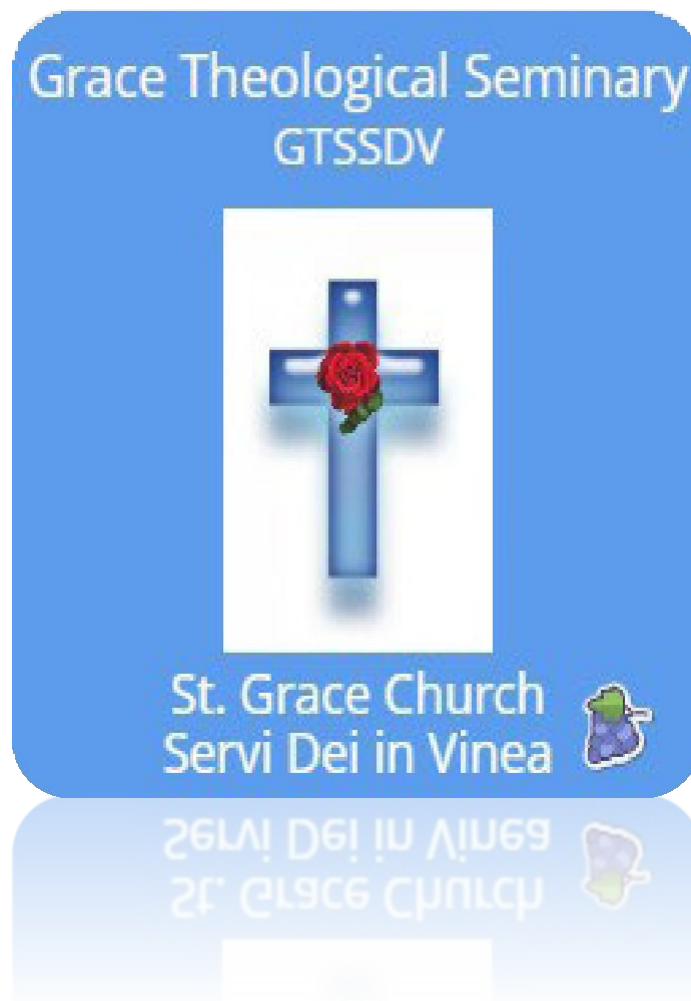


## **ST. GRACE ECUMENICAL CHURCH**

A WELCOMING ECUMENICAL CHURCH

Grace Theological Seminary is an affiliated  
ministry of St. Grace Ecumenical Church.

Grace Theological Seminary is  
Sacred Activism and Social Justice Focused  
We Joyfully Serve in God's Vineyard



## Welcome to the Grace Theological Seminary Scholars' Handbook

Preparation for ministry demands the pursuit of at least three phases of training, as noted in St. Paul's exhortation to Timothy (1 Tim. 4:12-16): godly character (what a person called to serve by the Holy Spirit should be), biblical knowledge (what a person called to serve by the Holy Spirit should know), and ministry skills (what a person called to serve by the Holy Spirit should be able to do).

Scripture clearly marks godly character as the sine qua non of the qualification for ministry. Biblical knowledge becomes the foundation of ministry skills, providing the scholar with the understanding that is then fleshed out in active service. Before one begins to serve officially in a ministry role a certain level of development in each of these three phases must be attained. Moreover, there should be ongoing zeal for further growth as that service continues. These three things dominate the mission of the Grace Theological Seminary and drive the passions of our faculty both in and out of the classroom. Everything we do is fueled by the desire to see scholars at GTS prosper in these areas, for it is within these three components that you ignite your passions not only during your brief time of study at GTS but throughout your lives. The seminary has dedicated itself to educating and training you, but you must commit yourself to cultivating these areas. Your future ministry depends on this.

No shortcuts exist in training for ministry. Only persistent prayer, hard work, and focused perseverance will do, i.e., an undying commitment to be a Servant in the Vineyard of God who is equipped for every good work. Please note that the Scholar Handbook will be updated as necessary.

Many Blessings and God's Grace to You.

The Right Rev. Linda Jarvis OSL, S.T.L., Ph.D.  
Rector- Grace Theological Seminary  
Updated: January, 25, 2024

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## **The History of Grace Theological Seminary**

The seed for Grace Theological Seminary was planted in 2004 when its founder and president, Bishop Linda Jarvis, S.T.L., Ph.D., attended the One Spirit Interfaith Seminary in New York City. She deliberately chose this highly regarded Interfaith seminary in order to be exposed to and receive a wide-based, globally focused, theological education. Subsequent to graduation and ordination as an Interfaith pastor she attended courses and programs in five (5) additional seminaries, each with a different focus, and ranging from the conservative to the liberal. She immersed herself in the structure and day-to-day operations of the seminaries to the point that she volunteered and cleaned seminary floors, scrubbed seminary toilets, and chauffeured seminary executives in order to witness seminaries from the inside. She did all this while working as a Health Compliance Officer in New York City. Simultaneously she attended multiple programs to learn to teach professionally and programs to learn Instructional Design.

Twenty-six years after attending her first seminary, she received discernment during Advent in 2020 from the Holy Spirit that she was ready to plant Grace Theological Seminary. Grace Theological Seminary is a Sacred Activism-Social Justice focused private college under the jurisdiction of religious exemption in Florida that is established as a ministry of St. Grace Ecumenical Church. St. Grace Ecumenical Church is Liberal Catholic in ethos and welcome, and follows the prototype of the ancient church which was inclusive to all who wished to serve God according to his/her gifts. The community of St. Grace Ecumenical Church, like the faculty and scholars at Grace Theological Seminary are Sacred Activism-Social Justice servants, who are joyfully serving in God's eternal vineyard. We serve God through caring for God's creation.

## **Contact Information:**

Mailing Address: Grace Theological Seminary- 3161 South Ocean Drive, Hallandale, Florida, 33009  
Office Telephone Number 1-877-731-9957 (Receptionist answers 24/7)

## **List of Officials:**

Linda Jarvis – Founder and President  
Mary Santi - Vice President  
Peter Wessel, Esq., JD. – Secretary Rev.  
Rev. Fr. Francis Vincent Jarvis - Treasurer

### **Seminary Advisors**

Father Clyde Kuemmerle, M. Div., Ph.D. - Advisor  
Mrs. Tara Rudakas, RN – Advisor  
Mr. Richard Simons, CPA, Esq., - Advisor  
Mr. Oded Tshesly, M.S. - Advisor

# Grace Theological Seminary - Scholars' Handbook

## **Academic Advisors**

Bishop Angela DeBry, S.T.L., D.D. – Academic Advisor  
Anthony Martini, Th.M. – Academic Advisor  
Valentina Iuffrida Tshesly, M.S. – Academic Advisor

## **Accreditation:**

Grace Theological Seminary is a private college that has been granted a religious exemption by the state of Florida to award religious degrees. It is currently pursuing accreditation.

## **Philosophy:**

Grace Theological Seminary is multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-faith, multi-race, multi-age, inclusive, affirming and Sacred Activism-Social Justice focused. We welcome and admit scholars who are spiritually called to ordained ministry yet may not "fit through mainstream doors". We affirm that everyone is equally called to ordained ministry. Just as the early church was planted, nourished, and grew in many diverse communities we are also from diverse religious, racial, ethnic, economic, and gender identifying communities. We welcome diversity. We welcome Good Trouble, Necessary Trouble. We are joyful servants in God's vineyard.

## **Degrees:**

**Associate Degree:** The Associate in Theology degree (in a Religious-Ministry Specialization), is awarded to seminarians/scholars who have completed a minimum of 60-credit hours or its equivalent.

**Bachelor Degree:** The Bachelor's in Theology degree (in a Religious-Ministry Specialization), is awarded to seminarians/scholars who have completed a minimum of 120-credit hours.

**Master's Degree:** The Master's in Theology degree (in a Religious-Ministry Specialization), is awarded to seminarians/scholars who have completed a minimum of 30-credit hours above the Bachelor's Degree. The subject matter may be presented in either a thesis or a project form.

**Doctorate Degree:** The Doctorate Degree (in a Religious-Ministry Specialization), is awarded to seminarians/scholars who have completed a minimum of 60-credit hours above the Bachelor's Degree, or 30-credit hours above the Master's Degree.

**Honorary Degrees:** Honorary Degrees are Never awarded from Grace Theological Seminary.

## Grace Theological Seminary - Scholars' Handbook

**Pre-Theology year (First year)** courses at Grace Theological Seminary are normally 3 credits. Credit-hour guidelines require a total of at least 48 hours of course-related work for each academic credit. Course related work includes: completing assigned readings, participating in discussion sessions, studying for tests and examinations, preparing written assignments, and other tasks that must be completed to earn course credit.

**Theology year (Second year)** courses at Grace Theological Seminary are normally 3 credits. Credit-hour guidelines require a total of at least 48 hours of course-related work for each academic credit. Course related work includes: completing assigned readings, participating in discussion sessions, studying for tests and examinations, preparing written assignments, completing externship placement requirements, and other tasks that must be completed to earn course credit.

**Residency year (Third year)** courses at Grace Theological Seminary are normally 4 credits. Credit-hour guidelines require a total of at least 48 hours of course-related work for each academic credit. Course related work includes: completing assigned readings, participating in discussion sessions, studying for tests and examinations, preparing written assignments, completing internship and /or residency placements.

### Ordinations:

**Non-Denominational Deacon** – Completion of at least 3 terms, completion of Candidacy Checklist, Referral from Faculty and Rector.

**Non-Denominational or Interfaith Ordained Pastor** – Completion of at least 6 terms, completion of Candidacy Checklist, Referral from Faculty and Rector.

**Permanent Deacon in Apostolic Succession** - Completion of minor Holy Orders, Sufficient transfer credits from a recognized program or completion of at least 6 terms, completion of Candidacy Checklist, Referral from Faculty and Bishop.

**Priesthood** - Completion of lower orders, Sufficient transfer credits from a recognized program or completion of at least 9 terms, completion of Candidacy Checklist, Referral from Faculty and Bishop.

### Department Deans:

Biblical Studies – Rev. Dean Odell Cooper, M.A.

Chaplaincy – Rev. Dr. Father Clyde Kuemmerle, M.A., M. Div., Ph. D.

Counseling Services – Rev. Dean Brenda Lammie, M. Div.

Divine Feminine Studies - Bishop Angela DeBry, S.T.L., D.D.

Humanities – Dean Oded Tshesly, M.S.

Pastoral Ministry – Rev. Dr. Asayo Okumura-Thomas D. Min.

Student Services – Dean Valentina Iuffrida -Tshesly, M.S.

Theology – Dean Anthony Martini, Th.M.

Writing – Bishop Linda Jarvis, S.T.L., Ph.D.

## Determination of Credit Hours

In order to best serve Grace Theological Seminary co-vocational faculty and scholars, courses are offered on the Trimester System. The Trimester system aka the "Term," divides the academic year into three sessions: Spring Term, Summer Term, and Fall Term. Each trimester is approximately 12-13 weeks long, depending upon holidays. During each trimester the scholar can take one to three courses depending on availability. Scholars benefit from frequently engaging with their coursework and peers, attending a variety of classes, and may receive more personal instruction from Faculty. In addition, trimesters offer Scholars the opportunity for group participation in completing collaborative assignments.

**Term System:** At Grace Theological Seminary there are three (3) 12-week terms offered per year. Please consult the current Academic Calendar for the dates of the terms, holidays, and term-breaks.

### **Credit Hours:**

The credit hour policy applies to all courses at all levels (pre-theology, theology, and resident academic credit on an official transcript regardless of the mode of delivery including, but not limited to, fully online, hybrid, lecture, seminar, praxis, externship, internship, residency, directed study, or study abroad. Deans, faculty, and administrators are responsible for ensuring that credit hours are awarded only for work that meets the requirements outlined in this policy.

Grace Theological Seminary utilizes the federal definition of the credit hour as a basis for determining the amount of credit for scholar work. The GTS Deans are responsible for ensuring that credit hours are appropriately approved for course work, and the GTS Registrar's Office ensures that credit hours are accurately applied to courses in the Student Information System. The Registrar's Office ensures that the number of class hours for all courses have been accounted for during the scheduling of courses. The following methodology guides credit hours assignments.

One credit hour should involve an input of approximately four hours per week, or the equivalent amount of work for other instructional formats, for the average scholar (e.g., one hour of scheduled class and three hours of out-of-class preparation). Typically, a three-credit hour course meets for one 60-minute session per week for twelve weeks. Irrespective of course instruction type or delivery method, all courses require a minimum of 2,880 engaged minutes per trimester credit hour. This basic measure may be adjusted proportionately to reflect modified academic calendars and formats of study. Regardless of the format of course content delivery, course workload expectations must align to the stated learning outcomes for scholars.

### **Lecture Courses:**

Traditional lecture-based courses that meet only in a Livestream format must meet for 720 minutes for each credit hour, whether offered in a trimester, or Summer Term Intensive format. In addition, it is expected that scholars will spend a **minimum** of 180 minutes in out-of-class preparation for every hour spent in class. Therefore, a one credit hour course must require a minimum of 720 class meeting minutes and 2,160

## Grace Theological Seminary - Scholars' Handbook

out-of-class preparation minutes. All courses will require a **minimum** of 2,880 engaged minutes per trimester credit hour.

A lecture contact hour represents the measure of scheduled instruction given to scholars and is dependent on the instructional format for the course. The lecture contact hours should be calculated on a per week basis. Although infrequent, deviations may exist from the prescribed formulas; however, the institution must still account for the expectation that a minimum of 2,880 engaged minutes will be required for every trimester hour of credit assigned to the course.

### **Hybrid/Fully Online Format:**

When courses are offered in a hybrid or fully online format, 2,880 engaged minutes are still required and expected for each hour of credit. Because it is difficult to measure engaged minutes for courses offered in hybrid or completely online formats, course content and learning outcomes should be matched to those established in livestream face-to-face sections of the same courses. Livestream face-to-face courses may be conducted through in-person delivery or through electronic delivery whether synchronous or asynchronous.

### **Praxis/Externship/Internship/Residential Courses:**

Standard academic practice specifies that a **minimum** of 2,880 engaged minutes must be required for each trimester credit hour. In the case of praxis, externships, internship, or resident courses, most of these engaged minutes will be spent in the actual execution of the same. Scholars may also be expected to spend out-of-class time in preparation. In all cases, class time plus expected out-of-class preparation time must add up to a **minimum** of 2,880 engaged minutes per trimester credit hour for the specified course.

### **Courses that blend activity/laboratory/studio/clinical and lecture components:**

Courses that blend lecture components with praxis, externship, internship, or resident components pose challenges in making the correct credit hour determination. The standard remains that a **minimum** of 2,880 engaged minutes must be required for each trimester credit hour. There are four components in this type of course:

- Lecture component
- Out-of-class preparation for the lecture component
- praxis, externship, internship, or resident component
- Out-of-class preparation for the praxis, externship, internship, or resident component

In general, it is appropriate to expect that scholars will spend a **minimum** of six hours in out-of-class preparation for every one hour spent in the lecture component of the class. The praxis, externship, internship, or resident component may exist with or without an expectation of out-of-class preparation. In determining whether the requirement for a minimum of 2,880 engaged minutes per trimester hour of credit has been met, minutes expected to be spent in class lectures, out-of-class preparation for the lecture component, the praxis, externship, internship, or resident component, and out-of-class preparation for the praxis, externship, internship, or resident component should be summed.

For each course, the number of trimester hours credit, the number of lecture contact hours (or equivalent) per week, and the number of praxis, externship, internship, or resident component hours per week are listed in the GTS Scholar Body Handbook.

### **POLICY REVISIONS:**

Proposed revisions to this policy should be submitted in writing to the Rector by way of the Student Services Department or Office of the Registrar.

Sources: Federal Register; GTS Policy Manual; SACSCOC Credit Hours Policy; Linda Jarvis/Rector.



### **Defining Distance Education:**

Grace Theological Seminary uses the Federal (2009) and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (adopted 2010; edited 2012) as the definitions of distance education and correspondence education. That is, "Distance education is a formal educational process in which the majority of the instruction (interaction between Scholars and Professors and among Scholars) in a course occurs when Scholars and Professors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. A distance education course may use the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs if used as part of the distance learning course or program." Grace Theological Seminary is a distance learning, online seminary that provides livestream lectures and coursework via a Learning Management System (LMS), coupled with on-site, supervised field placements for externships, internships, and residencies as necessary to achieve curriculum learning goals and objectives.

### **Defining Correspondence Education:**

Correspondence education is a formal educational process under which the institution provides instruction by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to Scholars who are separated from the Professor. Interaction between the Professor and the Scholar is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the scholar; courses are typically self-paced.

### **Verification of a Scholar's Identity:**

Grace Theological Seminary complies with the provisions of the United States Federal Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), Public Law 100-315 concerning the Verification of Scholars identity in distance learning.

Courses and programs offered through distance education or correspondence must verify that the scholars who registers for a course or program is the same Scholar who participates in, completes the course or program, and receives academic credit.

One or more of the following methods must be used for verification purposes:

- Upon admission to Grace Theological Seminary Scholars are required to present identification through a notarized document.
- An individual secure login and password (GTS username and password). All Scholars at Grace Theological Seminary are given a unique username and password. While usernames are system-generated, Scholars are not given their initial password until their identity is verified.

## Grace Theological Seminary - Scholars' Handbook

- A GTS username and password is required in order to gain access to course materials on the learning management system. This authentication method is also the only means of gaining access to courses/content delivered synchronously through web-conferencing system.

### Fair Consumer Practices:

**TUITION AND FEES:** As of this update Grace Theological Seminary charges a tuition of \$1200 per year. Late fees apply. Please see the Tuition section of this handbook. Scholars should be aware that if this practice changes, they will be notified in writing ninety days, (90) before a change in the tuition/fee schedule is implemented.

**TUITION REFUNDS:** Tuition is prorated according to the schedule below for scholars who take a leave of absence or withdraw after the term has begun. The effective date of a leave of absence or withdrawal is the date the petition is filed with the Registrar's Office.

No tuition will be refunded after the respective term's Add/Drop course date.

Scholars admitted to the Summer Break Intensive program and withdraw from the program after the 7<sup>th</sup> day should be aware that tuition for the program is non-refundable.

Non-Degree Workshop Participants

Non-degree workshop/seminary participants who withdraw from courses after the add/drop deadline should be aware that tuition for those courses is non-refundable.

FALL TERM '23	SPRING TERM '24	SUMMER TERM '24
Withdrawal Deadline 9/09/23 Refund of Tuition = 100 %	Withdrawal Deadline 01/06/24 Refund of Tuition = 100%	Withdrawal Deadline 4/05/24 Refund of Tuition = 100%
Withdrawal Deadline 9/13/23 Refund of Tuition = 75 %	Withdrawal Deadline 01/10/24 Refund of Tuition = 75 %	Withdrawal Deadline 4/09/24 Refund of Tuition = 75 %
Withdrawal Deadline 9/17/23 Refund of Tuition = 50 %	Withdrawal Deadline 01/14/24 Refund of Tuition = 50 %	Withdrawal Deadline 4/13/24 Refund of Tuition = 50 %
Withdrawal Deadline 9/21/23 Refund of Tuition = 25%	Withdrawal Deadline 01/18/24 Refund of Tuition = 25 %	Withdrawal Deadline 4/17/24 Refund of Tuition = 25 %
Withdrawal Deadline 9/25/23 (Final Add/Drop Date) Refund of Tuition = 0 %	Withdrawal Deadline 01/22/24 (Final Add/Drop Date) Refund of Tuition = 0 %	Withdrawal Deadline 4/21/24 (Final Add/Drop Date) Refund of Tuition = 0 %

## Grace Theological Seminary - Scholars' Handbook

### TRANSFER CREDITS:

**Professional Training:** Courses or professional training offered through business and industry. The amount of credits earned are determined by The National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs (published by the American Council on Education), or The Directory of the National Program on Non-Collegiate Sponsored Instruction. These credits may apply to the CAPSTONE course offered during the Residency year at GTS.

- **Yale Open Resource Courses:** YOR offers undergraduate open resources courses which are honored by GTS for electives that are accepted with the caveat that the scholar either submit the results of the course's assessment for GTS grading, or submit a thesis of the subject itself. The thesis will be assessed by both the GTS writing department and the subject's GTS Dean.
- **Study.com Classes:** Study.com offers general education courses for which the scholar can receive transfer credit.
- **Proficiency Exams:** Currently Grace Theological Seminary accepts the passing results from the University of Oxford, the STEP program at Notre Dame, INELDA, Domuni University, Harvard University-Extension, Coursera, EdX, MIT, and the [Clep Tests](#), [Dante Tests](#).
- **Military Training Courses.** Grace Theological Seminary accepts ACE recognized military courses for credit transfer to its Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate programs.
- **Credit for Life Experience:** Scholars who are able to demonstrate through a formal portfolio that they have served in a Ministry field for five years, and have gained the knowledge needed to earn credit for a specific course/program, may apply for and receive transfer credit. The maximum credit accepted for the Bachelor's Degree is 25% of the degree or 30-credit hours of study; Master Degree is 25% of the degree or 8-credit hours of study; Doctorate Degree – No credit for Life Experience is awarded.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE LICENSURE:** Grace Theological Seminary is authorized by the Florida Commission for Independent Education to award religious based degrees. Scholars who intend to enter into professions and occupations that require state licensure **are required** to check with the respective state's regulatory boards for additional information and requirements.

### Dress Code:

#### Matriculated Scholars.

Ultimately, clothing centers around three key ideas: culture, occasion and purpose; the most important being purpose. Cleanliness and neatness in appearance are indispensable for effectiveness in your Christian testimony. This attention to detail is part of your formation.

Because the seminary is preparing scholars for professional occupations as ministers of the gospel, adherence to certain professional standards of dress and appearance is required.

**Pre-Theology Year:** During class - Please wear a clean clergy shirt (Grey and/or Blue) without the tab collar. Hair is to be worn neatly groomed.

**Theology Year - Rev. Deacons:** During class - Please wear a clean clergy shirt (Black) with a Deacon's striped tab. Hair is to be neatly groomed.

## Grace Theological Seminary - Scholars' Handbook

**Ordained Permanent Deacons, Ordained Pastors, and Ordained Priests:** During class - Please wear a clean clergy shirt/blouse (Black) with either a Roman Tab Collar, or a Round Collar.

**During Chapel /Church Hours:** Please dress as above with the addition of clerical-wear requirements as established by your supervising faculty member.

**During physical apostolic placement and Praxis:** Scholars are required to wear clean and neat clergy shirts, dresses, or slacks, socks, jackets or sweaters, and dress shoes. Tennis shoes, blue jeans, tee-shirts, and flip flops are not appropriate attire.

### Private Funding for Scholars:

Matriculated scholars may request a donation of \$20 - \$100 each month after completing the respective term's orientation. The monies are intended for clericals, mandatory books, materials...etc.

### Scholarships:

The Dr. Henrietta Smith, Ph.D. service-scholarship is available for scholars as Tutors, in Chaplaincy service, and for Pulpit Call. Please visit the Student Affairs Office to view additional information, and follow up by applying at [vinonthepath@gmail.com](mailto:vinonthepath@gmail.com)

### Cancellation of Appointments:

Grace Theological Seminary is fiscally responsible for the wise expenditure of the monies donated from private funding. All sessions such as Spiritual Direction, Life Coaching, Lectures, Assessments, etc....are funded and must be paid regardless of the scholar's attendance. It is important that the scholar either schedules and keeps his/her appointments, or provides a 24- hour notice of cancellation. When giving notice please contact the person using the GTS email address. If the cancellation is emergent/urgent please call the seminary 24/7 receptionist at 1-877-731-9957 and leave a message for the person with whom you made the appointment.

### Academic Integrity Policy:

At the Grace Theological Seminary, we are committed to the academic, civic and ethical development of our Learning Community. We strive to create a learning environment that is both challenging and supportive. We are committed to upholding the fundamental values of honesty, respect and individual responsibility. Only through a genuine partnership among scholars, faculty, staff and administrators can we maintain the commitment necessary to ensure that the highest standards of academic integrity are upheld.

Administration and faculty will support scholars to understand the standards of academic integrity that govern conduct at GTS. Each scholar will abide by the following principles:

- Submits work that is his/her own
- Identifies appropriately the work of others when incorporated into his/her own work, including direct quotations, summaries and paraphrases

## Grace Theological Seminary - Scholars' Handbook

- Follows the directions of the professor with regard to permissible materials in the learning environment at the time of examinations/quizzes or with take-home exams
- Proceeds during examinations/quizzes without any assistance and without communicating in any way with others while the examinations/quizzes are being conducted, unless permitted by the Professor.
- Refrains from obtaining or distributing the content of any examination/quiz, without the permission of the professor
- Completes all field observations and reports based solely on his/her own inner processing of events
- Submits work, either whole or in part, as per the direction of the professor
- Represents data and sources appropriately and honestly

Scholars are responsible for adhering to these standards. Not being familiar with these standards does not mean that scholars are not accountable for their adherence.

Furthermore, scholars are encouraged to report suspected or known violations of the Academic Integrity Policy to appropriate faculty, staff or administration.

## Academic Dishonesty:

Introduction: Any type of activity that is considered dishonest by reasonable standards may constitute academic misconduct. The most common forms of academic misconduct are plagiarism and cheating. All instances of proven academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero for the work. Faculty must explicitly state the penalty for instances of academic dishonesty in the syllabus. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported to the Rector.

Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Plagiarism: The intentional or unintentional representation of another person's work as one's own. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Quoting, paraphrasing or summarizing another's work without appropriately acknowledging the source
  - Using another's content without acknowledging the source
  - Submitting another's work, purchased or otherwise obtained, as one's own
- Cheating on Examinations/Quizzes: Looking at another's work, using or bringing to the learning environment materials that are not permitted by the Professor, communicating with another Scholars, receiving any kind of assistance including, but not limited to, assistance from electronic devices and obtaining or disseminating the content of an examination/quiz without the permission of the Professor

## Grace Theological Seminary - Scholars' Handbook

- Multiple Submissions: Submitting any work of one's own, either whole or in substantial part, to more than one Professor without the permission of the Professor(s) receiving the work
- Facilitating Academic Dishonesty: Knowingly allowing another Scholars to use one's work or cheat from one's examination/quiz
- Fabrication: Falsifying or fabricating information in any situation, including but not limited to data for a lab or research project
- Grace Theological Seminary faculty are required to use plagiarism detection software as part of their courses. Faculty should include the following statement on their syllabus indicating the use of the system for plagiarism detection "Scholars agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review for the detection of plagiarism."

## Consequences of Violating Academic Integrity:

Consequences at the course level will be at the discretion of the Professor and may include, but are not limited to, one or a combination of the following:

- A verbal or written warning to the scholar
- A letter, detailing the violation, to be kept on record
- Successful completion by the scholars of an GTS academic integrity tutorial. Failure to complete the tutorial will result in a one of the two penalties listed below.
- Deduction of points, a grade of "F" or zero for the assignment, project or examination/quiz
- Lowering of the course grade or failure of the course, not to be superseded by Scholar's withdrawal
- Faculty, staff, and administration are encouraged to report instances of academic integrity violations to the Rector to facilitate the collection of data that would be indicative of repeated violations

## Pre-Appeal Academic Grievance Process:

### Scholars Pre-Appeal Process Regarding Academic Integrity

1. The scholar may request a meeting with the notifying faculty member to discuss the infraction and the consequences within five school days of the notification of a violation of any area of the Academic Integrity Policy.

## Grace Theological Seminary - Scholars' Handbook

2. If the scholar wishes to challenge the decision of the faculty member, she/he may initiate the Full Academic Grievance Process.

During the Academic Grievance Process, scholars should continue to participate and abide by the course requirements until a final decision has been made.

### Full Academic Grievance Policy Process:

Once the scholar has been notified of the faculty member's decision, she/he may submit a written request for a hearing with the Rector.

1. The Rector, the Dean of Vocations, and the Dean / Director of the Counseling Department will meet, make the final decision and notify all parties in writing of that decision.
2. All persons involved will maintain confidentiality at all times.
3. The Registrar's Office is responsible for maintaining documentation on reported academic integrity violations. A permanent record is made of reported violations. Notification of a reported violation will be forwarded to the scholar and the reporting faculty member. A third violation reported may result in the scholar's termination of the program. All records shall be maintained by the office of the Rector.

### Academic Integrity of Assessments:

The scholars will use the Grace Theological Seminary's Learning Management System, Moodlecloud to submit online coursework and take exams. During fieldwork the Scholars will be required to complete proctored / praxis examinations at a mandatory physical location.

Courses with proctored / praxis examinations will be noted in the course syllabus such that the scholar is made aware of this requirement prior to the beginning of the course.

### Attendance Policy:

**Punctuality:** Please be prompt when arriving to class. Late arrival disturbs the instruction already in progress and distracts the other scholars.

**Class Attendance:** All professors at Grace Theological Seminary are required to take and report attendance. Simply logging into an online course is not considered attendance. Scholars are expected to attend and participate in every class meeting. Professors establish specific policies relating to absences in their courses and communicate these policies through the

## Grace Theological Seminary - Scholars' Handbook

course syllabi. Individual professors, based upon the nature of the course determine what effects excused and unexcused absences have in determining grades and the ability to remain enrolled in the courses. An admitted scholar who does not attend at least one class session by the 2<sup>nd</sup> class meeting will be contacted by a member of the Student Services Department.

Emailing the professor will not suffice for attendance. The scholar will be counted as a no-show unless the professor has granted an extension of the assignment deadline. The professor's e-mail address and other information are always included in the course syllabus.

**Excused Absences:** Absences caused by illness and family emergencies are excused.

However, when absences from a course exceed the equivalent of 2 weeks of class, credit for the course is forfeited.

Grace Theological Seminary reserves the right to determine those excessive absences whether justified or not, are sufficient cause for institutional withdrawals or failing grades.

### Course Completion:

Scholars who have difficulty contacting their professor(s) must notify the Rector at [deansoffice@gracetheologicalseminary.org](mailto:deansoffice@gracetheologicalseminary.org)

On the final day of the course scholars are requested to complete and submit a Post Course Survey. The Post Course Survey is anonymous and is employed as a course and faculty review for Quality Management purposes.



**GRADING:**

**GRADING: Writing Rubric:**  
Papers Will Be Randomly Checked for Plagiarism

	<b>4 -A</b>	<b>3 -B</b>	<b>2-C</b>	<b>1-D</b>	<b>0.5 D-</b>
Format	The thesis and citations are formatted correctly as assigned. There are no misspellings. The punctuation is correct.	The thesis and citations are formatted correctly. There are either 2 or less misspellings noted/ or there are 2 or less errors in punctuation.	The thesis or the citations are not formatted correctly as assigned. There are no misspellings and the punctuation is correct.	The thesis and the citations are not formatted correctly as assigned. There are 5 or less misspellings, but the punctuation is correct.	The thesis and the citations are not formatted correctly as assigned. There are 5 or more misspellings. The punctuation may or may not be correct.
Submission	The thesis was submitted by the correct date and by the correct time.	The thesis was submitted by the correct day. The thesis was submitted AFTER the correct time.	The thesis was submitted up to 24 hours after the correct date and correct time.	The thesis was submitted up to 72 hours after the correct date and correct time.	The thesis was submitted more than 72 hours after the correct date and correct time.
Focus or Thesis Statement	The thesis statement names the topic of the essay and outlines the main points to be discussed.	The thesis statement names the topic of the essay.	The thesis statement outlines some or all of the main points to be discussed but does not name the topic.	The thesis statement does not name the topic, but does preview what will be discussed.	The thesis statement does not name the topic AND does not preview what will be discussed.
Evidence and Examples	All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Most of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author's position.	At least one of the pieces of evidence and examples is relevant and has an explanation that shows how that piece of evidence supports the author's position.	Evidence and examples are NOT relevant AND/OR are not explained.	No evidence and no examples are included or explained.
Support for Position	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement. The writer anticipates the reader's concerns, biases, or arguments and has provided at least 1 counter-argument.	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 2 pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 1 piece of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences).	No facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences were included.
Accuracy	All supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.	Almost all supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.	Most supportive facts and statistics are reported accurately.	Most supportive facts and statistics were inaccurately reported.	Plagiarism was verified.

## GRADING:

### GRADING: Project Rubric

#### Projects Will Be Randomly Checked for Plagiarism

CATEGORY	4-A	3-B	2-C	1-D	0.5 D-
<b>Format</b>	The project and citations are formatted correctly as assigned. There are no misspellings. The punctuation is correct.	The project and citations are formatted correctly. There are either 2 or less misspellings noted/ or there are 2 or less errors in punctuation.	The project or the citations are not formatted correctly as assigned. There are no misspellings and the punctuation is correct.	The project and the citations are not formatted correctly as assigned. There are 5 or less misspellings, but the punctuation is correct.	The project and the citations are not formatted correctly as assigned. There are 5 or more misspellings. The punctuation may or may not be correct.
<b>Submission</b>	The project was submitted by the correct date and by the correct time.	The project was submitted by the correct day. The thesis was submitted AFTER the correct time.	The project was submitted up to 24 hours after the correct date and correct time.	The project was submitted up to 72 hours after the correct date and correct time.	The project was submitted more than 72 hours after the correct date and correct time.
<b>Sources</b>	Source information collected for all graphics, facts and quotes. All documented in desired format.	Source information collected for all graphics, facts and quotes. Most documented in desired format.	Source information collected for graphics, facts and quotes, but not documented in desired format.	Very little or no source information was collected, and was not in the desired format.	No evidence of source material.
<b>Content</b>	Covers topic in-depth with details and examples. Subject knowledge is excellent.	Includes essential knowledge about the topic. Subject knowledge appears to be good.	Includes essential information about the topic but there are 1-2 factual errors.	Content is minimal OR there are several factual errors.	Almost no content or there are multiple factual errors.
<b>Originality</b>	Product shows a large amount of original thought. Ideas are creative and inventive.	Product shows some original thought. Work shows new ideas and insights.	Uses other people's ideas (giving them credit), but there is little evidence of original thinking.	Uses other people's ideas, but does not give them credit.	Mostly plagiarized/copied from some source
<b>Organization</b>	Content is well organized using required format throughout	Uses headings or bulleted lists to organize, but the overall formatting appears flawed.	Content is logically organized for the most part.	There was some organizational structure, mostly just a list of facts.	Almost no structure, hard to find or follow the required information

## Incomplete Grades (I):

**Scholar Generated:** Indicates that a scholar was doing satisfactory work, but due to non-academic reasons beyond his/her control, was unable to meet the full requirements of the course. A grade of I is appropriate only when the unfinished requirements can be clearly delineated and constitute a relatively small part of the course; otherwise, withdrawal is appropriate. It is the scholar's responsibility to initiate the request for an I by contacting the relevant Professor in a timely manner before the end of the term. The assignment of an I requires the written approval of the vocations office. To remove an I and convert it to a grade, the scholar must contact the professor in a timely manner and arrange to complete the course requirements. (An individual who has an I pending but is not otherwise enrolled may not retain possession of Grace Theological Seminary-owned equipment, and the individual has access to campus facilities and services only to the extent necessary to complete course requirements.) A grade of I that is not converted will automatically be changed to the grade Fail at the completion of 12 calendar months.

## Course Failure / Course Repeat Policy:

The completion of assignments is required. Scholars must submit assignment(s) as required by the course professor by the course deadlines set by the professor. Those who do not submit assignment(s) may be placed on academic probation. Scholars who fail a mandatory course must repeat and pass the course within 12 months. Scholars may not fail more than one course per Term. Those who do not repeat and pass the course a second time may be withdrawn from Grace Theological Seminary.

## Classroom Behavior and Exercise of Self-Discipline:

Faculty should clarify the definition of the Code of Conduct in their syllabi citing specific examples of conduct that would result in disciplinary action. Disruptive behavior includes but is not limited to intoxication, belligerent, abusive (physically or verbally), profane, distracting, and/or threatening behavior. More subtle forms of behavior may also negatively impact the teaching-learning process. Some examples include: inappropriate attire, eating during class time, and an unwillingness to participate in educational activities, that may significantly impact the Professor's ability to conduct the class. Faculty should provide scholars with an opportunity to clarify course policies and issues. Any statement beyond the above should be clarified in the syllabus.

To maintain classroom order, the faculty member has the right and responsibility to take the steps he or she deems necessary and reasonable, including private or public requests to refrain from disruptive behavior. A scholar who fails to respond to reasonable faculty direction regarding classroom behavior and/or behavior while participating in classroom activities may be dismissed from class, and in some circumstances may be dismissed from a course for the remainder of the semester.

A scholar is entitled to due process; thus, the Rector must be immediately notified in writing. If found in violation of this Code of Conduct, a scholar may, in addition to other outcomes, be administratively withdrawn from the course and may receive a grade of WF.

### **Academic Reporting and Scholars Privacy (FERPA):**

Scholars have the right to assurance that their educational records as defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 will be recorded accurately and retained in confidence. Scholars have the right to review the contents of their educational records. The type of information maintained by Grace Theological Seminary is divided into two groups: directory information and personally identifiable information. As such, Grace Theological Seminary personnel must not permit access to or release of any confidential Scholars information to any third parties without written consent of the scholar other than the following (34 CFR § 99.31):

Further, electronic scholar submissions should not be accessible to anyone other than the scholars and the Rector/Faculty member/staff who needs the electronic submission to carry out his/her duties. These individuals would usually include the Professor, administrators or staff approved by the Grace Theological Seminary, and e-learning administrators. For Scholars work to become available to a third party, the scholar must give permission. This consent is voluntary and a scholar may decline. If a scholar declines to give consent s/he cannot be denied any academic opportunity or privilege, or suffer resulting adverse consequences.

Education Records at Grace Theological Seminary are defined as any portion of the educational history that is maintained by the Grace Theological Seminary for the purpose of sharing by other academic officials and is intended to support the academic progress of the scholar. Typical examples are the academic files maintained in a department or Grace Theological Seminary administrative office. These records include: files, documents and materials in multiple mediums (handwritten, tape, disks, microfilm, CD-ROM, etc.) which contain information directly related to the academic educational efforts of the scholar.

Grace Theological Seminary has identified the following as directory information that may be released without written consent of the scholar's: name; address; telephone number; dates of attendance; previous institutions attended; major; awards and/or honors; degree conferred; participation in clubs, organizations, and sports; and place of birth.

All other information is considered personal and cannot be released without the scholar's written consent. Scholars record information accessible via computer is subject to all of the rules and regulations of confidentiality under FERPA. Faculty should take care to make sure that computer-accessible confidential information is handled with due professional care.

### **FERPA and Verification of Scholars Identity in Distance Learning**

Grace Theological Seminary must comply with the provisions of the United States Federal Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), Public Law 100-315 concerning the verification of Scholars identity in distance learning.

**FERPA and Scholars Privacy Protection:** Regardless of the method used, the scholar's identity verification must protect the privacy of the scholar's information. Scholars must be notified at the time of registration or enrollment of any fees associated with the verification of their identity.

**FERPA and Distance Education:** All credit bearing courses and programs offered through distance education must assure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). As such, Grace Theological Seminary personnel must not permit access to or release of any confidential Scholars information to any third parties without written consent of the scholar other than the following (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest
- Other schools to which a scholar is transferring
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a scholar
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
- Accrediting organizations
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies

A GTS Faculty member has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for the Grace Theological Seminary. Upon request, the Grace Theological Seminary also discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a scholar seeks or intends to enroll.

### **FERPA and Scholars Rights to View Their Education Records:**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords scholars certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights include: The right to inspect and review their education records within 45 days of the day the Grace Theological Seminary receives a request for access.

1. A scholar should submit a written request that identifies the record(s) the scholar wishes to inspect. The Grace Theological Seminary Dean of Vocations will make arrangements with the Rector for access and notify the scholar of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the scholar's education records that he/she believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the scholar's privacy rights under FERPA. A scholar who wishes to ask the Grace Theological Seminary to amend a record must write the Grace Theological Seminary Rector, clearly identify the part of the record the scholar wants changed, and specify why it should be changed.

If Grace Theological Seminary decides not to amend the record as requested, the Grace Theological Seminary will notify the scholar in writing of the decision and the scholar's right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the scholar when notified of the right to a hearing.

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

**Family Policy Compliance Office**

**U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202-5901**

### Title IX:

Any scholar, faculty, or staff member with questions or concerns about applicable Grace Theological Seminary policies or who believes that they have been the victim of or witness to sexual discrimination, sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, or sexual violence is encouraged to contact the Grace Theological Seminary Rector or can file a report with a legal agency via private email. Individuals who believe that they have been discriminated against on the basis of protected qualifications, including sex discrimination, sexual misconduct, sexual harassment and sexual violence may file a complaint with the Grace Theological Seminary by contacting the Grace Theological Seminary Rector or can file a report with a legal agency via private email.

**Accessibility:** The Grace Theological Seminary State community provides support and advocacy for scholars with documented disabilities under the guidelines of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ADA Amendments.

**Accommodations:** Grace Theological Seminary strives to maintain the highest standards of integrity and fairness in its policy and nondiscrimination on the basis of disability. Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits institutions from discrimination against "otherwise qualified" individual with disabilities. An individual with a disability is defined as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or regarded as having such impairment. A qualified individual with a disability is a person who, with reasonable accommodations, can perform the essential functions of a job or school curriculum.

Scholars with disabilities seeking accommodations or services should submit appropriate documentation to determine eligibility. GTS will provide accommodations provisionally for a period of time (usually one trimester) that would be reasonably sufficient for the scholar to gather the necessary information. Documentation is used to determine eligibility for disability services, as well as to inform accommodation decision-making. In order to establish disability status and eligibility for disability services GTS requires documentation from a qualified evaluator that: attests to the presence of a disabling condition as defined by the ADA and demonstrates substantial limitations impacting performance in the academic environment when compared to most people in the general population. Based on the documentation provided, Scholars may be eligible for one or more accommodations. Common accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- Extended test time
- Permission to audio record lectures
- Alternate text formats for textbooks and other printed course materials
- Use of computers with assistive technology for testing
- Captioning services

### **TUITION:**

Tuition and Fees must be paid by the assigned fee payment due date or courses will be dropped due to lack of payment.

At the time of the course payment, the scholar will be required to pay any previous obligations.

Tuition Payment Options:

1. One annual payment of \$1200.
2. Three term payments of \$425.
3. Twelve monthly payments of \$115.

**DUE DATES:** All payments are due before the first class. Scholar's must contact the Bursar's Office to discuss alternative payment options.

**Late Charges:** A fee is considered late if not paid within 72 hours of the first class. A fee of \$15.00 will be assessed for monthly late payments. A fee of \$25.00 will be assessed for term late payments.

Scholars cannot begin a new term unless the financial account is settled from the prior term. However, they will be given access to the Sanctuary, the Library, and the Bursar's Office until they have resolved the outstanding financial issues. It is the responsibility of the scholar to contact the Bursar's Office for any concern, discussion, or to consider other options. GTS understands that financial issues can be a challenge, and will consider circumstances as GTS remains committed to scholars' success.

Final course assessments aka report cards, transcripts, and letters of recommendation will not be sent by Grace Theological Seminary for scholars with accounts in financial arrears. Faculty are not permitted to write extramural letters of recommendation on behalf of Grace Theological Seminary without the written authorization of the Dean of Student Services.

**Bursar's Office:** Please contact the Bursar's Office at 1-877-731-9957 and leave a message for "the Bursar's Office". Your call will be returned within 24 - 48 hours.

### **PAYMENTS**

Credit or Debit Card

Please pay online using a credit or debit card.

Log in to Grace Theological Seminary  
Click on My Courses

Click on either the Student Affairs Office, or the Bursar's Office  
Scroll to the Payment Link and Click  
Follow the instructions to complete the Payment Information.

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### Check or Money Order

Steps to ensure your check or money order are processed:

You must be currently enrolled, or the Bursar's Office will not accept the check or money order.

You must write your name on the front of the check or money order.

Checks and money orders must be payable to Grace Theological Seminary in (\$) dollars and drawn on a U.S. bank. Payments in non-U.S. funds or drawn on non-U.S. banks will be returned unprocessed. Counter or starter checks are not accepted.

The check or money order amount must be equal to the entire balance due. No partial payments will be accepted.

All checks and money orders must be mailed to:

Bishop Linda Jarvis:

4 Horizon Road # 418

Fort Lee, NJ, 07024

Important: Please ensure that the check or money order is received at least ten business days prior to your due date to allow for processing time

## Technology: Digital Learning

The Rector is responsible for leading and coordinating Grace Theological Seminary's technological compliance activities, promoting the use of accessible technology and equipment, and providing recommendations to improve technological accessibility. The Rector is also charged with providing information, training, and technical assistance to the Grace Theological Seminary community regarding the promotion and use of accessible technology, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and related compliance laws.

Contact the Rector for questions related to these matters at [deansoffice@gracetheologicalseminary.org](mailto:deansoffice@gracetheologicalseminary.org)

**Acceptable Use Policy (AUP):** Please read this acceptable use policy carefully before using the media provided by Grace Theological Seminary.

Services provided by GTS may only be used for lawful purposes. You agree to comply with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations in connection with your use of the services. Any material or conduct that in our judgment violates this policy in any manner may result in suspension or termination of the services or removal of user's account with or without notice.

**Prohibited Use:** You may not use the services to publish content or engage in activity that is illegal under applicable law, that is harmful to others, or that would subject us to liability, including, without limitation, in connection with any of the following, each of which is prohibited under this AUP:



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- Phishing or engaging in identity theft
- Distributing computer viruses, worms, Trojan horses, or other malicious code
- Distributing pornography or adult related content or offering any escort services
- Promoting or facilitating violence or terrorist activities
- Infringing the intellectual property of Grace Theological Seminary, its faculty, staff, or other proprietary rights of others.

**Enforcement:** Your services may be suspended or terminated with or without notice upon any violation of this policy. Any violations may result in the immediate suspension or termination of your account. Infringement of Intellectual Property may result in fines and penalties.

**Reporting Violations:** To report a violation of this policy, please contact Grace Theological Seminary at [deansoffice@gracetheologicalseminary.org](mailto:deansoffice@gracetheologicalseminary.org)

GTS reserves the right to change this policy at any given time, of which you will be promptly updated. To make sure that you are up to date with the latest changes, we advise you to pay attention to your GTS notifications / check this handbook.

## Netiquette at Grace Theological Seminary

It is important for you to recognize that the online classroom is in fact a classroom, and certain behaviors are expected when you communicate with both your peers and your instructors.

These guidelines for online behavior and interaction are known as “netiquette”. The rules for online learning and classroom learning are virtually the same: You have to study, take notes, attend classes and participate in discussions. In the classroom, your words, gestures, posture and facial expressions communicate your thoughts and observations to your classmates and teachers. But how do you express yourself online, where the written word is all they see?

The purpose of the following information is to help you be a more effective and successful scholar when communicating via email, chat rooms, or on discussion boards as a part of your online learning activities.

### Why Netiquette is Important to Online Scholars

Proper conduct in an online class is just as important as in a classroom with similar potential repercussions for failing to maintain decorum. Remember that in an online class it is common for a very substantial portion of your grade to be a function of how well you perform in online discussion areas and other “classroom participation” activities. Your ability to clearly and properly communicate in an online class can be every bit as important to your success as how you perform on multiple choice tests and written assignments.

## Grace Theological Seminary - Scholars' Handbook

### Netiquette - General Guidelines

1. When communicating online, you should always:
2. Treat your peers and faculty with respect, even in email or in any other online communication.
3. Always use your professors' proper title: Dr. or Prof., or if you in doubt use Mr. or Ms. (Corollary: Make sure if you use a gender-specific title that you are clear on their gender. Some names can be gender ambiguous.)
4. Unless specifically invited, don't refer to persons by their first name. Some will be OK called "Indiana" and others will expect to be "Dr. Jones".
5. Use clear and concise language. Be respectful of readers' time and attention.
6. Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar. Avoid slang terms and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you".
7. Use standard fonts that are optimized for online reading (e.g., sans serif) along with a consistent and readable size (12 or 14 pt.)
8. Make sure identification is clear in all communications. Begin with a salutation ("Hello Jason!") and end with your signature ("Hannah Kay, Pastoral Ministry :130").
9. Review what you wrote and try to interpret it objectively. When we speak face to face and are misunderstood, we have an on-the-spot opportunity to rephrase our words. In writing, we must strive twice as hard to be understood, as we do not have the benefit of modifying or elaborating in real time. All caps ("I'M SHOUTING") and exclamation points ("Give me a break!!!") can be misinterpreted as intense anger or humor without the appropriate context.
10. If you wouldn't say it face to face, don't say it online. When you're working online, you're safe behind a screen, but that's no excuse to be ill-mannered or say things you would never say in public.
11. Don't assume everyone understands where you're coming from. Sarcasm and wit are often the spice of in-person conversations, but in online discussion, they can not only lose their edge, they can bite! In your high school classroom, all scholars were the same age, came from similar backgrounds and lived in the same area. In contrast, your online classroom is made up of people of all ages and cultures who have varied backgrounds, lifestyles and geographic locations. With this in mind, review what you wrote before contributing to the conversation and ask yourself, "Will everyone get the joke?"
12. Don't spam. Please don't take advantage of your connection with the other scholars in your online classroom to forward emails and links to sell services.
13. Use emoticons. In casual chatroom settings, emoticons can help convey feelings that may otherwise get lost in translation, including humor, exasperation, exhaustion and even confusion.
14. Respect others' privacy. Don't give out another scholar's personal email address without permission.

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15. Remember, if it's on the internet, it's everywhere. Don't share personal information about yourself in a public online forum, especially something that could put your safety or security at risk.
16. Follow the rules. Online forums have rules of conduct. Make a point to read them every time, as they can vary from course to course.
17. Forgive and forget. If you're offended by something another scholar says online, keep in mind that you may have misunderstood their intentions. Give them the benefit of the doubt.

### **Scholars' Code of Ethics:**

Preamble: As a Servant in God's Vineyard called by God to serve Creation and gifted by the Spirit to pastor, I dedicate myself to conduct my ministry according to the ethical guidelines and principles set forth in this code of ethics, in order that my ministry be acceptable to God, my service be beneficial to all communities, and my life be a witness to the world.

#### **Responsibilities to Myself**

1. I will maintain my physical and emotional health through regular exercise, good eating habits, and the proper care of my body.
2. I will nurture my devotional life through a regular time of prayer, reading of the Scriptures, and meditation.
3. I will continue to grow intellectually through personal study, comprehensive reading, and attending educational workshops, seminars, and conferences.
4. I will manage my time well by properly balancing personal obligations, church duties, and family responsibilities, and by observing a weekly day off and an annual vacation.
5. I will be honest and responsible in my finances by paying my debts on time according to my finances, never seeking special gratuities or privileges, giving generously to worthwhile causes, and living an ethical lifestyle.
6. I will be truthful in my speech, never plagiarizing another's work, exaggerating the facts, misusing personal experiences, or communicating gossip.
7. I will seek to be charitable in attitude and action toward all persons regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, economic realities, religious beliefs, or position of influence within the church and community.

#### **Responsibilities to My Family**

1. I will be fair to every member of my family, giving them the time, love, and consideration, they need.

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2. I will understand the unique role of my spouse and treat her/him with respect and honor.
3. I will regard my family as a gift from God and seek to meet their individual needs without imposing undue expectations upon them.

### **Responsibilities to the Seminary**

1. I will seek to be a servant-minister of the church by demonstrating faith, love, wisdom, courage, and integrity.
2. I will faithfully discharge my time and energies through proper study and work habits and reasonable schedules.
3. In my administrative and pastoral duties, I will be impartial and fair to all.
4. In my preaching responsibilities, I will give adequate time to prayer and preparation, so that my presentation will be biblically based, theologically correct, and clearly communicated.
5. In my pastoral counseling, I will maintain strict confidentiality, except in cases where disclosure is necessary to prevent harm to persons and/or is required by law.
6. In my evangelistic responsibilities, I will seek to lead persons to salvation and to church membership without manipulating converts, proselytizing members of other churches, or demeaning other religious faiths.
7. In my visitation and counseling practices, I will remain vigilant of my fidelity to my calling and will not engage in untoward relationships with counselees/their family/friends.

### **Responsibilities to My Colleagues**

1. I will endeavor to relate to my colleagues (peers, teachers, and mentors), especially those with whom I serve as partners in the work of God, respecting their ministry and cooperating with them.
2. I will seek to serve my colleagues and their families with counsel, support, and personal assistance.
3. I will refuse to treat my colleagues as competition in order to gain a grade, a church, receive an honor, or achieve statistical success.
4. I will refrain from speaking disparagingly about the person or the work of colleagues.
5. I will enhance the ministry of all peers by offering assistance as requested and needed.
6. I will return to Grace Theological Seminary for professional services, such as weddings and funerals if invited as an alumnus to celebrate a ceremony.
7. I will be thoughtful and respectful to all retired GTS Teachers, Mentors, and Staff.
8. I will be honest and/but kind in my recommendations of colleagues to church positions or other inquiries.
9. If aware of serious misconduct I will contact responsible officials of GTS immediately.

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### **Responsibilities to the Community**

1. I will consider my primary responsibility is to never neglect ministerial duties.
2. I will accept reasonable responsibilities for community service, recognizing the minister has a public ministry.
3. I will support public morality in the community through responsible prophetic witness and social action.
4. I will practice citizenship without engaging in partisan politics or political activities that are unethical, unbiblical, or unwise.

### **Responsibilities to My Denomination**

1. I will offer agape love, spiritual, emotional, and psychological support and cooperate with the faith community of which I am a part, recognizing the responsibility I owe to my denomination for its contribution to my life, my ministry, and my church.
2. I will work to improve my denomination in its efforts to expand and extend the kingdom of God.
3. I will be supportive and loyal to my colleagues, never criticizing them or undermining their ministry.
4. I will recognize my role and responsibility and will not feel threatened or in competition with other colleagues of my special area of ministry.
5. If single, I will be discreet in my dating practices, especially in relation to members of my denominational colleagues.

### **MILITARY CHAPLAIN    Military Chaplain Code of Ethics**

1. I will be an ethical example of a Christian lifestyle in a military setting.
2. I will perform my service duties according to the military codes of conduct while recognizing my ultimate allegiance is to God.
3. I will be truthful in my reports to my senior officers without divulging unnecessary confidential information.

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### **PASTORAL MINISTRY / CHAPLAINCY Professional Ministry Code of Ethics**

1. I will have a pastor/counselor to whom I can turn for counseling and advice.
2. I will be aware of my own needs and vulnerabilities, never seeking to meet my own needs through my counselees.
3. I will recognize the power I hold over counselees and never take advantage of their vulnerability through exploitation or manipulation.
4. I will never become sexually or romantically involved with a client, or engage in any form of erotic or romantic conduct.
5. I will demonstrate unconditional acceptance and love toward all counselees, regardless of their standards, beliefs, attitudes, or actions.
6. If I am unable to benefit a client, I will refer him or her to another professional who can provide appropriate therapy.
7. I will maintain good relationships with other counselors and therapists, informing and conferring with them about mutual concerns.
8. I will keep confidential all matters discussed in a counseling setting, unless the information is hazardous for the client, for another person, or is required by law.
9. I will offer my assistance and services to fellow ministers and their families whenever needed.
10. I will contribute to the ministry of my church through personal counseling, seminars, lectures, workshops, and group therapy.
11. I will seek to support the policies and beliefs of my ministry without unduly imposing them upon any counselee.

### **TEACHING Professional Teaching Code of Ethics**

1. I will interact with Learners only in appropriate settings.
2. I will communicate with Learners in a clear, respectful, and culturally sensitive manner.
3. I will take into account how appearance and dress can affect my interactions and relationships with Learners.
4. I will consider the implication of accepting gifts from or giving gifts to Learners.
5. I will engage in physical contact with Learners only when there is a clearly defined purpose that benefits the Learner and continually keeps the safety and well-being of the Learner in mind.

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6. I will avoid relationship with Learners which might impair objectivity and increase the risk of harm to learning or well-being or decrease educator effectiveness.
7. I acknowledge that there are no circumstances that allow for educators to engage in romantic or sexual relationships with Learners
8. I will consider the ramifications of entering into an adult relationship of any kind with a former Learner, including but not limited to, any potential harm to the former Scholars, public perception, and the possible impact on my career. I will ensure that the adult relationship was not started while the former Learner was in school.
9. I respect the privacy of Learners and the need to hold in confidence certain forms of Learner communication, documents, or information obtained in the course of professional practice.
10. I will uphold any legal requirements to reveal information related to legitimate concerns for the well-being of the Learner.
11. I will protect the confidentiality of Learner records and releasing personal data in accordance with prescribed state and federal laws and local policies.
12. I accept the responsibilities, performing duties and providing services corresponding to the area of certification, licensure, and training of my position.
13. I will reflect upon and assess my professional skills, content knowledge, and competency on an ongoing basis and am committed to ongoing professional education and training.

## Grace Theological Seminary - Scholars' Handbook

Thank you for Viewing the Grace Theological Seminary Scholar's Handbook. This handbook will be updated on an as needed basis.

