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Academic Norms ~ p. 0 ~ Seminarian Handbook
I. INTRODUCTION

These academic norms constitute Mount St. Mary’s Seminary policy regarding the intellectual formation program as it applies to both students and faculty.¹

II. INTELLECTUAL FORMATION OF FUTURE PRIESTS

The Program of Priestly Formation (2006) addresses the intellectual formation of future priests (PPF 136-235). It explains that disciples are learners. The first task of intellectual formation is to acquire a personal knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. The deepening and appropriation of this knowledge is not simply for personal possession. Rather, intellectual formation has an apostolic and missionary purpose and finality (PPF 137). Intellectual formation culminates in a deepened understanding of the mysteries of faith that is pastorally oriented toward effective priestly ministry, especially preaching (PPF 138). It demands academic integrity (PPF 138). “The overall goal of every stage of seminary formation is to prepare a candidate who is widely knowledgeable about the human condition, deeply engaged in a process of understanding divine revelation, and adequately skilled in communicating his knowledge to as many people as possible (PPF 138).

The study of philosophy is fundamental and indispensable to the structure of theological studies, and is usually at least two full years in length (PPF 152). It is not just an intellectual formation, but closely connected to human, spiritual, and pastoral formation. “Philosophy serves as a guarantee of that certainty of truth which is the only firm basis for a total giving of oneself to Jesus and to the church” (Pastores Dabo Vobis 52). Philosophy must include the study of ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary philosophy as well as logic, epistemology, philosophy of nature, metaphysics, natural theology, anthropology, and ethics. Students should develop critical and analytical abilities and become clearer thinkers who will be better able rationally to present, discuss, and defend the truths of the faith (PPF 156). It must be grounded in the perennially valid philosophical heritage and the philosophy of Aquinas should be given significant treatment (PPF 181). Other great Christian theologians who were also great philosophers should be treated (PPF 157).

Pre-theology should include 30 hours of philosophy, and students who lack a solid liberal arts education should be provided a curriculum that supplies for lacunae in this area. The Catholic intellectual tradition in literature and the arts should be part of such curriculum as well as Latin, Greek, rhetoric and communication (PPF 161-62, 182).

Theological education begins and ends in faith, is apostologically motivated, and integrated with other elements of human understanding especially philosophy and the human sciences (PPF 163). It must be rigorous, both academically and pastorally in its orientation (PPF 163). The theological curriculum is described in detail, with attention paid to homiletics, synchronic and diachronic methodology in scripture, the various theological methods, respect for both the traditional and contemporary modes of theological expression and explanation, fidelity to the magisterium, etc.

¹ The “Academic Policies & Regulations” regarding courses offered by Mount St. Mary’s University are listed in the current undergraduate catalog. Other policies governing undergraduate student conduct are contained in the university’s Student Handbook.
Regarding degrees to be offered (PPF 231), the PPF sees the Master of Divinity degree program as the recognized standard for preparation for ordained ministry, supplemented by the Master of Arts (theology), and the S.T.B. degree programs. Seminarians are normally expected to obtain the Master of Divinity and/or the S.T.B. degree prior to ordination (232). The Mount program is in compliance with the requirements of the PPF.

III. REGISTRATION

A. ENROLLMENT

1. Registration: Students enrolled in the seminary register for classes through the Seminary Registrar’s office according to posted schedules and procedures. Typically registration for the next semester occurs two weeks after the mid-semester break. Seminarians may also register for undergraduate classes through the Seminary Registrar with permission of the Academic Dean. No student will receive credit for any subject taken in a class or section for which he has not been duly registered by the Seminary Registrar.

2. Course Load: Full-time students may register for no more than 18 and no less than 12 credits per semester.

3. Pass/Fail and Audit Courses:
   a. Selected practica courses (HOML 701/702 Models of Preaching/ Homiletics practicum, LITY 801 Penance practicum, LITY 802 Mass practicum, PTHL 003 Pre-theology Formation Pro-Seminar, as well as the Pastoral Music and Pastoral Field Education placements) are graded either Pass (“P”) or Fail (“F”) and do not contribute quality points towards the grade point average calculations.

      1) There is no option for seminarians to choose to take other courses for pass/fail at Mount St. Mary’s.

   b. Seminarians may choose to audit courses (i.e. attend and participate without receiving credit) only with the approval of the seminary Academic Dean, and provided that space is available in the course.

      1) To receive the audit grade (“AU”) on the transcript, the student must satisfy attendance and any other course requirements set by the professor for an official audit.²

      2) After the last day of “drop/add” (at the end of the first week of classes), the student may not change enrollment status from audit to regular grade or vice versa.

² “A student may audit a course, i.e., attend and participate without receiving credit, provided that space is available in the course and written permission of the instructor is obtained.” (Academic Policies, undergraduate catalog)
B. **DROP/ADD COURSE POLICY**

1. Drop/add forms for either seminary or undergraduate classes are available from the Seminary Registrar. They must be completed by the student and returned to the Seminary Registrar’s office for approval by the Seminary Academic Dean before the deadline.

2. The deadline for the change of any course, change in enrollment status (credit/audit), the discontinuance of any course, or the change of section is **noon of the fifth day of classes** for that semester. The Seminary Academic Dean must approve all changes.

C. **INDEPENDENT STUDY/TUTORIAL COURSES**

1. In exceptional cases, independent study or tutorial courses may be permitted in order to accommodate a student for whom there is no other practical manner in which to fulfill a program or degree requirement.

2. Permission for any independent study or tutorial must be sought from the professor, the department chair, and the Seminary Academic Dean.

   a. The Independent Study/Learning Agreement form (available from the Seminary Registrar) must be completed and submitted for approval before the end of the drop/add period.

   b. In the case of an independent study elective to be counted towards the M.A.P.S. degree program, permission must be sought from the Director of M.A.P.S. in addition to the Seminary Academic Dean, prior making arrangements with a professor for such a course.

4

IV. **COURSE WORK**

A. **SYLLABI:**

1. At the beginning of each course, the professor will provide a syllabus to each student for all courses taught at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary, cores and electives. This may be posted on the course management software (Moodle). The professor also submits an electronic copy of all syllabi to the appropriate folder on the campus network shared seminary drive **no later than** the end of the second week of classes for the seminary’s academic archives.

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3 "An independent study is an advanced-level study taken with a faculty mentor, generally within a student’s major…. Satisfactory completion of independent study must involve a substantial scholarly or creative project that the student designs in concert with the mentor…. Independent studies must be approved in advance by the faculty mentor, the mentor’s department chair, and the dean of undergraduate studies. A tutorial is a specially offered version of a regular course, taken by a student because he or she does not have the opportunity to take it in the ordinary way…. Tutorials must be approved in advance by the faculty mentor, the mentor’s department chair, and the dean of undergraduate studies." ([Academic Policies](#), undergraduate catalog)

4 Refer to the Norms of the Master of Philosophical Studies (available as an appendix to these Academic Norms)

5 "Each faculty member at Mount St. Mary’s is free to devise any system of student evaluation that is based on reason and results in professional judgments of student academic performance and achievement. Ordinarily, this means faculty members base grades on the following criteria: understanding of material; articulation and communication of course material; application and integration of material; fulfillment of basic course requirements. “Faculty and students share an understanding that: A=Excellent; B=Good; C=Satisfactory; D=Poor; F=Failure. Grading policies for each course must be published in the syllabus distributed at the beginning of the semester.” ([Academic Policies](#), undergraduate catalog)
2. The syllabus shall contain at least the following:

a. the code and title of the course (as listed in the catalog); number of hours per week the course meets for the number of weeks in the semester (e.g., 3 hours per week/15 weeks or 2 hours per week/10 weeks)

b. professor’s name, academic rank, and credentials

c. course description (8-10 lines)

d. bibliography (5-10 titles of required texts)

e. place of this course in the curriculum, in the Formation Program Goals, in the specific degree programs

f. expected outcomes, goals, objectives for the course (no more than 6 statements)

g. course requirements (specific readings, papers, exams – with due dates, detailed instructions, and the percentage weight of different course requirements for the final grade calculation)

h. availability of professor outside of class times

i. grading – how it is based and what determines the final grade (showing the seminary grade scale* - unless the course is Pass/Fail), plus any penalties for the late submission of required work or unauthorized absences

j. *Seminary grade scale -- effective fall 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade point</th>
<th>Grade range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>96-100</td>
<td>Exceptional performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>93-95</td>
<td>Excellent work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>89-92</td>
<td>Very good work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>83-88</td>
<td>Good work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>Acceptable work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>Below average for graduate work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>74-76</td>
<td>Poor work for a graduate degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>70-73</td>
<td>Deficient work for a graduate degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Less than 70</td>
<td>Failure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Required Reading

1. Although there is no absolute norm regarding the quantity of reading normally required for a graduate level course, students should generally expect to devote more time to reading outside of the classroom than they devote to attending classes.

2. The university bookstore carries all required textbooks. The Phillips Library provides a reserve shelf for texts specified by the professor. The use of “Moodle” or other campus-standard course management software is expected. Photocopying is available in the library as well as in the seminary at a reasonable cost. All copyright laws shall be respected by students and faculty.
C. EXAMINATIONS

1. **Midterms**: A midterm exam (or its equivalent) shall be given in every seminary course about the middle of the semester. These shall be graded promptly. The student and the Seminary Registrar shall be made aware of any midterm academic deficiencies (*see below*).

2. **Finals**: Final examinations in the core courses will be scheduled by the Seminary Registrar and are to be administered at that time as part of the contact hours for the course. The exam schedule is generally available at the time of registration (or by the beginning of the semester) so that appropriate travel arrangements may be made in advance. The professor will determine whether an oral or a written examination will be given. Departments shall take care that students regularly are required to take written exams. Final examinations in elective courses are given on the last day of class.

D. PAPERS/Written Reports

1. Departments shall take care that all students regularly are required to submit research papers in the core classes.
   
   a. Details regarding written requirements for M.A.(theology) degree candidates are given below.

2. **General Norms**: The seminary follows the Turabian style sheet, and accepts its preference for footnotes rather than endnotes. Students are encouraged to own a copy of the most recent edition: Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996).

E. ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE

1. The Writing Center, located in the Phillips Library, is available to seminary students to help them develop skills in writing analytically and critically.

2. Learning Services, located in the Archbishop William Borders Learning Center, provides assistance to students seeking confidential academic accommodations.

3. Writing Pro-Seminars:
   
   a. A writing pro-seminar (MDIV 500) “Making Good Papers Better” is required of all first theologians (1T’s). Three sessions of about 75 minutes will be scheduled near the beginning of the fall semester each year and taught by a seminary professor. The content of the sessions includes: an overview of the writing process, with particular attention on the requirements for papers written during first theology, training regarding proof-reading fellow students’ papers to improve coherence and clarity, and instruction in the Turabian style of documentation.

   b. A writing pro-seminar is required of all first year pre-theologians (P1’s) as a part of the PTHL 003 Pre-Theology Formation Pro-Seminar. Two or three sessions of about 50 minutes will be scheduled near the beginning of the fall semester each year and taught by a seminary professor. The content of the sessions includes: an overview of the writing process, with particular attention on the requirements for papers written during the first year of pre-theology, training regarding proof-reading fellow students’ papers to improve
coherence and clarity, and instruction in the Turabian style sheet and MLA documentation.

F. **STUDENT COURSE EVALUATIONS**

1. All students are expected to complete an evaluation for each of their classes.
   a. The evaluations will be available online through the “Portal” during the final third of the semester and should be completed before the end of the final examination week (and the grades are submitted). The evaluation consists of rating standard statements regarding the teaching of each course, the student’s rating of their accomplishment of the goals set for the course (as exhibited on the syllabus), and a freeform section for comments about the course (which can be particularly helpful for the ongoing review and revision of the curriculum).
   b. Seminarians’ access to their personal information on “Portal” (grades, finances, etc) will be blocked during the time that the evaluation forms are made accessible until the final grades have been processed. The personal information will continue to be blocked until all course evaluations for that semester have been completed.
   c. Seminarians in undergraduate/graduate philosophy classes may be asked to complete seminary evaluation forms for those classes, as well as any course evaluations administered by the philosophy department.

2. Only the Seminary Registrar (who does the compilation) and the Rector have access to the raw data of the evaluation forms. Faculty members receive a compilation of the evaluations and comments after the final grades are received for the semester.

V. **MASTER OF ARTS (THEOLOGY) DEGREE PROGRAM**

The following specifies the procedures for registering for the Master of Arts (theology) degree program, research portfolio or thesis, comprehensive examination, and withdrawal from the degree program or any aspect of it.

A. **ADMISSION**

1. **Requirements:** (as listed in the catalog)
   a. Bachelor’s degree or the equivalent from an accredited college
   b. At least 18 undergraduate credits in philosophy
   c. For ordination program candidates:
      1) Approval from the sponsoring diocese to enter the M.A. (theology) degree program
      2) Endorsement (signature) of formation advisor

2. **Process:**
   a. Lay students: completion of the seminary’s short application forms and the application form for the area of concentration (approval of diocese and endorsement of formation advisor is not applicable for such candidates).
b. Seminarians: completion of the application form for one of the concentration areas available from the Seminary Registrar’s office.

c. Forms are available from the Seminary Registrar. Seminarians typically are admitted to the M.A. (theology)/M.Div. dual-degree program at the time of the fall registration into second theology.

B. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

1. Successful completion of the following foundational (first theology) graduate courses with an average of at least 2.50 (or permission of the Seminary Academic Dean)
   - MORL 501 Fundamental Moral Theology I
   - SCRP 501 Introduction to Biblical Studies: Wisdom & Psalms
   - SCRP 501 Christian Spirituality
   - SYST 501 Revelation, Faith, and Theology

2. Successful completion of the minimum 48 credits required with a cumulative average of 3.0; including 12 credits of foundation courses, 12 credits of concentration core courses; 9 credits of other cores, 6 credits of electives in the area of concentration and their concomitant research projects (details regarding the research projects portfolio below), plus 6 additional credits to be specified by the degree candidate. In addition the candidate must successfully pass an oral comprehensive exam (details below).

3. Seminarians must complete all degree requirements by the end of their fourth year of theology. Lay students must complete their program no later than four years from initial matriculation (see below for the thesis option deadlines). Any exceptions must have the approval of the Academic Dean.

C. PORTFOLIO OF WRITTEN RESEARCH PROJECTS

1. Electives and Concomitant Research Projects: M.A. (theology) candidates must take and pass three electives in their area of concentration according to the requirement specified in the catalog. The electives, in general, earn two credits and are given letter grades. M.A. (theology) candidates concomitantly register for an independent directed research project corresponding to each of the three electives. Each directed written research project is given a letter grade and earns one credit.
   a. The final copy of the project is due at the end of the semester in which the concomitant elective is taken. Any grade of “I” (incomplete) must be resolved according to seminary policy (see below). There are no additional extensions given for research projects. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that the final copy with the professor’s approval signature has been submitted to the Seminary Registrar’s office for their portfolio.
   b. The three successfully completed papers together comprise the portfolio of the M.A. (theology) candidate and are filed with the Seminary Registrar. No paper may be added to the portfolio with a grade of lower than 3.0. Departments may establish policies requiring specific courses or professors for the electives and or research projects.
2. **Requirements for Written Research Projects**: Each paper shall present a well-researched point in church history, moral theology, pastoral theology, sacred scripture or systematic theology in a clear, organized and reasoned way. The candidate shall demonstrate the ability to formulate an outline, discern and employ appropriate literature needed to research the topic thoroughly, to state the facts and positions in an intelligible manner, to discern and present the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments which have been investigated, and to draw an appropriate conclusion.

3. **Length and Style**: The written text shall be a minimum of 15 standard pages (about 250 words per page), exclusive of notes and bibliography. The director must agree to the candidate’s choice of topic. The director will provide guidance through the outline, research, and draft stages of the written research project, and will award a letter grade to the completed work. Mount St. Mary’s Seminary requires the Turabian style sheet and its preference for footnotes rather than endnotes. Projects will not be approved which rely too heavily on internet resources.

4. **Grading**: Research papers are awarded a letter grade which reflects the quality of the research and writing. Those awarded less than a “B” (3.0) may not be added to the portfolio, but the student may have one additional attempt at repeating such a research course.

5. **Final Copy**: The Seminary Registrar shall maintain a final copy of each of the written research projects in the student’s academic file. Three completed works comprise the M.A.(theology) portfolio. The official final copy of each research project should be in a format suitable for a three-ring binder, complete with a [basic standard format of wording for the title page] with a place for the director to sign and date the approval is to be followed (see sample). The professor is to submit the approved papers to the Seminary Registrar along with the semester grades for the course (or grade change request form, in the case of an incomplete). It is the student’s responsibility to make sure that this has been done in a timely manner.

**NOTE:** This sample is not proportionate; please use a 12-point font consistent with the body text.

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**MOUNT ST. MARY’S SEMINARY**
**EMMITSBURG, MARYLAND**

**RESEARCH PAPER TITLE**
A Research Writing Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master of Arts (Theology) degree program.

**BY**
**DEGREE CANDIDATE’S NAME**
in conjunction with the elective course
(specify title and semester)

Approved by ______________ Date __________
(Signature of Director)
D. Thesis Option

1. Distinction between a Thesis and a Research Portfolio: M.A.(theology) candidates, with the approval of the Academic Dean, may opt to write a thesis instead of taking two of the three electives with their concomitant research and writing projects. Because the thesis requires more extensive research and writing, six credits are awarded. At the Master's level one would not expect the thesis to produce some new discovery. It must, however, give evidence of research and knowledge in greater depth than is expected in a research portfolio. It can also treat questions that have a broader scope, since more time is allotted for this project.

2. Beginning the M.A.(theology) Thesis Project: It is the responsibility of the candidate to approach a prospective director for the M.A.(theology) thesis from those teaching in the area of concentration, as soon as possible after the candidate enters the M.A.(theology) program. The director must agree to the choice of topic, to guide the candidate’s research, outline, and draft stages, and to give or withhold final approval to the completed project. The department chair will designate a second reader for the thesis.

3. Stages to be Completed in Second Theology: At a meeting before the end of second theology, the candidate and director should have a preliminary discussion of possible topics, should review the thesis topic proposal form (available from the registrar), and plan a schedule to meet its deadlines.

4. Stages to be Completed in Third Theology: The completed form and required one-page summary of the nature of the proposed M.A.(theology) thesis (its major questions, methodology, and limit, and the proposed authors to be studied) are submitted to the director and second reader no later than November 1. After any adjustments to the thesis topic proposal have been made, the director, the second reader, and the department chair must signify their approval and file the proposal form with the Seminary Registrar no later than December 15. If the director is the department chair, the signature of an additional member of the department is sought. Mount St. Mary’s Seminary encourages candidates to begin work on their outline and research during their third year. After the thesis topic has been approved, the M.A.(theology) thesis must be registered for as a three-credit elective class for the first and second semesters of fourth theology.

5. Stages to be Completed in Fourth Theology: Candidates should submit a draft outline and bibliography to the director no later than September 1. Approval of the department is required for any extension. Papers must receive final approval of the director no later than March 31 to qualify toward a May commencement.

6. Length and Style: A recommended average length for the M.A. (theology) thesis is approximately 150 to 200 pages, exclusive of bibliography. The candidate should outline the thesis in such a way as to present the research adequately within this limit. The thesis must use correct grammar, style, and technical form. Mount St. Mary’s Seminary follows the Turabian style sheet, and accepts its preference for footnotes.

7. Grading: Upon approval, the thesis is graded by the director (first reader) and the second reader. Only a grade of "A" or "B" will be accepted and entered on the student’s transcript and averaged in with the other courses in order to arrive at the final grade point average.
(GPA). The title of the approved thesis appears on the student’s transcript. If it should happen that the two faculty readers are in disagreement as to the acceptability of the thesis, a third reader shall be assigned by the Seminary Academic Dean after consultation with the faculty in that area of concentration and the vote of that reader shall decide the issue.

8. **Final Copy:** The official final copy of the M.A. (theology) thesis should be signed by the director and second reader, submitted in a format suitable to be bound in a three-ring binder, and kept on file with the seminary. A basic standard format for the title page with a place for the director and second reader to sign and date the approval is to be followed (see the sample above for the research paper).

   a. Courtesy demands that a copy be given to the Ordinary, the director, and the second reader. Copier centers offer various binding services for any additional copies needed. The thesis must be completed within five years of initial matriculation into the M.A. (Theology) degree program.

E. **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

1. **Purpose:** The exam shall measure the candidate’s mastery of a body of theological knowledge as well as the ability to synthesize.

2. **Time of the Exam:** Offered in March of fourth theology, candidates are automatically registered for the comprehensive examination during registration for the spring semester. Only registered candidates may take the exam. The deadline for withdrawal (which must be made in writing to the Seminary Registrar) is two weeks prior to the examination. A no-show is counted as a failure, emergencies excepted.

3. **Study Guide:** After registering for the exam in the fall of fourth theology (or in the fall of the year a non-ordination program candidate plans to take the comprehensive examination), the candidate will receive a study guide consisting of three synthetic questions prepared by the department of concentration which should incorporate materials from the cores taken in the other disciplines in so far as possible. The study guide may, at the discretion of the department, include some bibliography should the department wish to offer it as a sort of reading list.

4. **Method of the Examination:** Each student will be examined by a team composed of the professors in the department of concentration for a 30 minute oral examination. Departments establish the specific procedures for the oral examination. The exam consists of any or all of the study guide questions. The Academic Dean designates one member of each board of examiners as the “chair of the exam.” It is the responsibility of the chair to keep time, to determine the ordering of the three 10-minute sections of the oral examination, to call for a vote at its conclusion, and to report the result of the examination to the registrar. *In exceptional cases a written comprehensive exam may be authorized by the Seminary Academic Dean (see V. F. below).*

5. **Passing the Examination:** After the candidate is excused, each examiner votes individually either pass or fail. Each judges both the merits of the answers given to questions he or she posed as well as the overall performance of the student in the examination as a whole.
Candidates pass the comprehensive exam by obtaining a unanimous vote of pass. Departments may record pass/fail or pass/fail/distinction for the comprehensive examination. The chair of the exam delivers the results to the Seminary Registrar, who announces the result to the candidate. The student is told the overall grade of pass or fail, not the individual vote of members of the examining board. The individual votes remain confidential. Nevertheless, any student who has failed is free to meet individually with members of the examining board to seek advice as to how to prepare for an eventual second attempt.

6. **Policy on seminarians who choose not to sit for the scheduled M.A.(theology) comprehensive examination**: Seminarians are required to complete all M.A.(theology) requirements before the end of their fourth year theology. Seminarians are automatically scheduled to sit for the M.A.(theology) comprehensive examination when they register for their final semester of study, usually in their fourth year. Students who are scheduled to take the M.A.(theology) comprehensive examination are exempt from the requirement of taking an elective in their final semester of seminary study. Subsequent failure to sit for the examination will count as one failed attempt at the comprehensive examination and will be recorded as such. In such a case the seminarian has only one remaining opportunity to take and pass the comprehensive examination. This may take place no sooner than the semester following his failure to sit for the originally scheduled examination, and no later than 1 year after the failure. He may still earn the M.A.(theology) degree (assuming all other requirements are met before he completes his final semester). However, if he fails to complete the other requirements or fails the exam or fails to take it in that timeframe, he is no longer eligible to earn the degree.

7. **Retaking the Comprehensive Exam**: Candidates who fail the comprehensive exam are permitted one additional attempt to pass the exam (usually no sooner than fall semester following their first attempt). The second attempt involves preparing the new study guide and sitting for the 30-minute exam as described above. The board of examiners will not necessarily be the same.

   a. It is the M.A.(theology) candidate’s responsibility to contact the department chair and request the rescheduled exam. The chair will set a date and establish a board of examiners and determine the study guide for the exam. It is expected that the exam be given face to face (in person) at the Seminary.

   b. The department chair shall inform the academic dean when and if the comprehensive exam date is set. If the exam is passed and all other requirements are met, the degree will be awarded at the graduation ceremony the following May.

**F. WRITTEN COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION** (*for exceptional cases, only*)

1. **Developing Examination Questions for Written Comprehensive Examinations**: A board of three examiners, one of whom is also named the chair, is selected by the Seminary Academic Dean. They meet and determine the three synthetic questions for the written examination. These may include any or all of the questions from the oral exam study guide for that year. The chair submits the questions to the Seminary Registrar who mails the assembled packet to the M.A. (theology) candidate in a sealed envelope.
2. Proctor: Written examinations are to be proctored. This is to be arranged by the candidate. Directions are given to the student on the sealed envelope containing the exam. The proctor is asked to sign a statement on the envelope, as follows: “I have monitored the M.A. (theology) candidate’s comprehensive exam, which I received in this sealed envelope. The candidate was allowed a total of 90 minutes to complete the questions. The candidate did not use any books, notes, or other materials in preparing the written response other than the one page prepared outlines which are being included with this exam.”

3. Written Comprehensive Examination Process:
   a. The candidate may not exceed 90 minutes to complete the questions chosen from the alternatives offered.
   b. The comprehensive exam consists of questions based on the three synthetic questions of the study guide. The candidate may use word-processing technology or may write out the answers in ink on lined paper or in the blue books provided with the exam. A separate blue book or sheets of paper should be used for each section of the exam. The candidate is to return the original envelope signed by the proctor, the exam questions sheet, and his or her answers to the Seminary Registrar in the envelope provided for that purpose as soon as possible. The written exam will be considered void and the attempt a failure if the exam is not returned within one month of its receipt.

4. Grading for Written Comprehensive Exams:
   a. Each examiner votes individually either pass or fail. Each judges both the merits of the answers given to questions he or she posed, as well as the overall performance of the student in the examination as a whole. Departments may record pass/fail or pass/fail/distinction for the examination. Candidates pass the written comprehensive exam by obtaining a unanimous vote of pass.
   b. The chair of the exam delivers the results to the Seminary Registrar, who announces the result to the candidate. The student is told the overall grade of pass or fail, not the individual vote of members of the examining board. The individual votes remain confidential.
      1) Nevertheless, any student who has failed is free to meet individually with members of the examining board to seek advice as to how to prepare for an eventual second attempt. A minimum of two weeks should be allowed for notification of the results of a written examination.

5. Retaking Written Comprehensive Exams: Only two attempts are permitted of the comprehensive examination, regardless of the format.

G. M.A. (THEOLOGY) DEGREE COMPLETION

All degree requirements, as specified in the catalog, must be completed by seminarians by the end of their fourth year of theology. Non-ordination program candidates must complete their program no later than four years from initial matriculation. Students who opt for a thesis must complete all degree requirements within five years of the date of matriculation.
1. Candidates are considered currently enrolled in the program from the date of matriculation until either they complete the degree, officially withdraw, or allow the time limit to expire.

2. The Seminary Academic Dean and the department chair must approve any request for an extension due to extraordinary circumstances.

H. HONORS AT GRADUATION

The graduation honors are calculated from the cumulative grade point average of the minimum 48 credits earned for the M.A. (theology) degree: summa cum laude (3.85 to 4.00); magna cum laude (3.65 to 3.84); cum laude (3.50 to 3.64). Such honors will be noted on the transcript along with other pertinent details about the M.A. (theology) degree program.

I. WITHDRAWAL FROM THE M.A. (THEOLOGY) DEGREE PROGRAM

1. The Seminary Registrar must be notified in writing by the student of their intention to withdraw from the M.A. (theology) program (with copies given to the formation advisor and vocation director). The transcript will show an indication of withdrawal from the M.A. (theology) program. If currently enrolled in any coursework for the M.A. (theology) program, the intention to withdraw from such courses must also be clearly communicated to the Seminary Registrar (and the proper drop/add - withdrawal form completed).

2. Seminarian candidates withdraw from the M.A. (theology) program only with the consultation of their formation advisor and the approval of the diocese, since this same process was required to enter the program.

3. Students who withdraw from the M.A. (theology) program will be readmitted to the degree program only with the consent of the Seminary Academic Dean and the chair of the department in which the student intends to concentrate. This shall occur only in exceptional circumstances.

J. WITHDRAWAL FROM A RESEARCH COURSE

1. Before the deadline for withdrawal from seminary courses: As in all other seminary courses, the student must submit a written explanation to the professor with a copy to the formation advisor and the Seminary Academic Dean explaining the reasons for the proposed withdrawal. No student may withdraw from a course after the fourth week of the semester without penalty. Students who withdraw are given a “W” on their transcript. A “W” is not calculated in the determination of the GPA.

2. After the deadline for withdrawal from seminary courses: A grade of “F” is given to a student who drops a seminary research course after the deadline, but who is not dropping out of the M.A. (theology) program. The grade of “F” is entered on the transcript and calculated in the determination of the GPA.

3. Withdrawal from both research course and M.A. (theology) program: A grade of “WF” is given for withdrawal from a seminary research course after the deadline on the condition that the student is withdrawing not only from the course but also from the M.A. (theology) program. The grade of “WF” appears on the transcript. A “WF” is not calculated in the determination of the GPA.
K. Failure of a Research Course

1. A student fails the 1-credit research course if he does not submit the required paper on time. A grade of “I” may be given following the procedures for Incompletes described elsewhere in these norms (X.E.). Otherwise, a grade of “F” is entered on the transcript, and the term and cumulative grade point average is calculated accordingly.

2. With the consent of the professor, a student may repeat any such (one or more) research course one additional time. The student is not required to repeat the concomitant elective(s) if this course has already been taken and passed. Transcripts will indicate a retake. If a passing grade is earned, the cumulative GPA will be recalculated based on the retake grade with the previous attempt forgiven.

L. Failure to Earn a Grade of at Least “B” in a Research Project

A student who does not earn at least a “B” in a research project may not submit that project to become part of the required M.A. (theology) research portfolio. In this case the student may repeat any such (one or more) research course one additional time. If a higher grade is earned, the cumulative GPA will be recalculated based on the retake grade with the previous attempt forgiven.

VI. Master of Divinity (M.Div.) Degree/Ordination Formation Program

A. Academic Requirements

The requirements for the Master of Divinity degree and the ordination formation program are listed in the current MSM Seminary Catalog (posted on the seminary website), along with descriptions for core and elective courses. All course credits applied to the M.Div. degree should be earned (at the Mount or another appropriately accredited graduate-level institution recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or by the Congregation for Catholic Education in Rome) within ten years of the awarding of the degree. The provisions of the catalog are not to be regarded as an irrevocable contract between the seminary and the student. The Seminary reserves the right to change any provisions or requirements at any time. Its general practice is to make no provisions retroactive, unless necessitated by changes in the Program of Priestly Formation (PPF) or other compelling causes.

B. Pastoral Field Education

See the Pastoral Formation section of the Seminarian Handbook (posted on the seminary website) for specifics.

C. Priesthood Integration Assessment

A comprehensive examination given to Fourth Theologians focusing on the pastoral application of the theological and canonical courses the seminarian has already successfully passed. The PIA is a 30-minute oral assessment given before the Rector and two other priest faculty members with broad parish experience. The questions of the Assessment address cases which may confront a newly-ordained priest during his first year in the parish. During the discussion of the cases with the priest assessors, the seminarian must prudently apply the theological and
canonical knowledge he is already presumed to possess to these pastoral cases. It involves aspects of dogmatic, scriptural, moral, sacramental, canonical and psychological issues faced in a normal parish setting. The Fourth Theologians are provided a Study Guide with these questions to help them prepare for the exam.

D. **Honors at Graduation**

The graduation honors are calculated from the cumulative grade point average of all courses taken in the four years of the ordination formation program (pre-theology coursework not included): summa cum laude (3.85 to 4.00); magna cum laude (3.65 to 3.84); cum laude (3.50 to 3.64). Such honors will be noted on the transcript. See the *Seminary Catalog* for other academic prizes that may be awarded.

E. **Withdrawal from the M.Div. degree/Ordination Formation Program**

1. In addition to the procedures outlined in the *Seminarian Handbook*, Tab-6 “Directives for Community Living” (posted on the seminary website), any student withdrawing from the seminary must ask the Seminary Registrar to withdraw enrollment from all current courses and degree programs.

2. An international student, who plans to withdraw early and transfer to another school, must inform the Seminary Registrar/DSO of that intent. An international student who withdraws early from their degree program (and is not transferring) has 15 days to leave the USA. However if dismissed or withdraws without informing the DSO, the student must depart the USA immediately (there is no grace period). Failure to maintain status with SEVIS can have serious consequences for the international student’s future ability to visit, study, or work in the USA.

VII. **Bachelor of Sacred Theology (S.T.B.) Degree Program**

A. **Purpose**

The degree of Bachelor of Sacred Theology provides the student with a solid, Thomistic, organic, and complete instruction in theology at the basic level. As a first-cycle ecclesiastical academic degree, it enables graduates to pursue further studies in the sacred sciences. The degree is a prerequisite for further pursuit of an ecclesiastical licentiate degree, and is also accepted for further study in universities of the European Union where the M.Div. is not recognized.

B. **Admission Requirements**

The following prerequisites for admission will be evaluated by the Seminary Academic Dean who may, in individual cases, allow the student to remedy particular deficiencies during the first year of the program:

1. A bachelor’s degree (B.A./B.S./or its equivalent) from an accredited college or university.
2. Superior achievement and the ability to pursue graduate work as indicated by the transcript of previous studies (with a minimum GPA of 3.00).

3. An undergraduate foundation in philosophy, including a minimum of 36 credit hours. Courses should include: ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary philosophy, logic, ethics, metaphysics, epistemology, natural theology, philosophical anthropology, political philosophy, and cosmology.

4. A reading knowledge of Latin.

C. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Course Work**: A minimum of 110 semester hours of credit is required with the following distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISCIPLINE (# credits)</th>
<th>MOUNT ST. MARY’S SEMINARY COURSES</th>
<th>HOURS PER WEEK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundational (21)</td>
<td>CANL 601: Introduction to the Code of Canon Law</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CANL 702: Marriage Law and Sanctifying Office</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>LITY 502: Introduction to the Liturgy</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MORL 501: Fundamental Moral Theology I</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MORL 502: Fundamental Moral Theology II</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SPIR 501: Christian Spirituality</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>SYST 501: Revelation, Faith, Theology</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Systematic (23)</td>
<td>SYST 502: Theology of the Tri-personal God</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SYST 605: Grace I: Protology &amp; Anthropology</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SYST 606: Grace II: Grace and Theological Virtues</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SYST 705: Christology and Soteriology</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SYST 707: Ecclesiology I</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SYST 803: Ecclesiology II: Ecumenism and Missiology</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SYST 911: Mariology</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SYST 920: Thomistic Seminar</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sacramental (10)</td>
<td>SYST 604: Sacraments: Baptism and Confirmation</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SYST 704: Holy Orders</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SYST 801: Sacraments of Healing: Penance and Anointing</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SYST 802: Holy Eucharist</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moral (15)</td>
<td>MORL 602: Justice and Social Teachings of the Church</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MORL 801: Catholic Medical and Sexual Morality</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>MORL 802: Sacrament of Marriage and Pastoral Care</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>MORL 907: Readings from the Summa I</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MORL 908: Readings from the Summa II</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scripture (21)</td>
<td>SCRIP 501: Intro to Biblical Studies/Wisdom and Psalms</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>SCRIP 502: Pentateuch and the Historical Books</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SCRIP 601: The Prophets</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SCRIP 602: Matthew and Mark</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SCRIP 702: Johannine Writings: Gospel, Revelation, and Letters</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SCRIP 801: Pauline Letters and Pastoral Letters</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church History (12)</td>
<td>CHUR 501: Patrology and the Church of the Fathers</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CHUR 502: Gregorian Reform and the Protestant Reformation</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CHUR 601: Modern/Contemporary Church History</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CHUR 802: History of the Church in the U.S.A.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral Theology (8) includes attendance at, in addition to the Formation Seminars, 2-day (10 hour) fall and spring workshops</td>
<td>ORDN 501: 1T Formation Seminar: Living Celibacy Well</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ORDN 502: 1T Formation Seminar: Theology of the Body</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ORDN 601: 2T Formation Seminar: Priest as Public Person</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ORDN 602: 2T Formation Seminar: Praying as a Parish Priest</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ORDN 701: 3T Formation Seminar: Priest as Servant Leader, I</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ORDN 702: 3T Formation Seminar: Priest as Servant Leader, II</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ORDN 801: 4T Seminar: Transition Seminary to Parish, I</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ORDN 802: 4T Seminar: Transition Seminary to Parish, II</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Semester Credit Hours (not including PHIL, LATN or GREK) for the S.T.B. degree** → 110

**NOTE:**
- 3 credit courses meet for 3 hours per week over a span of 15 weeks (150 hours of instruction);
- 2 credit courses meet for 3 hours per week over a span of 10 weeks (100 hours of instruction);
- 1 cr. Formation Seminars meet for 75 minutes per week over 15 weeks (50 hours of instruction).

2. **Language Requirements** Students must demonstrate a reading knowledge of New Testament Greek and Ecclesiastical Latin.

3. **Grade Point Average** The student must maintain a grade point average of 3.00 or above in the S.T.B. requirements.

4. **Comprehensive Exam** The S.T.B. comprehensive exam consists of written and oral examination. Normally the student takes the comprehensive examination during the eighth semester of study. The subject matter is material covered in the courses in systematic and sacramental theology, moral theology, and Scripture. A study guide of the themes or theses is given to the candidates. A series of preparatory and synthesis sessions is provided to those registered for the S.T.B. comprehensive. In order to pass, a student must receive an average grade of 3.0 on the exam. A candidate for the S.T.B. degree may not continue candidacy after two failures in the comprehensive examination.

   a) **Composition of the Examining Board:** The board of examiners will consist of four professors, one each from the areas of Sacred Scripture, Systematic Theology, and Moral Theology, and one examiner from the Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception (of the Dominican House of Studies).

   b) **Structure of the Examination:**

   i) **PART ONE: Written Component** A three-hour long written examination in which the candidate for the S.T.B. will be asked to write on three of the questions from the study guide, one each from the assigned areas of sacred scripture, systematic theology and moral theology. In each area the candidate will be able to choose from three possible questions.

   ii) **PART TWO: Oral Component** A three-quarters of an hour long exam before three faculty members and a representative of DHS who will examine the candidate in all of the assigned areas. Questions may be drawn from any of the themes. The Oral Component of the S.T.B. examination will be scheduled as soon as possible after the Written Component, preferably no later than three days. During the Oral Component of the examination, a complete set of themes will be provided for reference by both the candidate and the examiners. The candidate should bring a Bible to the oral examination.
c) **Purpose of the Examination**

   i) The principal purpose of the Written Component of the S.T.B. Examination will be to test the candidate’s ability to expose theological materials, with special emphasis (as appropriate) on the pertinent contributions of historical and positive theology.

   ii) The principal purpose of the Oral Component of the examination will be to test the candidate’s ability to order these materials towards a reasoned theological judgment or conclusion.


d) **Grading of the Examination**

   i) The following grades may be assigned for each part of the exam: A (4.0); A- (3.75); B+ (3.5); B (3.0); B- (2.75); C+ (2.5); C (2.0); F (0).

   ii) The grade for the S.T.B. comprehensive examination is the average of all grades submitted by the examiners (written and oral components), with a minimum average of 3.0 needed for each component. Each examiner will assign a grade evaluating only those sections of the examination which he administered. No student will be admitted to the oral component without having received the minimum average for the written component. If the candidate has not met the 3.0 benchmark for the oral component, he need repeat only this component.

   iii) No student will be admitted to the oral component without having passed the written component (minimum 3.0). The grades for both the oral and written components of the comprehensive examination will be available from the Office of the Seminary Academic Dean.

5. **Honors at Graduation**

   a) Honor grades are computed according to the following method: S.T.B. Course work: 75%, Comprehensive Examination: 25%.

   b) The graduation honors are: summa cum laude (3.90 to 4.00); magna cum laude (3.70 to 3.89); cum laude (3.50 to 3.69). Such honors will be noted on the transcript along with other pertinent details about the S.T.B. degree program.

6. **Residency and fees**

   a) The residency requirement for the S.T.B. degree is eight semesters.

   b) A $200.00 per year S.T.B. fee is charged (billed $100 each semester after matriculation in the S.T.B. degree program).

   c) A non-refundable $25.00 diploma fee (check payable to the “Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception”) is due prior to taking the comprehensive examinations in spring of Fourth Year.

7. **Transfer credit:** Students may transfer up to thirty (30) credits taken from an ecclesiastical faculty or other institution granting canonical degrees through affiliation with an ecclesiastical faculty.
D. **Withdrawal from the S.T.B. Degree Program**

1. Seminarian candidates withdraw from the S.T.B. program only with the consultation of their formation advisor and the approval of the diocese, since this same process was required to enter the program.

2. The Seminary Registrar must be notified in writing by the student of their intention to withdraw from the S.T.B. degree program. The transcript will show an indication of withdrawal from the program.

3. Students who withdraw from the S.T.B. degree program will be readmitted to the degree program only with the consent of the Seminary Academic Dean. This shall occur only in exceptional circumstances.

E. **Model S.T.B. Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Pre-Theology — Fall Semester (prerequisite courses)</th>
<th>[hours per week over 15 weeks]</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LATN 950</td>
<td>Ecclesiastical Latin I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 202</td>
<td>Logic and Philosophical Methods</td>
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<td>PHIL 311</td>
<td>Ancient Philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTHL 001</td>
<td>Catechism and Catechetics I</td>
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<td>PPHL 901</td>
<td>Cosmology</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Pre-Theology — Spring Semester (prerequisite courses)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LATN 960</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHIL 301</td>
</tr>
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<td>PHIL 312</td>
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<td>PTHL 002</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Second Pre-Theology — Fall Semester (prerequisite courses)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GREK 950</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHIL 313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 521</td>
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<th>Second Pre-Theology — Spring Semester (prerequisite courses)</th>
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<tr>
<td>GREK 960</td>
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<td>PHIL 314</td>
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<td>PHIL 318</td>
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<td>PPHL 506</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Theology — Fall Semester</th>
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<tr>
<td>CHUR 501</td>
<td>Patrology and the Church of the Fathers</td>
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<td>MORL 501</td>
<td>Fundamental Moral Theology I</td>
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<tr>
<td>ORDN 501</td>
<td>1T Formation Seminar: Living Celibacy Well</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCRP 501</td>
<td>Introduction to Biblical Studies/ Wisdom and Psalms</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPIR 501</td>
<td>Christian Spirituality</td>
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<td>SYST 501</td>
<td>Revelation, Faith, Theology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plus required Workshop on Catechetics</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Theology — Second Semester</th>
<th>[16 hours]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHUR 502</td>
<td>Gregorian Reform to Protestant Reformation</td>
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<tr>
<td>LITY 502</td>
<td>Introduction to the Liturgy</td>
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<tr>
<td>MORL 502</td>
<td>Fundamental Moral Theology II</td>
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<tr>
<td>ORDN 502</td>
<td>1T Formation Seminar: Theology of the Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCRP 502</td>
<td>Pentateuch and the Historical Books</td>
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<tr>
<td>SYST 502</td>
<td>Theology of the Tri-personal God</td>
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<tr>
<th>Second Theology — Fall Semester</th>
<th>[13 hours]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHUR 601</td>
<td>Modern and Contemporary Church History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CANL 601</td>
<td>Introduction to the Code of Canon Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORDN 601</td>
<td>2T Formation Seminar: Priest as Public Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCRP 601</td>
<td>The Prophets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYST 605</td>
<td>Grace I: Protology and Anthropology</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Second Theology — Spring Semester</th>
<th>[16 hours]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MORL 602</td>
<td>Justice and Social Teachings of the Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORDN 602</td>
<td>2T Formation Seminar: Praying as a Parish Priest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCRP 602</td>
<td>Matthew and Mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYST 604</td>
<td>Sacraments: Baptism and Confirmation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYST 606</td>
<td>Grace II: Grace and Theological Virtues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYST 920</td>
<td>Thomistic Seminar</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Third Theology — Fall Semester</th>
<th>[13 hours]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ORDN 701</td>
<td>3T Formation Seminar: Priest as Servant Leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MORL 907</td>
<td>Readings from the <em>Summa</em> I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYST 705</td>
<td>Christology and Soteriology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYST 707</td>
<td>Ecclesiology I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above program is shown starting on an even-year (such as AY 2012/2013).

VIII. DEGREE DISTINCTION

A. MASTER OF DIVINITY (M.DIV.)

The Master of Divinity degree is a fully accredited basic professional degree oriented towards ministerial leadership. Designed to foster basic theological understanding and develop pastoral competence on the part of students preparing for ministry, it is the normative degree to prepare seminarians for ordained ministry. It includes a thorough study of the Catholic theological heritage and its faithful contemporary expression and a supervised practice of ministry. The degree conforms to the standards of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). All seminarians entering first theology are enrolled in the M.Div. program.

B. MASTER OF ARTS (THEOLOGY)

The Master of Arts (theology) degree is a fully accredited graduate academic degree. It provides students with competence in the study of theology as a scientific discipline. It includes both the attainment of survey knowledge of theology as well as a focus in an area of concentration for study and research writing in church history, moral theology, pastoral theology, sacred scripture, or systematic theology. Conforming to the standards of the ATS, it can be of particular value for those interested in teaching positions or who hope to enter Ph.D. programs.

C. BACHELOR OF SACRED THEOLOGY (STB)

The Bachelor of Sacred Theology degree provides the student with a solid, Thomistic, organic, and complete instruction in theology at the basic level. As a first-cycle ecclesiastical academic degree, it enables graduates to pursue further studies in the sacred sciences. The degree is a prerequisite for further pursuit of an ecclesiastical licentiate degree, and is also accepted for further study in universities of the European Union where the M.Div. is not recognized.
D. DUAL DEGREE CANDIDACY

Qualified students at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary may enroll in one of the dual degree programs. The Mount offers two such programs, each with its own focus, entrance requirements, curriculum, and concluding exercise. Students may choose between an M.Div./M.A.(theology) combination or an M.Div./S.T.B. combination.

IX. PRE-THEOLOGY FORMATION PROGRAM

At the conclusion of Second Pre-theology students are awarded a “Pre-Theology Formation Program” certificate if they have completed at least one year of residency at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary. The certificate represents the completion of the formation program, with its four pillars: Human, Spiritual, Intellectual, and Pastoral formation, which normally includes 60 academic credits of which 30 are philosophical studies. In exceptional cases students may be awarded the certificate if they have six credits or less remaining to take in required philosophical studies coursework.

Seminarians in the Pre-Theology Formation Program may qualify to enroll in the Master of Arts in Philosophical Studies (M.A.P.S.) degree program through the University’s Philosophy Department (see the M.A.P.S. norms or the Mount St. Mary’s University Graduate School catalog for further details)

X. DISCIPLINARY QUESTIONS

A. ATTENDANCE

1. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes for which they are registered. Unexcused absences (“cuts”) are not permitted and are subject to penalty.

2. Permission to miss class must be obtained, in advance whenever possible, from the professor and from the Seminary Academic Dean. This permission is to be obtained in writing when an overnight absence from the seminary is anticipated. Absence from the seminary is also treated in the Directives for Community Living in this handbook.

B. TARDINESS

1. Punctual class attendance is the norm. Courtesy demands that an explanation for tardiness be given to the professor.

2. Professors are free to penalize tardiness. This should be addressed in the course syllabus.

C. CLASSROOM CONDUCT

1. Seminarians are expected to behave as mature adults and as men preparing for Holy Orders. Consequently, private conversations during a class and audible demonstrations of approval or disapproval are disruptive, distracting, and completely inappropriate.

2. Courtesy demands that permission be sought to leave class.

3. Students are permitted to record a class only with the explicit permission of the professor, and according to any restrictions that the professor specifies.

4. No guest shall be brought into class without the explicit permission of the professor.
5. The use of laptop computers is encouraged. These must be used in a manner which does not disrupt the learning environment. Any use of a laptop during class for purposes unrelated to the lecture shows a serious lack of respect for the professor and will be dealt with as such.

6. No student may post class notes electronically or on the internet as this infringes on the intellectual property rights of the professor.

D. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

1. Cheating on an exam or in a class assignment consists in unauthorized collaboration or the use of unauthorized materials. Cheating in any form is both a violation of the honesty expected of every student and of the integrity expected of those preparing for priestly ministry.

2. Plagiarism consists of presenting the words or ideas of another as one’s own. It ranges from careless negligence in the handling/citing the work of others to deliberate dishonesty. Plagiarism may involve printed as well as electronically retrieved materials. The Mount St. Mary’s University campus-wide Technology Acceptable Use Policy is to be followed.6

3. Both cheating and plagiarism are treated in the Seminary as both serious violations of academic integrity and as a formation issue. The response of the Seminary is dictated by its overall concern for priestly formation. In the event that questions are raised concerning seminarians:
   a. The person raising the question shall inform the Seminary Academic Dean.
   b. The Seminary Academic Dean informs the Rector, the Vice Rector, and the formation advisor of the seminarian(s) involved.
   c. If, in the judgment of the Rector, there is deliberate plagiarism, the sponsoring diocese shall be consulted.
   d. The Seminary Academic Dean, in consultation with the Seminary Admissions Committee, may dismiss a student from any degree program for cheating or plagiarism.
   e. In the event of a clear lack of academic integrity involving seminary students enrolled in any degree program, the Seminary Academic Dean has the authority, in consultation with the Seminary Admissions Committee, to dismiss such a student from either or both Master’s programs.
      1) A student may appeal the decision directly to the Rector.
      2) The Rector alone has the authority to dismiss students from the seminary.
      3) Penalties for any infraction are cumulative in that they are imposed in light of a student’s record at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary.

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6 Mount St. Mary’s University Technology Acceptable Use Policy is available as an appendix to these Academic Norms; and also at http://www.msmary.edu/inside/student-services/information-technology/.
i. The minimum penalty for the first offense will be a grade of zero for the assignment or examination; an instructor, at his/her discretion, may impose a more severe penalty, including a course grade of “F.”

ii. Any second offense during his seminary career will automatically result in a semester grade of failure (“F”) for the course in which this second incident occurred and a recommendation for the expulsion or suspension of the seminarian.

4. In the event that questions of plagiarism or cheating are raised regarding any student studying in the undergraduate division or in the Master of Arts in Philosophical Studies (M.A.P.S.) degree program of Mount St. Mary’s University such students are bound by the prescriptions and policies of that program.7

5. In the event of a clear lack of academic integrity involving non-ordination program students enrolled in the M.A.,(theology), M.Div., or S.T.B degree programs, the Seminary Academic Dean has the authority, in consultation with the Seminary Admissions Committee, to dismiss such a student. Students may appeal this decision directly to the Rector.

E. GRADE OPTIONS FOR COURSES NOT COMPLETED

1. **Withdrawal (“W” or “WF”):** After the drop/add period students may withdraw from a course only by way of exception and with the permission of the Seminary Academic Dean. The student must submit a written explanation to the professor, the formation advisor, and the Seminary Academic Dean explaining the reasons for the withdrawal.

   a. A notation of “W” or “WF” is entered on the grade reports for the withdrawn course and does not alter the GPA.

   b. No student may withdraw from a course after the fourth week of the semester (unless withdrawing from the Seminary).

   c. For withdrawal from M.A.P.S. or undergraduate courses, the policies in the University catalogs are to be followed,8 In addition the permission of the Seminary Academic Dean

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7 Standards of Academic Integrity. An academic community must operate with complete openness, honesty, and integrity. Responsibility for maintaining this atmosphere lies with the students, faculty, and administration. Therefore, the achievement of personal and academic goals through dishonest means will not be tolerated. Cheating is the unauthorized use or exchange of information before or during a quiz, test or semester examination. Unauthorized collaboration on a class assignment, submitting the same work in two courses without the professor’s permission, and buying or selling work for a course are also forms of cheating. Plagiarism is the representation of words or ideas of others as one’s own. The various forms of plagiarism include but are not limited to copying homework, falsifying lab reports, submitting papers containing material written by another person and failing to document in one’s written assignment words and ideas secured from publications.

Penalties for Cheating and Plagiarism. Penalties for any infraction are cumulative in that they are imposed in light of a student’s record at Mount St. Mary’s. The minimum penalty for the first offense will be a grade of zero for the assignment or examination; an instructor may impose a more severe penalty if circumstances warrant it. A second offense will result in a semester grade of failure (“F”) for the course in which this second incident occurs. The penalty for the third offense is expulsion from the College. (Academic Policies, undergraduate catalog)

8 “W” (Withdraw): This grade is posted for students who withdraw from a class after the end of the official add-drop period. Students who seek to withdraw from a class must submit to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, before the end of the tenth week of the semester, a withdrawal form signed by the instructor of the course in question. Withdrawal from class after the end of the tenth week is allowed only in cases of serious illness or other emergencies and must be approved by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies. No adjustment in tuition (full or part-time) is made as a result of withdrawal from class(es). Note that full-time students must maintain at least a minimum full-time load of 12 credits unless they receive special permission from the Dean.” (Academic Policies, “Grade options for courses not completed,” undergraduate catalog)
is required and the written explanation must be given to the Seminary Academic Dean and formation advisor.

2. Incompletes: The Seminary expects students to complete all academic requirements on-time. Incompletes should not be regarded as an extension of a deadline, but as a statement that the student was unable to complete the expected work in the expected time-frame. Any student who wishes to petition for a grade of “Incomplete” must complete and submit the signed “Incomplete Request Form” available from the Seminary Registrar. This form must include both the reason for the incomplete and a detailed plan for the completion of remaining requirements. This form must be submitted for the Seminary Academic Dean’s approval by the last day of class for the course in which the incomplete is being requested. Failure to submit the Incomplete Request form will result in a letter grade of “F” in the semester grade report. Copies of the form will be filed with the Rector, the Vice Rector for Formation, the Professor, the Formation Advisor, and the student’s academic file. The content of the form is also made available to the sending diocese.

a. In the semester GPA calculations a grade of "I" is given zero quality points.

b. The student, in consultation with the professor, must complete all outstanding work by such a date that the professor can grade it and submit a course grade to the registrar by the last day of the fourth week of class of the immediately following semester.

c. Seminarians who are dual degree candidates enrolled in the M.Div. and M.A.(theology) program with two or more unresolved incompletes in the research components are automatically dropped from the M.A. (theology) degree program, and so notified by the Seminary Registrar. Appeals may be directed to the Academic Dean in particular cases where it is believed that the incompletes are the result of circumstances beyond the control of the student (such as significant health issues or family considerations). The Academic Dean, with the agreement of the professors of the research projects involved, may grant permission for an extension of up to one semester in particular cases.

d. Students with more than two incompletes, regardless of their program (dual or single degree), are placed on academic probation.

e. If professors submit course grades by the deadline to resolve incompletes, an adjustment will be made right away on the student’s record. The GPA will be recalculated. However, any and all “I” (incomplete) grades become grades of “F” (failure) if professors do not submit course grades by the date specified in the Seminary calendar for the resolution of incompletes (i.e., end of the fourth week of classes). These failing grades remain on the transcript for the remainder of the semester, even if work is submitted after the deadline to resolve incompletes, and the professor accepts this work and files a grade change. Professors are not required by these academic norms to accept submissions after the deadline to resolve incompletes. Formation advisor reports will show that the student failed the course by failing to submit late work even with the extra time given (the posted deadline to resolve incompletes). Grade changes filed by professors and any recalculation of the GPA will be done only at the end of the semester.
f. The policy of the University’s graduate M.A.P.S. program and the undergraduate division are to be followed for incompletes in courses on those levels.\(^9\) In addition, permission of the Seminary Academic Dean must be obtained (using the seminary’s “Incomplete Request Form” or other appropriate form used by the University). That written explanation will be submitted to the Rector, the Vice Rector for Formation, the Professor, the Formation Advisor, and the student’s academic file.

3. **Failures:** Seminarians *must* repeat one time any core course which they have failed,\(^10\) and any student *may* repeat one time any elective course or the research/writing concomitant component which they have failed. The official transcript of the academic record will indicate retake courses. The GPA will be recalculated from the retake with the previous attempt forgiven.

**F. Academic Probation**

1. Students falling below the *2.00 average* (term GPA) in required program courses are subject to formal review, and a transcript notation of “Academic Probation” is recorded. If the resolution of an “incomplete” raises the semester GPA *above 2.00*, the notation is removed.

2. The formal review process for a student on probation includes the following:
   
a. A professor who has given a grade of “C−” or “F” is to meet with the student and review the student’s work (papers, tests, notes, etc.). As soon as possible professors are asked to submit in writing to the Academic Dean an indication of their opinion regarding the precise difficulty encountered (poor study habits, poor writing skills, poor note taking, absence from class, etc).

   b. The student will take standardized tests (Millers’ Analogies, TOEFL) and/or have interviews with Learning Services (or ESL office) regarding the study skills, note taking skills, and learning disabilities. These findings will help the seminary understand the precise difficulty encountered.

3. A meeting with the Seminary Academic Dean, the formation advisor, and a representative from Learning Services (or ESL) will take place for the purpose of identifying specific steps for recovery. In some cases the academic load may be reduced, the extracurricular program adjusted, the pastoral field assignment modified, or specific remedial courses proposed. In more extreme situations it may be necessary to recommend summer school.

4. A student with a cumulative GPA of 1.50 or less is subject to dismissal. At the very least he is required to repeat the year.

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\(^9\) “The grade of “I” is given in exceptional cases to a student who, because of illness or other reason beyond his or her control, is unable to complete the requirements of the course. The grade “I” is permitted only if the “Incomplete” form has been signed by the instructor and the dean of undergraduate studies. An Incomplete becomes an “F” and is entered as such on the official transcript if the Incomplete is not removed in the period specified by the dean. Ordinarily, the dean will not approve a completion date later than the final day of registration for the following semester.” (Academic Policies, “Grade options for courses not completed,” undergraduate catalog)

\(^10\) “FA” (Failure because of absence): This grade is posted for students who miss an excessive number of class periods, assignments, or exams as determined by the instructor, or who do not take a final exam.” [An “FA” has the same effect on the GPA as an “F” for a completed course] (Academic Policies, “Grade options for courses not completed,” undergraduate catalog)
5. The student's continuance as a candidate for ordination will depend on suitable progress according to his ability and the approval of the faculty. A minimum 2.00 cumulative GPA is necessary for successful completion of the ordination program and the awarding of the M.Div. degree.

G. ACADEMIC DEFICIENCY REPORTS

1. Seminary faculty report academic deficiencies at mid-term via an email to the Seminary Registrar. Whenever possible, the deficiency report should suggest reasons for the deficiency encountered (study skills, note taking, writing skills, absence from class, etc.). Copies of relevant materials (failed exams, very poor written work, etc.) should be appended or submitted separately and will be kept in the student’s academic file.

2. The mid-term deficiency report emails are forwarded to the Seminary Academic Dean, Rector, Vice Rector for Formation, and the seminarian’s formation advisor.

3. The Seminary Registrar provides to the Rector, Vice Rector, and the Seminary Academic Dean a listing of all students showing a deficiency in their final course grades at the end of each semester.

4. Deficiencies are defined as:
   a. a single grade of "C-", "F", or "I"; or
   b. a semester total with two or more "C / 2.0" grades or lower.

XI. STUDENT ACADEMIC RECORDS

A. GRADE REPORTS

1. Seminarians may access their grades (as well as financial records) at any time through the university’s portal, using their usual email/network user-id and password [http://portal.msmary.edu/exweb]. This access is blocked at the end of the semester during the time when faculty are submitting grades and until the student has completed all online course evaluations.

2. Final grades are generally accessible on the portal by the Thursday after exam week.

3. Grade reports are not routinely printed out and given to each student at the end of each semester (unless specifically requested in writing by the student). However a grade report or an unofficial copy of each seminarian’s transcript is given to the sponsoring bishop, vocations director, formation advisor, and put into the student’s academic file. Formation Advisors also have access through the Portal to their advisees’ academic information.

B. ACADEMIC FILES

1. Each current student has an academic file, maintained by the Seminary Registrar on behalf of the Academic Dean. It contains:
   a) Academic degree plan(s), course registration by semester, and current unofficial copy of the student’s Mount St. Mary’s Seminary transcript.
b) Official transcripts from all previously attended colleges, universities, seminaries (received as part of the admissions process).

c) Mid-term deficiency reports and any other correspondence regarding the student’s academic progress.

d) In the case of international students, a copy of the student’s passport, student visa, SEVIS I-20 form, and any other pertinent information.

2. Students or others who wish to have specific information regarding their rights of access to institutional education records maintained in their name should contact the Seminary Registrar at 301-447-5897.

C. CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS

1. Mount St. Mary’s Seminary accords all rights under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts (FERPA) of 1974, as amended, and any regulation promulgated there under.

2. The seminary does not release personally identifiable information or educational information to third parties by any means without the written consent of the student, except in those cases exempted by FERPA.

   a) Mount St. Mary’s may release directory information without prior consent unless notified in writing to the contrary by the student.

   b) Directory information includes: name, address, telephone number, dates of attendance, previous institutions attended, major fields of study, enrollment status, awards, honors, degrees conferred, date and place of birth.

3. The student’s written consent is not required under FERPA for disclosures to:

   a) Faculty and administrators of Mount St. Mary’s who have legitimate educational interests

   b) Certain government agencies and officials, or as required by law

4. Upon enrollment, seminarians are asked to sign a release form authorizing the seminary to disclose academic and other formation information to the sponsoring bishop, or his delegate, and other interested parties at the Seminary. In addition students sign a form authorizing the Mount St. Mary’s University Accounting and Finance office to discuss the student’s financial records with the appropriate parties. Further information regarding Student Academic Records may be found in the Seminarian Handbook, “Formation Advising Program,” Appendix A.

D. NOTIFICATION OF STUDENT RIGHTS UNDER FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, known by its acronym, FERPA (or as the “Buckley Amendment”), affords students certain rights with respect to their educational records. They are:
1. The right to inspect and review the student’s own educational records within 45 days of the
day the university receives a request for access. Students should contact the Seminary
Registrar (or University Registrar in the case of undergraduate records) to schedule an
appointment to review the academic records and receive an explanation or interpretation
of the records requested.

2. The right to request an amendment of the student’s own educational record that the
student believes is inaccurate or misleading.

3. The right to refuse consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in
the student’s educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosures
without consent.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged
failures to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Anyone who believes their rights have
been violated may file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S.

XII. ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Faculty members at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary are hired to teach in a specific area of competence
and exercise complete freedom to teach in that area in accord with the principles of their
respective disciplines (Governing Documents 6.16.1.). They enjoy lawful freedom of inquiry and of
prudent expression of their opinions on matters pertaining to their expertise, while exercising due
respect for the magisterium of the Church (Canon 218). Faculty members shall exercise this
freedom within the context of the purpose and mission of the seminary and taking account of the
rights of students, the institution, and the Church (Program of Priestly Formation 345). Faculty
members are required to have a mandate to teach from the appropriate ecclesial authority (Canon
812). New faculty members make the profession of faith and take the oath of fidelity.

XIII. ONGOING REVISION OF THESE NORMS

A. REVIEW PROCEDURES:

The Academic Norms are reviewed in their entirety each year by the Academic Committee and
are also updated biannually to be in accord with changes in the Seminary Catalog.

1. In addition, amendments may be suggested to any member of the academic committee by
any member of the seminary faculty, the seminary administration, or the seminary student
government.

2. Proposed amendments are discussed at meetings of the academic committee and brought
to the full faculty for a vote.

B. GROUPS RESPONSIBLE FOR REVIEW:

According to the calendar for the academic year, the following groups should discuss any
revisions to the Academic Norms in a set sequence:
1. Academic committee of the seminary student government - prior to academic committee meetings.

2. Academic committee - at fall and/or spring meetings

3. Full faculty meetings - at initial fall meeting to vote on proposed changes.