

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary



Field Education Manual 2025-2026

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Welcome

Welcome to the Field Education program at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary! Our program lies at the confluence of students, ministry sites, and the Seminary. It is where students develop ministry skills, practice theological reflection, discern their calls, and are mentored into professional ministries. It is where congregations and other organizations come alongside the seminary to educate future leaders as they help students integrate their classroom learning with ministry. It is where faculty and staff bring theological traditions and theories to bear upon the practices of ministry for the sake of the church and the world.

The Role of Field Education in a Student's Experience

Field education is a vital component of the education process. It is intended to complement the rest of the student's seminary curriculum in several ways:

- Students can delve into the specific ministry context to learn the skills that are needed in that place at that time.
- While field education focuses on practical skills and knowledge, it also affords new ways of interacting with and interpreting the Christian faith.
- Students can test the calling to ministry that seminary is preparing them for.
- Field education helps students develop a pastoral identity as they take on leadership roles outside the classroom.
- Field education lets students experience change and challenge amidst the messy realities that often characterize ministry in the 21st century.

The Role of Field Education in a Site's Experience

It is our greatest hope that the Field Education experience allows learning for the student and the congregation. We pray that our site supervisors have occasion to reflect anew on their mission and their common life and work, thus finding themselves renewed in ministry.

When congregations, agencies, organizations, or campuses host students in field education, they become part of the PTS community. They put flesh and bones, faces and stories, on a commitment to raising up the next generation of leaders. They serve as places where time-tested wisdom and tradition find their footing. At times, they also serve as laboratories, of sorts, as students may bring new and emerging ideas and practices. By receiving a student, whether someone known or previously unknown to their community, a site has a chance to shape that person's journey in ministry.

The Role of Field Education in the Seminary Experience

Field education fulfills the Seminary's mission to “equip people for ministries familiar and yet to unfold, and communities present and yet to be gathered.” The scholarship and intellectual inquiry of the classroom is joined with the ministry that students observe and engage in at their site. Through relationships, tasks, projects, and events, students gain hands-on experiences of participating in God’s ongoing mission in the world. Their understanding of the community of Christ is deepened and enlarged as they work side by side and reflect theologically with supervisors, peers, and others in ministries. They are resourced practically, skillfully, formationally, and theologically for the ministries awaiting them in the complex realities of the world that God loves.

The Field Education Office continually explores new placement opportunities through which students may best fulfill their vocational and educational needs and through which creative and engaging supervisors and placement sites may offer their gifts in the formation of ministerial excellence for the Church and the world. Please know that we are available to support and encourage students as well as supervisors through the journey of field education. Please do not hesitate to contact us at FieldEducation@pts.edu.

Components of Field Education at PTS

Though all students are welcome, two degree programs at PTS require students to complete a field education experience, the Master of Divinity (MDiv) and the Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies (MAPS).

The MDiv degree is a professional degree program that prepares individuals for ordained ministry as well as other forms of leadership in congregations, campuses, faith-based nonprofits, chaplaincies, and other settings. The MAPS degree is a graduate-level, two-year degree program that equips women and men for ministry leadership in various settings. Both degrees require one field education placement.

Students in field education serve ten (10) hours a week in a placement and concurrently take a faculty–taught course for two consecutive semesters (FE210 and FE220). The total time demand of a field education experience thus approximates the equivalent of two courses.

Our approach to field education seeks to integrate the theological and the practical in experiences that focus on the student as learner. This integration occurs through the contributions and interplay of the following components:

The Application Processes

PTS invites interested students and leaders to apply for the program in January and February and final placements are announced in May. The placement process looks different for local and distant students.

Some PTS students come to seminary already embedded in ministry sites. While experiences in new places always promote learning, we recognize that learning is lifelong and that students can and do learn from reflection on ministry in their own contexts. Therefore, some students will not interview for a field education placement but use their own context as their placement. They must still identify a supervisor who must still complete an application. The deadlines for confirming these placements are the same.

Site and Supervisor requirements:

- Potential supervisors should have the time, energy, and backing of their congregation or organization before applying to the program.
- They should be willing to prioritize a student's learning over the needs of their

site, as field education is primarily education rather than employment. Including meeting with the student for one hour each week for theological reflection.

- Supervisors ordinarily have theological degrees themselves and/or are ordained.
- Supervisors are expected to have served their site for at least one year prior to participating in the program.
- To avoid conflicts of interest brought about by dual roles, normally a supervisor is not the student's pastor, employer, partner, or family member.
- Programs and offices of the Seminary are not potential sites.

Application Process and Timeline

September: The Field Education office reminds local supervisors to get board approval to educate a student on site and include funding for a field education student in their budget for the upcoming year.

November: The field education director meets with potential students to begin the placement process. This includes encouraging distant students to find a placement site/supervisor that meets the seminary criteria.

January/February: Supervisors and students fill out the online application forms. They are on the PTS website under References>>Field Education. ALL students and ALL supervisors are expected to complete this forms. The Seminary typically receives applications from local churches to partner in educating the students. Local students can choose to interview at these sites or suggest one their own. In most cases, distant students will need to invite a supervisor and site to apply to the program. Students can find a supervisor through their own judicatory or network. The Field Education director works alongside the student to secure the site. All sites and supervisors are subject to vetting by the Seminary. This can include (but is not limited to) checking references, site visits, and online research. The director reserves the right to reject any site/supervisor.

March/April: Students and supervisors interview each other to determine a good match.

May: Placements are finalized. *The Field Education director determines all placements.*

August: Required online orientation for both students and supervisors. Orientation is offered at two different times. Students/supervisors attend the same orientation.

The Learning–Serving Covenant

Once matched, the student and supervisor plan the field education experience together, keeping in mind the learning goals of the student, the needs of the site, the gifts of the supervisor, and the requirements of the Seminary. The covenant serves two purposes: clarifying the nuts and bolts of the arrangement by articulating things like dates, hours, and payment. The second purpose is to identify the learning topics and skills the student would like to explore in the academic year. Together the student and supervisor will create a unique learning covenant. The covenant:

- articulates calendar expectations, including days/hours worked in-person, online, on-site or off-site.
- describes frequency of compensation. The stipend is taxable.
- identifies learning and skill goals that are achievable in 10 hours/week.
- relates the student's work to their specific educational needs and personal and professional goals.
- focuses the student's work around limited and realistic objectives.
- provides a framework for supervision and evaluation of the student.

Days and Hours

PTS offers field education during the academic year (two consecutive semesters, both of which must be completed to earn credit). Any Seminary holiday may be taken by the student as a holiday at the site, and this may include Christmas and Easter.

- Students serve 10-12 hours a week for 29/36 weeks, September to May.
- The start date should be no later than September 7, 2025, and the end date no later than May 15, 2026 unless other arrangements have been made with the student beyond the Field Education Covenant.
- The field education placement generally follows the PTS academic calendar, not the church calendar. Supervisors and students can covenant to certain specifications within it. They should pay special attention to decisions regarding whether the student will serve during the weeks of January term, religious holiday weeks that the PTS academic calendar observes as breaks, reading and exam weeks, and civic holidays when the Seminary is closed.

Time Use

One hour is to be set aside for supervision at least 20 of the 29 weeks. Time spent in staff meetings, preparation for work, and travel for work purposes *does* count toward the student's time on site, but time for travel to and from the site does *not*. The student and supervisor should be clear on how much of the work will be done onsite, remotely, or online. For example, sermon prep may take place at the Seminary library and some of the supervisory time may be a video conference.

Compensation

Students normally receive a \$4,350 stipend for their service—either directly from the site, from the Pittsburgh Presbytery, or through the Field Education office at PTS. The stipend is considered taxable income and is subject to Social Security withholding. Depending on the site's ability, students may also receive reimbursement for travel expenses related to their service, though not normally for commuting to the site.

FREQUENT MISUNDERSTANDINGS

Be sure to articulate these topics in your covenant agreement.

Field Education follows the academic calendar. This means the student may not be available for holidays or during the January term. Spell out the expectations in the covenant.

To fulfill their academic requirements students should work 29/36 weeks.

Be sure to clarify expectations of remote vs. onsite work. Every community has a different culture.

The stipend is taxable. The student may be added to the payroll.

The Learning–Serving Covenant is due no later than September 15, 2025 and must be signed by both student and supervisor. Once the director has reviewed and signed it, the covenant formally establishes the field education placement. For comprehensive guidance, see Appendix E, *Developing a Learning–Serving Covenant*.

The Supervisory Relationship

The key to a good field education experience is the relationship between supervisor and student. The supervisory hours are to assume an atmosphere of support, mutual accountability, honesty, trust, self-awareness, and freedom. While the focus of these regularly scheduled conversations will ordinarily be on what the student is learning through their ministry at the site, supervisors and students also often discuss the student's professional and relational skills, pastoral presence, and personal spirituality.

Evaluation

Evaluation is an ongoing part of the supervisory relationship in the sense that supervisors are expected to provide students feedback on a regular basis during supervision hours.

However, specific times are also set aside for formal evaluations, which are based on the Learning-Serving Covenant. In late November, students and supervisors meet to evaluate how well they are living into the covenant they established at the beginning of the experience. They may mutually agree to changes in the covenant if any are needed.

In late April, students and supervisors do a final evaluation of the students' progress toward their learning goals and other progress made during the year. These evaluations are written, co-signed, and submitted to the office of Field Education. They may also be used in the field education classes. It is the student's responsibility to submit the forms in a timely manner and completing them is necessary for meeting their graduation field education requirement.

The office of Field Education will share the student's final evaluation with their sponsoring judicatories, or other parties that the student names, if the student provides written consent.

The Concurrent Courses

FE210 (fall) and FE220 (spring) are required of all MDiv and MAPS students. The courses invite students into the postures, habits, and practices of theologically reflective ministry. Interdisciplinary in nature, they pay particular attention to the integration of student experiences in their sites with work in contextual analysis and theological reflection (FE210), and communication and missional leadership (FE220). This course sequence earns students three credits per semester. Completion of both semesters is normally required to receive credit for either. *Please note: some students will be taking preaching and pastoral care classes during their field education experience.*

The curricular prerequisites for FE210/220 are as follows: *Students need to have completed CS110. Students need to be **simultaneously enrolled in, or previously have taken,** OT210, OT220, NT210 or BI210, NT220 or BI220, TH210, PR210, and PC210.* Completion of WS110 prior to field education is also recommended.

According to the curricular plans for the MDiv and MAPS degrees, at the completion of these courses, students will be able to:

- integrate experiences in field placement sites with coursework in Contextual Analysis, Christian Theology, and Caring Ministry (FE210) and with coursework in exegesis, Preaching and Communication, and Missional Leadership (FE220);
- assess the fittingness and faithfulness of a Christian practice in a local context, drawing on biblical, theological, and historical resources (FE210) and lead a fitting and faithful Christian practice in a local context, including the work of communal discernment (FE220);
- demonstrate the practical use of sociological and anthropological tools to offer a thick description of a ministry context, while reflecting on its particularity in terms of God's mission (FE210);
- interpret a biblical text in context while deploying effective preparation and communication skills (FE220);
- offer evidence of a growing self-awareness, congruent with how the student is perceived by others, and progress in relational competencies;
- exhibit a growing ability to understand, discern, and reflect theologically upon the needs of persons and communities and determine appropriate responses, taking into account issues involved in organizational dynamics and group processes; and
- articulate an emerging understanding of the nature and range of Christian ministry and the relationship between this understanding and the student's own gifts and calling to participate in God's mission.

Summary Responsibilities of the Field Education Partners

The PTS Field Education program relies on relationships of trust with its sites, supervisors, and students. In that spirit, these expectations and responsibilities help keep these relationships in good working order.

The Field Education office will:

- run an effective process to place students with supervisors (see above).
- work with students and their judicatories to identify appropriate sites and supervisors in their geographic location.
- evaluate potential sites using in-person visits, online interviews with supervisors, and background checks with judicatories.
- provide an online orientation for students and supervisors at the beginning of the academic year.
- offer supervisor support, training and discussion sessions to supervisors.
- assist students and supervisors in preparing their Learning–Serving Covenants and final evaluations.
- address any concerns that arise between students and supervisors.

The student will:

- consult with their judicatory about any ordination requirements.
- hybrid students will be proactive in identifying sites in their geographic area.
- serve 10–12 hours per week according to the schedule in the Learning-Serving covenant.
- provide any necessary documentation for employment and secure any required clearances as instructed by the supervisor.
- submit the Learning–Serving Covenant, Mid–Point Evaluation, and Final Evaluation in a timely manner.
- complete both FE210 and FE220.
- participate faithfully in regular supervisory conferences.
- fulfill all responsibilities faithfully, professionally and to the best of their abilities.
- communicate and consult with the director of field education about any problems in the placement.

The site will:

- provide opportunities for the student to engage in meaningful learning and ministry.
- ensure the student receives any agreed-upon stipend and travel reimbursement in a timely manner.
- assist the supervisor in orienting the student to the site and making introductions.
- provide space to work and any site-specific resources the student will need (e.g., vestments, worship resources, books and materials, access to trainings).

The supervisor will:

- interview all students sent to them by the director and submit their match preference(s) by the deadline.
- help the student develop appropriate learning goals and tasks.
- attend the program orientation at the beginning of the academic year.
- attend two online supervisor sessions of their choice during the year.
- meet with their student regularly for an hour of supervision.
- submit the Learning-Serving Covenant, Mid-Point Evaluation, and Final Evaluation in a timely manner.
- communicate and consult with the director of field education about any problems in the placement before they escalate.

Benefits for supervisors during each year they serve in the program include:

- library privileges at PTS
- auditing privileges, pending faculty approval, for courses in the PTS curriculum
- participation in most offerings of the PTS Continuing Education program
- a community of colleagues and a chance to change a life

Policy and Procedure for Resolving Problems in Field Education

When a problem in the placement or breakdown in the supervisory relationship occurs that student and supervisor are unable to resolve through informal consultation with each other and the director of field education, the following procedure shall be followed:

- Challenges should be brought to the attention of the field education director at any time by the student or the supervisor.
- Students and supervisors should first try to resolve the problems as part of the supervisory time together.
- If resolution is not possible, the student, supervisor, and field education director will meet together to discuss the problems and attempt to identify a resolution that will ensure the student's learning while retaining the integrity of the placement.
- If a resolution is reached and the supervisor and student mutually decide to continue, the director, supervisor, and student will add the new work or behavioral expectations to the Learning–Serving Covenant and all three will sign a modified version. The director will follow up with both parties within a reasonable amount of time.
- If the supervisor and student mutually decide to terminate the placement, the director will outline any steps needed to bring closure, and will follow up individually with both parties. The director will notify the academic dean.
- If no mutually agreeable decision can be reached, the director will make the decision about continuing or terminating the placement.
- If sufficient time remains in the academic year to make a new placement feasible, the director will work with the student to find a match with a new supervisor and/or site so that the student may complete their field education requirement.
- If the director determines that the student's actions were the primary cause of a termination, the director will write a letter to that effect explaining why the student failed to complete their field education requirement and no attempts at alternative placement will be made that year. This letter will be placed in the student's permanent academic file.
- If the director deems the supervisor's actions were the primary cause of the termination, the director will reevaluate the supervisor and site with respect to participating again in the field education program. If the director of field education is unable to negotiate or make a decision, the matter will be referred to the Dean of the Faculty.

Ethical Principles for Students in Field Education

In the course of fulfilling the requirements for field education at PTS, students serve in ministry sites and occupy ministerial roles. Therefore, while they may not yet be ordained or credentialed ministers, ethical standards do apply to them in their work. What follows are principles addressed specifically to the field education context but which also apply to continuing service in ministry.

Note: Students practicing ministry within a structure of institutional or denominational accountability shall also be accountable to their respective governing bodies and shall adhere to the structures, policies, and ethical codes affirmed by those bodies. In addition, the congregations, agencies, or institutions where students are serving may have their own codes of professional ethics.

The Principle of Pastoral Responsibility

- Practice the disciplines of study, prayer, reflection, worship, stewardship, and service as you strive to be responsive to God's will.
- Use your knowledge and professional standing for the benefit of people.
- Provide ministry only for those problems, issues, or conditions that are within the reasonable boundaries of your competence. At those times when you are unable (or unwilling for appropriate reasons) to provide professional help, take initiative to locate other professionals or appropriate persons and agencies for continuation of ministry. Become well acquainted with the community's pastoral ministries and social service agencies.
- Regard all people with equal respect and concern as beloved children of God. Avoid discriminating against or refusing opportunities to or from anyone on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disabilities, age, or any other human condition.
- Be truthful and honest in your relationships with others.
- Do not engage in abusive, addictive, or exploitative behavior, and if it occurs, seek help in ending it.
- Avoid dual relationship with parishioners and clients (e.g., business or close personal relationships) that could impair your capacity to minister with integrity to all.
- Do not engage in sexualized behavior or sexual relationships at your site, even if another person invites or consents to it.
- Do not use personal funds for site-related duties or site funds for personal use.

The Principle of Self-Care

- Seek out and engage in collegial relationships.
- Manage your personal life in a healthful fashion and seek appropriate assistance for personal problems or conflicts.
- Prioritize your spiritual life through practices of worship, spiritual discipline, mentoring, or direction.
- Honor self-improvement, continuing education, and physical well being.

The Principle of Confidentiality

- Respect the privacy of all persons.
- Refrain from engaging in gossip.
- Maintain confidentiality at your field education site in the following manner: Your supervisor is included in your circle of confidentiality. In other words, if you start to receive a confidence from someone at your site (parishioner, client, staff, other minister), and its content rises to an important or sensitive level, tell the individual that, as a supervised student, you will have to share the confidence with your supervisor. Share such confidences with your supervisor alone. If the person sharing the confidence *is* your supervisor, then the director of field education is in your circle of confidentiality.
- Maintain confidentiality in your field education course in the following manner: Your group will maintain confidence about the specifics of what is said and heard in class. However, the director of field education is in each group's circle of confidentiality, so important information shared in class about a student, site, or supervisor should be shared with them. General wisdom coming out of class, though, can be shared!
- Follow the adage that 'what's heard here stays here; what's learned here leaves here.'

Mandated Reporting: *PTS students serve in different states and may or may not be mandated reporters by state law, that is, persons bound to disclose to authorities evidence of violence, abuse, or neglect. In any event, students must share such evidence with their supervisor, who is likely to be a mandated reporter. The director of field education is a mandated reporter in Pennsylvania.*

Boundary Training: *PTS students are encouraged to participate in any boundary training activities that may be offered by the church or the judicatory.*

The Principle of Stewardship

- Be a faithful and accountable steward of any property or funds entrusted to you in the course of your work at your field education site.
- Participate in conserving the assets (financial, human, and natural) of your site according to the stated goals and priorities of its governing body, the community of which it is a part, the wider church, and wise creation care.
- Refrain from incurring indebtedness that compromises your ministry.
- Practice effective time management.

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary Policies

Field Education is an educational program of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and is thus covered under PTS policies addressing conduct occurring on campus property and off. Reproduced here are excerpts from the Anti-Discrimination Policy and the Title IX Policy. For the full text of these policies, including the complaint procedures, please see the PTS Student Handbook. It is publically available at PTS.edu.

Anti-Discrimination Policy *[excerpt from PTS Student Handbook]*

Notice of Nondiscrimination

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is committed to modeling ways of being with one another that exemplify the recognition that we are all created in the image of God and are to be treated with dignity and respect. Our community, just as the larger world, contains diversity in many forms. For the sake of the unity of the church and our witness to the world, we are committed to embodying respect across differences. Therefore, in accordance with the witness of holy scripture and the Christian tradition, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary forbids discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, cultural background, national origin, religion, veteran's status, disability or handicap, age, ancestry, and genetic information. Pittsburgh Theological Seminary likewise prohibits retaliation for raising a concern of complaint of discrimination. This policy is intended to provide more information about how the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary addresses issues of discrimination and harassment in its educational programs and activities and to describe the Seminary's process for responding to complaints about violations of this policy in a manner that is prompt, fair to all parties, pastoral, and mirrors the Seminary's commitments to equality and to an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination.

Community Commitment and Scope of Policy

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (the "Seminary") is an educational institution that forms and equips persons for Christian ministry, with a commitment to scholarship. It seeks to be a generous and hospitable community that fosters intellectual inquiry, theological reflection, reconciliation, and justice. Discrimination and harassment are contrary to the Seminary's mission and vision and will not be tolerated within the Seminary community. Therefore, all students, faculty, employees and vendors are subject to this Anti-Discrimination policy. Learning and a free exchange of ideas cannot occur where there is discrimination or harassment. Likewise, living fully into the Seminary's Vision of the Seminary, as a place that teaches reconciliation and justice requires all within the Seminary's community to speak out whenever another member of the community is belittled, threatened, or discriminated against. Anyone within the Seminary community, including students, faculty, and employees who witness any violation of this policy must report the violation as outlined in Section V below. Prompt disclosure of any violation of this policy places the Seminary in the best position to

support any persons harmed by a violation of this policy and to remedy any situation or conduct that undermines the safety and integrity of the Seminary community. (Student Handbook, 44-45)

Definitions

Discrimination An adverse action or decision that is based on or motivated by an individual's race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, cultural background, national origin, religion, veteran status, disability or handicap, age, ancestry, or genetic information. Slurs, gestures, and non-verbal actions that convey prejudice (i.e., preconceived ideas about a specific group) are all forms of discrimination.

Harassment A form of behavior that is characterized by conduct: (1) occurring on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, cultural background, national origin, religion, veteran status, disability or handicap, age, ancestry, or genetic information that is unwelcome; AND (2) if sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive enough that such conduct could reasonably be expected to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment. The more severe the conduct, the less need there is to show a repetitive series of incidents to prove a hostile environment.

Harassment may occur in person, via text message, or via social media. Not every bothersome, persistent or offensive behavior constitutes harassment under this policy. The conduct must be tied to or be motivated by the victim's race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, cultural background, national origin, religion, veteran status, disability or handicap, age, ancestry, or genetic information. (Student Handbook, 45-46.)

This policy is intended to be read with the Title IX Policy and Procedures and to address any complaints of discrimination or harassment that are not covered in the Title IX Policy and Procedures. This policy is to be interpreted and enforced in a manner that is consistent with the Seminary's commitment to academic freedom and free speech while still advancing the purposes and goals of this policy. Additionally, nothing in this policy is intended to supersede any duty on the part of any ordained clergy member or other professional to maintain the secrecy of certain disclosures made in confidence or in a situation in which any legal or ethical privilege applies. (Student Handbook, 51.)

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary Title IX Policy and Procedures

[excerpt from PTS Student Handbook.]

Notice of Nondiscrimination

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 states that “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

Title IX includes protections against sexual harassment, gender-based discrimination, and sexual violence. Definitions of gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence are set forth in Section IV of this policy. Further information about Title IX and how it may affect you can be found at the Department of Education website: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/rights/guid/ocr/sex.html>.

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is committed to modeling ways of being with one another that exemplify the recognition that we are all created in the image of God and are to be treated with dignity and respect. Our community, just as the larger world, contains diversity in many forms. For the sake of the unity of the church and our witness to the world, we are committed to embodying respect across differences.

Therefore, in accordance with the witness of Holy Scripture and the Christian tradition, as well as Title IX, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary forbids discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. Pittsburgh Theological Seminary likewise prohibits retaliation for raising a concern or complaint of gender discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual violence and is committed to helping to provide protection, help, and safety to anyone who raises a concern or complaint under this policy.

This policy is intended to provide more information about how the Seminary addresses issues of gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence and to describe the Seminary’s process for responding to complaints about violations of this policy in a manner that is prompt, fair to all parties, pastoral, and mirrors the Seminary’s commitments to gender equality and to an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination.

Definitions

Gender Discrimination

An adverse action or decision that is based on or motivated by an individual's gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression. Female, male, and gender non-conforming persons are protected under this policy.

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is engaging in any physical sexual act against a person's will, or where the person does not or cannot give clear voluntary consent. Persons who are impaired due to being under the influence of drugs or alcohol or who have intellectual disabilities are customarily viewed as being unable to give voluntary consent. As used in this policy, "sexual violence" includes attempted or completed sexual assault (including rape, fondling, incest, and statutory rape), stalking, verbal or physical sexuality-based threats or abuse, domestic violence, dating violence, and intimate partner violence.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, graphic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature (collectively, "Sexual Conduct"). "Sexual harassment" as used in this policy includes *quid pro quo* behavior, hostile environment, and gender-based harassment.

Quid pro quo harassment is when submission to or rejection of any Sexual Conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic standing or is used as the basis for employment decisions or for academic evaluation, grades, or advancement in a course, program, or activity.

Hostile environment is when Sexual Conduct is sufficiently serious and/or pervasive that it objectively interferes with or limits a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the Seminary's educational programs or activities. The more severe the conduct, the less need there is to show a repetitive series of incidents to prove a hostile environment.

Gender-based harassment is verbal, nonverbal, graphic, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostile conduct based on sex, sex-stereotyping, sexual orientation or gender identity, but not involving conduct of a sexual nature, when such conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it interferes with or limits a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the Seminary's education or work programs or activities. For example, persistent disparagement of a person based on a perceived lack of stereotypical masculinity or femininity or exclusion from an activity based on sexual orientation or gender identity also may violate this policy.

Sexual harassment may be based upon a power differential, the creation of a hostile environment, or retaliation. Sexual violence, as defined above, is also a form of sexual harassment.

Community Commitment and Scope of Policy

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (the “Seminary”) is an educational institution that forms and equips persons for ministry, with a commitment to scholarship. It seeks to be a generous and hospitable community that fosters intellectual inquiry, theological reflection, reconciliation, and justice. Gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence are contrary to the Seminary’s mission and vision and will not be tolerated within the Seminary community. Therefore, all students, faculty, employees and vendors are subject to this Title IX policy.

Learning and a free exchange of ideas cannot occur where there is discrimination, harassment, or violence. Likewise, living fully into the Seminary’s Vision of the Seminary as a place that teaches reconciliation and justice requires all within the Seminary’s community to speak out whenever another member of the community is belittled, threatened, or discriminated against. Anyone within the Seminary community, including students, faculty, and employees, who witness any violation of this policy must report the violation as outlined in Section VI below. Prompt disclosure of any violation of this policy places the Seminary in the best position to support any persons harmed by a violation of this policy and to remedy any situation or conduct that undermines the safety and integrity of the Seminary community.

The procedure for raising a complaint under this policy is not intended to be a substitute for any other right or remedy that might be available. The Seminary has a limited ability to force cooperation in the investigation of any complaint under this policy, and full redress for certain conduct that violates this policy may only be found by using a court of law. The Seminary strongly encourages anyone who believes that s/he is a victim of sexual violence to notify law enforcement immediately, because the criminal justice system offers remedies that are unavailable under this policy. The Seminary shall also communicate its Title IX policy, offer appropriate bystander and other training under it, and strive to eliminate gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence from its educational programs and activities. The Seminary shall also offer educational programs and 85 communications designed to prevent violations of this policy.

This policy applies to conduct that occurs (i) on Seminary property or (ii) off Seminary property, if the conduct was either in connection with a Seminary or Seminary-recognized program or activity or the conduct may have the effect of creating a hostile environment for a member of the Seminary community. (Student Handbook, 83.)

Appendix A: Liturgical Resources

You may use these resources at the beginning and/or end of a student's time in the field education site.

A Liturgy of Commitment⁴

Greeting

Church Representative: Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, the head of the church.

Recognition

Church Representative

Addressing the congregation: Today we enter into a covenant with Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and [name of seminarian] as s/he/they prepares for ministry by pursuing theological education. The commitment to receive a seminarian and to serve as a place for a seminarian's practice of ministry is one way we affirm a person's call from God to prepare for leadership in Christ's church.

Addressing the student: Your intention to prepare yourself for ministry will require diligent and prayerful work. We promise to assist you in that work and in your pilgrimage of learning. We covenant with Pittsburgh Theological Seminary to provide opportunities for you to minister to us, teach us, and learn from us. We pledge to be a partner in your formation for ministry by helping you develop competencies in the skills for ministry, the practical wisdom you will need as a minister, and the spiritual formation that will strengthen your service. With you, we seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit as the future opens before you, and we invite you to call on us wherever we may be helpful to you in your preparation and study.

Promises

Church Representative:

Addressing the seminarian: As you enter this covenant with us, do you promise to seek our guidance and wisdom, to receive our support, and to minister to us faithfully?

Seminarian:

I do, with God's help.

Church Representative:

Addressing the congregation: Do you, the members of this congregation, as you enter this covenant with [name of seminarian] and with Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, pledge

⁴ Borrowed from Lexington Theological Seminary

to support [name of seminarian] as s/he/they continues the pilgrimage of learning?
Do you agree to receive his/her/their preaching, teaching, administration, care, and leadership, and do you promise to sustain him/her/them with encouragement, and support?

Members of the Congregation:

We do, with God's help.

Prayer

Church Representative:

Let us pray.

All:

**God, giver of gifts for the body of Christ,
we thank you for those in our generation**

who hear and answer your call to prepare for ministry in your Church.

We thank you for institutions of learning that nurture their call and prepare them for service.

**Grant your Holy Spirit to [name of seminarian]
that s/he/they may grow in faith,**

**be filled with courage,
and increase in wisdom.**

Grant that we, too, may grow in faith

**as we learn to support his/her/their theological education and
become a partner in his/her/their formation.**

Amen.

Declaration

Church Representative:

In the name of Jesus Christ, I declare that [name of congregation], [name of seminarian] and Pittsburgh Theological Seminary have entered into a covenant of formation for ministry.

All:

Thanks be to God!

A Litany of Welcome⁵

- Leader: We come from different places, bringing our varied concerns, and gather here as a community of faith to worship the living God.
- People: **God has blessed us as individuals and as a community, and has called us into service.**
- Leader: God continues to bless us in many and specific ways. As a sign of blessing, today we celebrate the coming of [name of seminarian] into our midst to join us in our life together.
- Student: I give thanks to God for this opportunity to serve and learn within this community of faith.
- People: **Our homes, our hospitals and nursing homes, our classrooms and programs, our sanctuary, and our lives are open to you.**
- Student: As one preparing for a life of service as a minister of Jesus Christ, I seek to earn your trust.
- Leader: Let us pray. O God, for the sacredness of teaching and learning your purposes, we thank you. We ask you to guide and nurture this new colleague in ministry whom we welcome today. As [name of seminarian] has come to serve with us, we seek also to serve with him/her/them. May the experiences we share enrich our life together. Grant us all the courage to risk honesty, the patience to understand each other, and the faith to follow you. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray.
- People: **Amen.**

*

A Litany of Thanksgiving⁶

- Leader: There are different gifts, but it is the same Spirit who gives them.
- People: There are different ways of serving God, but it is the same Lord who is served.
- Leader: Each of us is given gifts by the Spirit to use for the common good.

⁵ Adapted from the PCUSA *Worshipbook*

⁶ Adapted from the PCUSA *Worshipbook*

People: **Together we are the body of Christ, and individually members of it.**

Leader: Though our gifts may be varied, together we are a ministry of reconciliation led by the risen Christ. We work and pray to make God's church a useful servant in the world. Let us pray.

People: **We thank you for your servant [name of seminarian], whom you have called to serve among us. We thank you for blessing him/her/them with special gifts for ministry, and pray that you will guide him/her/them as he/she/they continues to prepare for service in your church.**

Student: I thank you, O Lord, for these, your people, who have welcomed me into their lives and taught me through our life together. Thank you for the faith they have shared and for their continuing witness in this place.

People: We thank you for [name of seminarian]'s service among us.

Student: I thank you, Lord, for what I have learned about your church and the world. I am grateful for the challenges we have shared, the memories we have created, and for the richness of shared ministry.

All: Though we now go our separate ways, keep us forever in your loving care. These things we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*

A Prayer for the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary⁷

O God, hear our prayer.
 We live in a little world
 Hemmed in by mountains
 And laced with rivers.
 Too often our eyes cannot see beyond our mountains;
 Too often we drink only the waters of our native streams;
 Too often we sit complacently
 While the whole world burns, thirsts,
 Cries out for want of thee.

O God, teach us
 That our little world of books and papers,
 Of prayers and hymns,

⁷ Ford Lewis Battles, Pittsburgh Seminary Professor of Church History and the History of Doctrine, 1967--1978

Of eating and sleeping and talking,
Is but the door through which we pass
To the great world,
The arena of thy redemption,
The world that daily sets thy cross on Calvary,
Yet, in the mystery of thy grace,
Receives the benefit of that cross.

O God, hour by hour, and day by day,
Make us better, wiser, more eloquent advocates
of thy Gospel.
Kindle our minds with truth,
Open our hearts to love,
Inspire our lips,
Strengthen our arms and feet.

Eternal Father, we do not ask
That this seminary have a long existence,
Rather, we ask that thou mayest number
Its years in spiritual usefulness,
In faithfulness to thy Word,
In devoted service.
For when we forget thee,
Neither we nor the institutions we frame
Deserve to endure.

Accept this, we pray thee,
Our sacrifice of praise,
To thine eternal glory and majesty,
And to the abiding presence in our midst
Of thy only-begotten Son
Through thy Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Appendix B:



Field Education Application 2025-2026 Academic Year

Return to: Fieldeducation@pts.edu

1. ORGANIZATION:
2. WHAT IS THE MISSION OR PRIMARY PURPOSE OF YOUR ORGANIZATION?
3. ORGANIZATION'S PHYSICAL ADDRESS (PLEASE ADD MAILING ADDRESS IF IT IS DIFFERENT):
4. ORGANIZATION WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS:
5. NAME OF THE PERSON SUPERVISING THE STUDENT:
6. SUPERVISOR E-MAIL:
7. SUPERVISOR PHONE:
8. PLEASE DESCRIBE THE FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES THAT WILL BE AVAILABLE TO THE STUDENT.
9. WHAT SPECIFIC TASKS OR MINISTRY AREAS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE STUDENT LEAD?
10. DESCRIBE THE PHYSICAL SPACE AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR THE STUDENT.
11. PLEASE SUMMARIZE YOUR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AS A MANAGER OR SUPERVISOR.
12. PLEASE DESCRIBE ANY EXPERIENCE SUPERVISING OR MENTORING STUDENTS.

13. LIST YOUR RELEVANT DEGREES OR CERTIFICATIONS:
14. PLEASE LIST YOUR ORDINATION/LICENSURE/ENDORSEMENT (INCLUDING THE ECCLESIAL BODY AND DATE):
15. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR SUPERVISORY STYLE?
16. WHAT POPULATION DOES YOUR SITE SERVE OR ENGAGE?
17. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR SITE'S BROADER CONTEXT?
18. WHAT ARE THE ORGANIZATION'S STRENGTHS?
19. ARE THERE OTHER LAY LEADERS OR VOLUNTEERS WHO CAN CONTRIBUTE REGULARLY TO THE FIELD EDUCATION EXPERIENCE WITH SUPPORT, OBSERVATION, FEEDBACK AND ASSESSMENT?
20. WILL THE CHURCH COVER COST OF THE \$4,350 STIPEND OR WILL YOU BE APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID?
21. WHAT MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT, IF ANY, CAN THE ORGANIZATION PROVIDE FOR THE STUDENT?
22. DO YOU HAVE ANY RESTRICTIONS ON THE STUDENTS YOU CAN INTERVIEW BASED UPON YOUR FUNDING SOURCE?
23. I AFFIRM THAT I WILL ATTEND TWO SUPERVISOR TRAININGS.
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
24. I AFFIRM THAT I WILL MEET WITH THE STUDENT WEEKLY FOR AN HOUR OF SUPERVISION WITH THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION.
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
25. I AFFIRM THAT I WILL SUBMIT COVENANTS AND EVALUATIONS BY THE DEADLINES

☐ Yes

☐ No

26. I AFFIRM THAT I INTEND TO BE IN THIS LEADERSHIP AND SUPERVISORY POSITION FOR THE NEXT YEAR

☐ Yes

☐ No

27. I AFFIRM THAT I WILL COMMUNICATE ANY CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS PROACTIVELY TO THE STUDENT. IF THERE IS NOT RESOLUTION I WILL CONTACT THE FIELD EDUCATION DIRECTOR FOR MEDIATION.

☐ Yes

☐ No

PTS Field Education Manual

28. I WILL ABIDE BY THE POLICIES AND STATEMENTS SET FORTH IN THE PTS FIELD EDUCATION MANUAL

☐ Yes

☐ No

29. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN SANCTIONED FOR MISCONDUCT BY AN ECCLESIAL OR CIVIL BODY? YES/NO

☐ Yes

☐ No

Appendix C:



Developing a Learning-Serving Covenant

Office of Field Education

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

What is a Learning-Serving Covenant?

The covenant articulates a three-way relationship between the student, supervisor/mentor, and the seminary's Office of Field Education. Like any covenant, it is a choice freely entered to join in mutual commitment, pursuits, responsibilities, concern, and learning. It outlines mutual expectations and goals. You will create this covenant with your supervisor and submit it to the field education director for approval.

Why Learning-Serving Covenants?

- They help you articulate your growing edges and help you to take responsibility for the direction and progress of your learning process. They give your supervisor an idea of how they can challenge and support you. Creating a covenant is sort of like mapping a route—while you may eventually detour from it to go new places, your journey will be the better for having set a course at the beginning.
- They allow you freedom to bring your whole self into expression through your unique gifts and values. A covenant does not limit you simply to tasks and responsibilities but also to broader commitments about how you want to grow.
- They provide other people with a meaningful guide in supporting your learning. Knowing what you have covenanted to with your supervisor can help the professors and the field education office know how to support you in your journey.
- They clarify and challenge your commitment to learning. Looking back at a covenant reminds you why you entered the relationship in the first place and keeps your goals before you.

Before you start: Identify what motivates your learning

- *Hope*
 - What would I be like if I were fulfilling my hopes?
 - What do I and others most enjoy about me that can be strengthened and used?
 - What dreams have brought me to this point? Are they still valid?
- *Inquiry*
 - What am I curious about?
 - What do I need to know to be engaged in leadership?

- What resources are available to me while in my field of interest?
- What do I already know that can be a resource to my development of ministerial identity and authority?
- *Discomfort*
 - In what situations do I commonly struggle?
 - What behaviors commonly get me into trouble? How can I change them?
 - How do I want my life in ministry to be different?
 - How do I want to be and act differently a year from now?

Creating a covenant

The first part of the covenant sets up the practical expectations about your field education:

- When will you meet for supervision? (day, time, place)
- When/where/how will you work? Be sure you are on the same page about offsite work like research and writing and Zoom participation in meetings. Each site's culture is different.
- What weeks between September and May will you be off? Remember mid-terms, finals, etc.!
- Which holidays (civic and religious) will you take off?
- How will you be paid?

Identify your goals

Next, start to be specific about how you want to grow through field education in three areas: **thinking, doing, and being**. Each area should have 1-3 goals. Your goals and growth will be as unique as you are. If you achieve your goals, you can always add more mid-year! Be sure to include a weekly, communal practice as one set of goals. Other goals may involve some of the following areas of ministry:

Administration and leadership

Community organizing

Curriculum building

Ecumenical/Interfaith work

Evangelism

Faith formation

Fundraising and development

Pastoral care

Program planning and evaluation

Social witness and advocacy

Teaching

Worship, including special services

Thinking goals. At Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, we are committed to your growth and development as a theologian who can learn about people and communities, think theologically about what is going on with them, and discern what God is calling them toward. What kinds of ministry topics might you want to learn more about? For example, a student in a jail or prison setting might commit to learning about how past traumas can affect inmates' faith and spirituality and therefore how they might provide trauma-informed

care. A student in a congregation might want to better understand how to plan a sermon series.

Doing goals. We also assume that there are practical skills, tasks, and competencies in which you as a student wish to become proficient. What will you DO that applies what you learned or thought about? For example, a student whose thinking goal involves trauma-informed care might start a small group. A student in a congregation would create a sermon series.

Being goals. Since ministry is as much about who you are as what you can do, we encourage you to set some goals about how you might grow spiritually in your field education. These being goals are as much about reflection as they are thinking or action. How has what you think about yourself changed? How has doing ministry influenced your theology? How do you balance the prophetic, the pastoral, and the personal? How do you set good boundaries with people? What do you bring to the context? How might you reflect on how the context changes you? What have you learned about yourself?

Thinking, doing, and being are often interconnected, and you may find a particular goal popping up in several places on the chart. That's okay! Additionally, some goals, especially in the "being" category, may seem like they will take your lifetime to achieve. Try to phrase them with a one-year period in mind, asking yourself "How am I being called to think, act, and be different a year from now?"

Identify what specific activities will help you meet your goals

As the popular 20th century self-help author Oliver Napoleon Hill put it: "A goal is a dream with a deadline." Goals are not just lofty ideals, so to reach them you have to be engaged in activities that happen with certain people in certain places at certain times. You'll need to negotiate the matching of your goals with the responsibilities you can realistically take on at your site.

Finalize a draft, co-sign it, and send it to the director

This covenant is for the entire academic year, but don't worry; you will be invited to revise it at mid-year so you won't be held to it for all time! The column for supervisor responsibilities will help your supervisor identify what they have to do to facilitate your tasks and responsibilities. For example, they may need to sign you up or invite you to some event, obtain resources for you, introduce you to people, train you in certain skills, remember to raise certain topics in supervision, etc. Finally, some goals have a time frame, e.g., seasonal activities, so that's what the Dates column is for. Other goals you'll work on continuously so you may leave the Dates column blank for those or write "Ongoing."



Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Office of Field Education

Learning-Serving Covenant

DUE SEPTEMBER 19, 2025

Student Contact Information

Name:

Email: @pts.edu Other email:

Phone:

Supervisor Contact Information

Name:

Emails:

Phone:

Site Information

Name:

Physical address:

Mailing address, if different:

Dates September 7, 2025 - May 15, 2026

The field education calendar follows [the PTS academic calendar](#). The student must serve 10 hours a week for **29 of the 36** weeks between September and mid-May. They are not required to work during school breaks and some students will take mission trips during the January term. Please be sure your calendar expectations are in sync.

Start date (no later than September 7, 2025):

End date (no later than May 15, 2025):

Will the student work the holidays when the school is on break?

Thanksgiving Y/N

Christmas Y/N

Easter Y/N

Supervision 20 of the 29 weeks

Students and supervisors meet for one hour a week for a theological (not planning) discussion. Our schedule for supervisory conferences will be:

Payment

Is the site paying the stipend? Y/N

Will taxes be taken out? Y/N

Please describe how the student will receive their stipend (monthly, each term, etc.):

| Goals | Student Responsibilities | Supervisor Responsibilities | Time Frame for completion |
|----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Thinking Goals | | | |
| Doing Goals | | | |
| Being Goals | | | |

By signing this Covenant, we not only agree to this plan but we also agree to abide by all seminary and site policies regarding harassment, discrimination, and conduct. Return this covenant to fielddeduction@pts.edu by September 19, 2025.

Student signature _____ Date _____

Supervisor signature _____ Date _____

Director signature _____ Date _____

Appendix D:



FIELD EDUCATION MID-POINT EVALUATION

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Through this mid-year evaluation, students and supervisors have an opportunity to evaluate their joint progress in addressing the goals identified in the Learning Covenant. Supervisor and student should discuss their responses to the questions together before signing and submitting the form. You may submit the form separately, however. Please email it to Fieldeducation@pts.edu. It is due no later than **December 12, 2025**.

Name of Seminarian:

Name of Supervisor:

Site:

1. Review the goals and responsibilities on your Learning Covenant. Then, taking each goal in turn, describe what each of you has actually **done so far** toward fulfilling it.

Student:

Supervisor:

2. Reviewing the student's formation so far—e.g., skill development, sense of vocation, knowledge of ministry—what has been confirmed? What has surprised you? Has anything in particular helped or hindered formation?

Student:

Supervisor:

3. What changes, if any, will you make to your Learning Covenant?

Student

Supervisor:

We have discussed together the content of this evaluation. **(Signatures required.)**

Student: _____

Date:

Supervisor: _____

Date:

Appendix E:

Note: this form may be subject to change pending faculty review

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
Office of Field Education
FINAL EVALUATION FORM

Instructions:

1. You will both review the Learning Covenant you created for the year. Because other experiences and opportunities for learning arise in field education beyond what was intentionally included on the LC, you will additionally reflect on the questions in this evaluation form (below). Set aside some time for reflection and note-taking for this review.
2. You will meet one-on-one to compare and discuss your reviews of the year. Please schedule one uninterrupted hour for this conversation and bring your notes to it.
3. Taking the conversation into account, the supervisor will then write an evaluation, including examples and illustrations as often as possible.
4. The supervisor will share the evaluation with the student and both will sign it.
5. The student may write an addendum to the supervisor's evaluation if they wish, either to include or submit separately from the supervisor's evaluation.

This evaluation is due in early May and may be incorporated into classwork sooner. It is the student's responsibility to ensure its submission to the Office of Field Education. Credit for FE210/220 and completion of the student's field education degree requirement are contingent upon timely submission of this evaluation.

This evaluation, and any addendum, will be saved in the Office of Field Education. It will only be released upon the student's written request. See the Release Form, below, which the student may submit now or at any point in the future.



Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Office of Field Education

FINAL EVALUATION FORM

24-25 Academic Year

Student name:

Supervisor name:

Site:

Dates for the field education experience:

SUPERVISOR'S EVALUATION

1. How well did the student achieve each of their learning goals?
2. Describe how the student has grown in vocational discernment.
3. How has the student grown in their self-understanding?
4. How have you witnessed the student deepening their life of prayer and worship?
5. Where have you seen growth in the student's emerging sense of pastoral identity (leadership, authority, authenticity, boundaries, etc.)?

6. In what ways has the field education experience informed the student's theology (nature and mission of the church, God, bible, etc.)?
7. Please describe the student's strengths for ministry going forward?
8. What future steps does this field education experience indicate for the student (e.g., further coursework, training, personal or professional development)?
What are their growing edges?

SIGNATURES

Student _____ Date: _____

Supervisor _____ Date: _____

STUDENT ADDENDUM (optional)

Student's signature _____ Date: _____

Appendix F:

RELEASE FORM (optional)

The Office of Field Education at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary releases the Final Evaluation for purposes of ordination, employment, and further education if the student has given permission. This form lets the student grant that permission in advance.

I hereby give my permission for the PTS Office of Field Education to release (check all that apply)

_____ *Supervisor Evaluation*

_____ *Student Addendum*

to the following person(s) overseeing my call to ministry:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Address Line 1:

Address Line 2:

City, State, Zip:

Student's Signature: _____ *Date:* _____