



Phillips

Theological Seminary

Theological Field Education 2025-2026 HANDBOOK

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TFE ANNUAL TIMELINE

TFE Application Period – Spring semester prior to program start

When	What	Who
Late March	TFE information Session(s)	Prospective TFE students
April 1-May 15	TFE Application Period Student Interviews with TFE Director	Student applicants
June 1	TFE Ministry Site Agreements due	Student applicants
July 1	Second draft of TFE Application & Agreements due (as necessary)	Student applicants

TFE I - Fall Semester

When	What	Who
August	TFE I Adjunct training (as needed)	Adjuncts
September	Supervisor-mentor Consultation	Supervisor-mentors
September	Students submit Learning Covenants	Students/Supervisor-mentors
October	Supervisor-mentor Consultation	Supervisor-mentors
October	Students submit Autobiographical Sketch	Students
November	Supervisor-mentor Consultation	Supervisor-mentors
November	Students submit Vocational Reflections	Student
December	Supervisor-mentor Consultation	Supervisor-mentors
December	Students submit Intercultural Engagement proposal	Student
December	TFE II Adjunct training (as needed)	Adjuncts

TFE II – Spring Semester

When	What	Who
January	Supervisor-mentor consultation	Supervisor-mentors
February	Contextual Analysis	Student
March	Ministry Case Study	Student
March	Supervisor-mentor consultation	Supervisor-mentors
April	Intercultural Engagement Project	Students
May	Supervisor-mentor Consultation	Supervisor-mentors

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM

CONTEXTUAL EDUCATION: THEOLOGICAL FIELD EDUCATION (TFE) & CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION (CPE)

Phillips Seminary's Theological Field Education Program (TFE) is a mid-degree academic-year-in-ministry program for selected Master's-level students. During TFE, the student, the faith community and the seminary engage together in ministry practices and reflection designed to assist the student in building skills for ministry, integrating their seminary experiences, engaging in vocational reflection, and imagining innovative contextually responsive practices of ministry.

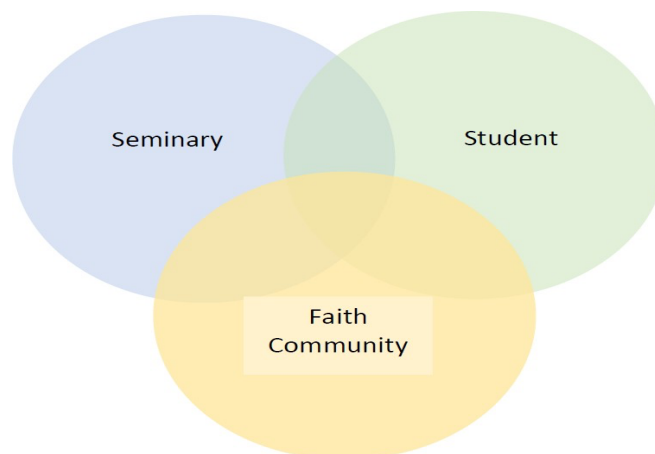
Students in the MDiv and MAMC programs devote one academic year to contextual education which comprises all of the ways persons learn about themselves and others through interactions with their context. For persons engaged in ministry, working in a congregation or other ministerial setting offers one avenue for such learning to take place. Additionally, other non-profit organizations and accredited CPE programs comprise field placement opportunities.

Students have two options for fulfilling this requirement: The Theological Field Education Program (TFE) or completing CPE through an accredited CPE Programs (For a listing of ACPE-accredited locations, see www.acpe.edu). Students apply directly to CPE programs and must be accepted by that program to participate in the CPE track. CPE is an integrated component of Phillip's Theological Field Education track. Students should consult denominational officials about which program best prepares them for ordination.

DIALOGICAL MODEL

Theological Field Education at Phillips creates an ecology of dialogue between Student-Seminary-Faith Community.

- Student and seminary are in relationship via participation in the classes, "Theological Field Education I and II."
- Seminary and site are in relationship via a series of live consultations throughout the academic year facilitated by the TFE Director.
- Student and site are in relationship via a structured mentoring relationship established between the student and the site supervisor/mentor, guided by Phillips' TFE curriculum.



PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Students who complete the Theological Field Education program should be able to:

- Engage in ongoing integrative reflection upon practices of ministry.
- Explore their vocational identity as a project toward the ongoing development of pastoral identity.
- Identify and articulate practices of personal and spiritual formation as they contribute to the development of pastoral identity.
- Articulate the impact of practices of personal and spiritual formation upon the development of their vocational direction.
- Demonstrate skills for leadership and identify areas for growth in intercultural contexts for ministry.
- Demonstrate skills for the continued development of innovative and culturally responsive ministry practices.

APPROACH

The purpose of Theological Field Education is for students to engage in **praxis** in ministry contexts in pursuit of the development of pastoral identity and effective ministry **practices**.

Praxis here is understood as a continual cycle of action and reflection during which the student develops practical wisdom¹ toward growth in pastoral identity and identification of effective ministry practices.

Practices include all the activities that are required in the context of professional ministry, both corporate and individual and in both church and community. The scope of practices that will be engaged through Theological Field Education are informed by the sixteen Areas of Ministerial Practice identified by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) General Commission on ministry: biblical knowledge, church administration and planning, communication, cross cultural and anti-racism experience, ecumenism, education and leader development, ethics, evangelism, mission of the church in the world, pastoral care, proclamation of the Word, spiritual development, stewardship, theology, understanding of heritage, and worship.² These practices are undergirded by the *habitus* of the context, whereby practices are informed by “structures, strategies, and cultural products”³ that contribute to the production of the “way things are” in a particular setting. TFE will engage various aspects of ministry arising out of these sixteen ministerial practices along with other practices that arise from the ministry context and will explore the *habitus* that contributes to the formation and operation of these practices in faith communities.

¹ Don S. Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 2-3.

² <https://disciples.org/gcom/areas-of-ministerial-practice/>

³ Emmanuel Y. Lartey, *Pastoral Theology in an Intercultural World* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2006) 23.

CURRICULAR ELEMENTS

Vocational Reflection

Vocational Reflection invites the student to explore the ways their *identity* and *purpose* are developing in seminary and through the field education experience. Ultimately, we want students to ask, “*Who am I? What are my gifts? How do I use my gifts for good in the world?*”⁴ Through vocational reflection individually, with mentors, and with peers, students will develop tools for vocational reflection well beyond the year in Theological Field Education.

Personal and Spiritual Formation

Practices of self-care and spiritual growth help to form a pastoral identity that seeks personal, relational, and spiritual vitality. Curricular components will invite students to identify practices of healthy personal and relational care along with practices of individual and communal spiritual formation, to reflect upon these formative practices in light of their developing pastoral identity, and to make plans for continued practice of personal and spiritual formation well beyond seminary.

Intercultural Engagement

Intercultural engagement—across lines of race, class, sexual orientation, or a host of other cultural identifiers—invites the student to consider their pastoral formation through engagement with the Other, to reflect upon their own cultural formation, and to build skills for pastoral leadership across lines of difference.

Development of Ministry Practices

TFE functions as a relative “lab” space for the development of effective ministry practices. It invites the student to bring together their knowledge about the community’s needs and their vocational gifts toward the development of effective ministry practice that arise from and respond to their experience in the ministry site context.

Integrative Reflection

The program components named above will come together for students in regular moments of reflection following this design:

Movement 1: Description of ministry practice arising from context

Movement 2: Critical reflection upon ministry practice

Movement 3: Theological reflection

Movement 4: Integration (Placing Tradition and Practice in Dialogue)

⁴ Lewis, et al., *Another Way: Living and Leading Change on Purpose* (Chalice Press, 2020), 85.

Movement 5: Imagining and Enacting Responses

Movement 6: Vocational Reflection

Students will engage in this reflective framework throughout their two semesters in TFE, one-on-one with their TFE mentors and in a classroom setting with TFE peers.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

THEOLOGICAL FIELD EDUCATION (TFE)

1. Ministry Site & Reflection with a Supervisor-mentor

Students in TFE will work in consultation with the TFE Director to identify learning goals and to select a field placement that will nurture their goals. Students are expected to spend roughly 10 hours per week per 13-week semester participating in pastoral ministry in their assigned ministry context. Ministry settings can include, but are not limited to:

- Congregational ministry in urban, suburban, and rural contexts
- Nonprofit ministries and other nonprofit settings
- Para-church organizations
- Faith-based social enterprise

Supervisor-mentor: Participation in the leadership of this ministry context includes a mentoring component. In addition to the general oversight of the student, the Supervisor-mentor will facilitate a series of one-on-one integrative reflection conversations over the course of the academic year. *See pages 13-14 of this handbook for more information about the mentoring relationship.*

2. Integrative Reflection in Seminary Classroom

Students will engage in reflection upon ministry practices in a weekly class with their peers. This reflection is intended to integrate the students' experiences with the seminary curriculum with life in the ministry context. Movements of the reflective framework (see *Integrative Reflection*, p. 5) will be utilized repeatedly across the two semesters in TFE to facilitate the ongoing development of students' personal and vocational identity. Theological Field Education I and II must be taken concurrently with participation in the Theological Field Education program. Students will receive 2 hours of academic credit per-semester for TFE classes. *See page 15 of this handbook for more information about Theological Field Education I and II.*

3. Practice of Ministry Case Study

Each student will present a case study of one practice of ministry that has arisen while working at their ministry site. The purpose of the case study is to engage in intentional *integrative reflection* (see *Integrative Reflection* handout on Canvas). This process invites the student to focus upon how one encounter in ministry can shape the student's pastoral identity and vocational trajectory along with critical awareness of the intersections of theological reflection and the practice of ministry. Case studies presume that theological insights and other meaningful wisdom emerge in important ways through storytelling, provided an intentional reflective process which includes problem posing, theological reflection upon images, symbols and texts, and action/reflection designed to deepen and refine the student's practices of ministry. Students will sign-up to present case studies. A written draft of your case study is due to your instructor, via Canvas, one week before its presentation in class. A final reflection upon your case study and the reflection process is due with your final submitted portfolio on May 7. This assignment will count toward 40% of your overall portfolio grade. See the assignment, "Integrative Reflection Upon Case Studies" on Canvas for more information.

4. Intercultural Engagement Project

A component of each students' field education program includes a moment of intercultural engagement in a community-based ministry setting. This engagement will occur during the second semester of Theological Field Education (TFE II). Projects must take place in contexts where the student is working across lines of difference, including (but not limited to):

- Race
- Class
- Gender
- Sexual orientation

Students will work with their supervisor-mentors and the TFE Director to identify and design projects during the second half of the semester in TFE I. *See page 16 of this handbook for more information about the Intercultural Engagement Project.*

Pedagogical components during TFE II will include encounters with resources about ministry across lines of difference and about effective intercultural engagement as a dimension of ministry for social change. Essential skills will include understanding power dynamics as they relate to privilege and marginalization in intercultural contexts, building facility for self-awareness in leadership amidst encounters with difference, and building skills for developing a spirituality of intercultural engagement as an ongoing element of vocational formation.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION (CPE)

Overview

In recognition of the growing need for practical, hands-on experience in pastoral care, we are pleased to announce the integration of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) into our Theological Field Education program. CPE is a form of theological education that takes place in clinical settings, such as hospitals, hospice centers, and other health care environments. It is designed to help students develop their pastoral identity and improve their skills in providing spiritual care to individuals in crisis.

Objectives of CPE

- **Personal Growth:** CPE provides a structured and supervised environment in which students can explore their own beliefs, values, and spiritual practices. This reflection is crucial for personal and professional growth in pastoral care.
- **Skill Development:** Students will develop and refine key skills in spiritual care, including active listening, empathy, theological reflection, and crisis intervention.
- **Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** CPE offers opportunities for students to work alongside professionals from various disciplines, fostering an appreciation for diverse approaches to care and enhancing their ability to function effectively within a team.

Program Structure

CPE programs are typically structured as units, each consisting of approximately 400 hours of combined clinical practice and group supervision. The program requires active participation in both providing pastoral care and engaging in reflective learning sessions. Students will be expected to complete a minimum of one unit of CPE as part of their Theological Field Education requirements. In addition to CPE placement requirements, CPE students will be required to participate in Synchronous Class Time & Asynchronous Discussion Post.

Evaluation and Supervision

Students enrolled in CPE will be closely supervised by certified CPE educators who provide feedback and guidance. Evaluation will focus on both the practical aspects of pastoral care and the student's personal and professional development. The CPE unit will culminate in a mid-term & final portfolio, which will be integrated into the overall assessment of the student's Field Education experience. The CPE portfolio will consist of the following:

- Autobiographical Sketch
- Online of the student's clinical work schedule.
- All Verbatims used in the CPE program.
- Mid-term & Final Supervisor/Mentor Evaluations
- Case Study Reflections
- Intercultural Engagement Project

Integration with Theological Field Education

CPE is intended to complement and enhance the existing Theological Field Education curriculum. The experiences and insights gained through CPE will inform the student's ongoing theological reflection and ministerial practice, enriching their overall educational journey.

GETTING STARTED

CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION

Application Process

Students interested in enrolling in CPE must apply through accredited CPE centers (For a listing of ACPE-accredited locations, see www.acpe.edu). Students apply directly to CPE programs and must be accepted by that program to participate in the CPE track. The application process typically includes a written application, an interview, and the submission of personal and academic references. Acceptance into a CPE program is contingent upon meeting the specific requirements of the chosen CPE center. Upon acceptance the student must adhere to the Phillips TFE application process listed below.

THEOLOGICAL FIELD EDUCATION

Program Year

Theological Field Education begins during the fall semester of each academic year and concludes at the end of the Spring semester of that same year. Students may not start TFE during any semester other than the program start each fall.

Prerequisites

Students who wish to enter the Theological Field Education program must be able to demonstrate completion of Phase I course requirements for Phillips Theological Seminary's MDiv or MAMC.

Application and Interview

Students wishing to enter the TFE program during the coming academic year will attend TFE Orientation the preceding Spring semester. Applications to TFE will be accepted between April 1 and May 15. Applications will be reviewed by the Director of Theological Field Education, who will interview each applicant. Application to TFE can be found [here](#) (www.ptstulsa.edu/academicresources).

Upon completion of the Application to TFE, students will be directed to [schedule an interview](#) with the TFE Director. Interviews will last approximately 30 minutes, during which the student and Director will work to identify learning goals for the upcoming year in TFE and will explore options for ministry sites. The students approved TFE Application and successful Interview will

indicate that the student can proceed to contact potential ministry site(s) and complete the TFE Ministry Site Agreement process, thereby solidifying their TFE plans. Students should also register for the respective courses, Theological Field Education I (SYM 505, Fall semester) and Theological Field Education II (SYM 510, Spring semester).

CHOOSING A MINISTRY SITE

Use the following criteria to assist you in choosing a Ministry Site:

1. The duties performed by the student in the ministry setting must align with the student's learning goals as stated on the TFE Application and as elaborated in the student's TFE Interview.
2. Students must be able to perform *substantive work* for a minimum of 10 hours per week at the ministry site. Substantive work must meet *one* of the criteria below:
 - a. Must include a clearly defined set of tasks in a setting that adequately contributes to the student's degree program and/or area of specialization, OR
 - b. Must address a clearly defined area of ministry (general pastoral, educational ministry, pastoral care, social service ministry, etc.); OR
 - c. Must focus on a set of skills the student needs to develop as part of their pastoral formation.

For students seeking ordination, licensure, and/or endorsement with a denominational, religious, and/or spiritual community, please consult with your respective community leader(s) for insight and recommendations as you choose your ministry site. Keep the following in mind as you consider the ministry context in which you might serve:

- We recommend that students intern somewhere other than their home community, or the local faith community in which they were raised. Serving outside of your home community or current place of worship provides an opportunity to engage the TFE experience with "fresh eyes" and to develop your pastoral identity critical awareness of your own religious, spiritual, and leadership formation.
- Some denominations require students in field education to work with a faith community that is *not* your sponsoring community for ordination.
- If you are already working in your chosen ministry vocation/context and are not pursuing a separate field education site, you will be asked to articulate a "growing edge" for the year (e.g. a new project, expanding into a new area of responsibility, etc.).

Theological Field Education and Existing Employment

Students who have existing employment in a ministry setting may submit that setting for approval as a TFE ministry setting. While ministry in a setting of existing employment situation is not cause for automatic approval to the program, ministry sites where the student currently serves that meet the criteria above will be considered for approval.

SELECTING A SUPERVISOR-MENTOR

A TFE Supervisor-mentor will be the person who supervises the student's work in the ministry context. The Supervisor-mentor should be a person who works in professional ministry as a career, with credentials specific to that position. Supervisor-mentors should *not* be a family member, a fellow Phillips student, or a lay congregational member (unless approved by the TFE Director).

Ideally, the student's Supervisor-mentor is *one* person serving in this dual role. However, some circumstances require for a separate Supervisor and Mentor. If you think you will require both a Supervisor and a Mentor, work with the TFE Director to make these arrangements. In this case, the student will have *both* a TFE Supervisor *and* a Mentor, who will be guided and resourced by the TFE program to successfully carry out their work.

Completing the Ministry Site Agreement

Students and Supervisor-mentors will together complete an electronic Ministry Site Agreement to solidify the arrangement between the student, ministry site/Supervisor-mentor, and seminary to participate in the Theological Field Education program. The Ministry Site Agreement can be found [here](http://www.ptstulsa.edu/academic/resources) (www.ptstulsa.edu/academic resources). In addition, the student and the Supervisor-mentor must each read and sign a copy of the Professional Ethics in Field Education agreement, indicating that they have read and agree to the expectations provided therein. The Professional Ethics in Field Education agreement can be found [here](http://www.ptstulsa.edu/academic/resources) (www.ptstulsa.edu/academic resources)

THE MINISTRY SITE

The Theological Field Education moment is an opportunity for students to engage self, seminary, and site in dialogue for theological reflection, development of pastoral identity, and identification of effective ministry practices. The ministry context—whether it be a congregation, clinical pastoral education placement, nonprofit, social service agency, or another setting—is the nexus for action and reflection, a site where students can practice ministry and reflect upon that experience. This moment of grounded action/reflection is indispensable to the student's journey toward effective and contextually relevant practice of professional ministry.

TFE Time Management

Managing the Student's Time at the Ministry Site

To accomplish 13 weeks of Theological Field Education, the start date for a student's work in the ministry context should coincide with the start of the Phillips Theological Seminary academic term. Students who begin their work the first week of the semester, who take weeks off for concentrated courses and for Thanksgiving or Easter recess (depending upon the

semester) will complete the required 13 weeks a semester by the final day of that respective semester.

The 10 hours per week of dedicated work provided by the student at the ministry site should include all necessary supervisory conversations and staff meetings, along with all elements of conversation between Supervisor-mentor and student required by the Theological Field Education Program. Tracking of student hours worked is *not required* by the TFE program but is recommended to be administered by the ministry site.

If Your Work Extends Beyond 10 Hours Per Week

It may be the case that the student's employment circumstances with the ministry site extend beyond the required 10 hours per week for fulfillment of the Theological Field Education requirement. In this case, the student and Supervisor-mentor are encouraged to be explicit of the student's use of a particular 10 hours per week toward the meeting of their learning goals in Theological Field Education.

Time Off

It is requested of the ministry site to provide time off to the student during each semester for Phillips' concentrated classes and for Thanksgiving Recess (in the Fall) and Easter recess (in the Spring), per the Phillips Theological Seminary Academic Calendar. The current academic calendar will be distributed to Supervisor-mentors during their onboarding to the TFE program.

If the student is required to continue to work during the aforementioned break periods, ministry sites are highly encouraged to provide time off to the student at the rate of 20 hours per semester.

Adequate Supervision

The ministry site must provide a sufficient and demonstratable line of accountability within the organizational structure of the site. If the student is performing in a multi-staff organization, there must be adequate oversight of the student's work by a senior staff person.

Financial Compensation

Most students make significant financial and personal sacrifices to undertake their seminary education. Therefore, we encourage our ministry sites to provide financial compensation for Theological Field Education. We recommend that sites aim for a minimum of \$15/hour for the duration of the student work at the ministry site through TFE (~\$3,900/year).

THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Supervisor-mentors offers indispensable guidance for student growth in TFE beyond what the seminary alone can provide. Mentors are professionals in ministry for at least three years who

can observe the student's practice of ministry in context, affirm their particular and emerging gifts and provide challenges for growth. In addition, Supervisor-mentors can model effective skills for ministry, theological reflection, and ongoing vocational discernment, and can demonstrate appropriate professional boundaries, mature personal self-care, and spiritual development.

Supervisor-Mentor Consultations

Supervisor-mentors will be supported by the seminary through four Consultations during the academic year. Consultations, led by the Theological Field Education Director, will resource the work of Supervisor-Mentors in the following content areas:

Date	Topics Covered
Fall Semester	
September	Personal and spiritual formation
October	Integrative reflection Vocational reflection
Spring Semester	
January	Nurturing practice and praxis in ministry Contextually responsive practices for ministry
March	Intercultural engagement in ministry Imagining new ministry practices

All consultations will be conducted digitally. A schedule of consultation dates will be provided to each mentor upon their agreement to participate in the TFE program.

Supervisor-Mentor Commitments

Supervisor-mentors are expected to make the following commitments to participate in the Theological Field Education program:

1. Attend and complete four online mentor consultations.
2. Meet with the student weekly for a supervisory meeting tracking the student's goals, tasks, and accomplishments.
3. Meet with the student for at least one-hour monthly for a focused mentoring conversation.
4. Be available for additional consultation as needed, keeping open communication channels with the student.
5. Complete, discuss, and submit a written mid-year and final Mentor Evaluation Report of the student.
6. Reflect upon your ministry and/or leadership and look for opportunities to share with the student formative experiences in your own professional journey—both in moments of success and in moments of significant challenge.
7. Involve the student as a leader within the broader institutional life of your organization

- (e.g. staff/committee meetings, worship/planning/leadership meetings, etc.)
8. Review and agree to Phillips' [Theological Field Education Professional Ethics Agreement](#).
 9. Communicate and consult with Phillips' Director of Theological Field Education with questions, concerns, challenges, and celebrations.

Scheduling Supervisory and Mentoring Meetings

Supervisor-mentors and students should anticipate meeting at least once *per week* in a supervisory capacity to set organizational goals, track projects, and maintain accountability. Mentors should rely upon their own organizational structure and expectations for supervisory conversations.

In addition, students and Supervisor-mentors should plan to meet for at least one-hour *per month* for a meeting focused specifically upon topics for mentoring. During each consultation, Supervisor-mentors will be provided a guide for conducting each mentoring conversation with the student.

Supervisory meetings (and *all other* administrative or staff-related meetings) and mentoring conversations should be counted within the 10 hours per week of dedicated work provided by the student.

Breakdown in Student/Mentor Relationship

Should a breakdown occur during which it is perceived that the Student/Mentor relationship cannot be continued—either from the perspective of the student or of the Supervisor-Mentor—related parties should contact the Director of Theological Field Education. Working with both student and mentor, the TFE Director will work to resolve the breakdown and (if necessary) work with the student to identify alternative arrangements for the remainder of the program.

THE INTERCULTURAL ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

During their second semester in Theological Field Education, students will participate in a moment of intercultural engagement. The purpose of this project is to develop a “multicultural sensitivity” so that the student, as pastoral leader, “can more effectively [minister] in ways that promote social justice [by] understand[ing] the experiences of marginalization that are the lived reality of groups other than [them]selves.”⁵ Projects must occur in a context where the student is working across lines of difference with a minoritized population, including (but not limited to):

- Race
- Class
- Gender
- Sexual orientation

Projects should encompass 30 hours of Spring semester work (10 hours per week for 3 weeks or 3.5 full-time workdays). Ministry sites should provide students time away from their central duties in order to complete the Intercultural Engagement Project.

During TFE I, students will begin to imagine their projects, submitting project proposals at mid-semester. All projects must be approved by the TFE Director. Intercultural Engagement Projects should reflect that the student is working across lines of difference in relation to at least one element of their own identity. The project can include (but is not limited to) the following:

- Participating in the activities of an advocacy group addressing the concerns of (a) particular minoritized group(s).
- Volunteering at a nonprofit that provides resources and/or services to people in (a) particular minoritized group(s).
- Participating in a series of congregational activities that primarily serves one or more minoritized group with which you do not identify.

Additional resources and guidelines for developing your Intercultural Engagement Project will be provided during class time in Theological Field Education I.

⁵ Kathleen T. Talvacchia, *Critical Minds and Discerning Hearts: A Spirituality of Multicultural Teaching* (St. Louis: Chalice Pres, 2003), 4.

THEOLOGICAL FIELD EDUCATION IN THE SEMINARY CLASSROOM

Theological Field Education I and II facilitate integrative reflection in the seminary classroom. Students are arranged into sections of 5-6 of their peers led by a Small Group Facilitator who is a Phillips' adjunct or affiliate faculty.

Credit hours: 3 hours per semester

PREREQUISITES

Theological Field Education I (SYM 505): Completion of Phase I course requirements and submission of required paperwork to the Director of Theological Field Education.

Theological Field Education I (SYM 510): TFE I and submission of required paperwork to the Director of Theological Field Education.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Theological Field Education I (SYM 505)

The purpose of Theological Field Education is for students to engage in ministry in a supervised context, in pursuit of the development of pastoral identity and toward the identification and crafting of effective ministry practices. During this semester, students will engage in 10-hours-per-week of ministry work in an approved context, for a total of 130 hours (13 weeks). Using case studies arising from the student's experiences of ministry in context, this course will provide opportunity for integrated reflection focused upon vocational exploration, theological reflection, development of pastoral identity, and identification of effective ministry practices.

Theological Field Education II (SYM 510)

The purpose of Theological Field Education is for students to engage in ministry in a supervised context, in pursuit of the development of pastoral identity and toward the identification and crafting of effective ministry practices. During this semester, students will engage in a 10-hour-per-week approved context for ministry, for a total of 100 hours (10 weeks). In addition, each student will complete an intercultural, community-based ministry project totaling 30 hours across the semester. The focus of this semester is upon building skills for and reflecting upon ministry in intercultural contexts as these skills intersect with the student's pastoral identity. Using case studies arising from the student's experiences of ministry in context, this course will provide opportunity for integrated reflection focused upon vocational exploration, theological reflection, development of pastoral identity, and identification of effective ministry practices.

Additional information about TFE I and II, including expectations and assignments, will be provided on Canvas and in the course syllabi.

PROGRAM POLICIES

Code of Conduct

Participation in TFE requires behavior and actions that reflect the best in professional ministerial ethics. While what is considered appropriate should always be judged by the norms and standards of a particular context, values involving respect, boundaries, confidentiality, use or abuse of power, love and compassion are universal. Each student and Supervisor-mentor is expected to adhere to the guidelines embraced by your denomination, church affiliation, or by the policies of the organization/institution in which TFE work will be performed. In addition, all involved persons are expected to follow the guidelines set forth in the [Theological Field Education Professional Ethics Agreement](#).

At any time you witness or experience conduct that is not appropriate for your context, please report in writing to the TFE Director. If a resolution cannot be reached, the Director will report the incident to the Phillips Theological Seminary Vice-President for Academic Affairs.

Confidentiality

Conversations within the context of TFE are to be held in confidence and with respect, regardless of whether in the classroom, at the ministry site, or in individual meetings between student and Supervisor-mentor. Confidentiality ensures trust and the safety of all parties. The circle of confidentiality should not only encompass people who are present at the time of the conversation, but should also keep in mind those not present, such as friends, relatives, and other related parties. Simply put, no information should be disclosed or shared about another person without expressed consent, either verbally or in writing. Additionally, personal consent or permission is not a license for the free disclosure of information when there is not a real “need to know” or when it is not appropriate to the context. The only exception to confidentiality is when there is a perceived threat of physical or emotional harm to a person or person, at which time such a threat should be reported to the TFE Director.

Grading

All grades reflect the students level of participation in all components of TFE. Final grades are based upon the same scale as described in the seminary’s catalog and student handbook. All final grades for TFE I and II are determined by the Director in consultation with the course instructor and Supervisor-mentor. Students who receive a failing grade from the course instructor cannot complete TFE. Although a student may complete all requirements of the course, the final grade can be lowered if there is sufficient evidence that a student has not adequately engaged other areas of the program (e.g. unfavorable evaluations from the mentor, failure to submit written reports by the deadline, intentional misrepresentation of the quality and quantity of one’s role in the ministry setting, etc.).

Failure to Complete the Program

The Theological Field Education model is built upon the sustained sequential nature of the two semester courses. In order to evaluate a student's progress toward integration and the development of skills, knowledge, and insight about ministry practices, completion of the full program year (beginning of Fall semester to end of Spring semester) is essential. However, for various circumstances, students may not be able to complete the program. In most cases, a student will only need to repeat the incomplete semester at the next available time that the course is offered. If the student does not enroll in the next available semester to complete the course, they may be required to reapply to TFE and to repeat the full sequence of courses and ministry site work. All requests for re-entry to Theological Field Education must be submitted to the TFE Director for approval.

Termination of the Ministry Site

Failure by the student to meet the prescribed criteria of the TFE program will result in discontinuation of the student's participation in the program. Any intentional misrepresentation of information on the application form will be considered academic misconduct and appropriate disciplinary action will be followed. If discontinuation of the student's participation in the program arises, at the decision of the TFE Director, the student will have to re-apply and re-enroll in the program, along with TFE I and II, during the next academic year.

Voluntary termination of a ministry site can be requested by the student if conditions or circumstances are determined to be unsafe, exploitative, overly burdensome, or are creating an environment no longer conducive to meeting learning goals. A request for voluntary termination of the ministry site must be submitted in writing to the TFE Director. If termination becomes necessary, the TFE Director will work with the student to identify alternative arrangements for completing the Theological Field Education program.

Complaint Process

All complaints involving participation in TFE should be submitted to the TFE Director for processing and resolution. If a complaint cannot be resolved by the Director, it will be forwarded to the Dean's office for further investigation. Please refer to the seminary's Academic Handbook for guidance on filing complaints.

Protections for Students and for Ministry Sites

Ministry sites must provide safe environments for learning and practice of ministry, free of harassment and coercion. The ministry site must follow all Phillips Theological Seminary policies reflected in the Phillips Student Handbook to protect the safety and interests of the students working in their midst. If at any time the ministry site fails to comply with the TFE Ministry Site Agreement, Professional Ethics Agreement, or the policies set forth by Phillips

Theological Seminary, the TFE Director will determine appropriate action regarding the student's participation at the ministry site.

In addition, the student must follow all policies generated by the ministry site for appropriate employee conduct, along with all policies set forth in the Phillips Theological Seminary Student Handbook. If at any time the student fails to follow ministry site or seminary policies, the TFE Director will determine appropriate disciplinary action regarding the student's participation in the program.

Program Evaluation

In addition to course evaluations conducted by the office of Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Theological Field Education program will be evaluated annually through a series of formal and informal methods developed and conducted by the TFE Director.

ALIGNMENT WITH INSTITUTIONAL GOALS, ACCREDITATION STANDARDS, AND DENOMINATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Phillips Seminary Degree Program Goals (from the 2020-2021 Academic Catalog):

Master of Divinity, Program Goal 4: "Demonstrate their ability to exercise and reflect on appropriate practices of leadership in ecclesial and/or public context." (p. 22, Academic Catalog)

Phase II: Vital Conversations (4 hours), Supervised Year in Ministry

During one academic year, students register for two Supervised Ministry courses that constitute a sequence in contextual theology: (a) SYM 505 Supervised Year in Ministry I which meets in the Fall semester (2 semester hours), followed in the Spring semester by (b) SYM 510 Supervised Year in Ministry II (2 semester-hours). There is no direct relationship between the total of four semester-hours of academic credit granted for the two supervised ministry courses and the amount of time and effort a student might spend in her or his ministry (for a description of the Supervised Year in Ministry Program (SYMP) see listing in "Academic Policies"). One unit of Clinical Pastoral Education that is taken at Phillips may also fulfill this requirement. For complete information on the CPE program at Phillips, see the CPE Handbook available on the Phillips website. (p. 24, Academic Catalog)

Master of Arts in Ministry and Culture, Program Goal 3: "Demonstrate the skills and practices associated with ministry in conversation with student's denominational heritage, Christian traditions, and probably ministry setting." (p. 32, Academic Catalog)

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Association of Theological Schools Standards of Accreditation

Standard 3.3: “The school demonstrates intercultural competency in student learning and formation by helping students understand, respect, engage, and learn from diverse communities and multicultural perspectives, inside and outside the classroom.”

Standard 4.3: “ The Master of Divinity degree is broadly and deeply attentive to the intellectual, human, spiritual, and vocational dimensions of student learning and formation in ways consistent with the school’s mission and theological commitments. The degree has clearly articulated learning outcomes that address each of the following four areas, though the school may use different terms for these areas: (a) religious heritage, including understanding of scripture, the theological traditions and history of the school’s faith community, and the broader heritage of other relevant religious traditions; (b) cultural context, including attention to cultural and social issues, to global awareness and engagement, and to the multifaith and multicultural nature of the societies in which students may serve; (c) personal and spiritual formation, including development in personal faith, professional ethics, emotional maturity, moral integrity, and spirituality; and (d) religious and public leadership, including cultivating capacities for leading in ecclesial or denominational and public contexts and reflecting on leadership practices.”

Standard 4.4: “The Master of Divinity degree requires supervised practical experiences (e.g., practicum or internship) in areas related to the student’s vocational calling in order to achieve the learning outcomes of the degree program. These experiences are in settings that are appropriately chosen, well suited to the experience needed, and of sufficient duration. These experiences are also supervised by those who are appropriately qualified, professionally developed, and regularly evaluated.”

Ordination Requirements: Disciples of Christ General Commission on the Order of Ministry, Theological Foundations for Ministry Document⁶

II. Policies and Criteria For The Ordering Of Ministry

D.5.c. “Professional and ecclesiological study plus supervised experience in the work of ministry, exhibiting competencies in that form of ministry in which the candidate hopes to serve.” (§831)

⁶ <https://cdn.disciples.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/06162557/TFPCOM-Final.pdf>.

