

# Union Theological Seminary General Academic Information

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## General Academic Information

Students are responsible for acquainting themselves fully with the Seminary's rules and policies, published in this catalog and elsewhere, such as in the course booklets and registration materials. Curriculum is subject to change without notice at any time at the sole discretion of the Seminary's administration. Students are expected to participate fully and attend faithfully all classes for which they are enrolled, including tutorial sessions and other special course meetings. Except in cases of emergency, absences should be reported in advance to the professor since absence from class may be grounds for failing a course.

## Grades & Requirements

### Grading

The grading system uses Credit with Distinction (CD), Credit (CR), Marginal Credit (MC), or No Credit (NC) instead of traditional letter grades. It has been the consensus of the Faculty that the mark of CR (credit) is intended for work that would fall in the B range (inclusive of A minus) on a traditional letter-grade scale. The grade of CD (credit with distinction) represents work that is truly outstanding and would merit a full A in a letter system. The grade of MC (marginal credit) indicates marginally satisfactory graduate-level work (less than B- level work) but is a passing grade. The grade of NC (no credit) is given for work that (a) is not acceptable as graduate-level academic work or (b) is simply not completed.

This grading system applies to all students except those enrolling here from other schools, to whom traditional letter grades are given. (Union students in courses in other schools may normally expect to receive letter grades in those courses.) Under UTS grading system, instructors prepare individual written evaluations at the end of the semester to detail the strengths and weaknesses of a student's work. Reasons for failing to earn credit, when that is the case, are stated in the evaluation. The evaluations are kept on file in the Registrar's Office and copies are given to the student, but they are not a part of the student's transcript. In the semester in which a candidate will graduate, he or she may request that a professor prepare a summary evaluation of his or her academic record and, upon request, a copy of this summary can be issued with the student's transcript.

### R Credit

M. Div. seniors, M.A. students in their second year, and doctoral candidates may be allowed to enroll for R (reading) credit which usually entails reduced requirements in a course, but, in every case involves faithful and regular attendance. Students must indicate on their registration cards the intention to take a course for R credit and must complete whatever requirements may be set by the instructor. When a

course is listed for a variable number of points (e.g., 1, 2, or 3 points), only the least number of points is available for R credit. Courses taken in other institutions may not ordinarily be taken for R credit.

An M.Div. senior may enroll for 4-6 points of R credit, in a maximum of two courses, toward the 78 point requirement for the M.Div. In the second year when the thesis is being written, an M.A. candidate may enroll for one course of up to 3 points of R credit to be counted toward the point requirement for the degree. These points may be taken only in elective courses. For the S.T.M. no R credit may be counted toward the point requirement for the degree. In the Union Ph.D. program the student will consult the principal adviser with regard to which courses should be taken for regular credit and which for R credit.

### **Transfer of Credits**

Students who have successfully completed graduate courses or a graduate degree in an accredited theological school prior to their admission to Union Theological Seminary may request that transfer credits be applied toward the Union Master of Divinity or Master of Arts degrees. Except for courses appropriately taken on a pass/fail basis, only courses in which the student earned the grade of B or better will be accepted for transfer credit.

A maximum of 50% of the required credits for the M.Div. or M.A. degrees will be considered for transfer. M.Div. transfer students must take at least one course at Union in the Biblical, Historical, Theological, and Practical Theology fields. M.A. transfer students must take at least one course in each of these fields except Practical Theology. The final semester's work for the degree is to be done at the Seminary, except by permission of the academic dean.

Transfer credits are not accepted for the Master of Sacred Theology or Doctor of Philosophy degrees.

A written request for transfer credits should be made when submitting an application. These requests will be reviewed by the dean of academic affairs.

### **Completion of Course Requirements and Requests for Extensions**

Instructors set the dates on which papers and other requirements, apart from final examinations, are due. The latest date that may be set in the semester is prescribed by the academic calendar. (Please note that those graduating may have earlier deadlines than others in the second semester.) Every student is expected to submit course assignments on time.

For good and sufficient cause, such as personal illness or other serious circumstances beyond the student's control, a student may ask the instructor for an extension of the due date of a requirement in a course. Instructors may grant extensions of up to one week at their discretion. Of course, extensions must be requested before the work is due. Late work completed with permission during the semester is to be given directly to the professor.

If the student needs more than a one-week extension, the request must be approved in writing by the professor of the course and by the academic dean, and the approval must be on record in the Registrar's Office. The maximum time given will be thirty days. An application to the dean for a thirty-day extension must be requested before the end of the reading period. When the late work is ready, the student gives the assignment to the Registrar's Office. The registrar will forward the paper or assignment to the professor with an official request for the student's final grade in the course. If the registrar does not receive the paper or assignment in question by the extension date, the student and the professor will be notified that NC (no credit) has been recorded as the student's final grade for the course, and the professor will prepare an evaluation of any other work the student may have completed in the course. Final grades are not subject to change. All of the above applies to courses taken at another institution as well as to those taken at the Seminary.

In the spring semester, extensions can never be made available to graduating students. Except for final examinations, members of the graduating class must complete all requirements by the dates set by instructors, which in no case may be later than the deadline given for graduating students in the academic calendar. If an assignment needed for meeting graduation requirements is handed in after that deadline, the student's graduation must be postponed until the following year.

### **Policies and Procedures for Academic Appeals**

In the procedures described below, the reference is to regular business days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. Also, it is a rule of the procedures that any matter that is adjudicated in one appeal cannot be used to form the basis of a second or separate appeal. These procedures for academic appeals will be posted by the registrar.

#### *Appealing a Failing Grade:*

If a student believes that her/his class work has been erroneously evaluated by an instructor, resulting in a grade of No Credit, the following process of appeal should be used to resolve the matter.

#### **Step 1. Discussion with the Instructor and Requesting Instructor's Review.**

The student who has grounds for believing that her/his course work has been erroneously evaluated is expected to bring the complaint to the instructor's attention in writing, with a copy to the academic dean, and to have a conference with the instructor to discuss the grade and the evaluation. The written request to the instructor for a review must be made by registration day of the semester following receipt of the report of NC. The instructor will normally provide the student and the registrar with an additional written explanation of the grade by the end of the first full week of classes. If, upon completing this step, the student still desires to continue the appeal, she/he may petition the Committee on Standing (Step 2) for review by writing to the academic dean by the end of the second full week of classes. If no written reply is received from the instructor by the end of the first full week of classes, then the student may proceed to Step 2 if she or he chooses.

## Step 2. Petition to the Committee on Standing.

In petitioning the Committee on Standing to review a grade of NC, the student must have completed Step 1 of this appeals process. The petition to the Committee must state the grounds for appeal and be accompanied by a copy of the course syllabus, copies of all assigned written work and examinations, and a copy of the instructor's evaluations. The instructor will also provide a copy of the syllabus, along with any revisions of the syllabus and any additional report he/she might think fit, by the end of the third week of classes. The Committee on Standing shall review the materials and make a decision that is not subject to appeal by October 15/March 15. (In the event that the instructor is a member of the Committee on Standing, she or he shall be replaced in this matter by another faculty member appointed by the academic dean.) The academic dean normally will inform the student the instructor of the disposition of the appeal by October 30/March 30. During the appeal process, the grade given by the instructor will continue to appear on the student's record.

### *Appealing Academic Dismissal:*

A student who has received a letter of academic dismissal from the Committee on Standing may feel that extenuating circumstances warrant reconsideration of his or her case. The following process has been established to permit appeal of academic dismissal. A student who has been dismissed from her/his program by the Committee on Standing may petition the academic dean in writing within 10 days of receiving her/his letter of academic dismissal. This written petition should contain all new and relevant information bearing upon the student's academic work and the appeal. The dean shall make the final decision on the matter and shall inform the student of the disposition of her/his appeal within 10 days. The dean's decision is not subject to appeal.

### *Appealing an Accommodation:*

A student who has requested and been denied accommodation in testing or completion of written work for reasons other than disability may appeal the instructor's decision by petitioning the academic dean in writing within 5 days of the denial of her/his initial request for the accommodation. The petition should state the reasons for requesting the accommodation, and should include the specifics of the requested accommodation, and the date which the student proposed for the completion of the work in question. The academic dean will inform the student of her/his decision within 5 days. The dean's decision is not subject to appeal.

### *Appealing an Accommodation for Disability:*

All requests for academic adjustments for disabilities (temporary or permanent) are to be made in writing to the associate dean for student life, the Section 504 Coordinator, accompanied by the proper medical documentation. A student with a disability whose request for accommodation has been denied may appeal the decision of the Section 504 Coordinator by petitioning the academic dean in writing within 15 days of being informed of the Coordinator's decision. The petition should include the original request, information about the accommodation offered by the Office of Student Life, if any, and the

reasons that the student feels the accommodation offered does not adequately meet his/her disability needs. The academic dean will inform the student of her/his decision within 10 days.

The dean's decision is not subject to appeal. For more information about services to students with disabilities, please contact the Section 504 Coordinator, Dean Yvette Wilson in AD 108, at 212/280-1396 or [ywilson@uts.columbia.edu](mailto:ywilson@uts.columbia.edu).

### **Tuition Obligation**

In the course of completing a program, every candidate is obliged to pay tuition units equal to the number of semesters normally required to complete the degree requirements, i.e., the M.Div. candidate must pay six tuition units; the M.A. candidate, four; the S.T.M. candidate, two; and the Union Ph.D. candidate, four doctoral tuition units. The number of semesters needed to complete the program and hence the number of tuition units required may be reduced when a candidate is admitted to advanced standing that is equivalent to at least one full semester at the Seminary. Lesser grants of transfer credit will not affect the candidate's tuition obligation. Any reduction in the number of tuition units required of a candidate will be stated in the letter granting advanced standing in the program.

Every student is expected to enroll consecutively in each semester after admission to candidacy until all requirements are completed and the degree has been conferred, except when a leave of absence is granted by the dean, thereby excusing a candidate from registering for a given semester. A candidate may enroll each semester for a full tuition unit (which allows registration for 7 to 15 curriculum points) or for a half tuition unit (which allows registration for up to 6 curriculum points) until the required number of tuition units have been accumulated. A candidate pursuing studies on a part-time basis will accumulate the tuition units required for the program before the academic requirements have been completed. Candidates who have met the requirement for tuition but still have outstanding academic requirements must enroll each semester for Extended Residence or Matriculation and Facilities, as appropriate, and pay the attendant fee in order to satisfy the remaining academic requirements for the degree. During the semester of Extended Residence or Matriculation and Facilities the candidate must, insofar as possible, complete all degree requirements that remain outstanding.

Tuition paid for courses in which the candidate was enrolled but failed to earn credit will not count toward meeting the tuition obligation. Tuition paid for approved courses in other institutions will count toward meeting the tuition obligation. A candidate who has permission to study full-time in another institution with the understanding that the credit earned there will satisfy degree requirements at the Seminary will be excused from paying tuition units for the number of full semesters for which credit is granted.

## **Continuous Registration and Leave of Absence**

Continuous registration until the completion of all requirements is required of each candidate for a degree. Students are excused from this requirement only when granted a leave of absence by the academic dean. A student who must interrupt studies for a compelling reason may, with the prior written approval of the academic dean, be excused from the Seminary for a leave of absence not to exceed 60 days if, as a practical matter, an absence of this length can be permitted.

## **The Reading Period**

Late each semester, after formal classes have ended and just before final examinations, a period of time is set aside as reading days, usually a week. It is done in the belief that students can profit from an opportunity for greater concentration in reading and study after the main materials of the courses have been presented. The reading period provides some time for further study in areas of deep interest or special need. It is important that all students take fullest advantage of it. Instructors are available as usual for conferences with students during reading week, although classes do not meet.

## **Masters Degree Thesis Information**

The Thesis is required of all M.A. candidates and the Thesis or Senior Project is required of all M.Div. candidates who have not chosen the additional 6-points of elective credit allowed in that program. Below, you will find pertinent information and downloadable forms for declaring your option for fulfilling this requirement.

Please note: Everyone (M.Div. and M.A.) must indicate to the Registrar's Office his or her intention for fulfilling the thesis requirement by November 1. That means you must return either the M.Div. thesis option declaration form (whether or not you plan on doing a thesis or senior project) or the M.A. thesis topic declaration form. M.Div. candidates who choose to take the 6 additional elective points must indicate this on the Thesis option declaration form.

## **S.T.M. Candidates**

S.T.M. candidates prepare an Extended Paper of 30-40 pages on some limited topic in their chosen field of major study. It is written during either the fall or spring semester as an extended or enlarged adaptation of the requirements of a seminar or other advance-level course or guided reading. Below you will find a downloadable form for declaring the Extended Paper topic. This form should be submitted to the Registrar's Office by November 1.

## Policies & Procedures

### Plagiarism

Students at Union are expected to observe the highest standards of integrity and honesty in their academic work. A critical part of such honesty consists of (i) the complete absence of plagiarism in submitted work and (ii) proper acknowledgment of the ideas of others.

Plagiarism consists of the appropriating and presenting as one's own of the writings or other creative work of another person or persons without acknowledgment. It is a dishonest violation of the intellectual property of another, and ethically akin to fraud and theft. All students at Union are expected to understand what plagiarism is and to avoid it in all circumstances. Plagiarism can take the form of quoting sentences or whole paragraphs of text (or image, or musical score as the case may be) without the use of quotation marks, or without adequate bibliographic citation. It can also be committed by the close paraphrasing of text written by another if it is done without due acknowledgment of the source. Minor verbal changes in a text that has been appropriated do not remove the consequences of plagiarism.

To avoid plagiarism, students should always use quotation marks and an appropriate bibliographic reference when quoting the text of another. Verbal transcription of a substantial piece of text without quotation marks may constitute plagiarism even if the original author is cited or referred to in some way.

It is also good academic practice always to cite, with appropriate bibliographic reference, the source of an idea presented in a paper or other submission, when that idea originated with another person and was derived from their work. This applies even when the idea is presented in the student's own words. Failure so to cite the ideas of another is bad scholarship. Plagiarism is subject to academic penalties including a failing grade for the course in which the plagiarism occurs. It is also subject to disciplinary penalties up to and including dismissal from the Seminary.

### Disciplinary Procedure for Treating Allegations of Plagiarism:

Whenever plagiarism is suspected in a student's work, the instructor of the class is required to meet with the student to inform him or her of the suspicion. Where after discussion the instructor is satisfied either (i) that no plagiarism has in fact occurred or (ii) that the fault was very minor and that the student has promised to correct his or her academic practice in future, no further action need be taken.

Nevertheless, the instructor shall in all such cases (i) draw the student's attention to the Seminary's policy documents on the subject and (ii) submit a brief written report of the incident to the academic dean. Where the infraction is serious and substantial, the instructor must report the facts in full to the academic dean, who will meet with the student and the instructor separately and/or together. After investigating the matter the academic dean will refer the matter to the Committee on Standing for

adjudication. In that event both instructor and student will be permitted to make representations to the Committee on Standing either in writing or in person, or both. The decisions of the Committee on Standing shall be communicated by the dean to the students and to the instructor in writing. These decisions are final and not subject to appeal.

### **Inclusive Language**

Union Theological Seminary is committed to equality for women, men and transgender persons of every racial, ethnic and religious background. Recognizing that language has often been used to imply racial and sexual inferiority, the Seminary urges student, faculty and staff members to avoid racist, sexist, ablist or discriminatory language and avoid assumptions about family composition, marital status, sexual orientation and racial, ethnic, cultural and gender identities and expressions in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in their writings. Failure to abide by appropriate behavioral norms in this regard can constitute grounds for discipline under the Seminary's anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies.

### **Good Standing, Marginal Credit, Academic Probation and Discipline**

Satisfactory work in courses and satisfactory progress in fulfilling the degree requirements are expected of all candidates. Every student at Union is expected to observe the highest standards in his or her academic and scholarly work. Any student found guilty of plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty will be subject to the discipline of the Seminary, including suspension and dismissal from the student body.

The Committee on Standing (COS), made up of faculty members, the Dean of Academic Affairs, and the Associate Dean for Student Life, meets at the end of each semester and at other times as may be necessary to consider the standing of students whose academic work or progress is less than satisfactory or otherwise deemed deficient. The records of students who have received no credit in a course or whose course evaluations indicate Marginal Credit are also subject to review. In the case of students who receive Marginal Credit, the COS may issue letters of warning; however, if a student receives two or more Marginal Credits within a semester, or if a student receives a Marginal Credit each in two serial semesters, the student will be placed on academic probation for the following semester, or such longer period as the COS may deem appropriate (the "probationary period"). If within the probationary period the student receives another Marginal Credit, it is within the power of the COS to propose additional sanctions or remedial measures, up to and including Academic Dismissal for the student.

In the case of students who receive no credit for a course, the COS will place that student on academic probation; the probationary period will be a minimum of one semester. Students will have until the end of the next complete semester or other probationary period following receipt of the probation letter in

which to meet the criteria set by the COS. At the end of the probationary semester or other probationary period, the COS shall recommend, in writing, one of the following: removal of probation, continued probation, or dismissal from the Seminary.

The COS may dismiss students for situations other than those specified above, and nothing herein shall limit the Committee's discretion in this regard. When dismissal from the Seminary is being proposed or considered, the COS must notify the student in writing of the possibility of dismissal. If the COS concludes that the situation is remediable, the student must be clearly informed of the remedial action expected, the time frame in which such action is to be taken and completed by the student, and any other conditions deemed appropriate by the COS. If the student does not complete the remedial action in the specified time frame, or otherwise fulfill the conditions specified by the COS, he/she may be dismissed from the Seminary. The COS may also determine, in its sole discretion that the situation is not remediable, and that immediate dismissal from the Seminary is warranted. Circumstances that may be not remediable may include, but are not limited to, academic deficiencies that are not susceptible to reasonable remedial activity, situations involving threats of violence or imminent harm, moral turpitude, occurrences or conduct reflecting or potentially reflecting negatively on the Seminary's reputation or community, and other situations where remedial action will, in the judgment of the COS, not be appropriate or available.

All students should be aware that academic probation (but not letters of warning) will adversely affect eligibility for various financial aid programs. A student remains eligible for a grant-in-aid from the Seminary for the first term that he or she may be on probation but will not be eligible for a grant in any subsequent semester of probation. Even first-time probationers lose their eligibility for loans from the Seminary and from Federal and state loan programs and cannot participate in the Federal Work-Study Program.

A student may be required to withdraw from the Seminary for other than academic reasons, since the personal behavior and emotional health of students will be within the scope of the COS. While an individual situation is being assessed, a student may be required by administrative referral to have an evaluation by the Seminary's mental health consultants.

A Committee on Doctoral Studies consults with the Dean of Academic Affairs as may be needed on the progress of doctoral students in such matters as language examinations, comprehensive examinations, dissertation proposals and examinations, and other requirements of the Ph.D. program of study at the Seminary.

## **Adding and Dropping Courses**

Students who wish to drop courses or otherwise make changes in their registration must do so in the Registrar's Office with the approval of a faculty adviser. The deadline for adding or dropping courses in each semester is given in the academic calendar. Tuition fees will not be adjusted for courses dropped after the end of the late registration period except in cases of complete withdrawal from the Seminary. Although the deadline for dropping courses without academic penalty or for changing a registration to "audit" is November 1 in the first semester and April 1 in the second semester, all courses dropped after the second week of classes will be graded "W" for "withdrawn without academic penalty" on the official transcript. To stop attending class or excuse oneself to the instructor does not constitute dropping a course. After these deadlines, students are responsible for the requirements of all courses in which they are enrolled according to the records held by the registrar. Any fees incurred for dropping a course taken at another institution must be borne by the student.

## **Changing Advisers**

Students may contact the Registrar's Office in writing about changing faculty advisers. Prior to agreeing to the role of adviser, a professor will want to inform a student of planned sabbaticals or any other major absences.

## **Changing Student Information**

Students are expected to notify the Registrar's Office in writing about any changes in address, legal name, denomination, marital status, and other biographical "directory" information.

## **Changing Degree Programs**

A student who wishes to change his or her degree program is required to complete a degree-change form available from the registrar.

## **Writing Assistance**

Many students, even those in graduate school, would benefit from giving special attention to developing their writing skills. The Seminary seeks to offer workshops and other skill-building opportunities to students, as time and resources permit. Some of the topics covered in the workshops may be: choice of an essay subject, review of outlines and drafts, techniques for paper writing, questions of style and grammar, resources available to the serious writer, and strategies for dealing with writers' blocks. Details of these study opportunities are usually published at registration.

## Policies and Procedures for Leave of Absence

The requirement to be enrolled continuously until graduation is normative. Students who are faced with extraordinary personal circumstances, however, will want to be informed about the rules and provisions for leave of absence from the Seminary. Students who wish to withdraw — that is, leave the Seminary without a definite intention of returning — but wish to do so in good standing, should consult the Academic Bulletin for information.

### Leave of Absence for Medical Reasons

- The student must complete a “Request for Leave of Absence” form available from the Office of Student Life.
- Obtain a letter of recommendation from the health professional. Please have the letter addressed to the Office of Student Life.
- The Dean of Academic Affairs will decide whether the leave of absence can be granted.
- The student will not be eligible for an “in-school” deferment of Seminary loans or loans obtained from other student loan programs during the leave of absence. Upon your return, any need-based grants will have to be recalculated in light of your latest financial information. It is generally the Seminary’s intention to renew for the normal duration of the degree program any scholarship support that you were awarded. This is intent, not a guarantee.
- Once granted, the student must renew the leave of absence status up to a maximum of two years, each semester by writing to the Dean of Academic Affairs and sending a copy of the letter to the registrar by July 15th for the fall semester and December 15th for the spring semester. If she/he fails to renew the leave of absence status in writing, then the student will be withdrawn from Union effective immediately and must go through the re-admission procedure to be reinstated to her/his program regardless of the period of absence from Union.
- If the student wishes to be reinstated within the two-year normal limit of a leave of absence, she/he must write to the Dean of Academic Affairs to request reinstatement by July 15th for the fall semester and December 15th for the spring semester (a copy of the letter must be sent to the registrar). If she/he fails to request reinstatement in writing, then the student will be withdrawn from Union de facto and must go through the re-admission procedure to be reinstated to her/his program regardless of the period of absence from Union. The Dean of Academic Affairs will decide in consultation with the Associate Dean for Student Life.
- For a student on leave of absence for a medical reason, she/he must get clearance from the appropriate health/medical professionals before any official reinstatement can be considered.

### Leave of Absence for Other Reasons

- The student must file the “Request for Leave of Absence” form available from the Office of Student Life.
- Write a letter to the Dean of Academic Affairs with reasons for requesting a leave.

- This letter should accompany the leave of absence form, but if the student wishes it can be placed in a sealed envelope.
- The Dean of Academic Affairs will decide whether the leave of absence can be granted.
- The student will not be eligible for an “in-school” deferment of Seminary loans or loans obtained from other student programs during the leave of absence. Upon the student's return, any need-based grants will be recalculated in light of her/his new financial information. It is the Seminary's intention to renew any scholarship support awarded for the duration of the student's program.
- Once granted, the student must renew the leave of absence status each semester for up to a maximum of two years by writing to the Dean of Academic Affairs and sending a copy of the letter to the registrar by July 15th for the fall semester and December 15th for the spring semester. If she/he fails to renew the leave of absence status in writing, then the student will be withdrawn from Union de facto and must go through the re-admission procedure to be reinstated to her/his program, regardless of the period of absence from Union.
- If the student wishes to be reinstated within the standard two-year limit of a leave of absence, she/he must write to the Dean of Academic Affairs to request reinstatement by July 15th for the fall semester and December 15th for the spring semester (a copy of the letter must be sent to the registrar). If she/he fails to request reinstatement in writing, then the student will be withdrawn from Union de facto and must go through the re-admission procedure to be reinstated to her/his program regardless of the period of absence from Union. The Dean of Academic Affairs will decide in consultation with the Associate Dean for Student Life.

#### **Procedures for Re-admission**

- Contact the Admissions Office and request the necessary forms and instructions.
- The student must fill out an Application for Re-Admission form and provide two letters of recommendation. She/he must also update her/his file with a new “personal statement.”
- The re-admission application will become a part of a regular application pool.
- Application for re-admission does not necessarily guarantee (re)acceptance into the program.

## Transcripts & Records

### Transcripts of Record

A student's academic record or transcript is a private document that is the property of Union Theological Seminary, and it will be issued to a third party only upon written authorization given by the student. Students may request transcripts in the Registrar's Office and are advised, if meeting deadlines, to make their requests in sufficient time to allow for processing and mailing. A charge is made for all copies. The Seminary reserves the right to withhold transcripts from any student with unpaid indebtedness to the Seminary.

The written evaluations submitted by course instructors are not a part of the transcript and will not be issued with it. If upon graduation, however, a student has arranged for a member of the faculty to prepare a summary evaluation of his or her academic career at the Seminary, a copy of this summary will be issued with the transcript whenever the student expressly requests it.

### Access to Educational Records and Privacy Rights

Under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), students registered at Union, or individuals who have been registered at Union, have the right to review their education records. A student or former student who wishes to examine any part of her or his file should make a request in person or in writing to the registrar, indicating which records are to be examined. Such records generally include course grades, evaluations, information concerning fulfillment of degree requirements; certain financial aid and admissions documents; and the application for admission. Certain records, defined in FERPA, are not accessible, and will not be made available. Generally, these include restricted reference letters, third party financial records, employment and medical records and law enforcement records. The Seminary also does not keep letters of recommendation from the admissions file once a student matriculates.

Students have the right to seek correction or amendment of records they believe are inaccurate, misleading or violative of their privacy rights. Students requesting such correction or amendment should follow procedures established by the Dean of Academic Affairs or the Dean's designee's.

The Seminary does not release or allow access by third parties to education records without the written consent of the student except as permitted by FERPA. The Seminary will, as provided by the Act, release data to certain persons, including officials of the Seminary, who have legitimate educational interest in obtaining access to the records. These records may also be released pursuant to any lawfully issued subpoena, in which case the Seminary would make a reasonable attempt to notify the student prior to such release.

In certain additional instances, educational records may be released without student consent. Generally, such non-consensual release is available to specified federal officers or state officials as

prescribed by law, to accrediting agencies carrying out accreditation functions, to law enforcement officials in connection with criminal investigations, in emergency situations when release of the information is needed to protect the health or safety of the student or others, and in other limited circumstances as specified in FERPA.

As of January 3, 2012, the U.S. Department of Education's FERPA regulations expand the circumstances under which your education records and personally identifiable information (PII) contained in such records — including your Social Security Number, grades, or other private information — may be accessed without your consent. First, the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or state and local education authorities ("Federal and State Authorities") may allow access to your records and PII without your consent to any third party designated by a Federal or State Authority to evaluate a federal- or state-supported education program. The evaluation may relate to any program that is "principally engaged in the provision of education," such as early childhood education and job training, as well as any program that is administered by an education agency or institution. Second, Federal and State Authorities may allow access to your education records and PII without your consent to researchers performing certain types of studies, in certain cases even when we object to or do not request such research. Federal and State Authorities must obtain certain use-restriction and data security promises from the entities that they authorize to receive your PII, but the Authorities need not maintain direct control over such entities. In addition, in connection with Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems, State Authorities may collect, compile, permanently retain, and share without your consent PII from your education records, and they may track your participation in education and other programs by linking such PII to other personal information about you that they obtain from other Federal or State data sources, including workforce development, unemployment insurance, child welfare, juvenile justice, military service, and migrant student records systems.

With respect to the privacy of students, the Seminary makes only directory information generally available. The Seminary designates as "directory information" the following: Student's full name; dates of attendance and degrees conferred; postal and e-mail addresses; telephone numbers; religious and/or denominational affiliation; colleges and universities previously attended and degrees earned.

The primary use of the directory information will be to publish a Union Seminary Community Directory for the benefit of its members. This may be done in print or on a password protected website. Any student who wishes to withhold permission to publish or otherwise release his/her directory information should complete a withholding form when registering as a student. The form is available at the Registrar's Office. If no withholding form has been filed with the Registrar, the Seminary will assume the student's consent to disclose directory information. The Seminary reserves the right to release information on prizes, fellowships and honors awarded.

Nothing in this policy requires Union to maintain student records indefinitely. However, if access to a specific record has been requested, the Seminary will take reasonable steps to safeguard that record so as to permit appropriate reviews.

Complaints regarding alleged violations of a student's rights under the Act should be sent to the Dean of Academic Affairs. They may also be submitted in writing to the:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue SW

Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

Additional information on FERPA may be accessed through the Department of Education's website.