

Field Education Program



Holy Cross
Greek Orthodox
School of Theology

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INTRODUCTION

The theological foundation upon which the Field Education Program rests is the conviction that theological studies cannot be separated from or unrelated to church life. There is an intimate and necessary relationship between theological study, worship and loving service to others. From the Orthodox perspective, theological study cannot be detached from the life of God's people. As an integral part of preparation for service to the Church in today's world, the Field Education Program manifests the relationship between worship, theological study and service to God's people.

GOALS

The supervised field education experiences offered have one fundamental concern – to assist students in deepening their relationship to God and to nurture their vocation to serve God through the Church. This central concern expresses itself in the following goals of the program:

1. To foster and nourish the student's vocation to enter ordained or lay ministry through active engagement in the life and work of the Church. The various experiences are opportunities where an individual can develop an identity as a person called to be part of the Church's ministry. In addition, those men who are seeking ordination should have the opportunity to develop a priestly consciousness.
2. To provide the individual with the opportunity to grow in the life of the Spirit within the context of ministered service.
3. To provide opportunities in which professional understanding and competence can be developed. Ministerial skills are best learned in actual situations. In addition to the acquisition of fundamental pastoral skills, the student should have the opportunity to test his/her vocation and to sense his/her gifts, talents and weaknesses.
4. To provide an opportunity for the student to offer responsible and meaningful service to the Church during his/her period of study and preparation.
5. To allow the student to develop interpersonal relations through involvement in the programs. All students are encouraged to work in cooperation with other students, the supervisor, members of the parish and the parish priest (if other than the supervisor).
6. To offer a framework in which theological issues are raised and faced. In this way, students are challenged to reflect theologically on the many contexts and situations of ministry today.
7. To provide a comprehensive and realistic view of the Church and its role in the lives of persons.
8. To make available programs in which the student has the possibility for guided self-evaluation and development of pastoral skills, so that limitations are recognized and strengths developed.

PRINCIPLES

The following principles are at the core of the Field Education Program:

1. The supervised experiences offered must be clearly distinguished from occasional and unsupervised church work in which an individual may become involved. The features of the Field Education Program which distinguish it from occasional church work are: first, an appropriate setting in which students are responsible and accountable for meaningful ministerial service; and second, supervision by a competent individual who is actively concerned with the student's personal and ministerial growth.
2. Supervised field education is viewed as an essential and integral part of theological education. Therefore, all students enrolled in the Master of Divinity degree program are expected to participate in the Field Education Program throughout the normal three years of residency in the School of Theology.
3. The Director of the Field Education Program has the ultimate responsibility for placing the students in field education settings and of determining satisfactory completion of requirements. The director will work closely with the supervisors and with the field education staff.
4. In addition to the actual field education experience, all students are required to participate in weekly seminars which are led by facilitators, who may be members of the faculty or other qualified personnel. These seminars afford students the opportunity to study various aspects of the ministry in which they are involved, reflect on them theologically with the help of the facilitator and share with fellow students their experiences and concerns.
5. The parish is of special importance in the Field Education Program. This is especially true for students preparing for ordination. A seminarian has the opportunity to learn and to serve in the various dimensions of parish life: education, mission, administration and worship.
6. Supervised programs are structured for each student so that he/she is involved in a variety of experiences during the three years of participation in the Field Education Program.

STRUCTURE

Serving as Director of the Holy Cross Field Education Program since its inception in 1975 is Dr. Lewis J. Patsavos.

Included in the Field Education Program are Field Education Seminars corresponding to each of the programs foreseen for Theology Years 1, 2 and 3 at Holy Cross. Field Education Seminars are the context for theological reflection, group supervision and focused instruction.

All students in the Master of Divinity degree program are required to complete six semesters of supervised field education in order to be certified for graduation. The actual time required for field education during the semester will vary, depending upon the particular demands of each project and the student's responsibilities.

PROGRAMS

Programs available to students in the School of Theology include the following:

1. Religious Education/Youth Ministry – Involvement in the catechetical school of a local parish by teaching aspects of the Orthodox faith to the youth. Interaction with the youth of the parish through available programs or new programs to be initiated by the student/s.
2. Parish Ministry – Exposure to the various aspects of parish life, including pastoral visitations, preaching, worship and administration. Students are expected to immerse themselves in these activities especially during their final year of studies.
3. Hospital Ministry – Ministry to the sick and the suffering usually fulfilled during the second year of studies at area hospitals and coordinated from the seminary. Hospital visitations can also be arranged to take place during the summer with the permission of the Director of Field Education.
4. Ministry to the Elderly – Ministry focused on the specific needs and concerns of the aged and infirm. The program takes place within the context of hospital ministry at two area nursing facilities with a sizeable Orthodox elderly population.
5. Campus Ministry – One of several non-parish based programs, the focus of which is serving the spiritual needs of college students in the Greater Boston area. Seminarians interact with students at campuses to which they are assigned through a variety of activities coordinated from the seminary.
6. Prison Ministry – Ministry to inmates of area correctional institutions facilitated through the Office of Field Education whenever there are students called to this particular outreach. Students involved in this ministry are supervised by persons specifically trained in this area.
7. Orthodox Question Box – Outreach ministry via the internet to persons with questions about the Orthodox faith. Exchanges between students and persons using this facility vary from one to several encounters over the internet, thereby offering an ideal opportunity for dialogue.
8. Summer Ministry – Immersion into programs offered during the summer months, such as camping ministry or church-related activities when available. Such programs have the advantage of providing an in depth experience to students in a particular area of ministry.
9. Orthodox Mission Internships – Involvement in the various missions projects sponsored by the Orthodox Christian Missions Center (OCMC). Such experience is especially recommended for students called to work in missions.
10. BTI Field Education Programs – Enrollment in one of the many specialized field education programs afforded by member schools of the BTI. Some of these programs emphasize social outreach and are professionally supervised by highly skilled resource persons.
11. Appalachian Ministries Educational Resource Center (AMERC) – Programs in rural parish ministry available in the summer during semester break. These programs take place in the region of Appalachia under the auspices of the consortium to which Holy Cross School of Theology also belongs.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Toward fulfillment of the requirements of all field education programs, the following are expected of all students:

1. To complete and return the Field Education Learning Agreement, Midyear and Final Evaluation forms by the deadlines set for the Program. These dates are to be found in the Field Education Events and Dates Calendar distributed annually.
2. Regular attendance and active participation in weekly field education seminars, which deal with issues relevant to the field experience. Periodically the seminar will be replaced by lectures, symposia or conferences, which students will be expected to attend.
3. Fulfillment of the assigned field education tasks.

During the first year of Theology, students are assigned to one of the approved field education learning parishes, where they are usually involved in its Religious Education and/or Youth Ministry Programs. Students are encouraged also to practice their chanting skills in the parish setting and to avail themselves of the opportunity to interact with parishioners socially whenever possible (for example, by attending the coffee hour following church services). Students who are new to the Hellenic College/Holy Cross campus are expected to be present at Divine Liturgy in the Holy Cross Chapel on Sundays. Therefore, during this year these students will select a program from among the available field education projects which meet at a time other than Sunday morning.

Students in the second year of Theology will normally participate in the Hospital Ministry Program.

Students in the senior year of Theology will select one of the remaining programs while completing their parish ministry tasks in preaching, teleturgics and parish administration. These students should normally be present at Divine Liturgy in the Holy Cross Chapel on Sundays.

GUIDELINES FOR THE STUDENT

Involvement in the Field Education Program must necessarily include participation in all the activities of parish life, especially as they relate to religious education, pastoral visitations, preaching, parish administration, organizational meetings, and participation in worship services. Specific requirements for seminarians are described in the next section.

In planning his/her field education experience, it will be up to the student to suggest what his/her needs are, but the above areas must be included during the three years of involvement. While many of the student's requirements may be fulfilled on Sundays, responsibilities need not be limited to Sunday alone.

It is to be noted that students are expected to spend not more than two years in the same setting during the course of their field education assignments.

CANDIDATES FOR ORDINATION

All students enrolled in the Master of Divinity degree program who are candidates for ordination must complete the specified number of pastoral tasks listed below, prior to graduation from Holy Cross:

1. Hospital Ministry Program – All students must complete the requirements for two semesters (1 year) in this program.
2. Pastoral Calls – A minimum of 12 calls must be made by each student, most of which should be conducted in the hospital setting within the context of the Hospital Ministry Program. These may also include visits to nursing homes, funeral homes, homes of parishioners, prisons, and other institutions.
3. Preaching – Students are expected to prepare and deliver three sermons, of which two should be preached during the spring semester of the senior year. One of these may include a sermon written for the course in Preaching and delivered at the Holy Cross Chapel, or a sermon delivered in the student's home parish, provided it is evaluated. It is to be noted that seminarians in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese are expected to preach one of the three sermons in Greek.
4. Sacraments – Students must chant or otherwise assist at the various sacramental services of the Church. To this end, each student must assist at least two times each at Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals.
5. Parish Meetings – During the course of his/her parish field education experience, each student will attend as many meetings as possible at his/her assigned parish, of which six (ideally) will count toward the required pastoral tasks. The meetings attended should be a balance of general assembly, parish council, Philoptochos, Church School staff meetings, etc. Additionally, diocesan meetings, such as the Diocesan Clergy-Laity Assembly, may be counted toward the six required meetings.

It is the sole responsibility of the student to see to the completion of these pastoral tasks and to obtain the required supervisor's signature. At the end of the senior year, each student must submit the necessary form before clearance for graduation is granted. Thus, it is imperative that accurate and complete records be kept by the student.

GUIDELINES FOR THE SUPERVISOR

The student ought not to assume a role of leadership in one's field assignment, unless previous experience qualifies him/her for such a role, or the supervisor will guide or assist the student.

Students are expected to experience as many aspects of parish ministry as possible. These should include religious education, youth ministry, pastoral visitations, preaching, exposure to the administration of parish organizations, and worship. Specific guidelines for these activities can be found in the preceding section.

Student and supervisor should carefully plan the year's activities so that they include the aspects of parish ministry mentioned above. These tasks should be clearly articulated along with

performance criteria in the Learning Agreement. For summer ministry and other non-concurrent projects (outside the context of the academic year), students should adapt the Learning Agreement and Final Evaluation forms accordingly.

Free days should be agreed upon between student and supervisor at the beginning of the assignment. These days will usually include periods when school is in recess, although this may vary. It is hoped that the student and supervisor together can agree upon the number of mutually acceptable free days. It is the supervisor's prerogative, however, to request that adjustments be made whenever it is felt that a student's absence might render his/her commitment ineffective.

FIELD EDUCATION TIME COMMITMENT

The number of hours weekly that a student devotes to field education may vary somewhat from one project to another. Nevertheless, it is expected that when planning their activities, students will adhere to the following guidelines: First Year Theology – 6 to 8 hours weekly; Second and Third Year Theology – 8 to 10 hours weekly

It should be understood that included in one's weekly time commitment are preparation, travel, actual task performance, supervision, field education seminars, etc.

Absence from school wide observances in order to fulfill field education commitments should be cleared with the Dean of Students.

TRAVEL EXPENSE

In view of the fact that school funds are not available to cover students' travel expenses, it is strongly recommended that car pools be used whenever possible. Students experiencing financial difficulty should contact the Field Education Office. They should not initiate arrangements for reimbursement without the approval of the Director.

GRADING CRITERIA

The criteria for grading in field education includes quality of task performance with respect to the performance criteria agreed upon by the student and the supervisor, as well as the terms outlined in the **Program Requirements** section of this Manual. The final grade (Pass/Fail) will be determined by the Director in consultation with the student's supervisor and facilitator.

Students successfully completing all requirements of the Field Education Program will receive 1.5 academic credits per semester over a period of three years, with a total of 9 academic credits required for graduation. Students should use the appropriate forms (to be made available before graduation) in order to record the programs in which they have participated and list the requirements which have been met.

Students who receive a failure in field education will usually be required to meet all deficiencies during the summer or between semesters. Summer field education programs must be approved in advance by the Director of Field Education. If a student must meet an entire semester's field education requirement, the summer program should average a cumulative time commitment equal to that of the academic semester.