

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Preparing students to serve Christ and His church through biblical, experiential, and practical ministry

(updated 06/2024)

Dear Puritan Reformed student,

We are grateful you have chosen to become part of our seminary community. We are enriched by each student the Lord sends to us and count it a privilege to be your partners in your preparation for the Lord's calling in your life.

This handbook, along with the other documents you receive at orientation, is meant to assist you during your time with us. The policies and procedures outlined here are given to protect the honor of our Lord, the integrity of our seminary, and your wellbeing. May God bless you with much success and joy during this time of seminary preparation.

Puritan Reformed faculty and staff

Table of Contents

I. Campus Safety and Facilities Policies.....	8
Facilities	8
Parking.....	8
Chapel.....	8
Bookstore.....	8
Library.....	9
Copier / Printer Usage.....	10
Internet Access.....	10
Lounge.....	10
Food Pantry.....	11
Student Mailboxes.....	11
Food in Class.....	11
Notices and Signs.....	11
Drug and Alcohol Policy.....	11
Weapons Policy	13
Safety Policies.....	13
Reporting Crime, Emergencies, and Non-Emergencies on Campus	13
Security and Access of Campus Facilities.....	14
Emergency Response and Evacuation Procedures.....	14
Emergency Response Procedures.....	14
Emergency Lockdown Procedures	15
Emergency Evacuation Procedures.....	15
Severe Weather Safety Procedures.....	15
Weather Policy	16
II. Community Life.....	17
Student Code of Conduct	17
Scope of Authority.....	17
Jurisdiction of the Seminary Student Conduct Code.....	17
Proscribed Conduct.....	17

Problem Resolution.....	19
General Guidance.....	19
Academic Problems.....	19
Social/Moral Conduct Problems.....	20
Procedure.....	20
Sanctions.....	20
Grievance Policy/Procedures.....	21
Personal Resolution.....	21
Informal Procedure	21
Formal Procedure.....	22
Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Policy.....	23
Definitions.....	23
Reporting Procedure	23
Investigation Procedure.....	24
Appeal Procedure.....	24
The Accused.....	24
Policies and Procedures Regarding Sexual Harassment and Sex Offenses	25
Policy Statement.....	25
Scope	25
Definitions.....	25
Protocol for Sexual Harassment Complaints	26
Report process.....	27
Sex Offenses—Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Rape, and Sexual Assault and Stalking—Against a Student.....	28
Preventing Dating Violence, Rape, Sexual Assault, and Stalking.....	28
Protocol for Sex Offense—Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Rape, Sexual Assault, and Stalking—Victims.....	29
Immediate Response	29
Report the Incident	29
Seminary Disciplinary Action.....	30
Disciplinary Procedures.....	31
Appeals Process.....	32

Federal Rights.....	32
The Federal Campus Sexual Assault Victim’s Bill of Rights:	32
III. Academic Policies.....	34
Honor Code	34
Consequences for Violation of the Honor Code.....	34
Class Attendance	38
Excused Absences	38
Unexcused Absences.....	38
Recorded Lectures.....	38
Use of Internet During Class	38
Drop-Add Policy.....	39
Tuition Refund for Dropped/Withdrawn Courses.....	39
For traditional semester-length courses:.....	39
For modular or intensive courses:	40
Unpaid Tuition.....	40
Withdrawal from the Seminary.....	40
Probationary Status Policy.....	40
Upon Admission (based on undergraduate work).....	40
During Program (based on seminary work)	41
Auditing Courses.....	41
Transfer of Credits	42
Grading System.....	42
Retake Policy.....	43
Late Submission of Course Assignments.....	44
Policy for Incompletes.....	44
Course Evaluations.....	44
Advising Sessions.....	45
Course Conflicts.....	45
Grade Reports and Appeals.....	45
Transcript.....	45
Distance Education Courses.....	45
Policy for Addressing the Academic Needs of Students with Disabilities.....	46

Student Responsibility	46
Faculty and Staff Responsibility	47
Suggestions for Practical Application of This Policy	47
IV. Additional Policies/Resources	50
Spiritual Formation	50
Procedure for Dismissal of Student for Habitually Unbecoming Behavior	50
Student Grievances.....	51
Purpose	51
Context.....	51
Academic Grievance Policy.....	51
Non-Academic Grievance Policy	52
Conflict Resolution and Appeal Procedure.....	52
Chapel.....	54
Student Orientation	54
Social Media Policy	54
IT User Policy.....	54
Classrooms	55
Network and Internet Resources.....	55
Acceptable Use	55
Speech Lessons.....	56
Student Writing Assistance.....	56
Reformed Theological Research and English Grammar.....	56
Graduation and Commencement Exercises.....	56
Puritan Reformed Student Services.....	57
Housing services.....	57
Health Services.....	57
Financial Services	57
Community Services.....	57
Academic Services.....	57
Spiritual council and advice	58
Student Society.....	58
Ministry Wives Fellowship.....	58

Dress Code	59
Interaction with Staff/Faculty	59
Etiquette	59
Student Forms	60
Consent to Release Form.....	60
Directory Information Restriction/Release Request.....	62

I. Campus Safety and Facilities Policies

Infractions of any of the regulations in this handbook are to be addressed by any of the following means, depending on the severity of the infraction: a warning, academic probation, suspension (either temporary or indefinite), or dismissal. If you have questions or concerns about any policies in this handbook, please feel free to speak with any faculty member or the registrar for clarification. All members of the seminary community are expected to act in accordance with local, state, and federal laws at all times, whether on or off campus. Breaches of such laws may also entail disciplinary action by the seminary.

Facilities

The seminary building was built in 2004 and expanded in 2014 with the dual purpose of housing Reformation Heritage Books (RHB; now operating out of their building on 29th Street) and Puritan Reformed. Much work and time went into its construction; it should therefore be treated with consideration. Access to building is controlled with access cards programmed by staff. Student access is limited to 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM (Monday through Thursday), 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM (Friday), and 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM (Saturday).

Parking

Parking is available in front of the seminary building with the exception of 35 spaces located at the south and south-east edges of the parking lot. These spaces are leased to Priority Health. Please do not block any sidewalks or the dumpster.

Chapel

The seminary chapel is located on the main floor, west of the classrooms. This room is designed for the weekly chapel meeting and the practice preaching sessions; video and sound equipment enable the recording of all sessions. The chapel is used for special events beyond the seminary's use, and should therefore be kept clean. The sound and video booth and its equipment are to be operated only by designated trained personnel.

Bookstore

The Puritan Reformed bookstore is located on the main floor and is open for business Monday – Friday (8:00 AM – 4:00 PM). Students are welcome to browse the bookstore, but may not remove books from the bookstore without purchasing them.

Library

Since its inception, the Puritan Reformed Library has grown from the personal collection of President Beeke to its present state of approximately 60,000 volumes. The library focuses on Puritan and Reformed theology, with its centerpiece being the Puritan Research Center.

The Puritan Reformed Library shares an online catalog and “integrated library system” with Cornerstone University and Kuyper College. Puritan, Kuyper College, and Cornerstone University students have reciprocal borrowing privileges, using a system that coordinates and automates functions such as circulation, cataloging, and searching.

In addition to its growing collection of theological books, the library has a variety of journals, both as current subscriptions and bound issues. Library subscriptions to several online databases (such as EEBO, ATLA-Religion, and Christian Periodical Index) provide further, powerful research capabilities.

Briefly, four other library resources for ministry and research deserve attention:

- Interlibrary Loan (ILL): Students and Faculty may ask to borrow books and articles that are not readily available in our own library. Submit requests by email to: laura.ladwig@prts.edu
- PeRT (Puritan Electronic Research Tool): literally hundreds of thousands of Scripture citations are indexed in an online database and keyed to books in our library. This index is located on the library’s webpage.
- Audio Library: thousands of cassette tapes have been digitized and are accessible as MP3 files directly from our online catalog, using the Firefox web browser.
- Research Assistance: Puritan Reformed Librarian, Laura Ladwig, is readily available by email (laura.ladwig@prts.edu), online using the “Ask-A-Librarian” form, or in person during normal seminary hours to assist students in finding and accessing theological and other resources.

Students are encouraged to study in the library where they will find study carrels with power access and network ports or wireless access to the Internet. Students may “designate” a carrel as their own, but the seminary is not responsible for any loss or damage to personal items left unattended in a carrel. Any library book kept in a carrel must be checked out.

Students may check out books or recordings for 4 weeks. Online access to one’s library account enables students to renew books for an additional 4 weeks. All borrowers are expected to return books before their due date and will be liable for overdue, lost, or damaged books. Overdue and replacement cost notices are sent automatically to the borrower’s email address.

Journals, reference books, and antiquarian books (pre-1850) are limited to library use only. However, free photocopying of journal articles or sections from reference books is available for Puritan Reformed student use. Photocopying of antiquarian books is generally prohibited due to the damaging effects of light and handling—please ask library staff to assist you in finding a reprint edition.

Copier / Printer Usage

Puritan Reformed provides black and white printing and full color scan services for all students. Each semester a student will be issued a \$60.00 credit for on-campus copying and printing. This includes all assignments and class work. The multi-function printer is located in the east wing of the library, next to the faculty reception desk. Students are granted access to the printer on the west wall. The printers on the south wall and in the first floor printing room are restricted to Puritan Reformed Staff and faculty.

Print Charges

- Single-side \$.10 per sheet
- Double-side \$.15 per sheet
- These charges will be automatically deducted from the \$60 credit issued at the beginning of the semester.

Credit reimbursement requests should be reported to support@prts.edu. Include the print job name or numbers on your request for reimbursement. Reimbursement will be made only for printer jams or malfunctions. *Refunds for “mistakes” will not be made.* \$60 will cover 400 double sided pages or 600 single sided pages. To avoid running out of credit before the end of the semester, monitor your printing needs carefully.

Internet Access

The seminary offers wireless internet access from most rooms of the building, including classrooms and the library. If you experience difficulties using the internet while on campus, please notify the IT director. Do note that the seminary’s server does have web-filtering software to block access to any adult content or questionable website.

Lounge

Students are welcome to coffee and tea and the use of the lounge. Please show consideration and kindness by cleaning up after yourself, and by putting dirty dishes into the dishwasher.

Food Pantry

Qualifying students will find that a food bank, housed in the 2919 Leonard garage building next door to the seminary, is of immense help financially. The food bank is operated by the student council alongside the HRC in Grand Rapids and is stocked every Tuesday by volunteers. Clients using the food bank must complete an annual application. Forms are obtained in the food bank or by contacting the registrar. If you have questions or concerns regarding the food bank, the seminary staff can direct you to the appropriate person.

Student Mailboxes

Student mailboxes are located in the administration office on the main floor. Access to mail is from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday – Thursday.

Food in Class

Food should not be consumed during class time, unless the instructor specifically allows for it (for instance, in the rare instance when one's class schedule would not allow for a separate lunch hour). Drinks may be brought into class, provided they are consumed quietly and care is taken that no mess is made or left behind.

Food should be consumed outside of the building, or in the lunchroom. When eating in the building, students should take special care to avoid cooking or warming food with strong odors, or leaving behind any mess. It is expected that everyone clean up after him/herself, placing dirty dishes in the dishwasher.

Notices and Signs

Permission must be obtained from seminary staff or faculty to display any notices or signs on or around seminary facilities.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Students and employees are reminded that members of the community differ in their convictions about the use of alcohol. Some have formulated positions which require them to abstain from its use. Others have not. Therefore, students and employees are requested to consider the consciences of others in the seminary. Those who abstain from alcohol use are requested not to condemn those who do not abstain from its use. Those who have not formulated positions requiring abstinence are requested to apply restraint whenever prudence or concern for another warrants it. In the interests of these sensitivities, alcoholic beverages and their consumption are prohibited on campus.

Illicit drugs are strictly prohibited. The seminary will cooperate fully with local police in prosecuting offenders who possess, use, or sell drugs. The seminary has adopted strict disciplinary sanctions regarding possession, use, or sale of illicit drugs.

Any student or employee who unlawfully possesses, uses or distributes illicit drugs or alcohol will be subject to criminal sanctions provided by federal, state, and local law in accordance with the Controlled Substance Act. The sanctions under the federal Controlled Substances Act include imprisonment of up to life and fines for each violation.

For updated information regarding the federal Controlled Substance Act, and penalties for the possession and trafficking of illicit drugs, please visit the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency's website: <http://www.justice.gov/dea/druginfo/ftp3.shtml>.

The seminary considers a violation of the drug and alcohol policy serious and, subject to applicable law, will take the following appropriate actions itself in response to a violation:

- Any student or employee convicted by a court of law of being under the influence of alcohol, on- or off-campus, shall be given an immediate warning. A subsequent offense of the same nature, at any time, is sufficient cause for a three-year probation. Counseling may be required as a condition of continuing enrollment/employment. A subsequent offense of any nature, whether described or not described in this Policy, warranting probation which coincides with the probation described for this offense, is sufficient cause for termination of enrollment/employment after due process.
- Any student or employee convicted by a court of law of being under the influence of illicit drugs or of illicit possession or distribution of alcohol, on- or off-campus, shall be immediately placed upon a three-year probation and may be required to seek counseling as a condition of continuing enrollment/employment. A subsequent offense of the same nature, or of another nature, described in this section or not described in this section, warranting probation which coincides with the probation prescribed for this offense, is sufficient cause for termination of enrollment/employment after due process.
- Any student or employee observed, by two or more witnesses, to be in possession of alcoholic beverage in any seminary building or consuming alcoholic beverage on seminary property shall be given an immediate warning. A subsequent offense of the same nature, at any time, is sufficient cause for a three-year probation and counseling may be required as a condition of continuing enrollment/employment. A subsequent offense of any nature,

described in this section or not described in this section, warranting probation which coincides with the probation prescribed for this offense, is sufficient cause for termination of enrollment/employment after due process.

- Any student or employee observed to be in possession of illicit drugs, on- or off-campus, shall be reported to law enforcement authorities. The seminary will cooperate fully in lawful prosecution, including testimony with regard to any accused in a court of law. Any student or employee arrested for such an offense may be suspended until proven guilty or innocent by a court of law. Any student or employee subsequently convicted of possession of illicit drugs shall have his or her enrollment/employment immediately terminated upon due process.

Weapons Policy

Despite some laws that allow people to carry firearms in public, Puritan Reformed prohibits any student from possessing or carrying weapons of any kind on seminary property, in seminary vehicles, or personal vehicles at any seminary function on or off campus, or while on seminary business. This includes the following:

- Any form of weapon or explosive;
- All firearms;
- All pneumatic firing devices; and
- All illegal knives or knives with blades that are more than six inches in length

Safety Policies

Reporting Crime, Emergencies, and Non-Emergencies on Campus

The procedure to take when a medical, fire, or criminal emergency or non-emergency occurs is as follows:

Step 1: For any emergency (medical, fire, or criminal), immediately call 911.

An emergency is any life-threatening situation—fires, medical emergencies in which an ambulance is needed, and crime situations requiring onsite police response. It would include the following:

- Any crime that is in progress or where the offender is still on the scene (or has just left the scene)
- All serious violent crimes—homicide, robbery, sexual assault, domestic violence, assault—even if the crime is no longer in progress or the offender has left the scene
- All fires and medical emergencies

- Building intruders. If you see a door or window forced open, do not go in. Call 911 from the nearest phone.
- Vehicle crashes involving personal injury, major property damage, or traffic tie-ups
- Seeing a criminal you know is wanted by the police

In case of fire emergencies only: In addition to calling 911, activate the nearest fire alarm pull box by pulling down on the lever to alert others in the building and then exit the building to a safe location.

Step 2: Any emergency or non-emergency (medical, fire or criminal) should also be reported to the VP for Operations or Dean of Students, who will, if necessary, assist in contacting the police and medical authorities. If an emergency or non-emergency is reported to a student or employee other than a person in one of the above-named positions, that person should immediately report it to the VP for Operations or Dean of Students.

Security and Access of Campus Facilities

The size, suburban location, and character of the seminary community promote a sense of safety, and the seminary has enjoyed a good safety and security record for many years. Safety is, however, a joint responsibility. Puritan Reformed encourages you to help maintain your own safety by using common sense safety practices such as being aware of your surroundings, exercising caution in walking alone in isolated or poorly lit areas, reporting suspicious activity, and not leaving your car or office unlocked or your personal belongings unattended.

Emergency Response and Evacuation Procedures

Emergency Response Procedures

- Once a possible emergency situation comes to the attention of the VP for Operations or Dean of Students, he will seek to confirm the report either by personally viewing the circumstances or calling an appropriate person to confirm it. If an emergency exists, 911 will be dialed immediately to bring local authorities on campus.
- If the nature of the emergency is a fire, the alarm for the affected building will be pulled and occupants directed to areas away from the building to allow fire personnel to respond appropriately on arrival.
- If the nature of the emergency requires notification of either a segment(s) of or the entire community, the appropriate authority will communicate to the affected portion of the community without delay in any of multiple methods deemed appropriate.

Emergency Lockdown Procedures

If you receive a message in text, email or voice to lockdown at the campus, and you are on campus, remain calm and use the following guidelines:

- Go to the nearest room or office. Lock or block the doors.
- Stay away from windows and doors.
- Keep down and quiet.
- Put cell phones on vibrate.
- DO NOT open the door.
- Evacuation is NOT recommended.
- If possible, call 911 and stay on the line until the dispatcher tells you otherwise.

If you receive a message in text, email or voice, to lockdown from the campus, and you are NOT on campus, do NOT come to campus.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

If you receive a message in text, email or voice to evacuate, remain calm and use the following guidelines:

- Exit the building immediately.
- Use the nearest available exit.
- Move quickly, quietly and calmly. Do not run.
- Keep away from all buildings and cars.
- Do not attempt to drive your vehicle.
- Be aware of any arriving fire and emergency vehicles.
- Do not re-enter the building until instructed to do so by your supervisor or a fire/rescue worker.

In the case of campus evacuation, instructions will be given, by building, via the emergency notification system. In case of bookstore evacuation, instructions will be given by on-site employees.

Severe Weather Safety Procedures

Occasionally the arrival of the spring semester is accompanied by periods of violent weather. To minimize the possibility of personal injury and property damage, the National Weather Service and Office of Civil Defense have developed an early warning system. This early warning information also serves as an assurance that weather conditions are being intelligently observed and promptly reported.

The National Weather Service severe weather warnings fall into the following categories:

- Severe Thunderstorm Watch: conditions favorable for the formation of severe thunderstorms, high winds and hail.
- Severe Thunderstorm Warning: thunderstorms, high winds and hail are in the area.
- Tornado Watch: conditions favorable for the formation of tornadoes.
- Tornado Warning: tornadoes are in the area. TAKE COVER.

The decision to terminate a class or activity, to close the library, or close any office will be the responsibility of the vice president for operations and in his absence the vice president for academic affairs.

General Comments:

- Tornadoes usually (but not always!) travel from the southwest to the northeast.
- Splintered glass and flying debris inflict most injuries in a tornado. Stay away from windows.
- The safest shelters in our building during a tornado are the two stairwells.
- Don't use the telephone except in an emergency. Help keep the lines open.
- Keep your radio tuned to a local radio station.
- If the electric power is interrupted, many phones are inoperative.

Weather Policy

The seminary links its decision to close school due to inclement weather to fellow colleges and graduate institutions such as Calvin Seminary, Grand Rapids Theological Seminary, Cornerstone University, and Aquinas College, and/or to state police bulletins that declare travel unsafe in Kent County.

The seminary may remain open during inclement weather, even when other institutions may be closed. Students must be prudent in their decision whether to travel to campus when conditions are hazardous. Students who decide it would not be prudent for them to travel to campus due to inclement weather will not be penalized when not in class for that reason. Students should communicate their decision by email to the professor as soon as possible.

II. Community Life

Student Code of Conduct

Scope of Authority

The Academic Dean has authority over all behaviors which would disrupt or obstruct the academic environment including academic dishonesty of any sort. The Dean of Students has authority over all problems concerning personal behavior. Final administrative authority in these matters resides with Executive Committee of the seminary (President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Vice President for Operations), with the Puritan Reformed Board of Trustees handling all appeals of administrative decisions.

Jurisdiction of the Seminary Student Conduct Code

The Puritan Reformed Student Conduct Code shall apply to conduct that affects the seminary community and/or the pursuit of its objectives, whether it occurs on seminary premises, at seminary sponsored activities, or off-campus. Each student shall be responsible for his/her conduct from the time of application for admission through the actual awarding of a degree, even though conduct may occur before classes begin or after classes end, as well as during the academic year and during periods between terms of actual enrollment (and even if their conduct is not discovered until after a degree is awarded).

Proscribed Conduct

This code recognizes that Christians seek to live their lives out of the positive law of love in obedience to God's commandments. As a community that prepares students for Christian service, we expect students to exhibit integrity, honesty, and other behavior that is in keeping with a follower of Jesus Christ. As an institution of higher learning, we sometimes engage difficult, controversial, and potentially offensive issues. We strive to address these issues in ways that are respectful, appropriate, and give the least offense to others. This code seeks to assist the community by proscribing the following conduct. This list is not exhaustive by any means, but is meant to illustrate the types of conduct which are not acceptable.

Acts of Dishonesty:

Including but not limited to:

- Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty.
- Furnishing false information to any seminary official, faculty member, or office.
- Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any seminary document, record, or instrument of identification.

Acts of Inappropriate Behavior:

- Physical, sexual, or verbal abuse, including harassment, assault, coercion, bullying, or other conduct which threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person. Abusive conduct is any conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive campus, educational, or working environment for another person. This includes unwanted, unwelcome, or inappropriate, activities or comments.
- Biased, prejudiced, or discriminatory comments or activities related to sex, gender, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, or any other legally-protected category. This especially includes comments or activities that are disparaging, derogatory, or denigrating.
- Attempted or actual theft of or damage to any personal, private, or public property, on or off campus.
- Failure to comply with directions of college or seminary officials or law enforcement officers acting in performance of their duties and/or failure to identify oneself to these persons when requested to do so.
- Unauthorized possession, duplication, or use of keys or other access devices to seminary premises or unauthorized entry to or use of seminary premises.
- Violation of any published seminary policy, rule, or regulation or of any federal, state, or local law.
- Disrupting or obstructing teaching, research, administration, disciplinary proceedings, or other seminary-based functions.
- Unlawful use, possession, purchase, distribution, sale, or manufacture of a controlled substance (including marijuana), designer drug, or drug paraphernalia.
- Unlawful possession, use, or distribution of alcohol on seminary property or as any part of seminary activities, and any type of intoxication on or off seminary property.
- Possession of firearms, explosives, weapons, or dangerous chemicals on seminary property.
- Inappropriate, disparaging, derogatory, profane, or obscene expressions, including speech and social media, which violate accepted standards of decency and Christian conduct or which defame others, including Puritan Reformed.
- Inappropriate or immodest dress or behavior.
- Sexual misconduct in its many forms.
- Any unauthorized use of electronic or other devices to make an audio or video record of any person while on seminary premises without his/her prior knowledge, or without his/her effective consent when such a recording is likely to cause injury or distress.
- Abuse of seminary computer technology and resources, including:
 - Unauthorized entry into a file.
 - Unauthorized transfer of a file.

- Unauthorized use of another individual's identification or password, or sharing your own.
- Use of technology and resources to interfere with the work of another student faculty, or staff member.
- Use of technology and resources to send obscene or abusive messages.
- Use of technology and resources to interfere with the normal operation of the seminary computer systems, including infesting seminary computers with computer viruses or malware.
- The publication or posting of materials without the professor's consent is prohibited.

Problem Resolution

General Guidance

We are a community of believers that shows hospitality and compassion to one another, holds one another accountable as we live and learn together, and always seeks restoration and reconciliation in matters of offense. Consequently, wherever possible we will seek resolution of conflict and conduct issues through dialogue and discussion with the parties involved, guided by the counsel of faculty and staff as appropriate.

If a student has an issue of conflict or conduct with a faculty or staff member, the student should follow the Puritan Reformed Grievance Policy. If the conflict or conduct relates to sexual harassment, discrimination, abuse, or any other sexually-related issue, the student should follow the Puritan Reformed Title IX policy and procedures.

Academic Problems

If the problem is academic in nature, the faculty member or staff person who has a complaint concerning a student must first approach that student. If the problem is not resolved, then the student, faculty member, or staff person shall bring the problem to the attention of the Academic Office. The Academic Dean shall discuss the problem with all parties involved, assuring that the student(s) involved have full opportunity to tell their story; evaluate possible courses of action to resolve the issue; make a determination; and impose an appropriate sanction when necessary.

In situations where there may be a conflict of interest, the Academic Dean will take the matter to the President to resolve the matter, following the same process.

Social/Moral Conduct Problems

With a Student or Students

If the problem involves social or moral conduct with a particular student or students, a faculty or staff member who has a complaint must first approach that particular student or students with the complaint. If the matter cannot be resolved, it shall be brought to the Dean of Students, who may conduct an investigation, maintaining records throughout the process.

Among Students

If the problem involves social or moral conduct or conflict among students, the students should ordinarily first seek to resolve the matter themselves. However, if one of the students feels threatened, unsafe, or for any other reason does not feel able to address the matter with the other student(s), he or she shall bring the matter to the Dean of Students, who may conduct an investigation, maintaining records throughout the process. If the matter involves sexual harassment, discrimination, abuse, threats, stalking, assault, and/or violence, the matter will initiate the seminary's sexually-related grievance policy and procedures.

Procedure

The Dean of Students will assure that the student(s) involved have full opportunity to tell their story. The Dean of Students will investigate the matter and make a determination, seeking resolution and reconciliation where possible, while imposing appropriate sanctions when necessary.

In serious matters, where suspension or expulsion may be appropriate, the Dean of Students will refer the matter to the Executive Committee.

In situations where there may be a conflict of interest, the Dean of Students will bring the matter to the Academic Dean to resolve the matter, following the same process.

Sanctions

Disciplinary action will be taken in one or more of the following manners:

- **Admonition:** an oral statement to the student that she or he has violated or is violating institutional rules. Such admonition may come from the Dean of Students, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Operations, a professor, or a staff person.
- **Warning:** a notice in writing to the student from the Dean of Students Office or the Academic Office, that the student has violated or is violating institutional regulations.

- **Personal Probation:** a written reprimand from the Dean of Students Office or the Academic Office, for the violation of specified regulations, stating the reason for the probation. Probation will be for a designated period of time, with the warning that more severe disciplinary actions will be taken if the student violates any institutional regulations during the probationary period.
- **Loss of Privileges:** when more severe disciplinary action is needed, certain privileges may be withdrawn from the student by the Dean of Students Office or the Academic Office for a designated period of time.
- **Dismissal:** an action by Disciplinary Committee, whereby a student is separated from the seminary for a definite period of time. Conditions for readmission will be specified by the Disciplinary Committee.
- **Expulsion:** permanent separation of the student from the seminary by action of the seminary Board of Trustees based upon the recommendation of Disciplinary Committee.

Grievance Policy/Procedures

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is committed to providing faculty, staff, and students a reasonable and fair process for reporting and resolving concerns or disputes that involve other personnel in the institution. The grievance policy is designed to give guidelines and outline procedures for addressing those issues.

Personal Resolution

If a member of the faculty, staff, or student body has a grievance against another person in the institution, he/she is encouraged to employ the principles of Matthew 18. The grieved party should raise the matter directly with the offending individual. If they can resolve the issue together, then the matter will be considered resolved and no one else needs to be informed unless others have been affected by the grievance. In such a case, the principles of Matthew 18 should apply to them as well. Puritan Reformed encourages that all such disputes be handled in a timely manner.

Informal Procedure

If the grievance cannot be resolved personally between the parties, the grieved individual may solicit a Seminary official for help in resolving the problem by discussing the matter privately with the individuals involved. Faculty should approach the VP for Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty; staff should approach the VP for Operations; and students should approach the Dean of Students.

Formal Procedure

If the personal and informal steps for resolution fail, the grieved individual may register a formal request. Although it is preferable to seek resolution through either personal or informal procedures, the grieved individual has the right to initiate the formal procedure directly. The individual registering the complaint should do so without fear of being subject to retaliation.

1. The grievant must submit in writing a detailed account and thorough explanation of the allegations and complaints being raised. This should include any witnesses or evidence that the grievant wishes to present. The grievant should also express the remedy or resolution desired. This formal complaint should be submitted within thirty days of the matter that caused the grievance. If the grievance is not submitted within the thirty days, the grievant waives the right to assert the complaint, unless there are extenuating circumstances causing a delay. This written complaint should be submitted to the Seminary's Executive Committee consisting of the President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Vice President for Operations.

If the grievance is against one or more of the Executive Committee, the Board of Trustees will appoint a replacement or replacements that should include a representative of the Board and/or a representative of the faculty.

2. Upon receiving the written complaint, the Executive Committee will respond to the grievant with a decision within ten days. There may be a request for additional information and/or personal interviews that would be germane to determining the resolution.
3. If step two does not lead to a resolution or the grievant is not satisfied with the decision, an investigative panel will be formed to provide the grievant the opportunity to make oral or written presentations. This panel will be comprised of five full-time faculty members: two of the grieved party's choosing; two appointed by the President; and one elected by the faculty. Upon hearing the case, the panel will make its recommendation to the President. The recommendation should be based on the record of evidence, relevant seminary policies, and in accord with state and federal laws.
4. Upon receiving the recommendations from the panel, the President will render the decision that includes a statement of the evidence and conclusions supporting the decision.

If the parties involved are not satisfied with the decision, an appeal may be made to the Board of Trustees who will function as the final court in the matter.

Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Policy

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary will not tolerate any behavior that constitutes unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation on account of sex, race, color, national origin, age, disability, and handicap or other legally-protected classification or activity. Violation of this policy may result in discipline up to and including discharge.

For policies and procedures regarding sexual harassment, please see “Policies and Procedures Regarding Sexual Harassment and Sex Offenses.”

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, “harassment” refers to any unwelcome verbal, visual or physical conduct, comments, communications or treatment of a discriminatory nature about, relating to or because of a person’s race, color, national origin, age or disability or other legally-protected classification or activity, that has the purpose or effect of unduly interfering with an individual’s work or academic performance; creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or academic environment; or otherwise adversely affects an individual’s employment or academic opportunities.

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to: making inappropriate or offensive jokes or remarks relating to race, color, national origin, age or disability; using e-mail or other methods of communication to disseminate such jokes or remarks; accessing such offensive material using seminary equipment; distributing such jokes or remarks received from others outside the seminary

Reporting Procedure

Puritan Reformed is committed to prompt, diligent and impartial enforcement of this policy. Puritan strongly encourages any person who feels that he or she has been subjected to any type of discrimination, harassment or retaliation or believes he or she has witnessed such conduct to report it promptly. Failure to report incidents of harassment promptly will hinder the seminary’s ability to investigate a complaint of harassment and will limit its ability to stop and prevent further harassment. Cooperation in reporting acts of harassment is essential to an effective anti-harassment policy. You are encouraged to provide as much information as possible so that a fair and effective investigation may follow.

Reports of harassment should be made to the Dean of Students.

If reports are made to anyone else, the person receiving the complaint must promptly inform the Dean of Students so that he may take the appropriate steps to investigate the complaint.

Investigation Procedure

The investigation will be conducted by the Disciplinary Committee consisting of the President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Dean of Students, or their designated alternate.

All investigations will be conducted promptly, thoroughly, and discretely so as to protect, to the fullest extent consistent with a thorough and appropriate investigation, the dignity and privacy of the persons involved. The principal investigator will report the results of the investigation to the complainant.

Appeal Procedure

In the event that the complainant believes that the complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved by the principal investigator, the complainant should promptly report the matter to one of the other principal investigators.

The Accused

If it is determined, after thorough investigation, that the accused has violated this policy, such person will be subject to appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective measures commensurate with the seriousness of the particular offense or other relevant circumstances, up to, and including, expulsion from academic programs.

Retaliation in any form against someone who exercises his or her right to make a complaint under this policy or against any individual who provides information related to any such complaints is strictly prohibited and will in itself constitute cause for appropriate disciplinary action.

Persons accused of harassment are warned that any form of retaliation taken against a person submitting a complaint or participating in the investigation of a complaint will be grounds for disciplinary action, including termination of employment and/or expulsion from academic program at Puritan Reformed.

Policies and Procedures Regarding Sexual Harassment and Sex Offenses

Policy Statement

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is committed to a policy that prohibits sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, stalking, or any type of aggressive sexual behavior. This policy complies with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and applicable state laws, and is consistent with the biblical conviction that every person is of worth and dignity, regardless of background or individual difference. The seminary affirms the scriptural teaching that God intends that all sexual activity take place within the bonds of heterosexual marriage. Therefore, any premarital or extra-marital activity, and especially that which is forced, is a clear violation of biblical teachings.

Scope

This policy addresses sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, and stalking involving students of the seminary.

Definitions

Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination and is defined as unwanted sexual advances or visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. The definition includes many forms of offensive behavior and includes gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex as the harasser. Following is a list of examples of sexual harassment:

- Unwanted sexual advances;
- Offering benefits in exchange for sexual favors;
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances;
- Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters;
- Verbal conduct such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, or jokes;
- Verbal sexual advances or propositions;
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature: graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene letters, notes, telephone calls, or invitation;
- Physical conduct such as touching, assaulting, impeding, or blocking movements;
- Creating a hostile environment that interferes with educational opportunities.

Dating Violence. Violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic nature with the victim. This violence includes but is not limited to sexual, physical abuse, or abusive taunting and threats.

Domestic Violence. Violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child, or by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim.

Rape. If a person engages in non-consensual sexual intercourse caused by physical force, coercion or threat, actual or implied, the act is considered rape. A person is unable to consent to sexual intercourse if he or she is mentally incapacitated, asleep, physically helpless due to drug or alcohol consumption, or unconscious. **Acquaintance Rape** occurs when a person is forced, by someone who is known to him/her, to enter into sexual activity despite objections or reservations.

Sexual Assault. Any harmful or threatening nonphysical behavior of a sexual nature such as threats or intimidation, or an actual, attempted or threatened unwanted sexual act accomplished against a person's will by means of force, duress, manipulation, or fear or when a person is incapacitated due to sleep, unconsciousness or substance use.

Stalking. According to Michigan Penal code, stalking is defined as "a 'willful course of conduct' involving repeated or continuing harassment of another individual that would cause a reasonable person to feel terrorized, frightened, intimidated, threatened, harassed, or molested, and that actually causes the victim to feel terrorized, frightened, intimidated, threatened, harassed, or molested. In this definition, 'willful course of conduct' refers to a pattern made up of a series of two or more separate noncontinuous acts which share the same purpose. The term "harassed" is defined as repeated or continuing unconsented contact directed toward a victim resulting in emotional distress. Harassment does not include constitutionally protected activity or conduct that serves a legitimate purpose."

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/Stalking_Brochure_2_175588_7.pdf.

Protocol for Sexual Harassment Complaints

Under federal and state law, it is a student's right and obligation to report instances of sexual harassment to the seminary. Both federal and state law and seminary policy protect from reprisal those who report harassment whether they themselves are the victims of the harassment or are witnesses to it. Because problems related to harassment may be of a personal or sensitive nature, students may discuss incidents of harassment with several people

within seminary administration. Those with whom students may wish to discuss such incidents include, but are not limited to, the Dean of Students, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President for Operations, or President. The seminary prefers that individuals submit complaints or reports in written form so that facts may be accurately documented. However, oral reports will also be responded to promptly and given equal consideration.

Report process

Informal Report. A person may contact the Dean of Students or the Vice President of Academic Affairs when s/he wishes to discuss an incident. Confidentiality will be maintained. However, when the health and safety of a student are involved, it may be necessary to inform the President.

Formal Report. A person may provide a written or taped statement after the initial contact to discuss an incident. The detailed statement shall be provided directly to the Dean of Students (or if the complaint involves the Dean of Students, to the Vice President of Academic Affairs). The fact-finding process shall be handled in the following manner:

- A meeting shall be arranged which will include the Dean of Students (or Vice President of Academic Affairs) and the person who made the complaint. The purpose of this meeting is to gather information relating to the complaint and to determine a possible resolution of the matter.
- A meeting shall then be arranged which will include the Dean of Students (or Vice President of Academic Affairs) and the accused individual, if the accused individual is a student. (In addition, if the accused individual is an employee or an individual outside the seminary, the appropriate administrator will also attend the meeting.) If the Dean of Students feels the complaint(s) is of a rather serious nature, he should not meet with the accused individual alone but ask the Disciplinary Committee (consisting of the Dean of Students, Vice President of Academic Affairs, and the President [or an appointed faculty alternate if one of the Disciplinary Committee cannot be present]) to meet with the accused individual. The purpose of this meeting is to notify the accused of the allegation, to gather information from the accused, and to determine a possible resolution to the matter.

As a result of these meetings, one of the following may occur:

- The complaint may be withdrawn and no further action taken.
- If the complaint is lodged against a student and if evidence strongly indicates that the accusation is true, the Disciplinary Committee may take appropriate disciplinary action in the form of a written reprimand (with documentation of such to be included in the student's file), suspension, or dismissal. In the case of a suspension or dismissal, the

Disciplinary Committee shall inform both the Faculty and the Board of Trustees of their action.

- If the complaint is lodged against an employee and if evidence strongly indicates that the accusation is true, the appropriate administrator shall inform the Disciplinary Committee, which may take appropriate disciplinary action in the form of a written reprimand (with documentation of such to be included in the employee's file), suspension, or dismissal.
- In response to the disciplinary action, the accused, if a student, has the right to a hearing headed up by either the Dean of Students or the Vice President of Academic Affairs who will in turn notify the Disciplinary Committee and if no resolution is made after the meeting, the accused has the right to use the appeal process outlined in 7.0.
- If the accused is a student, the investigation process will be concluded at any point at which the complainant withdraws from participation in the process.

Sex Offenses—Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Rape, and Sexual Assault and Stalking—Against a Student

In the event that a student is a victim of a sex offense—dating violence, domestic violence, rape, sexual assault or stalking—the following sections are intended to recommend appropriate responses.

Preventing Dating Violence, Rape, Sexual Assault, and Stalking

To deter dating violence, rape, and sexual assault students should:

- Walk in lighted and familiar areas;
- Walk with a companion;
- Be direct and firm with someone who is pressuring you sexually;
- Avoid the use of alcohol or illegal use of drugs because they cloud your judgment. Furthermore, alcohol consumption on campus and the illegal use of drugs violates the seminary's standards of conduct.
- Follow these guidelines when on dates:
 - Clearly establish the expectation that you and your date will agree, in advance, of where you will go and what you will do. Set boundaries.
 - Let someone know where you are going, when you expect to return, and whom you will be with.
 - When feeling uncomfortable, pay attention to that feeling and begin to plan a way to get to a safe place.

To avoid instigation of inappropriate behavior, as a student you should:

- Know that you are expressing hostility and aggression if you try to force or coerce someone to engage in sex.
- Accept the other person's decision not to have sexual contact.
- Not assume that because a person is flirtatious that s/he wants to have a sexual relationship.
- Not assume that paying for a date means that the partner owes sexual favors.
- Avoid the use of alcohol and illegal use of drugs.

Protocol for Sex Offense—Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Rape, Sexual Assault, and Stalking—Victims

Immediate Response

The following steps should be taken in any instances of physical or sexual abuse or threats to well-being in any sex offense situation:

- Get to a safe place.
- Try to preserve all physical evidence. In the case of any bodily contact, physical abuse or sexual abuse, do not wash, take a shower, use the toilet, apply medications, or change clothing if possible. If changing clothes is necessary, put all clothing worn at the time of the attack in a paper rather than a plastic bag.
- Contact someone who can be trusted to be with and support you through the decision making, medical treatment, and interviews which will follow. *This is your right.* This might be a close friend, family member, roommate, faculty advisor, etc.
- Get medical attention as soon as possible to assure your physical well-being and to collect important evidence in the event legal action is taken at a later time. It is important to seek immediate and follow-up medical attention for several reasons: (1) to assess and treat any physical injuries that may have been sustained; (2) to determine the risk of sexually transmitted diseases or pregnancy.
- Contact the Dean of Students to receive psychological and spiritual support. The long-term negative effects of such an incident may be minimized with the help of a trained professional counselor. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.
- When calm, the student should prepare written notes of the incident.

Report the Incident

Students deciding to report incidents should speak to the Dean of Students, who will assist the student in notifying the local police, if requested. A statement will be taken to document what happened, including a description of the assailant(s), and whether or not the assailant(s) was/were known to the victim. Questions will be asked about the scene of the crime,

witnesses, and what happened before and after the incident. These questions are part of a standard investigation. A support person may be present during the interview.

Both reporting and choosing to prosecute an incident are separate steps, and are at the discretion of the victim. When a report is filed there is no obligation to continue with legal proceedings or seminary disciplinary action. Adjudication through the seminary disciplinary system, the criminal justice system, or both is also at the discretion of the victim.

In cases when Michigan law requires the reporting of a crime that has been committed, the Dean of Students, on behalf of the seminary, will provide a written copy of his report to the police. Victims considering filing a criminal complaint may ask a local police officer to take part in the interview process. Victims may request that their identity be kept confidential until or unless a commitment is expressed to proceed with criminal prosecution.

Seminary Disciplinary Action

A student who has been the victim of a sex offense and is considering seminary action shall arrange to meet with the Dean of Students as described above.

In cases involving alleged sex offense, both the complainant and the accused are entitled to the same opportunities to have an advisor present during a disciplinary proceeding.

Both the complainant and the accused shall be informed of the outcome of the proceeding with respect to the alleged sex offense and sanction, if any, of the accused. NOTE: Compliance with this requirement does not constitute a violation of FERPA.

A student who is the victim of a sex offense has several options with regard to how the case is handled. The student may choose to:

- Press criminal charges through the local police department;
- Press charges through both the judicial and seminary disciplinary systems concurrently;
- Press no charges, but request a facilitated meeting with the assailant to discuss the incident;
- Press no charges, but have the Dean of Students discuss the incident with the assailant.

If the student chooses to participate in the seminary adjudication process, s/he must contact the Dean of Students. Charges may be filed directly by the complainant or by the seminary on the basis of the complainant's written statement. Such charges are handled in accordance with

the seminary's Grievance Policy. The outcome of cases charging sex offense will be made known to both the complainant and the accused.

At the complainant's request, the Dean of Students will make special provisions for alternate campus housing or campus employment, if applicable.

At the complainant's request, the Vice President of Academic Affairs will instruct the Registrar to effect changes in the complainant's academic schedule such as:

- Change of classes;
- Change of academic adviser;
- Extension on assigned quizzes, papers, or exams;
- Approval to take the course elsewhere and transfer credit back to the seminary;
- Independent study with a different professor and with fee waived;
- Other special support, provided as appropriate upon request.

Disciplinary Procedures

The following sanctions may be imposed following a final determination of the seminary's disciplinary proceeding regarding sex offenses.

Disciplinary Dismissal: In extreme situations, students may be dismissed from the seminary for serious and/or repeated violations. A student dismissed for disciplinary reasons may be prohibited from visiting on campus or attending seminary functions. In such a case, after one year, the student may submit a written request to the Dean of Students requesting permission to visit on campus. To gain reentrance to the seminary, such students must follow regular admission procedures.

Disciplinary, Permanent Expulsion: In very extreme cases, a student may be permanently expelled from the seminary. A student who has been expelled may not apply for readmission or return to the campus for any reason. Expulsion requires approval of the President.

If the student is dismissed or expelled, the church where is a member and the church where he may be interning, must be informed by the seminary's Disciplinary Committee.

If the student wishes to dispute the alleged charges, the student shall arrange to meet with the Dean of Students to resolve the disagreement.

Appeals Process

Following a disciplinary decision, a student has a right to appeal the disciplinary action. Appeal requests must be made in writing within three calendar days after receipt of the written decision, and must state the basis for the appeal. Appeals are considered when the student believes one or more of the following conditions exist:

- The discipline imposed is disproportionate to the offense (including consideration of the student's prior offenses or willingness to cooperate);
- The student was not accorded his/her rights as outlined in the student handbook and this failure significantly affected the student's right to receive a fair hearing;
- The decision was not supported by sufficient evidence;
- New evidence has become available that would have significantly altered the results.

Written appeals shall be submitted to the Vice President of Academic Affairs with a copy to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will be invited to submit a response to the appeal. Imposition of discipline may be deferred pending the review of the appeal request.

The Vice President of Academic Affairs will provide a written determination to the student within five days. At this point, if the student feels he has been treated wrongfully, the student has the right to appeal to Puritan Reformed's Board of Trustees. If the student still feels he has been treated wrongfully, the student has the right to appeal to Deputies of Article 49 of the Heritage Reformed denomination's Synod. If the student still feels he has been treated wrongfully, the student has the right to appeal to the Synod of the Heritage Reformed denomination.

Parental Notifications: The seminary may notify the parents of students under the age of 21 of disciplinary violations, suspensions, or expulsions related to alcohol or controlled substances. In such cases, parents are notified only after appeals have been satisfied.

In student disciplinary matters, the context of individual circumstances is considered when deciding whether or not to contact parents. When possible, students will be given the opportunity and encouraged to discuss the situation with their parents prior to the seminary's notification to them.

Federal Rights

The Federal Campus Sexual Assault Victim's Bill of Rights:

- Survivors shall be notified of their options to notify law enforcement.
- Accuser and accused must have the same opportunity to have others present.

- Both parties shall be informed of the outcome of any disciplinary proceeding.
- Survivors shall be notified of counseling services.
- Survivors shall be notified of options for changing academic and living situations.

The Campus Sexual Assault Victim's Bill of Rights was signed into law by President George W. Bush in July of 1992. This law requires that all colleges and universities (both public and private) participating in federal student aid programs afford sexual assault victims certain basic rights. Schools found to have violated this law can be fined up to \$35,000 or lose their eligibility to participate in federal student aid programs.

III. Academic Policies

Honor Code

A cherished aspect of community life at Puritan Reformed is the honor code. The responsibility for maintaining all aspects of this code lies directly with each member of the community. The honor code is, of course, based upon the entirety of Scripture, but it finds its roots particularly in the eighth and ninth commandments (Exodus 20:15-16) as those commandments are expounded and applied in the Westminster Larger Catechism, Questions 140-145.

The eighth commandment requires that we honor the property of others, whether that property be material possessions or copyrighted ideas. Stealing, destroying, misusing, and even borrowing without permission the property of others are among the sins prohibited by the eighth commandment. Active effort to preserve the property of others, as we would wish our own property to be preserved, is the essential duty required by the eighth commandment.

The ninth commandment requires that we honor the truth. Presenting as our own the ideas of others without full and appropriate documentation, failure to abide by the legitimate directions of our positional superiors without communicating to them what we have done, speaking against another person unfairly, and “speaking the truth unseasonably” are among the sins prohibited by the ninth commandment. Zeal for our neighbor’s as well as our own good name, keeping of all commitments, and a diligence to be exactly what we seem to be are among the duties required by the ninth commandment.

All members of the community are asked and expected so to uphold and protect this honor code that “we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness,” which “is good and pleases God our Savior” (I Timothy 2:2-3).

Consequences for Violation of the Honor Code

The first violation of the Honor Code will be categorized as either serious (willful and intentional and/or large in scope) or non-serious (unintentional and careless and/or small in scope).

A non-serious first violation will result in failure of the assignment or test in question and possibly failure of the course.

A serious first violation will result in failure of the course and suspension from the seminary for one semester. A second violation of any sort will result in failure of the course and either suspension for one year or expulsion.

Plagiarism is an academic crime that is never acceptable. In serious cases, it is a flagrant sin against the eighth and ninth commandments, and the seminary cannot tolerate it in any of its forms.

There is often confusion among students as to what constitutes plagiarism. At its basic level, plagiarism is taking another person's intellectual property and presenting it as if it were one's own. Practically speaking, it usually involves taking basic units of language (words, phrases, sentence, and paragraphs)—or even thoughts and ideas—without properly accounting for them in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations must be indicated by the use of quotation marks and a footnote citation.

It is perhaps easiest to explain with examples. Note the following paragraph taken from Gerald F. DeJong's, *The Dutch Reformed Church in the American Colonies*, Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America No. 5 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 228:

In contrast to some of the English colonies, New Netherland was not founded as a place of refuge for the religiously oppressed, but was established for the specific purpose of extending the Dutch commercial empire. Nevertheless, the religious needs of the settlers were not overlooked. Numerous letters and other documents of this period attest to the fact that the divines in Holland kept a watchful eye on what transpired across the Atlantic and from an early date fostered the Dutch Reformed Church there. By the time New Netherland fell to the English in 1664, eleven Dutch Reformed congregations had been organized on American soil, all but two of which were located in the colony of New York. The conditions confronting the churches were those of the wilderness frontier: communities were generally isolated, living conditions were harsh, ministerial salaries were irregularly paid, and most of the people were of a rough and boorish background. Nevertheless, despite primitive conditions, most of the ministers were well educated and dedicated men.

The following points, including improper and proper examples of citation from the above paragraph, must be understood concerning plagiarism:

Plagiarism includes undocumented copying of whole phrases.

Wrong: "Numerous letters and other documents of this period attest to the fact that the divines in Holland kept a watchful eye on what transpired across the Atlantic and from an early date fostered the Dutch Reformed Church there." (missing footnote and page reference)

Plagiarism includes undocumented copying of the essential substance of a sentence, even though one changes some words.

Wrong: “While the English colonies may have been started as a haven for religiously persecuted people, the Dutch colonies were founded for commercial purposes.”

Right: “As Gerald DeJong argues, unlike their English counterparts, the Dutch colonies were founded for commercial purposes.” (footnote and page reference)

Plagiarism includes copying of a phrase or phrases of another author, even if they are in one’s own sentence.

Wrong: “Dutch theologians did not ignore the developments across the Atlantic, but kept a watchful eye on what transpired in the colonies.”

Right #1: “As Gerald DeJong has documented, Dutch theologians did not ignore the developments across the Atlantic, but followed events in the colonies from afar.” (footnote and page reference)

Right #2: “Dutch theologians did not ignore the developments across the Atlantic, but followed events in the colonies carefully.” (footnote)

Plagiarism does not include repeating things that are common knowledge, which you might find in a dictionary or encyclopedia, and that anyone could have formulated in that specific manner. These things need not be documented, unless you are doing so at length, or you are including definite specifics of your source author. In such a case, you should simply have an opening footnote stating that you are leaning heavily on a particular source.

Right: It is unnecessary to footnote: “New Netherland fell to the English in 1664.”

The best way to avoid unintentional plagiarism is to do your research in a methodical way, making adequate notes of your sources so that ideas do not make their way into your mind without you being able to trace them. Follow this general rule: if in doubt, footnote (although one should take care not to over-document).

In implementing this policy, our school recognizes different degrees of plagiarism, including gross plagiarism and plagiarism by improper citation.

Gross plagiarism consists of the failure to cite a source in the paragraph where its content is used (even if that source is cited elsewhere in the project). This is a significant violation of academic integrity, as it intentionally misrepresents the intellectual property of another writer as one’s own.

Plagiarism by improper citation consists of the failure to follow the principles of right citation given above, though the source is cited in the paragraph where it is used. For example, this occurs when quotation marks are not placed around phrases that are exact quotations of the source. Or, this occurs when the source's content is only slightly changed or paraphrased by replacing certain words instead of being communicated in the student's own words. This is still an academic violation.

Any instance of plagiarism, whether gross plagiarism or plagiarism by improper citation, will result in the student being spoken to by the professor and/or academic dean, and the incident being recorded in the student's permanent record with the seminary.

If it is deemed that the plagiarism is a case of plagiarism by improper citation, the plagiarism does not affect a substantial part of the project (i.e., it is not lengthy), and there is no pattern of repeated and intentional plagiarism on the part of the student, the professor may opt to penalize the plagiarism simply with a grade reduction on the project or by requiring the student to rewrite the project properly.

However, if deemed to be a case of gross plagiarism, or plagiarism that affects a substantial part of the project, or that this case and others show a pattern of repeated plagiarism by the student despite being instructed on this matter, this is a serious offense to be disciplined as follows:

1. First offense: The student receives a failing grade for the project.
2. Second offense: The student receives a failing grade for the project and is suspended for one year. Re-admittance to study at the seminary requires the approval of the president of the seminary in consultation with faculty and the Board of Trustees (BOT).
3. Third offense: The student is expelled from the seminary and will not be permitted to graduate with a degree. Expulsion will proceed as determined by the faculty committee with the president and approved by the BOT.

Scholarship students who withdraw or are expelled as a consequence of plagiarism or any other discipline are required to reimburse the seminary 75% of the total funds received in scholarships.

All cases of plagiarism must be referred to the academic dean, who will then consult with the full-time faculty. Each case will be dealt with individually and may not go exactly according to the above-named steps. In the case of an exceptionally serious offense (blatant, intentional, and lengthy) the first step may be skipped. All second and third offenses—and exceptionally

serious first offenses—of plagiarism will be reported, as decided by the president in consultation with the full-time faculty, to the local church consistory (session or council) of which the student is a member, and to the BOT for any additional action. The president, in consultation with the full-time faculty, is to exercise discretion in this area, and the student retains the right to appeal to the BOT.

Class Attendance

Each student is expected, barring lawful reasons, to attend every class for which he or she is registered.

Excused Absences

Absences caused by illness or other justifiable causes will be permitted to a limited extent; a student should, however, notify the professor as early as possible and request an excused absence.

Unexcused Absences

Students should not accrue more unexcused absences than the number of course credit hours. Should absences endanger the student's performance in class, the instructor will counsel the student. Further absences will normally result in either the reduction of the course grade or expulsion from the course. Unexcused absences may also result in the student being placed on academic probation.

Recorded Lectures

At times, lectures are recorded for the seminary's distance learning program. In exceptional circumstances a student may make up a missed class by way of recorded classes. Students should submit their request to make up a missed class in this way at least 24 hours before the lecture begins. The first such request may be granted at the discretion of the lecturer and Registrar. Subsequent requests and long-term access will be considered by the relevant faculty member and Academic Dean. Students taking classes that are recorded should exercise caution to not produce background sound interference that will affect the recording. Students may not broadcast the lectures via the internet.

Use of Internet During Class

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is committed to fostering a spirit of godly learning in the classroom, where the student's active participation is valued, encouraged, and expected. Puritan Reformed desires that students will grow in the ability to focus attentively on the

intellectual or pastoral task at hand, both for the sake of effective learning and to establish patterns for faithful ministry. In light of this, Puritan Reformed does not allow student use of the internet on computers, smart phones, or other connective devices during class meetings. Make note to turn ringer off in class. The only exception is upon a professor's invitation to students to go online for the sake of classroom process. This expectation is not meant to disparage the value of electronic media in the life of the church, or in promoting evangelization, but to affirm the importance of diligence in the classroom for the sake of wise and respectful ministerial formation. Faculty members and the dean of students are asked to challenge students to attend to this standard and to consider seriously the quality of their attention and careful use of classroom time and instruction.

Drop-Add Policy

A student is able to drop or add a course within an established "grace" period as set in the academic calendar. After the drop/add deadline, a student may no longer enroll in a course. If a student drops a course within this period, the dropped course does not appear on the student's transcript. The drop/add deadlines are as follows:

- for fall, winter, spring, and summer semesters – 7 days after the start of each semester. These deadlines will be noted in the academic calendar.
- for all independent studies – 7 days after enrollment date.
- for all modular courses – first day of course (a student adding a modular class must attend the first day of that class)

The student should be aware of the tuition refund concerning dropped/ withdrawn courses as established in the following section.

Tuition Refund for Dropped/Withdrawn Courses

A student dropping or withdrawing from an individual course may receive the following refund on tuition:

For traditional semester-length courses:

- Within two weeks, an 80% refund is granted
- Within four weeks, a 60% refund is granted
- Within six weeks, a 50% refund is granted
- After six weeks, no refund is granted.

For modular or intensive courses:

- 4 weeks or more prior to the first day, an 80% refund is granted
- 3 weeks or more prior to the first day, a 60% refund is granted
- 2 weeks or more prior to the first day, a 50% refund is granted
- Within two weeks of the first day, no refund is granted.

Notification of a dropped or withdrawn course should be provided by submitting a written statement to this effect (email is fine) to the seminary registrar; consent of the academic dean is also required. Withdrawal under any other circumstance or withdrawal after the withdrawal deadline will result in a failing grade “F” for the course. Exceptions will apply only if approved by the academic dean or registrar.

For scholarship students, the above drop/add policy applies. For students in the Veteran program, the refund percentage will be prorated according to the specifications given in the following section.

Unpaid Tuition

Students with unpaid tuition may not be able to register for additional classes until tuition has been paid or an approved payment plan is in place. Failure to adhere to an established payment plan will be considered a breach of contract.

In addition, graduating students will not be provided with a diploma or a transcript until all tuition is paid in full.

Withdrawal from the Seminary

A student planning to withdraw from the seminary should report this to the Registrar and Academic Dean, and is responsible for unpaid bills to the seminary and the bookstore. Should such a student desire to return to the seminary within one academic year of withdrawing, he should notify the Registrar and normally need not reapply. Students who withdraw from the seminary may receive the refund on their tuition as detailed above.

Probationary Status Policy

Upon Admission (based on undergraduate work)

Admitted students without an undergraduate GPA of 2.3 (C+) are placed on academic probation and must have their probation lifted before the end of their second semester. Ordinarily, probationary students will be required to reduce their academic load if still on probation after

the first semester. The lifting of probationary status is a decision made by the Academic Dean on an individual basis.

The following regulations and procedures also relate to the probationary student:

- The acceptance letter sent to a student admitted on probation will strongly advise him to take four years to complete his academic program for the MDiv degree.
- The faculty committee will strongly advise a probationary student to limit the number of hours he/she spends in outside work to a maximum of 15 hours/week.
- A probationary student is required to discuss the matter of outside workload with a faculty counselor during the first month of the first academic semester. This discussion is to be initiated by the student.
- Wherever possible the admissions committee will include a period of supervised tutoring in the program of a probationary student before making a final decision to allow him/her to continue his/her studies at the seminary.

During Program (based on seminary work)

At the end of each academic term, a student who fails to maintain the minimum GPA for his or her program (MDiv/MABC = 2.3; MA = 2.7; ThM/DMin = 3.0; PhD = 3.5) will receive a notification from the registrar warning the student of the drop in performance, even if the student's cumulative GPA meets the minimum requirement. The student should take this warning seriously and endeavor to raise his or her average to acceptable standards during the following term. A student whose GPA falls below the minimum requirements for graduation will be placed on academic probation and will be given two semesters to raise his or her average to the minimum, or to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the registrar and academic dean that significant progress is being made to raise the average to the minimum standard. If sufficient progress is not made, the student will be terminated from the program. Funding sources such as the US Department of Veterans Affairs, church support, and the guaranteed student loan program will be promptly notified when a student receiving funds is terminated from a program.

Auditing Courses

Prospective students who wish to audit a class must first submit an online application as a visiting student; instructions regarding this mini-application can be obtained from the registrar. Regular students may audit a class provided there is sufficient room in the classroom. Classes may be audited at the cost of \$60 per credit hour for all courses.

Students who have taken a course which they subsequently wish to audit, may do so free of charge providing there is sufficient room in the class and permission is granted by the instructor.

ThM students may audit an MDiv/MA level class for free with appropriate permission from the instructor of the course. Free classes may not be enrolled online; ThM students are encouraged to meet with the registrar to enroll in these classes.

Transfer of Credits

A student seeking transfer credit on the basis of master's-level course work pursued at another institution should present to the registrar prior to registration an official transcript of the previous work, syllabi of the applicable courses, and a catalog from the other institution containing course descriptions of the work for which credit is requested. After confirming equivalency of course status with the appropriate professor of the relevant course(s), credit may be granted by the registrar for up to 50 per cent of the program being completed. No credit will be given for coursework completed at the bachelor's level, though language courses may be waived under certain conditions. In the event that courses completed at the bachelor's level clearly duplicate courses prescribed in the student's degree program at Puritan Reformed, permission may be given to substitute other equivalent courses. Such substitutions do not reduce the total number of credits required for the completion of the student's degree program.

Grading System

Education programs at Puritan Reformed employ a common set of marks to indicate student's achievement in a course. The following criteria are used in assigning a final grade:

- A: Excellent; superior achievement of course objectives
- B: Good; commendable achievement of course objectives
- C: Acceptable; adequate achievement of course objectives
- D: Poor; marginal achievement of course objectives
- F: Failure to advance in the course to the extent necessary for credit to be given
- W: Withdrawal; official permission granted to withdraw from the course after the final date for dropping the course
- P: Satisfactory or pass; adequate achievement of course objectives, but no grade points given
- U: Unsatisfactory; insufficient achievement of course objectives
- AU: Audit; no grade points given

I: Incomplete; a temporary extension

Grades have been assigned the following numerical values for the purpose of computing the grade point average:

Percent	Grade	Grade Points
95-100	A	4.0
91-94	A-	3.7
88-90	B+	3.3
84-87	B	3.0
81-83	B-	2.7
78-80	C+	2.3
74-77	C	2.0
71-73	C-	1.7
68-70	D+	1.3
64-67	D	1.0
61-63	D-	0.7
0-60	F	0.0

Grade points per subject are determined by multiplying the grade points assigned to the letter grade earned with the number of credit hours assigned to the course. A student’s semester and cumulative grade-point average are computed by dividing the total grade points earned with the number of attempted hours.

Retake Policy

In a course in which a student has received a failing grade, permission may be granted by the professor to take a re-examination or resubmit an assignment of sufficient quality to raise the grade to an F/D. Such work must be completed within one month after notification of the failing grade. If the grade is raised to an F/D, the student receives credit for the course but receives a 0.0 GPA for the course.

Students are permitted to repeat a course in which a grade was earned. When a course with an earned grade of an “F” is repeated, both the failing and second grade figure into the cumulative grade-point average. If a student repeats a course that has been passed, both grades will be shown on the transcript, but only the first grade will factor into the student’s GPA.

Late Submission of Course Assignments

All theses, papers, reports on assigned readings, or other special assignments must be submitted on or before the date set by the professor in charge. In special circumstances, however, a student may request an incomplete (I), provided that this is agreeable to the professor of the course. The incomplete will be removed from the transcript upon completion of the course providing it is within the time frame as expressed in the “Policy for Incompletes.”

Each instructor may deal with late assignments as he sees fit. The standard procedure, however, is that for every day late the student will be penalized by a drop of 0.7 grade points (thus, two days late would reduce the grade by 1.4 grade points, or for example, reduce the grade from an A- to a C+).

A student cannot submit the same or similar assignments for more than one requirement at the seminary, unless the instructor explicitly approves this. Neither can a student use work done for another institution (e.g., undergraduate work) to fulfill assignments in courses at the seminary. If you have questions about a possible overlap of work, please check with your instructor.

Policy for Incompletes

Students who make an incomplete (I) are required to make up or complete their work by the mid-term point of the following semester. If the work is not completed by the required deadline, the “I” will be changed to “F.” A student who makes up his work within the required time will receive a grade determined by the instructor. Exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the academic dean and president.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to complete evaluations for each course. Course evaluations must be completed within two weeks of the close of each respective course; they can be completed online through Populi. The student’s grade for the course will be locked until the evaluation is completed.

The evaluations for each course will be collated and submitted anonymously to the instructor, academic dean, president, and Board of Trustees. Please bear in mind that course evaluations are taken seriously by the faculty and board; they should therefore be completed in a professional manner. They are not, however, an opportunity to air grudges or refer to specific instances in class in which you were disappointed or offended. References to specific situations leave the Board of Trustees somewhat confused, not knowing the context of a statement or situation. Such situations should be handled at the time they occur, according to Matthew 18.

Offensive or unduly harsh comments may be excised from evaluations by the seminary registrar in consultation with the academic dean.

Advising Sessions

Each incoming student will be assigned an academic advisor who shall meet with the student regularly to give advice on various matters, including which courses the student should be taking each semester in order to complete the program requirements. A student should also notify the dean of students and/or the academic dean of any issues or difficulties that are hindering his academic progress.

Course Conflicts

Each semester the class schedules are set, bearing in mind the various demands of the students and instructors, as well as the limitations of our institution. If a student must take required courses through distance education courses, efforts will be made to accommodate this as much as is possible. The student should, however, adjust any non-essential element of their schedule to fit the course schedule.

Grade Reports and Appeals

Every student has access to an unofficial copy of his or her transcript through Populi, the seminary's online student management system. Any discrepancy between the transcript and the student's personal record must be brought to the attention of the seminary registrar. Students have a period of six months from the final date of the semester to appeal any grade recorded on their transcript within that same semester. After this six-month period, grades will be considered final.

Transcript

An official transcript for your files or for another academic institution may be requested from the registrar.

Distance Education Courses

In order to complete a program in a timely manner, a student may find it necessary to complete courses via distance learning or independent study. When taken for credit, distance education courses are charged regular tuition rates, with the addition of a \$75 non-refundable distance education fee. The student is responsible for contacting the Registrar or DE assistant assigned for the course for any course packet, assignment, or exams. Students should make an effort to finish independent studies during the semester in which they are taken.

Policy for Addressing the Academic Needs of Students with Disabilities

Puritan Reformed is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified students with disabilities. It has formulated this policy for addressing the educational needs of students with disabilities.

The purpose of this policy is two-fold. First, the seminary aims to provide assurance that all reasonable measures will be taken by the seminary to provide an equal opportunity for students with disabilities to study and thrive at Puritan Reformed in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Second, this document serves as a guide for faculty, administration and staff in reasonably accommodating and serving students with disabilities within the seminary community.

Federal and state law prohibit Puritan Reformed from discriminating against otherwise qualified students with disabilities.

As defined by the law, “disability” is used to refer to a person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such an individual (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

Reasonable accommodation will refer to measures taken in the form of modification or adjustment to ensure that an otherwise qualified student has full and equal access to seminary sponsored programs. Accommodation will vary depending on the class or activity and on the needs of the individual. The goal will be to accommodate the student and establish equity without giving unfair advantage. Accommodation measures must not alter the material or challenge the integrity of the course, the material it is designed to impart, or the skills it wishes to evaluate. The measures are intended to be effective, and reasonable, but may not be exactly as the student wishes or requests.

Student Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the individual student to make any and all needs known to the seminary as well as to their individual professors. As stated in the acceptance letter from the Admission Office, students must submit written documentation, including evaluation of their disability, to the Dean of Students at least two months prior to matriculation.

After the documentation of the disability has been received and reviewed, measures for accommodation will be proposed by the Dean of Students in writing. The student must then provide permission for letters of notification to be sent to his or her instructors. Instructors should review the proposed accommodations. Concerns or objections regarding the proposed accommodations should be brought to the Dean of Students.

Faculty and Staff Responsibility

Faculty and staff are advised to only make accommodations for students who have taken the proper measures to bring their requests or concerns through the appropriate channels. Initiation of proposed accommodations will begin with the Dean of Students. After the student's documentation of the disability has been reviewed and accommodations proposed, a letter of notification will be sent to the student's professors for that term at the student's agreement and request. Students will then be encouraged to introduce themselves to their professors and to discuss the practical application of the proposed measures. Concerns or objections regarding the proposed accommodations should be brought to the Dean of Students especially if the faculty or staff member has reservations about potential unfair advantage to the student or the alteration of course material or curriculum objectives.

Suggestions for Practical Application of This Policy

The following is taken from the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations regarding examinations and courses (28 C.F.R. §36.309).

General

Any private entity that offers examinations or courses related to applications, licensing, certification, or credentialing for secondary or postsecondary education, professional, or trade purposes shall offer such examinations or courses in a place and manner accessible to persons with disabilities or offer alternative accessible arrangements for such individuals.

Examinations

Any private entity offering an examination covered by this section must assure that:

- The examination is selected and administered so as to best ensure that, when the examination is administered to an individual with a disability that impairs sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the examination results accurately reflect the individual's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factor the examination purports to measure, rather than reflecting the individual's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where those skills are the factors that the examination purports to measure);

- An examination that is designed for individuals with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills is offered at equally convenient locations, as often, and in as timely a manner as are other examinations; and
- The examination is administered in facilities that are accessible to individuals with disabilities or alternative accessible arrangements are made.

Required modifications to an examination may include changes in the length of time permitted for completion of the examination and adaptation of the manner in which the examination is given.

A private entity offering an examination covered by this section shall provide appropriate auxiliary aids for persons with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, unless that private entity can demonstrate that offering a particular auxiliary aid would fundamentally alter the measurement of the skills or knowledge the examination is intended to test or would result in an undue burden. Auxiliary aids and services required by this section may include taped examinations, interpreters or other effective methods of making orally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments, Brailled or large print examinations and answer sheets or qualified readers for individuals with visual impairments or learning disabilities, transcribers for individuals with manual impairments, and other similar services and actions.

Alternative accessible arrangements may include, for example, provision of an examination at an individual's home with a proctor if accessible facilities or equipment are unavailable. Alternative arrangements must provide comparable conditions to those provided for nondisabled individuals.

Courses

Any private entity that offers a course covered by this section must make such modifications to that course as are necessary to ensure that the place and manner in which the course is given are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Required modifications may include changes in the length of time permitted for the completion of the course, substitution of specific requirements, or adaptation of the manner in which the course is conducted or course materials are distributed.

A private entity that offers a course covered by this section shall provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services for persons with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, unless the private entity can demonstrate that offering a particular auxiliary aid or service would

fundamentally alter the course or would result in an undue burden. Auxiliary aids and services required by this section may include taped texts, interpreters or other effective methods of making orally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments, Brailled or large print texts or qualified readers for individuals with visual impairments and learning disabilities, classroom equipment adapted for use by individuals with manual impairments, and other similar services and actions.

Courses must be administered in facilities that are accessible to individuals with disabilities or alternative accessible arrangements must be made.

Alternative accessible arrangements may include, for example, provision of the course through videotape, cassettes, or prepared notes. Alternative arrangements must provide comparable conditions to those provided for nondisabled individuals.

IV. Additional Policies/Resources

Spiritual Formation

Each student is expected to meet with the dean of students and spiritual formation at least three times during each semester. Puritan Reformed believes that the spiritual wellbeing of the student is critical both for their present study and future ministry. Students must take the initiative to schedule with the dean of students. Students must fill out a questionnaire (available on Populi) before coming for their first visit. For all spiritual, family, and personal concerns, our dean is available to help and assist you in any way he can.

Procedure for Dismissal of Student for Habitually Unbecoming Behavior

Puritan Reformed seeks to shape students in academics and in character, in which, upon graduation, students would exhibit a deep love for the triune God, His Word, His truth and His Church and an increasingly Christ-like humility in relation to others.

While the Honor Code policy addresses academic violations, this policy outlines the procedure for addressing obvious character and spiritual violations—issues that are habitually unbecoming of one preparing to be a leader of Christ’s flock. The goal of this disciplinary process is the restoration and well-being of the student, the preservation of Christ’s name, and upholding the integrity and reputation of the seminary.

Student conduct is under the supervision of the Dean of Students. The institution reserves the right to dismiss from the institution a student whose conduct is found to be unsatisfactory. Such conduct includes serious breaches of moral behavior or ethical standards.

Analogous to Matthew 18, the Dean of Students will speak to the student about their present circumstances as the first step of intervention. This initial investigation will determine a course of action to assist in correcting the problem including, but not limited to, offering counsel, soliciting advice from additional seminary faculty/staff, and communication with the student’s church(es).

If the student persists in unbiblical conduct, the Dean of Students will actively seek to work with the local congregation where the student is a member/attending and the elder(s)/pastor(s) who have spiritual oversight over the student.

If the student persists in unbiblical conduct and ignores the recommendations of his local church and the recommendations of the seminary, the Dean of Students will present a report to the Disciplinary Committee, and the student may be withdrawn from the institution.

If events warrant administrative withdrawal, the Dean of Students will present a report to the President. The student will be administratively withdrawn and any scholarships would immediately be revoked. In the case of international students, they and their families must return to their home country within 14 days, as stipulated by the federal government (see NAFSA 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(f) (5) (iv)).

Conflicts with other students should be brought to the dean of student's attention if a resolution cannot be reached.

Student Grievances

Purpose

In providing the procedure for students to lodge a complaint regarding issues at Puritan Reformed, the seminary's desire is for students to know they have a voice on the peer level as well as the institutional level. The general guidelines will follow the biblical mandates given in Matthew 18 as to how to process concerns personally and corporately.

Context

In two primary contexts in the seminary are complaints lodged. One is the area of academic and/or administrative concerns. In this context, policies and procedures that deal with academic concerns and financial issues will be addressed.

The second context has more to do with things that involve the community as a whole. This context would include attitudes and actions that affect individuals or groups within the campus community. Code of conduct issues are used in responding to grievances expressed within the second context.

Academic Grievance Policy

An academic appeals process exists to resolve any academic problem that cannot otherwise be settled in a biblical manner and assures fairness to all parties concerned.

The student should first go to the professor and/or Academic Dean to express concern. If a third party is necessary, the Dean of Students is available to assist.

If the issue is still unresolved, the student should submit a written appeal to the Academic Dean regarding the issue. Depending on the issue, the Academic Dean may request input from the Faculty. The Academic Dean will render a written decision.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision, then the student may submit a subsequent written appeal to the President requesting a hearing. The President in consultation with the Academic Dean and Faculty Moderator may or may not grant the request. If granted, the President will appoint an *ad hoc* committee of faculty to hear the case. This committee is authorized to meet with any or all concerned parties to resolve the issue and will render a written decision concerning the case.

The decision of the President or the *ad hoc* committee is considered final, subject only to review by the Board to affirm that the appeals process was properly observed.

Non-Academic Grievance Policy

Guidelines

For all general grievances not covered under other campus policies, a similar process outlined above is to be followed in the non-academic realm:

- Go to the person or parties and express the concern.
- If the issue is still unresolved, the student should submit a written appeal to the Dean of Students regarding the issue.
- If the student is not satisfied with the decision, then the student may submit a subsequent written appeal to the President requesting a hearing. If granted, the President will appoint an *ad hoc* committee of faculty to hear the case. This committee is authorized to meet with any or all concerned parties to resolve the issue and will render a written decision concerning the case.
- The decision of the President or the *ad hoc* committee is considered final, subject only to review by the Board to affirm that the appeals process was properly observed.

Conflict Resolution and Appeal Procedure

In recognition of the fact that conflicts within the seminary community can arise, it is to the glory of God and to the benefit of all involved that these conflicts be resolved in a manner that reflects the principles of procedural fairness.

The persons involved in a conflict should do their utmost to resolve the matter. Their objective is to glorify God and seek peace with each other. In order to do this there must be the

willingness to address each other, to listen to each other, to admit one’s own faults, to forgive, and to work towards reconciliation.

If the conflict cannot be resolved in this way, help by a third party may be necessary. If this does not have the desired result and the conflict cannot be resolved, there is the opportunity to appeal. The appeal procedure depends on the nature of the conflict and the persons involved.

For appeals involving allegations about life and conduct, and/or sexual harassment, refer to the following table. For academic appeals, refer to the relevant section in the Student Handbook, as well as the following table.

Parties in conflict	Appellant May Contact	If Not Resolved appellant may contact	If Not Resolved appellant may contact	If Not Resolved appellant may contact
Students or student/faculty	Dean of Students	Seminary Executive ¹	Board Executive	Board of Trustees
Student/Staff	Dean of Students	Seminary Executive	Board Executive	Board of Trustees
Staff/Faculty	Dean of Students	Seminary Executive	Board Executive	Board of Trustees
Staff/President	Dean of Students	Academic Dean	Board Executive	Board of Trustees
		Director of Operations		
Faculty Members	Seminary Executive	Board Executive	Board of Trustees	Synod
Faculty/President	Academic Dean	Board Executive	Board of Trustees	Synod
	Director of Operations			

¹ Seminary Executive is comprised of the President, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Vice President for Operations.

Chapel

Chapel is held once a week during the regular semester. Faculty and invited speakers lead in prayer and give a short meditation aimed at concerns which may benefit the students in particular. The message, prayer, and singing should not take longer than 25-30 minutes. It is followed by an additional 30 minutes of announcements and fellowship and prayer. Full-time students are expected to attend chapel; part-time students should attend as enabled. Please contact the dean of students if you are unable to attend. Resident students receiving Puritan Reformed scholarships are obliged to attend chapel.

Student Orientation

An orientation for new students is held at the beginning of each academic year. The purpose of the orientation is to introduce new students to the facilities and policies of the seminary. Orientation is mandatory for all new students. Students who matriculate in the spring must attend the next possible student orientation.

Social Media Policy

Consider 1 Peter 2:18, Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 39, and the following points:

- Be aware that your online presence as a student of Puritan Reformed reflects upon the seminary and your sponsoring churches.
- Remember that what you write online may affect future calls to the ministry.
- Do not post details of in-class discussions or out-of-class conversations between you and the professors.
- Be respectful in any references to Puritan Reformed staff, fellow-students, pastors, and churches
- Be clear that you are not speaking as a seminary spokesperson with any news media.

IT User Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all users understand their privileges and responsibilities in relation to the computer, network, and Internet resources provided by the seminary. Use of these resources signifies your understanding of, and agreement to, this policy. Violations of this policy may result in suspension of privileges and/or other disciplinary action. If you have questions or require clarification about any of the provisions of this policy, please contact the Director of Information Systems.

Classrooms

The computer and audio-visual equipment in the classrooms is for faculty use only. Students may only use this equipment as part of a class with faculty supervision.

Network and Internet Resources

Access

Students have access to the Internet through the campus wi-fi system.

Email

Puritan Reformed provides email accounts to students. All official seminary communication is directed to the student email address. Students are expected to read, respond, and archive all official correspondence from the seminary, and to use the student account for all correspondence with seminary offices.

Acceptable Use

All users are expected to use network resources in a manner consistent with civil regulations and laws and biblical standards and in a manner honoring to Christ. Students may not share email or network passwords with anyone, at any time. Chain letters or messages for personal financial gain, promotion, advertising, or commercial activity are prohibited. Messages that contain profane, sexually explicit, or degrading language are prohibited and may be grounds for disciplinary action.

Puritan Reformed expects all students to act appropriately at all times and in a manner consistent with the mission to which God has called the seminary. Actions that are unacceptable in other settings are also unacceptable on seminary resources, including 1) harassment in any form; 2) usage related to pornography and racially derogatory, discriminating, threatening or abusive communication; 3) failure to respect the property and rights of others; 4) forgery or other misrepresentation of one's identity; 5) distribution of any material without the permission of the copyright owner; 6) attempting to gain unauthorized access to any system, on or off campus; 7) sharing email or network username and password with others.

Breaches of this policy could result in penalties up to and including dismissal from enrollment in educational programs.

Speech Lessons

Speech lessons may be obtained through faculty designate. If a student desires or requires speech lessons, initial approval should be attained of the academic dean. Upon approval, the student should contact the faculty designate and inform her/him of the specific needs and the number of anticipated sessions. (This may need to be changed in consultation with the speech instructor.) Contact information will be provided.

Student Writing Assistance

Volunteer and staff assistance is available for students who need writing assistance. Please see the registrar or librarian to make arrangements.

Reformed Theological Research and English Grammar

Every student is required to take the one-credit Reformed Theological Research course in their first semester; this course provides essential direction for meeting the writing objectives of each of our degrees. The course is offered every fall semester. Should a student matriculate in a semester other than the fall, the Reformed Theological Research course must be taken at the next available offering.

In their first semester at Puritan Reformed, every MDiv and MA student (and may be required of some ThM students) will be enrolled in 099 English Grammar & Syntax. This course has a threefold purpose:

- To prepare the student for the original language courses;
- To give the student the skills needed to write well and to analyze their writing;
- To acquaint the student with the Puritan Reformed Style Guide and its requirements for proper citation.

Unless a waiver is granted, this is a required course. Students will be able to test out of the course.

Graduation and Commencement Exercises

A student will be allowed to graduate only after all the program requirements have been met and a graduation checklist form has been completed and submitted to the registrar. Only in rare situations, and with approval of both the academic dean and the president of the seminary, may a student participate in commencement exercises with incomplete coursework. In such cases the student will not be awarded a diploma until all program requirements have been fulfilled.

The date for commencement exercises will typically be the first Friday evening after the last final exam of the spring semester. Seminary regalia will be made available for graduating students.

Puritan Reformed Student Services

All Puritan Reformed students are welcomed into the community with all the privileges of the Puritan Reformed family.

Housing services

The three homes owned by the seminary are designated for student families. The registrar/admissions director assists students with housing arrangements. If necessary, the community makes every attempt to furnish all the basic housing needs for Puritan Reformed students.

Health Services

The seminary does not offer any on-campus health services. Numerous local clinics are accessible for qualifying students. Contact information is in the Ministry Wives Institute handbook. MemberCare, a Christian Healthcare Center, is the recommended first contact for medical needs.

Financial Services

Puritan Reformed offers limited scholarships based on potential for service and demonstrated need. Applications are obtainable from the website. Students are given an account which they can view regarding their obligations to the seminary. Policies for tuition payment and tuition refunds are posted on the seminary website and printed in the Student Handbook.

Community Services

The Puritan Reformed community supports the students with a food pantry for basic grocery needs. Access to thrift shop clothing and other needs is also provided. Local car dealers provide vehicles at cost for those who demonstrate this need.

Academic Services

The registrar guides students who need assistance with scheduling, enrollment, and other academic services. Our Populi student support site is accessible 24/7. Students requiring writing

or speech tutorials are encouraged to contact the registrar for arrangements. These tutorials are free to students with some limitations as to frequency of use.

Spiritual council and advice

Students have access to the Dean of Students and Spiritual Formation with concerns and questions about their spiritual life. The Dean seeks to meet with students at least three times a semester.

Student Rights and Responsibilities are clearly listed and defined in the student handbook. Discipline, should it become necessary, is practiced biblically as outlined in the student handbook (see, for example, the above discussion concerning plagiarism).

Student Society

The Puritan Reformed Student Society is a student-led campus group that exists to enrich Puritan Reformed students' lives while they attend Puritan Reformed. The society has a fourfold mission: to promote Christian growth; to offer Christian fellowship and recreation; to encourage theological reflection; and to foster intellectual development. To accomplish this, the society sponsors spiritual, theological, and intellectual discussions; plans various fellowship and recreational events; and provides opportunities that allow students to take advantage of the rich resources available in the seminary and greater Grand Rapids community. On-campus students are elected to serve on this society. The society is designed to draw the student body closer together through active participation in the events which are separate from the classroom setting.

Ministry Wives Fellowship

Being a pastor's wife is a very important part of ministry. At Puritan Reformed we want to serve you as a whole family and one of our ministries is to reach out to your wives and provide support, helpful topics and encouragement. The Ministry Wives Fellowship has a fourfold mission: to promote personal Christian growth and piety; to equip future pastors' wives for a life of service alongside her husband; to foster fellowship and communion between the wives at Puritan Reformed; and to involve Puritan Reformed students' wives and children in various social events. In order to accomplish this, regular meetings are held in which all students' wives are encouraged to attend. At these meetings various topics are presented which focus upon some aspect of what it means to be a pastors' wife. Time for questions and answers is also provided. The Ministry Wives Fellowship has put together a "Handbook for Seminary Families" which is available at the office. This book is a great resource about very practical issues of living in the Grand Rapids area, shopping, banking, hospitals, etc.

Dress Code

In class, all students are required to wear clothing that reflects the biblical principles of modesty, distinction and appropriate for the activity. We expect that Puritan Reformed students will dress conservatively and not follow the trends of our culture but rather dress in a way that encourages purity and distinction from the world. This also means that dress will reflect the God-ordained difference between male and female. All students are required to wear clothing that is professional. This excludes jeans, shorts, T-shirts, and active wear (sweat pants, hoodies, sneakers, etc.). Female students should dress modestly and inoffensively. Men should wear collared shirts to classes, and a suit for practice preaching. Please remember that how you dress is a matter of respect, for yourself, others, and your future work. Should a student's dress not follow these principles a faculty member and the dean of students will address the student about their dress.

Interaction with Staff/Faculty

Students should take care to maintain a professional, kind, and circumspect demeanor around everyone in the seminary, including the seminary and bookstore staff. Students should allow staff to concentrate on their work and refrain from unnecessary or prolonged conversations. The seminary staff's chief responsibility is to assist the student in academic matters. Students should, however, take care not to overburden them with tasks they are not required to do (photocopy, check out books, proofread papers, etc.), unless specifically instructed to do so by faculty. Students should see faculty in their offices by appointment or during their office hours, unless specified otherwise by the individual faculty member.

Etiquette

The seminary recommends that students know the etiquette of North American society and culture, as well as that of other societies and cultures. Paul affirms the minister is not to give "offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed" (2 Cor. 6:3). Students are urged to practice punctuality, gratitude, and helpfulness.

Student Forms

Consent to Release Form

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended, it is necessary for Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary officials to require written consent from a student prior to releasing information from the student's educational record to most sources outside the seminary. An educational record is defined as "any record directly related to students and are maintained as official working files by the seminary."

PART A

Sign this portion of the form **ONLY** if you want the named individual(s) to be authorized to inquire about your educational record on your behalf. All student requests for consent will be accommodated.

I, _____ Date _____

hereby consent to the release by Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary of educational record information as specified below.

TYPES OF RECORDS TO BE RELEASED:

___ All educational records

___ Specific records listed below:

___ Admissions

___ Business Office (Accounts Receivable)

___ Puritan Learning Center

___ Registrar

Center

___ Dean of Students: ___ Student Financial Services

PARTIES TO WHOM SUCH RECORDS MAY BE RELEASED:

1. _____
 Name Relationship

2. _____
 Name Relationship

Student

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PART B

Sign this portion of the form **ONLY** if you desire to reverse consent previously submitted.

- Yes, please void** consent as previously requested.

Last Name _____ First Name _____ M.I.

ID# _____ Date _____

Student

Signature: _____

Please return form to the Registrar’s Office, Fax 616.855-5740, or send to: admissions@prts.edu or Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary – Registrar’s Office – 2965 Leonard Street, NE, Grand Rapids MI 49525

Office Use Only:

- Data entry Date: _____ Dept: _____
- File form in student file

Directory Information Restriction/Release Request

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended, it is necessary for Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary officials to obtain written consent from a student prior to releasing information from the student's educational record to most sources outside the seminary.

FERPA policy allows the release of directory information.

Directory information as identified by Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary includes:

Name

Dates of Attendance

Address

Degrees Pursued

E-Mail Address

Cumulative Credits

Phone Number

As an enrolled student, you have the right to restrict release of Directory Information. Use this form **ONLY** if you do **not** want the above listed information released. All requests must be submitted within the first week of classes of your first semester. This request will remain in effect from the date indicated below until written notification is given to release information. All requests for non-disclosure of directory information will be accommodated. Carefully consider the consequences of your decision to withhold directory information. If you decide that Puritan should not release directory information, all requests for such information from persons or organizations (prospective employers, scholarship opportunities, etc.) not specifically sanctioned by Puritan Reformed and federal regulation will be refused, regardless of the effect on you, and Puritan assumes no liability for honoring the request.

Option A:

Restrict the following information:

All Information Phone Number Degree Cumulative Hours

Address Birth Information

E-Mail Degrees Photo

Option B:

___ **Release** Current restrictions as previously requested.

Last Name _____ First Name _____ M.I. _____

ID# _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Please return this form to the Registrar's Office, Fax 616-855-5740, or send to:
admissions@prts.edu or Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary – Registrar's
Office – 2965 Leonard Street, NE, Grand Rapids MI 49525

Office Use Only: ___ File form in student's file

