

ST. TIKHON'S ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



SEMINARY STUDENT HANDBOOK

Office of the Dean
St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary
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St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary

Academic Policy Series

700.2 St. Tikhon's Seminary Student Handbook

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St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary

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Statements of Seminary policy pertaining to students assembled in this *Handbook* have been drawn from several sources:

1. *Manual of Policies, Procedures, and Regulations* of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary;
2. *Academic Bulletin* of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary;
3. Actions of the Board of Trustees and the Faculty, respectively, related to their authority;
4. Policy statements incorporated from previously issued Student Handbooks;
5. And the codification of current practice.

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St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary is accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS), 10 Summit Park Drive, Pittsburgh PA 15275-1110; Telephone: 412.788.6505, Fax: 412.788.6510. The following degree program is approved by the Commission on Accrediting: Master of Divinity (M.Div.).

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A Message from the Dean

Dearly Beloved in Christ:

On behalf of the entire St. Tikhon's community, I would like to welcome you to our Seminary. In choosing to come to St. Tikhon's you have begun a journey of vocational discernment and spiritual formation that follows a rich institutional heritage stretching back to the Seminary's founding over seven decades ago. At St. Tikhon's we believe in providing a spiritual environment in which you will be able to more fully recognize the reality of a Life in Christ, and more fully be able to proclaim His Gospel to the world, so that men and women may come to know Him and love Him. Actively fostering such an environment is the collective work of the entire community, of which you have become a part. By God's grace, we hope and pray that your journey will culminate in taking up a position of pastoral or lay leadership within Christ's Holy Church in which you will embody what you have received here.

As you begin your journey here at St. Tikhon's in preparation for service to the Church, I would like to present you with this *Student Handbook* that lays out many important elements regarding your life as a student within the community. I would ask that you familiarize yourself with the policies presented within this *Handbook*, as they will provide you with insight into the daily rhythm of life within the Seminary.

All of us here at St. Tikhon's Seminary wish you the very best during your time as a student on these hallowed grounds, and wish you every blessing in your spiritual journey.

In Christ,

V. Rev. Steven Voytovich, D. Min.

Dean and COO

St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary

Section 1: Introduction

1.0 Institutional Mission. The primary mission of the Seminary lies in providing the necessary theological, liturgical, spiritual, and moral foundations for Orthodox men to become, as God wills, good shepherds of His Holy Orthodox Church. At the same time, however, the Seminary also recognizes that many individuals choose to enroll in a professional theological training program for the fulfillment of needs other than those of ordained ministry. Among these are: preparation for general religious leadership responsibilities in parishes and other settings; advanced theological study; specialized ministry as religious educators or choir directors; and personal spiritual enrichment. Therefore, St. Tikhon's Seminary continues to support all honorable reasons for matriculation at the Seminary and participation in class (from the "Mission Statement of the Seminary").

1.1. Statement of Purpose. In the 200-year history of Orthodoxy in America, Orthodox theological education has continually had to face and meet special missionary challenges. The living tradition of Orthodox spiritual life, however, firmly and deeply rooted in the Church's experience in the Old World, remains for us a source of inspiration and energy, courage and wisdom, patience and tolerance, and moves us to do the work of God here in the twenty-first century.

As a community we are committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as proclaimed by the Apostles, articulated by the Holy Fathers, and manifested fully in the Orthodox Church. Holding fast to these commitments, we believe that it is essential to provide an educational experience that fosters the personal, spiritual, and pastoral formation of our students in preparation for service to Christ in ordained and lay ministry. At St. Tikhon's we embody the Holy Tradition of the Orthodox Church in a lived community as the authentic means of acquiring the Orthodox spiritual, theological, and pastoral ethos. Thorough participation in this community, our students acquire that which is necessary to carry out the divine ordained task of the Church in contemporary society.

Because of its well-known Faculty dedicated to the Patristic Tradition, and through its close relationship with the St. Tikhon's Monastery, our Seminary

has gradually emerged as a significant center of Orthodox theological education and spiritual formation that serves the pressing needs of the Church in North America. Through our relationship with the Monastery, we provide our students with an ideal environment for pastoral formation that integrates worship, theological study, field education, and personal transformation in the context of authentic Christian community. With God's blessings we can expect the continued growth and spiritual enrichment of the institutional life of the Seminary, and the increase of its sustaining contribution to the life of the broader Church community.

1.2 Accreditation. St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary is accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS). The Seminary's Master of Divinity Program is approved by the Commission on Accrediting.

1.3 General Standards. By virtue of their admission to St. Tikhon's Seminary, students are welcomed as active participants in the life of our distinctive religious and academic community; called to fulfill a vital role in the ongoing process of learning, teaching, and service to their fellow man; and expected to reflect the highest standards of ethical living and conduct. These standards include:

- (a) Commitment to Orthodox Christian religious values and spiritual living in a personal following after Christ;
- (b) Academic honesty and integrity;
- (c) Actions that are always civil, courteous, and respectful of all members of the campus community, their property, and the property of the Seminary;
- (d) Personal behavior that encourages social responsibility and discourages the unlawful use of alcohol, controlled substances, and weapons; and
- (e) Group behavior that promotes the overall safety and security of the learning and teaching environment, asserts the human dignity and personal safety of its members, and opposes actions of harassment, intimidation, or discrimination of any person.

1.4 Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities. The intent of this *Statement of Rights and Responsibilities* is to clarify the freedoms, rights, and responsibilities afforded all students at St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary, as described in officially promulgated policies and procedures, which include, but are not limited to:

- (a) All human and civil rights and freedoms normally afforded to individuals by civil and ecclesiastical law (canon law);
- (b) The freedom of conscience, inquiry, responsible expression, and association;
- (c) The right to human dignity, with freedom from harassment, intimidation, and discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, and/or national origin;
- (d) The right to pursue educational goals in a secure, orderly, and safe environment that is free from inappropriate pressures, interruptions, or distractions;
- (e) The right to accurate and understandable information about academic programs and student services, as well as to the rules and regulations of the Seminary;
- (f) The right to expect professional and equitable conduct from faculty and staff members in the assignment, assessment, and evaluation of academic work and community service;
- (g) The right to receive courteous assistance and service from members of the Seminary Administration and Staff;
- (h) The right to due process in disciplinary proceedings as described in the *Student Code* (see Section 4.3 below);
- (i) The right to petition for redress of grievances (see Section 5 below);
- (j) The responsibility to exercise the rights and freedoms granted to all students in a manner that will not violate Seminary rules and regulations, nor infringe on the rights of other students, administrators, faculty members, and staff members;
- (k) The responsibility to treat all members of the Seminary community with civility, courtesy, and respect;
- (l) The responsibility to comply with the requirements of academic programs, to appropriately utilize student services, and to abide by the rules and regulations of the Seminary;

- (m) The responsibility to be an active participant in the learning and teaching process, and to engage fully in personal, spiritual, intellectual, and professional growth;
- (n) The responsibility to meet the standards of courses undertaken, and to complete on schedule their requirements;
- (o) The responsibility to hold others accountable for actions that negatively influence the Seminary community, or for violation of Seminary rules and regulations; and
- (p) The responsibility to contribute to the overall welfare and common good of all students, Faculty, and Staff of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary.

1.5 Confidentiality Policy. In accordance with the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), each student has the right to have his or her educational record maintained confidentially and to review his or her own educational records. The act states that: (a) a written institutional policy must be established, and (b) a statement of adopted procedures covering the privacy rights of students must be made available.

Accordingly, the *Confidentiality Policy* of St. Tikhon's Theological Seminary is that no one but authorized officers of the institution (i.e., Rector, Dean, and Registrar) and the student may have access to the student's records. No copy of a student's transcript, test scores, or other evaluations will be supplied to another person or agency without the student's written consent.

Section 2: Residence Code

2.0 Residency. Single students live in dormitory or other assigned Seminary residential facilities. Rooms are assigned by the Director of Student Life. Students having special needs or preferences should make arrangements for the accommodation of such needs by contacting the Director of Student Life directly.

Married students generally live in private facilities of their own choice, but are subject to Seminary regulations concerning student participation in the life of the Seminary, including liturgical services, choir, and other requirements as set forth in this *Handbook*.

The Seminary does not have facilities on campus for regular health care. Usually, students with medical issues are referred to area doctors or hospitals as circumstances arise. From time to time, health care professionals connected to the Seminary provide *pro bono* consultations with students. The Seminary does not provide a health insurance program for its students. Therefore, students are highly encouraged to secure adequate health insurance coverage for the duration of their Seminary residence. Also, it is recommended (though not required) that each student inform the Office of the Dean of the type of insurance coverage and appropriate policy numbers in the event that the Seminary is expected to provide this information at the time of an emergency.

Students who park vehicles on the grounds of the Seminary or Monastery must provide the Office of the Dean with a copy of driver's license and insurance.

Entrance and exit doors are to be closed at all times in compliance with insurance and state fire regulations (Dept. of Labor and Industry, State Fire Marshall).

2.1 Room Assignments. Student residency in Seminary dormitory facilities is subject to regulation by the Seminary Administration. Rooms are assigned during the time of registration. Permission must be received in order to change rooms or exchange furniture. Permission is not granted for the placement of any nails or hooks into the walls, ceilings, or furniture. Each student is responsible for any damage done to the room or its furnishings.

If it is deemed to be necessary, the Seminary reserves the right to change room assignments during the academic year.

Dormitory facilities must be vacated the day after Memorial Day. If a student petitions to remain longer, he/she must understand that he/she may be given permission to occupy his/her present room or another, but will be required to pay a fee or undertake work assignments on Seminary or Monastery grounds.

2.2 Visitors and Guests. All visitors and guests wishing spend the night at the Seminary, either in the main building or in dormitory facilities, must receive permission from the Director of Student Life, and will be assigned a room by the Director of Student Life after completing a standard registration form.

2.3 Room Code. The following code applies to students living in Seminary dormitory facilities:

- (a) Dormitory rooms must be kept clean at all times. Inspections take place on a monthly schedule distributed by the Director of Student Life. "Spot inspections" made with the student present may be made whenever deemed necessary. (In the event of an emergency situation, a designated member of the Seminary Administration may enter a student's room);
- (b) No cooking is permitted in dormitory rooms (unless done in a microwave oven). Microwave ovens are permitted with the permission of the Director of Student Life. No open heating elements, however, are allowed in the dormitory, as all cooking should be done in the dormitory kitchen;
- (c) Dormitory residents are permitted to use small refrigerators with the permission of the Director of Student Life. Snack foods must be kept in appropriate containers;
- (d) CB radios and police scanners are not permitted in the dormitory. Radios, stereos, televisions, and CD/DVD players are allowed, but must not be heard beyond the confines of the room. Consequently, earphones and headsets are encouraged in order to ensure an atmosphere conducive to prayer, meditation, and study. No student has the right to infringe on another's quiet time;
- (e) It is strongly suggested that students bring only what is necessary for

- their time in residence;
- (f) Pets and other animals are not permitted in Seminary buildings (except animals used for assisting students with physical disabilities);
 - (g) Dormitory residents may not entertain guests in their rooms after quiet hours without the explicit permission of the Director of Student Life; and
 - (h) Alcoholic beverages are not permitted in dormitory facilities. The use of alcoholic beverages outside of the dormitory on other areas of the campus must be authorized by either the Dean or the Director of Student Life.

2.4 Smoking. St. Tikhon's Seminary strongly discourages smoking. Smoking is not permitted in any of the buildings on Seminary or Monastery property. Smoking is only permitted on the sides of the Metropolitan Leonty Dormitory and outside the rear north side door of the main building, provided smokers properly dispose of cigarette butts. Smoking is forbidden in front of either building.

2.5 Student Lounge (TV Room) and Kitchen. Students living in the dormitory should strive to keep the student lounge (TV room) and dormitory kitchen clean. The Director of Student Life will assign a particular student the task of making sure that the lounge and kitchen remain clean.

2.6 Quiet Hours. An appropriate atmosphere of quiet, conducive to prayer, meditation, and rest, is to be maintained in the Seminary dormitory. To this end, every night there are mandatory dormitory "quiet hours" from 10:00pm to 7:00am. They also should respect the rights of their fellow residents, and be aware of the fact that profane talking, noisy gatherings, and parties are not permitted in the dormitory.

2.7 Curfew. Dormitory residents must return to the Seminary dormitory by 10:00pm Sunday through Thursday evenings. On Friday and Saturday evenings, residents must return to the dormitory by 12:00am (midnight). If, for some unforeseen reason, a resident cannot return by this time, he/she must immediately inform the Director of Student Life.

2.8 Special Leave. Should the need arise for any student to leave the Seminary for two or more days during the course of the semester (with the exception of

Mission Choir trips), a form (available from either the Office of the Dean or the Director of Student Life) must be completed and submitted to the Director of Student Life and the Dean for approval.

2.9 Departure Policy. Students no longer enrolled in the Seminary must remove their belongings immediately. If a student requires more time to remove his/her belongings, he/she must make arrangements with the Director of Student Life to do so.

Section 3: Liturgical and Spiritual Life

3.0 Liturgical Services and Choir. Regular community participation in liturgical services in the Monastery Church constitutes the very center of Seminary life. Participation in the daily, weekly, and annual cycles of services is the primary spiritual obligation of every student. Students are required to take an active part in singing, reading, and serving at liturgical services. Students are expected to participate in the Seminary choir and be present at rehearsals as required.

3.1 Required Attendance (Dormitory Students). All dormitory students are required to attend the following Divine Services in their entirety (unless officially excused) according to the rules set forth below:

- (a) Divine Liturgy on Saturdays, Sundays, the Great Feasts of the Lord and the Theotokos (e.g., Nativity of the Theotokos, Elevation of the Cross, etc.), and Vigils preceding Sundays and Great Feasts;
- (b) Divine Liturgy, with preceding Vigil, on other major feast days, as designated by the Seminary in the semester or yearly calendar. These required feast days are posted on the Seminary bulletin board. These feasts include the following: 30 January, Three Hierarchs; 27 February, St. Raphael of Brooklyn; 9 March, Forty Martyrs; Memorial Saturday before the Sunday of the Last Judgment; 18 March, St. Nicholai of Zicha; 31 March, St. Innocent; 7 May, St. Alexis; 1 October, Protection of the Theotokos; 9 October, St. Tikhon of Moscow; St. Demetrius Memorial Saturday; 8 November, Holy Archangels; 6 December, St. Nicholas; and 13 December, St. Herman; and
- (c) Divine Liturgy on one of the weekdays, Tuesday through Thursday, and Ninth Hour and Vespers every evening Monday through Thursday. Each student's attendance at these services is connected to his/her assignment to a "church group," the details of which are articulated below in Section 3.4.

During the Great Fast, dormitory students are required to attend the following services in their entirety:

- (a) The services of the first week of the Great Fast;
- (b) The Vigil for Akathist Saturday (i.e., fifth Saturday of the Holy Fast);
- (c) The services of Holy Week from the Matins of Lazarus Saturday to the Paschal Divine Liturgy;
- (d) The Canon of St. Andrew during the fifth week of the Great Fast;
- (e) Pre-Sanctified Liturgies mid-days on Wednesday and Friday;
- (f) Divine Liturgy on Saturday morning; and
- (g) Vespers on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings.

3.2. Required Attendance (Married Students). All married students are required to attend the following Divine Services in their entirety (unless officially excused) according to the rules set forth below:

- (a) Divine Liturgy on Sundays and the Great Feasts of the Lord and the Theotokos (e.g., Nativity of the Theotokos, Elevation of the Cross, etc.), and Vigils preceding Sundays and Great Feasts;
- (b) Divine Liturgy, with preceding Vigil, on other major feast days, as designated by the Seminary in the semester or yearly calendar. These required feast days are posted on the Seminary bulletin board. These feasts include the following: 30 January, Three Hierarchs; 27 February, St. Raphael of Brooklyn; 9 March, Forty Martyrs; Memorial Saturday before Sunday of the Last Judgment; 18 March, St. Nicholai of Zicha; 31 March, St. Innocent; 7 May, St. Alexis; 1 October, Protection of the Theotokos; 9 October, St. Tikhon of Moscow; St. Demetrius Memorial Saturday; 8 November, Holy Archangels; 6 December, St. Nicholas; and 13 December, St. Herman; and
- (c) Divine Liturgy on two of the weekdays, Tuesday through Thursday, with the accompanying Ninth Hour and Vespers service on the preceding evening. Each student's attendance at these services is connected to his/her assignment to a "church group," the details of which are articulated below in Section 3.4.

During the Great Fast, married students are required to attend the following services in their entirety:

- (a) The services of the first week of the Great Fast;
- (b) Vigil for Akathist Saturday (i.e., sixth Saturday of the Great Fast);
- (c) The services of Holy Week from the Matins of Lazarus Saturday to the Paschal Divine Liturgy;
- (d) The Canon of St. Andrew during the fifth week of the Great Fast;
- (e) Pre-Sanctified Liturgies mid-days on Wednesday and Friday;
- (f) Divine Liturgy on Saturday morning; and
- (g) One Vesper service on Monday, Tuesday, or Thursday evening.

3.3 General Attendance Requirements. If a student is unable on a long-term basis to attend services on a particular day of the week due to outside work, family responsibilities, etc., the Director of Student Life must be notified in writing. The student must give specific reasons for the absence. The Director of Student Life will inform the Monastery and Director of Music about the student's situation.

All students will be asked on a regular basis to read on the kliros.

Qualified male students will be assigned on a regular basis to serve in the altar of the Monastery Church under the supervision of a monk designated by the Monastery Superior.

All students, whether married, single, or ordained, must report to the choir loft to sing and read on assigned days.

All students should be in Church 20 minutes prior to when morning services are scheduled to begin, and as soon as possible prior to evening services following afternoon classes. Students singing in the choir should not leave the kliros without permission from the Choir Director. Students are expected to refrain from unnecessary talking, and maintain proper church decorum.

Students who have attendance related concerns that are of an ecclesiastical nature should make those concerns known to the Dean.

3.4 Church Practicum. Each regular student, regardless of status, participates in church practicum duties (i.e., reading at Vespers, Matins, Liturgy, altar serving, etc.), as well as a choir practicum assignment. Duties and Choir assignments are made by either the Director of Student Life, Director of Music, or by an appointed designee. Each student is expected to be present for the entirety of the service in which their duty falls. All students are expected to sing, read, and serve in the altar, if assigned. In addition to being assigned practicum duties, students living in the dormitory are assigned a practicum day for singing in the choir during the week, as well as participate in choir on Saturday. Full-time students living off-campus may request a preferred practicum day during the week for choir participation.

As worship is a central part of Orthodox life in general, and Seminary life in particular, the Seminary Administration regularly reviews each student's participation in Divine Services, examining both the student's attendance record and general competency in reading, singing, serving, and knowledge of Orthodox liturgical practice.

The Director of Student Life will regularly monitor and record individual student attendance at required Divine Services and Church groups, and regularly report this information to the Dean, and will incorporate such observations into each student's Seminary record.

Absences from services or cases of repeated tardiness are monitored by the Director of Student Life in order to ascertain whether or not the absence or tardiness is excused or unexcused. If a pattern of absence or tardiness develops, the student may be asked to meet with the Director of Student Life in order to work out a solution to the problem. Habitual absences and/or cases of tardiness are referred to the Dean for further action.

3.5 Noon Meal Reading. Reading assignments for the noon meal are made by the Director of Student Life.

3.6 Spiritual Direction. Each student is expected to be under the spiritual guidance of one of the Seminary or Monastery clergy. The Seminary Administration reserves the right to approve each student's choice of father-confessor. (Each student is expected to complete an appropriate form indicating his/her choice of a father-confessor. This form must be completed

at the beginning of the academic year.)

3.7 Community (Seminary) Service. As a means of moderating Seminary operating costs, acting in the spirit of Christian obedience, and providing service to the Seminary community, each student is expected to give a portion of his/her time to performing work assignments at the Seminary. These assignments are made and distributed by the Director of Student Life. Negligence in fulfilling work assignments may result in disciplinary action (see Section 4.3 below).

Each student is assigned to kitchen duty on a rotating basis, assisting the cook and working under his/her direction. The student(s) assigned for a particular day must complete the tasks given by the cook regarding food preparation and cleanup. Responsibilities include washing the kitchen floor and emptying all garbage and refuse containers. Kitchen assignments are posted on the appropriate bulletin boards.

Part of community service also includes service assignments in the Seminary's Administrative Building, as well as dormitory facilities. Service assignments will be distributed by the Director of Student Life. Students are expected to fulfill their service requirements on a regular basis as articulated by the Director of Student Life. Failure to complete service assignments will be addressed by the Director of Student Life, and the Dean (if necessary).

3.8 Dining Room (Refectory)

Students planning to join the Seminary community at the noon meal in the dining room must be present for the opening blessing at meals and may not leave until dismissed. Meals begin and end with prayer. Lunch begins at 12:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and should last about a half hour until 1 p.m. No conversation should take place during noon readings or meditations.

Expectations and Guidelines concerning access to and upkeep of the Kitchen will be conveyed to students by the Cook and/or the Director of Student Life. Meals are served in the dining room at the following times:

Self-Serve Breakfast: Monday-Friday between 8:00am and 8:30am;

Lunch: Monday-Friday between 12:30pm and 1:00pm.

Dinner and Weekends: as announced

3.9 Illness

Any illnesses or accidents must be reported immediately to the Director of Student Life or, in his/her absence, to any other member of the Seminary Administration.

3.10 Off-campus Students

All full-time students living off-campus are subject to the general disciplinary regulations of the St. Tikhon's Seminary, and must fulfill all obligations appropriate to them as outlined in this *Handbook*.

The Monastery Church is considered the “parish church” of all regular off-campus students unless the Director of Student Life countermands this norm in writing. All students are obligated to attend any special function identified by the Seminary Administration unless the Director of Student Life grants permission to the contrary.

3.11 Dress Code. Upon acceptance into the Seminary, and after the conclusion of the Annual Orientation and Opening Retreat, male seminarians are given a temporary blessing to wear a black cassock for the duration of their time at the Seminary. The blessing does not signify tonsure to the Minor Orders of Reader or Sub-deacon, and does not confer ordination status. If seminarians are not tonsured to Minor Orders or ordained to Holy Orders, the temporary blessing is considered automatically rescinded upon the student's graduation, withdrawal, or dismissal from the Seminary.

The cassock is to be worn on the following occasions: all liturgical services, during classes, at the noon meal, for mission trips, visits to a Bishop's residence, and certain other occasions as specified by the Rector or Dean. On formal occasions, including Sundays, feast days, all community services at the Monastery, and Mission trips, black shoes, black socks and trousers, and a dress shirt shall be worn under the cassock. On weekdays, students are blessed to wear less formal attire under their cassock, so long as their clothing is appropriate and their shoes and socks are dark.

3.12 General Dress: When the Cassock Is Not Worn. For both male Seminarians and female students proper dress that is in keeping with the spirit of Scriptural precepts is expected during residency at St. Tikhon's Seminary. The dress code for male seminarians not wearing their cassocks or for other students not blessed to wear a cassock is as follows:

- (a) Mission trips: Because students are official representatives of the Seminary while on mission trips, proper attire must be worn consisting of: black shoes, black socks, a black or light-colored dress shirt. Other attire is permitted only with the permission of the Director of Student Life.
- (b) Seminary and Monastery: All students are expected to dress professionally while on Seminary grounds, subject to instructions by the Director of Student Life. Clothing must be kept neat. Shoes must be worn at all times.
- (c) Free time off the Seminary Grounds: proper attire must be worn at all times. The cassock may not be worn unless the Dean grants the student explicit permission to do so.
- (d) Female students studying at the Seminary are expected to dress in a modest manner proper to being part of a Seminary community that worships primarily at a Monastery Church.

In general, the dress code presupposes that each student will always appear neat and clean, as befits one studying to serve the Orthodox Church.

3.13 Tuition and Fees. Tuition and fees are payable at registration each semester. Special arrangements may be made with the Seminary Administration to pay these fees in installments with the provision that full payment is remitted prior to the date of final examinations at the end of each semester. No credit will be given for any classes unless all fees have been paid.

3.14 Class Attendance. Class attendance is a most serious obligation for students at St. Tikhon's Seminary. Students are expected to exercise maturity of judgment in matters of class attendance. Students also bear the responsibility of keeping abreast of class work and of making up any outstanding work.

All students of the Seminary are expected to attend all of their classes, though the Seminary does not specify a minimum number of tolerated absences. Every Seminary instructor determines the impact that absences have on the final grade of the class and specifies the course absence policy in the course syllabus.

Class work missed through absence may be made up at the discretion of the instructor. If possible, students should arrange make-up work prior to the absence.

Particular Seminary policies regarding the academic program can be found in the Seminary's *Bulletin*.

Section 4: Code of Student Conduct

4.0 Philosophy. Students matriculating at St. Tikhon's Seminary assume an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the Seminary's function as an institution of pastoral formation and theological education of the Orthodox Church in America. The Church teaches that theology cannot be separated from the spiritual life. Thus, it is the position of St. Tikhon's Seminary that training those pursuing studies preparatory to the Holy Priesthood, and other areas of Church service, requires academic effort that is not separated from spiritual effort and community life.

All students are subject to ecclesiastical regulations, moral standards, and behavioral patterns set forth by the Holy Orthodox Church, as manifested in this *Handbook*, and as traditionally expected of those preparing for Church service. Formal application to St. Tikhon's Seminary, as well as the acceptance of an offer of admission, constitutes a student's agreement to these requirements. Hence, it is the expectation that students will conduct themselves as responsible members of the Seminary community, adhering completely to the *Code of Seminary Conduct* (see Section 4.1 below) while formally associated with the institution.

As seminarians, students are in training as potential candidates for Holy Orders. They must therefore conduct themselves in such a manner as will reflect that potential calling. Accordingly, students must present themselves in such a way that the Gospel injunction might be fulfilled: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father Who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

Each student, upon entering St. Tikhon's, is furnished with this *Handbook* and will be asked to acknowledge in writing his/her commitment to adhere to the codes spelled out in this *Handbook*.

St. Tikhon's Seminary, as an institution of the Holy Orthodox Church, has an interest in student behavior quite separate from that of civil authorities, and, therefore, has the right and responsibility to exercise its jurisdiction and take such actions appropriate to the protection of this interest. Student misconduct, or any other action that discredits the individual or the Seminary, may lead to

disciplinary probation or, if deemed substantial, to immediate dismissal. Whenever appropriate, the Seminary reserves the right to report a disciplinary matter to civil authorities.

All regular students, all special students, and all married students, whether living on- or off-campus, are considered as being in residence. This means that not only their academic work, but also their participation in church life, ecclesiastical status, spiritual formation, voluntary or paid activities and assignments, as well as any change in condition (i.e., marriage, ordination, employment, enrollment in other institutions) are subject to Seminary approval.

4.1 Code of Student Conduct. By virtue of their admission to St. Tikhon's Seminary, students are welcomed as active participants in the life of our distinctive religious and academic community, called to fulfill a vital role in the ongoing process of learning, teaching, and service to others, and expected to reflect the highest standards of ethical living and acceptable conduct. These standards include:

- (a) Commitment to Orthodox Christian religious values and spiritual living in a personal following after Christ;
- (b) Academic honesty and integrity;
- (c) Actions that are always civil, courteous, and respectful of all members of the campus community, their property, and the property of the Seminary;
- (d) Personal behavior that encourages social responsibility, and discourages the unlawful use of alcohol, controlled substances, and weapons; and
- (e) Group behavior that promotes the overall safety and security of the learning and teaching environment, asserts the human dignity and personal safety of its members, and opposes actions of harassment, intimidation, or discrimination of any person.

4.2 Student Misconduct. Violation of the principles of the *Code of Student Conduct* set forth in Section 4.1 above constitutes student misconduct. The Seminary recognizes two forms of student misconduct: (a) academic misconduct, and (b) non-academic misconduct.

4.2.1 Academic Student Misconduct. Academic misconduct means the violation of Seminary policies involving academic integrity. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Intentional tampering with grades;
- (b) Resubmitting assignments for more than one class without the permission of the professor;
- (c) Intentionally taking part in obtaining or distributing any part of a test that has not been administered;
- (d) Cheating as defined as any act of deception by which a student misrepresents or misleadingly demonstrates that he/she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not mastered. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - i. Giving or receiving unauthorized help in an academic exercise;
 - ii. Use of sources or resources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, or carrying out other assignments;
 - iii. Acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the Seminary Faculty or Staff; and/or
 - iv. Engaging in any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion; and/or
- (e) Plagiarism as defined as using the ideas or writings of another as one's own. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - i. The use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and/or
 - ii. The unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

The above actions will be considered misconduct or unacceptable academic conduct.

4.2.2 Non-Academic Student Misconduct. Non-academic misconduct for which a student may be subject to disciplinary action includes the following:

- (a) Forgery; alteration or misuse of Seminary documents or records; fraud; or knowingly furnishing false information to the Seminary;
- (b) Intentional obstruction or disruption of the teaching, research, or administrative process or disciplinary proceedings, or of any other Seminary activities, including public service functions, or Seminary-sponsored or supervised events;
- (c) Harassment, assault, or intimidation of any person on Seminary or Monastery property or at Seminary-sponsored or -supervised functions or events, or threatening to engage in any of those acts; or any other action or conduct that threatens or endangers the health, human dignity, or safety of another person;
- (d) Stealing, concealing, defacing, or intentionally damaging Seminary or Monastery property, or the personal or intellectual property of any student, Seminary employee, or campus visitor; or threatening to do so;
- (e) Unauthorized entry to, or use of, Seminary or Monastery property, including failure to leave any Seminary or Monastery grounds after being asked to do so by an authorized representative of the Seminary or Monastery while in performance of his/her duties;
- (f) Use, possession, or distribution of unauthorized alcoholic beverages; being intoxicated in the Seminary dormitory, on Seminary or Monastery grounds, or at Seminary-sponsored or -supervised functions or events (students may not frequent bars or taverns on a regular basis);
- (g) Use, possession, or distribution on Seminary or Monastery property, or at Seminary-sponsored or -supervised functions or events, of controlled or dangerous drugs or substances, or drug paraphernalia, as defined by state and/or federal law, except as may be expressly permitted by law;
- (h) Possession, storage, or use on Seminary or Monastery property or at Seminary-sponsored or -supervised functions or events, of any firearm, rifle, pistol, gun, or any other dangerous or deadly weapon of any kind, or of any explosive material or incendiary device, except in connection with a Seminary-approved activity,

as expressly authorized by the Rector or his designee. This also includes unauthorized use of any instrument capable of inflicting bodily injury to any person;

- (i) Failure to comply with reasonable directions of Seminary or Monastery officials acting in performance of their duties; and/or
- (j) Violation of other published Seminary policies or regulations; or violation of federal, state, or local laws which may constitute a felony or misdemeanor.

Unless otherwise provided, the above actions will be considered misconduct or unacceptable conduct on the Seminary campus, including student rooms, Monastery grounds, at Seminary-sponsored or -supervised functions or events, or in any situation where students officially represent the Seminary away from campus.

4.2.3 Statement on Sexual Misconduct. The Seminary adheres to the “Policies, Standards, and Procedures of the Orthodox Church in America on Sexual Misconduct,” issued by the Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America in Spring 2014. In that document, sexual misconduct is defined as a “range of behavior used to obtain sexual gratification against another or at the expense of another or in a situation where the perpetrator is in a position of authority – physical, psychological, emotional, or spiritual – over the victim. Sexual Misconduct includes sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any conduct of a sexual nature that is without consent, or has the effect of threatening, intimidating or using the person against whom such conduct is directed.” In conformity with these guidelines, the Seminary utilizes screening procedures of students, faculty members, other employees, and volunteers and periodically reviews procedures reduce the risk of sexual misconduct. The Seminary also maintains ongoing development sessions for the entire Seminary community on the nature of sexual misconduct.

Allegations of sexual misconduct shall be investigated promptly. In cases of alleged sexual misconduct involving a student or a member of a student’s family, Seminary employees, or volunteers, allegation shall be reported to the Dean. In cases of alleged sexual misconduct involving the Dean, allegations shall be reported to the Rector. The Seminary will report allegations in accordance with civil law, in conformity with the OCA guidelines, and will cooperate in accordance with civil and canon law in any investigation by civil

or ecclesiastical authorities.

4.3 Disciplinary Action and Processes

4.3.1 Disciplinary Actions. Seminary disciplinary actions may be of a formal or informal nature. The Seminary will follow the procedural guidelines described below. Generally, academic disciplinary matters are handled in an informal manner and appropriate sanctions are imposed by the Dean. Non-academic disciplinary matters are handled in an informal manner and appropriate sanctions are imposed by the Director of Student Life.

Students who are found to be in violation of the *Code of Student Conduct* may be subject to any of the following disciplinary sanctions: disciplinary warning, disciplinary probation, suspension, or dismissal from the Seminary. The following guidelines will apply:

- (a) **Warning:** An oral or written statement that the student is in violation of the *Code of Student Conduct*. Students will generally be given a disciplinary warning in oral or written form if the misconduct is a first offense, or if the nature of the misconduct is deemed to be non-malicious. Since all students are admitted to St. Tikhon's Seminary on provisional status during their first academic year, students may be subject to non-academic probation or suspension without previous disciplinary warning during their first academic year at St. Tikhon's Seminary;
- (b) **Probation and/or Suspension:** Exclusion from classes and/or exclusion from other privileges or activities (e.g., temporary removal of the cassock), or from campus for a specific period of time. Students will be placed on disciplinary probation for the entire following semester or will be suspended if the nature of their misconduct follows a repetitive pattern of offenses, and they have been previously subject to disciplinary warning. Students on non-academic probation or suspension must fulfill the conditions of their probation or suspension and remove themselves from probation or suspension within the semester in which they were disciplined; and
- (c) **Dismissal:** Exclusion from the Seminary for a specific or indefinite period or permanently. Students will be subject to

withdrawal of offer of admission and disciplinary dismissal from the Seminary if they do not meet the conditions of their disciplinary probation and/or suspension from the Seminary. Most students who do not meet the conditions of their probation or suspension are subject to dismissal from the Seminary, and are ineligible to re-enroll without the approval of the Admissions Committee.

4.3.2 Jurisdiction: Determination and notification of disciplinary warning, or probationary or suspended status, will be made informally by the Dean or Director of Student Life, who are generally responsible for administering the *Code of Student Conduct*. In cases where dismissal is to be considered and formal procedures are deemed necessary, a specially constituted Committee of Student Discipline functions to hear all allegations, charges, and appeals. The Committee is composed of four members: the Dean (*ex officio*) and three faculty members appointed by the Dean.

4.3.3 Procedures for Academic Misconduct. Academic misconduct can have repercussions within a course that are mediated by individual professors in consultation with their Department Chair and/or the Dean. These repercussions may include such things as failure of a course assignment, requirement to redo coursework, failure of the course, etc.

Beyond this, allegations of academic student misconduct that are deemed by a faculty member to require further action beyond the confines of the academic classroom must be reported to the Dean, who will be responsible for an initial review of the allegations and any supporting facts. If the initial review shows the allegations to be lacking in merit, the allegations will be dismissed. If facts appear to support the allegations, the Dean may make a determination to take formal or informal action for imposition of appropriate disciplinary sanctions.

If determination is made to take informal action, the Dean may impose disciplinary warning consistent with 4.3.1(a) above, or, in consultation with the Rector, impose academic probation or suspension consistent with 4.3.1(b) above.

If the facts and allegations warrant further review, the Dean will make a

determination to take formal disciplinary action. In this case, within ten (10) Seminary business days after the allegations were initially lodged with the Dean, accused students will receive written notification of the allegations or charges against them, of this procedural policy, and of their right to a hearing before the Committee on Student Discipline. The Dean will constitute the Committee on Student Discipline and refer to it the allegations and any supporting facts for the purposes of substantiating the charge(s) and making recommendations for disciplinary action.

A student charged with academic misconduct shall be presumed innocent of all allegations and charges until the Committee on Student Discipline has determined that the facts of the case indicate the student to be in violation of the *Code of Conduct*. The Committee may review any facts supporting or opposing the allegations, whether offered through documents or personal testimony.

Students charged with academic misconduct shall be permitted to attend in person any hearings or proceedings of the Committee, and be provided with an opportunity to respond to the charges. Students shall also be permitted to bring with him/her a friendly advisor of their own choosing, who shall be a fellow student, or members of the Faculty or Staff. The chosen friendly advisor shall not ordinarily be allowed direct participation in the proceedings, unless the accused student is unable to do so. Refusal by a student to participate in disciplinary proceedings shall ordinarily constitute substantiation of allegations against him/her, unless the Committee previously agrees to consider in written form whatever rebuttal the student desires to offer for the Committee's review.

The Dean shall be responsible for convening the appointed Committee on Student Discipline within two (2) weeks of initial receipt of written allegations and supporting documentation from individuals bring such allegations, and subsequently for providing written notification to the Rector of the Committee's findings and recommendations for discipline. Sanctions for academic misconduct must be consistent with the policies and procedures of St. Tikhon's Seminary.

Within five (5) Seminary business days of the conclusion of the Committee's proceedings, the Dean shall provide a written report of the Committee's

findings and recommendations to the Rector. The report will include a determination of whether the charges have been substantiated, together with the Committee's recommendations for disciplinary sanctions. In turn, within five (5) Seminary business days of the receipt of the Dean's report, the Rector will notify the accused student in writing regarding the outcome of the hearing and the disciplinary sanctions to be imposed, if any. Unless good causes exist for rejecting the Committee's recommendations, the Rector's decision should reflect the Committee's recommendations.

4.3.4 Procedures for Non-Academic Misconduct. Allegations of non-academic student misconduct must be reported to the Director of Student Life, who will be responsible for an initial review of the allegations and any supporting facts. If the initial review shows the allegations to be lacking in merit, the allegations will be dismissed. If facts appear to support the allegations, the Director of Student Life may make a determination to take formal or informal action for imposition of appropriate disciplinary sanctions.

If determination is made to take informal action, the Director of Student Life may impose disciplinary warning consistent with 4.3.1(a) above, or, in consultation with the Dean, impose non-academic probation or suspension consistent with 4.3.1(b) above.

If the facts and allegations warrant further review, the Director of Student Life will make a determination to take formal disciplinary action. In this case, within ten (10) Seminary business days after the allegations were initially lodged with the Director of Student Life, accused students will receive written notification of the allegations or charges against them, of this procedural policy, and of their right to a hearing before the Committee on Student Discipline. The Dean will constitute the Committee on Student Discipline and refer to it the allegations and any supporting facts for the purposes of substantiating the charge(s) and making recommendations for disciplinary action.

A student charged with non-academic misconduct or violation of the *Code of Student Conduct* shall be presumed innocent of all allegations and charges until the Committee on Student Discipline has determined that the facts of the case indicate the student to be in violation of the *Code*. The Committee may review any facts supporting or opposing the allegations, whether offered through

documents or personal testimony.

Students charged with non-academic misconduct shall be permitted to attend in person any hearings or proceedings of the Committee, and be provided with an opportunity to respond to the charges. Students shall also be permitted to bring with him/her a friendly advisor of their own choosing, who shall be a fellow student, or members of the Faculty or Staff. The chosen friendly advisor shall not ordinarily be allowed direct participation in the proceedings, unless the accused student is unable to do so. Refusal by a student to participate in disciplinary proceedings shall ordinarily constitute substantiation of allegations against him/her, unless the Committee previously agrees to consider in written form whatever rebuttal the student desires to offer for the Committee's review.

The Dean shall be responsible for convening the appointed Committee on Student Discipline within two (2) weeks of initial receipt of written allegations and supporting documentation from the Director of Student Life, and subsequently for providing written notification to the Rector of the Committee's findings and recommendations for discipline. Sanctions for non-academic misconduct must be consistent with the policies and procedures of St. Tikhon's Seminary.

Within five (5) Seminary business days of the conclusion of the Committee's proceedings, the Dean shall provide a written report of the Committee's findings and recommendations to the Rector. The report will include a determination of whether the charges have been substantiated, together with the Committee's recommendations for disciplinary sanctions. In turn, within five (5) Seminary business days of the receipt of the Dean's report, the Rector will notify the accused student in writing regarding the outcome of the hearing and the disciplinary sanctions to be imposed, if any. Unless good causes exist for rejecting the Committee's recommendations, the Rector's decision should reflect the Committee's recommendations.

4.3.5 Appeals. An adverse action or decision concerning academic or non-academic misconduct against a student by the Director of Student Life / Dean may be appealed by the student to the Committee on Student Discipline. In cases where the Committee on Student Discipline initially heard allegations against the student and submitted its recommendations to the Rector, adverse

action by the Committee on Student Discipline may be appealed to the President of the Seminary.

Written notice of intent to appeal must be received by the Rector and the President within five (5) Seminary business days of the notification of adverse action, or by the deadline specified in the letter of notification, whichever is longer. Student failure to submit such written notice of intent to appeal by the stipulated deadline will cause the action to become final and no longer subject to appeal. If a student submits a written notice of intent to appeal an action, the effect of the action is stayed pending the outcome of the appeal. A specific date for an appeal review will be established no sooner than five (5) Seminary business days after the student submits a written notice of intent to appeal, unless the student requests an earlier review and it can be arranged.

Within ten (10) Seminary business days of the receipt of a written intent to appeal, the President of the Seminary or the President's designee(s) will conduct an appeal review of the grievance process. The appeal review may include a meeting with the student. Appeal review by the President is final, and cannot be further appealed. The President or designee(s) will notify the student of the final decision in writing, within five (5) Seminary business days of the established review.

Students should be aware that procedural hearings and appeal reviews established by the Seminary are not constituted or construed as legal proceedings. The intent of these hearings and reviews is to offer students a structured opportunity to be heard by the Faculty, the Dean, the Rector, and the President of the Seminary. While a friendly advocate or advisor may informally accompany the student to hearings, representation by legal counsel is ordinarily not permitted, or may be permitted only with prior written consent by the President of the Seminary, in extraordinary circumstances. However, if legal counsel is to be present for the student, the Seminary reserves the right to have legal counsel present as well.

4.3.6 Administrative Removal. It is the understanding of the Seminary Administration that regular disciplinary actions related to students will be handled according to the procedures outlined above. In extraordinary situations, however, a student who exhibits behavior that (1) poses a significant

risk to the health or safety of one's self or of others, (2) poses a significant risk of damage to property, (3) provides considerable disruption to the normal educational processes of the Seminary may be administratively removed on an interim basis pending a formal investigation. An administrative removal may be implemented by the Rector of the Seminary in consultation with the Dean. In most cases, administrative removal will be immediate and shall be for a reasonable length of time. If the situation warrants, the Seminary will follow its internal post-incident policies in following up with parties involved in the events connected to the removal. There is no appeal to implementation of an administrative removal. Note that at any time prior to the implementation of an administrative removal, a student may choose to withdraw voluntarily and take a leave of absence from the Seminary.

Decisions regarding administrative removal will be based on observations of the student's conduct, actions, and statements and not based on knowledge or belief that a student has a disability. Any student that is subject to administrative removal will be given the opportunity to be heard on the decision by the Rector and Dean with understanding that in exigent circumstances, this opportunity may be after the removal has gone into effect. The Seminary will apply this policy in a nondiscriminatory manner.

When a student is administratively removed, he/she shall be provided with the following in writing:

- The reason(s) for this action;
- Conditions which must be met prior to the individual's re-instatement (if appropriate). In appropriate cases, this will include recommendation that an individual receive professional counseling/intervention;
- A delineation (if any) of investigative process related to circumstances leading to the action;
- Information regarding the student's presence on campus or use of Seminary services/facilities; and
- Results of non-compliance with the conditions for re-instatement.

The written plan outlined above may be subject to amendment as determined by the Rector.

The Seminary Administration considers the following actions of students to be subject to immediate consideration of administrative removal:

- Instances of physical, sexual, or verbal assault;
- Instances of destruction of personal or Seminary Property; and/or
- Threat of injury to self, others persons, or property.

If the Rector determines that the issues connected to the removal warrant the consideration of an individual's dismissal from the Seminary, the Rector shall initiate a disciplinary process in accord with policies delineated in Section 4.3.4 above.

It is understood that a student returning to the Seminary following the administrative removal will enter a probationary period upon his/her return.

Section 5: Uniform Grievance Process

5.0 Introduction. St. Tikhon's Seminary is committed to equitable, fair, and reasonable resolution of disputable issues and concerns that may arise in the normal course of institutional life and processes among various constituencies of the Seminary community. The Seminary encourages the application of principles of Christian charity, open communication, mutual civility, courtesy, and respect in seeking proper resolution of such issues and concerns. Occasionally, however, because of differences in perceptions and existing limitations of human nature, the need to effectively address issues and concerns necessitates the application of formal procedures in seeking effective resolution of issues of redress of grievance. For this reason the Seminary has established a uniform formal process to guide orderly procedures to address grievances.

5.1 Procedures. The following procedures will uniformly apply in addressing grievances:

5.1.1 Petitions and Grievances. The Seminary has established policies to deal with two areas of concern – “Petition and “Grievance”.

- (a) “Petitions” are requests from students seeking exceptions to policy or relief from Seminary rules and regulations because of alleged special medical, legal, or personal circumstances beyond student control (illness, death, etc.).
- (b) “Grievances” arise when students perceive actions by particular faculty or staff members, or the existence of specific situations, to be unfair or unreasonable; or when students perceive that they are adversely affected by perceptions of arbitrariness, bias, unfairness, or unreasonable deviation from Seminary policy or practice; or, in absence of defined policy or established practice, when they perceive their academic or personal well-being, security, or safety to be threatened, injured, or compromised; and in all cases when informal communication with their instructors or administrative staff members do not appear to have resolved stated issues or concerns. Thus, the fundamental criterion for initiating grievance procedures is reasonable belief by an individual student or a group of students that an arbitrary,

biased, capricious, unreasonable, or unfair decision of Seminary Faculty, Staff, or Administrators has adversely affected some aspect of their Seminary life, and that informal attempts at resolution of the issue(s) in question have failed to bring relief.

5.1.2 Classification of Grievances. In general, student grievances are classified as academic, non-academic, or procedural grievances, as follows:

- (a) Academic grievances are allegations of error in academic judgment, or of arbitrary, biased, capricious, or unfair assessment or evaluation of a student's academic work, or other matters pertaining to academic courses, programs, or degree requirements;
- (b) Non-academic grievances involve allegations of alleged bias or prejudice, or abuse of supervisory authority, unrelated to academic courses, programs, or degree requirements; and
- (c) Procedural grievances involve allegations of procedural error (i.e., the failure to follow established written policies and procedures) in the course of dealing with issues that arise in the course of Seminary life.

The following understandings and procedures shall inform and guide grievances processes.

5.1.3 What May Be Grieved. The Seminary Administration has authority in general to establish policies governing the academic and community life of students, faculty members, and staff members. The Seminary seeks to exercise its authority reasonably and fairly. Accordingly, students have the right to question whether decisions are reasonable, fair, and consistent with established policies and practices.

- (a) The grievance procedure is to be used for the resolution of all academic, non-academic, and procedural grievances against particular actions or decisions of faculty members or administrative staff members of St. Tikhon's Seminary that are perceived by students to be arbitrary, unreasonable, or unfair;
- (b) Actions or decisions are grievable only if they involve an error in professional judgment or conduct, procedural irregularity, a misapplication or misinterpretation of Seminary policy, rules or

- regulations, or federal or state law, or a misapplication or interpretation of a standard of the Seminary's accrediting body;
- (c) The grievance process may not be used to challenge standing Seminary policies and procedures of general applicability;
 - (d) Additionally, the grievance procedure may not be used to grieve:
 - i. Allegations or claims based on purchases or contracts;
 - ii. Allegations or claims against faculty members or staff members that are unrelated to their function or role at the Seminary;
 - iii. Disciplinary matters and appeals related to the *Code of Student Conduct* (Issues of grievance related to the Code of Student Conduct are governed by the policies set forth above in Section 4.3); or
 - iv. Matters for which other procedures have been established by Seminary policy.

5.1.4 Who May Grieve. Matriculated and non-matriculated students who are currently enrolled in courses or programs at St. Tikhon's Seminary, or who were participants in a Seminary-sponsored educational event or function at the time of the incident being grieved, may use the grievance procedures outlined below. The person(s) filing the grievance must be the alleged victim(s) of unfair or unreasonable treatment. Grievances cannot be filed on behalf of another person.

5.1.5 Other Remedies. The existence or use of the grievance procedure outlined by this policy does not preclude or bar students from seeking resolution of issues or filing claims in other appropriate forums or jurisdictions, as may be defined by civil or ecclesiastical law (canon law).

5.1.6 Time Limits. Ordinarily, students are expected to seek redress of grievance promptly, but in any case no later than two months, or sixty (60) days after becoming aware, or receiving notice, of an adverse action, decision, or occasion giving rise to the grievance, unless otherwise specified by existing Seminary policy. A student's right to initiate grievance proceedings ceases six months after graduation, or from the end of the student's last semester of enrollment. The administrator with jurisdiction over the grievance may reasonably extend this time limit for good cause (i.e., an active effort at an informal resolution of the issue at hand), if the student makes a request for

extension within the initial 60 day limit.

5.1.7 Grievance Process. The overriding consideration in dealing with grievances is fairness. This requires that all parties are aware of the evidence that is being considered, and are given an opportunity to be heard during the process. It also requires that individuals whose judgment is being questioned shall not sit in judgment of their own decisions or actions.

The grievance process is normally divided into three stages: informal inquiry, formal review, and appeal, with increasing formality at each successive stage of the process. At each stage in the process, parties to a grievance are entitled to be accompanied by a friendly advocate, normally selected from among the students, Faculty, or Staff of the Seminary, for advice and support. Such an advocate, however, may not participate in any formal proceeding or act on behalf of the aggrieved in any capacity.

(Note: Students should be aware that the process of procedural review and appeal established by this policy is not constituted or construed as legal proceedings, but is a mechanism to offer students a structured and fair opportunity to be heard by fellow students, faculty members, administrators, and officers of the Seminary. Representation by legal counsel is ordinarily not permitted, or may be permitted only with prior written consent by the President of the Seminary, in extraordinary circumstances. However, if legal counsel is to be present for the student, the Seminary reserves the right to have legal counsel present as well.)

5.1.7.1 Stage One: Informal Inquiry. Informal inquiry is initiated when the aggrieved student goes directly to the individual whose decision or act is being questioned. Initial communication may be either in person (e.g., a conversation) or in writing (e.g., a letter asking for clarification or explanation of the decision or act being questioned). Informal communication is generally an effective mechanism for resolution of disputable issues, permitting an initial airing of differences in perception, together with an assessment or evaluation of conflicting points of view. A course instructor or member of the Staff or Administration is normally expected to informally respond to the student inquiry within ten (10) Seminary business days of the initial request with clarification or reason for the

decision.

5.1.7.2 Stage Two: Formal Review. Students who are not satisfied with the outcome of an informal inquiry may, within ten (10) Seminary business days after receiving a response to their initial informal request for clarification, or a reason for an allegedly unfair decision, initiate a **formal review** by submitting a written request to the appropriate authority, indicating the grounds on which the request is being made, and detailing the results of efforts undertaken at the informal level.

- (a) If the grievance is a grade grievance, or another academic grievance pertaining to matters and issues of educational policy, or is a non-academic or procedural grievance pertaining to general matters and issues of Seminary policy, the written request for formal review should be directed to the Dean.
- (b) If the grievance involves allegations of administrative or procedural error, or instances of alleged bias or prejudice, or abuse of supervisory authority, the written review should be directed to the Rector.

If petitioning for formal review, the student must, in his/her written request, observe the following conditions:

- (a) State how the decision or action being grieved is arbitrary or unfair, or harmful to the grievant, and list the Seminary policies, procedures or regulations, or state or federal laws, if any, that have been violated, if known;
- (b) Name the respondent person(s) against whom the grievance is being filed;
- (c) State how the respondent(s) are responsible for the action or decision;
- (d) Describe informal efforts that have been previously undertaken to bring the matter to an equitable resolution, and the results of such informal processes; and
- (e) State the requested remedy.

If on the face of the written request it becomes clear that the matter at hand cannot be grieved under this procedure; or that the person

filing the grievance has no grievance rights; or the grievance has not been filed within the proper time limits, the Dean shall so indicate in a letter to the grievant. Otherwise, within ten (10) Seminary business days, the Dean or a designee shall provide to the student a formal written response indicating what action, if any, will be taken in response to the student's written request.

In the case of grade grievances, the Dean (or his designee) may, at his discretion, meet with the student and/or instructor together or separately to discuss the matter. All documents and any recordings that are part of the Dean's review will be compiled into a record of the grievance. A detailed written record of such discussions shall be kept, on the basis of which the Dean (or designee) shall prepare a written decision and send it to the student, faculty member, and the Rector of the Seminary, who shall make a final determination regarding the grievance. A meeting is then held in which the Rector, Dean, faculty member, and student will discuss the final decision made concerning the grievance. If the matter is appealed beyond the Rector, the record shall be forwarded to the Office of the President of the Seminary.

Note: These procedures are set forth to guide only the formal grievance of final grades. Test scores and interim grades are not deemed appropriate for formal grievance.

In no event shall persons who review a grade grievance substitute their subjective judgment about academic quality for the judgment of the instructor. However, grievances may be substantiated if it is determined on the basis of the evidence that the grade was based on a factor other than academic merit, or if there has been a clear error in grading based on objective criteria.

5.1.7.3 Stage Three: Appeal. Students who are not satisfied with the outcome of a formal review at the level of the Rector, may initiate **an appeal** to the President of the Seminary, the third and final stage of the grievance process. Written notice of appeal must be submitted to the President within ten (10) Seminary business days after receiving from the Rector a response to the written request for formal review. The written notice of appeal must:

- (a) Identify the parties to the grievance;
- (b) Provide a brief statement of the grounds for appeal, which should contain a list of alleged errors in the decision or decision-making process;
- (c) To the extent possible, state which federal or state law(s), Seminary policy(ies), procedures or regulations have been violated by each of the alleged errors;
- (d) Indicate what remedy is requested;
- (e) Be signed by the appellant and dated; and
- (f) Include a copy of the decision being appealed.

Appeals received more than ten (10) Seminary business days after the student's reception of the Rector's decision (or delivery of the decision was attempted) will not be allowed and the decision made by the Rector shall be final.

5.1.7.4 Consideration of Merit. In considering the merit of an appeal, at his sole discretion, the President of the Seminary may:

- (a) Ask parties to the grievance to submit written statements of their positions for purposes of appeal, and render a decision based on review of the record of the case, together with any written appeal statements submitted by the parties at the President's request. In this case, no right to a hearing or oral presentation in appeal shall be presumed or granted.
- (b) Constitute a four-member **Ad Hoc Grievance Committee** to hear the grievance and to submit recommendations to him.
 - i. In such a case, Committee members shall include two students and two faculty or staff members who are not part of the same office or immediate administrative unit as the respondent(s), are perceived to have had no personal involvement in earlier stages of the grievance procedure, and have no personal interest in the outcome of the proceeding.
 - ii. Within ten (10) Seminary business days after receiving from the President notice of being constituted, the Ad Hoc Committee will review any

facts supporting or opposing the allegations, by documents or personal testimony from all parties to the grievance, including the aggrieved student(s), respondent(s), and any witness(es). All parties shall be permitted to attend in person any hearings or proceedings of the Committee, and provided with the opportunity to rebut allegations against them. Aggrieved students shall also be permitted to bring with them a friendly advisor, who may be a member of Faculty or Staff. The chosen advisor shall not ordinarily be allowed direct participation in the proceedings. The Chair of the *Ad Hoc* Committee shall be permitted to grant, for good cause, reasonable time extensions to all parties to the proceeding. Formal rules of evidence will not apply, and the Committee may consider any evidence it believes to be relevant and reliable. Any hearings must be recorded so that all persons can be clearly heard.

- iii. Within sixty (60) calendar days after the conclusion of Committee proceedings, the Chair shall issue a written report of the Committee's findings. The report shall address and resolve all material factual issues in the dispute, note any procedural errors in the formal review, and issue a conclusion regarding the alleged misapplication or misinterpretation of Seminary policy, or state or federal law, and recommend remedies as appropriate. An official record of the proceedings, including copies of all correspondence with the parties, all evidence submitted to the Committee (documentary evidence that the Committee declined to consider must be so marked and segregated), the recording or transcript of the hearing, and anything else considered by the panel in reaching its recommendation shall be attached.
- iv. The report and official record shall be delivered to the President, with copies of the report to be sent to

- the parties. Dissenting members of the Committee may file a minority report at the same time.
- v. Within five (5) Seminary business days after receipt of the Committee Chair's written report, the President of the Seminary or his designee will notify the aggrieved student(s) in writing regarding the outcome of their appeal.

In all cases, the decision of the President of the Seminary shall be deemed final, and no further internal appeal shall be permitted.

5.1.8 *Ex Parte* Contacts. *Ex parte* communication occurs when one party shares information with another party without including all parties to the grievance. Because *ex parte* contact or communication is always subjective and one-sided, once a student has requested a formal resolution of a grievance, no *ex parte* communication between parties to grievance procedures concerning the merits of a case should be permitted. Discussion of the grievance or evidence outside the grievance process is inappropriate and should be avoided. All communication should be in writing, and distributed simultaneously to all parties. The rule against *ex parte* contacts also applies to communication with everyone who is responsible for deciding appeals.

5.1.9 Confidentiality. All persons involved in any aspect of grievance proceedings are expected to maintain strict confidentiality regarding such proceedings. State and federal law govern the privacy rights of students, Faculty, and Staff. Disclosure of any information shall be on a "need to know" basis, and always should follow the Seminary's policy on confidentiality. Any questions about disclosure of information should be directed to the President of the Seminary in writing.

5.1.10 Modification of Procedure. In any particular case, the President of the Seminary may approve modification of the grievance procedures detailed in this *Handbook* if the modification is for good cause, and does not violate due process rights, policies of the Orthodox Church in America, or the policies, regulations, and procedures of St. Tikhon's Seminary.

This *Student Handbook* supersedes all previous codes and handbooks.
Glory to God for All Things.