Phillips Theological Seminary

Position Description for
Controller

FLSA Classification: FT/exempt
Salary Grade/Range: A19/$81,564-$95,838+
Position Title: Controller
Reports to: Chief Financial Officer
Date Created/Revised: October 2026

Phillips Theological Seminary offers theological education dedicated to learning the way of Jesus in order to cultivate vital congregations, communities, conversations, and the public good. The Seminary is affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Located at the trifinium of the Creek, Osage, and Cherokee Nations, and just minutes east of the Greenwood District of Tulsa, OK, better known as Black Wall Street. Phillips is committed to justice initiatives and relational solidarity. We are committed to diversity, interculturality (e.g., Africana, Latinx, Asian, and Indigenous American communities), and justice with attention to the social realities of race, class, ethnicity, gender, and queer expressions of the human experience.

Summary/Objective:
Reporting to the Chief Financial Officer, the Controller is responsible for the leadership and management of the Seminary's accounting, treasury, financial reporting, and business systems functions. The Controller ensures the integrity of financial information, maintains effective internal controls, and provides timely and accurate financial reporting to support Seminary decision-making. The Controller partners closely with Seminary leadership to enhance business processes, strengthen financial stewardship, and advance the strategic goals of the Seminary.

Essential Functions:

- Oversee the daily operations of accounting and financial administration, including general ledger, endowment accounting, and financial business systems.
- Implement and maintains the financial business systems, including modules for general ledger, fixed assets, budget, endowments, accounts receivable and accounts payable. In conjunction with this maintains the general ledger chart of accounts in accordance with GAAP and theological education industry practices.
- Oversee grants accounting and compliance activities, ensuring proper accounting, reporting, and stewardship of restricted federal, state, and private grant funds.

- Assist with debt compliance, covenant reporting, and preparation of information required by lenders, rating agencies, and other external stakeholders.
- Work closely with leadership in Seminary departments to establish priorities for improving and enhancing financial systems and processes. Establishes Seminary-wide training for financial tools and processes to support effective and efficient solutions.
- Assist the Chief Financial Officer in the preparation and monitoring of the annual operating and capital budgets and supports multi-year financial forecasting and scenario analysis.
- Develop and maintains financial reports, dashboards, and business intelligence tools that provide meaningful information to leadership, budget managers, and the Board of Trustees.
- Oversee the preparation and submission of required external financial reports, surveys, and accreditation-related financial information, including the preparation and review of annual tax filings including Form 990, Form 990-T, state filings, and other required regulatory reports.
- Ensure that all accounts are properly monitored and maintained and that accurate reports are provided to departmental budget managers on a timely basis.
- Lead the coordination of the annual external audit, prepares audit schedules, serves as primary liaison to external auditors, and implements recommendations to strengthen internal controls and financial processes.
- Build and maintains positive working relationships with internal and external constituents. Demonstrates initiative through early identification of problems and resourcefulness in timely resolution. Takes leadership in disseminating information and provides advice and counsel to constituencies.

(Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform these essential functions.)

Competencies:

- Knowledge of the goals, objectives, structure, and operations of the Seminary.
- Exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to interact effectively with academic leadership, faculty, community leadership, and a wide range of individuals in a diverse community.
- High degree of emotional and cultural intelligence. Demonstrated leadership, organizational, and management skills.
- Ability to remain calm and take a leadership role in a crisis.
- Ability to delegate and train employees, to include organizing, prioritizing, and scheduling work assignments.
- Ability to perform complex tasks and to prioritize multiple projects. Self-motivated and deadline oriented.
- Strategic thinking and long-term financial visioning.
- High ethical standards and integrity.
- Skilled in change management and operational improvement.

- Ability to communicate complex financial concepts to diverse audiences.

Supervisory Responsibilities:
- No supervisory responsibility

Work Environment:
This position requires an independent and creative self-starter with great attention to detail. The work environment requires self-management and must be conducive to productivity with timely response to Phillips employees and supervisor.

Physical Demands:
This is an office position requiring minimal lifting or carrying. The ideal candidate must be able to complete all physical requirements of the job with or without reasonable accommodation.

Position Type/Expected Hours:
This position is full-time and requires 40 hours per week.
Occasional evening and weekend hours for special events.

Travel:
Occasional travel required for support of major events and on-site production.

Required Education/Experience:
- Bachelor's degree in accounting, Finance, or a related field.
- At least five years of progressively responsible accounting or financial management experience, including general ledger management, financial reporting, account reconciliations, and month-end and year-end close processes.
- Demonstrated experience with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), internal controls, and financial reporting.
- Experience supporting annual audits, budget preparation and monitoring, and regulatory or tax reporting.
- Proficiency with accounting software, financial management systems, and Microsoft Excel.
- Strong analytical, organizational, communication, and problem-solving skills, with the ability to explain complex financial information to diverse audiences.

Preferred education/Experience:
- Certified Public Accountant (CPA) or Certified Management Accountant (CMA) credential.
- Master's degree in accounting, Finance, Business Administration, or a related field.
- Experience in higher education, a nonprofit organization, or a faith-based institution.

- Experience with endowment accounting, restricted funds, grant compliance, and fund accounting.
- Experience preparing for or reviewing IRS Forms 990 and 990-T and related state filings.
- Experience with financial reporting for a Board of Trustees, finance committee, or senior leadership team.
- Experience implementing or improving accounting systems, financial processes, and internal controls.

EEO Statement:
Phillips is an Equal Opportunity, ecumenical seminary of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). We are approved by the University Senate of the United Methodist Church. Phillips Theological Seminary is an equal employment opportunity employer who complies with all federal, state, and local equal employment opportunity laws The Seminary does not discriminate against employees or applicants base on race, color, national or ethnic origin, alienage and citizenship status, marital status, age, sex, gender (including gender identity and expression), sexual orientation, genetic information, pregnancy, disability, military status, or religion. The Seminary's commitment to equal opportunity extends to all aspects of the employment relationship, including hiring, promotions, training, working conditions, compensation, and benefits.

Other Duties:
Please note this job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties, or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this position. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position. Duties, responsibilities, and activities may change at any time with or without notice.

Signature:
Employee signature below constitutes the employee's understanding of the requirements, essential functions, and duties of the position.

Employee:_____ **Date:**_____