY: 512-703-1395

Emergency Policies

The Seminary's emergency policies are available for review [here](#). These include, but are not limited to:

- Uninvited Visitors and Loitering Policy
- College Court Emergency Procedures
- Emergency Response Plan

Inclement Weather Procedures

In the event of severe inclement weather, the executive vice president of the seminary will issue notification to all students, faculty, and staff about any change in campus operations, including late opening, early closing, or other impacts to the campus community. The executive vice president's notification is issued via email to all registered users @ssw.edu and also via text message.

Policies and More

Throughout your time at the Seminary, you'll refer to a variety of resources. These include the Student Handbook, Academic Code, and Seminary policies covering topics such as academic integrity, grading, registration, financial policies, student conduct, Title IX, technology use, and more.

[Academic Code](#)

[Academic Catalog](#)

Policies

The Seminary requests that all students review the list of [Seminary of the Southwest Policies](#). The policy section includes, but is not limited to:

1. Attendance Policy
2. Fundraising and Solicitation Policy
3. Grading Policy
4. Security Access Card Policy
5. Tobacco-Free Campus Policy
6. Weapons Prohibition Policy

Health Insurance Requirement

Students (enrolled in 10 or more credit hours) are required to maintain health insurance while attending Seminary of the Southwest.

By August 31, full-time students must either:

- Provide proof of existing health insurance by emailing a copy of the front and back of their insurance card to deirdre.nelson@ssw.edu, or
- Enroll in the Seminary's health insurance plan by contacting Deirdre Nelson.

Students may enroll in the Seminary's insurance plan at the beginning of each semester or following a

qualifying life event. Coverage for new students begins September 1. Dental coverage is available as an optional benefit.

Students enrolled in the Seminary's insurance plan will have premiums billed to their Populi student account. Payment is due to the Seminary by the 10th of each month, beginning September 10. Students are responsible for the full September premium. Failure to make payments may result in termination of coverage.

For health insurance plan information, rates, enrollment materials, or questions, contact Deirdre Nelson at deirdre.nelson@ssw.edu or 512.439.0395.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords eligible students certain rights with respect to their education records. (An "eligible student" under FERPA is a student who is 18 years of age or older or who attends a postsecondary institution.)

These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Seminary of the Southwest (SSW) receives a request for access.

A student should submit to the registrar, dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the school official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

A student who wishes to ask the school to amend a record should write the school official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested, the school will notify the student in writing of the decision and the student's right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the university discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

The school discloses education records without a student's prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by SSW in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person serving on the board of trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of SSW who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent or a student volunteering to assist another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for SSW.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by SSW to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
 U.S. Department of Education
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW
 Washington, DC 20202

Memorandum Regarding Directory Information

To: All Students Academic Year 2026-2027

Release of student record information is generally not done at Seminary of the Southwest without the expressed, written consent of the student. There are, however, some exceptions.

For example, directory information includes the following, and may be released without the student's consent: name, address, telephone number, email address, dates of attendance, class and degree, photograph. Please note that you have the right to withhold the release of directory information. To do so, you must complete a "Request for Non-Disclosure of Directory Information" form, which is available from the Registrar's office. Please note two important details regarding placing a "No Release" on your record:

1. SSW receives many inquiries for directory information from a variety of sources outside the institution, including friends, relatives, prospective employers, and degree verification. Having a "No Release" on your record will preclude release of such information, even to those people.
2. A "No Release" applies to all elements of directory information on your record. SSW does not apply a "No Release" differentially to the various directory information data elements. The institution will honor your request to withhold any of the categories listed above but cannot assume responsibility to contact you for subsequent permission to release them. Regardless of the effect upon you, SSW assumes no liability for honoring your instructions that such information be withheld.

Please contact the Registrar's office for the "Request for Non-Disclosure of Directory Information form.

You can find information regarding the most up-to-date versions of Handbooks, Catalogs, and Manuals [here in Populi](#).

Constitution of the Student Body

Seminary of the Southwest

Constitution of the Student Council - 2026

Seminary of the Southwest

Student Council of the Seminary of the Southwest

Preamble: Historically the Student Council of the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest “SSW Student Council” or “the Council”) has been an active part of the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest (“Seminary of the Southwest” or “SSW”) by serving the student body of SSW in many ways. In preserving the spirit, traditions, and ideals of the Seminary of the Southwest and the Council, the students of the Seminary of the Southwest hereby ordain and establish this Constitution of the SSW Student Council.

Article I. Name

The organization is named The Student Council of the Seminary of the Southwest (“the Student Council” or “the Council”).

Article II. Purpose

The purpose of the Council is:

- a. To provide student activities for all students of SSW, from time to time, funded by the student activity fund;
- a. To provide assistance to students of SSW, and their families, in their time of need;
- a. To promote a constructive form of student government, following the Christian principles taught at SSW;
- a. And to uphold the mission, vision, and core values of the Seminary of the Southwest.

Article III. Student Body

Section 1. – The Student Body is comprised of all students registered and enrolled for credit in at least one course during the current academic year. Each voting student in each class may vote for class representatives of their own class (Junior, Middler, Senior, Degree in Anglican Studies (“DAS”), Masters of Arts in Religion (“MAR”), Masters in Spiritual Direction (“MSD”)) in which they are classified at the start of the term of the representative being elected. The following terms shall have the definition as given to them in the then current governing documents and policies of SSW: “academic year”, “Junior”, “Middler”, “Senior”, “DAS”, “MAR”, and “MSD”.

Article IV. Election of Representatives

Section 1. - Students enrolled in the Master of Divinity (“MDiv”) program and the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (“MHC”) program will elect 2 representatives from each class each year as representatives to the Council, for a total of 12 representatives, 6 from each program. Students enrolled in the DAS, MAR and MSD programs will elect 1 representative from each class year as representatives for a total of 5 representatives, 2 from MAR and MSD, and one from DAS. Thus, the total number of representatives on the Council will be 17. The failure of any class in the DAS, MAR or MSD programs to select a representative will not affect the operations of the Council, and the number elected

for the year from all programs shall be the full complement of representatives for the Council for that year. Each representative will have an equal voice and vote.

Section 2. - The Senior and Middler representatives for each degree designation, save and except DAS, will be elected by the following process: representatives are elected by the Rising Senior and Middler class in the Spring semester of the academic year preceding the term of office, during the week of preregistration for the Fall semester. Nominations will be solicited from class members through announcements made by the current Middler and Junior representatives when the students are gathered for a core curriculum class and may also be solicited by email announcement. Nominations for the Senior and Middler representatives are to be made in writing (and only with the consent of the nominee) to a current Middler or Junior representative, respectively, in the five-day class week most immediately preceding the week of the election. The Middler and Junior representatives will present all nominees to their respective classes for election.

Section 3. - The Junior MDiv and DAS representatives for each degree program will be elected by the following process: representatives are elected before the Matriculation Ceremony during New Student Orientation or within the first five class days of the Fall semester of the academic year, under the guidance of the Senior representatives. Nominations will be solicited from the entering Juniors in their respective degree programs by announcement at a gathering at which all are reasonably expected to be present and may also be solicited by email announcement. Nominations for the Junior representatives are to be made in writing (and only with the consent of the nominee) to the Senior Class representatives in each degree program. Elections shall be conducted during the first 10 class days of the fall semester. Election results will be presented to the Senior Class representatives as soon as they are received.

Section 4. - The MHC Junior representatives will be elected by the following process: representatives are elected during week 3 of the Fall Semester, under the guidance of the Senior representatives. Nominations will be solicited during week 2 of the Fall Semester from the entering MHC Juniors by announcement at a gathering at which all are reasonably expected to be present and may also be solicited by email announcement. Nominations for the MHC Junior representatives are to be made in writing (and only with the consent of the nominee) to the MHC Senior Class representatives. Elections shall be conducted during week 3 of the fall semester. Election results will be presented to the Senior Class representatives as soon as they are received

Section 5. - All elections will be by secret ballot and are to be held immediately prior to or following a core curriculum class in the designated election week. Elections may also be held via electronic method. Notice of the election will be given by oral class announcement at least five days in advance, and may also be posted or sent by email. Representatives will be elected by a simple majority of those present and voting. In the case of a tie, a run-off election will be held within five days of the general election.

Section 6. - All terms of office expire on the last day of classes for the Spring semester. New Middler and Senior representatives will take office at that time and will constitute the entire Council until the election of other members in the Fall of the next academic year.

Section 7. - The elected members of the Council will be presented to the Student Body at the Monday Assembly of the second week of the academic year, as well as via email announcement.

Section 8. - In the event that a representative vacates their seat during the academic year in which they are serving, that representative's seat shall be filled by special election to be directed by the Council in a manner consistent with this Article IV.

Article V. Meetings

Section 1. - The Council will hold regular monthly meetings, as set by the President, during the academic year when classes are in session. The first meeting of each academic year will be held after the Junior and DAS representatives for each degree program have been elected. Special meetings,

outside of the regularly scheduled meetings, may be called by the President upon written notice to all representatives, which may be via email or other electronic means, about the date, time, and subject matter of the special meeting which shall be given at least 24 hours in advance.

Section 2. – Meetings of the Council shall be in person, but can also be attended telephonically or electronically, as long as the representative attending electronically can participate fully and clearly in real time and is able to communicate without issues. All actions of the Council at a meeting shall be by simple majority vote of the representatives attending the meeting at which a quorum is present, except as otherwise specified by the terms of this Constitution. A quorum shall exist in the event that two thirds or more of the representatives are in attendance at the meeting. Additionally, the Council may act via written consent of all the representatives, which may be obtained via electronic means (email or text) sent by each representative to the President.

Article VI. Officers

Section 1. – The regular officers of the Council shall be a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Section 2. – The President for the following academic year shall be elected by the members of the Council from the rising Senior representatives at the last regular meeting of the then current academic year. The duties of the President shall include announcing regular meetings, calling special meetings (if necessary), soliciting agenda items from representatives, determining the agenda for Council meetings and for meetings of the Student Body, and presiding over Council meetings and Student Body meetings, as well as other relevant duties assigned by the Council. Additionally, the President shall serve as an ex officio voting member of the Community Life Committee as set forth in the Student Handbook of SSW.

Section 3. – The Treasurer for the following academic year shall be elected by the members of the Council from the rising Middler representatives at the last regular meeting of the then current academic year. The duties of the Treasurer shall include disbursing Student Activity funds as authorized by the Student Council or Student Body and in accordance with the written policy of the Council, as well as other relevant duties assigned by the Council. The Treasurer shall keep accurate records. The Treasurer shall make reports at regular meetings of the Council concerning the financial position of the Council with regard to Student Activity funds and such other funds as have been established by the Council.

Section 4. – The Secretary for the following academic year shall be elected by the members of the Council from the newly elected Junior representatives at the first meeting of the then current academic year in which those Junior representatives are serving. The duties of the Secretary shall include keeping a permanent record of the proceedings of the meetings of the Council and the Student Body, and having charge of their official correspondence, as well as other relevant duties assigned by the Council. The Secretary will forward a draft of the minutes to the President with copies to all representatives for review/approval prior to the regular meeting following the meeting at which the minutes were taken. Once approved, the President will keep the minutes of Student Council meetings in a form that can be easily accessed by members of the Student Body.

Section 5. – If the President resigns, is removed from office, or is unable to fulfill their required duties, the Treasurer shall operate as the interim President and appoint an interim Treasurer from the members of the Council of their choosing for a period no longer than is necessary for the election of new Senior member of the Council who will become the new President. Upon such a vacancy, the interim President shall inform the Student Body and call a special meeting of the Senior class in order to elect a new representative. The person who obtains a majority of the votes cast at that meeting shall be the new Senior representative for the remainder of the term to which the previous President was elected. The new President shall be elected from the Senior members of the Council by the members of the Council. These elections (for Senior representative and President) shall be completed within three weeks of the vacancy, and voting may be done via email or other electronic means.

Section 6. – If the Treasurer or Secretary resigns, is removed from office, or is unable to fulfill their required duties, the President shall appoint a replacement from the remaining members of the Council. The new Treasurer or Secretary shall serve for the remainder of the term for which their predecessor was elected.

Article VII. Non-Voting Representative of the Board of Trustees of Seminary of the Southwest

Section 1. - The non-voting student representative of the Board of Trustees of the Seminary of the Southwest (“the Board of Trustees”) for the following academic year shall be elected by the members of the Council from the rising Senior representatives at the last regular meeting of the then current academic year. For service in academic years that end in an even numbered year, the non-voting student representative of the Board of Trustees shall be elected from the Senior MHC representatives. For service in academic years that end in an odd numbered year, the non-voting student representative of the Board of Trustees shall be elected from the Senior MDiv representatives.

Section 2. - The non-voting student representative of the Board of Trustees shall attend the meetings of the Board of Trustees and report back to the Council regarding the business of the Board of Trustees.

Section 3. – If the non-voting student representative of the Board of Trustees resigns, is removed from office, or is unable to fulfill their required duties, the President shall appoint a replacement from the remaining members of the Council. The new non-voting student representative of the Board of Trustees shall serve for the remainder of the term for which their predecessor was elected.

Article VIII. Meetings of the Student Body

Section 1. – Meetings of the Student Body may be called, as deemed appropriate by the Student Council, to deliberate and vote on initiatives affecting the Student Body. Notice shall be given to the Student Body of each called meeting of the Student Body in writing via email at least 15 days prior to the meeting. Each member of the Student Body shall have equal voice and vote. In order for the meeting to conduct business, there must be a quorum of one third of the entire Student Body present. Should the required quorum not be present, the Student Council may, upon a unanimous vote of those students present, declare a quorum to be present. All actions of the Student Body at a meeting shall be by simple majority vote of the students attending the meeting at which a quorum is present, except for amending this Constitution or adopting a new Constitution in place of this one which shall require a two thirds vote of the students attending the meeting at which a quorum is present.

Section 2. – The President shall preside over all meetings of the Student Body and shall set the agenda of each meeting. The Secretary shall take minutes at each meeting of the Student Body and keep said minutes in the permanent records of the Council.

Article IX. Committees

Section 1. – The Council shall establish such committees as it deems necessary in order to do the work of the Council. Each committee shall have at least two members of the Council on the committee, but committees may have members that are not members of the Council. The chair of each committee shall be a member of the Council, and such chair shall be chosen by a vote of the Council.

Section 2. – A Council member serving on the committee shall report to the Council on the committee's activities. Such reports will include a financial report where appropriate or when requested by the Council.

Article X. Student Activity Fees and Funding

Section 1. – The Council will assess student activity fees. This value may be changed by a unanimous vote of the Council in an amount to be determined by the Council and to be collected by the administration of SSW during registration of the academic year and remitted to the Student Council within ten (10) business days of the start of each semester. These funds, once paid to the Student Council, will be kept by the Treasurer in a general fund. Disbursements by the Treasurer from the general fund shall be made at the direction of the Council.

Section 2. – Funds accruing to the Student Body from any other sources shall be noted and kept by the Treasurer in the general fund, or to any special fund created by vote of the Council, and are to be disbursed at the direction of the Council, including fundraising activities initiated by the Student Council and the offertory monies collected in Christ Chapel.

Section 3. – Students, student committees and/or groups who want to organize an event or activity open to all students may request funding by submitting a request form specified by Student Council. Funding requests for events or activities that are under the amount of \$20 per member of the student body will be approved by a simple majority of the Student Council. Funding requests greater than \$20 per member of the student body will be approved by a two thirds vote of the Council.

Article XI. Adoption and Amendments

Section 1. – Adoption Process. The approval of a majority of voting members of the Student Body at a meeting where a quorum is present shall be sufficient for the establishment and adoption of this Constitution.

Section 2. – Amendment Process: Amendments to this Constitution must be agreed upon by a two-thirds majority of a quorum at a meeting of the Student Body.

Section 3. – Any proposed amendments to this Constitution will be submitted in writing to the Student Council for consideration. If the Council deems a proposed amendment worthy, or if a petition signed by one third of the Student Body is presented to the Council, a meeting of the Student Body shall be called for the purpose of discussing and voting on the proposed amendment. Any proposed amendment shall be posted and/or distributed to the Student Body electronically for a period of ten days prior to the Student Body meeting.

Article XII. Miscellaneous

Section 1. - At the request of the Dean and President or Academic Dean, members of the Council will make recommendations for student appointments to faculty or SSW committees.

Student Handbook Disclosure

Seminary of the Southwest is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award master's degrees and post-baccalaureate diplomas. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Seminary of the Southwest.

Seminary of the Southwest is accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada to award master's degrees. Contact the Association of Theological Schools at 10 Summit Park Drive, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15275-1103, or call 412-788-6505 for questions about the accreditation of Seminary of the Southwest.

Seminary of the Southwest's Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is fully accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accreditation. CACREP is a national accrediting body that sets educational standards with the purpose of creating uniformity between counseling graduate-level programs across the nation. Since 1987, CACREP has been a nationally recognized accrediting agency in the U.S. with the purpose of developing, implementing, and assisting in maintaining standards "for preparation for the counseling profession's graduate-level degree programs".

CACREP accreditation ensures that students are receiving the requisite curriculum necessary in order to apply for licensure for the state of Texas and beyond, as well as enhancing the program's professional identity and collegial connections with the larger counseling field. CACREP accreditation benefits the students graduating from our program in significant ways.

CACREP graduates may sit for the National Counselor Examination earlier than otherwise permitted, apply for federal loan forgiveness if working in qualified underserved areas, apply for Veterans Administration employment post-graduation, and more easily transfer licenses between states.

For additional information about CACREP please visit: <http://www.cacrep.org/>