



**Pacific School of Religion**  
**BERKELEY, CA**

# ACADEMIC CATALOG 2023-2024

[www.psr.edu](http://www.psr.edu)

Students have the responsibility to be familiar with the policies and regulations in the Academic Catalog and Student Handbook. Students who have questions about policies before matriculation should contact the Admissions Office. After matriculation, students who have policy questions should contact the Office of Academic Affairs.

Pacific School of Religion reserves the right to change the information contained in this catalog, including, but not limited to, program offerings, curriculum, admission requirements, tuition and fees, graduation requirements, and policies, at any time. Notice is optional for a new policy to take effect; however, Pacific School of Religion will make reasonable attempts to promptly notify students of any changes through website or email postings, mail distribution, or other methods deemed appropriate by the institutional administration.

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# Governing Body, Officials, Faculty, and Their Qualifications

## Executive Team

**Rev. Dr. David Vásquez-Levy**, President and Professor of Homiletics (DMin, Lutheran School of Theology)

**Dr. Susan Abraham**, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Dean of Faculty, Professor of Theology and Post-Colonial Cultures (ThD, Harvard Divinity School)

**Byron Chung**, Executive Director, Ignite Institute

**Murry Evans**, Vice-President for Enrollment and Marketing (MBA, University of Surrey)

**Natasha Lee**, Vice-President of Finance and Administration (University of Maryland University College)

**Andrea Vecchione**, Executive Director of Development & Strategic Partnerships (Ph.D., California Institute of Integral Studies)

## Board of Trustees

**Dr. Sandra Y. Nathan**, Board Chair (Executive Director Philanthropy Southwest)

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**Dr. Veril Phillips** (Ph.D., Michigan State University)

**Dr. Patrick B. Reyes** (Senior Director of Learning Design, Forum for Theological Exploration)

**Cynthia Scherr** (MBA Stanford, MTS Harvard Divinity School)

**Akiko Miyake-Stoner** (Senior Pastor, United Japanese Christian Church)

**Rev. Dr. David Vásquez-Levy**, (President, Pacific School of Religion)

## Faculty

**Dr. Susan Abraham**, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Dean of Faculty, and Professor of Theology and Post-Colonial Cultures (ThD, Harvard Divinity School)

**Professor Lisa Asedillo**, Assistant Professor of Worship and Liturgical Ethics (Ph.D., candidate at Drew University)

**Rev. Dr. Dorsey Blake**, Faculty Associate Leadership and Social Transformation (DMin, United Theological Seminary)

**Dr. Aaron Brody**, Robert, and Kathryn Riddell, Professor of Bible and Archaeology, Director of the Badé Museum of Biblical Archaeology (Ph.D., Harvard University)

**Byron Chung**, Faculty Associate Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation

**Rev. Dr. James Lawrence**, Dean of the Swedenborgian House of Studies, Faculty Associate in Spirituality (Ph.D., Graduate Theological Union)

**Professor Leonard McMahan**, Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care, Spirituality, and Political Theology (Ph.D. candidate at the Graduate Theological Union)

**Dr. Peter Rios**, Associate Professor of Organizational Leadership and Intercultural Studies and Academic Director of Ignite (Ph.D., Fuller Seminary)

**Dr. Bernard Schlager**, Associate Professor of Historical and Cultural Studies Executive Director, Center for LGBTQ and Gender Studies in Religion Director, Certificate of Sexuality and Religion (Ph.D., Yale University)

**Professor Eunhye (Grace) So**, Assistant Professor of New Testament and Rhetorical Studies (Ph.D. candidate at the Graduate Theological Union)

**Rev. Dr. David Vásquez-Levy**, President, and Professor of Homiletics (DMin, Lutheran School of Theology)

## Letter from the Dean

Dear Student,

This catalog records Academic Policies, Procedures, and Program Objectives for the 2021-2022 academic year. The catalog allows you, the student, to understand your rights and responsibilities as you navigate PSR's innovative and creative curricular offerings. PSR is part of a consortium of theological schools that provide a range of courses that you may cross-register in as your program permits.

PSR is committed to diversity, inclusion, and intersectionality, intertwining academic and practical perspectives on social justice issues on LGBTQIA+, racially minoritized groups, challenges facing immigrants, challenges facing the urban poor in the United States, and the violence perpetuated on these groups. Simultaneously also, our curriculum seeks to provide constructive pathways for future religious leaders, scholars, activists, and thoughtful people who understand that religion remains a stable and strong force in politics, economic, legal, and other cultural systems. Consequently, our academic life is marked by multiplicity; many ground their calling in their relationship with Jesus, others in different holy names for the Divine, and still others in the web of planetary life. We welcome everyone to a life of deep spiritual development, intellectual growth, and respectful acknowledgment of difference.

Since our curricular offerings are curated with care for our mission, you will do well to

familiarize yourself with them. The catalog serves as a contract between you and Pacific School of Religion, and you must abide by the policies and procedures outlined here. Timely completion of program requirements necessitates regular and consistent communication between you, your advisor, and the Office of Academic Affairs. We aim to move you through your program efficiently and quickly because we believe in your vocation and call to serve the world.

This catalog is supplemented by a more up to date "Schedule of Classes" posted on the GTU website, which will also provide specific information about courses offered each semester. While the catalog is true and correct at the time of publication, changes to programs, courses, services, rules, regulations, and fees are subject to modification to accommodate changes in resources or educational plans at the Pacific School of Religion. We will do our best to communicate such changes in a timely fashion.

With best wishes for your academic life at PSR,



**Susan Abraham, ThD**

Professor of Theology and  
Postcolonial Cultures  
VP of Academic Affairs  
and Dean of Faculty

## **Commitment to Equality Diversity/ Non-Discrimination/Equal Opportunity Policy Statement**

Pacific School of Religion (the School) is committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity and inclusion. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees invest in their work and that our students invest in their studies represents a significant part of our culture. We embrace and encourage our employees' and students' differences in age, race, color, creed, national origin or ancestry, ethnic origin, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, medical condition, religion, marital status, domestic partner status, and any other characteristic protected by applicable law.

Pacific School of Religion affirms its commitment to equality of opportunity for all individuals. The School prohibits and will not tolerate discrimination, including harassment, intimidation, and violence. This commitment requires that no discrimination shall occur regarding admission, or access to, or treatment or employment in, any program or activity in the seminary on the basis of age, race, color, creed, national origin or ancestry, ethnic origin, citizenship status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, religion, marital status, domestic partner status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law in the administration of PSR's programs and activities. The School is an equal opportunity employer and makes employment decisions based on merit. We want to have the best available persons in every job. The School is committed to compliance with all applicable laws providing equal employment opportunities. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, and transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training. This policy also prohibits discrimination based on the perception that anyone has any of these characteristics listed above or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of these characteristics. Discrimination can also include failing to reasonably accommodate religious practices.

Please note: Pacific School of Religion is a school of religion, and as such, there are some occasions where religious doctrine, religious preference, or personal beliefs or characteristics may be a bona fide qualification or limitation regarding employment or about participation in a program or activity.

This commitment applies to **all** persons involved in School operations and prohibits unlawful discrimination by any employee of the School, including supervisors and co-workers. To comply with applicable laws ensuring equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with a disability, the School will make reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is an applicant or an employee unless undue hardship would result. The School responds to requests for disability accommodations in accordance with applicable law.

The School provides a procedure whereby complaints of discrimination based on this policy can

be resolved. If the School determines that unlawful discrimination has occurred, effective remedial action will be taken commensurate with the severity of the offense. Appropriate action also will be taken to deter any future discrimination. The School will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint and will not knowingly permit retaliation by management, employees, or your coworkers.

As part of Pacific School of Religion's equal employment opportunity policy, PSR will also take action to ensure that minority group individuals, females, veterans, and qualified disabled persons are introduced into our workforce and student body.

The School's diversity initiatives are applicable—but not limited—to our practices and policies on employee and student recruitment and selection; professional development and training; promotions; transfers; social programs; and the ongoing development of a community environment built on the premise of gender equity that encourages and enforces respectful communication and cooperation between all employees and students.

The above-mentioned policies shall be periodically brought to the attention of employees and students and shall be appropriately administered. All personnel who are responsible for hiring and promoting employees and for the development and implementation of programs and activities are charged to support this policy. An Equal Opportunity Officer will be responsible for the establishment and implementation of procedures to guide our diversity program throughout the School. This includes monitoring diversity-related decisions and activities.

## Drug-Free Notification

The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 (Public Law 101-226) require all schools receiving federal funding of any kind (i.e., CWSP, Perkins Loans) to notify all employees of the following on an annual basis and all students at the time of matriculation:

The Pacific School of Religion and other GTU schools require that their campuses be drug-free.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance while at PSR is prohibited. Abuse of alcohol (including underage drinking) on PSR premises is also not allowed. Violation of this policy will be considered cause for termination from employment or from a student's program of study. PSR is required to impose sanctions, up to and including the dismissal, of any employee/student engaged in the abuse of alcohol or the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs while on PSR or member school premises. Any employee/student involved in such illegal activity is subject to legal sanctions under local, State, and Federal law. (Information regarding specific penalties is available at PSR Business Office.) In addition, an employee/student convicted of any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace/campus is required to notify the Personnel Officer or the President/Dean of such a conviction no later than five days from the date of the conviction. PSR and its member schools comply with California State law, which prohibits the possession or use of alcohol by or sale of alcohol to anyone less than twenty-one years of age. Abuse of alcohol on the PSR campus is prohibited. (Persons who qualify under California Proposition 215 to use marijuana for medical

purposes are not permitted to possess, store, provide, or use the marijuana on any PSR owned or controlled property, including, but not limited to academic buildings, student housing and



residences, parking lots, library and offices, or during any PSR sanctioned activity regardless of location. Failure to follow this policy may result in termination of employment and/or dismissal from academic programs, in addition to prosecution by police authorities.) The health risks associated with the use of illicit drugs and the abuse of alcohol are many. Detailed information concerning the known health hazards resulting from the abuse of drugs and alcohol may be obtained from your physician or from the PSR Personnel Officer/Director of Community Life. Several drug and alcohol counseling, treatment, and rehabilitation programs are available to PSR faculty, students, and employees. Check your health insurance program for the closest location. In addition, you may find these resources helpful:

- A local Alcoholics Anonymous may be reached at 510/839-8900, and a local Narcotics Anonymous program may be reached at 510-444-4673.
- See the Personnel Dept. or Community Life for complete delineation of policy and educational programs for drug and alcohol abuse.
- See the Personnel Department or Community Life for a complete delineation of policy and educational programs for drug and alcohol abuse.

## Campus Safety and Clery Report

In an effort to deepen our institutional commitment to anti-racism, PSR formed the Campus Safety Task Force in July 2020 to explore alternative ways to think of safety as a community that does not rely on the police. We acknowledge the violent history of policing in the United States, especially toward Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and LGBTQ+ communities, and we recognize that the presence of police on campus has the potential to not only trigger policing-related trauma for members of our community but could also result in further physical, mental, or emotional harm. The work of the task force seeks to create a climate that calls the police in conflict or crisis only as a last resort and after utilizing other resources. Structured conversations about community safety, de-escalation and conflict management training, and mental health resources and workshops have and will continue to help PSR reimagine what safety looks like in our community.

The Campus Safety Task Force encourages all PSR community members to sign up for the PSR alert system. Like the GTU, the PSR system requires OPT-IN signup only, and participants are encouraged to sign up for both text and email notifications. The PSR system is not a substitute for the GTU alert system. Please sign up or remain on the list for the GTU alert system as well. Go to [psr.omnilert.net](https://psr.omnilert.net) to subscribe.

This system is designed to send notifications of emergency situations that require quick campuswide communication, such as incidents that threaten life or property or situations that require immediate sheltering-in-place or that necessitate the presence of emergency services on the campus. Other alerts may include civic or PSR institutional notifications.

There will be two (2) contact persons who will do the intake of notifications, certify that the incidents qualify as a community alert, and format and send the alert via the system. Those persons are Rev. Ann Jefferson (Director of Community Life) and the current Operations Manager. The number to call to report potential alerts is **510-697-5485**. In accordance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, the Pacific School of Religion provides information

related to crime statistics and security measures to all current students, faculty, and staff and is required to notify recipients when the report is available. The current PSR annual security report is online. The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security

Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act is a federal law originally known as the Campus Security Act. This legislation requires colleges and universities across the United States to disclose information pertaining to crimes that have been reported or occurred on or around college campuses, or in the vicinity of college properties on public properties, including properties owned or maintained by the college. The annual report contains three years of campus crime statistics and must outline certain security policy and/or procedural statements, including sexual assault awareness programs and reporting procedures. Specific information is provided regarding both the law-enforcement authority of campus security police and how and where the college community may report crimes. Download the [Pacific School of Religion Clery Report](#) to read more on the following topics and more updated annually:

- What to do in case of an Emergency
- Missing Student Notification Policy
- Campus Safety
- PSR's Main Security Provisions
- Access to PSR Campus and Buildings
- Security of PSR Campus Buildings
- Procedures to Report Criminal Activity and Emergencies
- Information about Registered Sex Offenders
- Drug-Free Campus and Workplace
- Sexual Assault and Rape
- Crime Statistics
- Student Housing & Fire Safety Report
- Crime Report & Internal Investigation Form/ PSR Crime Incident Report Form
- GTU Alert System

## Housing

### Subsidized Housing for PSR Students

Pacific School of Religion is committed to partnering with students in making theological education accessible. To this end, resources from PSR's endowment, annual fundraising, and ancillary income are used to support the education of students in PSR's various programs. Through the use of these resources, PSR is able to offer its education at tuition levels that are well below the actual cost of delivering the education.

Additionally, PSR provides housing—managed by Hudson McDonald—that is offered to PSR students at a significant discount from prevailing housing costs in our area. In order to best steward the use of these properties for its educational mission, PSR has established the following requirements for PSR students to qualify for subsidized housing:

To qualify for subsidized housing, students must be currently enrolled in at least 6 credit hours per term and a minimum of 12 credit hours per year (3 and 6 credit hours respectively for Doctor of Ministry students) and in good academic standing.

The priority deadline for housing for new students is April 1. After April 1, housing is offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

Units will be assigned according to number of residents as follows:

- Residence Hall Room—single student
- One Bedroom—couple, couple and 1 child, parent and 1 or 2 children

Pacific School of Religion's housing is managed by Hudson MacDonald.

### **Hudson McDonald Properties, Inc**

1600 Shattuck Ave

Suite 218

Berkeley, CA 94709

(510) 665-9900

[www.hudsonmcdonald.com](http://www.hudsonmcdonald.com)

### **For Information about Housing**

New students should contact Admissions at [admissions@psr.edu](mailto:admissions@psr.edu).

Continuing students should contact [aurelia@hudsonmcdonald.com](mailto:aurelia@hudsonmcdonald.com)

### **Residential Fee Payment Policy for PSR students**

To assist students in making prompt payments towards housing, which is managed by Hudson McDonald and is subsidized by PSR, residential fees (rent) will be deducted from financial aid. Students will see residential fee charges on the statement of account available on the SONIS Student Portal.

Financial aid will first be applied towards tuition and fees. Any remaining financial aid will then be applied towards residential costs. After financial aid has been applied to residential costs, any remaining balance can be paid by:

- Lump-sum payment by check or credit/debit card to PSR's Office of Academic Affairs; or
- Automatic debit (ACH) from your bank account in four monthly payments on the first of each month through Hudson McDonald. ACH must be set up for each semester.

Because of financial aid regulations, for those who will be with us during the **summer**, residential fees are payable directly to Hudson McDonald by ACH withdrawal by the first of the month, June, July, and August.

We appreciate your making payments on time. In order to ensure we can sustain student housing, failure to make payments on time may result in the following:

- The business office will put a hold on the student account, preventing the student from making registration changes for the current term, registering for next term, graduating, receiving their diploma or receiving any transcripts from PSR.
- Loss of housing; and
- Referral to an outside collection agency

## **Accessibility, Accommodations, and Americans with Disabilities Act**

PSR is committed to helping students realize their academic potential and eliminate physical, programmatic, and attitudes that serve as barriers for students with disabilities. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities in employment, education, public accommodations, transportation, state and government services, and telecommunications.

According to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States [. . .] shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

This policy and its procedures and resources are related to not just physical disabilities but also learning and other types of disabilities as well. All accommodations related to physical, psychological, learning, etc., disabilities must be determined by the institution to not incur an undue institutional burden and should not substantively alter academic standards and learning outcomes of the programs.

### **Student Accessibility Services Officers**

The Associate Director of Engaged Learning along with the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Registrar, serves as the Student Accessibility Officers (SAOs).

### **Accessibility in Buildings, Grounds, and Campus Housing**

PSR works to ensure that important private and public spaces on campus are accessible to those who use wheelchairs. Ramps or ground-level doors provide ready access to the administration building and classrooms. Please consult the PSR Campus Map and our PSR Student Accessibility Service page for more information. Because of the hills around PSR, manually driven wheelchairs can be difficult to maneuver; motorized wheelchairs or scooters are advised.

### **Accommodations based on Learning/ Mental/ Psychological/ Emotional Disabilities**

Students may apply for accommodations for more time, use of various tools and technologies, and in some cases even negotiate alternative modalities for exams and lectures (dependent on the faculty's capacity to accommodate) based on learning, mental, or psychological disabilities. Consult the ADA Procedure and Forms well in advance before accommodations.

For students who may not necessarily know what accommodations would be most helpful or are unsure of what kind of disability they may have, the student may seek out a third-party Education or Learning Assessment which PSR and the GTU do not provide. Students are also encouraged to seek resources, including financial assistance through the Department of Rehabilitation.

### **Temporary Accommodations and Disability**

At times, students may require short-term accommodations due to a variety of reasons such as surgery, short-term illness, etc. For such short-term disabilities, students are also encouraged to apply for ADA

accommodations by consulting the ADA Procedure and Forms and to submit a physician's notice. Students are also encouraged to inform Student Accessibility Services when accommodations are no longer needed.

## Other Resources for Students with Disabilities

### Software and Technological Tools

- [Bookshare](#): Accessible Online Library for people with print disabilities (braille for visually impaired, high-quality text-to-speech books)
- [Kurzweil Scanning](#)  
For reading materials not readily available in Bookshare or with text-to-speech, Kurzweil scans in text and applies OCR to enable text-to-speech
- The [Pomodoro Technique](#)
- [Educational Assessments](#): If you think you might have a learning disability but aren't sure, you may want to seek a Learning or Educational Assessment.

### Campus Accessibility at Pacific School of Religion

If you require campus accessibility accommodations that you do not see listed below, please contact the [Assistant Dean & Registrar](#) for either temporary or ongoing campus accommodations. It is strongly recommended that you contact our offices for any special accommodations or access arrangements well in advance of your arrival.

### Holbrook Hall — Classrooms, Administrative, and Faculty Offices

- Three Ramps to Holbrook
  - West entrance
  - South entrance to the Bade Museum/Doug Adams Gallery
  - Outer parking lot to "B" level of Holbrook
- Wheelchair door activation switch at the west entrance
- One accessible unisex restroom on level 1

### Parking

- Parking spaces for persons with disabilities are available at the main entrance of PSR Campus/Holbrook Hall and in the outer lot, and under the Mudd building on the north side of Holbrook Hall.
- Douglass Parking manages the parking lot and garage (under the Mudd Building). Please review all Parking signage posted in the lot for more information. Note: There is a daily parking fee, and all vehicles that have not been paid will risk a citation and/or tow.

## Students with Disabilities: Accommodation Policy and Process

Pacific School of Religion strives for consistent and equitable student access to educational opportunities. In particular, the Accommodation Policy and process address a student's ability to fulfill degree and certificate course and program requirements. The policy covers student advising, classroom

activities and requirements, program exams, GTU library use, and capstone experiences such as theses and dissertations. It does not address extracurricular events sponsored by GTU member institutions, student housing, and administrative activities (e.g., registration, access to facilities, etc.).

Accommodations are not intended to give students with disabilities an unfair advantage but to remove barriers that prevent students from learning and from demonstrating what they have learned in the context of their formal degree or certificate program.

The Director of Community Life and Spiritual Care, along with the Assistant Dean for Academic Programming, serves the Student Accessibility Services (SAS). As needed, SAS will work with the Students with Disabilities Program staff at UCB to verify accommodation eligibility and recommend accommodation options.

**Student Request:** The student is responsible for fully participating in the process and exercising due diligence to ensure that the provision of accommodations is successfully accomplished. The student who wishes to request accommodations with their academic work submits the request form available on the [PSR website's SAS page](#). The student needs to include official written documentation with the form from a professional who has the credentials and expertise to diagnose the student's condition (a form for this step is available on the website). The student is responsible for incurring any cost associated with the documentation.

**The Timing of a Student Request:** The student should request accommodations early in the semester, well in advance of when the accommodation is needed. The student needs to factor in the amount of time required to secure written documentation from an appropriate professional. It can take time for the review process and verification, and recommended accommodations.

Students eligible for academic accommodations will normally have their request reviewed and, if appropriate, approved no more than two weeks after submitting the request.

**Decision:** SAS will finalize accommodation options in the context of institutional resources and culture and assure consistency and equity. Accommodation is not "reasonable" if it will necessitate modifications of the essential nature of a program or activity or would place undue financial or administrative burdens on the institution.

SAS conveys the official decision and, if appropriate, recommended accommodations to the student by email, who then uses written confirmation to work with appropriate staff and faculty on the implementation of accommodations. SAS also sends a communication to the faculty on the list of enrolled courses the student provides. This list needs to be provided each semester accommodations are needed.

**Implementation:** Accommodations will apply to all educational events described in the DRO's email for up to three years. Students should present the SAS email to faculty and staff to arrange accommodations as needed.

**Appeal:** The student and/or faculty involved with the student may not agree with the SAS decision for accommodations. If a faculty member disagrees with and/or refuses to provide the recommended accommodations, SAS and an institutional contact should work with the faculty member to resolve

her/his concerns. SAS can consult with UCB's Students with Disabilities Program and their section 504 compliance officer for advice on ways to resolve the conflict with the faculty member. If a resolution is impossible, the student can seek remedy from the faculty member's school's academic grievance policy.

If a student disagrees with the SAS decision and/or recommended accommodations, they can appeal the decision through her/his own school's academic grievance policy. Again, SAS and an institutional contact should work with the student first to find ways to resolve concerns.

## Student with Disabilities: Accommodations Forms

To request accommodations, students must register with SAS, which involves:

- Complete the [Accommodations Request](#) form.
- Provide supporting documentation (see [Documentation Guidelines](#)).
- Meet with a SAS staff member to discuss your request and current situation and to develop a plan for moving forward.

All medical documentation and requests for accommodations will remain confidential. Confidential information is shared only with those who have a legitimate need to know. Student Accessibility Services (SAS) may share some information with instructors and staff as necessary to coordinate student accommodations.

Students who are unsure about their eligibility for assistance should complete the Request form and meet with SAS staff to discuss their situation.

## Building, Security, and Facility Care Guidelines

Obtain codes by emailing [deansoffice@psr.edu](mailto:deansoffice@psr.edu)

In order to ensure that PSR students enjoy that intended benefit, it is necessary for all users to participate in observing a few security and facility care guidelines:

All facility users must acquire the necessary codes by emailing the Dean's Office Assistant at [deansoffice@psr.edu](mailto:deansoffice@psr.edu) (name or student I.D. must be included in the request)

- All users must read the "Accountability Covenant" indicating agreements to NOT SHARE the codes with others.
- Users are asked to ensure that the facility door has closed completely upon leaving the building.
- Computer Lab Basic Guidelines are below. Since we don't have a paid staff to guard the space, please help enforce the rules below by reminding those who are using the computer lab about the rules.

### Who Gets to Use the Computer Lab?

Only PSR students are allowed in the Computer Lab. This includes Ph.D. & MA students who are officially affiliated with PSR.

### Not Allowed

- No loud (or distracting) music or conversations.
- No cell phone conversations.
- No food or drinks.

Remember, this is an academic workspace. Everyone must treat the computer lab just like a library. Please be respectful towards those who are working.

## **Privacy Policy – The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, is a Federal law that states (a) that a written institutional policy must be established and (b) that a statement of adopted procedures covering the privacy rights of students be made available. The law provides that the institution will maintain the confidentiality of student education records.

Pacific School of Religion and the Graduate Theological Union accord all the rights under the law to students who are declared independent. No one outside the institution shall have access to nor will the institution disclose any information from students' education records without the written consent of students except to personnel within the institution, to persons or organizations providing students financial aid, to accrediting agencies carrying out their accreditation function, to persons in compliance with a judicial order, and to persons in an emergency in order to protect the health or safety of students or other persons. All these exceptions are permitted under the Act.

Within the Graduate Theological Union community, only those members, individually or collectively, acting in the students' educational interest are allowed access to appropriate segments of student education records. These members include personnel in the office of Academic Affairs and Dean (including Registrar and Assistant to the Dean, Common Registrar), Faculty Advisors, Financial Aid Office, and the Business Office, and other academic personnel within the limitations of their need to know.

At its discretion, the institution may provide Public Information in accordance with the provisions of the Act to include: student name, address, telephone number, email address, photograph, date of birth, place of birth, area of study, year in school, enrollment status (graduate, full-time, half-time, less than half time), dates of attendance, degrees received from this institution, dissertation or thesis title, religious affiliation/order, scholarships and honors, most recent previous degree and school, country of citizenship, school/school affiliation.

Students may withhold Public Information by notifying the PSR Registrar in writing by the first registration deadline of the Fall semester at [registrar@psr.edu](mailto:registrar@psr.edu). A form for this notification is also



available from the GTU Registrar. Requests for non-disclosure will be honored by the institution for only one academic year; therefore, authorization to withhold Public Information must be filed annually with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

The law provides students with the right to inspect and review the information contained in their education records, to challenge the contents of their education records, to have a hearing if the outcome of the challenge is unsatisfactory, and to submit explanatory statements for inclusion in their files if the decisions of the hearing panels are unacceptable. Students wishing to review their education records must make written requests to the Office of Academic Affairs as listed in the Directory of Student Educational Records, listing the item or items of interest. Only records covered by the Act will be made available within forty-five days of the request. Students may have copies made of their records with certain exceptions (e.g., a copy of the academic record for which a financial "hold" exists or a transcript of an original or source document that exists elsewhere). Official transcripts are available for a charge per copy. Student education records do not include records of instructional, administrative, and educational personnel, which are the sole possession of the maker and are not accessible or revealed to any individual except a temporary substitute, employment records, or alumni records.

Students may not inspect and review the following as outlined by the Act: confidential letters and recommendations associated with admissions, employment or job placement, or honors to which they have waived their rights of inspection and review; or education records containing information about more than one student, in which case the institution will permit access only to that part of the record which pertains to the inquiring student. The institution is not required to permit students to inspect and review confidential letters and recommendations placed in their files prior to January 1, 1975, provided those letters were collected under established policies of confidentiality and were used only for the purposes for which they were collected.

Students who believe that their education records contain information that is inaccurate or misleading or is otherwise in violation of their privacy or other rights may discuss their problems informally with the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs and Registrar. If the Assistant Dean agrees with the student's requests, the appropriate records will be amended. If not, the students will be notified within a reasonable period of time that the records will not be amended; and they will be informed by the Assistant Dean and Registrar of their right to a formal hearing. Student requests for a formal hearing must be made in writing to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean, who, within a reasonable period of time after receiving such requests, will inform students of the date, place, and time of the hearings. Students may present evidence relevant to the issues raised and may be assisted or represented at the hearings by one or more persons of their choice, including attorneys, at the students' expense. The hearing panels which will adjudicate such challenges will be appointed by and chaired by the Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The hearing panel will consult with legal counsel as appropriate.

Decisions of the hearing panels will be final, will be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing, and will consist of written statements summarizing the evidence and stating the reasons for the decisions, and will be delivered to all parties concerned. The education records will be corrected or amended in accordance with the decisions of the hearing panels if the decisions are in favor of the

student. If the decisions are unsatisfactory to the student, the student may place with the education records statements commenting on the information in the records or statements setting forth any reasons for disagreeing with the decisions of the hearing panels. The statements will be placed in the education records, maintained as part of the students' records, and released whenever the records in question are disclosed.

Students who believe that the adjudications of their challenges were unfair or not in keeping with the provisions of the Act may request, in writing, assistance from the President of the institution to aid them in filing complaints with The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office (FERPA), Department of Education, Room 4074, Switzer Building, Washington, D.C. 20202.

## **Definitions of Terms Used in FERPA**

### **Student**

The term "student" includes an individual who has been admitted to and has enrolled in or registered with any degree or certificate program or registered enrollment as a Special Student, auditor, CEU, or other levels of enrollment in courses through Pacific School of Religion. The term "student" is an individual who may be active in a program but on leave of absence, internship, or thesis work. FERPA rights are effective upon the student's first registration of a course or first payment for a course after admittance, and a student's records are protected under FERPA for the life of the person.

### **Student Education Records**

Student education records mean those records which are directly related to a student and maintained by the institution or by a party acting for the institution. Student education records may include, but are not limited to, academic evaluations, transcripts, test scores and other academic records, general counseling and advising records, disciplinary records, and financial aid records.

The term "student education records" does not include:

- "Sole Possession" records created by individuals for the use of memory aid and reference; other personal notes.
- Personnel Records or records relating to an individual who is employed in an educationally related position as a result of their status as a student (e.g., work-study).
- Medical and Health records
- Records contain only information relating to a person after that person is no longer a student, such as information pertaining to alumni. The only exception to this rule is legal name change records submitted after a person is a student at PSR for the purposes of updating official transcripts or ordering diplomas.

### **Public/Directory Information**

The term “public information” as used in the PSR FERPA policy is the same as the term “directory information” in the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and the State of California Education Code.

However, in the interest of protecting student privacy, general practices at PSR will interpret “public information” to be limited to student’s name, email address, state or country of birth, area of study, dates of attendance, year in school, degrees or certificates conferred, number of credits registered or unregistered, registered status, dissertation or thesis title, religious affiliation/order, scholarships and honors, most recent previous degree and school, country of citizenship, school/school of affiliation.

In the interest of protecting student privacy, the fields that PSR would not disclose without some additional discretion and discernment are student address, phone number, date of birth, registered courses, current, and past. However, PSR retains the right to consider these semi-restricted fields as a public directory for third parties with a legitimate and educational need and right to know.

### **Disclosures that do NOT Require Student Consent**

PSR may disclose personally identifiable information educational records without student consent to the following parties:

- School officials with legitimate educational interests
- In connection with a health and safety emergency, if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other individuals
- U.S. Comptroller General, U.S. Attorney General, U.S. Department of Education
- State and local officials
- Authorized organizations conducting educational research and services
- Accrediting agencies
- Alleged victim of a crime
- Parent of a Dependent Student as defined by the IRS
- Parent of a student under 21 regarding the violation of a law regarding alcohol or drug abuse

### **Subpoenas of Student Records**

In the case of a court-ordered or lawfully issued subpoena, PSR makes a reasonable effort to notify the eligible student of the order or subpoena in advance of compliance, so that the eligible student may seek protective action unless the disclosure is in compliance with-

- (A) A Federal grand jury subpoena and the court has ordered that the existence or the contents of the subpoena or the information furnished in response to the subpoena not be disclosed;
- (B) Any other subpoena issued for a law enforcement purpose and the court or other issuing agency has

ordered that the existence or the contents of the subpoena or the information furnished in response to the subpoena not be disclosed; or

(C) An *ex parte* court order obtained by the United States Attorney General (or designee not lower than an Assistant Attorney General) concerning investigations or prosecutions of an offense listed in 18 U.S.C. 2332b(g)(5)(B) or an act of domestic or international terrorism as defined in 18 U.S.C. 2331.

Proof of receipt of this notification to the student is not required for PSR to comply with the subpoena. In the cases that proof of receipt of acknowledgment is received by PSR, a record of that receipt will be kept in the student's educational record so long as the educational record is maintained. In all other cases, a copy of all records relevant to the subpoena will be kept in the student's educational record so long as the educational record is maintained.

### **Disclosures that DO Require Student Consent**

For personally identifiable information disclosures of educational records to a third party other than those listed above, regarding personally identifiable information of students that is not a degree verification, or enrollment verification or what is considered "public directory" information under FERPA, student-written consent is usually required.

To submit a form requesting such information for a PSR student(s), contact the PSR registrar at [jcabanero@psr.edu](mailto:jcabanero@psr.edu). The form will request that the student verify that the records may be disclosed, state the purpose for the disclosure, and identify the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made. A copy of this form will be kept in the student's educational record so long as the educational record is maintained

## Stack 1 Milestones for all Certificate & Masters programs

All students must also complete a set of milestones and non-course requirements for graduation that are due at specific points of each program. CSR, CSSC, MAST, MTS, and MDiv students are all required to complete the following milestones by the end of their first semester of Stack 1 courses.

### Vocational Academic Plan

#### What is the Vocational Academic Plan at PSR?

Pacific School of Religion prepares a diverse cadre of spiritually rooted leaders with the vision, resilience, and skill to create a world where all can thrive. Your structured conversation with a PSR Academic (Faculty) Advisor is designed to assist you in discerning and articulating your vocational goals. All students must complete a Vocational Academic Plan in the first semester of their program.

#### Purpose of Vocational Academic Plan Development

The Vocational Academic Plan development will be a time of collaboration where you can work with your Academic (Faculty) Advisor to determine what vocational plans you hope to engage in, where you might find resources to accomplish your goals, and how you can be supported and empowered in your formation as a spiritually rooted leader. The questions for planning and conducting the Vocational Academic Plan conversation are online on the Student Resources page.

#### The Components of the Vocational Academic Plan

- Review Questions to Consider
- Determine which Graduate Certificate (CSR or CSSC) and concentration tracks (Congregational or Chaplaincy) you are interested in completing?
- Read and acknowledge PSR's Community and Learning Covenants (*ALL students must sign and return each Covenant to their Faculty Advisor by the end of their first semester*).

### Spiritual Formation Plan

#### What is Spiritual Formation at PSR?

At PSR, spiritual formation involves transforming and grounding the whole person in a spirituality that will shape and sustain a student's change work in the world. This formation happens individually and in accountability communities, both conceptually and practically. While spiritual formation has inward dimensions and work, it is informed by and informs how one moves through and impacts the world. Spiritual and cultural humility and respect for cross-cultural differences aimed at creating a more just and compassionate world where all can flourish are essential components of this formation process. Therefore, spiritual formation – cultivating and nourishing spiritual roots, caring for soul and body, and opening oneself to experiences of the Holy in the world through deep understanding and sustained practices – is at the heart of PSR's theological education.

#### Purpose of Spiritual Formation Conversation and Plan Development

Your structured conversation with a PSR campus pastor is designed to assist you in discerning and articulating your intentions for fostering your spiritual formation during your degree program. It will be a time of collaboration where you can work together to determine what spiritual practices you hope to engage in, where you might find resources to accomplish your goals, and how you can be supported and empowered in your formation as a spiritual leader.

The questions for planning and conducting the Spiritual Formation Plan conversation are online on the Student Resources page. The conversation will occur either at the end of the “Spiritual Formation for Leadership” course or, if you do not take this course, during the second semester of Stack 1. During Stack 2 of your academic journey, this Spiritual Formation Plan will be included in your Middler Review to help assess your progress in meeting these goals.

### Components of Spiritual Formation Plan

- Review questions for structured conversation with initial responses submitted to campus pastor before the conversation - *completed 1st semester, during "Spiritual Formation for Leadership" course.*
- Schedule and complete structured Conversation with the campus pastor - *done at the end of "Spiritual Formation for Leadership" course or during the 2nd semester of your first year*
- Develop a Spiritual Formation Plan and submit it to Faculty Advisor via the online form - *due within two weeks of your completed conversation with the Campus Pastor.*

## Stackable Master of Divinity

### Overview of the Program

The Master of Divinity Program (MDiv) at Pacific School of Religion (PSR) is offered in a concurrent hybrid format. You have entered a professional graduate degree program designed to prepare students from diverse backgrounds for various forms of ministry. Inaugurated at PSR in 2018, we are pleased to offer a unique path to the MDiv at PSR that adds value in multiple ways to you as the first among the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) schools in North America to provide such an innovative and formative path to the MDiv.

As a degree accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), PSR's MDiv includes instruction in Biblical Studies, Christian history, theology, and ethics; instruction in the social contexts in which religious communities exist; education to develop ministerial skills and critical frameworks for effective leadership in religious communities or communities that may not be religious but are open to ancient wisdom traditions; and intentional efforts to form students to mature in the qualities and capacities needed for religious leadership. Unlike many forms of secular leadership, religious leadership is service—to God and God's creatures.

### MDiv Program Learning Outcomes

The faculty at PSR has made a special commitment to graduate theological education emphasizing critical interdisciplinary thinking, contextuality, partnership in learning with faith communities, the Graduate Theological Union (GTU), and formation for leadership in multiple settings, including beyond the church and academy. Students who complete this degree successfully will be able to:

- ❖ Articulate a critical understanding of texts and traditions in both physical and digital contexts and appropriately apply this to situations:

- Theologically ground ministerial and vocational arts, including preaching, worship leadership, pastoral care, and community organizing
  - Communicate the theological or philosophical, or aesthetic traditions of one's own religious community or communities.
  - Engage in creating new theological discourses.
  - Articulate the relationship of a theological or religious text to its original context and use a spectrum of approaches for interpreting sacred texts today.
  - Articulate an understanding of the constructed and contextual nature of the information.
- ❖ Recognize all knowledge and information as contextual:
    - Articulate the significance of the various factors that shape one's context.
    - Understand the markers of authority recognized by disciplines, professions, and other communities of knowledge and practice.
    - Debate the ways privilege influences the perception of authority.
    - Demonstrate an awareness of the inequities perpetuated by the growing influence of AI and information technology.
    - Demonstrate an awareness of other contexts, especially across differences with respect to race, sexuality, gender, ethnicity, class, culture, nationality, religious affiliation, etc.
    - Imagine how to translate across and among various contexts.
    - Avoid inappropriate boundary crossing and misappropriation.
- ❖ Articulate the connection between spiritual practice(s) and the development of a leadership style:
    - Demonstrate personal integrity and character based on spiritual values.
    - Develop a spiritual leadership style to fit with contemporary hybrid models of worship and community gathering.
    - Practice appropriate spiritual practices that engage the wider society
    - Develop a spiritual-rootedness to sustain world-changing work.
    - Effectively link spirituality and leadership in a community of accountability
    - Engage in life and work with cultural humility and respect for cross-cultural differences, including the reality of different time zones.
- ❖ Form effective partnerships with various organizations and individuals:
    - Work effectively with people of different backgrounds, cultures, and experiences.
    - Incorporate insights from non-academic contexts.
    - Evaluate the information produced by organizations and individuals to create alliances and solidarities in the digital world and to counter the effects of fake news, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and xenophobia.
- ❖ Integrate various intellectual disciplines, fields, topics, and themes of theological education in the practices of ministry and public leadership in a variety of contexts, including the digital world:
    - Articulate a theologically grounded position on social justice issues.
    - Articulate a theologically grounded position on the creation and circulation of information.
    - Organize community efforts toward achieving social change and use the means at one's disposal, including digital means.

- Develop a definition of social transformation in critical, constructive, theological, and historical modes relevant to the digital and physical worlds people occupy.
- ❖ Understand that information creation, including religious and theological claims, is a process that unfolds in physical and digital worlds:
  - Distinguish between format and method of access, understanding that these are separate entities.
  - Recognize that similar content may be presented in different formats, which may affect the interpretation of the content.
  - Contribute to scholarly and public conversations by becoming a creator and critic of distributed information.
  - Describe the way systems of information distribution privilege some perspectives and present barriers to others.
- ❖ Cultivate best practices for personal growth, service, and financial health:
  - Develop an understanding of organizations and the limits of resources to serve oneself.
  - Develop sustaining habits of resilience and flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances.
  - Be open to being formed for the needs of others.
  - Acquire knowledge of and learn habits and practices of living within one's means while meeting personal financial responsibility.

### **Stackable (1-2-3) Curriculum**

The MDiv program at PSR has three stacks, organized in ascending steps toward the M.Div. Students receive a credential at the end of each academic year. This 1-2-3 stackable program provides vocational value to each year of your education at PSR to provide flexibility based on personal or financial circumstances. Your study will be rigorous and reflective while being one of the nation's most innovative and creative paths to the M.Div.

At the end of Stack 1 of your study in the program, you will be awarded a Certificate of Spirituality and Social Change (CSSC) or a Certificate in Sexuality and Religion (CSR). In the first stack, the focus of the foundational courses for the CSSC **OR** CSR provides a cohort experience in the foundational and required courses while emphasizing ongoing personal change and transformation. Students may only receive one of the other of these certificates.

At the end of Stack 2, you will complete the Master of Arts in Social Transformation (MAST). The Stack 2 courses are oriented towards the theological and practical formation, equipping students to think critically about socio-political dynamics to reflect constructively on the role of religion and theological traditions in movements for social change.

In Stack 3, you will complete the final requirements for a Master of Divinity (MDiv) with the possibility of two concentrations— Chaplaincy **OR** Congregational Ministry.

This curriculum is designed for a full-time student taking 12-15 units each semester. Part-time students will need to pay close attention to the sequence of courses so that they take them in the required order. Your advisor and the Assistant Dean and Registrar will be invaluable support here.



In Stacks 1-2-3, students will have exposure to immersive learning opportunities and options to take courses at other schools in the GTU. It is important to remember that the Stackable Curriculum design has a deeply formative aspect. Further, the program introduces you to the logic of "stacking," which implicitly means that even as the MDiv is a terminal professional degree, it invites you to continue your education into the future.

## Concentrations

There are two concentrations (tracks) possible in the Stacked MDiv curriculum:

**Congregational Ministry:** This concentration allows you to acquire the CSSC (or CSR) in the first year, the MAST in the second year, and the M.Div. in the third year. You must ensure that the concentration courses you take and your field education experience in the second year are cohesive with your vocational focus. If you seek ordination, you must use your concentration and elective courses to fulfill denominational polity requirements. At the end of your second year, near the end of your field education, you must organize the Middler Review Capstone, instructions for which can be found among the other required milestones. In the final step, it is required that you complete the Senior Seminar Capstone (MDV-8400) that integrates your ministerial goals with the study of theology, religion, and spirituality.

**Chaplaincy:** This concentration allows you to acquire the CSSC in the first year, the MAST in the second year, and the M.Div. in the third year. You must ensure that your field education experience is cohesive with your vocational focus to develop chaplaincy skills. Most students on this track complete an accredited Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program to meet their M.Div. requirement. You are expected to use your concentration and elective courses to deepen your understanding and skills needed for chaplaincy/spiritual care work. All electives you take must be related to your vocational focus. In the final step, your Senior Seminar, it is required that you complete the Senior Seminar (MDV-8400) course that integrates your skills in chaplaincy/spiritual care with the study of theology, religion, and spirituality.

## Specific Academic Stipulations

Since the Stackable 1-2-3 Curriculum is a feature unique to PSR, it is important that you follow the prescribed path or sequence of courses when offered at PSR. The sequence and design of the stackable curriculum will ensure that your intellectual and financial resources are utilized for maximum advantage to acquire the credential at the end of the year.

## Expected Program Duration

Students entering the M.Div. program for the MDiv to be awarded, students must complete a total of 72 units. As a full-time student in the stackable curriculum, the expected duration of your program is three academic years for either iteration of the degree. Full-time students are expected to take between 24 credits per academic year and include some Summer or Intersession courses. However, students who are part-time or who are transferring in credits have as many as ten years to complete their program from the start of the first course they took either at PSR or as a transfer student.

## Using Your MDiv Worksheet

The *MDiv Degree Worksheet* is your program planning document. All the course distribution expectations are listed for you to follow. Review this document found online on the [Student Resources](#)

page and when consulting with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or advisor each time you select courses as part of registration.

## **Academic Milestones (Additional Program Requirements)**

In addition to the 72 credits specified for the degree, MDiv students must also complete a set of milestones and non-course requirements for graduation that are due at specific points of a program. All students complete the Vocational Academic Plan and Spiritual Formation Plan in Stack 1. MDiv students must complete these milestones:

## **Middler Review**

### **What is the Middler Review at PSR?**

The Middler Review, a meeting held at the midpoint in the M.Div. program—Congregational and Chaplaincy tracks—is a comprehensive review of your theological understanding of ministry, field education or CPE experience, academic record, and development of proficiencies in ministry in the light of your personal vocational objectives and, if you are in the process for ordination, your denomination's requirements for ordination.

This Middler Review meeting —attended by you, your faculty advisor, perhaps a second advisor which may be assigned by the Dean's Office, a denominational representative, your field education or CPE mentor/supervisor, and a peer—is a time of support, assessment, review, and planning. Your faculty advisor chairs the meeting. You are responsible for planning your Middler Review, gathering and inviting your attendees, coordinating the meeting time and materials, and registering for your Middler (MDV 4000) in your student portal.

The guidelines for planning and conducting the Middler Review are online on the Student Resources page. These resources include an outline of the Middler process (including guidelines for writing the 15-20 page Theological and Vocational essay); a detailed Middler Guide to be followed by the student and provided to the Review members; the student Self-Assessment form to be provided to the Review members; and examples of the Middler essay. Upon completing this review, you must complete a Middler Review Report online to enter the program's final year. Congregational Ministry students are expected to complete their Middler Review shortly after completing their Concurrent Field Education internship. It is highly recommended that Chaplaincy students taking CPE complete this review shortly after completing their CPE program, whether in the fall, spring, or summer semester. Only MDiv students who complete their Middler after general registration for the term after completing their Stack 2 courses will be allowed to move forward in their program.

## **Master of Divinity Capstone/ Senior Seminar**

You will complete a Senior Integrative Essay at the end of the M.Div. program. This essay is developed in either the Senior Seminar Capstone (MDV-8400) or through working with your faculty advisor.

## **Community Engaged Learning (CEL): Field Praxis**

This department of the Office of Academic Affairs is called Community Engaged Learning at PSR precisely because it engages communities like those you may be called to serve. Immersive learning experiences are a critical part of formation through the Stackable Curriculum.

Field Praxis is both an integral and integrative part of theological education. PSR is committed to providing opportunities to integrate theological and ethical commitments with the practice of ministry, supporting the development of vocational clarity, the deepening of faith, and assisting in the development of specific competencies in the work of ministry and chaplaincy.

Students must successfully complete all of their “first year” (CSSC or CSR) required courses before they are eligible for field praxis, either through Concurrent Field Education at a placement site or through Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) with an accredited CPE program.

### **Concurrent Field Education: Congregational Ministry or Non-Profit Community Ministry**

Concurrent Field Education is a cohort- and praxis-centered course, taken in both the fall and spring semesters of one academic year. Weekly 3-hour class sessions occur during fall and spring; the praxis internship of 15-hours per week spans the full nine months. You must find placement at a site approved by CEL and will remain there for 9 months, collaborating with a mentor and a teaching community and learning leadership skills in that context. Students on the ordination track must work at a church approved by both CEL and their denominational committee.

The distinctive characteristics of field praxis include: an appropriate formation-centered setting in which students are responsible and accountable for significant works of ministry; competent supervision in the field; disciplined mentor and cohort reflection on the experiences of ministry; reflection and feedback from constituency groups, laity or target community served; and the development of learning goals, designed by the student in collaboration with their mentor/supervisor, outlining practical methods for learning and as the foundation for subsequent written evaluations. These experiences are structured in ways that mirror ministry, spiritual care, and leadership contexts in wider social milieus. The commitment of Community Engaged Learning is to provide opportunities to learn how you may serve in the future. CEL provides you with valuable praxis experience and reflection to think about service and leadership and you are strongly encouraged to think about it as critical to your formation at PSR.

### **Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE): Chaplaincy/Spiritual Care**

Students who are on the Chaplaincy track must find an accredited CPE program that spans 4 or 9 months and offers at least 1 unit of CPE. Typically, these sites require 200 clinical hours along with didactic education and group and individual reflection. As such, most programs can be done in 4 months, roughly matching the calendar of fall, spring, or summer semester at PSR. Summer CPE programs are always full-time. Some CPE programs at military-affiliated hospitals last for 9 months. CPE programs match the characteristics and learning outcomes of the PSR's Concurrent Field Education course and therefore are approved as meeting the M.Div. field praxis requirement. Community Engaged Learning is committed to working with students to find accredited CPE programs in environments that match their vocational goals. Please collaborate with Community Engaged Learning and your faculty advisor to determine which type of CPE program and in which semester works best within your academic plan. Students on the ordination track should also check with their denominational committee to verify

that the accrediting organization of their CPE program is accepted. More detailed information about using CPE for academic credit can be found in Student Resources online.

It is important that you meet with CEL early in the spring semester of your “first year” to identify your vocational goals, either Congregational or Chaplaincy, to allow for sufficient time to find and validate a placement or CPE program.

Applications for Field Placements and Clinical Pastoral Education must be completed months in advance. Concurrent Field Education placements are best arranged by May for the following September. CPE applications are usually submitted 2-3 months before the start of the program; CPE Supervisors interview and select participants in order to create a cohesive learning cohort. The range of placements for field placements include prisons, campus ministries, social service agencies, and social justice organizations. The range of CPE environments can include hospitals, spiritual care counseling, street ministry, and validated non-traditional clinical settings (validated by the CPE program, not PSR.) It is your responsibility, in consultation with CEL and your faculty Advisor, to arrange an appropriate field placement and mentor. CPE students must apply directly to CPE centers. CPE program tuition is not a replacement for PSR academic program tuition; students can use their financial aid to pay for both. More information is available in the CEL office. Academic credit is not given for past CPE or Field Education experience.

### Electives

While it is encouraged for students to also take electives that speak to their area of focus, students may select from any course across the GTU Consortium to fulfill this requirement. Students admitted prior to Fall 2021 should plan to take at least one elective course (3 credits) during either one Summer or Intersession term in one of the years leading up to graduation.

### Immersion

Students who entered prior to Fall 2021 are required to do one Immersion course before the completion of their program. This is a 1.5 credit immersive experience overseen by Community Engaged Learning. Sometimes immersion courses are offered at other GTU schools during Intersession and Spring. Most PSR immersive experiences are Special Reading Courses, coordinated with PSR faculty and approved by CEL and the Dean. For additional information, please contact [CEL](#).

### Denominational Requirements

Students seeking ordination may have denominational requirements to fulfill that fall outside the PSR M.Div. course requirements. Specific requirements vary according to denomination, local district, and the individual ordination candidate. Be aware of courses you need to take to fulfill these requirements. Please work with the Office of Academic Affairs and your denominational representative to determine when and where you can find courses to meet your ordination requirements.

### Specific Program Stipulations

**Lapsed Time Rule:** While the MDiv is a three-stack program, you may take up to ten years of part-time study to complete the MDiv degree, including semesters on leave. The elapsed time begins with the first

coursework applied to the degree, including transferred courses. No extension exists beyond the stated lapsed time.

**Graduate Theological Union:** PSR is part of the [Graduate Theological Union](#) (GTU) – Students enrolled at PSR can choose from more than 700 courses offered across the consortium each year. With eight member schools, five academic centers, and five affiliates, the GTU is one of the largest theological consortiums in the world. Students in any concentration of the stackable curriculum are given multiple opportunities to complete courses within the GTU, including specific program requirements, electives, and concentration courses. Students must have a minimum of 27 credits of coursework taught by a PSR faculty member and will not be eligible for graduation unless that requirement has been met.

**Transfer Credits:** It is determined on a case-by-case basis by the Assistant Dean and Registrar.

**Special Reading Course (SRC):** A Special Reading Course SRC is a course a student and a faculty member design for a specific area of interest. An SRC can only be used for electives. This must be a course not offered at PSR or in the Consortium but reflects the focus you are developing in your course of study. Once you and the faculty member have identified such an interest, students must fill out a form in the Office of Academic Affairs and procure the signatures of the Dean and the Assistant Dean and Registrar before finalizing plans with the faculty member. At most, nine units of the credits used towards your degree may be filled with an SRC, and an SRC can only be used towards elective credits.

**Required GPA:** Satisfactory completion of the MDiv degree requires the completion of the required courses with an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) or higher at each potential exit point in the Stackable Curriculum, which is the CSSC **OR** CSR and MAST. Students with a GPA below 3.0 will not be eligible for graduation.

## Extensions/Incompletes in Courses

**Extension:** PSR students taking courses in the Stackable Curriculum with PSR faculty may be granted an extension from the last day of the semester to the day faculty are required to submit their grades – a period of three weeks.

**Incomplete:** An Incomplete may be granted for PSR students taking courses with PSR Faculty. An incomplete is granted (only) when an unforeseen and dire exigency happens and the student petitions to submit an assignment for a course on the first day of the following semester. There will be no exceptions to the submission date for an approved Incomplete. Such a petition must have signatures from the Dean, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs and Registrar, and faculty member. Please note that Incompletes are only granted in exceptional cases.

If the student does not submit the work by the deadline for either the Extension or the Incomplete, the final grade posted will be an Incomplete Fail ("IF"), and the student will not receive credit for the course. PSR students taking courses with non-PSR faculty but within the consortium must follow the GTU Incomplete guidelines in the Consortial Registration Policies.

Students are only allowed five petitions for incompletes/extensions for the duration of their program.

**Letter Grade vs. Pass/Fail Grade:** Letter grades count towards a student's overall GPA, whereas a Pass/Fail grading scale does not. Students in the MDiv stackable curriculum may take up to 15 units of their courses as Pass/Fail. All other courses must be taken for a letter grade.

## Stackable Master of Arts in Social Transformation (MAST)

### Overview of the Program

PSR's Master of Arts degree in Social Transformation (MAST) equips students to think critically about socio-political dynamics and reflect constructively on the role of religion and theological traditions in movements for social change. This academic program combines the tools and methods of social theory and constructive theology for a distinctive blend of spiritual leadership skills in a rapidly changing world.

Each MAST student works closely with a faculty advisor and a social innovation fieldwork supervisor to devise a course of study leading to an applied project in social transformation. The program prepares students for various vocational paths in social justice advocacy, non-profit organizational leadership, community organizing, education, or congregational development.

PSR offers a unique history in progressive religious leaders and a richly diverse location, both geographically and in a multi-faith consortium, for this specialized field of study and preparation.

MAST students will draw on PSR's resources to integrate and develop three broad skill sets:

1. Methods for social theorizing and ethical analysis.
2. Tools for constructive theological reflection and spiritual practice.
3. Strategies for collaborative community organizing and network building.

### Stackable 1-2-3 Curriculum

At the end of Stack 1 of your study in the program, you will be awarded a Certificate of Spirituality and Social Change (CSSC) or a Certificate in Sexuality and Religion (CSR). In Stack 1, the focus of the foundational courses for the CSSC **OR** CSR provides a cohort experience in the foundational and required courses while emphasizing ongoing personal change and transformation. Students may only receive one of the other of these certificates.

At the end of Stack 2, you will complete the Master of Arts in Social Transformation (MAST). The Stack 2 courses are oriented toward the theological and practical formation, equipping students to think critically about socio-political dynamics to reflect constructively on the role of religion and theological traditions in movements for social change.

### MAST Program Learning Outcomes

*Successful completion of this degree will prepare students to:*

- ❖ Engage in cultural and political analyses, both theologically and ethically, for insights into structural inequality, systemic injustice, and institutionalized oppression.

- ❖ Evaluate how the digital world creates, sustains, and fosters social inequality, even as it claims to democratize societies, cultures, and politics.
- ❖ Understand, as both contributor and critic, complex physical and digital information distribution systems.
- ❖ Assist faith communities in collaborative partnerships with programs and organizations devoted to systemic social change for the common good.
- ❖ Articulate the unique contributions theological and ethical traditions can make to the work of social change-making in areas such as economic justice, organizational development, and ecological sustainability.
- ❖ Evaluate and employ diverse, interdisciplinary strategies for change-making drawn from the worlds of social innovation, nonprofit organizations, and grassroots community organizing.
- ❖ Foster communities marked by cross-cultural humility and devoted to collaborative problem-solving for transforming systems of oppressive power.

## Curriculum

Students in the MAST program have the unique opportunity to be a part of our innovative stackable curriculum. By completing your first year of study, you will be awarded a Certificate of Spirituality and Social Change (CSSC) or a Certificate in Sexuality and Religion (CSR). Completing Stack 1 and 2, including the SAIL Capstone Project, will result in a Master of Arts in Social Transformation (MAST) degree.

While much of the curriculum is structured, the MAST program has room for electives. Students may take any course within the GTU Consortium to meet requirements in the following subject areas paying attention to whether a course is offered at the introductory or advanced levels:

- Introductory Ethics Course (3.0)
- Upper-Level Theology Course Elective (1.5 units)

Fieldwork in the MAST program provides social-change experiences through collaborative projects to test and further hone the academic theorizing of the program's core courses. The courses associated with the fieldwork will provide opportunities to refine the student's skills for engaging in theological/ethical reflection with the tools of social analysis.

## Social Analysis for Innovative Leadership (SAIL)

SAIL Capstone Project Guidelines *Master of Arts in Social Transformation (MAST)*

### Overview

The SAIL Capstone is required for the fulfillment of the MAST program. This e-portfolio project provides a framework for curating and narrating students' work across their MAST degree program to make their work impactful in broader contexts and articulating their contributions to and understandings of the complex intersections of social transformation and spiritual leadership.

The MAST program is designed to equip students to think critically about socio-political dynamics and reflect constructively on the role of religious and theological traditions in movements for social change. To do this, coursework and social change fieldwork contribute to developing and integrating three broad skill sets:

1. Methods for social theorizing and ethical analysis.
2. Tools for constructive theological reflection and spiritual practice.
3. Strategies for adaptive transformative leadership, collaborative community organizing, and network building.

Successful completion of this SAIL capstone project involves producing an e-portfolio project completed in consultation with the student's advisor after students have completed  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the MAST degree requirements (see prerequisites below). This e-portfolio will include elements that demonstrate the student's engagement with the program's learning objectives.

## Capstone Objectives

The portfolio should address a specific sector of social change-making in relation to the student's social change fieldwork and demonstrate the student's ability to:

- Analyze socio-political dynamics for the sake of advancing positive social change.
- Evaluate challenges and opportunities for effective religious/spiritual leadership in contextually specific ways.
- Retrieve critical and constructively key theological or religious ideas for advancing social transformation.
- Identify and assess professional and vocational religious/spiritual leadership skills for particular social change venues.

## Summative Portfolio Project

The e-portfolio involves creating and populating an online platform (such as Google Sites, WordPress, or Wix.com) with materials for engaging in social analysis, theological/religious reflection, and vocational preparedness. Each of the key components of this portfolio should be uploaded to distinct "tabbed" sections accessible from the site's home page. (Google Sites, WordPress, and Wix, among others, allow the creation of a completely private site, an open and public site, or a limited access site; this e-portfolio can thus be shared with as many or as few as desired and also maintained over time for future work beyond graduation).

**The e-portfolio should include these elements:**

- Vocational statement of professional purpose and goals, as well as a description of the role and approach to spiritual/religious leadership in this social change sector; (Transformative Leadership; Who Cares?)
- An exposition of the student's approach to employing theological resources and spiritual practices in the work of social change-making; (Spiritual Formation, Theological Thinking, Rhetorical Use of Texts)
- An illustration of the type of social analysis the student undertakes in this particular sector of social change; (Contextual Thinking)
- A sample research paper or excerpts from such a paper dealing with social analysis and spiritual/ethical reflection; (Introduction to Christian Ethics; Upper-Level Theology course)



- Case studies or other relevant materials from coursework, immersive learning, or social change fieldwork sites. (Design Thinking for Social Change; Innovative Vibrant Ventures.)
- Proper attribution of ideas and texts is expected, following the same conventions as traditional citations and hyperlinking.

### Process

Students should begin the SAIL Capstone project after they have completed  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the MAST degree's required courses, including the prerequisites listed below. This process should occur just before or during a student's last semester in the MAST degree program.

Successful completion of the SAIL project requires the following:

1. Preparatory conversation with the student's advisor at the beginning of the semester in which the SAIL capstone project will be completed to develop materials for the project and identify any areas that need to be strengthened for the project to be completed.
2. Preparing and submitting the e-portfolio - the final version of the e-portfolio should be accessible to the advisor through a submitted URL with distinct elements noted appropriately for the sake of assessment and evaluation.
3. Engaging in an evaluative conversation with the advisor using the provided rubric and the advisor's comments and assessment.

### Pre-requisites

Before engaging in the SAIL Capstone Project, students should have completed the following courses:

- |                                      |                                     |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ✓ Spiritual Formation for Leadership | ✓ Transformative Leadership         |
| ✓ Contextual Thinking                | ✓ Design Thinking for Social Change |
| ✓ Rhetorical Use of Texts            | ✓ Social Change Field Work          |
| ✓ Introduction to Christian Ethics   | ✓ Who Cares                         |
| ✓ Theological Thinking               | ✓ Upper-Level Theology course       |

### Specific Program Stipulations

Since the Stackable Curriculum is a feature that is unique to PSR, you must take courses as and when they are offered at PSR. The sequence and design of the stackable curriculum will ensure that your intellectual and financial resources are utilized for maximum advantage to acquire the credential at the end of the year.

**Using Your MAST Worksheet:** The *MAST Degree Worksheet* is your planning document. All the course distribution expectations are listed for you to follow. Review this document found online on the [Student Resources page](#) and when consulting with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or advisor each time you select courses as part of registration.

**Expected Program Duration:** For the MAST to be awarded, students must complete 39 total credits. As a full-time student in this curriculum, the expected duration of your program is two academic years

taking between 9 – 12 credits per semester apart from the final term. However, students who are part-time or who are transferring in credits have as many as five (5) years to complete their program.

**Lapsed Time Rule:** While the MAST is a two-year program, you may take up to five years of part-time study to complete the MAST degree, including semesters on leave. The elapsed time begins with the first coursework applied to the degree, including transferred courses. There is no extension beyond the stated lapsed time.

**Transfer Credits:** It is determined on a case-by-case basis by the Assistant Dean and Registrar.

**Special Reading Courses (SRC):** An SRC is a course a student and a faculty member design for a specific area of interest. An SRC can only be used for elective credit. This has to be a course not offered at PSR or in the Consortium but reflects the focus you are developing in your course of study. Once you and the faculty member have identified such an interest, students must fill out a form in the Office of Academic Affairs and procure the signatures of the Dean and the Assistant Dean and Registrar *before* finalizing plans with the faculty member.

**Required GPA:** Satisfactory completion of the MAST degree requires an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) or higher for both the CSSC and the MAST. At each potential exit point in the curriculum are the CSSC and MAST. Students with a GPA below 3.0 will not be eligible for graduation.

## Incompletes/Extensions in Courses

**Extension:** PSR students taking courses with PSR faculty may be granted an extension from the last day of the semester to the day faculty are required to submit their grades – a period of three weeks. The amount of time granted for an extension is at the discretion of the faculty through the end of the three weeks.

**Incomplete:** An Incomplete may be granted for PSR students taking courses with PSR Faculty. An incomplete is granted (only) when an unforeseen and *dire* exigency happens and the student petitions to submit an assignment for a course on the first day of the following semester. There will be no exceptions to the submission date for an approved Incomplete. Such a petition must have signatures from the Dean, Assistant Dean, Registrar, and faculty member. Please note: Incompletes are only granted in exceptional cases.

PSR students taking courses with non-PSR faculty but within the Consortium must follow the GTU Incomplete guidelines and submit all work by three weeks from the end of the term.

**Letter Grade vs. Pass/Fail Grade:** Letter grades count towards a student's overall GPA, whereas a Pass/Fail grading scale does not. Students in the MAST stackable curriculum may take up to 9 units of their courses as Pass/Fail. All other courses must be taken for a letter grade.

Changing a Program

Students in the MAST program who wish to continue with the Master of Divinity should be aware that these changes require admissions procedures and adhere to application deadlines for admission.

Students changing to or adding the Common MA program apply through the GTU Admissions Office. If you plan to add the MA program, please inquire with the GTU before your third semester at PSR.

The Common MA program at the GTU cannot be taken concurrently with the M.Div. at PSR. Please consult with PSR Admissions and Enrollment for additional information.

## Certificate of Spirituality and Social Change Program

### Overview of the Program

PSR's Certificate of Spirituality and Social Change (CSSC) offers specialized training for social change-making. Participants come from and prepare for a wide range of socially innovative vocational paths, whether social justice advocacy, community organizing, the visual and performing arts, or congregational leadership. In each of these areas, effective efforts for *social* change rely on ongoing *personal* change and transformation rooted in a practice of spiritual formation. To that end, the CSSC program combines these key elements for participants:

1. Spiritual formation and theological reflection in a cohort of changemakers.
2. Leadership skills for critically constructive social analysis.
3. Immersive learning and practice with experienced mentors.

### CSSC Program Learning Outcomes

*Students who complete this certificate will be equipped to:*

- ❖ Participate in and demonstrate an understanding of various spiritual formation practices (such as meditation and contemplative prayer, liturgical worship and table fellowship, sacred dance, and the visual arts, to name just a few), especially as such practices inform and sustain the work of social transformation.
- ❖ Articulate the significance of personal transformation for the work of social change-making (such as: recognizing and addressing one's own collusion with institutional systems of oppressive power; analyzing the multiple social locations one occupies and the varying degrees of privilege they might carry; and acknowledging one's contributions to unjust social and cultural systems and the ongoing need to seek forgiveness, healing, and reconciliation).
- ❖ Engage in cultural and political analysis both theologically and ethically, especially for insights into structural inequality, systemic injustice, and institutionalized oppression.
- ❖ Recruit and prepare faith communities to engage in collaborative partnerships with programs and organizations devoted to systemic social change for the common good.
- ❖ Evaluate and appropriate diverse strategies for change-making drawn from the worlds of social innovation, non-profit organizations, and grass-roots community organizing, and identify the active or potential role of spiritual practice/formation in those strategies;

- ❖ Develop skills for transformative leadership suitable for building coalitions committed to the work of social and economic justice by attending carefully to the issues involving professional boundaries, institutional power, and social ethics.

### **CSSC as Part of the Stackable (1-2-3) Curriculum**

The Certificate for Spirituality and Social Change, whether as a stand-alone certificate or as part of the Stackable Curriculum, is also part of the Stack 1 curriculum for students who are working towards a Master of Arts in Social Transformation (MAST) as well as the students in the Master of Divinity (MDiv) program. A student pursuing the CSSC may wish to continue their education beyond the certificate. If so, please refer to this catalog's "Adding or Changing a Program" section for additional information. It's important that all deadlines and requirements are met to be admitted into the MAST or MDiv programs.

This design will allow students to gain the learning outcomes required for the certificate and prepare them for a career in social change.

**Expected Program Duration:** The CSSC program is designed to be a full-time one-year program. Alternatively, you may take up to three years part-time to complete the certificate.

The CSSC is designed to enable those who are employed full-time to enter this course of study. For the CSSC to be awarded, the equivalent of 21 credits, which usually translates to one full-time year or three part-time academic years, must be completed.

**Using Your CSSC Worksheet:** The *CSSC Degree Worksheet* is your planning document. All course requirements are listed for you to follow. Using this document will help ensure that you meet the program's requirements. Review this document found online on the Student Resources page with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or advisor each time you select courses as part of registration.

**Lapsed Time Rule:** While the CSSC is a one-year program, you may take up to three years to complete the CSSC, including semesters on leave. The lapsed time period begins with the first coursework applied to the certificate. This includes transferred courses.

**Transfer Credits:** Determined on a case-by-case basis by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

### **Special Reading Courses (SRC)**

An SRC is a course a student and a faculty member design for a specific area of interest. An SRC can only be used for electives. This must be a course not offered at PSR or in the Consortium but reflects the focus you are developing in your course of study. Once you and the faculty member have identified such an interest, students must fill out a form in the Office of Academic Affairs and procure the signatures of the Dean and the Assistant Dean and Registrar *before* finalizing plans with the faculty member. At most, 3 units of the credits used towards your certificate may be filled with an SRC, and an SRC can only be used towards elective credits.

### **Required GPA**

Satisfactory completion of the CSSC. Completing the necessary courses requires an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) or higher.

### Extensions/Incompletes in Courses

**Extension:** PSR students taking courses in the Stackable Curriculum with PSR faculty may be granted an extension from the last day of the semester to the day faculty are required to submit their grades – a period of three weeks.

**Incomplete:** An Incomplete may be granted for PSR students taking courses with PSR Faculty. An incomplete is granted (only) when an unforeseen and *dire* exigency happens and the student petitions to submit an assignment for a course on the first day of the following semester. There will be no exceptions to the submission date for an approved Incomplete. Such a petition must have signatures from the Dean, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs and Registrar, and faculty member. Please note: Incompletes are only granted in exceptional cases.

If the student does not submit the work by the deadline for either the Extension or the Incomplete, the final grade posted will be an Incomplete Fail ("IF"), and the student will not receive credit for the course. PSR students taking courses with non-PSR faculty but within the consortium must follow the GTU Incomplete guidelines in the [Consortial Registration Policies](#).

*Students are only allowed one petition for incompletes/extensions for the duration of their certificate.*

## Certificate of Sexuality and Religion

### Overview of the Program

The Certificate in Sexuality and Religion (CSR) program is designed to be a two-year, less-than-full-time course of study, although you may take up to four years to complete the certificate. It is common for current degree students (those in the Master of Divinity, Master of Theological Studies, Doctor of Ministry, or the GTU Master of Arts) to add CSR to their degree coursework to gain competency and specialization in sexuality and religion. Adding the CSR may or may not require additional study semesters, depending on the number of elective hours available.

Whether you are a religious professional, employed in a secular field that addresses issues of sexuality, or an LGBTQIA+ activist, the CSR, as a professional development certificate program, will enable you to speak with authority and expertise on the issues of religion and sexuality, both within faith traditions and in the broader society.

### CSR Program Learning Outcomes

*Students who complete this certificate will be equipped to:*

- ❖ Demonstrate the ability to engage critically and creatively with texts, religious traditions, spiritual disciplines, social systems, and political structures to hone one's expertise in issues of religion, sexuality, and gender, both within faith traditions and the broader society
- ❖ Give evidence for the development and employment of effective praxes of social change-making and justice-seeking by applying contextually based approaches to ministry and

leadership to foster change at the intersections of religion, sexuality, and gender in faith communities, advocacy groups, and legislative bodies

- ❖ Demonstrate the ability to work intersectionally by forming partnerships with others in a variety of ministry and social change-making settings; by showing an awareness of the knowledge of various theological and spiritual thinkers and schools of thought rooted in contexts other than one's own; by working effectively with communities and individuals in online, remote, or digital environments; by working effectively in inter-faith contexts, across lines of culture, or in partnership with social change organizations to address systemic oppression and to work for the common good
- ❖ Communicate a sense of shared direction and purpose for faith communities effectively or social change organizations through the competent and responsible utilization of appropriate media for in-person, hybrid, and fully online environments.
- ❖ Draw upon (in appropriate and culturally sensitive ways) engaged spiritualities to lead, educate, and collaborate with others around issues relating to religion, sexuality, and gender
- ❖ Give evidence of the ability to work effectively with others in ways that (1) demonstrate respect for – and understanding of – their religious/spiritual, racial/ethnic, and cultural traditions; and (2) are rooted in a personal spirituality grounded in self-reflection, humility, and an openness to learn from others.
- ❖ Demonstrate "Information Literacy" – both in one's certificate coursework and in the CSR Final Project – that is rooted in an understanding that "(a) Authority Is Constructed and Contextual; (b) Information Creation is a Process; (c) Information Has Value; (d) Research is a form of Inquiry; (e) Scholarship is a form of Conversation; and (f) Searching for Information is a form of Strategic Exploration." (The American Association of School Librarians and The Association for Educational Communications and Technology, *Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning*: pp.1-3.)

### **CSR as Part of the Stackable (1-2-3) Curriculum**

The Certificate in Sexuality and Religion (CSR), whether as a stand-alone certificate or as part of the Stackable Curriculum, is also part of the Stack 1 curriculum for students who are working towards a Master of Arts in Social Transformation (MAST) as well as the student in the Master of Divinity (MDiv) program. A CSR student may wish to continue their education beyond the certificate. If so, please refer to this catalog's "Adding or Changing a Program" section for additional information. It's important that all deadlines and requirements are met to be admitted into the MAST or MDiv programs.

**Using Your CSR Worksheet** The *CSR Worksheet* is your planning document. All course requirements are listed for you to follow. Using this document will help ensure that you meet the program's requirements. Review this document found online on the Student Resources page with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or advisor each time you select courses as part of registration.

### Expected Program Duration

CSR students are required to complete a minimum of 22.5 credits. These credits are distributed amongst the prescribed pathway of the Stackable Curriculum required courses (18 credits), Area of Concentration/CSR Course (3 credits), and the Final Project (1.5 elective credits).

### CSR Final Project (1.5 elective credit)

The final component of the CSR program is the completion of a project designed by the student with the approval of their CSR advisor/coordinator. Students sign up for CSR 3001 the semester they complete this project. The project's general topic is established when you enter the CSR program and is used to direct your course of study throughout the program.

The project should include both research and community application components. Students must consult with at least two CSR-related faculty (either regular or adjunct) concerning their final projects. The project should be at least 12-15 pages long.

**Lapsed Time Rule:** While CSR is a one-year program, you may take up to three years to complete the CSR, including semesters on leave. The lapsed time period begins with the first coursework applied to the certificate. This includes transferred courses.

**Transfer Credits:** Determined on a case-by-case basis by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

### Special Reading Courses (SRC)

An SRC is a course a student and a faculty member design for a specific area of interest. An SRC can only be used for electives. This must be a course not offered at PSR or in the Consortium but reflects the focus you are developing in your course of study. Once you and the faculty member have identified such an interest, students must fill out a form in the Office of Academic Affairs and procure the signatures of the Dean and the Assistant Dean and Registrar *before* finalizing plans with the faculty member. At most, 3 units of the credits used towards your certificate may be filled with an SRC, and an SRC can only be used towards elective credits.

### Required GPA

Satisfactory completion of the CSR. Completing the necessary courses requires an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) or higher.

### Extensions/Incompletes in Courses

**Extension:** PSR students taking courses in the Stackable Curriculum with PSR faculty may be granted an extension from the last day of the semester to the day faculty are required to submit their grades – a period of three weeks.

**Incomplete:** An Incomplete may be granted for PSR students taking courses with PSR Faculty. An incomplete is granted (only) when an unforeseen and *dire* exigency happens and the student petitions to submit an assignment for a course on the first day of the following semester. There will be no exceptions to the submission date for an approved Incomplete. Such a petition must have signatures from the

Dean, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs and Registrar, and faculty member. Please note: Incompletes are only granted in exceptional cases.

If the student does not submit the work by the deadline for either the Extension or the Incomplete, the final grade posted will be an Incomplete Fail ("IF"), and the student will not receive credit for the course. PSR students taking courses with non-PSR faculty but within the consortium must follow the GTU Incomplete guidelines in the [Consortial Registration Policies](#).

*Students are only allowed one petition for incompletes/extensions for the duration of their certificate.*

## Master of Theological Studies Program

### Overview of the Program

The Master of Theological Studies program (MTS) is a graduate degree program designed to provide a generalized yet rigorous course of theological studies without research or thesis requirements. Some of you pursue lay or ordained ministries in churches and other faith communities. Others are interested in the intersection of religion, theology, Christian ethics or spirituality, and your current vocation. Still, others seek to deepen or broaden their understanding of any fields within theological studies in a seminary context.

### MTS Program Learning Outcomes

*Students who complete the MTS will be able to:*

- ❖ Demonstrate a clear understanding of the basic differences among all of the four theological disciplines: biblical studies, ethics, history, and theology.
- ❖ Understand at least three different schools of thought/criticism within the above disciplines.
- ❖ Refer to, evaluate, and use relevant resources from the above disciplines critically, consistently, and responsibly.
- ❖ Integrate and synthesize information and make connections across two or more theological disciplines to address a special topic, issue, or question logically, clearly, and in ways that show understanding and respect for each discipline's own integrity.
- ❖ Demonstrate awareness of a variety of contexts consistently.
- ❖ Explain and illustrate critically and carefully how contexts under consideration are different and what importance those differences make in understanding or dealing with a text, a situation, or an issue.

The MTS program is designed to be a two-year, full-time (up to five years part-time) program offering students a broad yet comprehensive education in theological studies across various disciplines. Building



on the core of foundational courses of the MTS program allows you to focus on and gain competency in more particular areas of interest compatible with the school's resources.

During their study, MTS students are encouraged to take full advantage of the Graduate Theological Union's schools, centers, and institutes.

### Using Your MTS Worksheet

The *MTS Worksheet* is your planning document. All the course distribution expectations are listed for you to follow. Using this worksheet found online on the Student Resources page will ensure that you meet the program's requirements. Bring this document when consulting with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or your advisor about specific course planning or program review.

### Expected Course Distribution

MTS students are required to complete a minimum of 48 credits. Twelve (12) credits must be taken as foundational courses in designated areas (see below). Each foundational course may be at least 3.0 credits and must be taken for a letter grade. It is recommended that courses in this category be at the introductory level. The course distribution is as follows.

- ✓ Foundational Courses (12): These courses must be taken at PSR to develop a cohort experience. Courses relevant to the CSSC/CSR are relevant.
- ✓ 3 credits in Biblical/Rhetorical Studies (BS, OT, or NT): Any relevant course/s at PSR or in the consortium
- ✓ 3 credits in Historical Studies (HS): Any relevant course/s at PSR or in the consortium
- ✓ 3 credits in Theology (ST), Philosophy [of Religion] (PH), Philosophical Theology (PT) 3 credits in Ethics & Social Theory/Christian Ethics (CE) or Religion & Society (RS): Any relevant course/s at PSR or in the consortium
- ✓ Area of Interest Courses (24) Electives (12)
- ✓ MTS 5020 Synthesis Essay Total MTS courses (48)

Twenty-four (24) credits must be taken in an Area of Interest defined in consultation with the faculty advisor. The remaining 12 credits are electives.

### Academic Milestones (Additional Program Requirements)

In addition to the 48 credits specified for the degree, MTS students must also complete a set of milestones and non-course requirements for graduation that are due at specific points of a program:

- Vocational Academic Plan
- Spiritual Formation Plan
- Synthesis Essay in the last semester

The Office of Academic Affairs uses these milestones to assess the school's academic programs and individual student progress. After a student has left the program and data has been gathered, milestones are retained in the Office of Academic Affairs for a limited time and then destroyed. Your advisor plays an essential role in these required "milestones" of the MTS as they must "sign off" on each

before they are submitted to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar. You are accountable to your advisor for the satisfactory completion of these requirements.

### **Synthesis Essay**

The MTS Synthesis Essay (10-15 pages) is completed in the final semester of your program in consultation with your advisor. In this essay, you will identify a problem, issue, or topic related to your Area of Interest. The essay should address this issue by drawing on two foundational disciplines studied in the program. [Guidelines for this essay](#) are available in the appendix of this manual, in front of the Office of Academic Affairs, and on the MTS web page. You must register in your last semester for the MTS Synthesis Essay course (MTS 5020).

You may take the course for either 0.0 credits or 1.5 credits, depending on if you need the elective credits. The course will require your time and attention to your essay in the first half of your final semester. To graduate in May, you must submit your essay to your advisor by April 15. The essay is graded by your faculty advisor on a Pass/Fail only basis. If the essay is graded as "Fail," you must revise it and resubmit it to your advisor for re-grading shortly after that. The final version of your MTS Synthesis Essay must be submitted to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs by the last day of the semester. In some cases, usually related to a change of program or transfer that leads to advanced standing in the program, requirements for one or more milestones may be waived or modified with the approval of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

### **Guidelines for the MTS Synthesis Essay**

The capstone integrative document of the Master of Theological Studies Program at PSR is the MTS Synthesis Essay. The essay is used as a learning tool to assist you in integrating the various aspects of your theological education before graduation, and as an assessment tool, as evidence of the extent to which you have achieved the goals of the degree program and the extent to which PSR has met the goals it has set out for teaching and learning in the MTS program.

Your Synthesis Essay should reflect the program's goals. In your essay, you should be prepared to:

- Engage in theological reflection, analysis, and critical thinking about a contemporary issue related to your Area of Interest.
- Draw upon at least two areas of theological study (bible, history, theology, or ethics). You will be integrating and bringing these areas into creative and critical inter-play with one another.
- Demonstrate knowledge and competency in your area of interest.
- Show evidence of your understanding of the importance of social location by explaining how different contexts impact one's understanding of the text, issue, or topic under discussion.

While it is not as long as an MA thesis and does not involve the original scholarly research characteristic of an MA thesis, the MTS Synthesis Essay is nonetheless a piece of academic writing. While personal reflection may be relevant in situating the source of your interest in the topic, or the contextual factors that shape the way you ask it, the essay is designed to be an academic exercise using the standards of argument and publicly accessible reasoning (characterized as a typical) research paper. While it should meet the design requirements discussed below, the essay may build on a research paper you have written or are writing for a course in your degree program.

The Synthesis Essay is 10-15 pages long and prepared in consultation with your advisor. In the essay, you will identify a problem, issue, or topic related to your Area of Interest. The issue/problem should be described clearly and set in its context (social, religious, etc.). The essay should address this issue by drawing on two foundational disciplines (Biblical Studies, Historical Studies, Theology, and Ethics) studied in the program. Usually, the Area of Interest is quite broad (i.e., Religion and Histories of Resistance; Feminism/Gender/Sexuality and Religion, Religious Pluralism, Social Justice; Religion and the Arts). The issue, problem, or topic identified in the synthesis essay must necessarily be much narrower than the Area of Interest so that you may successfully address it within the recommended 10-15 pages.

For example, a student interested in ecological justice might focus the essay on the relationship of eco-feminism/womanism to the Christian faith in a way that makes appropriate use of religious and theological resources. Such a student might wish to draw on her exposure to Biblical Studies, exploring biblical themes that support or contribute negatively to an ethic of environmental justice. In this case, the student demonstrates that she has acquired exegetical, historical-critical, and hermeneutical skills appropriate for someone with a degree in theological studies. Further, she might draw on her exposure to the discipline of theology, identifying eco-feminist/womanist strands in work or works of Christian feminist theology. In so doing, she is demonstrating critical theological and contextual reflection skills and actual theological knowledge of thinkers and texts encountered as part of her theological education.

The above example is only illustrative, as there is considerable freedom in the design and content of the essay; the MTS Synthesis Essay is intended to allow you to integrate your theological education creatively by bringing this education to bear on a question that has motivated your theological education or engaged you throughout your exploration of your particular area of interest. At the same time, you will be demonstrating newly acquired standard critical skills and knowledge from at least two theological disciplines. You may find it helpful to consult with your advisor and other faculty members as you prepare your essay.

In your last semester, you will register for the MTS Synthesis Essay course, MTS 5020. You may choose to take the course for either 0.0 or 1.5 credits. The course is intended to require your time and attention for the MTS Synthesis Essay in the first half of your final semester. To graduate in May, you must submit your essay to your advisor by April 15<sup>th</sup>. Your advisor grades the essay on a Pass/Fail basis. If after you submit your essay to your advisor, the essay needs revisions, you must revise it and resubmit it to your advisor until they approve it by signing the essay.

*Note: A copy of your final essay signed by your advisor should be uploaded to Moodle by your advisor. Once OAA receives this signed copy, your grade for MTS 5020 will be recorded as "Pass." If the signed copy is not received by the last day of the semester, the grade will be recorded as "Fail," and PSR will not be able to confer your degree.*

**Lapsed Time Rule:** While MTS is a two-year program, you may take up to five years to complete the MTS, including semesters on leave. The lapsed time period begins with the first coursework applied to the certificate. This includes transferred courses.

**Transfer Credits:** Determined on a case-by-case basis by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

**Special Reading Courses (SRC):** An SRC is a course a student and a faculty member design for a specific area of interest. An SRC can only be used for electives. This must be a course not offered at PSR or in the Consortium but reflects the focus you are developing in your course of study. Once you and the faculty member have identified such an interest, students must fill out a form in the Office of Academic Affairs and procure the signatures of the Dean and the Assistant Dean and Registrar *before* finalizing plans with the faculty member. At most, 3 units of the credits used towards your certificate may be filled with an SRC, and an SRC can only be used towards elective credits.

**Required GPA:** Satisfactory completion of the MTS. Completing the necessary courses requires an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) or higher.

## Extensions/Incompletes in Courses

**Extension:** PSR students taking courses with PSR faculty may be granted an extension from the last day of the semester to the day faculty are required to submit their grades – a period of three weeks.

**Incomplete:** An Incomplete may be granted for PSR students taking courses with PSR Faculty. An incomplete is granted (only) when an unforeseen and *dire* exigency happens and the student petitions to submit an assignment for a course on the first day of the following semester. There will be no exceptions to the submission date for an approved Incomplete. Such a petition must have signatures from the Dean, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs and Registrar, and faculty member. Please note: Incompletes are only granted in exceptional cases.

If the student does not submit the work by the deadline for either the Extension or the Incomplete, the final grade posted will be an Incomplete Fail ("IF"), and the student will not receive credit for the course. PSR students taking courses with non-PSR faculty but within the consortium must follow the GTU Incomplete guidelines in the [Consortial Registration Policies](#).

# Certificate of Theological Studies

## Overview of the Program

The Certificate of Theological Studies (CTS) program is designed to be completed as a one-year full-time on-campus or three-year part-time flexible-learning program. It is not uncommon for students entering PSR as CTS students to transfer to the Master of Divinity, Master of Theological Studies, or the GTU Common Master of Arts program. If a CTS student is interested in one of these programs, it is a good idea to consider taking courses each semester required for the master's programs. If a student is admitted to a degree program, credits earned in the CTS program may be applied to that program if they fall within its stipulations.

## CTS Learning Outcomes

- ❖ Participate in and demonstrate an understanding of various spiritual formation practices, especially as such practices inform and sustain the work of social transformation.

- ❖ Articulate the significance of personal transformation for social change-making, including recognizing and addressing one's own collusion with institutional systems of oppressive power.
- ❖ Engage in cultural and political analysis theologically and ethically, especially for insights into structural inequality, systemic injustice, and institutionalized oppression.
- ❖ Recruit and prepare faith communities to engage in collaborative partnerships with programs and organizations devoted to systemic social change for the common good.
- ❖ Evaluate and appropriate diverse strategies for change-making drawn from social innovation, non-profit organizations, and grass-roots community organizing, and identify the active or potential role of spiritual practice/formation in those strategies.
- ❖ Develop skills for transformative leadership suitable for building coalitions committed to the work of social and economic justice by attending carefully to the issues involving professional boundaries, institutional power, and social ethics.

### Using Your CTS Worksheet

The *CTS Worksheet* is your planning document. All the course distribution expectations are listed for you to follow. Using this worksheet found online on the [Student Resources page](#) will ensure that you meet the program's requirements. When consulting with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or your advisor about specific course planning or program review, bring this document.

### Expected Course Distribution

CTS students are required to complete a minimum of 24 credits. More than half of these credits (15) **must** be taken in specific distribution areas of study designated below. Courses acceptable in these areas must be at least 3 credits (1.5 credit courses cannot be used to complete the requirements) and must be taken for a letter grade. These classes may be any course that *begins* with the area designation (e.g., a course designated as BSRA may be used for the 3-credit requirement in biblical studies). The other credits are your choice to select from any Area of study. Course distribution is as follows:

#### Foundational Courses

- ✓ 3 credits in Biblical Studies (BS, OT, or NT), 3 credits in History (HS)
- ✓ 3 credits in Theology or Philosophy (ST or PH)
- ✓ 3 credits in Christian Ethics or Religion & Society (CE or RS). 3 credits in Practical Theology (FT, SP, HM, LS, PS, ED)

#### Elective Courses

- ✓ 9 credits in Areas of your choice

## Doctor of Ministry Program

### Overview of the Program

The PSR DMin program provides an opportunity for creative, focused, advanced professional studies in a variety of areas. This program attracts and encourages interaction among a diverse, multicultural, and multinational group of students from diverse faith traditions who are interested in the intersections of religion/spirituality and progressive social change.

### DMin Learning Outcomes

*The DMin is a professional degree in ministry in which students will:*

- ❖ Demonstrate critical, creative, and constructive engagement with practical disciplines, texts, traditions, social systems, and political structures.
- ❖ Apply contextually based approaches to social issues and the development of self-reflective leadership skills that are effective in the student's particular spiritual leadership context. The student can present some evidence of social change in that context as a result of the project.
- ❖ Demonstrate partnership and/or exploration of philosophies, thinking, professional leadership, and research in relevant fields of study, such as: the knowledge of schools of thought from contexts in alignment with and/or different from their own; work done ecumenically in an interfaith relationship; work across lines of culture, gendered roles, or other embedded identities often used for exclusion, and/or work to address systemic oppressions and to achieve diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- ❖ Communicate a sense of direction for a professional leadership setting, using appropriate media.
- ❖ Produce and communicate new knowledge about a selected issue and discipline in the context of praxis.
- ❖ Give evidence of a self-reflective and engaged spirituality that can critically engage social location and personal experience. These outcomes are demonstrated through clearly articulated projects that locates the student in their own social context and supplies concrete expressions of their spiritual foundations and leadership applications.
- ❖ Integrate new understanding and competencies into a spiritually coherent analysis of a specific praxis issue as evinced in well-formulated descriptions of new advances achieved and the actions required to manifest them in practice.

The PSR DMin is organized using a cohort model, a crucial dimension for the program's pedagogy. The cohort model provides a structure where students can be in partnership with others in different contexts of ministry; hone their critical and creative skills, particularly their ability to be self-reflective and critical of their own work; sharpen the communication of their findings; support each other in staying on track toward completion of the degree; and support each other spiritually

### DMin Program Pedagogy

The PSR DMin program is organized using a cohort model, a crucial dimension for the pedagogy of the program. The cohort model provides a structure where students can

- be in partnership with others in different contexts of ministry;

- hone their critical and creative skills, particularly their ability to be self-reflective and critical of their own work;
- sharpen their communication of their findings;
- support each other in staying on track toward completion of the degree; and
- support each other spiritually.

What students learn from each other is as important as what they learn from professors in courses. In addition to attending two intensive seminars as part of the course requirements, students also participate regularly throughout the year in a continuous online platform called Cohort Conversations, where they share what they are learning and experiencing in their coursework and research, and where they engage and gain insight from the learning journeys and evolving projects of their doctoral colleagues.

## Responsibilities of a PSR Student

Students are governed by the program requirements that were in place at the time they were admitted. The standards, requirements, policies, and procedures of the program presented here provide a common understanding of these elements of the program among PSR faculty and students enrolled in the Doctor of Ministry degree program.

Registration in a PSR degree or graduate certificate program assumes the registrant has read and agreed to the terms as outlined in the document on the PSR [Student Resources](#) web page and in the *Course Policies and Guidelines* section of each PSR course syllabus. Students are responsible for knowing and abiding by these policies. A Statement of Understanding must be signed and submitted by the second week of the first semester in the program in order to continue. The Statement of Understanding as well as the PSR Student Covenants can also be found on the Student Resources web page.

Administrative procedures can be modified at any point in order to improve and clarify the program, so students and faculty are urged to be attentive to updates communicated during their course of study which may reflect changes in the program. This section of the Academic Catalogue reflects the details of the DMin program as of Fall 2023.

Any questions for clarification should be directed to the Associate Dean, Registrar, or the DMin Director.

## DMin Program Planning

### Professional Praxis Focus

On the application for admission to the program, students indicated a topic of interest with a proposed context of investigation to be pursued in the Doctor of Ministry program. The student's advisor has been selected for the resources they bring to the student's ministry focus. Work engaged in the DMin program will enable students to approach their study in a cross-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary fashion. Course work in their focus area will prepare the student to demonstrate competence in their field of study through the development of their final DMin Project.

### Using the DMin Worksheet

The DMin Worksheet is the student's program planning document. All the course distribution expectations are listed as guidelines for progression in the program. Using this worksheet will ensure

that the student meets the program's requirements. Students should bring this worksheet when consulting with their advisor about specific course planning or program review. The [PSR Registrar](#) can provide a program worksheet and/or a program audit to the student before meeting with their advisor.

### Develop a Plan of Study

Students develop a plan of study during the two-week Beginning Seminar Intensive, DM-6000. We recommend that before taking this seminar—and especially before the first semester of elective courses begins—each student should make an appointment to review their plan and course work selections with their advisor.

A student should choose courses in the focus area of study in consultation with the advisor, who will help to determine courses providing necessary background, method, or in depth study of the focus area.

Students are encouraged to have a consultation with their advisor about their current plan of study at least once a semester.

### DMin Program Design

The Doctor of Ministry degree at Pacific School of Religion is earned by completing 30 academic credits and successfully defending the final project. The 30 credits are earned through 9 credits in cohort pedagogy courses, 12 credits of research electives, and 9 credits of final project work.

The 9 credits of courses in cohort pedagogy format are earned through:

- **Beginning Seminar** intensive, DM-6000 @ 3.0 credits, offered during January Intersession,
- Two semesters of **Continuing Seminar** intensive, DM-6021 @ 1.5 credits each, offered each January Intersession, for a total of 3.0 credits.
- Six semesters of **Cohort Conversations**, DM-8600 @ 0.5 credits each (total:3 credits,) offered only in the Fall and Spring semesters.

Other course work is selected in consultation with the student's advisor and DMin Committee

- Elective research courses at the doctoral level for a total of 12 credits,
- Final Project construction, **DMin In Project**, DM-6011 @ 3 credits each, for a total of 9 credits (usually completed in one year.)

### DMin Beginning Seminar DM-6000

The first required course is the Doctor of Ministry Beginning Seminar (DM-6000,) offered as an intensive in hybrid format during January Intersession (only.) This seminar is required of all DMin students and must be taken during the first year. It is designed to assist Doctor of Ministry students in developing and focusing their DMin projects in preparation for the start of research. The seminar focuses on research methodologies and project designs as well as the development of an initial plan of study. This seminar is where peers in the program cultivate collegial conversation about their projects, develop intersections of interest and research with the projects of other students, formulate plans for research, and begin consideration of appropriate research methodologies.

Class presentations and peer consultations are central features of this seminar. Seminar sessions are collegial discussions based upon readings, preliminary project descriptions, and presentations of completed DMin project research and designs. The role of the faculty is to bring input to each student's



project focus. Perspectives on various theological, social justice, community organizing, pastoral care, organizational leadership, and other disciplines are introduced during the seminar, and students are asked to consider them in their studies and project plans. This course seminar is graded on a letter grade basis.

### **DMin Cohort Conversations DM-8600**

The next required seminar is the online forum Cohort Conversations, DMin-8600 that commences in the first semester of a student's program and continues through the first six Fall and Spring semesters of their doctoral journey. Students whose doctoral journey takes more than 3 years may continue to participate in Cohort Conversation, but they are not required to. Depending on their first semester, many DMin students participate in Cohort Conversations before attending their Beginning Seminar intensive.

In Cohort Conversations, students participate in semimonthly online conversations sharing their learnings in coursework, their live-edge questions, issues about their program journey that need consultation, and how their research and final projects visions are shaping up. This seminar is designed to deepen collegial relationships over a period of time and to take advantage of the collective cohort wisdom. The DMin Director is usually present to facilitate these discussions and other PSR faculty may participate as needed.

This seminar is given 0.5 credits for the first six Fall and Spring semesters and is assessed on a Pass/Fail basis. If a student's progress enables them to defend their final project before six semesters have elapsed, a required equivalency will be designed to ensure the completion of 30 credits in the degree program.

### **DMin. Continuing Seminar DM-6021**

The second required intensive is the DMin Continuing Seminar (DM-6021.) After the first year of the program, students must register for and complete two semesters of the DMin Continuing Seminar. This intensive is only offered during January Intersession. This required seminar is facilitated by a faculty member and is designed to maintain peer conversation and the development of student projects. Students are required to formally present the progress of their project to their colleagues during this seminar. This course is graded on a letter grade basis.

## **Elective Coursework**

All PSR courses and many GTU consortium courses are offered in hybrid or online-only formats. All elective courses for the DMin program must be taken at levels appropriate for doctoral studies and for letter grades.

In advance of registration for the upcoming semester, the DMin Director provides a list of PSR/GTU consortium courses that the course faculty agrees to offer at the 4000 (doctoral) level. Students are also welcome to contact course faculty to request participation at the doctoral level.

The 12 credits of elective coursework in the DMin program are typically taken as four 3-credit courses. However, some courses may be taken for fewer or more credits, in consultation with the student's advisor and program committee. The next section of this DMin program description—**Detailed DMin Elective Course Information**—provides the protocols required for each type of elective course. These elective courses may be taken in any of the following formats :

- Registering in PSR courses offered in the upcoming semester.

- Registering in GTU Consortium courses offered in the upcoming semester.
- Registering for an independent study Special Reading Course (SRC-9999) with a PSR professor.
- Registering for a course at another accredited school and transferring the credit to the student's PSR degree.

## Final Project Coursework

Doctor of Ministry students may choose from among three final project models:

- Thesis dissertation of 150-200 pages.
- Documentary/educational/performative practice film produced at a publishable level.
- Capstone Portfolio of an integrated collection of productions and artifacts demonstrating the student's research applications into their professional praxis.

The Film and Portfolio options are expected to approximate the work of a 150–200-page dissertation.

After being approved for their final project, students will enroll into the course *DMin In Project*, DM-6011. A maximum of 9 final project credits are required to be used toward completion of the degree.

This stage of the program follows the completion of course work and approval from the DMin Committee to proceed with a student's project. Students are not permitted to register for DM-6011 until they have filed their fully signed [Request to Proceed with Project](#) form with the DMin Director and the Associate Dean. Each DM-6011 course is registered for 3 academic credits and is charged at the same per-credit rate as other DMin courses. Upon graduation, these *DMin In Project* credits will be given a grade of Pass.

## Detailed DMin Elective Course Information

**Course Instructor:** Courses used toward the DMin program must have an instructor of record possessing, at minimum, a doctoral degree.

**Course Criteria:** PSR faculty have agreed upon a set of criteria for courses acceptable for the PSR DMin program. The current [DMin Criteria for Doctoral Level Work](#) can be found in the DMin Resources section of the [PSR Student Resources](#) web page.

**Course Level:** The PSR/GTU numbers for elective courses should be at Advanced or Doctorate levels (4000-6999 or 8400-8699 for online courses). Courses taken below this level will not count toward the degree.

If a course offered at a lower level fits the student's final project research areas, the student can request a course "upgrade" with the course faculty. If accepted, the student works with their advisor and the course faculty to expand the course's bibliography and coursework, incorporating the student's research topics and meeting the requirements for doctoral level work. Once these course adjustments are finalized and approved by the course faculty (indicated by their signature on the [Special Reading Course form](#)), the student submits the signed form to the Associate Dean for an SRC level 8888. This form must include:

**Course Objectives:** These must be pertinent to the student's final project research,

**Course Outline and Bibliography:** This should include an excerpt of the original course syllabus with the additional bibliography and coursework upgrading the course to doctoral level work,

**Method for Evaluation:** This method must be accepted by the student's advisor as meeting DMin program requirements.

All SRCs used as DMin elective courses must be taken for a letter grade.

## Independent Study Courses (SRC-9999)

Most DMin students take at least one Special Reading Course as an independent study because their specialized research topics and questions are not met by currently offered courses. Independent study courses are taken as SRC level 9999 and must follow the same approvals, protocols, and doctoral level guidelines as with an SRC-8888. SRC-9999s can be taken for less than or more than 3 academic credits.

SRC-9999 courses can **only be taken with PSR faculty**. **No more than two SRC-9999 courses** may be taken in the Doctor of Ministry program. All SRCs used as DMin elective courses must be taken for a letter grade.

## Electives Course Learning Outcomes

DMin students must submit an online [Electives Learning Outcomes](#) form at the beginning of each course taken toward their Electives requirement. This form certifies that the courses students are taking fulfill some of the DMin Program Learning Outcomes and is related/contributes to their final project.

## Transfer Credits while in Program

If a student wishes to take a course outside of the PSR/GTU Consortium, they must first discuss the rationale for this choice with their DMin advisor. Upon the advisor's approval, the student must then work with the PSR Associate Dean to ensure the institution offering the desired course is accredited by appropriate accrediting bodies and that the course is/can be offered at a doctoral level. Once the course is approved by both the student's advisor and the PSR Associate Dean, the student must register for the approved course at the non-PSR/GTU institution. Many times, this will require several steps, some of which will likely have associated fees:

- The student confirms that the course can be taken by a student who is not in a degree program at the course's institution.
- If needed, the student applies for admission to the institution as a Special Student and is accepted.
- The student confirms that the course faculty can provide academic credit and a letter grade, even if the course is audited or offered as Pass/Fail.
- The student registers and pays for the course through the course institution's systems, confirming with the institution's Registrar that the course units and grade can be transferred to PSR in a timely way.

Once registration is confirmed, the student submits the confirmation of registration provided by the course's institution to the PSR Registrar, who will register the student into a "placeholder" course at 0 academic credits. When the course has been completed with a letter grade, the student requests an official transcript to be sent to the PSR Registrar showing the course information and grade. Once the transcript is received and confirmed, the PSR Registrar can enter the transfer credits into the student's DMin record.

Students taking only a non-PSR/GTU course in a given semester should register for the DMin course *Under Supervision*, DM-6005 at 0 academic credits. This will retain the student's status as a PSR student while they are not enrolled in a PSR/GTU course. The student will still incur a nominal supervision fee as indicated in PSR Tuition and Fees.

## Under Supervision

If a DMin student has not completed and defended their final project when they have completed all 30 credits—required and elective—of the degree program, the student must register for the course *Under Supervision*, DM-6005 @ 0 credits. The student continues to work on their project and registers for DM-6005 each Fall and Spring semester until completed.

All DMin students are expected to continue working as a student while registered in DM-6005; this course does not take the place of a Leave of Absence (LOA.)

To maintain Registered Student status, with access to an advisor and to the GTU library, the student must be registered for DM-6005 each Fall and Spring Semester if they are not registered for additional elective PSR/GTU courses or in the *DMin In Project* course.

## DMin-Specific Academic Stipulations

### Required number of PSR course credits

In all PSR certificate and degree programs, at least one-third of all credits earned toward the program must be earned through PSR courses. This one-third allocation does not include transfer credits from within and outside the GTU Consortium schools. In the DMin program, a **minimum** of 10 academic credits must be earned through PSR courses at the doctoral level. These 10 academic credits do not include transfer credits from within and outside the GTU Consortium schools

### Program Lapsed Time Rule

For the Doctor of Ministry diploma to be awarded, the equivalent of 30 credits must be completed within six years from the 1<sup>st</sup> course taken. This 6 years accrual includes

- all semesters on leave
- all semesters in which transferred courses apply to the degree
- *Under Supervision* semesters.
- *DMin In Project* semesters

Students who have not finished the DMin program at the end of their sixth year of study may have the option of receiving a Certificate of Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS.) However, no matter the number of credits earned, after 6 years without completion the student will be either terminated or withdrawn from the DMin program.

### Financial Aid: Full-Time/Part-Time

Most DMin students are attending courses as part-time students because they are full-time professionals. This does not affect their status in the DMin program until six years have elapsed. However, for those DMin students receiving **federal financial aid**, full-time status is currently defined as 6 academic credits; at least 3 credits are needed to be considered half-time.

### International Student Full-Time Status

International DMin students registered for *DMin In Project*, DM-6011 at 3 credits or *Under Supervision*, DM-6005 at 0 credits are stated as having full-time status for the Student and Exchange Visitor Information system (SEVIS) reporting purposes only. In order to keep their F-1 status valid, international students should register for **at least 9 academic credits per semester** if they are not currently registered in *DMin In Project* or *Under Supervision*.

### Required GPA

DMin students must maintain a B (3.0) average to graduate. Additionally, a B- or better is required in all letter graded courses.

### Incompletes/Extensions in Courses

No more than 3 incompletes may be taken during the entirety of the DMin student's program.

### Letter Grade vs. Pass/Fail

Students in the DMin program must take all courses for letter grades with the exception of *DMin In Project* (DM-6011,) *Cohort Conversations* (DM-8600,) and *Under Supervision* (DM-6005). If any other courses are taken for Pass/Fail, these credits will not count toward the student's 30 credit requirement for the DMin degree.

## DMin Advising and Committee Information

### Advisors

The student-advisor relationship is important to the student's success in completing the DMin final project. Dr. James Lawrence is the Director of the DMin Program. The student's primary advisor is a PSR faculty member and is assigned during the Admissions process based on the student's stated focus of study and the availability of faculty. The primary faculty acts as Chair of the student's DMin Committee. The student should consult with their primary advisor to select appropriate and knowledgeable participants to act as the other two required committee members.

The DMin student is responsible for keeping their primary advisor up-to-date on the intentions and outcomes of their elective course choices. The faculty advisor acts as a resource in planning and tracking the student's progress through the program. The DMin Director is also available for assistance.

All faculty members at PSR hold regular office hours and can be available at other times by advance appointment. Many PSR faculty use an online appointment app (e.g., Calendly) to schedule a conversation during office hours. Email is the best way to request a conversation with your advisor outside of their office hours. The student can request a meeting in person or via Zoom or another videoconference service.

### Changing Advisors

If the primary faculty advisor is no longer available to continue work with the DMin student, the PSR Dean will assign another advisor. The student may communicate their preference for this new advisor. The student may also elect to change their advisor in the event that more depth of knowledge is needed, or the student has changed their area of focus.

In both cases, a *Change of Advisor* form signed by the current advisor and the new advisor must be submitted to the PSR Registrar. (see [Student Resources](#) web page.)

### **DMin Committee**

The student's DMin Committee is composed of the faculty advisor, who serves as chairperson, and two other members. These two committee members are selected by the student in consultation with their faculty advisor.

The second member is normally a PSR or GTU faculty person whose area(s) of academic study are compatible with the student's area of focus. The third member of the committee can be either a non-faculty professional in the student's context of ministry, or a faculty member at another institution. Additional relevant members may join any DMin Committee as deemed appropriate and desirable by the student and other committee members. However, there are no institutional funds available to provide a stipend and/or travel expenses of a committee member. If one or more committee members are located outside the geographical area of the PSR campus, they will participate in Consultations and the Dissertation Defense by Zoom or another videoconference service.

The student identifies committee members during preparations to submit the [Request to Proceed with Project](#) proposal. However, the DMin student should be developing relationships with potential committee members as they continue their project research. These relationships can be built by consulting with the persons of interest and by taking elective courses taught by them.

Committee members signal their agreement to serve on the committee and their approval of the student's project design and human subject's protocol by signing the *Request to Proceed to Project* form. The Doctor of Ministry committee directs the student's progress through the degree program and administers and evaluates their Final Project Defense. In the unlikely event of any disagreement about the student's work, the committee may request the PSR Dean's assistance in adjudicating the situation.

### **DMin Project Planning and Defense Information**

A DMin student can begin planning their final project at the beginning of their program, in consultation with their advisor and possibly with the DMin Director. The student can be shaping usable material as they proceed through the research phase of the program. As the student is completing their research electives, they will identify committee members and plan for the acceptance of their Final Project. The student creates preliminary documentation of their project for the committee's review:

- Focus of study,
- Proposed title,
- Project hypothesis,
- Anticipated Learning Goals,
- Project description,
- Methods of research,
- Learning Goals,
- Anticipated Timeline,
- Approved Human Subjects Proposal, if applicable

The student then submits these documents with the *Request to Proceed with Project* to their committee for approval. If the student has completed their elective research coursework at this point, they must register for DM-6005, *Under Supervision* while preparing and submitting the request to proceed.

## Doctor of Ministry Final Project

The Doctor of Ministry Final Project should show the competence of the student to fulfill the Learning Outcomes of the degree. These can be found at the beginning of this section. Students may choose from among three final project models: a thesis dissertation, a documentary/educational/performative practice film, or a Capstone Portfolio.

All project models must be agreed to by the committee, supported by sufficient written material to show knowledge of the literature and a rationale for the design, and evaluated by standards appropriate to the medium and related to the areas of ministry being explored.

After completing *DMin In Project*, DM-6011 for a total of 9 credits, students must continue to enroll each semester for supervision (DM-6005) until the project is successfully defended and completed to the satisfaction of the DMin Committee. This maintains your status as a PSR active student but has a smaller fee attached to it than tuition

### Project Language

All students must have proficiency in English to do graduate level reading and writing for course work. In certain circumstances, when the major faculty advisor is proficient in the student's language, it may be possible for the final DMin Project to be written in that language.

### Non-print Projects

Film and Portfolio projects are accepted as long as the format is:

- Agreed to by the committee,
- Supported by sufficient written material to show knowledge of the literature and a rationale for the design,
- Evaluated by standards appropriate to the medium and related to the areas of contextual ministry being explored. Under certain circumstances consultants may be used to help evaluate the project.

### Project Final approval

The student's committee and Final Project needs to be approved before the student can move to *DMin In Progress* status. In the case that the project is not approved as it stands, all revisions must be completed and approved before the project is filed. DMin Final Projects are evaluated against a general project evaluation rubric called the DMin Project/Thesis Assessment Rubric. Once you have defined your project and obtained approval from your committee, you are ready to begin research and writing.

### Project Defense

A project defense is required for the DMin, no later than April 15th. Schedule your defense enough in advance of this date to give you time to do any revisions your committee might require as a result of the defense and to get the defense materials into proper form. Your committee must receive your materials at least two weeks before the scheduled defense. PSR defenses are closed sessions.

The possible outcomes of your project defense are as follows:

- Pass with distinction (requires a unanimous vote of the committee)
- Pass, no revisions necessary
- Pass with minor revisions: graduation approved pending receipt of revised project.
- Pass with major revisions: graduation not approved but delayed until the next year; student must re-enroll in DM-6005 the next semester and resubmit project, but a new defense is not necessary. If this is completed by the end of the semester, the degree will be awarded the next May.
- Fail with recommendations:  
Major Revision and rescheduling of defense in the future or award with Certificate of Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS)
- Fail terminal:  
failure of defense with no option to continue in the program

If the result of the defense is Fail, the committee and student should develop a process to, in person, debrief the exam and clarify the reasons for the failure. The process should be developed at the end of the examination period, and the debriefing should occur reasonably soon after the exam. At least two members of the committee should be present for the debriefing.

The student's advisor records the outcome of the defense and submits the results to the Associate Dean using the online [Doctor of Ministry Project Defense Certification](#).



# PSR Policies and Guidelines

## Admissions

PSR is a progressive Christian seminary and graduate school that will prepare you to advance your career and transform the world. Pacific School of Religion is a thriving community that connects theological study with spiritual formation and innovative leadership development.

### 1. Apply Online

The following items are required to apply for admission to Pacific School of Religion. Further instructions are available in the online application:

- [Online application](#)
- Transcripts: Official transcripts must be submitted directly to the **Office of Admissions, Pacific School of Religion, 1798 Scenic Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709**. If you can send them electronically, please have them sent to [admissions@psr.edu](mailto:admissions@psr.edu). Unofficial transcripts may be used for review purposes; however, the official transcripts must be received prior to registration and matriculation.
- **\$50** application fee
- [Doctor of Ministry](#) applicants are also required to submit a resume/C.V. and have an admissions interview with the director of the program.

### 2. Apply for Financial Aid

For All Applicants: Please fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). PSR's school code is G01256. You can complete the FAFSA online by clicking [here](#).

For Non-US Students Only: Bank statements (translated into English) from the past three months and completed financial aid application form.

All of PSR's graduate programs are available online and on-campus in the San Francisco Bay Area. We are a founding member of the Graduate Theological Union, a consortium of the largest theological faculty in North America.

### 3. Review Process

Once your application is complete, the review process takes two to six weeks. Applications submitted less than three weeks prior to the beginning of the semester may not be processed in time and may be considered for the following semester.

You can check on the status of your application [here](#).

### 4. After Acceptance

Secure your spot in the incoming class by **submitting your \$200 deposit**.

If you have not done so, file your **FAFSA** using PSR's school code **G01256**.

You will receive information about orientation, campus life, and your first-semester registration.

### 5. Other Learning Options at Pacific School of Religion

Enrolling in a degree or certificate program is one of many opportunities to learn at PSR. The public is welcome to explore these options.

- [Audit a graduate course](#) –To be considered for admission to the Pacific School of Religion as an auditor of a course; please complete the [Application for Auditing](#) as completely and accurately as possible. <https://www.psr.edu/admissions/application-for-auditing/>
- [Take a graduate course for credit](#) –To be considered for admission to the Pacific School of Religion as a special student, please fill out the Application for Special Student Status completely and accurately as possible.

## Tuition and Fees

Pacific School of Religion offers affordable tuition and fees, a variety of merit scholarships and need-based grants, as well as access to low-interest loan programs and work-study to assist you in financing your education. Additionally, if you choose to live in the Bay Area, we provide subsidized housing options right on campus.

### Tuition Refund Policy

- Before the end of the second week: full tuition
- Before the end of the fifth week: 50% of tuition
- After the fifth week: no refund

Students with federal Title IV financial aid are subject to the R2T4 calculation; further information is available from the Financial Aid Office ([financialaid@psr.edu](mailto:financialaid@psr.edu)). Federal direct loan recipients who drop below half-time enrollment or withdraw completely from all coursework at PSR are subject to a Return to Title IV (R2T4) calculation, and if the student has completed less than 60% of the term, they must return a portion of the “unearned” federal funds that are determined from the calculation procedure. PSR Financial Aid will also immediately send loan borrowers a link to complete Exit Counseling via [studentloans.gov](http://studentloans.gov). For more information on R2T4, please contact PSR Financial Aid ([financialaid@psr.edu](mailto:financialaid@psr.edu)),

*Please note that most fees are likely to increase by 1.5% to 3% each July.*

**Tuition Refund Policy for Oregon Residents:** After classes begin for a term, a student who withdraws before the end of the third week is eligible for a full refund of tuition. After the third week, a student who withdraws from a course is eligible for a partial refund through the middle week of the term. After the third week, refunds shall be based on unused instructional time and shall be prorated on a weekly basis.

### *Tuition Refund Schedule for Oregon Residents*

*Number of Weeks per Term: 15*

*Term Type: Semester*

<i>Percent of Tuition Refunded</i>	<i>Week of Term</i>	<i>Refund Required?</i>
100	1	Yes
100	2	Yes
100	3	Yes
70	4	Yes
60	5	Yes

50	6	Yes
40	7	Yes
0	8	No
0	9	No
0	10	No
0	11	No
0	12	No
0	13	No
0	14	No
0	15	No

### Policy on Student Account Payment

- Students with outstanding balances on their PSR account (tuition, rent, fees, emergency loans, etc.) who are not on a payment plan at the time of Early Registration in a given term will not be permitted to pre-register for the upcoming term.
- Students with any outstanding balance from prior terms at the time of General Registration will not be permitted to register for courses.
- Graduates whose account is not paid in full will not receive their diploma or transcripts until their balance is paid off.
- Students with concerns about the effect of their unpaid account on their registration or graduation eligibility should contact the Office of Academic Affairs.

### Payment Methods

- E-Check, Credit Card, Check, Cash, and Money Order Payments
- Online through SONIS by E-Check or Credit Card
- By mailing a check or money order to Pacific School of Religion, c/o Bursar
- In-person by check, cash, or money order at the Office of Academic Affairs

Any returned checks will be charged a minimum of either \$10 or the bank fees incurred by the PSR, whichever is greater. Failure to make timely payment as described below may be cause for termination of enrollment for the semester and will result in PSR withholding transcripts and placing a hold on future registration until such amounts are paid in full, including late payment fees.

If an account is not paid in full by the end of the term, the student shall pay any and all actual and reasonable costs of collection incurred by PSR. If an action is brought by PSR to enforce the terms of this payment plan, the student shall pay all costs of this action, including reasonable attorney's fees.

Tuition for 2023-2024	Cost per credit/unit
Master of Divinity (MDiv)	\$790
Master of Arts in Social Transformation (MAST)	

Master of Theological Studies (MTS)	
Certificate of Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS)	
Certificate of Sexuality and Religion (CSR)	
Certificate of Spirituality and Social Change (CSSC)	
Certificate of Theological Studies (CTS)	
Doctor of Ministry (DMin) ( <i>per credit</i> )	\$690
Continuing education ( <i>per unit</i> )	\$210
Audit ( <i>per unit</i> )	\$390
Audit – PSR alumnx ( <i>per unit</i> )	\$80
Tuition for full-time PSR staff, alumnx, field education mentors, adjunct faculty, emeriti/ae, employees, and student spouses ( <i>limited to one course per year</i> )	\$110

## Payment Plans

Pacific School of Religion (PSR) offers three payment plans to assist the students in meeting the costs of education.

### Plan A: Full Payment

- Payment is due in full by the end of the late registration period.

### Plan B: Payment Plan

- 25% down and three-monthly installments.
- Payment plan application along with 25% of the balance due must be received in the PSR Business Office by the end of the late registration period.
- Students must not have any outstanding accounts with PSR, nor have they had more than two late payments in past semesters to qualify for Plan B.
- Monthly installments are due by the 15th of each month, beginning the first month after the late registration period. The student is responsible for making such payments; reminder statements will not be sent by PSR.
- If the student makes adjustments to registration after the late registration period, which results in additional tuition and/or fees, the payment plan installments will be adjusted to include such additional tuition and fees. Accounts with late payments will be assessed a \$10 non-refundable fee on the 16th of that month.

### Plan C: Financial Aid, Scholarships, and/or Stipends

- This option is available only for financial aid, scholarships, and/or stipends for the applicable semester.
- All financial aid, scholarships, and/or stipends will be applied first to any outstanding balances due to PSR.
- Students who do not file financial aid applications by the deadlines imposed by the Financial Aid office and therefore do not have aid available by the end of the late registration period must use either Plan A or Plan B.

- Once aid is received, it will either be refunded to the student if all accounts are paid in full or will be applied to Plan B amounts due. Funds received in excess of amounts due for tuition and fees will be deemed to be used for living expenses and funded to the student if there are no other account balances due or will be applied to housing expenses if the student rents from PSR.
- For foreign students subject to IRS 1042 taxes, at least 14% will be withheld from this payment.
- If funds have been refunded to the student and the student subsequently makes changes to their registration that results in additional tuition and/or fees, the student is responsible for payment to PSR when such additional amounts are incurred.

## Policies for Students Eligible for VA Benefits

Students with outstanding financial obligations to PSR may not register for classes or graduate. An exception to this policy applies to students using Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefits (CH31) or Post-9/11 G.I. Bill® (CH33), according to the following conditions. Such students will be allowed to enroll in and attend courses and access campus facilities while the campus awaits payment for tuition and fees from the VA. While awaiting receipt of funds from the VA, PSR will not impose any penalty, charge late fees, or require an eligible student to borrow additional funds to cover tuition or fees. This waiting period begins the date the student registers for courses and continues either until funds are received from the VA or until 90 days after the School Certifying Official (the PSR Registrar) has certified the student's enrollment for tuition and fees. To demonstrate current eligibility and intent to use Chapter 31 or 33 benefits, a student must provide the following documents: (1) VA Form 28-1905 (Authorization and Certification of Entrance or Re-entrance into Rehabilitation and Certification of Status); or (2) Certificate of Eligibility (COE) or Education Enrollment Status form (printed from the VA website); and (3) any additional information requested by the School Certifying Official to properly certify enrollment to the VA. For more information regarding this policy, contact our School Certifying Official, Janett Cabanero at [jcabanero@psr.edu](mailto:jcabanero@psr.edu).

Other Fees	Cost
Application fee ( <i>one-time</i> )	\$50
Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) supervision fee ( <i>per semester</i> )	\$250
Community Association of PSR (CAPSR) fee ( <i>per semester</i> )	\$260
Contextual learning fee ( <i>per semester</i> )	\$100
DMin supervision fee ( <i>per semester, after the completion of all units</i> )	\$250
Late registration fee	\$100
Library/ID card replacement	\$25
Diploma replacement	\$100
Transcripts	\$25

## Scholarships

In addition to affordable tuition, we offer need-based grants and merit-based scholarships. We can advise and assist students in applying for denominational scholarships as well.

### Merit Scholarships

Each year, entering students are chosen for the President's Scholarship and the Dean's Scholarship. These merit awards are available to students accepted into our master's degree programs. (MDiv, MTS, and MAST) Students accepted to our master's programs must apply by the appropriate priority deadlines to be considered:

- Fall Priority Deadline – March 1st.
- Spring Priority Deadline – November 1<sup>st</sup>

Recipients of these awards must be enrolled at least half-time.

To retain a merit award, merit scholars must continue to make satisfactory academic progress.

## Consumer Information Disclosure

In compliance with the [Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 \(HEOA\)](#), we're providing the following consumer information to current and prospective students, employees, and the public.

### Financial Aid

PSR offers a comprehensive financial aid program for eligible students that includes merit scholarships, need-based grants, work-study, VA benefits, and loans.

To be considered for financial aid, all students should apply by the **February 1** priority deadline for the fall semester and by **October 1** for the spring semester:

US citizens and eligible non-citizens:

- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online. The school code is **G01256**.
- Continuing students must reapply for financial aid each year.

International Applicants:

- [Financial aid application](#)
- Bank statements (translated into English) from the past three months.
- Continuing international students must reapply for financial aid each year.

*Completed forms should be sent to the following:*

**Office of Admissions**  
**Pacific School of Religion**  
**1798 Scenic Avenue**  
**Berkeley, California, USA**

As a Title IV-approved graduate institution, PSR offers direct unsubsidized loans to help meet costs. When a student applies for aid, the financial aid office automatically considers eligibility to receive a direct loan upon processing a financial aid application. Should the applicant meet federal eligibility for

the loan, it will be awarded to the student as part of their aid package to accept or decline as the student sees fit.

Because direct unsubsidized loans are not awarded based on a student's financial need, up to \$20,500 a year can be awarded, so long as the student has not received other aid over their Cost of Attendance.

Disbursements of direct loans are made in the amount of \$10,250 in the fall and \$10,250 in the spring, minus the "origination fee" set by the federal government each year. However, students are welcome to request alternate disbursements should the need arise.

To remain eligible to receive direct loans, students must apply for aid each year via the FAFSA, must be enrolled at least half-time at PSR, must have yet to receive aid over their Cost of Attendance, and must be meeting satisfactory academic progress in their program. Please refer to the academic catalog for details on satisfactory academic progress.

### **Need-Based Grants**

Each year, Pacific School of Religion distributes scholarships to qualified students with financial needs. Students are eligible for a percentage of tuition based on demonstrated financial need and availability of funds. International students are eligible for these scholarships. These scholarships are not available for Doctor of Ministry students.

Scholarships are available to eligible students who are enrolled at least half-time.

### **Federal Work-Study**

The Federal Work-Study Program was established to promote part-time employment for students who need earnings to finance the cost of their education. Students may work up to 20 hours weekly while school is in session.

Students interested in Federal Work-Study may contact the Financial Aid department at [financialaid@psr.edu](mailto:financialaid@psr.edu) to determine eligibility. Please note that for the Financial Aid department to determine a student's eligibility, the student must have completed the current academic year Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Eligible students will also need to complete the "On-Campus Federal Work-Study Employment Authorization" form.

After the student secures a Federal Work-Study eligible position, funds are disbursed via the student's paycheck (twice a month). Students remain eligible for Federal Work-Study so long as they fill out a FAFSA each year, have stayed within their award for the academic year, and are meeting satisfactory academic progress in their program.

## **Financial Aid Verification Policy**

### **Pacific School of Religion: 2023-2024 Financial Aid Verification Policy:**

In accordance with regulations set forth by the United States Department of Education, the Office of Recruitment, Admissions, and Financial Aid verifies every Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) that has been selected for Verification before need-based federal aid can be disbursed. Verification ensures the accuracy of the information submitted on the FAFSA. The process reduces errors and ensures that eligible students receive all of the federal financial aid to which they are entitled and prevents ineligible students from receiving aid for which they do not qualify.

A FAFSA application may be selected by the Department of Education Central Processing Service or by PSR Financial Aid. Reasons for being selected include, but are not limited to:

- Incomplete data
- Inconsistent and/or incongruent data
- Random selection
- Estimated income tax information

Students are notified if their FAFSA is selected for Verification via a comment on the Student Aid Report (SAR) that is provided to them after submitting their FAFSA as well as by PSR Financial Aid via e-mail. The email will be generated and sent as soon as we receive the FAFSA data from the Department of Education.

Students selected for Verification should submit the required documents no later than the first day of classes in their next upcoming term of enrollment. Financial aid will not be awarded until completion of the Verification process. In some extreme cases, students who have been selected but who cannot complete the process may appeal to the Office of Financial Aid for a preliminary award. A preliminary award may be granted if the appeal documentation is merited. In either case, whether a new or returning student is selected, no federal aid can be disbursed until the Verification process is completed.

FAFSA data items that may need to be verified include, but are not limited to:

- Household size
- Number in college
- Adjusted gross income
- Tax liability
- Untaxed income
- Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program Benefits (SNAP)
- Child Support Paid

To complete Verification, students will be required to submit the following documentation to PSR Financial Aid:

- 2023-2024 Verification Worksheet provided by Office of Financial Aid
- Copies of student's (and spouses if applicable) 2021 federal income tax return transcript. Tax transcripts can be ordered directly from the IRS website at <http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Get-Transcript>.
- In lieu of a federal tax return transcript, tax filers can transfer their income tax information directly from the IRS to the FAFSA by using the Data Retrieval Tool or DRT. Data must be transferred without any changes. For information about the IRS Data Retrieval Tool, go to: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out#irs-drt>
- Student (and spouse's if applicable) 2021 W-2 form(s).



PSR Financial Aid will notify the student via e-mail if additional documentation is required. Please do not send copies of tax returns (1040, 1040A, 1040EZ). The U.S. Department of Education regulations state we can only verify using tax return transcripts or by use of the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT).

Should any corrections to the student's FAFSA be necessary, PSR Financial Aid will make the corrections to the FAFSA based on the Verification documentation. Once the corrections are made, a financial aid award can be packaged based on the new and verified FAFSA transaction that is sent to us.

Should PSR Financial Aid have reason to believe that the information submitted on the FAFSA and/or the Verification documents has been altered and/or misreported in order to fraudulently receive federal need-based aid, all questionable evidence will be submitted to the Office of the Inspector General at the California Regional Office.

## **Return of Title IV Funds (R2T4)**

### **Dropping Coursework and Return of Title IV Funds (R2T4) Policy**

Federal aid (AKA "Title IV" aid) is awarded under the assumption that you will attend the institution for the entire period in which federal assistance was awarded. If you withdraw from school or drop all of your courses before the end of a term, you may no longer be eligible for the full amount of Title IV funds that you have received or were scheduled to receive and would thus be subject to a Return of Title IV Funds (R2T4).

The return of funds is based upon the premise that students earn their financial aid in proportion to the amount of time in which they are enrolled. A pro-rated schedule is used to determine the amount of federal student aid funds they will have earned at the time of the withdrawal. For example, a student who withdraws in the second week of classes has earned less of their financial aid than a student who withdraws in the seventh week. Once over 60% of the semester is completed, a student is considered to have earned all their financial aid and will not be required to return any funds.

### **Calculating Earned Financial Aid**

The amount of *earned* financial aid is calculated daily from the first day of classes. The process uses a calendar rather than business days. *Earned* aid is determined by taking the number of days attended before enrollment ended divided by the total number of days in the term (first day of instruction until the last day of finals, excluding Reading Week in the fall semester and Spring Break in the spring semester).

*Return* policies apply to students that withdraw on or before the 60% point of the term. For a student who withdraws after the 60% point-in-time, there is no *unearned* financial aid. All students who withdraw from coursework during the semester, regardless of when will have the R2T4 calculation performed in order to determine whether they are eligible to receive a "Post-Withdrawal Disbursement (PWD)."

### **Post-Withdrawal Disbursements (PWD)**

In compliance with federal regulations, PSR Financial Aid will perform the R2T4 calculation within 30 days of the student's withdrawal, and funds will be returned to the appropriate federal aid program within 45

days of the withdrawal date should a return be necessary. An evaluation will be done to determine if aid was eligible to be disbursed but had not been disbursed as of the withdrawal date. If the student meets the federal criteria for a PWD, the student will be notified of their eligibility within 30 days of determining the student's date of withdrawal. Because PSR is a graduate institution and thus only disburses direct federal loans, after being notified of PWD eligibility, students must reply to PSR Financial Aid if they wish to accept the post-withdrawal loan obligation. When a PWD is accepted, the funds will be disbursed within 45 days of determining the student's date of withdrawal. A PWD of loan funds would first be used toward any outstanding charges before any funds are returned to you. If no response is received within approximately two weeks of notification, the award will be canceled.

### School Portion vs. Student Portion of Return of Title IV Funds

As part of the R2T4 calculation, schools must assess the charges made to the student and calculate a percentage of charges that were "unearned" by the school, based upon the percentage of the term that the student actually completed. For example, If PSR charges a student for nine (9) credits at \$790/credit for the fall semester (charges equaling \$7110) and the student withdrew from courses after completing 50% of the fall semester, PSR must return 50% of "unearned charges" (totaling \$3,555) made to the student for which Title IV funds were used to pay the charges incurred. After the school returns its portion of unearned aid, any amount of the total *unearned* aid that remains becomes the **student portion** of the *Return*. The student portion of the *Return* is calculated by subtracting the amount of the school Return from the **total unearned aid**.

**Total Unearned Aid**  
**(Subtract) School Return Amount**  
**(Equals) Student Portion of Return**

Because PSR is a graduate institution, R2T4 policies only apply to Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans and Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loans. The student portion of unearned loans is to be repaid according to the terms of your Master Promissory Note. You will not be billed for these funds upon discontinued enrollment.

### Future Aid Eligibility

Anytime a student receiving a direct federal loan drops below a half-time load of coursework, they must complete Exit Counseling, and the Financial Aid Office will notify the student right of this requirement as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days past the time of withdrawal. A financial aid-related hold will also be placed on the student's account that will prevent the student from receiving transcripts or registering in the future until the Exit Counseling has been completed. Additionally, anytime a student is enrolled less than part-time, the "grace period" of six months begins before loans must enter repayment. This grace period will begin on the day of the withdrawal from the school. The student must contact the U.S. Department of Education (ED) or their lender(s) to make payment arrangements, and once payment arrangements are made, loans must be repaid by the loan borrower as outlined in the terms of the borrower's promissory note. For more information on how to repay your loans, including information on the different payment plans available to students, [you can go here](#).

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**

When a student withdraws from coursework and does not complete at least 75% of the term in which they were enrolled, the student is then placed on academic probation and is thus not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) per PSR SAP policy. The conditions of meeting SAP are reviewed later in the catalog.

### **Veterans Benefits and Yellow Ribbon Program**

Pacific School of Religion is committed to providing veterans with theological education as part of our mission to make a world where all can thrive. PSR also participates in the Yellow Ribbon Program which applies to veterans eligible for the Post 9/11 GI Bill.

Students who are veterans with previous graduate level coursework/ training in the program to be pursued will be evaluated upon enrollment and given appropriate credit. Evaluation will be based upon review of academic transcripts. Any allowed credit will be recorded in enrollment records, and the length of the program shortened proportionately. In addition, the student and the Department of Veteran's Affairs shall be notified. (Note: All prior graduate level course work and training not used to satisfy another degree will be evaluated. Upon completion of the course of study a degree will be conferred.) Students (including veterans) must maintain satisfactory academic progress. MA students must maintain a 3.0 GPA and be making acceptable progress towards the completion of their program. Doctoral students must move through their program at an acceptable speed and complete an annual evaluation with their academic advisor. If a student does not make satisfactory progress, he or she is allowed one semester in the MA program and one year in the doctoral program to get back on track. An incomplete grade must be made up within three weeks of the end of the current semester. The faculty submit the grade three weeks after the work has been turned in to them. If no grade is turned in by the end of the sixth week after the semester, it will become a failing grade and will not count toward graduation requirements.

## **Academics**

Pacific School of Religion strives to provide a relevant and meaningful program of study, deeply spiritual and personal formation, and responsive and loving praxis to serve a world in need. Since its founding in 1866, PSR has cultivated a reputation as a forward-thinking institution characterized by academic excellence, progressive, welcoming, inclusive theology, and bold loving action.

### **Curriculum Overview**

Pacific School of Religion has developed an innovative and stackable curriculum that combines traditional fields of theological study with contextual education, cross-cultural immersion, spiritual formation, and professional development. Students stack curricular and co-curricular courses and experiences to foster a sense of holistic formation. All PSR degree programs seek to apply insights from subjects learned in the classroom to the context of the broader community, including global cultures, world religions, and the arts.

### **Degrees & Certificates**

The curriculum at PSR offers students the flexibility needed for a rapidly changing world. Our Stackable Curriculum offers students the opportunity to earn a graduate certificate after the first year, a Master of Arts in Social Transformation after the second year, and a Master of Divinity degree after the third year.

In addition to our graduate-level degrees and certificates, we provide ways for clergy, lay leaders, and spiritual seekers to engage in theological education without enrolling in degree or certificate programs. All students benefit from our Stackable Curriculum, which streamlines a student's progress toward completion while also allowing students to experience the riches offered by other Graduate Theological Union institutions.

## Institutional Learning Outcomes

*By the end of their studies, students at PSR can:*

❖ Critically engage texts, traditions, social systems, and political structures in physical and digital environments.
❖ Apply contextually based approaches to social issues, appropriating the skills and resources necessary for creating and communicating transformation in physical and digital environments which
❖ Show evidence of an engaged spirituality rooted in marginalized, emerging, and established traditions that shape communities, promote ethical leadership styles, and cultivate the skills necessary to lead effectively in physical and digital environments with respect and humility.
❖ Demonstrate the ability to deconstruct religious cultures, traditions, and environments and then reconstruct them into forms of knowledge that attend to how digital and physical contexts affect systemic oppression and the common good
❖ Articulate the unique contributions theological traditions, and ethical practices make to the work of social change-making and justice-seeking in physical and digital environments
❖ Construct broad theological knowledge into an understanding of research as iterative inquiry and knowledge as the product of appropriate digital and physical research methodologies
❖ Critically engage self-awareness, social location, personal experience, and habits of creating and consuming digital information.
❖ Demonstrate the ability to collaborate within one's sphere of engagement and across cultures, religious traditions, and digital environments to address systemic oppression and work for the common good

## Stackable Curriculum

Pacific School of Religion is the first seminary in the U.S. to offer stackable credentials. PSR's innovative, stackable curriculum combines traditional fields of theological study with contextual education, cross-cultural immersion, spiritual formation, and professional development. The curriculum at PSR offers students the flexibility needed for a rapidly changing world. Students "stack" curricular and co-curricular courses and experiences to foster a sense of holistic formation.

## Stack Your Learning

**Stack One:** Certificate of Spirituality and Social Change (CSSC) OR Certificate of Sexuality and Religion (CSR)

**Stack Two:** Master of Arts in Social Transformation (MAST)

**Stack Three:** Master of Divinity (MDiv)

## Students

### Full-Time or Part-Time Status

#### Full Time/Half-Time Definitions by Degree Program

For all master's programs, except the Master of Arts program, full-time status is achieved at 9.0 units or more per semester, and 4.5 units per semester is considered half-time.

- For MA students, full-time is at 12.0 units or more, and 6.0 units is considered half time.
- For Doctor of Ministry Students, 6.0 units are considered full time, and 3.0 units are considered half-time.

### Agency Reporting to Obtain Eligibility Statuses

Often eligibility for certain programs (such as housing, financial aid, loan deferment, some veteran's benefits programs, and immigration status) depends on maintaining a full or half-time load, so check with the policies of these departments to ensure your load is appropriate for the eligibilities you are seeking.

For agencies that require status reporting during terms other than Fall and Spring, the definitions are as follows:

- During the Intersession term, 3.0 credits are considered full-time.
- During the Summer term, 6.0 credits are considered full-time.

PSR can verify load status for only courses registered through PSR. Transferred courses or courses taken concurrently outside of the consortium do not contribute to load status as reported by PSR. Enrollment reporting, or enrollment verifications, can only be done during or after the first day of the reporting term.

**Note:** These standards do not necessarily define how many units must be completed each year to finish in the program's prescribed time. It may take more than 18.0 units per year to complete your program within the expected time frame.

### International Students

International students must always be at full-time status for reasons related to visa status. The only exceptions to this requirement are in cases where:

- MDiv students are enrolled in Field Education Internship (TBA)
- DMin students are under supervision (DM 6005) or thesis status (DM 6011).

- International MA students below 12.0 units must register for MA 5000 or MABL 5005 for the remaining units to reach the full-time load.

### Credit Load Maximum

Generally, semester loads above 15.0 credits are discouraged. If you plan to take more than 15.0 credits in one semester, you may be required to take more than 15.0 credits in one semester; you may be required to consult with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or your advisor.

## Transfer Credits

### Transfer Policy and Procedure

You may transfer a portion of your PSR program from an accredited theological or graduate school if that credit is evaluated by the Assistant Dean as an appropriate part of your program. No credits that fall outside the Lapsed Time Rule may be counted toward the program. Petitions to Transfer Credits should be submitted by the end of the first semester of your program so that a decision may be rendered in time for you to plan your program.

Petitions should include official transcripts showing the credits earned if they are not already obtained during the Admissions process. All petitioned courses are assumed to be transferred for elective credit unless noted on your petition to be used toward a basic requirement. In the case that you wish to petition a transferred course to be used for one of your basic requirements or any other kind of requirement, you must note that on your petition, and you must supply course descriptions and syllabi of those courses to accompany the written petition request. Requests without syllabi will be processed for elective credit only.

### Special Transfer Cases

**Certificate of Theological Education for Leadership (CTEL):** Students who already possess an associate degree or higher and have earned a CTEL may petition to transfer up to 3.0 elective credits toward a graduate PSR degree or certificate program by the end of their first semester at PSR.

**Field Praxis Credit:** Transferring Field Education credits requires, in addition to transcripts, submission of all field education reports documenting the course syllabus, field education experience and evaluations from the previous institution and student's mentors. For CPE credits, the signed CPE Supervisor Final Evaluation is sufficient. Community Engaged Learning, after reviewing these documents, determines whether field praxis credits can be transferred. Given the integrative structure of PSR's stackable curriculum degrees, Field Education experience and/or Clinical Pastoral Education experience prior to 2 years before the start of the student's PSR degree program will likely not be accepted.

As PSR is on a semester system, quarter credits are transferred at 2/3 of the original rate. Courses suitable for credit transfer are graduate-level academic courses from an ATS or regionally accredited (or equivalent) institution. Up to 2/3 of your (total) required units may be transferred from a school outside PSR, including courses from another school in the consortium.

In short, a few key things to remember and check if you are thinking about transferring are:

- Credits can be 4-7 years old (lapsed time rule), depending on which program you apply to at PSR.
- Courses must be at the graduate level, in a theological field, and from an accredited institution.
- Petitions must be accompanied by copies of syllabi for courses you wish to use toward the basic foundational requirements of PSR programs.

## Petition Appeals

If you wish to appeal a decision, please do so by submitting all additional syllabi and/or other documentation to support your appeal by the next deadline. Submissions that are not received in time by a deadline will be processed at the next deadline. Note, however, that petitions with complete documentation should be submitted by the end of the first semester of your program so that a decision may be rendered in time for you to plan your program. No requests for transfer or additional appeals will be considered after your first year at PSR.

### Transferring out of PSR to another institution

Note that this policy covers only transfers of non-PSR coursework to PSR programs only. For policies on transfers of PSR credits to an outside institution, please consult that institution's transfer policy.

## Academic Disputes Policy

A student who has an academic dispute with a Pacific School of Religion course or Instructor (Faculty) should read the below carefully.

Academic Disputes with Course or Instructor:

- ✓ Step 1: Contact the instructor involved, in writing, regarding the concern.
- ✓ Step 2: If the student wishes to appeal the instructor's decision, they should bring the matter to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar. This consultation phase may involve gathering information from involved parties and an attempt at a resolution, and the student may be advised to submit an Academic Petition form with relevant supporting documentation if needed.
- ✓ Step 3: If the dispute is not resolved during this phase, or if the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Assistant Dean & Registrar, then the petition, supporting materials (which include efforts to resolve the dispute), and any additional documentation the student wishes to provide will be forwarded to the Dean. The Dean will then determine whether to either pass the dispute on to an Academic Committee or the Faculty for deliberation.

**Result:** The decision of the Committee or Faculty is final. The Dean's Office will inform the student of the decision.

Academic disputes that are NOT related to a specific course or instructor:

Academic disputes unrelated to a course or instructor should also be taken directly to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar. A similar procedure of petitioning as described above may be implemented.

## Grade Disputes

Grade disputes must be submitted in writing to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar within six months of the final grade being posted. Students are responsible for checking their grades in SONIS when posted (five weeks after the last day of the term). After six months of posting, disputes will only be considered for clerical or instructor errors. This time limit does not apply to grades of "I" (incomplete).

Cross-registration of students in courses within the consortium is a valuable feature of the Graduate Theological Union. The GTU and all the member schools are committed to ensuring that students have appropriate recourse if they complain about some aspect of their experience while taking courses at a school other than their own:

- The following protocol is to be followed in any such cases, including but not limited to complaints concerning unfair discrimination, cultural insensitivity, sexual harassment, and disputes over grades and other forms of academic evaluation:
- Each school of GTU is committed to giving students from all other schools access to its normal complaint process whenever they are taking courses or studying with faculty at the host school.
- Students are encouraged to attempt to resolve the complaint directly by raising the issue with the individual at the host school whose conduct is the focus of the complaint.
- If the matter cannot be resolved directly, the student should bring the complaint to the dean's attention at the student's school.
- The dean of the student's home school will then contact the dean of the host school to help the student determine which policies and procedures at the host school are relevant to the situation.
- The normal policies and procedures of the host school will be followed, with the added proviso that the dean of the student's home school will be informed of the progress made in addressing the complaint.
- After the complaint resolution process, the dean of the host school will report the outcome in writing to both the student and the dean of the student's home school.

## Advising

All degree and certificate students are assigned an advisor by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The core faculty at PSR serve as student advisors in all degree and certificate programs. Advisors are key to each student's progress through their program and are a great source of support, direction, and academic counseling.

Below is a list of when students should meet with their advisors. Not all meetings need to be in person as some advising can be done via video conference or a phone call. However, despite how a student and their advisor meet, following these guidelines for when to meet will create the ideal path to graduation.

### All Programs

- Once Before or During Orientation
- Once Before Registering for One's Second Semester



- Once Per Semester Until End of Program

### Stackable Curriculum

#### Year One

- Review Spiritual Formation Plan
- Review Vocational Academic Plan

#### Year Two

- SAIL Capstone (before, during and after, as necessary)
- Middler Review (MDiv Students ONLY)

#### Year Three

- Prior to Submitting [Intent to Graduate Form](#)
- MDiv Capstone

### Master of Theological Studies

- Prior to Beginning the Synthesis Essay

### Common MA

- Prior to, and during, the Thesis

### Doctor of Ministry

- Start of Program to Plan Elective Coursework
- Each Semester "In Thesis"
- Each Semester "Under Supervision"

For programs that have a thesis/project defense of some kind, your advisor will usually be the primary committee member for your defense.

Incoming student advisors or changes to advisor assignments are usually processed and emailed to students around the summer for incoming Fall students and in winter for incoming Spring students. If any urgent and necessary advising needs arise in the interim, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may assist students during these transitional periods.

Students find their advisor and advisors find their advisees by logging in to SONIS. Students may also find contact information for advisors through the PSR website. For stability reasons, we try to encourage maintaining the same advisor assignment throughout a students' program, but in the case that a student wishes to change advisors, after the first semester at PSR, they may apply to switch advisors by submitting a [Change of Advisor form](#)<sup>1</sup> to the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs & Registrar. This form must be signed by both current advisor and the advisor of choice prior to being approved.

## Responsibility for Program Requirements

While your advisor oversees your program, you are responsible and expected to take the initiative in communicating with your advisor as noted above or more frequently as needed. Each Student is responsible for understanding their program and their program's requirements.

## Resources for Choosing Classes

- Your Advisor
- A Degree Audit (students may request this by emailing [registrar@psr.edu](mailto:registrar@psr.edu) and should allow 7 – 10 business days for the document to be returned).
- Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs & Registrar

## Grades

Grades are pedagogical tools to help students understand two things: (1) where they stand on any one assignment and (2) whether they have fully mastered the coursework or if further work on it is needed before moving on to the other issues. Thus, assigned grades should communicate the following. The grade point average (GPA) associated with each letter grade (LG) is also listed below.

## Letter Grades

### GPA LG Explanation

- **4.0 A+** Publishable material; superb work, far beyond the level of excellence generally found in student work.
- **4.0 A** Excellent work; work that shows a level of mastery *consistently* beyond the expected scope of the assignment
- **3.7 A-** Excellent work; work that shows a general level of mastery *usually* beyond the expected scope of the assignment but also indicates a few instances of *only* adequate levels of mastery
- **3.3 B+** Very good work; work that indicates a *consistently* full and adequate mastery of the assignment at the expected level
- **3.0 B** Good work; work that indicates a basically adequate level of understanding of the assignment but where improvements are clearly possible
- **2.7 B-** Passable work; work that shows a beginning grasp of the assignment but that needs improvement and additional study to reach a level of adequate mastery
- **2.3 C+** Weak work; work that indicates significant lacunae in understanding, execution, or critical engagement; much additional study is needed to adequately fulfill the assignment

- **2.0 C** Poor work; work that shows a lack of overall understanding of the assignment
- **1.7 C-** Lack of work; work that indicates varying degrees of weakness in understanding, execution, and critical engagement
- **1.4 D** Extremely poor work; work that indicates severe weakness in understanding, execution, and critical engagement; student needs to begin studying all over again
- **0.0 F** Failure — Consistent inability to understand, execute and critically engage the material; student receives no credit for assignment or class.

### Other Grades

The following are some Other Grades that PSR uses and their explanations.

**AUD** = Audit

**I** = Incomplete

**IP** = In Progress (IP units may not be used toward graduation requirements)

**NC** = No Credit (usually given in non-audited courses offered for 0.0 units)

**NR** = Not Recorded (students should contact instructors to resolve)

**P** = Pass

**NP** = No Pass

**S** = Satisfactory, given for CEU courses in which CEU requirements were fulfilled

**NS** = Non-Satisfactory, given for CEU courses, in which CEU requirements were not completed

**W** = withdrawal

**WF** = Class dropped after final deadline to count as Withdrawal

### Notes

- No credits are given for courses that receive an AUD, IF, F, NC, NR, and W.
- Passing "P" grades are not reflected in the GPA.
- Continuing Education Units (CEU's) do not carry academic credit.

### Pass/Fail

Some courses are offered only on a pass/fail on basis. You may request permission to take a pass/fail course for letter grade, but this option is always subject to the consent of the instructor. When a course is taken for pass/fail, pass is the equivalent of C or better. Fail indicates the level of C- or below. No credits are given for courses that fail. If a student anticipates additional graduate work, it is not advisable to take academic courses pass/fail, particularly in the anticipated field of study. For information on what restrictions there may be to take pass/fail courses in your program, please review your program information.

### Withdrawal

A withdrawal from a class is indicated on a transcript as a "W." Students may drop a class without it appearing on the transcript so long as they drop the course prior to the 7<sup>th</sup> week of the term (50 percent for short-term classes). After the 10<sup>th</sup> week of the semester (or 75 percent for short-term classes), students may not withdraw from any course and must either receive a grade or request an Incomplete.

### Policy on Unsubmitted Grades

PSR shall take appropriate and reasonable measures to communicate with instructors to ensure that course grades are submitted within a reasonable amount of time in accordance with published deadlines. In the case that an instructor is incapacitated, unresponsive, or otherwise unable to submit grades two (2) months beyond the stipulated deadline, the PSR Dean shall assign another faculty person to evaluate final work and assign grades to registered students.

### Tracking Progress within a Course and Final Grades

Courses are managed in a shared Learning Management System (LMS) called Moodle. Students receive feedback of their progress directly from the Moodle system. Students must frequently check their progress in a course to ensure they are doing well, submitting their work on time, and doing all that's necessary to succeed in the class.

SONIS, PSR's student information system is where all student's official records are held. Final grades are entered into the SONIS Student Portal 5 weeks from the last day of the semester. Students should only reference SONIS for their academic records and final grades.

### Repeating a Course

A course may be repeated once to improve a poor or failing grade (no letter grade other than D or F). When a course is repeated, the previous grade remains on the transcript for 0.0 credits, and the new grade and units are used to calculate GPA and show up on the transcript for the semester in which the course was repeated.

For information on required GPA's, consult the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy: For more information on disputing grades, consult the Academic Disputes Policy. For any other questions regarding grades, contact the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

## Credit Hour Policy

For PSR courses, one (1.0) semester credit hour requires the following minimum work:

- one hour of instructor mediated learning and
- two hours of outside of class study weekly

for an average fifteen (15) week semester.

Thus, one three credit hour (3.0) course would require a minimum of 9 hours of work per week (3 instructor mediated hours plus 6 outside study hours) for 15 weeks.

### *Time per Credit*

For each graduate credit awarded by a course at Pacific School of Religion, students should be spending approximately one hour (50 minutes) in contact with the instructor and two hours (100 minutes) on course work outside of class per week over the equivalent of a 15-week semester.

This applies to face-to-face, intensive, and online classes alike.

- 1.0 credit course = 15 hours of direct contact plus 30 hours outside of class
- 1.5 credit course = 22.5 hours of direct contact plus 45 hours outside of class
- 3.0 credit course = 45 hours of direct contact plus 90 hours outside of class

These figures are targets, not absolutes. Courses may exceed the expectations, or the ratio of direct contact to outside work may vary somewhat. Students may not miss more than 10% of direct contact time within a given course. Students who miss 10%, or more, of any course are subject to an automatic fail unless the missing contact hours can be made up by the student and faculty meeting outside of the normal class hours (this is completely dependent on faculty willingness and availability as it is not required for faculty to do so).

Learning outcomes for classes that have multiple formats are to be identical across format. Format should have no effect on quality or quantity of learning outcomes.

### Hours Outside of Class

"Hours outside of class" include advance and daily readings, writing, participation in online discussions, studying, reflection, projects, final papers, etc.

### Intensive (Short-Term Classes) & Experiential Classes

Intensive and Experiential classes take place in summer and January sessions. They typically meet for four or eight hours of learning per day, five days a week, for one to two weeks. Because we cannot expect students in a five- or ten-day course to spend 10+ hours per day studying outside of class, substantial student work ahead of and/or following the actual course dates is to be expected.

### Contact Hours for Intensive/Short-Term Classes

One Week Course (1.5 units) = 5 days, 4 hours per day

One Week Course (3 units) = 5 days, 8 hours per day

Two Week Course (1.5 units) = 10 days, 2 hours per day

Two Week Course (3 units) = 10 days, 4 hours per day

*\*Students may not miss any class time for intensive one-week courses and may only miss one day of class if the course meets for two weeks. Missing any time beyond what is specified will result in the student failing the class.*

## **Attendance Policy for In-Person and Remote Learning**

Many courses are taught concurrently where students may take the same class either in-person or remotely. Students must register for the modality they prefer and, once selected, will have until the first day of class to switch. After the first day of class, students must remain in the chosen modality, no exceptions.

Absences, excused or otherwise, are held to the Credit Hour Policy. Students can not miss more than 10% of class time throughout the semester- no exceptions allowed. For students on a two hour and fifty-minute 3 credit course that meets weekly, the allowed number of absences is two. Any additional absence would lead to an automatic grade of "F" (fail) unless the faculty and student agree to make up the missing contact hours at an arranged time outside of normal class hours. In the event of excessive absences that are not made up with the faculty outside of the classroom, the student will be administratively withdrawn, and the mark of a "W" will appear on the student's official record for the course.

Students who register for in-person courses will be considered absent if they access the class remotely. Only in very rare circumstances will this be allowed and only at the discretion of the instructor. Students registered for remote learning will not be allowed to attend the in-person class session.

Students should always do their best to notify the faculty in advance of an absence and to get any missing work/materials from the faculty, so the student does not fall behind. Students should use faculty office hours and work with classmates to ensure they are reasonably caught up. Students should make every effort to attend every class and submit all assignments on time.

### **Make-Up Work**

In the event an assignment is due on the day of the class being missed, the assignment is still required to be submitted. Students should do whatever they can to get the assignment to the faculty either by submitting it digitally or asking a classmate to submit it. If the assignment is not submitted, the faculty may penalize the student by reducing points from the overall score, or reject the assignment completely, as defined in their syllabus.

PSR recognizes that a student may become sick or have life events that lead to their inability to complete an assignment on time. In order to prevent penalties for late submissions, the student is responsible for providing documentation to the teaching faculty member. In the event the

student falls too far behind (due to illness or life events), they should work with the teaching faculty member for the class on an Extension or an Incomplete.

### Tardiness

In order to prevent time waste and classroom disruption, students are expected to arrive to class, or in the zoom session, on time. In some circumstances, students may know in advance they will be late to a class and should notify the faculty in those instances. Any more than three tardies will be counted as an absence by the faculty. Students who come to class late more than three times will be reported to the Assistant Dean and Registrar. A meeting will be set between the Assistant Dean and Registrar to determine the cause. The outcome of this meeting may lead to an administrative withdrawal from the class if the instances of tardiness are too excessive or it's deemed that additional tardies will occur. In the event of an administrative withdrawal, the mark of "W" will appear on the student's official record for the course.

### Special Reading Courses

A Special Reading Course (SRC) allows a student to work with a consortium instructor on a topic that is not available via the regular course schedule (SRC-9999) or to upgrade a lower level course to a higher-level course with additional work required (SRC-8888). The student and the instructor negotiate and must agree on the details of the course or upgrade (meeting times, readings, papers, projects, exams, etc.). For some general guidance on workload expectations, please refer to PSR's Credit Hour Policy. The student should be aware that the instructor receives no additional compensation for offering an SRC. Therefore, a student should not ask a professor to offer an SRC for a class that is offered regularly, and while core faculty are not obligated to offer SRCs, those who choose to do so are advised to take on no more than two SRCs per semester.

Special reading courses (SRCs) can be arranged between an individual student and a faculty person who has a regular (not adjunct) appointment at PSR or another GTU school. In general, PSR does not approve SRCs where the proposed instructor is an adjunct faculty person.

SRCs are not taken as replacements for regular curricular offerings and are not an appropriate means to fulfill required courses for a program. Each SRC cannot exceed 3 credits. All SRCs are counted as elective credits, unless you obtain special approval from your instructor, advisor, and Dean, and there are different limitations to how many SRCs may be used toward a program.

Program	SRC Credits Allowed
Cert. of Adv. Prof. Studies	3
Cert. of Special Studies	3
Cert. of Theology	3
Common MA	6
Master of Theology	6
Doctor of Ministry	9

### **SCRs and the Stackable Curriculum**

Students in the stackable curriculum may only use SRCs for elective credit. Students may refer to the Stack Map to determine where electives are available.

For any exceptions to the above policies that must be approved by the Dean, it is recommended that a student obtain written permission and confirmation regarding these exceptions (example: using an SRC to fulfill a requirement; having an adjunct faculty person teach your SRC, etc.) prior to enrollment in an SRC. Dean approval on the SRC form does not constitute approval for fulfillment of a core course requirement.

### **Enrolling in an SRC**

Submit a [Special Reading Course](#) form to the Assistant Dean and Registrar. The student contacts the proposed instructor to make the necessary arrangements and obtains an SRC form from the PSR website. The student must complete all sections of the SRC form, obtain signatures of the faculty and advisor and submit the form to the PSR Registrar by the close of late registration. In both SRC 9999's and SRC 8888's, a Special Reading Course form is required to complete registration.

Failure to submit a completed form before the end of the late registration period may result in not being able to take the course, no credit, and no grade. Successfully completed SRCs will appear on your transcript as SRC-9999-PS [instructor initials] or SRC-8888-PS [instructor initials] and then the course title you and instructor agreed on for your course.

## **Extensions, Incompletes, and Time Lapsed Rule**

### **Extensions for Programs: Lapsed Time Rule**

Each degree and certificate program are to be completed in an expected number of years. However, if you are part time, you may still take courses that count toward your degree over more years, as long as you are within your program's lapsed time rule. Time lapse spans from the first course you take for the program through the last course you take to complete your program. This span will include transfer credit from previous institutions and any breaks (approved Leave of Absence or otherwise) taken during your program's progress.

Extensions beyond the expected graduation time may be subject to the approval of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar in consultation with your advisor. Such extensions do not entail a continuation of housing and/or financial aid privileges, and you may have to seek non-campus housing and other sources of income if you wish to continue beyond your program's expected time.

Extensions beyond the maximum allotted time as stated in the lapsed-time rule must be specially approved by the Dean and most likely will result in the loss of eligible coursework to be applied to your



degree/certificate, which may mean you will need to re-take some of your earliest coursework. Therefore, it is in your best interest to graduate sometime within the lapsed time rule.

Degree/Certificate	Expected time	Lapse Time
MDiv (prior to Fall 2018)	3 years	10 years
MA	2 years	4 years
Stacked CSSC/MAST/MDiv	4 years	10 years
MAST	2 years	4 years
MTS	2 years	5 years
DMin & CTS	3 years	6 years
CAPS/CSS	1 year	2 years
CSR	2 years	4 years
CSSC	1 year	3 years

### Extensions for Courses

All coursework is due by the end of the semester (5 pm of the last day of the semester as listed in the GTU course schedule), except in cases where illness or other serious circumstances make this impossible. In instances where there is minimal course work to make up, an arrangement can be made between the instructor and the student to allow for up to three additional weeks to complete the outstanding assignments. *Upon the three-week deadline, if the student has not completed the outstanding assignments, the instructor must submit the grade for any work that was submitted up until that day.* Additional extensions are strongly discouraged.

### Incompletes

In the event a student needs more time than an Extension would allow, they can petition for an Incomplete. Incompletes are given based on mitigating circumstances that prevent the student from finishing the course and would require more time than an Extension allows to submit the outstanding work. *Students who receive an Incomplete must submit all previously unfinished work no later than the first day of the following semester.*

Students must petition with the instructor of the course and the Dean. At that time, it is also up to the faculty's discretion how much time is allotted for the completion of coursework so long as the date indicated is no later than the first day of the following term, In the interim, the student will receive a grade of "I" (Incomplete) on their transcript. Once the outstanding work has been submitted to the instructor, the faculty have 3 weeks to submit the final grade. Once the grade is received by the Registrar's office, the "I" placeholder grade will be changed to the final grade and placed on the student's permanent record.

Students who do not submit their coursework by the due date will receive a grade of "IF" (Incomplete Fail) on their transcripts. No exceptions.

PSR strives to make all programs accessible to students with disabilities. If you wish to request extensions for assignments and exams due to a disability, please contact the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar

### **Incomplete Maximums by Program**

The following degree/certificate programs have the following maximums:

- MDiv: 5 incompletes allowed
- All other degree and certificate programs: 3 incompletes allowed
- CEUs- Incompletes are not available

After the maximum number of incompletes has been reached, a fail is recorded for all courses where work is not completed on time.

### **Adding or Changing a Degree Program**

Application materials regarding changes in program from the certificate to a degree program, a change in a degree program, or an additional degree program are available from the Recruitment and Admissions Office. Students should be aware that these changes require admission procedures and adhere to application deadlines for admission into the desired program. Students changing to or adding the Common M.A. program apply through the GTU Admissions Office.

A common change in degree program is the addition of a Common Master (MA) or Master of Theological Studies (MTS) to the Stackable Master of Divinity (MDiv) Degree program. Another common change is adding the CSR certificate program to any masters or doctoral program. We encourage anyone who plans to add this or other certificates to their program to add them as soon as possible. Adding these programs officially will give evidence of interest in these programs. Please consult Admissions to add this program and other certificates.

- MDiv students wishing to change to the MTS must make an appointment with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar.
- MA students wishing to change to any other PSR program must also make an appointment with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

### **Provisional Status Policy**

Provisional status may be offered for up to 18 months to applicants who do not meet the minimum academic requirements but who otherwise meet admission criteria and standards. The minimum academic requirements for regular admission are a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university; a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale; and, when applicable, TOEFL test scores that meet minimum acceptable scores. (Cumulative GPA is calculated from all higher education coursework).

- Provisional status may also be offered to applicants whose files need more information for the committee to determine if they meet the minimum academic requirements and who otherwise meet admission criteria and standards.
- Provisional status provides a student with the opportunity to demonstrate successful participation in the academic life of the institution.
- Provisional status is for the Master of Divinity (MDiv), Master of Arts in Social Transformation (MAST), or Master of Theological Studies (MTS) programs only. Admission without a bachelor's degree to any of our other programs will be decided by the Admissions Committee on a case-by-case basis.

### Admissions Information

Applicants complete and submit the standard program application with the same required supporting materials. Provisional status is offered by the Admissions Committee based on its review of the application file. Please note Applicants who do not possess a bachelor's degree must have a minimum of two years' worth of undergraduate coursework to be admitted to any program.

### Moving from Provisional to Full Status

After you have completed your first two semesters as a provisional student, you may be required to apply for full status to continue in your PSR degree or certificate program. Application for Full Status.

### Leave of Absence and Deferment

Any *continuing student* who does not intend to register for degree work or approved field education during any regular semester (fall or spring) must apply for a Leave of Absence (LOA). Such requests, in writing, must be received by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar before the conclusion of the registration period of the semester for which the leave is requested.

### Request for a Leave of Absence (LOA) form

Are available online or by request to the Assistant Dean and Registrar. Failure to either register or request a leave of absence each semester may result in termination, which means that a student who wishes to return to school will be required to apply for re-admission. Requests for leave received after General Registration will incur the Late Registration fee.

Leaves of Absence (LOA) are granted for up to two consecutive semesters. Exceptions are considered by petition to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar. LOAs entail a break in all academic work and eligibilities: library privileges; financial aid eligibility; loan deferment qualification; class work; examinations; and thesis work. However, you will still be required to stay on and check your mandatory PSR student e-mail account to receive important announcements about deadlines that will help keep your student status active even as you are away. You are advised to consult the Financial Aid Office about whether an LOA is the best financial decision. If you have educational loans, an LOA may jeopardize your deferment of payment. All semesters of leave are included in your time-lapsed period.

GTU Common MA students have a slightly different Leave of Absence policy. They must submit a GTU Leave of Absence form by the close of registration for each semester they will be on leave. There is a fee per semester for MA leaves.

To return from leave, please notify Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar, or if you are an MA student, also notify the MA coordinator at the GTU. After you've notified the appropriate individuals that you plan to return from leave, make sure you register online through SONIS during open registration periods. Check the academic calendars online for those dates.

### **Administrative Leave of Absence**

When warranted, a student may be placed on Administrative Leave of Absence (ALOA) on academic, medical or disciplinary grounds by the Dean and Office of Academic Affairs. The student will have to withdraw from registering for courses for at least one semester unless a longer Administrative Leave of Absence is stipulated by the Dean. Additional documentation may be required for the student to conclude the ALOA and return to their program of study.

### **Return of Title IV Funds (R2T4) 2**

Students who withdraw from all coursework (including going on a Leave of Absence) and who do not complete more than 60% of their term of enrollment must have a portion of "unearned" federal funds returned to their source. For more information on PSR's R2T4, visit [financialaid@psr.edu](mailto:financialaid@psr.edu).

### **Deferment**

If you are an entering NEW STUDENT and have been accepted to PSR but cannot attend the semester you had planned to start, please let PSR Admissions know by contacting [admissions@psr.edu](mailto:admissions@psr.edu) before the close of registration that you wish to defer and for how long (one term usually), and we will keep your admitted status active for up to one year. Semesters of deferment are not included in your time lapsed period.

If PSR does not hear from you by the close of registration and you do not attend, your active admitted status will be terminated, and you will be required to complete another application — including new letters of reference, personal statement, and other admissions forms — should you wish to attend any time after one year of deferment, with no guarantee of admittance the second time around. If you still cannot attend after one year, your active student status will be terminated.

### **Withdrawal and Termination**

Students are encouraged to have a consultation with their advisor, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar, or the Dean before filing for withdrawal or accepting termination from a program. While PSR aims to support students in their decisions, in many cases, we have policies and support to accommodate and address the reasons for student departure that would be less severe and irreversible.

#### **Withdrawal from Program**

Withdrawal severs the relationship between the student and PSR. Committees are dissolved, and it is intended to be an irreversible decision.

If you are considering withdrawing from PSR, please speak with your advisor, the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs & Registrar, or the Dean. As withdrawal is a permanent action, if you decide to return to PSR later, you will need to re-apply again through Admissions with a full application.

### **Termination of Program**

Students who do not register and do not file for a Leave of Absence by the end of the fourth week of the semester will be removed from the active rolls, and their programs will be terminated. Students on suspension or academic probation who do not fulfill the terms of their agreement to return may also be terminated. At times students who have been terminated have not updated their contact information with PSR, so make sure you update your contact information and check your PSR emails to avoid termination.

Like withdrawal, termination also severs the relationship between the student and PSR. Committees are dissolved, and it is intended to be an irreversible decision. If you decide to return to PSR later, you will need to re-apply again through Admissions with a full application.

### **Withdrawal from Course**

After the 10th week of courses, if you request to drop a course and obtain the instructor's and the Dean's approval, your course will be marked on your transcript as withdrawn or "W." This action is subject to the change in schedule fees.

### **Return of Title IV Funds (R2T4)**

Students who withdraw from all coursework (including going on a Leave of Absence) and who do not complete more than 60% of their term of enrollment must have a portion of "unearned" federal funds returned to their source. For more information on PSR's R2T4, please view the policy [here](#).

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress and Academic Probation Policy**

After each semester, student transcripts are reviewed by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, who informs the Dean of any students not making satisfactory progress. Satisfactory progress is defined as:

- Cumulative GPA equal to or greater than 3.0.
- No more than five total incompletes for the MDiv and MDiv/MA and three total incompletes for all other programs.
- Completion of at least 75% of the course units for which the student was registered in a Fall or Spring semester term (the "W," "I," and the "F" indicate non-completion).
- Note that merit scholars may lose or compromise their scholarships if they do not meet satisfactory academic progress. For more information on this policy, consult the PSR Financial Aid page.

### **Academic Probation Policy**

A student who does not fulfill the conditions for satisfactory academic progress is automatically placed on academic probation. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs informs the student and advisor of this action. The student is required to meet with their advisor before the start of the semester.

The student is removed from academic probation if they are making satisfactory progress at the end of a probationary semester. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs informs the student and advisor of this action. *A student may remedy the situation for which probation was imposed by:*

- bringing one's GPA to the required level.
- original grade will remain, but the new grade will replace the D or F on the GPA. The new grade will appear with the course in the semester it was re-taken, and there will be a note on the original course grade that it has been remediated.
- satisfactorily completing the following semester's work if less than 75% of the coursework in the previous semester was completed.

If a student has not met the terms of satisfactory academic progress at the end of the probationary semester, a hearing with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Faculty Advisor is held before the end of the first week of the next semester. Based upon this hearing, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar may require a second hearing with the Dean present. At the conclusion of this second hearing, a recommendation will be made to the student's Advisor regarding the student's future status.

### Possible recommendations

**Continued Probation:** The recommendation for continued probation might be made if there were improvements in the GPA that would suggest that the student could reach the GPA required for graduation within a reasonable period or if the low cumulative GPA seems to be the result of an isolated semester of poor grades. If a student is permitted to continue probation for a second semester, the hearing will be repeated if the conditions for satisfactory academic progress are not met after the end of the second probationary semester.

**Dismissal:** If academic progress is not being made at the end of the probationary semester, the Dean may recommend that the faculty act to dismiss a student immediately. A student cannot apply for re-admission after dismissal for academic reasons for at least one year (two semesters) following the dismissal. Re-admission is contingent upon the approval of the Admissions Committee.

### Veterans Benefits and Yellow Ribbon Program

Pacific School of Religion is committed to providing veterans with theological education as part of our mission to make a world where all can thrive. PSR also participates in the Yellow Ribbon Program which applies to veterans eligible for the Post 9/11 GI Bill. Students who are veterans with previous graduate level coursework/ training in the program to be pursued will be evaluated upon enrollment and given appropriate credit. Evaluation will be based upon review of academic transcripts. Any allowed credit will be recorded in enrollment records, and the length of the program shortened proportionately. In addition, the student and the Department of Veteran's Affairs shall be notified. (Note: All prior graduate level course work and training not used to satisfy another degree will be evaluated. Upon completion of the course of study a degree will be conferred.) Students (including veterans) must maintain satisfactory academic progress. MA students must maintain a 3.0 GPA and be making acceptable progress towards

the completion of their program. Doctoral students must move through their program at an acceptable speed and complete an annual evaluation with their academic advisor. If a student does not make satisfactory progress, he or she is allowed one semester in the MA program and one year in the doctoral program to get back on track. An incomplete grade must be made up within three weeks of the end of the current semester. The faculty submit the grade three weeks after the work has been turned in to them. If no grade is turned in by the end of the sixth week after the semester, it will become a failing grade and will not count toward graduation requirements.

### Financial Aid Probation Policy

Federal standards require that students receiving federal assistance be in good standing and making satisfactory academic progress. Therefore, the student placed on academic probation is also placed on financial aid probation for up to one year. If the student regains satisfactory progress, financial aid will continue. If the student fails to meet the standards after two semesters of probation, aid will be discontinued. Students who exceed two semesters of academic probation and are in jeopardy of compromising their financial aid or enrollment status may request an appeal to this policy due to exceptional circumstances. Appeals must be made in writing to the Dean before the first day of the third semester on probation and must be the nature of the exceptional circumstances. In some cases, the Dean may consult the faculty for a decision on the appeal. Students who invoke the appeal process may do so only once during their program at PSR.

### Graduation and Degree Conferral

Degrees and Certificates are conferred twice a year: at the end of the Fall Semester and at the end of the Spring Semester. This is not to be confused with the Graduation/Commencement Ceremony. The graduation ceremony happens one time a year at the end of the Spring Semester. In order to be eligible to participate, your degree/certificate requirements must be met by the end of the Spring Semester. If you complete your requirements in the Fall term, you may file an [Intent to Graduate form](#), receive your degree/certificate for the fall term, and still choose to participate in the Graduation Ceremony at the end of the following Spring Semester.

Students must submit an [Intent to Graduate form](#) (please click on the link to access the form) the semester *before* they anticipate completing their program requirements. Ideally, the Assistant Dean and Registrar should receive the form prior to Early Registration for the coming semester so that they, and their advisor, can review the student's progress, and future registration, to assure program completion. Even if all program requirements are met, *students must have a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 for degree or certificate conferment*. The only exception are students planning to receive their Certificate of Special Studies which has a minimum GPA requirement of 2.0.

The Assistant Dean and Registrar will respond to the Intent to Graduate form prior to the start of General Registration for a student's anticipated final term. The correspondence will confirm (or deny) eligibility for degree conferment, eligibility to participate in the Graduation Ceremony, and notify the student of any outstanding requirements. The timing is so students can register or work on any requirements not yet met before the end of registration and/or the semester. Students may submit the Intent to Graduate form at any time during their anticipated final two semesters however those submitted after Early Registration or during the student's anticipated final semester are considered late and may render the student ineligible to participate in the Graduation Ceremony

It is the student's responsibility to understand their program requirements and not drop any course that is needed for degree or certificate conferral during their anticipated final semester. In the event a course must be dropped, or if they fail a required course, students should anticipate their program completion to be deferred and may lose eligibility to participate in the Graduation Ceremony.

Degrees and certificates will be conferred after successful completion of program requirements. Students can anticipate the reception of their diploma about two months after their degree conferral date. When filling out the Intent to Graduate form, please provide an address where you will be at the time the diploma is sent. Please avoid providing P.O. Boxes, and other small, locked mailboxes, as diplomas are large and do not fit.

At the Graduation Ceremony, students receive their diploma cover and are hooded by the Faculty Marshall. Master of Art and Doctor in Ministry students are specifically hooded by their faculty advisor. In the absence of the expected faculty, the Dean, Program Director, or Faculty Marshall will replace them and do the hooding. Students must get the approval of the Office of Academic Affairs if they wish for others to hood them.

**Please note:** Participation in the Graduation Ceremony in no way indicates degree/certificate conferral for students finishing their program requirements in the Spring. Degrees/certificates are only conferred upon the Assistant Dean and Registrar's confirmation of final grades and that all program requirements have been met.

## Forms

During the Fall semester prior to your expected graduation, graduating students will be asked to file an [Intent to Graduate form](#) and return it to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Registrar.

## Student Conduct and Special Needs Policy

The conduct of each student at Pacific School of Religion shall always be consistent with the character and purpose of the school as an educational institution committed to serving God by equipping leaders for ministries of integrity, compassion, and justice. On rare occasions in every institution, questions arise about whether a student's conduct on campus, in academic and non-academic settings, is compatible with the nature and purpose of the institution. When these questions arise, the school has established a Committee on Student Conduct to objectively assess the facts and recommend what action should be taken.

In the case of theological students, the Special Needs Policy, a sub-category of the Student Conduct Policy, may be invoked.

### Special Needs Policy

Pacific School of Religion (PSR) shares responsibility with the ordaining and commissioning agencies of churches and other religious communities for judgments concerning a person's fitness for professional religious leadership. Special needs policy and process involves, in part, the school's exercise of this responsibility. Master of Divinity (MDiv) students and other students preparing for ministry agree, by their enrollment at PS, to accept the policy and procedures described below as part of their education and to be bound by the decisions. These standards do not preclude the school's application of other



policies, such as those pertaining to the occupancy of school housing, academic discipline, and student conduct.

### **Student Conduct and Special Needs Policy**

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#### **Definition: Special Needs A "special need"**

Special needs refer to any situation or condition which brings into question the personal and professional development of a student that makes consultation and/or intervention necessary beyond the usual teacher-student or advisor-advisee relationship. In such instances, this process assesses questions of fitness and of professional development for ministry.

*Examples of possible special needs situations include but are not limited to:*

- personal and professional difficulties arising from field placement.
- matters of character, self-understanding or integrity that raise questions about the student's fitness, competencies, readiness or effectiveness for religious leadership.
- behaviors suggesting short- or long-term emotional difficulties which may impact the student's ability to attend to personal and professional development.

The primary purpose of this process is to identify needs relevant to the appropriate preparation for ministry and resources to meet those needs for students in the professional degree programs. When it does not appear that a student, in PSR's judgment, can appropriately attend to those needs, the policy may lead to limits on the range of the student's participation in PSR classes and other activities up to and including temporary removal from classes or permanent expulsion.

The following procedures refer to both Student Conduct and Special Needs cases unless a distinction is clearly stated. Before the completing of either policy procedure, the student shall retain all rights and privileges as a student unless the President and/or Dean, with the consultation of the Committee, determine that immediate suspension from student rights and privileges or greater on different sanctions is in the best interests of the School. At all times in this process, the school has all rights and obligations otherwise imposed by law to notify law enforcement agencies if appropriate. See the section on "Immediate Interim Suspension" for more details.

## Complaints

Specific reports about a PSR student shall be brought to the attention of the Dean's Office by a student, any faculty, staff, field education supervisor, on-campus residential member, or others with whom the student associates.

### Initial Respondent

Such reports may be referred to the Director of Community Life to be addressed informally and without reference to disciplinary measures (i.e., offering conflict management counseling, providing a referral to mental health services, or substance abuse treatment). If such a report is not informally resolved through the involvement of the Director of Community Life, the report may be referred to the Dean, and a phase of more formal information gathering will follow.

### Information Gathering & Policy Determination Phase

The Dean, or the Dean's designee, gathers preliminary information from relevant sources and decides if the situation warrants initiation of either the Student Conduct process or the Special Needs process or not.

The Dean, or the Dean's designee, notifies the student's advisor of the situation and meets with the advisor and one other member of the PSR faculty or staff (e.g., the Assistant Deans, Housing Director, etc.) selected by the Dean, normally within five business days following determination of either a Student Conduct or a Special Needs situation.

### Consultative Phase

1. The information-gathering phase leads to a consultation with the Dean, the student, the advisor, and, if needed, one more appointment at the Dean's discretion, considering the type of issues the alleged conduct raises. A course of action is outlined to define and deal with the student's conduct.
2. If the student accepts the proposed course of action, a written statement of the proposal and a signed statement of the student's assent are placed in the advisor's file, the Dean's office, and a copy is sent to the student.

### Committee Phase

1. If the student does not accept the proposed course of action if the Dean determines that the action plan needs to be brought by the student or for other good reasons, the Dean may convene a committee, normally within ten business days. The student will be notified in writing of the convening of the Committee.
2. The Committee shall consist of a. For Student Conduct: The Dean, Director of Community Life, Advisor, Faculty member, and, if needed, another appointment by the Dean. b. For the Special Needs: three Faculty members appointed by Dean for the academic year.

3. *The Dean serves as an ex officio member.*
4. The Committee reviews the case, the steps to date, and any relevant documentation. The Committee chooses a chair for its work with the student. The Committee will choose the recorder/secretary. The Committee sets a place, time, and date within ten business days for a hearing with the student.

### Hearing of the Committee

1. The student is informed in writing of the time, date, and location for the hearing with the special needs Committee at least four business days in advance.
2. These proceedings may be conducted without a student who fails to appear after proper notice.
3. The Committee and the student's advisor shall meet with the student in a hearing. Formal rules of evidence will not be used. Any person who disrupts the hearing may be excluded.
4. The student shall have the privilege of presenting to the Committee written or oral statements from others with knowledge of pertinent facts or presenting other pertinent materials.
5. If a psychological or other professional evaluation has been requested by the Committee, the professional who prepared the evaluation may be requested to appear at the hearing and to respond to relevant questions, upon request of any party if the chair of the Committee determines that such participation is important to the resolution of the case.
6. The Committee may require the attendance of people from the PSR community. The Committee may also request the attendance of people from outside the community, whose participation is deemed important to adjudicating the case.
7. The student may be accompanied by up to one person, such as a family member, a licensed mental health professional, a member of the faculty or staff, or a fellow student. The student may consult with, but not be accompanied by, an attorney. The student shall communicate to the Committee chair the name of the person who will accompany them to the hearing, doing so two days before the hearing.
8. The Dean or an individual identified by the Dean may record the hearing. This recording will be available only to the student, the Committee, and, if needed for the appeal, to the President. The Dean shall store this document or video for 90 days following the hearing.
9. When the Committee determines by majority vote that it has received all information necessary to its determination, it shall terminate the process and, in a private session, reach its decision with respect to the matter under consideration.

### Reporting

1. The Committee's decision shall be transmitted to the students in writing by the Dean or designee within five business days (if practicable) after the completion of the hearing. The written decision should contain a statement of reasons for the Committee's determination. In the case of a decision for expulsion, the student should be advised when or whether a petition for reinstatement would be considered, along with any conditions.

2. If the Committee decides not to affect the student's matriculation, it may initiate a process of consultation and/or action which it considers appropriate to meet the student's need. Examples of appropriate action include, but are not limited to the following: special training in study skills; the requirement of additional course work in writing or academic research skills; an appropriate term of psychological counseling; removal from or change of field education or internship placement; specified medical treatment; etc.
3. When in the judgment of the Committee a process has met the student's need, no further action is needed. A brief report shall be made to the faculty, enclosed in the student's file.
4. If the Committee decides affecting the student's matriculation, that is, expulsion or a conditional or non-conditional leave of absence, the chair shall present at the following executive faculty meeting as full a report as needed to inform the faculty of the case. The faculty may accept the report or, if presented with new substantive information within 30 days, ask the Committee to reconsider its decision.

## Plagiarism Policy/Academic Dishonesty

In the United States and many other countries, one of the important markers of high academic standards is proper attribution (giving credit) for someone else's ideas, thoughts, words, or methods of scholarship. Proper credit should be given in both oral and written contexts. Proper credit is:

- When you use an actual sentence from a published article or unpublished essay, including print and digital material, you must put the sentence in quotation marks and give a footnote or citation to indicate who said it. The citation should include full bibliographic information. (For further information about correct citation form, see Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*.)
- When you paraphrase or summarize another person's ideas, you must give a footnote or citation to indicate whose ideas they are and where you got them. (Or, in lecturing, make clear from whose ideas you are drawing.)
- When you adopt a significant idea from someone else's work, you must give a footnote or citation to indicate where you got the idea.
- When you use a method developed by someone else, you must give a footnote or citation to indicate the source of the method.

When you fail to do this, it is considered Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty. Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty can apply both to students and to faculty. Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty is using someone else's ideas, thoughts, words, or methods of scholarship as if they were your own and without giving proper credit to that person. Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty is considered wrong because (1) it is 'stealing' another person's ideas, methods, etc., and (2) it is 'lying' — representing something as your own when it is not yours. At PSR, as at many comparable graduate-level institutions, Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty is considered a serious offense.

- Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty includes failing to give citations in the examples above.
- Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty also includes copying another student's exam or part of an exam or essay.

It is not Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty when you indicate clearly that you are summarizing someone else's views in order to provide the context for an assessment or critique of those views, or to incorporate them into a larger project. In this case, you must indicate clearly that you are giving the views of someone else — e.g. by starting with "so-and-so argues that..." It is also not Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty to use a well-established idea that has been developed in multiple sources — e.g. to claim that God can be called "woman" as well as man is now sufficiently well established that it needs no attribution. Some phrases — e.g. "the personal is political" — are in such wide usage that sometimes we do not know where they originated; in such cases, it is acceptable to use them without attribution. However, the best scholarship will make every effort to give attribution where possible (e.g. to note that this phrase came from Robin Morgan).

### **Procedures and Penalties**

Instances of suspected Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty will be reported to the Academic Dean (or, in the case where the Dean is suspected of Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty, to the President). Suspected Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty may be reported by either students or faculty. The Dean or President will assess the evidence and investigate in order to determine whether Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty has occurred.

PSR's Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty Policy applies to all PSR students and PSR faculty, including but not limited to adjunct and visiting faculty. In all cases of reported Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty, source information of what was plagiarized (such as the name of the article, textbook, author, or the original source of ideas) must be submitted at the time the case is reported to the Dean's Office for at least one identified instance of Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty. Failure to comply with the policy may result in a re-evaluation of work accused of containing Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty by other PSR faculty and/or other administrators as assigned by the Dean or President.

### **In the Case of Students**

When Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty has been substantiated, the faculty person shall inform the dean's office (every instance of substantiated Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty must be reported to the dean's office so that Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty can be monitored). The faculty member will discuss the Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty policy with the student and the student shall fail the assignment.

Additionally, the student will sign a letter stating that they have committed Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty, have received a warning, and is aware of the consequences. A letter for each instance will be signed and placed in the student's file each time the student has committed Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty.

If, when reporting student Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty to the dean's office, it is discovered that it is the student's second attempt at Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty, the faculty member, dean, and student shall meet. The student will fail the course.

If a student plagiarizes a third time, the student shall be immediately expelled from the school.

Any student expelled for Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty will not be allowed to re-apply to PSR for a minimum of one year. If the student re-applies after one year, all documentation regarding instances of Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty and the institutional actions taken will be included in the admissions file for review. If the student is re-admitted and one more confirmed instance of Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty occurs after re-admission the student will be expelled again permanently with no option of returning.

### **In the Case of Faculty**

If allegations of Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty appear to be substantiated, the faculty member has been charged with "action justifying dismissal," and shall be dealt with according to the procedures described in the Faculty Manual. Faculty who serve on the Core Doctoral Faculty of the Graduate Theological Union are also subject to the Plagiarism policies and procedures of the GTU.

### **GTU Consortial Agreement Regarding Plagiarism<sup>2</sup>**

When a student from one GTU school is suspected of plagiarism in a course that the student is taking at another GTU school, the following protocol will be followed:

1. The faculty member teaching the course will notify the dean of the faculty member's school that the student has been suspected of plagiarism.
2. The dean of the faculty member's school will notify the dean of the student's school that the student has been suspected of plagiarism.
3. The faculty member will follow the policy of his or her own school in regard to possible consequences within the context of the course (e.g., failing grade on the assignment, failing grade for the course, etc.).
4. The student's school will be responsible for following its own policy in regard to possible consequences beyond the context of the course (e.g., warning, academic probation, expulsion, etc.)

### **Student Communication and Problem-Solving Policy**

The Pacific School of Religion is committed to nurturing a professional and fulfilling working and campus environment as well as open communication for all its employees and students. At all times students should seek to engage in respectful and courteous communication as outlined in the Covenant. However, if communication issues or problems arise among community members, students with complaints should refer to existing relevant and applicable policies and then discuss the issue with their

\* *Approved by the Council of Deans, April 2010*

fellow student/instructor/advisor. PSR values each student as a member of our community and encourages comments about how our campus environment can be improved.

### **Prohibition of Retaliation**

This policy prohibits retaliation against persons who report a grievance, assists someone with reporting a grievance, or participates in any manner in an investigation or resolution of a grievance case. Retaliation includes but is not limited to threats, intimidation, reprisals, and/or adverse actions related to employment or ability to participate in the educational program, including on-campus housing, on-campus dining, or other non-academic programs that are part of the educational program PSR provides.

### **Informal Problem Resolution**

It is the goal of PSR to maintain a collegial campus environment, which minimizes conflict and encourages the resolution of problems.

When possible and most beneficial to all concerned parties, it is preferred for problems to be resolved informally and at the lowest level of administrative intrusion. To that end the following steps are suggested:

#### **Between Students**

1. When a student is troubled by an incident that occurs with another community member, they should speak with the other community member to try to resolve the issue. *\*\* An exception to this process is in the case of sexual harassment or any other conflict in which there is a risk of harm to oneself or others, whether real or perceived. In such cases it is advised that the grievant cease any contact or communication with the presumed respondent and report to the Title IX coordinator (either the CBO, Patrick O'Leary, or, in the CBO's absence, the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs and Registrar, Janett Cabanero), deputies, other appropriate PSR employee, or local authorities.*
2. If the issue is not resolved between the two community members, the grievant (the student) should consult the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs and Registrar, Janett Cabanero, and/or Director of Community Life, Ann Jefferson, in order to review existing student and institutional policies that may address the complaint more specifically.

#### **Between Students and Faculty**

1. In the case of a student who is troubled by an incident that occurs with their own instructor or advisor, they should speak directly with the instructor/advisor to resolve the issue.
2. If the issue is not resolved in this fashion, the student should consult the Assistant Dean, Dean, and/or Director of Community Life.

### **Policies for Formal Student Grievances (Specific)**

It is recommended that all existing policies that are more specific to the nature of the complaint be consulted before invoking a grievance. These policies may include:

- Sexual Harassment Policy

- Academic Disputes Policy
- Student Conduct/Special Needs Policy
- Drug Free Policy
- Housing Policy

However, in an organization of this size and with such diversity, problems may arise that do not necessarily fall into the categories above. It is for such cases that the following grievance procedure has been adopted.

### **Policy and Procedures for Formal Student Grievances (General)**

If a satisfactory resolution is not reached through the informal grievance process, the grievant may begin the formal procedure by advising the Dean in writing, using the forms provided in the addendum.

The Dean (or designee) will promptly inform all parties named in the grievance and will then appoint a Formal Grievance Panel consisting of members as described in the Grievance Panel matrix.

### **Individuals Covered by this Policy**

This grievance policy applies to currently registered and active students of the Pacific School of Religion.

### **Types of Matters and Disputes Covered**

Matters which may be grieved through this process include:

- those related to the application of the PSR student program manual
- any disputes or complaints arising between two or more community members when the grievant is covered by this grievance procedure.
- Grievances *against* persons or *by* persons not covered by this procedure: **do not follow these procedures**

In order to provide for prompt and efficient evaluation of and response to grievances, PSR has established the practice of an initial informal procedure as described above. There will be no discrimination against or toward anyone for their part in presenting grievances or against or toward the person against whom the grievance is brought, regardless of the outcome of the matter.

### **Structure and Conduct During a Grievance Hearing**

PSR will ensure that a training session is conducted for the co-conveners, as well as provide the full panel an orientation to the grievance process.

### **Formal Grievance Panel Guidelines**

The Grievance Panel is charged with investigating the grievance and making a written recommendation for its resolution.



### The Panel shall

- establish its own procedures for the conduct of its investigation
- have full authority to obtain any necessary documents and discuss the grievance with any related party(s)
  - Panel requests to meet with the grievant or for more information from the grievant will be communicated in writing
    - The grievant must provide a documented response<sup>3</sup> to the request within five (5) business days of the Panel's request or the grievance will be denied.
- keep all information received and reviewed by the Panel in strict confidentiality
  - All information related to this grievance obtained by the Panel members is strictly confidential and may be used only for the purpose of resolving the grievance both during and after the grievance process.

### The investigation may include, but is not restricted to

- discussions with any parties directly involved
- review of any applicable institutional policies or state/federal laws
- examination of any written documentation as presented by the parties directly involved (i.e.: memos, letters, etc.).

## Composition of Formal Grievance Panels

### Staff Respondent

- Co-Chair of Grievance Panel: 1 Administrative Staff, appointed by the Chief Business Officer
- Co-Chair of Grievance Panel: 1 Support staff member, appointed by the Chief Business Officer
- 1 Seminary employee selected by Grievant
- 1 Seminary employee selected by Respondent

If the grievant is a student: 1 student representative

If the grievant is a faculty member: 1 faculty representative

### Faculty Respondent

- Co-Chair: Chair of the Faculty Association, or a faculty member appointed by the Dean
- Co-Chair: 1 Administrative staff member, appointed by the Dean
- 1 Seminary employee selected by Grievant
- 1 Seminary employee selected by Respondent

If the grievant is a student: 1 student representative

If the grievant is a staff member: 1 support staff representative

### Student Respondent

- Co-Chair: Dean or designee
- Co-Chair: Assistant Dean or Director of Community Life
- 1 Seminary employee selected by Grievant
- 1 Seminary employee selected by Respondent

If the grievant is a staff member: 1 support staff representative

If the grievant is a faculty member: 1 faculty representative

### Notes

- The VP for Academic Affairs and Dean (referred to as “dean” in this policy) or the Chief Business Officer (referred to as “CBO” in this policy) will appoint members of the Panel specified as “representatives” after consultation with appropriate Seminary staff and faculty.
- Adjunct faculty will be treated as faculty for the purposes of this policy.
- Employees who hold both faculty and staff responsibilities will be treated as faculty or staff depending on the situation being grieved. The President will make this determination.

### Rights and Restrictions of the Grievant and Respondent

The Grievant and Respondent each have the right to meet directly with the Grievance Panel.

### Legal Counsel

- Neither the grievant nor the respondent may have their legal counsel present during the formal grievance procedure.
- However, should it be desired, a written statement may be given to the Panel from an attorney for the grievant or respondent.
- In addition, the grievant and respondent, when called to participate in a hearing, may bring a PSR employee as a Not-taker;
- Note-takers may not address the committee or respond to questions posed to the grievant or respondent.

### Panel Recommendations

The Panel may recommend any remedies including any disciplinary consequences up to and including dismissal.

In any case in which dismissal is recommended by the Panel, the Panel’s recommendation shall be made by written report to a Review Group.

## Dismissal Review Group

The membership of the Review Group is designed to provide a balanced decision. If any of these people are implicated in the grievance, they shall be recused from this review group.

### The Review Group shall be made up of:

- In the case the dismissed party is an employee: The Chief Business Officer (or designee), direct supervisor of the employee whose dismissal is being recommended, and an Administrative Staff member.
- In the case the dismissed party is a student: The VP for Academic Affairs/Dean (or designee), Assistant Dean/Registrar, dismissed student's advisor, and Director of Community Life (or designee)

### Dismissal Review Procedure

- One or both Grievance Panel co-conveners will present the dismissal recommendation to a meeting of the Review Group to explain the reasons for the recommendation and to answer questions that may arise.
- After reviewing the recommendation from the Panel, the Review Group will make the final decision regarding the recommended dismissal and document the reasons for its decision.
  - The Review Group may make additional recommendations to the Grievance Panel (e.g. disciplinary actions rather than dismissal, changes to policies, etc.) but the final decision on all recommendations OTHER THAN DISMISSAL are made by the Grievance Panel.
- At the end of the investigation (including decisions by the Review Board) the Grievance Panel shall submit a written report outlining its recommendations to the grievant and any other parties involved and affected in the grievance and the Dean.

In cases of discipline short of dismissal, the Panel's written decision shall be delivered to the grievant and respondent (and affected parties) by a member of the Grievance Panel and shall be considered a final decision.

If dismissal is recommended, the Dean (or designee) and the direct supervisor (if the dismissed person is an employee) will deliver the written decision to the person being dismissed in person. A member of the Grievance Panel and the Dean (or designee) will deliver in person the written decision to the others affected by this action.

### Formal Grievance Time Expectations

The Grievance Panel will normally conclude the investigation of the grievance no later than twenty-two (22) business days after the Dean formally received the complaint.

If this timeframe is impossible to achieve, the grievant will be provided the reasons for the delay.

### Grievance Appeal

The decision of the Panel (including the decision of the Review Group) shall become final within five business days, unless the grievant, the person against whom the complaint was lodged, or a person whose dismissal resulted from this process appeals the decision to the President.

If a grievance is denied due to missed deadlines and the grievant believes there are extenuating circumstances, they may request an exception. The Grievance Panel in consultation with the Dean shall determine if an exception can be made to this guideline.

### **Appeal Procedure**

Appeals must be made in writing within five (5) days of receipt of the Grievance Panel or Review Board's decision.

The President will only accept an appeal if it is based on at least one of the following criteria:

1. An allegation that the grievance panel process was not in conformity with prescribed procedures.
2. An allegation that there is new information or other relevant facts not brought out in the original hearing, enough to alter a decision, because such information and/or facts were not known to the person appealing at the time of the original investigation by the Grievance Panel.

The President will decide on whether to accept the appeal and will notify the grievant about the next steps. The President's decision is final.

### **Conclusion of the Process**

All documentation developed during the formal grievance process shall be turned over to the Dean who will keep copies for official files.

## **Sexual Harassment Policy**

Below you'll find policies and resources for students related to Sexual Harassment at PSR. All active PSR students (registered or unregistered) are required to complete an online Sexual Harassment Training powered by CampusAnswers/WorkPlaceAnswers by the end of the calendar year in which they entered. For more information or to sign up for a training, contact the Assistant Dean and Registrar.

### **PSR Sexual Harassment Policy**

Pacific School of Religion (PSR) is committed to providing a work environment and educational community in which all persons who participate in PSR programs and activities can work and learn together in an environment free of all forms of harassment. Every member of the PSR community should be aware that such behavior is prohibited by law and institutional policy and that PSR will take appropriate action to prevent, correct, and discipline behavior that is found to violate this policy.

For PSR's disclosures and policies regarding the [Clery Report](#) which covers instances of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, rape, and other instances of sexual violence, battery and assault, please refer to our [Clery Report](#), updated annually.

This policy applies to all students, faculty, staff, and others who participate in PSR programs and activities.

### **Definition of Sexual Harassment**

In general, sexual harassment is defined as inappropriate, unwelcome, or offensive conduct whether verbal, physical or otherwise where:

- Submission or rejection to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment or education.
- Submission or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment or educational decisions; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or education, or creating and intimidating, hostile or offensive working or educational environment.

For example, sexual harassment often involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or offensive sexual jokes.

Harassment that is not sexual in nature but based on gender, gender identity, gender expression, sex- or gender- stereotyping and/or sexual orientation is also prohibited by PSR's non-discrimination policies if it is sufficiently severe to deny or limit a person's ability to participate in or benefit from PSR's educational programs, employment, or services. While discrimination based on these factors may be distinguished from sexual harassment, these types of discriminations may contribute to a hostile work or educational environment and thus may be considered in cases regarding sexual harassment.

This policy covers unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. For other cases involving harassment of a non-sexual nature please refer to PSR's harassment, student conduct, grievance, and/or non-discrimination policies.

### **Reporting Sexual Harassment**

Employees or students who believe they are being harassed should promptly notify their supervisor or the PSR Title IX Coordinator or a Title IX Deputy. Investigation and resolution of complaints will be handled by personnel trained to investigate harassment allegations.

Supervisors, faculty members, staff, or any "first responder" who become aware of a sexual harassment situation, whether created by employees or non-employees, by students or non-students, should immediately notify the Title IX Coordinator. "First responders" may include but are not limited to the Director of Community Life and Spiritual Care, a faculty advisor, an administrator, building managers, the HR Director, or any individual who has direct access to personnel who has the authority to officially

respond and take action on a sexual harassment case. These designated employees have an obligation to respond to reports of sexual harassment, even if the complainant requests that no action be taken.

Prompt reporting will enable PSR to investigate the facts, determine the situation, and provide an appropriate resolution or disciplinary action. PSR shall respond to reports of sexual harassment brought up to one calendar year from the time of the alleged incidence, taking into consideration the amount of time transpired since the alleged incident occurred.

Complainants are also reminded that they may file a report with law enforcement when applicable.

PSR shall respond to the greatest extent possible to reports of sexual harassment brought anonymously or brought by third parties not directly involved in the harassment, with the understanding that the response and investigation from such anonymous or third-party reports may be significantly limited if information cannot be verified by direct parties.

### **Complaint and Resolution Procedures**

As your institution, Pacific School of Religion has adopted a firm policy against sexual harassment. Every reasonable step will be taken to prevent harassment from occurring. However, if you believe that you have been unlawfully harassed, we urge you to report the incident immediately so that your complaint can be resolved quickly and fairly.

#### **Procedures for Early Resolution**

Early Resolution options may be recommended when the parties involved desire to resolve the situation cooperatively and/or when a more formal investigation or resolution procedure is less likely to lead to a satisfactory outcome. Early Resolution may involve an inquiry into facts, but typically does not involve a formal investigation. Options for Early Resolution may include but are not limited to:

- Mediating an agreement between the parties
- Separating the parties
- Referring the parties to counseling program
- Negotiating an agreement for disciplinary actions
- Conducting targeted educational and training programs
- Providing remedies for the individuals harmed by the offense

The person(s) leading the Early Resolution may choose to schedule separate discussions with the parties involved, make recommendations for resolution, and/or conduct follow-up after a period the chosen response has been implemented.

All parties needing further advice or counseling on matters addressed by this policy are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator, an appropriately designated Deputy, the HR director and/or the Director of Community Life and Spiritual Care.

## Procedures for Formal Investigation

For cases in which Early Resolution may not be appropriate or lead to a satisfactory outcome, PSR may conduct a Formal Investigation. If the complainant does not want to pursue a Formal Investigation, then PSR's ability to investigate and respond will be limited. The following are the steps for a Formal Investigation:

Provide a written or oral complaint to the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy as soon as possible after the Incident. Include all details regarding the incident, names of individuals involved, and names of any witnesses

The Title IX Coordinator or Deputy will appoint an individual as Investigator who is well versed with the PSR Sexual Harassment Policy and trained in conducting investigations if the Coordinator/Deputy will not be leading the investigations themselves. The Investigator shall not be an individual for whom either party may hold a position of authority over.

The Investigator will undertake an effective, thorough, and objective investigation of the allegations. The Investigation will generally include interviews with each party, interviews with other witnesses as needed, and review of relevant documents. Disclosure of facts to parties and witnesses shall be limited to what is reasonably necessary to conduct a fair and thorough investigation. Participants in an investigation will be reminded that maintaining confidentiality is essential to protecting the integrity of the process.

Upon request, the complainant and the accused may each have one (1) representative present when they are interviewed.

At any time during the investigation, the Investigator may recommend interim protections or remedies for the complainant or witnesses to be provided by PSR. These interim protections may include but are not limited to placing limitations on contact between the parties, modifying work or housing arrangements, etc. Non-compliance of these interim protections may be considered violation of the Sexual Harassment Policy.

The investigation will be completed as soon as possible but at the latest within 60 working days of the filing of the complaint.

The investigation will result in a written report that will include at minimum: a statement of the allegations and issues, the positions of each party, a summary of the evidence, findings, and a determination by the Investigator as to whether the Sexual Harassment policy has been violated. The report also may contain a recommendation for actions to resolve the complaint including recommended disciplinary measures. This report is kept in the office of the Title IX Coordinator and may be used as evidence in subsequent complaints or appeals.

The complainant and accused will be notified in writing when the investigation is completed. The notification will include the following information

- Whether the Sexual Harassment Policy was or was not violated.
- Disciplinary actions or sanctions up to and including expulsion or termination

## For the Accused

- All sanctions imposed
- For the complainant & other related parties:
- Only sanctions imposed that directly relate to and affect the complainant and other related parties on a need-to-know basis
- The accused may give explicit written permission to disclose all sanctions to the complainant and related parties if they choose to
- The complainant and the accused may request a copy of the Investigator's report.

## Procedures for Appeal

In an unsatisfactory result occurs at the conclusion of the Formal Investigation, the complainant may file a Formal Grievance. Please refer to the PSR Grievance Policy and Procedure.

Sexual harassment is prohibited by state and federal law. In addition to the procedures above, individuals may pursue complaints directly with government agencies that deal with unlawful harassment such as the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

## Retaliation

This policy prohibits retaliation against persons who report sexual harassment, assists someone with reporting sexual harassment, or participates in any manner in an investigation or resolution of a sexual harassment case. Retaliation includes but is not limited to threats, intimidation, reprisals, and/or adverse actions related to employment or ability to participate in the educational program, including on-campus housing, on-campus dining, or other non-academic programs that are part of the educational program PSR provides.

## Intentionally false reports

Because sexual harassment frequently involves interactions between persons that are not witnessed by others, reports of sexual harassment cannot always be substantiated by additional evidence. Lack of corroborating evidence or "proof" should not discourage individuals from reporting sexual harassment under this policy. However, individuals who make reports that are later found to have been intentionally false or made maliciously without regard for truth may be subject to disciplinary action.

## Conflict of Interest Related to Consensual Relationships

There may be special risks in any sexual or romantic relationship between individuals within the PSR community, and parties in such a relationship assume those risks. Even when both parties have consented at the outset to a romantic involvement, this past consent does not remove grounds for a charge based upon subsequent unwelcome conduct.

Where such a relationship exists, the person in the position of greater authority or power will bear the primary burden of accountability and must ensure that they do not exercise any supervisory or evaluative function over the other person in the relationship. Where such a recusal is required, the recusing party must also notify their supervisor, dean, or HR Director so that they can exercise their responsibility to



evaluate the adequacy of an alternative supervisory or evaluative arrangement to be put in place. The responsibility of recusal and notification lies with the person of greater authority or power.

In rare situations where it is not possible to provide alternative supervision or evaluation, the supervisor, dean, or HR Director must approve all evaluative and compensation actions and decisions.

### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

PSR protects the privacy of individuals involved in a report of sexual harassment to the extent required by law. In times when it may be required to disclose certain personal information, PSR will make every effort to redact records or remove identifiers when possible. Only sanctions that directly relate to or affect the complainant will be disclosed to the complainant or other relevant parties unless the accused gives written permission for all sanctions to be disclosed to the complainant or other relevant parties.

An individual's requests regarding confidentiality of reports of sexual harassment will be considered in determining an appropriate response. However, such requests will be considered along with context of campus and individual safety as well as the context of the institution's legal obligation to ensure a working and educational environment free from sexual harassment.

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for maintaining records relating to sexual harassment reports, investigations, and resolutions. Records shall be maintained in accordance with PSR archiving and record-keeping policies, generally five years after the complaint is resolved. Records may be retained longer at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator in cases where parties have a continuing affiliation with PSR.

### **Sexual Harassment Resources**

*The Title IX Coordinator for Pacific School of Religion is Natasha Lee ([Nlee@psr.edu](mailto:Nlee@psr.edu))*

### **The Coordinator's Duties Include**

Training and supervision of Title IX Deputies who may function as the central sexual harassment officer in different contexts (example: deputy for student vs. student cases; deputy for staff vs. staff cases);

- Oversee, develop, and implement sexual harassment education and training programs in coordination with Human Resources and Student Services departments.
- Update Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures as federal and state regulations change.
- Maintain records of reports of sexual harassment per PSR practices.
- Prepare and submit an annual report to the Office of the President summarizing PSR sexual harassment complaint activity.

*Title IX Deputies are formally trained by the coordinator to interpret and implement the policy in contexts that may be specific to the department, setting, or classification of individuals involved.*

- [The Registrar](#) for student vs. student cases

- Natasha Lee ([nlee@psr.edu](mailto:nlee@psr.edu)) for employee vs. employee cases
- *Office of Community Life and Spiritual Care* Pacific School Religion
- Ann Jefferson ([ajefferson@psr.edu](mailto:ajefferson@psr.edu)) provides a safe space to initially discuss a possible sexual harassment case for individuals of all classifications (student, staff, faculty).

### Office for Civil Rights

The Office for Civil Rights serves student populations facing discrimination and the advocates and institutions promoting systemic solutions to civil rights problems. An important responsibility is resolving complaints of discrimination. Agency-initiated cases, typically called compliance reviews, permit OCR to target resources on compliance problems that appear particularly acute. OCR also provides technical assistance to help institutions achieve voluntary compliance with the civil rights laws that OCR enforces. An important part of OCR's technical assistance is partnerships designed to develop creative approaches to preventing and addressing discrimination.

### Policy Review and Evaluation

This policy is effective July 1, 2014. It is subject to periodic review and any comments or questions may be addressed to the Title IX Coordinator.

### Sexual Harassment Prevention

[Title IX](#)

### Sexual Violence and Assault

[Campus Save Act](#)

[PSR Clery Act](#)

### Bystander Intervention

[National Sexual Violence Resource Center](#)

[Catharsis Productions: And I'm Glad I Did It Bystander Intervention PSA 1 \(1:10\)](#)

[Step Up-American University video \(5:25\)](#)

Step Up, is an award-winning bystander intervention program, adopted by American University, which uses five steps to teach students how to intervene in situations including sexual assault, alcohol abuse, mental health emergencies, hazing, and more. This film has been created by American University's Office of University Communications and Marketing and the Office of Campus Life.

### Organizations

[Faith Trust Institute](#): a national, multifaith, multicultural training and education organization with global reach working to end sexual and domestic violence.

[Love Is Respect](#): The Love Is Respect Website offers information on how to recognize dating violence and seek help.

Office on Violence Against Women: Established by the Violence Against Women Act, the Office on Violence Against Women is designed to reduce violence against women and strengthen resources for all survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking.

National Domestic Violence Hotline: Established by the Violence Against Women Act, the National Domestic Violence Hotline provides twenty-four-hour support for people facing domestic violence.

Stalking Resource Center: Part of the National Center for Victims of Crime, the Stalking Resource Center provides assistance and guidance for those impacted by stalking.

NotAlone.gov: This government-sponsored Website contains resources on responding to and preventing sexual assault in schools.

Pandora's Project: Nonprofit organization dedicated to providing information, support, and resources to survivors of rape and sexual abuse and their friends and family since 1999.

Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN): This nonprofit organization has a twenty-four-hour hotline for anonymous support for people dealing with sexual assault and their friends and families.

The National Suicide Prevention Hotline: This nonprofit organization has a twenty-four-hour, toll-free confidential suicide prevention hotline.

VAWnet: National online resource on Violence Against Women. A comprehensive and easily accessible online collection of full-text, searchable materials and resources on domestic/intimate partner violence, sexual violence and related issues.

### **Reporting Suspected Ethical Violations**

Report suspected ethical violations to: [DeansOffice@psr.edu](mailto:DeansOffice@psr.edu)