

Student Handbook

2020 – 2021

Jackson Campus



J A C K S O N



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WELCOME FROM THE DEAN OF STUDENTS!

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to RTS Jackson! I look forward to being part of your life during the academic year.

This handbook contains the policies, procedures, and information that shape campus life. Read it carefully.

If you have questions, please contact Jim Scott or me. If you or your family faces an emergency, call me on my cell phone any time during the day or night.

Enjoy the Lord and the life He has given us together at RTS!

Your fellow servant in Christ,

Charles Malcolm Wingard
Dean of Students
Cell Phone: 256.509.9284

NON-DISCRIMINATORY ENROLLMENT

Reformed Theological Seminary admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national/ethnic origin, in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs.

ACADEMIC LIFE

You may have come to RTS with a clear sense of your calling to ministry. Then again, you may have little sense of the kind of ministry for which the Lord is preparing you. Whatever your state of mind and heart, the seminary's goal is to provide an opportunity for self-evaluation and analysis before you commit yourself to a career.

Several courses of study have been developed to meet a wide range of student needs for basic and advanced preparation for Christian ministry. The [RTS Catalog](#) is designed to acquaint you with the different degree programs and their requirements.

Succeeding in Seminary

Study

Your own study habits will be the primary factor that determines your success or failure in any course. Students are expected to spend at least two hours of study for each hour of class. Self-discipline is indispensable; do not procrastinate. Get into a good study routine as quickly as possible. Take full advantage of our library space and resources. Make a schedule for your work that sets deadlines well in advance of due dates and find someone who will be willing to hold you accountable to your schedule. When you stay on top of your seminary work, you can fully enjoy the academic, communal, and recreational aspects of your seminary experience.

Pedagogy

In order to succeed in seminary, one of the first things that you will need to learn is how to learn. An important part of that skill is adjusting yourself to the particular teaching method of each professor. Your syllabi, course Teaching Assistants (TAs), and students who have already taken your courses will be your best resources for quickly determining a professor's style and emphases. Once you have a sense of a professor's teaching method, adapt your notetaking and study habits to help you master the material.

Writing and Language Lab

Our TAs have a Writing/Language Lab located in the Dean Center Conference Room. Most weekdays, unless a class needs that room, one or two TAs will be in the TA Lab from 10:00 a.m. to noon and from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. to assist with writing papers and with understanding and using the biblical languages.

We strongly encourage all students to utilize this resource well, even if only to have your papers proofread by another set of eyes! If you need help with citations, we also recommend that you check out the library's "[Citation Helps for Seminary Writing,](#)" which includes links to a number of useful citation tools (like Zotero, BibMe, etc.) and other resources.

Expectations

Class Attendance

You are responsible to attend class, even when term papers or exams are pending or your work schedule conflicts. You should obtain the professor's permission if you must be absent from class, particularly one-week extensions. Absences of more than a week require permission from the Academic Dean obtained via a written request. If you need special consideration in any course, consult the professor involved.

Assignment Submission

Students are expected to submit all assigned work on time. The method of submission will vary between classes according to the preferences of the professor. Consult your course syllabus or ask the professor or TA for your course if you are unsure about how to submit your work. Also, be sure to double-check the success of your assignment submissions, especially if you attempt to submit from a tablet or phone.

Assignments that are submitted late or are left incomplete at the end of a course may receive a grade penalty or, in some cases, result in failure of the course. If you need an extension for an assignment, you may request one from the course's professor or TA. If you need an extension for an exam, you will need to apply through the Registrar's Office prior to the first day of final exams. In both cases, extensions are only granted for significant emergencies or unforeseen circumstances.

Recording Courses

Video recording of RTS's courses by students is prohibited. Audio recording of classes by students is only allowed with the instructor's permission and if the taped material is to be used solely for personal study and spiritual edification and is not distributed privately or publicly in any manner.

Scheduling

Drop/Add

Students may drop/add courses via Self-Service until the drop/add deadline. After the term begins, there is a fee for each course dropped or added. Therefore, it is recommended that you finalize your schedule before the first day of the term. Tuition is usually not refunded for courses dropped after the deadline. See the appropriate [term schedule](#) for important academic dates. See the most recent [schedule of fees](#) for the current drop/add fee.

Course Sequence

When scheduling your classes, it is important that you follow the course sequence for your program as closely as possible. This will help you to avoid schedule conflicts between required classes that may otherwise delay your graduation. It will also ensure that you complete all prerequisites before enrolling in a given class. You may find the recommended course sequences for the three-year and four-year M.Div. tracks [here](#), and you may find the course sequence for the two-year MAC track [here](#). Consult the Registrar if you need assistance with class and degree planning.

Directed Studies

Directed Studies are opportunities for you to tailor your academic program to your particular needs and interests by studying subjects not covered in-depth in existing courses. In order to register and receive credit for a Directed Study course, you will need to approach the professor with whom you desire to study. If the professor is able and willing to conduct the Directed Study, you must then get approval from both the Academic Dean and the Registrar. This process must be completed *before* the beginning of the semester in which you will complete the Directed Study. Please see the Registrar for the required forms.

Final Exams

As the end of a fall or spring term approaches, an official final exam schedule will be released for all courses. This schedule will be posted outside the Office of the Registrar and communicated to students via email. If you have two exams scheduled at the same time or have another schedule conflict with an exam, talk to the professor or TA for the course to find a time to take an exam early. If taking the exam early is not possible, speak to the Registrar to request an extension.

Student Records

Grades

Grades are posted on [RTS Canvas](#) and [Self-Service](#) as they become available. Papers and tests may be returned to you, usually through the student mail boxes. For information about the [RTS Grading Scale](#) and [Academic Probation](#), please see the [RTS Catalog](#).

Transcripts

[Official transcripts](#) cost \$10 and must be requested through the RTS website. An unofficial student transcript may be obtained from the Registrar or from [Self-Service](#) at no charge.

Privacy of Student Records

RTS maintains the security and confidentiality of student educational records. All student records are kept in locked rooms and in locked file cabinets. In addition, all transcript information for current degree-seeking students is digitally backed-up at an off-site location.

Since RTS does not accept Title IV student loan monies, RTS is not bound by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). However, RTS's confidentiality policies are generally consistent with FERPA. RTS policies are as follows:

- A student may inspect and review his/her academic file and transcript after a written request has been made to the Registrar's office. The Registrar will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. The Registrar will be present during this inspection and review.
- If a student believes his/her academic file and/or transcript is inaccurate or misleading, the student may request to amend the file and/or transcript. The student should write the Registrar, clearly identifying the portion of the record that the student wishes to change and specifying what is inaccurate or misleading. If RTS decides not to amend, the student may use the appeal process outlined on [page 13](#) in this Handbook.
- RTS will not disclose, without the student's consent, personally identifiable information found in the student's academic file or transcript, excepting legitimate educational interests and directory information.
- Directory information includes, but is not limited to, name, address, telephone number, email, date and place of birth, spouse's name, home state, previous schools attended, denomination and presbytery affiliation, grade level, dates of attendance, photo and photo of spouse, degree program, enrollment type (full-time, part-time), and degrees with date of graduation.

Graduation Requirements

It is important that you track all graduation requirements for your degree program throughout your time at RTS. Review your schedule regularly to ensure that you complete all required classes and obtain the required credit hours. Additional requirements for the MAC program may be found in the addendum at the end of this handbook. Additional requirements for M.Div. and MATS/BS students are as follows:

English Bible Exam

MA and M.Div. students at RTS Jackson must take the English Bible Exam (EBE). Each student must pass the EBE in order to graduate (a grade of "C"/80% is needed to pass). The best method for preparing for the EBE is for the student to familiarize himself with the following:

- The broad flow of biblical history
- The main themes and historical setting of the books of the bible
- The location (book and chapter) of significant biblical events and verses
- The life and historical circumstances of significant biblical characters

Helpful resources include William Hendriksen, *A Survey of the Bible*, and Willem A. VanGemeren, *The Progress of Redemption*.

Westminster Shorter Catechism Exams

M.Div. students must memorize the *Westminster Shorter Catechism*. You may memorize the *Catechism* in Old English or Modern English. The catechism exam is taken in three parts as follows: Part I covers questions 1 - 38, Part II covers questions 39 - 81, and Part III covers questions 82 - 107.

The English Bible Exam and *Westminster Shorter Catechism Exams* can only be taken on three days during the year: the Friday before Summer Institute of Biblical Languages, the Friday before Fall Semester, and the Friday before Spring Semester begins.

Field Education

Supervised field education and attendance in the Field Education Seminar are requirements of the M.Div. program. Details are published in the catalog. The necessary forms and additional information on Field Education requirements are located in the *Field Education Guidelines* for the Jackson campus, available in the Field Education Office in the Dean Center.

Students should view field education assignments as opportunities to serve the Lord and the church and to develop skills for ministry. They should not regard them as a primary means of financing their education. Financial remuneration should be incidental to, not the objective of, field education. Students may occasionally be asked to take non-remunerative assignments (at nursing homes, for example).

Requirement: The M.Div. program requires 400 hours of registered Field Education in order to graduate. Preaching engagements (see below) may count for a maximum of 150 of these hours.

Registration: In order for any Field Education to be counted towards the Field Education requirement, you must gain approval from and register with the Field Education Director prior to beginning the experience. No hours completed prior to this registration can be counted toward the Field Education requirement.

Student Pastorates: Students may hold student pastorates in accordance with the ecclesiastical policies of the churches concerned and the Field Education policies of the seminary. Arrangements for student pastorates are negotiated directly with the individual church and the ecclesiastical body having jurisdiction over it (e.g. the presbytery, association, or conference). Student pastors must furnish the Field Education Office with written authorization for their pastoral relationships from the responsible ecclesiastical bodies.

Miscellaneous Matters

RTS only has one graduation ceremony, which is held in May. However, students may graduate in either December or May. (*The Registrar's office is authorized to issue diplomas in August **only for graduates in the Master of Arts in Counseling degree program. This is the ONLY exception.***)

Students intending to graduate during our regular May graduation must apply for graduation during their final fall semester. This application can be made with the Registrar. Please note that a **2.0 average** is required in order to graduate. A graduation fee of \$200 is required, whether you participate in the actual ceremony or not. The student should set up an appointment with the registrar to "audit" the student academic record, confirming all course work is in process.

Preaching Opportunities

Many churches across Mississippi do not have a full-time Senior Pastor of their own. M.Div. students have the opportunity to serve and care for these churches and develop their ministry skills by preaching God's Word to them. As with Field Education assignments, students should regard these preaching opportunities as service to the Lord and his church rather than as a means of financial gain.

Field Education

Opportunities to preach enrich the Field Education experience. Preaching engagements may count for up to 150 hours of the required 400 hours. Students may only log the hour in which they lead worship and preach. Preparatory time may not be logged. Students who choose to log preaching hours as a portion of their field education experience must submit the required Field Education forms at the beginning of their approval, and they must submit a sample sermon to the Director of Field Education annually.

Eligibility

Students interested in preaching on the RTS Jackson circuit must complete (a) the Field Education Office's circuit orientation, and (b) Pastoral Ministry (PT5250). Students must also obtain the approval of the Director of Field Education and submit the required forms.

Assignments

Students who desire a preaching assignment must notify the Assistant in the Field Education Office, Marguerite Westbrook, and must provide their availability before the beginning of each month. Please note that assignments are not guaranteed.

Additional Information

Books

Books are both tools and temptations for seminarians. Get good advice before you buy. Most professors provide bibliographies of recommended works. Use the seminary library to acquaint yourself with other authors; then buy books that will have lasting value for you. You will probably want to keep your textbooks for future reference. Check your whole library from time to time to identify weak areas. The bookstore carries textbooks and recommended reading; for more information, see [page 19](#).

Conferences/Lecture Series

Several conferences/special lecture series are offered each year, including the John Reed Miller Lectures, the Hughes Lectures, and the Conference on Christian Counseling (biannual). Students are encouraged to attend these lecture series and conferences, and classes are often cancelled for that purpose.

Students' Spouses

Spouses of current full-time, non-MAC students who demonstrate financial need may receive a 100% tuition grant to take courses for credit. Spouses of current full-time MAC students who demonstrate financial need may receive a 50% tuition grant to take courses for credit. All spouses may audit courses without charge, provided there is room in the class and they have registered with the Registrar. These courses not only provide opportunity for spiritual growth but also help spouses get acquainted with professors and others in the seminary community.

Accreditation Complaint

Reformed Theological Seminary maintains a goal to comply fully with the standards of accreditation of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) in the United States and Canada and the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Students who believe that RTS has violated these standards in any way should submit their complaint in writing to their respective campus's Academic Dean. The Dean will consult with the Chief Academic Officer, who serves as the coordinator of matters related to institutional accreditation. The complaint will be reviewed and a written response provided to the student in a timely fashion. If the student is not satisfied with the written response from

RTS, he or she may file a complaint directly with ATS and/or SACS.

STUDENT LIFE

Student Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times as mature believers. Exemplary Christian conduct should control our words and our actions, both in public and private. In today's technological environment our words can include texting, emails, social networking, and blogging, in addition to our speech. Godly behavior, expected of all Christians, is especially required of those who are preparing themselves to become ministers of the Word or servants in the church. Classroom manners should also reflect this maturity. Students should be respectful of professors, attend all class periods, and submit assignments on time.

Student conduct is under the supervision of the Dean of Students. The seminary reserves the right to dismiss any student whose conduct is found to be unsatisfactory on the basis of spiritual or moral principles found in the Scriptures. If desired, the student can appeal the dismissal according to the policy stated on [page 13](#).

Plagiarism

Research papers require borrowing other people's ideas and words. However, the source of such borrowing must be acknowledged properly so that your ideas are clearly distinguished from ideas that you borrowed. If the source is not acknowledged properly, your work is plagiarism. For an excellent summary of plagiarism (both intentional and unintentional) and steps to avoid it, see Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (rev. by Wayne C. Booth, etc.; 9th ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), pp. 81-83 (section 7.9).

Plagiarism includes word-for-word copying, lifting terms, restating someone's argument or line of thought, etc. – all without acknowledgment of source. Plagiarism also includes giving a source partial credit when more is taken from that source than indicated.

Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, is very serious. All plagiarism cases are referred to the Academic Dean for resolution. Consequences may include the following:

- Student may be required repeat the assignment and receive a maximum of a D.
- Student may receive an F on the assignment.
- Student may receive an F in the course.
- Student may be expelled from the seminary.

Sexual Harassment

The seminary expects all members of its community to apply common sense and biblical principles to their relationships. It will not tolerate offensive or inappropriate sexual behavior and requires all faculty, staff and students to refrain from any action or conduct that could be viewed as sexual harassment. Any such harassment is contrary to and prohibited by seminary policy and will be considered grounds for disciplinary action. It should be noted that, for academic purposes, some appropriate teaching and discussion of sexual information may occur, particularly in a counseling program; however, these discussions are necessary for the formation of a competent counselor or pastor and therefore do not constitute sexual harassment.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other offensive verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature is expressly prohibited. Examples of prohibited conduct include but are not limited to lewd or sexually suggestive comments; off-color language or jokes of a sexual nature; verbal, graphic, or physical conduct inappropriately relating to an individual's gender; or any display of sexually explicit pictures, greeting cards, articles, books, magazines, photos, computer images, or cartoons.

The seminary must have the cooperation of all faculty, staff, and students in order to implement its sexual harassment policy. It is the individual's responsibility to report immediately any incident which they believe to constitute sexual harassment. Even if they believe the act is isolated or infrequent, they should report it to the campus Dean of Students or President. The seminary will promptly investigate the situation and take whatever corrective action is necessary and appropriate. The seminary prohibits any retaliatory action against persons reporting conduct that is believed by the reporting individual to be in violation of this policy.

Chapel

Chapel is held in Grace Chapel on Wednesday mornings from 11:00 to 11:50 AM during the Fall and Spring semesters. The purpose of chapel is to praise God with singing, to offer prayer for the seminary community, and to sit together as a community under the preached Word of God. Chapel messages are always recorded by our A/V department and uploaded to the [RTS website](#).

Attendance is required for all faculty members and for all students taking two or more classes during the Fall or Spring semesters as part of the RTS Jackson graduation requirement. Each semester (Fall and Spring) we gather twelve times for chapel. Students are permitted to be absent from two chapels each semester. Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Academic Dean on a case-by-case basis and require a scheduled face-to-face meeting with the Academic Dean. Additional absences must be made up by listening to the chapel message online and submitting a one-page summary of the chapel message to the office of the Academic Dean. Summaries must be submitted no later than the last day of classes for the semester. Students sign-in to chapel with their student IDs at the electronic card reader in the chapel lobby.

Prayer Groups

For the hour following chapel on Wednesdays, students gather with their assigned prayer groups to pray with the faculty. We hope that these prayer groups will be a powerful spiritual influence on campus. All students are expected to participate in a prayer group.

Reformed Informer

The *Reformed Informer* campus newsletter is emailed on Friday of each week during the regular academic calendar. If you would like to request that something be announced in the *Informer*, or if you are not receiving the *Informer*, please contact the Student Services Coordinator. All submissions to the *Informer* must be made no later than Wednesday prior to that week's issue.

Student Organizations

Information concerning student organizations can be found on the website. Specific information about meeting dates and programs will be emailed in the *Informer*, put in student mailboxes, or displayed on bulletin boards.

Student Services Committee

As an arm of the Office of Student Services, the Student Services Committee exists to enrich student life by fostering community among RTS students through campus events. The Student Services Coordinator organizes the Student Services Committee and selects members of the student body annually to serve on the committee. The coordinator seeks to enlist students who are eager to help organize student events and facilitate opportunities for students to find and foster community on campus.

Leadership:

- Coordinator—Matthew Pinckard

- Faculty Advisor—Dr. Charlie Wingard

The Great Commission Society

GCS exists for two reasons: (1) to cultivate a concern for making disciples of all nations, across the street and around the world, and (2) especially to impress upon students the necessity of the work of missions among the peoples of the world who have no access to the gospel.

RTS Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship exists for female students and wives of students to foster a gospel-centered community on the RTS campus where women can learn, connect, and be encouraged as they prepare for a life of ministry.

We gather for teaching, training, fellowship, and prayer. By fostering authentic and meaningful relationships with other women on the same journey, we are forming lifelong connections to guide, encourage, and uplift us along the way. The journey may be counseling education, theological studies, or preparing with a spouse for ministry; either way, we have the same goal: to glorify God and serve his Church. So, whether you are living on- or off-campus or whether you are a student, a spouse of a student, or both, allow Women's Fellowship to be a means by which you can connect with other women on the same journey.

Please [follow on social media](#) to stay updated on Fellowship opportunities this Fall and beyond.

International Students

On-campus student work for international students is only available to students holding an F-1 visa. Under U.S. law, spouses of international students (usually holding an F-2 visa) are not permitted to work in the U.S. unless they, too, have an F-1 visa. Full-time international (F-1 or non-resident) students who receive any form of financial aid or on campus student employment from the seminary are required to maintain insurance for their families.

As an F-1 student, international students are not permitted to work off-campus or to engage in business without specific employment authorization. Check with Jim Scott for additional information and approval. F-1 students may work on campus up to 20 hours per week while school is in session. Such employment may be increased during vacation periods (Fall, Christmas, Spring, and Summer breaks) so long as it stays within RTS policy. Employment means the rendering of services for compensation, financial or otherwise, including self-employment. If international students receive food, clothes, money, etc. in exchange for work, skills, or expertise, the students are considered by INS to be working.

Working illegally is one of the most serious violations of immigration law. Not only could it jeopardize the student and force them to return home, but it could cause RTS to lose the privilege of bringing any international students to all RTS campuses.

Clothes Closet

Reformed Theological Seminary trains pastors, teachers, missionaries, counselors, and other Christian servants in America and around the world. This training is often a financially trying time for the student and his or her family. One way local churches and individuals minister to RTS students is by donating clothing and household goods to the RTS Clothes Closet. These donations are available to current RTS students, employees, and their families at no charge.

The Clothes Closet is located in the Sam Patterson Student Center. The store hours are Tuesdays and Fridays 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. and the second Saturday of each month from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Students are only permitted to shop during regular store hours. Call 601.923.1649 to speak to the Clothes Closet manager. The store will be closed for holidays and other important events. If you would like to donate

items to the Clothes Closet, please drop them off during store hours or contact the manager.

Security

Student ID cards: RTS will create student ID cards during orientation. These will be made in the Student Services Coordinator's office. During orientation week, an appointed time is set by the Coordinator for each student. This ID should be worn at all times when on campus grounds. The badge will give you access to the closed gate at the front of the main campus and to all buildings on the north campus. It will identify you as belonging on campus and will serve as your access to check out books or study at the library.

Campus security is a matter of concern and involvement for everyone. While RTS employs a professional security company (Pendleton Security Services), extra care should always be used to avoid potentially dangerous situations. All students, faculty, and staff should note and report suspicious people who may be on our campus, whether during the daylight hours or at night. We encourage a "neighborhood watch" mentality to look out for one another, our children, and our property. Polite inquiries as to an unfamiliar person's needs might be in order, but we strongly discourage direct challenges or confrontations. During regular business hours, call the campus receptionists at 601.923.1600 and report potential concerns, or contact the Director of Facilities/Security at 601.906.1608 (cell). In the evenings, call the security guard at 601.212.6725, or **dial 911 for the police**, depending on your best judgment of the situation. Security is on campus from 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 a.m. during the regular work week. They are on campus 24 hours during weekends and holidays.

Keep doors and windows closed and locked when you are away from your apartment. Use the dead bolt at all times. Do not leave bikes or toys unsecured outside. Do not leave anything of value openly visible through car windows, even if you are planning on being away for only a short while. Most break-ins occur when tools, briefcases, computers, etc. have been left visible in an unoccupied car. Break-ins can happen during daylight hours (often early in the morning) as much as at night.

Be sure that your vehicle has an official white and maroon RTS decal on your windshield as identification for Security. This can be obtained from the Student Services Office. Proper placement is the lower corner of the passenger side of windshield on the inside of the vehicle.

Do not give out access codes to the front gates to people outside of the campus community for any reason. If you have a guest or a delivery driver arriving on campus, contact the receptionist (during business hours) or the guardhouse (after business hours) to inform them in advance. Guests who are using our guest housing will be given a guest code for the front gate. Also, remember that the front "drop-arm" gates operate very quickly and allow only one vehicle to pass through them at a time.

All faculty, students, and staff must notify security if they will be in the buildings after normal working hours.

Children on Campus

Because of the many seminary activities usually in progress, as well as the lack of supervisory personnel available, non-resident students, faculty, and staff are generally discouraged from bringing their children on the campus except for activities that involve children such as parties and picnics. It is recognized that there are certain times when an individual has to have their children with them on campus, and, when this is the case, the individual should make certain that their children stay with them and are kept from wandering unattended around the campus or in any seminary buildings.

Student Appeals

An appeals process exists to resolve any behavioral or academic problem that cannot otherwise be settled in a biblical manner and to assure fairness to all parties concerned. This process is rarely needed and should only be used after all other means have been exhausted. For example, in academic matters that pertain to a class or a grade, the student should first work directly with the professor and/or Registrar. Concerning behavioral or community issues, the student should first consult with the Dean of Students. If the matter cannot be resolved by the above means, the following appeals process exists:

1. The student should submit a written appeal to the Academic Dean regarding the issue. Depending on the issue, the Academic Dean may request input from the Faculty. The Academic Dean will render a written decision.
2. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Academic Dean, he or she may submit a subsequent written appeal to the campus President requesting a hearing. The campus President may or may not grant the request. If granted, the campus President will appoint an ad hoc committee that may consist of trustees, faculty, staff, and/or institutional officers to hear the case. This committee is authorized to meet with any or all concerned parties to resolve the issue and will render a written decision concerning the case.
3. The decision of the President or the ad hoc committee is considered final, subject only to review by the Executive Committee of the Board to affirm that the appeals process was properly observed.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Making Payments

Payments to your student account may be made online through [Self-Service](#). If you do not want to pay online, go to the Student Accounts Office located in the Institutional Building during regular office hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Place your payment in an envelope available at the window. Be sure to fill out the envelope completely. Connie Stegall in our Student Accounts Office will answer questions about your account during regular hours. Her contact number is 601.923.1717.

Online payments may also be made through our third-party payment page at <https://rts.edu/pay> (the "Student Account Number" may be omitted if you forgot it). If you are receiving from a church or individual, they may also make payments toward your account through this link. Alternatively, payments may be mailed to the following address:

Reformed Theological Seminary
ATTN: Student Billing
5422 Clinton Blvd
Jackson, MS 39209

If other options fail, payments may be made over the phone with the Student Accounts Office.

Failure to Pay

Non-payment for tuition will result in a "stop" being placed on your student account. This prohibits the student from viewing grades and/or registering for classes. All fees and balances must be cleared before the next semester begins. An official transcript will be unavailable until all balances and fees are paid. You are not allowed to charge bookstore purchases to your student account unless you have a credit balance. Additionally, a student who becomes delinquent in his/her account for more than 30 days must schedule a meeting with the Dean of Students.

Payment Plans

Payment Plans are available for Fall and Spring semesters. This takes your tuition balance and breaks it down into three installments. There is a 1% finance fee on the outstanding balance at the end of each month. A "stop" remains on your account until the balance is paid in full. You cannot receive credit or a grade for coursework until your tuition is paid in full. Payment plan [agreement forms](#) are available online. You need to apply separately for each applicable semester. There is not an official payment plan for summer courses, but it is acceptable to make smaller payments toward your balance as long as the balance is paid in full before the end of classes. Finance fees apply. You cannot register for any new semester as long as you have an outstanding balance.

Financial Aid

To learn more about financial aid, visit <https://rts.edu/admissions/financial-aid/>.

On-Campus Student Work

On-campus student work is available doing such things as assisting a professor or working in Maintenance, Admissions, Student Services, the Library, the Counseling Center front desk, the Bookstore, the Mailroom, or the Sam Patterson Student Center. On-campus student work is contingent upon the availability of a job for which the student is qualified. Positions not filled by full-time students may be offered to part-time students or student spouses on a per-semester basis. On-campus student work positions are coordinated by the Director of Operations. Please note that on-campus student work is not a grant but a scholarship received in return for hours actually worked.

Students are limited to a maximum of 960 work-hours per fiscal year (June 1-May 31) and may not work more than 20 hours in a given week or 80 hours in a given month. Students are allowed to work more than one work-study position, but separate timesheets must be submitted for each position, and the student must not exceed 80 hours per calendar month **combined for all positions**. Timesheets are submitted on the last day of the month. Earnings are paid monthly to students for hours worked on or around the 10th of the month. **New-hire paperwork and the e-verification process must be completed before an on-campus student worker can begin working.** Forms are available with the Director of Operations.

Medical Insurance

As of January 1, 2019, the Affordable Care Act eliminated the Individual Mandate, which required Americans to purchase a minimum level of health insurance coverage. There will no longer be a penalty for not having a minimum level of health insurance coverage. Due to the change in the Affordable Care Act, RTS does not require all full-time students (with one exception mentioned below) to show proof of major medical insurance.

The exception to this policy is that F-1 visa students and their families receiving financial aid are still required to show proof of major medical insurance coverage for all dependents listed on form I-20. For international students, proof of major medical insurance must be shown to the appropriate campus staff member by the first day of classes for the Fall and Spring semesters.

Be advised that, even with the recent adaptations to the Affordable Care Act, RTS strongly encourages students to obtain health insurance due to the high costs of medical care. If a student does not elect to have health insurance coverage while enrolled in seminary, they understand and agree that any medical bill or liability is not the responsibility of RTS; it is a personal cost.

Although RTS is unable to offer a student plan, we do want to assist students in their search for a viable health insurance option. We encourage you to explore all your options and choose the best plan for your situation. The following are the general categories of coverage to consider:

- Parent's Insurance Plan: Students age 26 and under may have the option to stay on their parents' health insurance plans until they turn 26 (regardless of student or marital status).
- The Federal Marketplace: Federal Marketplace or State Medicaid
- Coverage through a spouse's employer: If a student's spouse is employed and has access to health insurance, then that may be a viable option to consider.
- Other Insurance Carriers: Look for insurance carrier sites such as Blue Cross, Aetna, and United Healthcare.
- Individual Broker or Consultant: Students may also be able to find an individual broker or consultant who can help them choose the best plan available for themselves as well as for their families.
- RTS has provided a number of [links](#) on the RTS Jackson website under the Students tab.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

During your first semester, each new student is required to meet with the Dean of Students. The purpose of the meeting is to determine if there are issues with which he can assist you as you transition into campus life at RTS Jackson. Within a few weeks of your arrival, the assistant to the dean will contact you to arrange a time to meet.

Every student needs assistance from time to time. Sometimes it will be as simple as getting some information. Sometimes it will involve help with a financial, personal, or family issue that needs an objective viewpoint. Sometimes it will involve academic matters. Whatever your need, there is someone available to help. Let us know if you are having difficulty.

Academic Matters

If you need assistance for a particular class, consult the professor for that class. Most classes will also have a Teaching Assistant (TA) available to help students understand the material, advise them on how best to fulfill the requirements of the course, give feedback, and answer technical questions.

If you have more general academic issues, you should consult the Registrar, Kim Lee (601.923.1681) or Academic Dean, Dr. Miles Van Pelt, (601-923-1695) who will help you with the problem or direct you to an appropriate person within the faculty or administration.

Personal or Family Matters

The Dean of Students, Dr. Charlie Wingard (office: 601.923.1627; cell: 256.509.9284), can handle many problems in these categories. He is happy to speak with you night or day to help you through a crisis situation. More extensive counseling is also available for a nominal/reduced fee through the RTS Counseling Center (601.923.1645).

Financial Matters

If you need financial assistance with regard to paying your student account, you may discuss this with Jim Scott (601.923.1699). If you have a question or a technical issue regarding your account, please contact Connie Stegall (601.923.1717).

Placement

The Director of Field Education will assist M.Div. and MA students who are seeking placement. MAC students will be assisted by the Director of the RTS Counseling Center. Students and graduates seeking employment (especially ministry positions) are also encouraged to visit the [Vocational Services](#) page to view current job openings.

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Campus Map



Campus Map Overview/Building Information

Generally, all campus buildings are open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during regular business hours, but you will need a student ID badge to gain entrance. Exceptions are noted for each building in its description. No campus buildings are open on the Lord's Day, except for special services by permission.

Children of students, faculty, and staff may use these facilities under the same rules that apply to their use of other facilities: they must be accompanied by and supervised by at least one parent. The facilities are provided primarily for students.

The Facilities Maintenance Building (1) is located behind the single students' apartments. This area is not open to students.

Campus Housing (2) See [page 28](#) for more information.

The Biblical Studies Building (3) houses the Communication Department. Overflow of the Old and New Testament classes are occasionally taught in Biblical Studies.

Vacant Building (Old Library) (4)

The Institutional Building (5) is located near the heart of campus and houses the offices of the Chancellor/CEO, COFO, Human Resources (Payroll and Benefits), Finance, Development, and Computer Services.

The White House (6) is the large, southern colonial house on campus. This building is currently being used as a guesthouse. Reservations may be requested on the RTS website from the [Campus Services Forms](#) page.

The Sam Patterson Student Center (7) houses the mailroom, dining room, Clothes Closet, recreation facilities, RTS Women's Fellowship/TV room, and the nursery. There are foosball, table tennis, and pool tables. Students are expected to treat these facilities as they would the facilities of any home in which they are guests. Litter and bottles are to be disposed of properly, and spills are to be cleaned. Please leave the premises the way that you would like to find them.

Students may use the Student Center for special events. There may be a cleaning charge, depending on the event. These events must be discussed and approved by the Student Services Coordinator and the Dean of Students in advance. A [Facilities Request Form](#) must be completed for the following reasons: 1) for approval, 2) to ensure that only one event is planned at a time, and 3) to notify all departments of the event. Please call the Student Services Coordinator at 601.923.1672 for details.

The Mailroom is located in the Student Center. The mailroom window is open from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday - Friday. Domestic letters and packages as well as international letters can be mailed; postage for these items may be purchased from the mailroom. International packages may be mailed at the post office in Clinton.

For students, we have UPS and FedEx delivery only. UPS deliveries come to the mailroom; a package slip is placed in your student mailbox if the package is too large to fit in your student mailbox. FedEx deliveries come to the receptionist's desk in the Administration building, and students are notified to pick up their packages. To ship via FedEx or UPS you may contact the local branches in Clinton.

Every student (whether living on or off campus) **must** sign up for a mailbox at the mailroom window upon enrollment for credit. Mailboxes are used for special notices, personal messages, papers returned by professors, announcements, grades, and, of course, incoming mail. All mail is put in student boxes as soon as it is received. **Check your mailbox at least once a week.**

Besides the *Informer*, the main location for campus-wide announcements, personal sale items, posters, etc. is on the bulletin board in the hallway across from the mailroom. Please check it frequently. If you would like to post something, you must have it approved by the mailroom supervisor.

The Clothes Closet (8)—for rules and hours of operation please see [page 11](#).

Grace Chapel (9) is available for student prayer and meditation except when in use for special functions.

The Chapel Annex (10) is connected to the Chapel. It houses the Chancellor's Library, the office for Child Evangelism Fellowship, the office for the Consulting Services Foundation, and the Jackson Development office.

The Bookstore / Administration / Information Building (11) is the first building on campus, and it houses the reception desk, the offices of the Director of Operations and the Director of Admissions, and the Bookstore. The main campus number is 601.923.1600.

The Bookstore Manager and all personnel are happy to help you select books. The RTS Bookstore's motto is that we will meet, beat, or compete with Amazon. Check with the bookstore for information on purchasing textbooks with tax exemption. The sale of a book by the Bookstore does not constitute endorsement of its contents by the seminary. Hours of operation are 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, closed on holidays. The Bookstore closes early on the last day of the month for end-of-the-month-processing. The email address for the bookstore is jacksonbookstore@rts.edu, and the phone number is 601.923.1616.

The Dean Center (12) houses the offices of Admissions, Student Services, Field Education/Placement, the Registrar, the Academic Dean, the Dean of Students, Faculty, the Student Study Lab/TA office, indoor recreation facilities, and classrooms DC1 and 2. The Dean Center, except for the athletic facilities, is open during regular hours 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. You will need your security ID badge to gain access to the building. Rules for the use of the athletic facilities are found on [page 22](#). Use of the gym and workout rooms is handled by the Student Services office.

Gymnasium (13) See [page 22](#) for rules and regulations. Student Services handles the gym schedule.

Guardhouse (14) Security guards are on duty from 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 a.m. Monday through Friday and all day on weekends and holidays.

The RTS Counseling Center (15) is located on the South Campus. Counseling classrooms and faculty offices and the Clinic are located there. The Clinic is open to the public.

Library (16)—for more information, see [pages 20-21](#). Please note that the RTS Library is not a public library.

Ambition School (17)—charter school not affiliated with RTS.

General Campus Policies

We have been blessed with great facilities at RTS for residence, study, and recreation. We all bear a common responsibility to maintain, clean, and use them considerately. Each student is expected to share that responsibility in at least the following ways:

1. When you see a need for maintenance, take a moment to complete an online request at <http://rtsjackson.org/maintenance>. Please do not phone in requests to maintenance or housing offices. For emergencies, contact Kyle Sandidge at 601-906-1608.
2. Wherever you see litter or trash, please pick it up and dispose of it properly.
3. Turn off lights that are not being used.
4. Thermostats are to be adjusted only by the Facilities Department.
5. Dogs, cats, and other pets are not allowed in seminary buildings or student housing.
6. Food is permitted only in the lounge of the Library. Drinks only are permitted in the classrooms. Food and drink are not permitted in the Chapel.
7. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted in the school's academic, social, and administrative buildings.
8. Tobacco products are not permitted on campus grounds.
9. Automobiles should be parked only in paved, designated areas. Please do not drive vehicles on the grass. Only Facilities Department vehicles are permitted on the grass. All student vehicles must have an RTS decal on the windshield for identification.
10. The speed limit on all campus property is 15 mph. Please observe ONE WAY arrows located in the main parking lot.
11. Firearms are not permitted in classrooms, public buildings, or grounds of the seminary property at any time. Stored firearms in your on-campus housing must be registered with the Student Services Office.
12. Any attempt to disable fire protection devices (smoke detectors, alarm systems, etc.) is a serious offense that will incur disciplinary action. For the safety of our campus, do not tamper with any such equipment in our campus buildings or apartments.
13. Once a building has been locked, you will not be able to access the building even with your security badge. The Student Center will remain open late for games, fellowship, study, and watching TV.

RTS Jackson Library

Library General Rules

1. Respect the privacy and property of all other library users.
2. Refrain from interrupting or disturbing other library users.
3. Use all access to the Internet primarily for research purposes.
4. Do not use any Internet access to download, view, or transmit video or images that would be considered mature, X-rated, etc.
5. Conduct conversations, including cell phone calls, away from other library users.
6. Limit use of a single copier to five minutes or less when someone is waiting to use it.
7. Conduct research and study in designated areas throughout the library, not in the dining area.
8. Keep any study area free from litter, including food and drink containers.
9. Use the Dining Room for all meals. Clean any dishes you use. You may store items in the refrigerator during the day, but not overnight. Any items left in the refrigerator overnight may be thrown away.
10. Children must be monitored by a parent or guardian at all times.
11. The only pets permitted on the premises are those licensed as a Service dog or other license to assist those individuals with a disability.

Circulation Policies

1. The due date for books and all other material will be three weeks from date of checkout. If the due date falls on a holiday, the item(s) checked out will be due the first business day after the holiday. You must have your student ID with you to check out or renew library materials.
2. You may renew library materials online by accessing the online catalog at <http://rtsjackson.org/library/myaccount> and following the instructions. We do not renew books over the phone. You will need your identification card and PIN number to access your account. Your default PIN number is the last four digits of your barcode number. To verify your PIN number, please call 601.923.1623.
3. RTS students may renew each item twice unless it is needed to fulfill a class reserve reading. Once you have reached your renewal limit for an item, you must return it to the library to be re-shelved and made available for other students and library users. The book must remain in the library for one week before you may check it out again.
4. It is the patron's responsibility to return checked-out material on time. An overdue notice will be emailed to the patron two days after the due date of the item(s). An excessive number of overdue books will result in the patron's being unable to check out additional books until the overdue books are returned.
5. RTS Students are not charged fines for overdue books. Other patrons with check-out privileges are charged \$0.10 per day, per item. The maximum fine is \$10.00, and patrons with \$5.00 or more of fines will be unable to check out additional books until the fines are paid.
6. You are encouraged to replace a lost or damaged item with an identical item in good condition. For books, the replacement item must be free of any underlining or highlighting and have solid binding. If the lost or damaged book is replaced with a paperback copy, an additional \$8.00 re-binding fee will apply. If the lost or damaged book is not replaced, the cost is equal to the normal retail price plus a \$10.00 processing fee. If Amazon.com is used to determine the price, "new" copy pricing will be used to determine cost. If the book is out of print, the "like new" pricing will be used. Overdue fines are not added to the replacement cost.

Library Equipment

Copying machines are available for student use in the Library at \$0.05 per copy. Scanners are available free of charge. For assistance with these machines or for information regarding other equipment in the Library, please see Library personnel.

Library Hours

Fall and Spring Semesters:

Monday	8 am – 8 pm
Tuesday	8 am – 8 pm
Wednesday	8 am – 5 pm
Thursday	8 am – 8 pm
Friday	8 am – 4 pm
Saturday	9 am – 2 pm
Sunday	CLOSED

Summer, Winter, and Breaks:

Monday	8 am – 5 pm
Tuesday	8 am – 5 pm
Wednesday	8 am – 5 pm
Thursday	8 am – 5 pm
Friday	8 am – 4 pm
Saturday	CLOSED
Sunday	CLOSED

Grace Chapel

Students are eligible to use Grace Chapel for their weddings, subject to regulations. Details should be discussed with the Student Services Coordinator (601.923.1672).

Guest Housing

Reservations for the White House or for the guest apartment (B15) may be made on the website through the appropriate [forms](#). Reservation requests may not be granted if the housing is needed for guests of the seminary, renovations, etc., so be sure to make your request well in advance of the date for which you will need it.

Athletic Facilities

The athletic facilities in the Dean Center include the gymnasium, racquetball court, weight room, and locker rooms. Use of these facilities is limited to students, faculty, staff, alumni, and their families and guests. Students and their guests engage in athletic activity at their own risk. You must have your ID badge with you for identification with security.

Guests: Guests of seminary families using the athletic facilities must remain with their host. Children of students, faculty, and staff age 15 and over are treated as students to whom all student rules apply. Children 14 and under are treated as guests to whom guest rules apply. This means that they must remain with their host (or parent) at all times. Release forms must be signed by first-time guests. See Matt Pinckard for forms.

Availability: The facilities are generally open Monday through Saturday but are closed on the Lord's Day and during chapel time each week. Gym facilities can be accessed at any time with a student ID through the back entrance (around the north end of the building). The main entrance doors to the gym are usually locked. For security reasons, please do not leave any doors propped open!

Footwear: No street shoes or black soled shoes are allowed on the gym floor. Please stay on the sidewalk when approaching the building to keep your shoes clean.

Locker Rooms: Lockers are available in the men's dressing room and baskets (only) in the women's dressing room. Showers are available also, but students must furnish their own towels.

Cleanliness: Wipes are provided in the weight room. Please be sure to wipe down the benches, weights, machines, etc. after use in order to keep them in good condition.

Organization: Please put weight/athletic equipment away after use and leave the facility the way you would like to find it. Report any damage on a maintenance request form even if you did not cause it.

Restrooms: Please use only the restrooms in the locker area after business hours.

Audio/Video Equipment

1. No A/V equipment may leave the seminary grounds, except for the purpose of maintenance or repair, without the expressed permission of the President's office.
2. Equipment is made available only to individuals who are associated with RTS.
3. Requests for A/V equipment setup must be made 48 hours in advance by completing the [Audio-Visual Equipment/Service Request form](#) on the RTS website. Requests made less than 48 hours in advance will only be filled as permitted by the class schedule of the A/V student worker(s).
4. Projectors, computers, cables, and video cameras are not available to RTS staff, faculty, and students for personal use.

Computer Privileges

1. Student-users may use only those computers that have been authorized for their use by Computer Services or their department supervisor.
2. KnowBe4 Internet training must be completed to use any RTS computer.
3. Student-users may use a computer only for the purpose for which permission has been granted. Seminary computers may not be used for commercial purposes without the permission of the President.
4. Student-users given a password for computer access are responsible for the security of the password. A user's password must never be given to another person. If a user suspects another person knows his password, he must contact the Director of Computer Services immediately for a new one.
5. Student-users must respect the intellectual labor and creativity of others. Since electronic information is easily reproduced, respect for the work of others is especially critical in computer environments. Violations of original works, including plagiarism, unauthorized access, and copyright violations, may be grounds for disciplinary action.
6. Student-users must not access or copy volumes, libraries, directories, programs, files, or data not belonging to them without authorization. For computer software and data owned by the seminary, authorization must come from the President.
7. **Student-users must not attempt to modify or allow others to modify the seminary's computer hardware or software.** Failure to adhere to this policy may be grounds for disciplinary action. In addition, the cost incurred to restore damaged hardware or software will be charged to the student.
8. Student-users of seminary computers must have appropriate training before operation. Each department is responsible to ensure that student-users and workers are adequately trained. Questions from student-users and workers should be directed to the department staff. Only department staff should contact Computer Services.
9. Student-users of seminary computers should report hardware or software problems to their department supervisor or department staff designated to receive such reports. That person should report problems to Computer Services.
10. A student-user that deliberately adds a computer virus to equipment owned by the seminary will be subject to disciplinary action. Users who suspect a computer has been infected by a virus or has been maliciously tampered with in any way should contact Computer Services immediately.
11. Computer Services, acting on behalf of the seminary, reserves the right to access all computer files on seminary computers.
12. Students may use computers designated for student use in labs or for public access. Students are not to use computers designated for administrative purposes unless authorized to do so by their department supervisor or Computer Services.
13. Administrative tasks have priority for any computer assigned to a department with administrative responsibilities.
14. Computer Services is not responsible for support of hardware or software not owned by the seminary.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES

The following procedures and guidelines are intended to help students, faculty, staff, and others on our campus respond appropriately to the various emergencies that may arise on the campus of RTS Jackson. It is impossible to prepare for every possible emergency, but these guidelines will serve you well for the most common and/or most dangerous emergencies. More emergency preparedness resources may be found at [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov).

Reporting

In the case of a true emergency (involving an immediate threat to life and/or property), **call 9-1-1 immediately** to report the situation to emergency services. When speaking to the dispatcher, remember to do the following:

- Remain calm.
- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Provide a detailed description of the nature and location of the emergency.
- Answer all questions from the dispatcher.
- Comply with all instructions.
- Remain on the phone until instructed by the dispatcher to hang up.

After you have spoken with the dispatcher, report the incident to Kyle Sandidge (cell: 601.906.1608) **only once it is safe to do so**. Non-emergency incidents should also be reported to Kyle. He will decide what action to take and what authorities or emergency personnel to contact. Outside of business hours you may also contact the security guard on duty at 601.212.6725.

RAVE Mobile Safety

RTS uses Rave Mobile Safety to send text message and email alerts to lists of people in the event of an emergency. We ask all students with a viable text message plan and phone number to submit their number via their Self-Service account. It is essential to opt-in to this service so that RTS can notify you in the event of a weather emergency, school closing, change in schedule, etc.

If you do not supply your phone number via Self-Service, you will not receive alerts on your phone and will be considered as opting out of this service. If you have any questions or concerns, please email RaveAlert@rts.edu, and they will be happy to assist you. Visit the RTS website for **step-by-step instructions** on how to register your cell phone numbers through Self-Service.

Building Monitors

Every building at RTS Jackson has been assigned a Building Monitor to act as the emergency contact person for those inside the building. In the case of an emergency, the Building Monitors are responsible for ensuring that their buildings are secure and that students, faculty, and staff are aware of how to respond to the emergency. The following are the names of the staff members who are serving as Building Monitors for the current academic year:

- **Ann Foster**—Institutional Administration Building
- **Stephanie Wielgosz**—RTS Counseling Center
- **Kyle Sandidge**—Maintenance
- **David Jackson**—Library
- **Kathy Eldridge**—Student Center
- **Abby Wood**—Biblical Studies Building
- **Bobby Quarles**—Chapel Annex
- **Rachel Underwood**—Dean Center
- **Receptionists**—Administrative/Bookstore Building

Active Shooter

Most of the information contained in this section was taken from the "Active Shooter Quick Reference Guide" card provided to residents upon moving to campus. If you would like one of these cards, contact Matt Pinckard. We recommend that residents keep one of these cards in a visible place in the home and that all students familiarize themselves with this information.

Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims. Because active shooter situations are often over within 10 to 15 minutes, individuals must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with an active shooter situation until law enforcement arrives on the scene.

Should there be an active shooter event on campus, the two most important things for you to do are (1) remain calm and (2) **call 9-1-1 as soon as it is safe to do so!** If the shooter is nearby and you are unable to speak, call and leave the line open so that the operator can hear what is happening.

When speaking to the 9-1-1 operator, be sure to provide, if possible, the following information:

1. The number and location of the shooter(s)
2. A physical description of the shooter(s)
3. The number and type of weapons possessed by the shooter(s)
4. The number of potential victims.

Answer any further questions that the operator may ask and comply with all the operator's instructions.

When law enforcement arrives on campus, remember to do the following:

1. Remain calm and follow instructions.
2. Drop any items you have in your hands, especially bags and jackets.
3. Raise your hands and spread your fingers.
4. Keep your hands visible at all times.
5. Avoid quick movements toward officers.
6. Avoid pointing, screaming, or yelling.
7. Refrain from asking questions while evacuating.

Be aware that the first officers to arrive on scene will usually not stop to help the injured. Rescue teams will follow the initial officers, and these rescue teams will treat and remove the injured. Law enforcement will most likely hold you at a safe location until the situation is under control and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. **Do not leave the area** until law enforcement instructs you to do so.

Before law enforcement arrives, you have three options in responding to the shooter: run, hide, or fight.

RUN

- Have an escape route in mind
- Leave your belongings
- Evacuate whether or not others will agree to follow.
- Help others escape if possible.
- Do not attempt to move the wounded.
- Prevent others from entering an area where the active shooter may be.
- Keep your hands visible.
- Call 9-1-1 when you are in a safe place.

HIDE

- Hide in an area out of the shooter's view.
- Lock the door or block the entry to your hiding place.
- Silence your cell phone, including vibrate mode, and remain quiet.

FIGHT

- Fight **only as a last resort** when your life or another's life is in imminent danger.
- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter.
- Act with as much physical aggression as possible.
- Improvise weapons or throw items at the active shooter.
- Commit to your actions; your life may depend on it!

Weather Emergencies

Tornado

Awareness of impending severe weather shall be the responsibility of designated personnel via electronic media and audible warnings. Upon the threat of tornado activity, a warning shall be delivered by the speediest means to every campus building in which faculty, staff, students, or others may be located. In the case of a tornado warning, the Building Monitors shall direct all students, faculty, and staff to the designated safe area of the particular building.

- **Dean Center:** Racquetball Room
- **Admin Building:** Copier Room
- **Institutional Building:** Vault Room
- **Student Center:** Men's and Women's Bathrooms
- **Biblical Studies Building:** Men's Bathroom or Kitchen area
- **Chapel:** Kitchenette at the end of the hall
- **Counseling Center:** Computer room
- **Library:** Computer room or classroom at the back of the building
- **Housing:** Bathrooms or study nooks inside each apartment/single suite

Winter Weather

Due to the significant rise and fall of temperatures during Jackson winters, otherwise insignificant precipitation may cause icy conditions. Students are advised to limit travel as much as possible when there is snow or ice on the roads. *The RTS Jackson campus follows the Clinton Public School District regarding campus closures due to inclement weather. If Clinton public schools are closed, then RTS Jackson will also close.*

Building Emergencies

Fire

If a minor fire is seen and appears controllable, report it to Kyle Sandidge (cell: 601.906.1608) and, if outside of business hours, the security guard on duty (601.212.6725) **immediately**. If possible, use a fire extinguisher to put out the fire. Every precaution should be taken to avoid personal injury. If the fire is successfully extinguished, report back to Kyle and the guard that the emergency no longer exists.

Upon recognizing the existence of an uncontrollable fire in the building, pull the fire alarm and evacuate the building. Notify Kyle (and the security guard, if applicable) as soon as possible. In the case of an uncontrollable fire, all students, faculty, and staff must evacuate the building calmly, but as quickly as possible. To facilitate a smooth evacuation process, do your best to always be aware of primary and secondary exits when entering a building or room.

Building Evacuation Procedures:

- Building evacuations will occur when an alarm sounds and/or upon notification by designated emergency personnel. When the building evacuation/fire alarm is activated during an emergency, everyone must leave the building via the nearest marked exit and alert others to do the same.
- Stay as low as possible while evacuating, as smoke is the greatest danger during a fire and the lower air will be cooler and less toxic.
- Designated emergency personnel will assist any handicapped persons in exiting the building.
- Designated emergency personnel will physically check each room/area in the building to ensure everyone has left the building.
- Once outside, everyone should proceed to a clear area that is at least 500 feet away from the affected building.
- Keep streets, hydrant areas, and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and personnel.
- No person should return to an evacuated building until designated seminary or law enforcement personnel give permission.
- When the emergency dictates that the campus be evacuated, personnel will be strategically placed at specific locations to direct vehicle traffic.

Utility Failures

Gas Leak: If you smell natural gas, notify Kyle Sandidge (cell: 601.906.1608) *immediately*. In the case that Kyle cannot be reached, contact Atmos Energy directly (866.322.8667). If a gas leak is strongly suspected or confirmed inside a campus building and cannot be controlled, all students, faculty, and staff will be directed to exit the building immediately. Do not return to the building unless told it is safe to do so by first responders or seminary personnel.

Power Failure: If there is a power failure anywhere on campus, report the outage directly to Entergy by calling 1.800.968.8243 (1.800.9OUTAGE).

Loss of Water Pressure: If you notice a loss of water pressure on campus, notify Kyle Sandidge. Widespread loss of water pressure is usually a city issue rather than a campus issue. If low water pressure persists, certain portions of campus, especially the Library and the Clothes Closet, may close until it is restored.

In many cases, the loss of pressure will be followed by a Boil Water Alert from the city of Jackson. Sometimes you will receive direct notice of the alert from the city, but this is inconsistent. Residents will be notified via the campus GroupMe and/or via email. During a Boil Water Alert that affects the RTS Jackson campus, do not use the water fountains in campus buildings. The coffee makers in the Dean Center and the Student Center may be used at your own risk, but know that the water does not stay hot enough for long enough to meet recommendations for purifying water during a Boil Water Alert.

HOUSING

Eligibility

RTS students are eligible for seminary housing. First priority is given to current students based on the academic year. Second priority is given to new students based on the confirmation date of the non-refundable tuition deposit. Clinical years are considered academic years for counseling students. Application for occupancy in a single apartment or a married apartment must be made [online](#). For more information, contact the Office of Student Services (601.923.1672).

Single Suites

On-campus single-suite housing is available for single students. Each suite houses four students in separate bedrooms with a common kitchen, living/dining areas, and two bathrooms. The bedrooms are furnished with a single bed and dresser or chest of drawers. The larger bedroom is furnished with a desk or table, a chair, and bookshelves. The occupant of the smaller bedroom receives a separate study. All apartments are centrally heated and cooled and carpeted and have blinds on the windows. Dishes, silverware, and cooking utensils are not provided. Pets are not allowed. All utilities are included in the monthly rent.

In anticipation of new students coming in, residents are not allowed to use unoccupied rooms as "bonus space" for their own possessions, nor are they allowed to have guests stay in the unoccupied rooms without permission from the Student Services Coordinator. If you have any overnight guests coming to RTS, you need to notify the Student Services Coordinator prior to arrival. This would include anyone staying in your apartment or single suite. We will notify Security so that they are aware of the guest and their authorized visit. Single suite rental is \$20.00 per night.

Married Apartments

There are a limited number of one- and two-bedroom apartments on campus that are available to students. Three tiers of apartments are available at different rates: unrenovated, renovated, and premium. Married students have first priority. Each campus apartment includes a small study containing a built-in desk and bookshelves. All apartments are centrally heated and cooled and have blinds on the windows. Apartments are unfurnished. Pets are not allowed.

Lease and Deposit Information

A refundable security deposit of **\$510** is due with each application, and a signed lease agreement is required upon arrival. Security deposits are refunded after the lease is terminated, provided the apartment is left in an acceptable condition. Lessees are responsible for damage to the property beyond normal wear (see below for more information). Monthly rental charges are due the first of each month and in advance of the month.

Insurance

Renter's insurance is strongly recommended. Policies are available through local insurance agents at very reasonable costs. Coverage for losses attributable to fire, theft, etc. are usually included in such policies. The seminary's insurance does not cover the loss of student property. ***RTS is not responsible for the loss of student property for any reason.***

Mailing Address

The United States Postal Service requires that our campus housing residents include their full address, including their apartment number, to receive all personal mail and subscriptions. For example, if you live in B15, your full official mailing address will look like this:

[YOUR NAME]
5422 Clinton Blvd
Apt B15
Jackson, MS 39209

If you live in a single suite, your apartment number will be your building letter and the number of the specific suite assigned to you (F5, J2, etc.). Downstairs units are 1-4, and upstairs units are 5-8.

Utility Information

All units are completely electric. For the single suites, as noted above, utilities are included in the cost of rent, excluding Internet and telephone service. For the apartments, water is included in the cost of rent, and you will need to establish service for electricity within seven (7) days of moving into your apartment. Any charges for electricity incurred after your official move-in date but before you have transferred service into your own name will be charged to your student account.

To establish electrical service, call Entergy at 1.800.368.3749 at least **two (2) working days** prior to the date service is to begin. You will need the following:

1. Social Security Number
2. Seminary address (5422 Clinton Blvd, Jackson, MS 39209)
3. Your apartment number
4. Date your service is to begin
5. \$200 deposit

A wireless Internet connection is provided in all academic and administrative buildings, but this does not extend to the apartments. Residents who desire home Internet service will need to establish such service themselves. At this time, the only viable Internet option is Xfinity by Comcast. To establish service, visit their website as <https://xfinity.com>. As a cost-saving option, some residents choose to share Internet service across apartments, using a Wi-Fi extender/booster/repeater to adequately cover both apartments. Residents are responsible for making such arrangements and for ensuring that they do not violate any contracts with Comcast.

Laundromat

A quarter-operated Laundromat is available to all campus residents between the A and C apartment buildings. Use of the washing machines costs \$1.50, and use of the dryers is free. Tenants share in the responsibility of maintaining the Laundromat in a clean, orderly condition. RTS is not responsible for any damage to clothing items caused by the machines; use of the machines is at the tenant's discretion. Machine and other malfunctions should be reported through the [maintenance request form](#). Quarters can be purchased at the receptionists' desk on Monday and Thursday mornings before noon.

Inspections

Check-in/Check-out

Upon moving into your apartment, you will be asked to complete a check-in inspection form, on which you will either indicate that each area of the apartment is in good condition or note any preexisting problems. The Office of Student Services will keep this form on file for use when you move out.

Please notify the Office of Student Services (601.923.1672) at least **30 days** prior to moving out of your apartment. A check-out inspection will be performed after your departure, comparing the condition of the apartment to that indicated on the check-in form. If any part of your housing unit is left unclean (including all kitchen appliances), a cleaning service will be hired to finish cleaning the apartment. The cost of this service will be deducted from your housing deposit. Additional fees may be deducted for damage caused to the apartment, and any fees exceeding the amount of your housing deposit will be charged to you.

If you are to receive your housing deposit, it will be forwarded to you within 30 days of your departure. Please be sure that the Student Services Coordinator and the Mailroom Supervisor have your forwarding address. You may leave your keys on the kitchen counter.

Annual Inspections

Annual housing inspections are conducted to check apartments for preventive maintenance and general cleanliness. An official inspection sheet will serve as a guideline for the inspections. If the standards for completing the inspection are not met, the Director of Facilities will send a memo to your apartment stating what needs to be completed and a deadline for completion. If the standards are still not met after the deadline has expired, RTS will hire a cleaning service to complete the required work. The cost of hiring the cleaning service will be charged to the residents of the apartment.

Firearms

General Ban

In accordance with institutional regulations as well as state law, Reformed Theological Seminary generally prohibits the possession of any firearms or other weapons on its property, including within classrooms and public buildings and on the grounds of the seminary.

Exception

Certain individuals who are authorized by applicable state law, law enforcement, or the military to carry a concealed firearm may be allowed to do so on seminary property after registering it with the appropriate institutional authority. For the Jackson campus, this institutional authority is Kyle Sandidge, Director of Facilities and Security. The residents of campus housing must also register any firearms they plan to store in their apartments/single suites.

Appendix A: Release Forms/Acknowledgment of Student Handbook

Please print and sign the following form and return it to the Office of Student Services.

Waiver and Release Information

As it relates to use of facilities owned/operated by Reformed Theological Seminary – Jackson:

In consideration for use of all facilities provided by Reformed Theological Seminary, it is noted that you hereby agree to waive all claims against RTS and its agents, employees, representatives, officers, and directors (Indemnitees), for injuries or damages caused by, arising out of, or related to any participation in activities performed in and utilizing any buildings or on the grounds of the Jackson campus of Reformed Theological Seminary whether caused by, arising out of, or relating to negligence of Indemnitees or otherwise. It is further agreed to indemnify, save, and hold Indemnitees harmless from any loss, liability, attorney's fees, damage, or costs that may incur arising out of or related to the use of Reformed Theological Seminary's facilities or on the premises whether caused by the negligence of the Indemnitees or otherwise. We expect students and guests to conduct their actions in a manner so as not to damage, interrupt, or disturb existing facilities, class sessions, or meeting groups that may take place in adjoining rooms or buildings. You agree to conduct yourself in a Christ-like manner and understand the "no tobacco products" policy and the "no alcoholic beverages" policy of Reformed Theological Seminary.

Acknowledgement of Media Release

As it relates to use of media production:

By enrolling as a student at Reformed Theological Seminary, you are granting RTS permission to use pictures, videos or audio recordings of seminary classes, campus life or other seminary sponsored activities that include your voice, image or likeness.

Acknowledgement of Student Handbook

I have received a copy of the Student Handbook and agree to abide by the policies and guidelines as set forth in the manual.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B: Emergency Contact Information

On Campus	
Emergency Help	<u>911</u>
Receptionists 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday- Friday (Except for Holidays)	<u>601.923.1600</u>
Pendleton Security: For emergency dispatch please contact Kyle Sandidge.	<u>(cell) 601-906-1608</u>
Security Guard House	<u>601.212.6725</u>
Security Mobile Patrol	<u>601.212.6725</u>
Kyle Sandidge, Director of Facilities and Security	<u>(cell) 601.906.1608</u>
Charlie Wingard, Dean of Students	<u>(cell) 256.509.9284</u>

Jackson	
Emergency Help	<u>911</u>
I need to report a crime to an officer.	<u>601.960.1234</u>
I need to report an accident/incident.	<u>601.960.1234</u>
Clinton	
Emergency Help	<u>911</u>
I need to report a crime to an officer.	<u>601.924.5252</u>
I need to report an accident/incident.	<u>601.924.5252</u>

Appendix C: Quick Reference Phone Numbers

Receptionist and General Information:	601.923.1600 (Ext. 1600)
Executive Assistant to the Chancellor: Jan Hyde	601.923.1656 (Ext. 1656)
President—Dr. J. Ligon Duncan III: contact Jan Hyde	601.923.1656 (Ext. 1656)
Director of Operations: Jim Scott	601.923.1699 (Ext. 1699)
Academic Dean: Dr. Miles Van Pelt	601.923.1695 (Ext. 1695)
Dean of Students: Dr. Charlie Wingard	601.923.1627 (Ext. 1627) Cell: 256.509.9284
Director of Admissions: Step Morgan	601.923.1671 (Ext. 1671)
Admissions Counselor: CL Pearce	601-923-1675 (Ext. 1675)
Admissions Coordinator: Rachel Underwood	601.923.1670 (Ext. 1670)
Registrar: Kim Lee	601.923.1681 (Ext. 1681)
Field Education: Dr. Charlie Wingard	601.923.1627 (Ext. 1627)
Preaching Circuit: Marguerite Westbrook	601.923.1678 (Ext. 1678) Cell: 601.954.1969
Payroll, Benefits: Linda Cochran	601.923.1661 (Ext. 1661)
Student Accounts: Connie Stegall	601.923-1717 (Ext. 1717)
Facilities/Security: Kyle Sandidge	601.923.1700 (Ext. 1700) Cell: 601.906.1608
Maintenance Office Manager: Mary Moore	601.923.1691 (Ext 1691 or 9914)
Student Services Coordinator: Matthew Pinckard	601.923.1672 (Ext. 1672)
Counseling Clinic:	601.923.1645 (Ext. 1645)
Bookstore:	601.923.1616 (Ext. 1616)
Library Circulation Desk:	601.923.1623 (Ext. 1623)
Mailroom: Denise Pryor	601.923.1647 (Ext. 1647)
Patterson’s Porch, Clothes Closet: Kathy Eldridge	601.923.1649 (Ext. 1649)

Appendix D: Faculty and Staff by Building

Jackson Administrative/Bookstore Building

Jim Scott	Director of Operations	1699
Step Morgan	Director of Admissions	1671
Carolyn Callahan	Afternoon Receptionist	1600
Matt Poole	Bookstore Manager	1640
	Bookstore	1616

Institutional Admin Building

Ligon Duncan	Chancellor & CEO, Jackson President	1656
Jan Hyde	Executive Assistant to the Chancellor	1656
Brad Tisdale	COFO	1660
Tiffany Bryson	Executive Assistant to the COFO	1643
Bryant Jackson	Vice President- Finance	1664
Ken Wiandt	Director of Finance (all campuses)	1662
Linda Cochran	Payroll & Benefits Administrator (all)	1661
Connie Stegall	Student Billing Director (all campuses)	1717
Ann Foster	Accounts Payable (all campuses)	1663
Pons Bautista	Director of IT- Jackson	1667
Cheryl McCullouch	Coordinator of Development Operations	1653
Tim Thompson	Director of Gift Processing	1658
Sunny Hollingsworth	Development Systems Specialist	1657

Biblical Studies Building

Phillip Holmes	Vice President- Institutional Communications	1689
Abby Wood	Executive Assistant to the VP for Institutional Communications	1698
Rachel Loftus	Services Manager	1683
Kelly Berkompas	Communications Manager	1679
Stephen Griffin	Social Media Manager	

Dean Christian Education Center

Dr. Miles Van Pelt	Professor-Old Testament, Academic Dean	1695
Kim Lee	Registrar , Assistant to Academic Dean	1681
Dr. Charlie Wingard	Professor- Pastoral Theology, Dean of Students , Dean of Chapel, Director of Field Education	1627
Marguerite Westbrook	Administrative Assistant- Field Education and Placement	1678
Dr. Elias Medeiros	Professor Emeritus- Missions	1688
Dr. John Fesko	Professor- Systematic and Historical Theology	1646
Dr. Ben Gladd	Professor- New Testament	1694
Dr. Guy Waters	Professor- New Testament	1697
Dr. Bruce Baugus	Professor-Philosophy & Theology	1696

Dr. Michael McKelvey	Professor- Old Testament	1659
Matthew Pinckard	Student Services Coordinator	1672
CL Pearce	Admissions Counselor	1675
Rachel Underwood	Admissions Coordinator	1670

Chapel Annex

Bobby Quarles	Director of Planned Giving	1651
Bebo Elkin	Consulting Services Foundation	601-259-9394
LilyAnn Gerhardt & Diane Johnston	Child Evangelism Fellowship	

RTS Counseling Center

Dr. Guy Richardson	Professor- Counseling, Director of the MAC Program	1650
Dr. Jim Hurley	Professor- Counseling, Site Administrative Coordinator	
Dr. Bill Richardson	Professor- Counseling, Site Practicum and Internship Coordinator	1632
Mike Hillerman	Adjunct Professor- Counseling, MAC Program Development Coordinator	1630
Jaycee Terry	Assistant Site Administrator	1633
Stephanie Wielgosz	Director of RTS Counseling Center	1635
Tara Walls	Assistant to the Director of RTS Counseling Center	1637

RTS Jackson Library

John Crabb	Library Director	1618
David Jackson	Assistant Librarian	1639

Maintenance Shop

Kyle Sandidge	Director of Facilities and Security	1638
Mary Moore	Assistant to Director of Facilities	1691
Dale Hewitt	Facilities Specialists	
Mehmet Demir	Housing Supervisor	

Sam Patterson Student Center

Kathy Eldridge	Student Center Coordinator	1649
Denise Pryor	Mailroom Coordinator	1647

REFORMED
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY



Student Handbook Addendum
Master of Arts in Counseling Program

Last Revised: May 2019

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GENERAL INFORMATION

This Addendum has information that applies to, and is important for, students in the RTS Master of Arts in Counseling (MAC) program. It should be referenced in addition to the campus specific RTS Student Handbook.

Mission Statement and Program

RTS Institutional Purpose Statement

The purpose of RTS is to serve the church in all branches of evangelical Christianity, especially the Presbyterian and Reformed family, by preparing its leaders, with a priority on pastors, and including missionaries, educators, counselors, and others through a program of theological education on the graduate level, based upon the authority of the inerrant Word of God, the sixty-six books of the Bible, and committed to the Reformed faith as set forth in the *Westminster Confession of Faith* and the *Larger and Shorter Catechisms* as accepted by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America as its standard of doctrine at its first General Assembly in 1789.

RTS MAC Program Mission Statement

The mission of the Master of Arts in Counseling program is to prepare distinctly Christian, conceptually and clinically competent Professional Counselors who can integrate their Christian faith and Reformed worldview with their knowledge of counseling, render counseling to both church and non-church populations in multicultural and pluralistic societies and successfully enter the helping field.

MAC Program Objectives

The Program Objectives (POs) of the MAC program are to prepare counselors who:

PO 1: Faith and Worldview. Graduates demonstrate a lively Christian faith and the ability to integrate their Christian faith and Reformed worldview with their counseling

PO 2: Professional competence. Graduates have the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be professionally competent conceptually and clinically in the areas of (1) professional counseling orientation and ethical practice, (2) social and cultural diversity, (3) human growth and development, (4) career development, (5) counseling and helping relationships, (6) group counseling and group work, (7) assessment and testing, (8) research and program evaluation, and (9) clinical mental health counseling.

PO 3: Diverse populations. Graduates have the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to render service to church and unchurch populations in our multicultural and pluralistic society

PO 4: Licensure. Graduates have the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions successfully to be licensed as professional counselors

Academic Advising

The registrar at each site (Jackson and Orlando) are assigned as the advisor for the MAC students at that site. The registrar is available for questions regarding courses and registration. The student is strongly encouraged to meet with the advisor at least once each semester.

Even though the advisor is available for assistance, it is each student's responsibility to meet the requirements for the degree under the catalog. The student should also be knowledgeable of the certification or licensure requirements of the state they are likely to practice.

Program Structure and Leadership

Program Director

The Program Director is responsible for providing guidance, coordination and leadership to the RTS MAC program located on both the Jackson and Orlando Campuses. The Site Administrators and Practicum/Internship Coordinators at each site are accountable to the Program Director. Currently, Dr. Guy Richardson serves as the MAC Program Director.

Sites

The MAC program is a single program offered by RTS on two of its sites: Orlando and Jackson. Each site offers an equivalent program of study and clinical experience.

Site Administrators

Each site for the MAC program is led by a Site Administrator who serves to administer the academic and curricular implementation of the MAC program on their given site.

Site Practicum/Internship Coordinators

Each site for the MAC program has a Site Practicum/Internship Coordinator who is responsible for the clinical aspect of the program. Their responsibility covers the Practicum/Internship semester courses, including supervision structure.

Communication within the Program

Faculty open-door policy

The MAC faculty maintain an open-door policy, meaning that anytime their door is open the student is welcome to approach the faculty with questions or comments. Most days, there is at least one faculty member on-site available for meeting with students.

Student Representatives

When beginning the program, each cohort elects 3 students to serve as class representatives. These student representatives will attend, on average, one faculty meeting each month. Their purpose is to present concerns to the MAC faculty on behalf of their cohort. These concerns may be academic or clinic related, and it provides students with the opportunity for their voice to be heard anonymously. Faculty take these concerns into consideration in the improvement of the MAC program. Student representatives are also responsible for planning annual program events.

Canvas

RTS uses Canvas (<https://rts.instructure.com/login/ldap>) to post course information and to communicate between faculty and students. When you register, your courses will appear on Canvas. Therefore, it will be for your benefit to become familiar with this system. Signing in to Canvas requires the same username and password that is used for Self-Service (registration and billing).

Licensure Disclaimer

The MAC program currently meets the academic and clinical requirements outlined by the Mississippi Board of Licensed Professional Counselors, the Florida Board of Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy, and Mental Health Counselors as well as most states' licensure boards. Some states such as Ohio and Kentucky require a Master of Arts in Counseling degree exclusively from a CACREP accredited program in order to pursue licensure. RTS has designed its program to meet CACREP standards and has entered into the multi-year CACREP accreditation process. *There is no guarantee that we will be granted CACREP accreditation though it is our goal to do so.* Students graduating from the RTS MAC program within eighteen months prior to our accreditation approval will be considered graduates of a CACREP accredited program.

Licensing and Certification

Since each state specifies its own licensure requirements, students are advised to check with the licensure board in their state or the state in which they plan to work. Post-graduate requirements to become a licensed counselor generally include a minimum number of direct service, face-to-face clinical hours, a specified ratio of clinical supervision to hours of clinical experience, and a passing grade on a state approved licensure exam administered by the National Board of Certified Counselors. To find out more information about a particular state's licensure requirement, visit www.nbcc.org/Licensure.

The MAC program meets the licensure requirements for most states. However, it is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the specific licensure requirements for the state in which they anticipate practicing. The faculty and staff do play a supportive role for the student when there are questions or concerns about the licensure process. **It is important to note that each student should keep a copy of all syllabi for documentation with various licensing agencies.** The following websites are associated with licensure within the states of our 2 sites. Since the policies change frequently, this is the best source for keeping up with licensure requirements:

MS State Board of Examiners for LPC (lpc.ms.gov)

MS Counseling Association (mica.memberclicks.net)

FL Board of Psychology (floridaspsychology.gov)

FL Counseling Association (flacounseling.org)

American Counseling Association (counseling.org)

Academic Appeal Policy

The MAC program follows the general RTS Student Complaints and Appeals Process which is stated in the RTS Student Handbook.

Endorsement Policy

Some states require an official endorsement statement from the educational institution before graduates can pursue licensure. Additionally, some employers may request an endorsement/recommendation from faculty and/or program leadership as a prerequisite to hiring a MAC program graduate.

Program Completion Endorsement

The RTS MAC program faculty will endorse MAC graduates for the purpose of pursuing state licensure who have successfully completed all academic and clinical requirements and are in good standing at the time of graduation.

Employment Endorsement

Requests for specific employment endorsement by faculty and/or program leadership for MAC graduates will be handled on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the faculty member and/or program leadership.

Students should be aware that the RTS MAC program is a general Mental Health Counseling program and cannot endorse graduates for positions that require specialized training beyond the scope of the program (e.g. Substance Abuse Counseling, School Counseling, Rehabilitation Counseling, etc.).

OUTLINE OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Matriculation Requirements

The institutional [website](#) includes a five page item on application procedures specifying details of the procedure, a checklist of steps and information on steps to take after making application. The following checklist briefly summarizes the steps:

Matriculation Checklist

- Submitted letter of intent with appropriate tuition deposit.
- Requested and submitted financial aid application before deadline (if necessary).
- Submitted housing application (if applicable).
- Pre-Registered online

Professional Counseling Organizations and Professional Involvement

Counseling Association Membership

All students admitted to the RTS MAC program are required to join (at their own expense) a professional counseling association and maintain membership for the duration of their time at RTS. Students can join either the American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA) or the American Counseling Association (ACA). Proof of membership and proof of membership renewal must be submitted to site designated personnel prior to the end of each summer term that students are enrolled in the RTS MAC program.

In addition to the AMHCA and ACA, students may optionally explore professional involvement and activities in organizations that may include subchapters in areas that may be of specific interest to them. These may include the following counseling associations:

Christian Association of Psychological Studies (caps.net)

American Association of Christian Counselors (aacc.net)

Mississippi Counseling Association (mica.memberclicks.net)

Florida Mental Health Counselors Association (fmhca.wildapricot.org)

Conference Attendance

Students are required to attend one state or national Counseling Conference of their choice by the end of the second spring semester in the program. Professional conferences offered by the program qualify for this requirement. Expenses relating to conference attendance vary. The student is responsible for these costs.

Curriculum Outline

The expected sequence of courses is as follows:

Summer – 1 st year		
Course #	Course Name	Credits
PSY5100	Counseling and Helping Relationship Skills	3
PSY5220	Group Theories & Practice	3
PSY5170	Research & Program Evaluation	3

Fall – 1 st year		
Course #	Course Name	Credits
PSY5150	Psychopathology	3
PSY5210	Theory & Practice of Counseling	3
PSY5240	Neuroscience Informed Counseling	2

ST5350	Theological Foundations for Counseling	2
OT5500	Old Testament Studies for Counseling	3

Winter – 1 st year		
Course #	Course Name	Credits
PSY560	Substance Abuse & Addiction	3

Spring – 1 st year		
Course #	Course Name	Credits
PSY5190	Couples & Family Counseling 1	2
PSY5200	Couples & Family Counseling 2	3
PSY5180	Professional, Ethical, and Legal Studies	3
PSY5110	Psychodiagnostics	2
PSY5280	Practicum	3
NT5500	New Testament Studies for Counseling	3

Summer – 2 nd year		
Course #	Course Name	Credits
PSY5250	Counseling in Community Setting	3
PSY5160	Assessment & Testing	3
PSY5290	Counseling Internship	3

Fall – 2 nd year		
Course #	Course Name	Credits
PSY5120	Social & Cultural Issues in Counseling	3
PSY5130	Human Growth & Development	3
ST51355	Systematic Theological Studies for Counseling	3
PSY5290	Counseling Internship	3

Winter – 2 nd year		
Course #	Course Name	Credits
PSY5230	Human Sexuality	3

Spring – 2 nd year		
Course #	Course Name	Credits
PSY5140	Career & Lifestyle Development	3
PSY5290	Counseling Internship	3
PSY5270	Application of Counseling & Theology	1
	OT, NT, ST, HT Electives (Note: No PT courses allowed)	6

Academic Expectations

Full time

The MAC program is purposefully designed to be a full-time program. Taking courses and/or completing the practicum and internship on a part-time basis are not offered as an option. However, we do provide the option for students to apply under the Special Student status. Special Students are able to take a maximum of 18 credit hours of MAC courses before starting in the MAC program. Not all courses are available for Special Students, so these students would need to consult with the Site Administrator or the Site Assistant Development Coordinator each semester for advising. **Note: Beginning as a Special Student does not guarantee a spot in the MAC program. Each Special Student must complete the application for the MAC program during the year of study as a Special Student.**

Class sequencing

Due to the MAC program being full-time and a cohort admissions system, the course curriculum schedule for the counseling courses is not flexible and students should take them according to the prescribed schedule.

Outside work

Students should be aware that the academic and clinical demands of the MAC program will make it difficult to maintain a full-time job in addition to the seminary schedule. However, almost every student works part-time while studying in the program. Any outside work must be flexible to give priority to the students' counseling training.

Personal Expectations

Community life expectation

Students are expected to participate actively in a local church fellowship, the community life of the seminary and their MAC cohort.

Personal growth expectation

The nature of counselor training requires self-reflection as well as giving and receiving feedback. Students can, therefore, expect the MAC program experience to be both intra- and inter-personally demanding.

Clinical Expectations

Time Commitment

Once a student enters the clinical training phase of the MAC program, they can expect to spend 15 to 20 hours per week involved in the various aspects of their clinical practicum and internship. Students will be required to remain in their internship through the last week of April of their final semester, regardless of the number of internship hours completed prior to this date. During the final semester, second year students will participate in co-counseling paired with first year students.

Supervision

Students in the clinical training phase will be required to attend weekly individual and group supervision until all their client cases are closed or transferred to another student counselor. Students participating in off-site internships typically will be required to attend staff meetings at their internship site.

Priority of Client Care

The priority of clinical supervision is client care. Although students' professional and personal growth develops out of supervision, clients remain the first priority. Because of this, supervision is not equated with personal counseling. Should personal issues arise in the context of supervision that could interfere with the student's ability to function in a clinical setting, MAC program leadership may require the student to engage in personal counseling from the faculty-approved counselor list at the student's expense.

Ethical Obligations

In addition to our institutional student conduct policy, our MAC students are expected to adhere and comply with the most current version of the American Counselor Association's Code of Ethics. The current Code of Ethics can be found at: <https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>

Records

Accurate record keeping is an ethical and legal requirement for mental health professionals including student counselor interns. Students must maintain the MAC standards for record keeping (including the proficient use of the scheduling and documentation software) during their clinical practicum and internship. Failure to do so will be regarded as a lack of professionalism, and unethical and illegal conduct. Such behavior may result in dismissal from the RTS MAC program.

Liability Insurance

All RTS MAC students are required to obtain professional counseling liability insurance while participating in practicum or internship (or any other clinical activities, e.g., "shadowing in clinic").

Professional counseling liability insurance can be obtained at no additional cost as a benefit of student membership in ACA or AMHCA. Proof of insurance obtained via professional organization membership or other professional liability insurance carriers must be submitted to site designated personnel no later than two weeks prior to Practicum and Internship (or any other earlier clinical involvement). Proof of liability insurance renewal must be submitted each year the student continues participation in clinical internship.

Additional Expenses

Program completion will require additional expenses not listed in the RTS fee schedule, e.g. cost of textbooks, conference attendance, liability insurance, monthly practicum and internship fees (once entering clinic work), and specialized professional training and testing materials.

Graduation

Before graduating from the MAC program, each student must meet the requirements for graduation as explained in the Student Handbook. In addition to these institutional requirements, the student must have completed the 400 required direct hours which include at least 120 relational hours. Relational hours are defined by having more than 1 client in the session. The student must also complete at least 600 indirect hours. These indirect hours may include case administration, supervision, peer reviews, case review, training, and conferences. Graduates must complete all of their clinical requirements prior to the day of graduation.

Policy Changes

There are dynamic aspects of any graduate program that cannot be predicted. It is possible that some dates or circumstance noted in this handbook may need to be changed due to any number of reasons (e.g., budgetary changes, scheduling conflicts). If such changes are necessary, students will be informed

STUDENT EVALUATIONS

Student Progress Evaluations

The Student Review Committee of the MAC program systematically reviews student progress toward their degrees in a number of ways. Included among them are:

Key Performance Indicators

The MAC program faculty have identified Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that measure a combination of skills and knowledge. The KPI data inform the faculty of student progress and of program effectiveness overall and by site. If a student does not achieve a KPI, their overall performance in the relevant course or courses is examined and steps for remediation may be taken by the Student Review Committee.

Key Professional Disposition Indicators

The MAC program faculty have identified Key Professional Dispositions that measure student ability to effectively and cooperatively work in professional relations with clients, colleagues, and others.

Student Counselor Outcome Rating

The MAC program faculty have identified various dimensions of student clinical performance that are assessed by means of the Student Counselor Outcome Rating form (SCOR).

Course completion

The MAC program faculty regularly review student course completion of courses required for the degree.

Policy for Student Retention, Remediation, and Dismissal

Policies regarding student conduct, retention, remediation, and dismissal are included in the RTS Student Handbook. Additionally, the following apply to MAC students:

Student progress evaluation

Twice a year, the faculty meet as the site Student Review Committee (SRC) to assess student progress and as needed to attend to special matters such as student impairment or ethical conduct, taking into account individual student assessment data (e.g. KPI, KDI, SCOR) and other information as deemed wise.

As a result of any evaluation of student progress, three options will be considered:

1. Student is identified as meeting adequate progress. If this option is decided upon, no action is taken other than sharing this information with the student.
2. Student is recommended for remediation.
 - If this option is decided upon, the student and faculty develop a plan of remediation. This plan will be specific to remediating the identified behaviors, may involve outside parties (e.g., counseling professionals), and adherence will be determined by an individual identified by the SRC.
 - If the student fails to adhere to the plan, this may result in dismissal from the program. If dismissal is recommended, faculty will help facilitate the student's transition out of the program and, if possible, into a more appropriate area of study. (See "Process for handling student conduct or impairment issues" below.)
3. Student is recommended for dismissal from the program (see "Process for handling student conduct or impairment issues" below).
 - If this option is decided upon the Student Review Committee will help facilitate the student's transition out of the program and, if possible, into a more appropriate area of study.

If option 2 or 3 is decided upon, a meeting will be scheduled with the student. This meeting usually includes selected faculty member(s). The faculty's concerns and recommendations are clearly explained to the student. The

student will be allowed to discuss his or her thoughts, feelings, and reaction. After reviewing the assessment data and other information they may deem pertinent, the committee recommends retention, remediation or dismissal of each student, following the policies presented below.

Counselor Impairment

The MAC program requires that students' functioning in clinic must not be impaired. Therapeutic **impairment** occurs when there is a significant negative impact on a counselor's professional functioning which compromises client care or poses potential harm to clients. Impaired counselors are distinguished from **stressed or distressed counselors**. The latter may be experiencing significant stressors but their work is not significantly impacted. It is assumed that an impaired counselor has at some point had a sufficient level of clinical competence, which has become diminished as described above. (The definition of "therapeutic impairment" is adapted from the ACA's Taskforce on Counselor Wellness or Impairment)

Areas of impairment may, for instance, include the following:

- Intra- and interpersonal functioning
- Substance abuse or chemical dependency
- Mental illness
- Personal crisis (e.g., traumatic events or vicarious trauma, burnout, life crisis)
- Physical illness or debilitation

Student counselors may or may not be aware of possible impairment and its impact on client service. Student counselors experiencing emotional, relational, or health problems that may potentially impact their helping capacity (e.g., family problems, adverse effects of medications, substance abuse) are to inform a program clinical supervisor or the MAC program leadership who will take steps to protect the welfare of the clients and the particular student counselor and to direct them toward appropriate help.

Ethical Compliance

Situations of non-compliance with the most current version of the American Counselor Association's Code of Ethics are addressed in the section on 'Ethical Obligations' in the MAC Addendum to the RTS Student Handbook.

Process for handling student conduct or impairment issues

The site Student Review Committee (SRC) is the initial body to address matters of retention, remediation and dismissal for the site, taking into consideration matters such as academic and clinical performance, ethical violations of the ACA Code of Ethics, institutional student conduct regulations, intra- or interpersonal functioning and/or impairment. The site committee considers matters at hand to determine what, if any, further steps to take. The committee process may include gathering information from relevant sources and interviews as deemed wise.

After deliberation, the committee recommends a course of action which may range from taking no further actions to steps for remediation of the concern to recommending that the student be dismissed from the program. Actions of the committee are recorded in the Task Tracking System and recommendations made, as appropriate, to institutional administrative persons. Where steps of remediation or dismissal are recommended, the student involved is informed in writing of the decision and recommendation(s) of the committee. Recommendations of dismissal by a Site SRC are presented for discussion to the Program SRC in an online meeting and passed on to appropriate institutional offices (e.g. Dean of Students or Academic Dean)

Remediation: When the site SRC recommends remediation, a plan of remediation is formulated and communicated to the student. Generally, a member of the faculty or staff is appointed to monitor progress in remediation steps and to report back to the committee. If the plan is successfully completed, that fact will be noted in the Task Tracking system and the matter is resolved. If the plan is not successfully completed, the committee may meet to determine what further steps to take, which steps may include recommending dismissal from the program.

The written remediation plan will state the exact actions the student must take for remediation, and this plan will:

1. Advise the student of the Faculty's concerns
2. Provide the student with an opportunity to correct/resolve the concerns
3. Make the student aware of the consequences of not following through

The plan will clearly specify what behaviors or changes in behavior are expected and what time limits are operative. All involved parties will sign the remediation plan and the student will be given a copy of the signed document.

Dismissal: If the committee recommends dismissal of a student from the program, they present their conclusions to the Program SRC, to the student, and to the Program Director who will then take the matter to the campus Academic Dean and Dean of Students, as well as appropriate institutional officers.

Appeals: Students may appeal committee decisions by means of the regular institutional student appeals policy published in the [Student Handbook – Jackson Campus](#) [change to include in the specific *Student Handbook – Orlando Campus.*]

Personal Counseling Resources

A list of faculty-approved counselors will be provided at program orientation. This list includes counselors that may offer a sliding scale, provide discounted rates for RTS MAC students, or bill insurance.

Student counselors engaging in unethical, immoral or illegal behavior are also likely adversely to impact clients. Such behaviors should be disclosed to supervisors or MAC program leadership for appropriate action.

MAC program students who observe student counselors experiencing events or engaging in behaviors likely adversely to impact clients should immediately communicate their concerns to MAC program supervisors or MAC program leadership.

REFORMED
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY



**RTS – Master of Arts in Counseling Program
Student Handbook Addendum Signature**

This form attests that I have read the Student Handbook Addendum for the Master of Arts in Counseling Program.

My signature below signifies that I have read and understand the policies and procedures of the MAC program that are presented in the Student Handbook Addendum.

Student Name _____ ID _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Student preferred email address _____

Student phone number _____

Turn in to the Assistant Program Development Coordinator by the end of Orientation.

Department Use Only:

Site Program Admin. Signature _____ Date: _____