

# ANCTI POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Disclaimer

The American National Catholic Theological Institute (“ANCTI” or “Institute”) is a non-accredited private theological school offering courses of study and spiritual formation under the auspices of the American National Catholic Church (“ANCC”) for seminarians of the ANCC and other independent Catholic jurisdictions, for its clergy’s continuing education, and for the deepening of its members’ understanding of their faith and practice. The ANCTI does not offer any academic or professional degrees for the completion of its courses of study, although students who successfully complete its programs may be awarded a certificate of completion. The ANCTI does not represent to its students or any academic institution that its courses may be transferrable or applied for another institution’s program of studies.

## Admissions

“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit, fruit that will last . . .” (John 16:16). We do not choose to serve Christ, rather it is Christ who chooses us. Individuals responding to the call of Christ enter the American National Catholic Theological Institute through two main paths: Inquirers who have discerned their call with the Vocations Team, and those who seek admission from a jurisdiction outside the ANCC.

The ANCTI welcomes prospective seminarians accepted through our Vocation Team’s process of discernment. Inquirers who have been invited to apply are deemed “admitted” upon satisfactory completion, review and acceptance of their application. Students seeking admission as seminarians from jurisdictions outside the ANCC must submit a separate application for admission to the Institute. Upon review of their application, they will be notified by the Rector of their admission status.

Acceptance into the ANCTI carries no assurance, promise or agreement, implied or otherwise, that a student will be approved for candidacy or presented for ordination in the ANCC.

## Transfer of Credits and Credit for Prior Learning

Only credits from an accredited program of study will be considered for transfer. Credits earned within the past ten years prior to application are eligible for transfer. Formal application for transfer of credits must be made to the Rector no less than 8 weeks before a student begins a course of study in the Institute. The application must be accompanied by an official transcript from the student’s former academic institution(s). A maximum of 66% of a student’s credits may be transferred to the Institute. Where a student presents with other life skills and/or experience, an assessment will be made consistent with the Credit for Prior Learning model presented in the ANCC Manual of Formation of Presbyteral Ministry.

## **Withdrawals**

### **From Courses**

Institute courses may be added or dropped without penalty within the first two calendar weeks after the start of the first course class (inclusive of the first class). The student must notify in writing both the instructor and the Registrar of the withdrawal. A full tuition refund will be granted, and the course will not be listed on the student's transcript.

Students withdrawing after the end of the second week but before the fifth week of class will be offered a refund of half the tuition, and a "W" will be recorded on their student transcript. Students who drop a course after the fifth week are not entitled to a tuition refund and a failing grade will be recorded on their student transcript.

### **Leave of Absence**

Leave of Absence: A student may voluntarily request a leave of absence from Institute studies by submitting a written request on a Leave of Absence Request form provided by the Registrar. Upon approval of their leave, a student is charged a fee of \$25 per semester during the period of leave. Failure to pay this fee within 30 days of notification by the Registrar will result in the student being withdrawn from the Institute. Students may request up to two consecutive semesters of leave. Further consecutive leaves must be approved by the Rector. After two consecutive semesters of leave a student must either register for courses or withdraw from the Institute.

### **Withdrawal from the Institute**

Students seeking to withdraw from the Institute completely must submit a written request to do so to the Rector and complete the Institute Withdrawal Form that may be requested from the Registrar. There is no cost associated with requests to withdraw. Students who withdraw but subsequently desire to resume studies must apply for readmission. Readmitted students may resume their academic record prior to their withdrawal, depending upon the circumstances and the intervening time period. Tuition and fees are not reimbursed for withdrawal from the Institute.

## **Probation and Dismissal**

The Rector may place on academic probation a student who appears to be underperforming academically. A recommendation for probation must be made in writing by the student's instructor, stating the concern that leads the instructor to believe the student is in danger of failing. Students on probation may be required to receive additional academic support and monitoring to assist them in improving their academic situation.

The Rector may place on disciplinary probation any student who has demonstrably violated the Seminarian Code of Conduct or has been found behaving in a manner unbecoming of a member of the clergy. Students on disciplinary probation may not participate in Institute courses or programs for the period of time designated by the Rector, such period not to exceed two consecutive academic semesters. Students placed on disciplinary probation are required to pay a fee of \$25 per semester. There is no reimbursement of tuition and fees for students on disciplinary probation.

The Institute reserves the right to dismiss any student whose way of life does not conform to the Seminarian Code of Conduct or that is inconsistent with the expectations of an ordained minister of the Church or who does not otherwise exhibit gifts or potential for ordained ministry.

Students may also be dismissed for reasons of poor academic performance. A student is automatically dismissed from the Institute when she/he no longer has credits that may be applied for successful completion of an Institute program of studies. Students may appeal dismissals for academic reasons. Appeals are reviewed by a committee composed of the Rector, Registrar and a faculty member not directly involved in the student's case. The decision of this committee is final. There is no reimbursement of tuition and fees with dismissal from the Institute.

### **Readmission**

Seminarians seeking readmission must initiate the process by submitting a written request to the Rector no later than eight weeks before the start of the semester in which the seminarian would like to resume studies. In consultation with the Registrar and others, the Rector will decide on readmission based on the best interests of both the student and the Institute. As part of the readmission determination, and in view of the student's prior academic record, conduct and period of absence from the Institute, the student may be required to complete specific academic requirements as a condition for readmission.

### **Tuition and fees**

The tuition and fees are established by the Institute. Tuition is expected to be paid no later than one week before the start of a course in which the student has enrolled. Fees are to be paid no later than 30 days after the fee is assessed to the student unless other arrangements have been made in writing. Students experiencing financial difficulty may apply to the Rector for consideration for a financial scholarship. Students should request the Financial Scholarship Application form from the Registrar, usually at the time of registration.

### **Student Records (FERPA, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99)**

Student records are protected by Federal law providing for the privacy of student education records. Current and former students have the right to inspect or review educational files, records, or data that relate directly to him or her. A student who wishes to inspect information or records may do so by writing to the Registrar. Within 10 days of receipt of the written request, the Registrar will notify the student of the date and time when he or she may inspect the requested record or how a copy of the record may be transmitted to the student.

The Institute will not disclose student information without the student's written permission, with the following exceptions:

“Directory” information, unless the student requests such information not be disclosed. Directory information includes information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance;

Information provided to Institute officials with a legitimate educational interest;  
Other schools to which a student is transferring;  
Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;  
Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;  
Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the Institute;  
Accrediting organizations;  
To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; and  
Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies.

**Plagiarism** (*this section, with modifications, is taken from the Immaculate Conception Seminary Academic Handbook*)

Plagiarism is any language that is not the student's, whether in direct quotation or in paraphrasing, and that is not attributed to its proper source. Such language need not be limited to material in print but may also be specific data or intellectual concepts derived from verbal communication or electronic media. These include:

- a. Failure to document with any material copied directly from other sources (*e.g.*, with quotation marks, or other standard methods as indicated in Turabian).
- b. Failure to acknowledge paraphrased material (someone else's ideas)
- c. Failure to indicate sources in a bibliography and/or footnotes.
- d. Use of another's ideas as one's own for themes or compositions.

### **Why Plagiarism is a Serious Academic Offense and Morally Wrong**

Plagiarism is a serious academic offense in any educational setting and institution. It constitutes the double offense of intellectual theft of another's work and attempted fraud by passing off that other party's work as one's own. For these reasons, plagiarism is a serious moral offense, too. In addition, it causes the student to fail to learn the course material and impedes the instructor's ability to assist the student to a proper understanding of the subject matter. Thus, plagiarism is a foolish act, as well. Within the context of theological studies at the Institute, the theft and fraud that plagiarism amounts to are utterly incompatible with the pursuit of knowing the object of those studies, *i.e.*, the One Who is the Truth.

### **What Steps are Followed in Cases of Plagiarism**

**The Course Instructor.** The course instructor is the initial, principal authority for determining when a case of plagiarism has occurred. It also falls to the course instructor to determine the gravity of the incident, *i.e.*, whether it was occasioned by genuine ignorance or by knowing act, whether brief or lengthy, whether in direct quotation or in paraphrasing, etc. In a first-time offense, it is the instructor's task to decide on the proper penalty:

- a. a chance to resubmit the work in proper fashion with the possibility of a reduced grade for the assignment and/or course;

- b. to assign a failing grade for the assignment; or
- c. to assign a failing grade for the course.

The instructor also has the opportunity to inform the student of a correct understanding of academic integrity and the standards for academic work. The instructor should inform the Registrar, due to the possibility of other instances of plagiarism by a student, about which the course instructor would be less likely to know.

### **Official Institute Action**

Whenever an instance of plagiarism by a student is not a first-time offense, action by the Rector would supersede the instructor's decision regarding proper penalty. The Registrar acts as the primary intermediary if the incident requires steps by the Institute. The Registrar informs the Rector of all cases of plagiarism. In all cases of plagiarism, the seminarian's formation team is informed according to the instruction of the Rector. In any case of plagiarism by a student, the Institute reserves the right to impose the penalties of:

1. Dismissal from its programs;
2. Continuation in its programs under a provisional status that stipulates in a formal letter to the student that any repeated instance of plagiarism could result in dismissal.

### **Inclusive Language**

The Institute's administration and faculty desire to foster the use of inclusive language, when appropriate, and encourages its use in all Institute academic endeavors.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

The Institute will provide an environment for work and study where everyone engaged in the programs and courses of study offered by the Institute is treated with dignity and respect. Accordingly, the Institute will not tolerate and prohibits unlawful harassment of members of its community at any level because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, age, physical or mental disability, veteran status, marital status or any other protected characteristics protected by applicable federal, state and local law.

The Institute expects all students, staff, and faculty to remove from their behavior and speech, as well as from their thinking, all indications of racial and ethnic bias. Racism in any form will not be tolerated and will be met with disciplinary measures. All members of the Institute community are encouraged to celebrate the rich cultural heritage that each cultural group brings with them and to learn from the diversity of perspectives on life and ministry that each group possesses.

### **Americans with Disability Act (ADA)**

It is Institute policy that "No otherwise qualified disabled person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity" at the Institute (*see Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*). Individuals with a disability that requires special accommodations should inform the

Rector or course instructor as soon as possible so provisions can be made to accommodate the special learning needs related to their disability.

### **Sexual Harassment Policy**

The Institute is committed to providing a learning and working environment that is free of discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment, is strictly prohibited. Harassment is defined as unwelcome or unsolicited verbal, physical, or visual contact that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Any student or faculty or staff member who believe that they have been subjected to such treatment should immediately report such to the Rector or Dean of Students.

### **Anti-bullying**

Workplace and classroom bullying is driven by a perpetrators' need to control the targeted individual(s), and is initiated by bullies who choose targets, timing, place and methods, that may escalate to involve others who side with the bully, either voluntarily or through coercion. Bullying undermines the interests of the Institute when bullies' personal agendas take precedence over the goals and mission of the Institute. Any student or faculty or staff member who believe that they have been subjected to such treatment should immediately report such to the Rector or Dean of Students.

## **Seminarian Code of Conduct**

All seminarians are expected to uphold Christian values and conduct. This Seminarian Code of Conduct is closely modeled after the Code of Ministerial Behavior found in the Manual of Presbyteral Ministry in the American National Catholic Church.

### **Responsibility**

The public and private conduct of seminarians can inspire and motivate people, but it can also scandalize and undermine people's faith. Seminarians must, at all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany their work and studies. They must also know that God's goodness and grace support them in their endeavors.

Seminarians have a responsibility to witness, in all relationships, the chastity appropriate to their state in life. They must avoid any covert or overt sexual behaviors with those with whom their studies and formation involve them. This includes seductive speech or gestures as well as physical contact that sexually abuses, exploits or harasses another person. Seminarians are to provide safe environments in parishes, schools and other institutions where children and others can be assured that their boundaries will not be violated.

Seminarians should be aware of their own and other persons' vulnerability, especially when working alone with another, and be particularly aware that they bear the greater responsibility for maintaining sexual boundaries in a pastoral relationship, for they will be perceived to hold the greater power. They must not initiate sexual behavior and must refuse it when another invites or consents to it. They must give preference to the perspective and judgment of those who are vulnerable and dependent on them in order to determine whether touching would be an appropriate expression of pastoral care.

Seminarians must show prudent discretion before touching another person, since they cannot control how physical touch will be received. They should strive for greater self-awareness in order to recognize the sexual dynamics at work in pastoral relationships and to heed the warning signs that indicate when they are approaching boundary violations. Seminarians assume the burden of responsibility for establishing and maintaining clear, appropriate boundaries in all pastoral relationships with others.

Seminarians should satisfy needs for affection, intimacy, attraction, and affirmation outside the pastoral relationship. They should seek supervision, spiritual direction or other professional help to remain focused on their responsibilities and to hold firm to the sexual boundaries of the pastoral relationship.

Seminarians must intervene when there is evidence, or they have reasonable cause to suspect, that children are being abused in any way. Seminarians must report any suspected abuse or other violations of sexual conduct to the pastor, instructor or other individual who is their ecclesiastical superior.

Responsibility for adherence to this Code of Seminarian Conduct rests with the individual seminarian. Violations of this Code may lead to disciplinary action by the Institute and/or by the seminarian's ecclesiastical superior.

### **Conduct with Children and Youth**

Seminarians working with children and youth shall maintain an open and trustworthy relationship between them and their adult supervisors. All must be aware of their own and others' vulnerability when working alone with children. Always consider a team approach when working with children.

Physical contact with children can be misconstrued and should occur only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate, and never in private. One-on-one meetings with a young person are best held in a public area, or if that is not appropriate, then the door to the room is left open, and another responsible person is notified about the meeting.

Seminarians should refrain from a) the illegal possession and/or illegal use of drugs and/or alcohol at all times, and b) the use of alcohol when working with youth. Adults should never buy alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, videos, or reading material that is inappropriate and give it to young people.

Seminarians should not allow any young people to stay overnight in the cleric's private accommodations or residence. Youth ministers and all adults should always meet with young people in areas that are visible and accessible. It is always a safe practice to have two adults in the area where youth are present or when driving children home.

Seminarians should not provide shared, private, or over-night accommodation for individual young people including, but not limited to, accommodations in any Church owned facility, private residence, hotel room, or any other place where there is no other adult supervision present.

In rare, emergency situations, when accommodation is necessary for the health and wellbeing of the youth, the seminarian should take extraordinary care to protect all parties from the appearance of impropriety and from all risk of harm. Use a team approach to managing emergency situations.

### **Sexual Conduct**

Seminarians must not, for sexual gain or intimacy, exploit the trust placed in them by the faith community.

Seminarians must avoid developing inappropriate relationships with minors, other staff, or parishioners. Seminarians must always behave in a professionally supportive manner. No seminarian may exploit another person for sexual purposes.

Allegations of sexual misconduct should be taken seriously and reported to the appropriate civil and ecclesial authorities according to the policies and procedures of the ANCC. Seminarians should review and know the contents of the child abuse regulations and reporting requirements for their state of residence or where they are engaged in pastoral work or academic studies and should follow those mandates.



## **Harassment**

Seminarians must not engage in physical, psychological, written, or verbal harassment of staff, volunteers, or parishioners and must not tolerate such harassment by others.

Seminarians, to the extent they have a role, shall provide a professional work environment that is free from physical, psychological, written, or verbal intimidation or harassment.

Harassment encompasses a broad range of physical, written, or verbal behavior including, but not limited to: physical or mental abuse, racial insults, derogatory ethnic slurs, unwelcome sexual advances or touching, sexual comments or sexual jokes, requests for sexual favors used as a condition of employment or to affect other personnel decisions, such as promotion or compensation, and the display of offensive materials.

Harassment can be a single severe incident or a persistent pattern of behavior where the purpose or the effect is to create a hostile, offensive, or intimidating environment. Allegations of harassment should be taken seriously and reported immediately to the seminarian's ecclesiastical superior, the Institute Rector or Dean of Students, as the case may be. The policies and procedures of the ANCC and of the ANCTI will be followed to protect the rights of all involved.