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Section One: Introduction to Theological Field Education

Welcome

Welcome to Palmer Seminary's Theological Field Education (TFE) program! It is our hope that your experiences in TFE will enhance your overall seminary experience and help you to become a more effective servant leader in the church and in the world.

Theological Field Education is the place in the curriculum where academic theory is tested and tried. It is the place where you can be challenged to not only teach and preach your theology, but live it. It is the place where you can develop your gifts, discern your calling, and have the opportunity to be the Body of Christ in the world.

Theological Field Education is what you make it: we challenge you to enter into this process with an open mind and a teachable spirit. The more you “put into” TFE, the more you will gain. It is a life-changing experience for those who dare to embrace it.

So - welcome to TFE. May your experience be a blessing and a challenge, to the glory of God.

Rev. Beth Congdon-Martin, Director, Supervised Ministries Affiliate Faculty
Administrative Leadership Team 484-384-2958 econgdon@eastern.edu

Rev. Dr. Marsha Brown Woodard, Lecturer
Administrative Leadership Team 484-384-2958 mwoodard@eastern.edu

Mrs. Lindsey Plant Perry, Coordinator
lperry@eastern.edu 484-384-2959

Rev. Phaedra Blocker, Affiliate Faculty
pblocker@eastern.edu

Rev. Dr. Andrew Foster, III, Adjunct Faculty
afoster2@eastern.edu

Rev. Dr. Peter Wool, Affiliate Faculty
pwool@eastern.edu
**Purpose**

"The Whole Gospel for the Whole World through Whole Persons", Palmer Theological Seminary’s motto, calls us to understand the broad purpose of theological education: providing supervised experience in ministry to prepare the whole person to respond to the Gospel imperative to meet the varied challenges of our changing world.

Palmer Theological Seminary’s understanding is that TFE is an integral part of Seminary training. Using an action/reflection style of learning, Seminarians are enabled to test their vocational calling, utilize persons and events as sources of theological and ministry learning, and integrate theory with practice. Theological Field Education provides a grounding of students’ seminary training in ministry experience, enabling the development of professional competency and confidence in ministerial identity and authority.

We are preparing students for the wider church. TFE is an opportunity to experience a variety of ministry settings.

**Who We Are**

Palmer Seminary has vested Supervised Ministries with responsibility for these programs: Theological Field Education (TFE), Clinical Pastoral Care (CPC), Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), and Placement Information. TFE is our largest program. Please feel free to visit us online or call to receive information about our programs.

**Curriculum Options for Student Internships**

Palmer students have several options to complete their ministry and clinical internship requirements for the M.Div. degree. This may not apply for students who matriculated at Palmer before Fall 2011.

**Option 1:**
- TFE 1A & 1B (SUPV520 & 521) at Level 2, earning 2 credits
- TFE 2A & 2B (SUPV530 & 531) at Level 3, earning 2 credits
- CPC (SUPV522) at Level 2 or 3, earning 2 credits

**Option 2:**
- TFE 1A & 1B (SUPV520 & 521) at Level 2, earning 2 credits
- TFE 2A & 2B (SUPV530 & 531) at Level 3, earning 2 credits
- CPE (SUPV532) at Level 2 or 3, earning 2 credits
- for ½ Unit of CPE

**Option 3:**
- CPE (SUPV532) recommended at Level 2, earning 4 credits
- for 1 Unit of CPE
- TFE 1A & 1B (SUPV520 & 521) at Level 2 or 3, earning 2 credits

**Student Readiness for TFE**

**Prerequisites** for TFE 1A & 1B are as follows:
- Minimum 20 units completed
- CM502 Intro to Pastoral Care or CM522 Holistic Habits for Ministry or PRMN510 Foundations of Pastoral Care and Counseling
- INT501/SFRM510 Spiritual Formation
- CTM501 Systematic Theology I or THLE520 Systematic Theology and Ethics: Vision of Community (may be taken concurrently and must be successfully completed in the fall semester of the TFE year in order to continue in TFE)

Prerequisites for 2A & 2B are as follows:
- Minimum 40 units completed
- CM507/508 Middler Theological Field Education or SUPV 520/521 TFE 1A & 1B completed

Entrance to the TFE program is singular, in September of each year.

**Academic Requirements and PTS Policies**

TFE requirements are based on the academic policies and procedures of PTS, with adaptations made for the contextual education component that is also required.

Faculty has mandated that no student shall be waived from Theological Field Education. The amount of reading and written material required for successful completion of TFE 1A & 1B and TFE 2A & 2B meet the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and Palmer Theological Seminary standards required for granting one-unit of credit per semester.

Given the participatory nature of TFE, attendance in the TFE seminar group is mandatory. Small group dynamics are impacted by absences; therefore, students are expected to attend all classes. Work cannot be made up outside of class. Students are expected to arrive on time and to remain for the duration of the class. Tardiness of ten minutes or more for any three seminars will constitute one absence. Students are allowed no more than two excused absences for each semester. Therefore, students are strongly encouraged to restrict absences for emergency needs only. Collegiality and confidentiality are essential to the effectiveness of the seminar group formation.

Extensions given for written work must follow the guidelines in the PTS Student Handbook (Policy on Incomplete Coursework/Requests for Extensions). The Supervised Ministries Administrative Leadership Team represents the faculty in this case. No exceptions to the printed guidelines will be accepted.

A failure to comply with the requirements of the course will result in a designation of "No Credit" for the course. Theological Field Education courses are required for graduation with the M. Div. degree. The successful completion of both semesters is required to earn credit for each.

All correspondence concerning TFE will be forwarded to students via "eastern.edu" accounts.

Any Seminary forms that require an official TFE signature (e.g. Verification form), must come from the Supervised Ministries' Office.
**PTS International Student Policy**

The Primary Designated School Official (DSO) for Palmer Theological Seminary is the Director of International Student and Scholar Services for all of Eastern University, whose office is located on the St. Davids campus. There is also a DSO with signature authority in the Palmer Admissions Office. International students on an F-1 visa must have curricular practical training (CPT) authorization added to their I-20 when starting TFE or CPE. For questions about international student policy or to request CPT authorization, please contact:

Rev. Kathy Kautz de Arango, Director of International Student and Scholar Services, Phone: 610.341.5870  E-mail: kkautz2@eastern.edu

**Theological Field Education Structure**

Partners in Theological Field Education include the ministry site, Site Team, Pastor/Mentor and Supervised Ministries teaching faculty and staff. In addition, students are part of a weekly Seminar Group. Definitions of these terms may be found in the Glossary of the TFE Handbook.

The following represents the interwoven relationships among the various TFE partners:

Weekly seminar groups are formed through the Supervised Ministries Office (SMO) with the intention of creating diverse groups. Students who are being mentored in the same TFE Ministry Site must attend different weekly Seminar groups. Students are responsible for notifying the SMO immediately if they are placed in a group that has an intern serving in the same TFE Ministry Site. In most cases, this will result in a change in the group membership. The Supervised Ministries office is responsible for addressing any student concerns about the Seminar group.
The Theological Field Education Policies

Policies for TFE are established within the Supervised Ministries department and are in alignment with the academic policies and procedures of Palmer Seminary. Adaptations are made for the contextual education component that is required.

Attendance

Given the participatory nature of TFE, attendance in the TFE seminar group is mandatory. Small group dynamics are impacted by absences; therefore, students are expected to attend all classes. Work cannot be made up outside of class. Students are expected to arrive on time and to remain for the duration of the class. Tardiness of ten minutes or more for any three seminars will constitute one absence. Students are allowed no more than two excused absences for each semester. Therefore, students are strongly encouraged to restrict absences for emergency needs only.

Consultation with the Supervised Ministries Office

Students with issues related to their ministry site placement and its continuation, relationship to their Pastor/Mentor, absences from class and other concerns related to the structure of the internship and its grading should contact staff members of the Supervised Ministries Office.

Code of Ethics

It is expected that all the participants in Theological Field Education (Seminarian, Pastor/Mentor, Site Team, Supervised Ministries' staff and TFE faculty) be committed to the standards of ethics of the Christian church, which promotes the dignity and worth of all persons. We are accountable for our ministry as expressed in relationship to parishioners, clients, members of the community, Seminarians, Pastor/Mentors, churches, agencies, and the seminary. Commitment to the following standards is expected in Theological Field Education internships.

Avoid discrimination against or refusing pastoral assistance or educational opportunity to anyone on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, age or physical attributes.

Do not engage in any forms of harassment, abusive words, or actions, or exploitative coercion.

In this context, all forms of sexual behavior or harassment by Pastor/Mentor, Seminarian, or parishioner/client within the framework of the pastoral internship are unethical, even when a parishioner or client invites or consents to such behavior. Sexual behavior includes, but is not limited to, seductive speech, gestures and behavior, and physical contact of a sexual nature. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, comments, gestures or physical contacts of a sexual nature.

Confidentiality of the parishioner, client, and Seminarian is expected. Records are to be kept in a manner that assures security. Communication from Seminarian, parishioners and
Pastor/Mentor are treated with professional confidence. Confidences are not disclosed except:

- as mandated by law
- to prevent a clear and immediate danger to someone
- for purposes of supervision or consultation, or
- by previously obtained written permission.

Pastor/Mentors, Supervised Ministries' staff and TFE faculty do not engage in ongoing psychological counseling with Supervised Ministries' students.

Seminarians engage in ministry appropriate to their level of training and within the boundaries of their serving/learning covenants. They are not to engage in professional services beyond their training, level of experience and competence.

Seminarians are also responsible to uphold Conduct and Standards expectations as set forth in the PTS Student Handbook.

Charges of violation of these ethical standards are to be reported to the Administrative Leadership Team, or the Director of Supervised Ministries. In the case of charges filed against the Director, they are to be reported to the Dean of Palmer Theological Seminary for evaluation.

Full Disclosure

Pastor/Mentors are required to offer full disclosure of the Seminarian’s performance and conduct while under their supervision. Disclosure of misconduct will be directed to the Supervised Ministries Director and the Administrative Leadership Team.

Pastor/Mentor Confirmation

Qualifications for Pastor/Mentors of Palmer Seminary students include an earned Masters level degree in theology from an institution accredited by the US Department of Education and a minimum of 2 years of competent parish or professional ministry experience. Pastor/Mentors who are ordained may be accepted into the TFE program at Palmer with 10 years of competent ministry experience in lieu of a Master’s degree. Pastor/Mentors must have completed, or be willing to complete, TFE 700 The Ministry of Supervision - the training event offered by the Seminary every fall (and sometimes spring). The purpose of this training is to clearly communicate the PTS Field Education process and expectations, striving to foster the best first field education experience for all partners. Certification training must be completed within the academic year that the Pastor/Mentor serves in this capacity. Pastor/Mentors will not be considered for a second year of service until they have completed TFE 700. (Also see “Criteria for selecting a Pastor/Mentor” Section 5, Handbook)

Ministry Site Confirmation

The Supervised Ministries Office must approve all TFE ministry site placements for participation in the program. Official notification of non-approval will be communicated to
the ministry setting. All ministry site placements must be fully endorsed by the Pastor/Mentor and, when appropriate, by congregational leadership. In instances where the Pastor/Mentor is off-site, endorsement comes from the ministry site, where the intern serves. Students may complete both levels of TFE in the same site, (except in the case of the Home Church Waiver which is not automatically renewed), but are not required to do so. Students should check with their denomination for other requirements.

**Ministry Site Supervisory Personnel**

No member of the Seminarian’s family may serve as their Pastor/Mentor or serve on the Site Team. Current Palmer Seminarians may not be considered for supervisory positions regardless of years and quality of ministry experience, nor may they serve on Site Teams. Please refer to the section “Pastor/Mentor Confirmation” for further requirements. Non-traditional placements and supervisors will be assessed based upon their graduate education and professional experience equivalent to the M. Div. standard. Theological Reflection, even in a non-traditional placement, is a core educational component of the supervisory experience. Non-traditional placements refer to any site other than the local church.

**Early Termination**

The Seminarian is expected to serve in the same TFE placement for the duration of both fall and spring semesters. As agreed in the Serving Learning Covenant, neither the Seminarian nor the Pastor/Mentor may terminate the TFE ministry site placement without approval of the Supervised Ministries Office. If the internship is terminated by the Seminarian without approval, a grade of “No Credit” may be given to the student for the year. When an internship is terminated, the Office will determine the next step. This may include participation in individual reflection on the circumstances of that departure. This reflection would take place with a staff member of Supervised Ministries for the duration of the academic year. The purpose of this singular work is educational; it is an opportunity for learning from the experience through guided reflection.

**Home Church Policy**

It is the policy of Supervised Ministries that no Seminarian may serve in their Home Church except with the expressed written consent of the Director and Administrative Leadership Team. Approval of one Seminarian’s proposal does not constitute precedent for another Seminarian to obtain approval. Each proposal is treated as unique. Exemption from this policy may be granted under the following conditions and are for one year only (students may reapply for a second year):

A. If the Seminarian gives evidence that he/she is the Senior pastor of the ministry site in consideration.

B. If the Seminarian is not a Senior pastor:
   1. A completed Home Church Waiver Application must be submitted to the Office of Supervised Ministries
2. An interview/meeting between the Seminarian and the Administrative Leadership Team or Director may be required.
3. An interview/meeting between the potential Pastor/Mentor and the Administrative Leadership Team or the Director of Supervised Ministries may be required.

*A Home Church is defined as:
A church of origin, in which the Seminarian acquired membership or devoted a substantial amount of time in fellowship.
or
A church in which the Seminarian has developed a substantial relationship with the congregation either as a layperson or as a part of ministerial leadership.

Applications for a waiver from the Home Church Policy may be obtained in the Supervised Ministry offices. The application and all other supporting materials need to be submitted to the SM Office for review and action. The SM Office will make a decision within two weeks of receipt of the completed waiver application.

Theological Field Education Elective Internship - SUPV650 Information
(Full course syllabus available on the Supervised Ministries website)

Course Description
This elective internship offers the possibility of an intensive serving/learning experience in ministry. Arrangements must be negotiated with and approved by the Supervised Ministries office. The Seminarian may earn up to a total of 7 units in Theological Field Education of which only three may be electives. These 3 units are in addition to the units required of TFE students in the M.Div. degree track.

A total of 3 units may be given.

One unit = 120 - 140 Contact Hours
Two units = 240 - 280 Contact Hours
Three units = 360 - 420 Contact Hours

TFE elective is not an independent study and cannot be taken in lieu of SUPV520/521 (TFE1A & 1B) or SUPV 530/531 (TFE 2A & 2B).

All electives must be pre-approved by the Supervised Ministries Office no later than 30 days prior to the appropriate registration period. Registration forms for TFE electives are in the Supervised Ministries Office. Consultation with your academic advisor is necessary to insure fulfillment of requirements for graduation.

Desired Course Learning Outcomes
1. Develop personal and professional skills through the implementation of the serving/learning covenant
2. Integrate theory, theology and tradition with the practice of ministry
3. Perform with increasing competence in the broader dimensions of ministry
4. Learn appropriate methods of theological reflection on ministry experience
5. Engage in relationships of support and evaluation with peers, supervisor, laity and faculty
6. Develop a philosophy of life-long learning and collegiality
Course Prerequisites (√)

- Minimum 20 units completed
- CM502 Intro to Pastoral Care or CM522 Holistic Habits for Ministry or PRMN510 Foundations of Pastoral Care and Counseling
- INT501/SFRM510 Spiritual Formation
- CTM501 Systematic Theology I or THLE520 Systematic Theology and Ethics Vision of Community

Process Steps (to apply for SUPV650 Elective Credits)

- I have met/consulted with the Supervised Ministries Office. Date: ___________
- I have received, read, and accept the SUPV650 packet, which includes program guidelines and Internship requirements.
- I have submitted my proposal (components outlined below) for approval 30 days prior to the appropriate registration period.

Requirements

1. The Seminarian must submit a proposal to the Supervised Ministries Office including the following information:
   a) Define your learning goals for the internship. (see “Tips for Writing Goals” included in the SUPV650 syllabus)
   b) Diagram your projected time involvement, including contact hours, areas of responsibility, study and preparation.
   c) Submit a comprehensive job description.
   d) Duration of your internship.
   e) Indicate time designated for regular supervision.
   f) A signed letter of agreement from pastor/mentor and related-church or agency.

2. Read and write book critiques for at least two assigned texts recommended by the pastor/mentor due respectively at the 1/3 and 2/3 markers in the internship. These critiques will be read, responded to and returned to the seminarian by the pastor/mentor. (Use the format for Reading Critiques included in the SUPV650 syllabus)

Write 5 Theological Reflection Papers for each unit of credit for this course. Use the format for Reflection Papers included in the SUPV650 syllabus. These papers will be read, responded to by the mentor, and returned to the seminarian. A critical incident report or verbatim may be substituted for the Theological Reflection Paper.

3. Your internship may afford you the opportunity to participate in an interdisciplinary group while serving at your placement site. This component will depend entirely on the particular pastor/mentors and facility. As a part of this interdisciplinary learning you, at times, might be required to attend and participate in selected in-service training or interdisciplinary event.

4. The Administrative Leadership Team of the Department will have the option to assign additional readings and assignments related to the internship experience.

5. Both the pastor/mentor and the seminarian will be required to complete an end-of-the-internship summary. (Use the End-of-Service evaluation forms included in the SUPV650 syllabus).

6. The final grade will be "Credit" or "No-Credit".
7. All requirements for the TFE elective must be completed according to the dates approved in the proposal. Requests for extensions shall be filed with the Department within 2 weeks of the date set for completion in the proposal.

All work must be filed with the Supervised Ministries Office.

[TFE Elective Internship Syllabi and Details are available from Supervised Ministries]

TFE and Technology

Communication:

All correspondence concerning TFE will be forwarded to students via “eastern.edu” accounts.

On-line Learning and Theological Field Education (TFE):

Palmer Theological Seminary courses utilize online learning in a variety of ways. Some courses are taught entirely online while others, such as TFE, are considered to be web-enhanced courses. As a web-enhanced course, we utilize the resources of technology but do not use them as the sole means of instruction.

All Students:

The Handbook is available online as are all of the forms. This makes the Handbook and forms readily available to pastoral interns at www.palmerseminary.edu/current-students/supministries. Once on the Supervised Ministries Homepage click on “Field Education Program”. You can then navigate from section to section. All forms are included and can be downloaded to print. While the assessments (mid- or end of year) are combined in a single form, the questions for each partner are different.

Pastor/Mentors and Site Teams:

The Handbook is available online as are all of the forms. This makes the Handbook readily available to you and your ministry site at www.palmerseminary.edu/current-students/supministries. Once on the Supervised Ministries Homepage click on “Field Education Program”. You can then navigate from section to section. All forms are included and can be downloaded.

Seminar Groups & Blackboard:

Seminar Groups may use Blackboard for discussion, information sharing, assignment tracking, and group announcements. Your group will be identified by your Seminar Leader’s name and level (TFE 1A & 1B or TFE 2A & 2B). You will use the same password that you have received for use with your eastern.edu/myEastern account. Your Seminar Leader will let you know to what extent your group is using Blackboard. TFE assignment forms and program documents are not available on Blackboard, but are instead on the TFE website.

Technical Support:

- For information including tutorials and FAQ about Tech support: http://www.eastern.edu/helpdesk/index.html
- For Academic Computing (Email/Computer Lab/Wireless Access): 484-384-2937 or semis@eastern.edu or Richard White, PC Support Technician and User Support, East Falls, Palmer Theological Seminary, 18th & JFK Academic Computing rwhite@eastern.edu
Glossary

The following glossary for Theological Field Education represents terms useful for all TFE partners.

A. People and Places

Pastoral Intern is the Seminarian enrolled in Theological Field Education. The experience is comprised of supervised ministry and faculty-led weekly seminars. Some seminarians serve in approved ministry sites new to them while others may function within established call to the pastorate.

Ministry Site is the church/agency where Seminarians serve and learn with persons in professional and lay ministry. While recognizing that some Seminarians may serve in full-time pastoral positions, which are year-round, Theological Field Education credit requires a minimum 10-12 hours per week commitment in ministry from September through May. Students must begin placement in an approved setting before September 30. Students may complete both levels of TFE in the same site, (except in the case of the Home Church Waiver which is not automatically renewed), but are not required to do so. Students should check with their denomination for other requirements.

Pastor/Mentor is the professional person in the field who is responsible for guiding and supporting the Seminarian's serving and learning. This person (usually a parish pastor, agency director, denominational leader or chaplain) provides a significant function in the Theological Field Education of the Seminarian. Some serve as mentors to pastoral interns while not practicing ministry in the same site as the intern. We designate these mentors as "Off-Site" Pastor/Mentors. A key requirement of this education is the weekly meeting with the Seminarian for reflection in the supervisory conferences. The Pastor/Mentor must agree with the program's philosophy and participate in its training events. The structure of the supervisory conferences between interns and their mentors may be different for Off-site mentors (see Section 5 for additional information).

Site Team is the lay group that represents the larger church/agency in providing a channel of communication, education, and feedback between Seminarian and congregation or agency in an atmosphere of support, accountability and practice of ministry experience. This group meets 6-8 times throughout the year (monthly) and contributes to the mid-year and final evaluations of the Pastoral Intern.

Seminar Group is the gathering of students that meets weekly at the Seminary for theological reflection upon ministerial experiences for the sake of learning and growing. Written reflection papers/case studies are presented for discussion by students. The seminars are facilitated by TFE faculty.
Theological Field Education Faculty and Staff are the seminary personnel who coordinate and implement the program of Theological Field Education. This includes the Director of Supervised Ministries, the Administrative Leadership Team, the Coordinator, and TFE faculty.

TFE Partners are the Supervised Ministries Office/Palmer, the Pastor/Mentor, the Site Team, and the Pastoral Intern.

B. Common Terms
Guidelines for participation in the program are based upon an assumption that Theological Field Education is central to and concurrent with one's seminary education for maximum benefit and growth.

Serving/Learning Covenant is the basic agreement that defines the relationship between Seminarian and church/agency in light of mutual expectations, commitments, and obligations. The covenant must be negotiated, completed, signed, and submitted to the Supervised Ministries Office by October 15th in order to participate in the program. The covenant is not to be terminated prior to a meeting of the Seminarian, the Pastor/Mentor, the Director or a member of the Administrative Leadership Team of Supervised Ministries and when possible, the Site Team chairperson. The Seminarian and Pastor/Mentor negotiate hours, including holidays and January Term.

Theological Field Education Internship involves a time commitment to the Theological Field Education ministry site of 10 to 12 hours per week.

Financial Remuneration of at least $12.00 - $15.00 per hour is strongly recommended, but it is recognized that some ministry sites are able to offer more and others offer less. While this is only one of the considerations in deciding upon a Theological Field Education site placement, increasing expenses are a concern for Seminarians. We encourage both Seminarians and Pastor/Mentors to think of other benefits that can be given when financial remuneration is not possible. Compensation from internships is taxable income requiring a federal W-2 form. U.S. Department of Justice form I-538 is required for all international students.

Diverse Ministry Experience is desired for each Seminarian. While the church/agency has particular ministry needs, the Seminarian needs to be challenged for professional growth by a full spectrum of ministry opportunities. The church/agency, Pastor/Mentor, and Seminarian need to work together to make this possible.

Theological Reflection is the process of reflection upon ministry that is used with intentionality in the Seminarian’s Theological Field Education seminars. Theological Reflection always concludes with the question: What does God require of me in this situation? The principles of that process undergird the supervisory conference with the Pastor/Mentor, in meetings of the Site Team with the Seminarian and in participation in the TFE seminar.
Media Interaction Reviews provide the opportunity to think and to reflect upon theological themes as they are expressed through performance art and film.

Assessments are related to the Serving Learning Covenant. They are:
(a) Appraisal by the Seminarian, Pastor/Mentor, and the Site Team concerning their covenant-keeping, and
(b) Assessment of the Seminarian’s growth. While this is to be an ongoing process among Seminarian, Pastor/Mentor, and Site Team, two written assessments are slated per academic year. The mid-year and end of year assessments will be administered among all three partners. Evaluations are to be jointly shared and discussed. The Seminarian is responsible to return the completed and signed evaluation forms to the Supervised Ministries Office. Note that the assessment forms may be different for each of the TFE partners.
(c) Students are encouraged to assess their progress and growth throughout the year informally.
(d) Throughout the year, the seminar groups will be involved in group evaluations. Written evaluations are requested at the end of each semester.
Section Six:
Pastor/Mentor Guidelines and Information

A Guide to Pastoral Supervision

Pastor/Mentor Training - TFE 700 “Ministry of Supervision”

Students are expected to download their forms and those of the other TFE partners, as necessary. All forms are available online: [www.palmerseminary.edu/current-students/supministries/fielded](http://www.palmerseminary.edu/current-students/supministries/fielded)
Welcome

Welcome new and returning Pastor/Mentors to Palmer Seminary's Theological Field Education (TFE) program! We are delighted that you have agreed to partner with Palmer Theological Seminary in the educational experience of preparing men and women for Christian ministry. It is our desire that your experience and that of your ministry constituency will be one in which you feel the joy of helping raise up leaders for the church, its agencies and institutions. Further, it is our hope that your experience with the TFE program will confirm your own sense of call and renew your enthusiasm for your leadership role in the Church of Jesus Christ.

Theological Field Education is the place in the seminary curriculum where academic theory is tested and tried. It is the place where students can be challenged not only to teach and preach their theology, but live it. It is the place where students can develop their gifts, discern their calling, and have the opportunity to be the Body of Christ in the world.

Theological Field Education is an opportunity to develop a relationship with a colleague of the future. We commend you to the educational task, believing you will be enriched by the experience.

For your fuller understanding of the expectations of TFE, we ask you to read the departmental policies in Section I of this TFE Handbook. Section I includes selected academic policies of Palmer Theological Seminary's, the TFE Code of Ethics (repeated in this section), and policies about ministry site confirmation, Home Church Policy, Supervisory Personnel, and Full Disclosure. Tips for finding a Pastor/Mentor and a TFE Site is found in Section V.

If you have any questions, please be in touch with the SM office. Again welcome to TFE at Palmer Seminary. May your experience be a blessing to you and for God's work among us.

Purpose

The supervisory relationship is an essential component of the internship. Meeting weekly for guidance, consultation and support, the Seminarian and the Pastor/Mentor develop a relationship of trust and accountability. In this relationship of teaching and learning, both Seminarian and Pastor/Mentor become open to new understandings from each other. While the Pastor/Mentor functions as an experienced mentor and guide, the Seminarian takes responsibility for her or his own growth.

Effective supervision occurs in an interdependent relationship between the Seminarian, the church or agency, and the Pastor/Mentor. Unlike the traditional authoritarian model of learning in which the teacher assumes primary responsibility for education, pastoral internships are opportunities for students to claim responsibility for their learning. The philosophy of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire illuminates the possibilities for growth through conscientization or problem-posing education. Hierarchical patterns of learning are replaced with dialogue and interactions of shared responsibility. Moving from dependence...
on the teacher, the student learns to engage in an interdependent relationship with the teacher in inquiry and mutual learning.

Describing effective supervision, teachers of supervision in psychotherapy, Rudolf Ekstein and Robert Wallerstein observe that "beyond their secure skill which they teach and beyond a need to proselytize, (supervisors) are capable of offering real choices to their students on the road toward mature professional self-actualization." Competent supervisors are able to "identify fully with the process of teaching itself" rather than over-identifying with their students or pastoral interns. Pastoral interns are not viewed by their supervisors as "extensions of themselves." When supervisors are "eternal learners," they help their interns "identify with their activity and their own process of constant growth" (Ekstein, R. and R.S. Wallerstein, The Teaching and Learning of Psychotherapy, Basic Books, NY, 1958, p. 80)

Acceptance is vital to the Theological Field Education environment. When Seminarians are able to accept who they are personally and professionally, experiencing the accepting presence of the Pastor/Mentor and the laity, they are enabled to face who God is calling them to be. In an environment in which strengths can be recognized and anxiety and weakness can be faced, Seminarians learn "how their being affects their capacity to embody loving acts toward others," and to more fully "embrace the power of knowing that we are authentic sons and daughters of God" (Edgerton, W. Dow).

While pastoral supervision is accepting, it is not passive or permissive. As Theological Field Education professor Lynn Rhodes points out, Pastors/Mentors "need to be straightforward about not being 'therapist,' 'father,' or 'mother' figure." Seeking to "model adult relationships with a colleague," Pastors/Mentors need to be honest about their own reactions and experiences. Since the Pastor/Mentor and congregation have covenanted to attend to the Seminarian's vocational development, they offer their skills and backgrounds not because they assume that they know more, but "because (they) listen with care, ask questions that open up new possibilities, and offer (their) experiences as they relate to (the Seminarian's) work and experiences." Vital to the development of a ministry of mutuality and justice is learning the art of "attentive partnership" (Rhodes, Lynn "Supervision of Women in Parish Contexts" in Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry, Vol. 10, 1998, p. 206-7).

The process of self-examination is not limited to the Seminarian. As the Pastor/Mentor and church/agency face their strengths and weaknesses within the context of faith, they learn to experience the depth of their lives and understand how to help others to embark on this journey. As a Pastor/Mentor shares, "the journey inward always leads outward into becoming more effective midwives for persons and their relationships to themselves, others, and God, so that we participate in the process of moving from alienation to reconciliation" (Edgerton, W. Dow).

**Code of Ethics**

It is expected that all the participants in Theological Field Education (Seminarian, Pastor/Mentor, Site Team, Supervised Ministries' staff and TFE faculty) be committed to the standards of ethics of the Christian church, which promotes the dignity and worth of all persons. We are accountable for our ministry as expressed in relationship to parishioners, clients, members of the community, Seminarians, Pastor/Mentors, churches, agencies, and
the seminary. Commitment to the following standards is expected in Theological Field Education internships.

**Avoid discrimination** against or refusing pastoral assistance or educational opportunity to anyone on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, age or physical attributes.

**Do not engage** in any forms of harassment, abusive words, or actions, or exploitative coercion.

**In this context**, all forms of sexual behavior or harassment by Pastor/Mentor, Seminarian, or parishioner/client are unethical, even when a parishioner or client invites or consents to such behavior. Sexual behavior includes, but is not limited to, seductive speech, gestures and behavior, and physical contact of a sexual nature. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, comments, gestures or physical contact of a sexual nature.

**Confidentiality** of the parishioner, client, and Seminarian is expected. Records are to be kept in a manner that assures security. Communication from Seminarian, parishioners and Pastor/Mentor are treated with professional confidence. Confidences are not disclosed except:

- as mandated by law
- to prevent a clear and immediate danger to someone
- for purposes of supervision or consultation, or
- by previously obtained written permission.

**Pastor/Mentors**, Supervised Ministries' staff and TFE faculty do not engage in ongoing psychological counseling with Supervised Ministries' students.

**Seminarins** engage in ministry appropriate to their level of training and within the boundaries of their serving/learning covenants. They are not to engage in professional services beyond their training, level of experience and competence.

Seminarins are also responsible to uphold **Conduct and Standards** expectations as set forth in the PTS Student Handbook.

Charges of violation of these ethical standards are to be reported to the Administrative Leadership Team, or the Director of Supervised Ministries. In the case of charges filed against the Director, they are to be reported to the Dean of Palmer Theological Seminary for evaluation.

**Method of Supervision**

- **COVENANT**
  The Seminarin, Pastor/Mentor and laity need to clearly communicate their goals of ministry. When Seminarins are enabled to appropriately formulate objectives and to evaluate their effectiveness in fulfilling their covenants, growth in developing readiness for ministry is facilitated. When there is lack of clarity and accountability in the negotiating and fulfilling of covenants, disruption and conflict in the process of learning and service often
occur. Working on effective communication is important for the internship and the development of pastoral skills.

➢ RESPONSIBILITIES
The Pastor/Mentor agrees to:
- permit free expression of feelings without fear of reprisal;
- support Seminarian during periods of discouragement;
- respond to Seminarian’s needs, while encouraging autonomy;
- stimulate further efforts at learning through interest in and recognition of what the Seminarian does well;
- respect Seminarian’s boundaries;
- follow the norms of pastoral ethics
- name appropriate persons to the Site Team, if “on-site” with Team (see Site Team Information)
- encourage regular Site Team meeting, if “on-site” with Team
- work with the Site Team for appropriate closure and recognition of Seminarian when the term of ministry is completed, if “on-site” with Team.
- The “Off-Site” Mentor agrees to meet with the Site Team to be clear of their availability in case there is need.

The Seminarian agrees to:
- fulfill covenant goals;
- be self-evaluative;
- seek consultation while growing in self-reliance;
- be supportive of the Pastor/Mentor’s ministry;
- respect the Pastor/Mentor’s boundaries;
- respect the values and traditions of the internship site
- follow the norms of pastoral ethics

➢ SUPERVISORY CONFERENCE
Setting regular, weekly conferences in a relaxed atmosphere that is free from interruptions facilitates the development of an effective learning and serving relationship. Structuring one-hour conferences, the Seminarian and Pastor/Mentor address issues reported by the student. The Seminarian submits a brief report of a current experience or ministry issue in advance of the conference. This process encourages selective reflection upon one’s ministry and informs agenda-setting for the conference. During the conference attention is given to the socio-emotional and task dimensions of the interactions. The relationship is facilitated by the responsiveness of both the Pastor/Mentor and Seminarian, as they respect others’ feelings, needs, concerns and perspectives.

Off-Site Mentors may make additional arrangements for communication and supervision with the student, including the use of technology. Each semester, the Off-Site Mentor shall meet face to face at least once with the Seminarian and observe the Seminarian in ministry performance.

➢ PROCESS OF SUPERVISION
- Facts Seek clarification of what is unclear or unstated in report on ministry experience.
- Feelings  Identify the affective responses of both the receivers and givers of ministry.
- Focus    Explore the relationship between the insights from ministry experiences and the learnings from theological education.
- Fantasy  Identify ways to respond, given the limits of persons and situations.
- Faith    How does faith inform the Seminarian's ministry experience; and how does the experience inform his/her faith?

After supervisory conferences, the Seminarian follows through on commitments and the Pastor/Mentor follows up on the results.

**Assessment**

Questions to ask in evaluating the process of supervision include:

- Are supervisory conferences providing educational experiences for professional growth and development?
- Is the setting relaxed, private and long enough?
- Was the preparation adequate?
- Is an appropriate supervisory relationship developing?
- Are the affective concerns as well as the facts addressed?
- Is there a consistent focus on the Seminarian's needs, rather than the Pastor/Mentor's needs?
- Did Pastor/Mentor and Seminarian listen to one another carefully; were helpful and supportive comments offered?
- Were areas for growth and action plans identified?
- Are boundaries of supervision being respected?

What other values have you identified for supervision that you want to discuss as you begin the supervisory relationship, and as you evaluate the process?

See also Pastor/Mentor Assessment Forms included in Section Three. They can be downloaded in useable form from our website. See instructions and web address at the beginning of the section.

**Retention of Student Records**

The Supervised Ministries office maintains Theological Field Education records for five years following of the most recently completed Supervised Ministries course. Due to the limited nature of the retention of student records, we recommend that students maintain files of their TFE materials.

In light of the fact that judicatories and denominations may ask for recommendations based on these records, you as the Pastor/Mentor may want to consider writing a generic reference for your pastoral intern. The generic reference might include observations on the growth of the Seminarian over the year under your care in Theological Field Education, his/her strengths, character traits, and what you observe of his/her professional gifts at this
point in her/his journey. The generic reference may be given to the pastoral intern to keep in his/her TFE file.

**Pastor/Mentor Training**

Supervision is a crucial component in the preparation and continuing education of women and men for ministry. In its most basic sense it is the teaching and learning of ministry. Richard A. Bollinger of the Menninger Foundation said, pastoral supervision is an educational process in which a Pastor/Mentor and a Seminarian/Pastor agree to organize their relationship in a given setting of ministry in such a way as to effect changes in the Seminarian as he/she does the work of ministry.

He stated three key elements of any supervisory relationship as educational, self-reflective, and relational. A good Pastor/Mentor must be a reflective person, a confrontational as well as supportive person, an honest person, a differentiated person, and a person willing to learn from mistakes and experiences.

Palmer Theological Seminary has designed a certification course for Pastor/Mentor and leaders. The course is entitled TFE 700 - The Ministry of Supervision which involves at least 6 contact hours earning 0.6CEU's. All participating Pastor/Mentors are required to complete this course within the academic year in which they begin service.

After successful completion of TFE 700 - you are recognized as a certified Pastor/Mentor. To maintain your certification status, you must attend the annual joint class meeting with TFE Seminar Leaders and your students during each of the years you provide supervision.

The cost of the certification course is $50.00 (2013-2014), which includes a textbook, printed materials and lunch. We recognize the commitment our Pastor/Mentors make both in sharing their time and substance as they attend the training. Those who wish to mentor, but are unable to pay the fee, are asked to be in contact with the office.

Upon completion of this course you are entitled to:

1) Enjoy library privileges during the year in which you have a Palmer Seminary TFE student. The privileges can be used only during the ABC Mission Center’s office hours, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
2) Have your name listed as a certified supervisor in the Palmer Theological Seminary on-line catalogue, as available.

**Thank You**

Palmer Theological Seminary is very grateful to the persons serving as Pastor/Mentors. The Supervised Ministries Office seeks to serve Pastor/Mentors by providing training opportunities and by conferencing with Pastor/Mentors upon request in person or by phone (484-384-2958 or 484-384-2959) about any matters of concern. Thank you for your essential role in the education of students in training for ministry.