



ORLANDO



# STUDENT HANDBOOK 2021-2022



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[www.rts.edu/orlando](http://www.rts.edu/orlando)

# 2021-2022 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

## 2021 Summer Session

April 1	Registration opens through Self-Service
June 7	Classes begin
August 20	Summer session ends

## 2021 Fall Semester

June 15	Registration opens through Self-Service
August 24	Orientation
August 25	Classes begin
September 6	Labor Day holiday
September 8	Last day to add a class
September 29	Last day to drop a class
October 11-15	Reading week
November 24-26	Thanksgiving holidays
December 6	Last day of fall semester classes
December 8	Term paper deadline (11:00 a.m.)
December 9-14	Examination period (Dec. 9, 10, 13, & 14)
Dec 15 - Jan 2	Christmas holidays

## 2022 Winter Session

November 1	Registration opens through Self-Service
January 3	Winter session begins
January 28	Winter session ends

## 2022 Spring Semester

December 1	Registration opens through Self-Service
February 1	Orientation
February 2	Classes begin
February 16	Last day to add a class
March 9	Last day to drop a class
March 14-18	Spring Break
May 10	Last day of spring semester classes
May 13	Term paper deadline (11:00 a.m.)
May 16-19	Examination period
May 20	Graduation

*Handbook Updated 6-2021*

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# WELCOME TO RTS ORLANDO

I want to extend to you a very warm welcome to RTS Orlando! We are thrilled God has called you to begin advanced study of Scripture, theology, and the church of Christ in preparation for a lifetime of service to His kingdom. You are entering a community of students, faculty, and staff who are from all over the world and from a variety of church traditions—now all joined together by a commitment to the authority of God’s Word over all of life.

Undertaking seminary training is no small task, nor is it a task to be undertaken alone. You are now part of a family of learners whom God has put together on this campus to help one another, teach one another, and spur one another on in Christian discipleship and disciple-making during this unique time of life. Much of seminary unavoidably involves you, the Bible, books, your computer, and a desk in the library. But by no means all of it! We encourage you to share your gifts, struggles, discoveries, worries, joys, and failures with those around you at RTS—and with the local church in which God places you during your time here. God designed us to need one another in the Christian life, and seminary is no exception! We hope you will find your seminary years as a time of immense blessing through the relationships you make with your brothers and sisters in Christ at RTS Orlando.

This handbook is meant to introduce you to some key essentials to life here at RTS Orlando. It will inform you of what is going on, and it will help alert you to some expectations and responsibilities for members of the student body. We will touch upon some elements of the handbook during orientation, and we encourage all students to review it more thoroughly later. Each year students should reread the handbook upon their return to study.

If you have any questions, please touch base with the Student Life Coordinator, Abby MacDonald, or myself. The Student Life Office is here to support you and your family and help you become a flourishing part of this learning community. We want you to thrive and to contribute, to belong and to grow. And we have hope arising from Christ’s promise that “the word of Christ dwells in you richly” as you sit under God’s Word and sing of God’s glory together. As we worship and study and seek to walk before the Lord together here at RTS Orlando, we do so expecting that Christ’s Word will not only speak but will do so in rich and transformative ways.

May God bless your time in our midst!



Rev. Mike Osborne  
Director of Field Education/Placement  
Dean of Students

# INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of Reformed Theological Seminary 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. This program shall be characterized by biblical fidelity, confessional integrity, and academic excellence, and committed to the promotion of the spiritual growth of the students. The breadth of this ministry will include multiple campuses and extensions as led by the Lord.

## VISION STATEMENT

Reformed Theological Seminary exists to glorify the Triune God and to serve His Church in all branches of evangelical Christianity, especially Presbyterian and Reformed churches, by providing Reformed graduate theological education that is globally accessible. RTS equips its students for ministry, primarily through pastoral preparation, to be servant leaders marked by “A mind for truth. A heart for God.”

# SPIRITUAL LIFE

## COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS

As you begin or continue your seminary career, we invite you to join us in committing to:

1. The truth of Scriptures in its full expression and in the breadth of its application to all of life (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
2. Sharing with each other in hard work and personal service (1 Thess. 2:8).
3. Offering our academic work to the Lord as our current vocation (2 Tim. 2:15-16).
4. A genuine and supportive friendship with each other, reflecting the self-sacrificing love of our Savior for us (1 John 3:11, 16-18).

## PERSONAL COMMITMENTS

The Apostle Paul wrote Timothy: “Watch your life and doctrine closely...” (1 Tim. 4:16a). Your personal walk with the Lord merits your continuing, prayerful concern and will receive ongoing support from fellow students, faculty, and staff. We desire and pray that seminary will be a time of notable growth in closeness with the triune God, and by his grace we seek to structure curricula, activities, and assignments so as to foster that kind of progress. Your fellow students

and our teaching staff want to support and encourage you in times of joy and of sorrow, of obvious growth and of seeming struggle. You will be summoned to much activity in preparing yourself for a lifetime of active ministry and service. Please start now to develop patterns of prayerful meditation on Scripture, of personal and corporate worship, and of spiritual nourishment so that your study will be a spiritual gain, not a hindrance.

## **THE LORD’S DAY**

The Lord’s Day is set aside for your worship with a local congregation and for rest. You are urged to participate actively in a local church. This will be a valuable and indispensable element during your seminary experience. Take some time in the first few weeks to determine where you will attend, and then commit yourself to faithfully attend and serve. For a list of area churches please contact the Student Life Office for more information. Faculty, staff, and students attend many congregations and will gladly help introduce you to the life of those church bodies, especially if you are new to the area.

Observance of the Lord’s Day also means that you should rest from studying (as from other labors) as part of the good rhythm of keeping Sabbath. Please do not call faculty or staff at their homes concerning academic or other seminary-related matters on the Lord’s Day. The seminary is closed on Sunday. Emails sent to faculty and staff will be answered on Monday.

## **CHAPEL**

Chapel is an important part of community life and is held each Wednesday during the Fall and Spring semesters at 11:00 a.m. All faculty have been advised to dismiss classes no later than 10:50 a.m. to allow students a few minutes to walk from the classrooms to the Chapel. Seminary policy as adopted by the faculty states: “All regular students are expected to attend the chapel services. Other members of the academic community are urged to attend when possible.”

## **PERSONAL & CORPORATE PRAYER**

Opportunities for prayer occur regularly. We strongly encourage you to take advantage of them and to institute such practices regularly with your seminary classmates and faculty. Faculty and staff begin each week with a short prayer meeting outside the President’s office at 8:45 am on Monday. You are also encouraged to find a prayer partner during your time at RTS.

## **PURSUING RELATIONSHIPS**

Friendships are an important part of seminary life and, we pray, one of the great legacies of your time here. You will be making friendships that will last your entire life. They will be a source of encouragement for the days ahead. So pursue people while you are here. In particular, we encourage you to get to know people in other degree programs. We encourage you to form friendships with students from other nations. You have an extraordinary opportunity to build international friendships that may become the basis for future ministry partnerships. Finally, pursue our staff and faculty. They will reach out to you. Reach out to them. Pursue them outside

the classroom.

## **MISSIONAL CAMPUS**

On our campus, we try to model what we hope our churches will look like. We want to bless our community. Consequently, you will see many people from our community on campus. We have over 400 people who come into our counseling clinic. We have two churches that meet on campus each week. People come from all over to visit our bookstore. A variety of other gatherings occur in any given month. We are also glad the housing we own is close to campus where you can interact with non-believers and share your faith. The University of Central Florida, located minutes from our campus, is now the second largest public university in the United States. UCF's proximity offers many opportunities for RTS students to interact with the university world.

## **STUDY (AS A SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY)**

Studying and preparing for class is your responsibility before God during your seminary days. Preparation for ministry is a consecrated activity. Commit yourself to preparing thoroughly and work hard approaching your study as a devotional service of worship.

# **CAMPUS LIFE**

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

### **FINANCIAL AID**

The decision to enroll in Seminary is a step of faith and, for many students this step has been taken without full assurance of complete financial support. Such a step is challenging. Although RTS is generous in its financial aid, the Seminary asks students to treat their awards as confidential information. The online financial application is available at [ww.rts.edu](http://ww.rts.edu). If you have questions about Financial Aid or Scholarships please contact the Director of Admissions, Caleb Burnison ([cburnison@rts.edu](mailto:cburnison@rts.edu)). He is available to discuss possible ways to meet your financial needs.

Financial Aid is awarded annually in the form of need-based grants, need-based partnerships with particular ministries, or merit based scholarships. Applications for financial aid must be submitted to the Admissions office using the online form referenced above. Preference will be shown to full time students and applications received by March 1st. All students who desire to be considered for Financial Aid must complete an Online Financial Aid Application each Spring Semester for the following academic year. Please visit [www.rts.edu](http://www.rts.edu) for more information.

### **WORK STUDY**

Many students work on campus in work study positions. These normally consist of a maximum

of 20 hours of work each week on campus in such places as the Library, the Admissions Office, the Maintenance department, as Teaching Assistants (TAs), or in other areas. Positions are based upon availability and therefore are not guaranteed for any student.

Before you accept a work study job, you must understand that this is a commitment that should be honored. The Seminary depends on work study students to do necessary, critical work. Most of the departments on campus see their work study students as vital contributors to the overall mission of RTS and therefore expect a measure of dependability regardless of the pressure of studies, exams, or other responsibilities.

Please contact Rob McAdams (rmcadams@rts.edu) for current work study job opportunities.

## **WORKING WHILE IN SEMINARY**

Since there are a limited number of jobs on campus, students often seek work opportunities off-campus as well. Check the online bulletin board for jobs here:(<https://padlet.com/mosborne15/8htpnpcgljqz>).

Contact Mike Osborne (mosborne@rts.edu) to talk about full-time job opportunities upon graduation from seminary. To search for both part-time and full-time ministry positions, go to [www.rts.edu](http://www.rts.edu) and click on Services, then Job Listings.

## **HOUSING**

RTS student housing is more than just a place to live. It's a place to connect and a place to reach out. We're building a community of like-minded students who want to form relationships. There are community events like meet-and-greets, game nights, and pool parties.

The seminary owns 19 condos that are available to students at affordable prices. The condos are located at the Villas at Lakeside on Slavia Road in Oviedo. Please contact Rob McAdams if you have any questions.

## **RTS WIRELESS NETWORK**

Wireless network service is available for all members and guests of the RTS community. Access is available to all publicly accessible areas inside RTS buildings. Current configuration information is as follows:

SSID	RTS-ORL
Password	HermanBavinck1!

## **RTS Technology General Usage Expectations**

1. Wireless network access is provided for use by members of the RTS community and is intended to support and enhance the educational experience. All usage should be in keeping with the student code of conduct.
2. Providing a safe and secure technological environment in a community setting requires cooperation from all members of the community.
3. Wireless network access may, on occasion, be taken offline without notice for testing, troubleshooting, expansion, etc.
4. Intellectual labor and creativity are highly valued by the seminary community. Therefore, because electronic information is so easily reproduced, respect for the work of others is especially critical as it relates to the use of technology. Any violation of original works such as plagiarism, unauthorized access, and copyright violations may be grounds for disciplinary action and/or loss of access privileges.
5. Digital information of any kind that does not belong to an individual should not be copied or accessed without prior authorization and is not allowed without such permission.
6. Community technological resources may not be modified in any way by anyone outside RTS IT Department. Costs incurred to restore/replace equipment that has been altered or damaged will be assessed to those responsible.
7. Intentional harm or damage to RTS-owned technological resources by knowingly spreading virus-infected files, malware, spyware, adware, etc., or any use of these resources for inappropriate conduct may result in disciplinary action and/or loss of privileges, and/or assessment of costs to repair/replace such resources.
8. RTS Information Technology Department is not responsible for support of any hardware or software not owned by RTS.

## **RTS Network Usage Policy**

If you choose to use the RTS network, you are agreeing to comply with and be bound by the following terms and conditions of use.

Terms of use:

1. Your use of any information or materials on sites you access is entirely at your own risk, for which we shall not be liable.

2. You agree that, though this portal, you will not perform any of the following acts:
  - Attempt to access devices or resources to which you have no explicit, legitimate rights
  - Copy, reproduce, or transmit any copyrighted files or information other than in accordance with the requirements and allowances of the copyright holder Launch network attacks of any kind including port scans, DoS/DDoS, packet floods, replays or injections, session hijacking or interception, or other such activity with malicious intent
  - Transmit malicious software such as but not limited to viruses, Trojan horses, and worms
  - Surreptitiously install software or make configuration changes to any device or application, by means of the installation or execution of key loggers, registry keys, or other executable or active application or script
3. You agree that you will use the access provided here responsibly and with full regard to the safety, security, and privacy of all other users, devices, and resources.
4. You agree that you will be mindful of the cultural sensitivities of others while using this portal so as not to provoke reaction or offense, and that you will not intentionally access pornographic, graphically violent, hateful, or other offensive material (as deemed by RTS) regardless of others' sensitivities.
5. You understand that we reserve the right to log or monitor traffic to ensure that these terms are being followed.
6. You understand that unauthorized use of resources through this portal may give rise to a claim for damages and/or be a criminal offense.

## **INSURANCE**

There are at least two measures you can take to protect yourself from overwhelming financial problems:

1. **Medical Insurance.** Medical Insurance. As of January 1, 2019, the Affordable Care Act eliminated the Individual Mandate, which requires Americans to purchase a minimum level of health insurance coverage. Due to this change, RTS does not require all full-time students 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 the I-20 form. 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, and is a personal cost. Students are responsible for all policies that are provided in the student handbook, which is accessible on the RTS website.

2. Life Insurance. Although life insurance is not required of Seminary students, it is a wise precaution and highly encouraged.

## **THE ROOSTER**

*The Rooster*, a weekly newsletter, is published each Saturday throughout the Fall and Spring semesters. It is an excellent source of information and includes official announcements, upcoming events, and other matters of interest. Please read this newsletter to stay connected to our community.

## **ON-CAMPUS COUNSELING**

The Oviedo Counseling Clinic, located on the second floor of the administration building, offers discounts to RTS students and spouses. Several of the services include Premarital, Marital and Couples Counseling, Anxiety and Stress Management, Parenting Challenges, Relationship Growth, Work and Career Challenges, and much more. Please call the Director of Northland Counseling ministries, Sarah Baker at 321.244.3576 if you would like more information. In addition, the Dean of Students is always available to help in a pastoral counseling role for all students. Please contact Mike Osborne at mosborne@rts.edu if you have additional questions or need resources.

## **STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

The Dean of Students handles the coordination of needed accommodation for students with disabilities and special needs. This includes students with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, and non-native English speakers. If you need assistance, please contact the seminary at the beginning of the semester. We will do all we can to accommodate your special needs when we know about them in advance.

## **BRIGHTLIGHT BOOKS @ RTS**

Our bookstore, BrightLight Books @ RTS is located on the ground floor of the administration building and has become a popular place for students to gather throughout the day for great books, Wi-Fi connection, coffee, and fellowship in a casual and relaxed atmosphere.

BrightLight Books is owned and operated by RTSO alumni Scott Huber (MABS, '98) and offers new and used books, DVDs and CDs and features one of the largest collections of secondhand Christian theological books in the country.

Seventy percent of BrightLight's inventory is used items purchased with cash or trade credit directly from customers. They will buy-back books, as well as some textbooks, from both the

local and seminary community. For more information, visit their website at [www.brightlightbooks.com](http://www.brightlightbooks.com).

## **STUDENT COMMONS**

The Student Commons is located between Classrooms 2 and 4 and provides students a space for eating, hanging out or studying. There are a few conveniences and amenities provided for student use.

If you bring your lunch or dinner to campus, the Commons is equipped with two refrigerators, four microwaves, a coffee pot, and vending machines. Please keep the kitchen clean and label all of your personal food items. The refrigerators are cleaned regularly. Unlabeled, outdated, or spoiled items will be thrown away.

A ping pong table, foosball table, and Nintendo are available. Please be mindful of other students who may be studying and help us care for our equipment by reporting damage and returning items to their proper place. The television is available but please be respectful of others when choosing a program or adjusting the volume.

## **IDENTIFICATION CARDS**

All students receive an ID card during their first semester of study. Every student must request an ID card within the first four weeks of a semester. Please contact the Student Life Coordinator, Abby MacDonald at ([amacdonald@rts.edu](mailto:amacdonald@rts.edu)) to have your photo taken or to submit a photo via e-mail.

## **LOST & FOUND**

The Front Desk and the Library each have an area for lost and found items.

## **STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS & ACTIVITIES**

### **STUDENT ACTIVITIES FEE**

Each semester, students taking 3 or more credits are required to pay a Student Activities Fee. This fee helps form the budget which the Student Life Team distributes to foster community within RTS. Some of the activities include the Fall and Spring Kick-off, Christmas Party, and the Graduation Reception.

### **STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM**

The Student Leadership Team (SLT) is comprised of a diverse group of students and serves as a critical liaison between students and the administration and which also serve to help increase the quality of community at RTS. SLT members are chosen annually by the Dean of Students.

Please share any and all suggestions for improving Student Life with SLT members, the Student Life Coordinator, or the Dean of Students.

## **WOMEN IN MINISTRY**

WiM (Women in Ministry) is a component of our Student Life department. Serving all women who are part of the RTS Orlando community, WiM connects and equips women for kingdom service. Fellowship driven events like our fall beach retreat provide our women an opportunity to build relationships that will last beyond seminary days. At our monthly Connection Lunches, you will get to meet and build friendships with women connected to the seminary. Smaller gatherings prepare women for more specific callings. No matter where you may be called to serve in the future, WiM will help prepare you for a faithful and fruitful ministry. Contact the WiM Coordinator, Jeanna Freire ([wimorlando@rts.edu](mailto:wimorlando@rts.edu)) for more information.

## **CANOE**

The canoe is available for excursions on Long Lake and is free to all RTS students and their families. Please speak to the front desk receptionist or the Student Life Coordinator to fill out a waiver of liability form and request the keys. If you fish from a canoe or off the dock, state law requires a fishing license.

## **PLAYGROUND & DOCK**

The playground, dock, and gazebos are available to our students and their families. Please help us take care of them. Unaccompanied minors are not allowed on campus for liability reasons.

## **LECTURESHIPS**

Each year we have various lectures given on campus by world class Christian scholars. In the fall, we host the Hughes Preaching Lectures. In the spring, we have the Kistemaker Academic Lecture Series, and we have also hosted the Spurgeon Lectureship in the past. We encourage our student community to take advantage of these and invite guests.

# **ACADEMIC LIFE**

## **ACADEMIC ADVISING & CONCERNS**

Several curricula have been developed to meet a wide range of student needs for basic and advanced preparation for Christian service in any field. The catalog (available online only at [https://rts.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/RTS\\_Catalog\\_2019\\_Single\\_Page.pdf](https://rts.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/RTS_Catalog_2019_Single_Page.pdf)) is designed to acquaint you with various program requirements. Become very familiar with its contents. You should plan your curriculum in close consultation with the catalog and the Registrar.

If you should have a problem involving a specific class, consult with that professor. If you have a broader scheduling issue, please speak with the Registrar, Lanny Conley, or the Academic Dean,

Dr. Michael Allen.

## **REGISTRATION**

Course registration is completed online via Self Service. Please see the link at the bottom of the RTS home page, [www.rts.edu](http://www.rts.edu). If you encounter any difficulties, please contact the Registrar, Lanny Conley at [lconley@rts.edu](mailto:lconley@rts.edu).

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE & CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE**

Students should be respectful of professors, attend all class periods, and hand in assignments on time. Classroom etiquette also includes leaving cell phones turned off, refraining from surfing the Internet, playing computer games, texting, and communicating with your neighbor during lectures.

Recording of class sessions is permitted with each professor's prior approval. Recordings are to be used solely for personal study and spiritual edification and are not to be distributed privately or publicly in any manner. The video recording of RTS courses by students is prohibited. Please remember that lectures and syllabi are the intellectual property of the professors. Distribution may be considered piracy.

## **COMMUNICATION**

The Seminary will use a variety of communication methods to give you important information. The first way is through email. It is important that you have a working email address, and that you check messages frequently. You will receive important information about your classes, financial aid and upcoming events through email. The staff at RTS Orlando are very careful about avoiding unnecessary emails. Secondly, information is disseminated using the *The Rooster*, RTS Orlando's weekly email update (presently sent out on Saturdays). Third, each semester we publish an events calendar so you can plan to be part of the many campus events at RTS. Finally, we also communicate through our campus Facebook page, RTSO Student Life, which all students are encouraged to join.

## **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).

## **EXTENDED ABSENCES**

If you must be absent from any course for an extended period of time (more than a week), you must obtain prior approval from the Academic Dean. Requests for extended absence must be

made in writing. If you need special consideration during any course, consult individually with each professor involved. If you need to withdraw for any reason, please notify the Registrar.

## **TESTS & EXAMINATIONS**

Tests and examinations, other than final examinations, are developed and administered according to each professor's requirements. Most professors indicate their testing schedule at the beginning of each semester. This does not preclude unscheduled examinations. Ask your professor what the policy is and what kind of response expected on examinations and then be prepared to respond accordingly.

## **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 whenever the idea is distinctive to another or the particular words are taken exactly from another. If the source is not acknowledged properly, your work is plagiarism. For an excellent summary on what constitutes plagiarism, see Kate L. Turabian, 8th Edition, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (rev. by Wayne C. Booth, etc.; 7th ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), pp. 78-82 (section 7.9).

Plagiarism includes word-for-word copying, lifting terms, restatement of 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. If you have questions about plagiarism, please consult with your professor or the librarian.

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

1. Repeat the assignment and receive a maximum of a D on the assignment
2. Receive an F on the assignment
3. Receive an F in the course
4. Expulsion from the seminary

## **EXTENSION TIME FOR PAPERS & OTHER ACADEMIC WORK**

Deadlines for papers or other academic work must be observed. You may request an extension of time by consulting with your professor and/or the Academic Dean. Requests must be approved by the professor of the class and the Academic Dean. Students who request extensions should expect a reduced grade for work handed in late. Having all work completed on time is seen as an important part of training for ministry. You must familiarize yourself with the process and time limits for requesting extensions. If you have any questions, please speak with the Registrar.

International students and/or students with disabilities that affect completion of assignments or tests please contact your professors and the Dean of Students at the beginning of the semester in

order to receive appropriate accommodation. Please see section on Students with Special Needs.

## **GRADES**

Grades are posted online via Self Service approximately five weeks after the last exam of any semester. Students with unpaid account balances will not receive grades until all obligations to the Seminary are fulfilled.

A	(97-100)	4.00	D+	(75-77)	1.33
A-	(94-96)	3.66	D	(72-74)	1.00
B+	(91-93)	3.33	D-	(70-71)	0.66
B	(88-90)	3.00	F	(0-69)	0.00
B-	(86-87)	2.66	I-	(incomplete)	
C+	(83-85)	2.33	W-	(withdraw)	
C	(80-82)	2.00	S-	(satisfactory)	
C-	(78-79)	1.66	P-	(passing)	

## **FIELD EDUCATION**

Field Education is theological education in which classroom learning is tested and applied in the life and ministry of the church. The purposes of Field Education are:

1. To help Master of Divinity students test, exercise, and improve their gifts and skills
2. To equip them with firsthand experiences in the area of their calling
3. To encourage their theological reflection on the various tasks of pastoral ministry

All Master of Divinity students at RTS are required to have 400 hours of Field Education during their time in seminary. Many students have had very valuable previous ministry experience before beginning their studies; nevertheless, the seminary expects students to have field education experience under the oversight of both faculty and trained supervisors as a part of the seminary curriculum. This experiential education in the ministry context is an essential component of the seminarian's personal growth and preparation for ministry.

The 400 hour requirement may be met through a 9 to 12 month part-time internship (10-15 hours per week), a summer intensive (40 hours per week) or other possible arrangements negotiated between the student, church and Field Education Director. The field experience credit may be earned as a summer student assistant to a pastor, a student supply in a vacant pulpit, a pastoral internship of nine to fifteen months, a missionary internship, a campus ministry internship, work with a para-church organization, ministry in a national park, youth ministry, evangelistic ministry in a local church, nursing home chaplaincy, hospital chaplaincy, jail ministry, teaching home Bible classes, or other similar ministries.

Please visit <http://www.rts.edu/campuses/orlando/students/field-education/> for more information

or to obtain the field education registration form. If you have questions about Field Education please contact Mike Osborne at [mosborne@rts.edu](mailto:mosborne@rts.edu).

## **SPOUSES TAKING CLASSES**

Spouses of *full-time, degree-seeking students* (MDiv, MABS, MATS, and MAC) may *audit* courses without charge. No application to RTS is necessary. Please use the following registration form that is found on the RTS website at <http://www.rts.edu/campuses/orlando/admissions/audit>

Spouses of *full-time, degree-seeking students* (MDiv, MABS, and MATS) may also enroll for credit without charge after first completing the application process and gaining admission to RTS. *This no-charge-for-credit spousal benefit does not extend to the MAC degree program. If either student is in the MAC degree program, the spouse discount is limited to a maximum of 50%.*

Upcoming classes are found under the Academics tab at [www.rts.edu](http://www.rts.edu). Not only do these courses provide opportunity for spiritual growth, they can also help you become better acquainted with professors and others in the Seminary family.

## **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 transcribed 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' confidentiality policies are generally consistent with FERPA. RTS policies are as follows:

1. 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.
2. If a student believes his/her academic file and/or transcript are 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 the student wishes to change and specify what is inaccurate or misleading. If RTS decides not to amend, the student may use the appeal process outlined elsewhere in this Handbook.
3. 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.

4. 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.

## **ACCREDITATION INFORMATION & STANDARDS**

### **ACCREDITATION INFORMATION**

Reformed Theological Seminary is accredited by The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Reformed Theological Seminary has a License by Means of Accreditation (LMBA) from the Florida Department of Education/Commission for Independent Education (FLDoE/CIE).

Last Re-Affirmation of Accreditation:

ATS            06.30.12

SACS 07.31.12

Next Re-Affirmation of Accreditation:

ATS            05.30.22

SACS           12.31.22

Reformed Theological Seminary is accredited to award the following degrees: Doctor of Ministry, Master of Divinity, Master of Arts (Biblical Studies), Master of Arts (Theological Studies), Master of Arts in Counseling.

#### The Association of Theological Schools

10 Summit Park Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15275-1110  
(412) 788-6505 | [www.ats.edu](http://www.ats.edu)

#### Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

1866 Southern Lane  
Decatur, GA 30033  
(404) 679-4500 | [www.sacs.org](http://www.sacs.org)

#### Florida Department of Education

325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1414  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400  
(850) 245-3200 | [www.fldoe.org](http://www.fldoe.org)

### **ACCREDITATION STANDARDS**

Reformed Theological Seminary maintains a goal to comply fully with the standards of accreditation of ATS, SACS, and the Florida Department of Education/Commission for Independent Education. Students who believe RTS has violated these standards in any way

should submit their complaint(s) in writing to the RTS Orlando 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 will be provided to the student in timely fashion. At this point, if the student is not satisfied with the written response from RTS, the student may file a complaint directly with ATS and/or SACS, and/or FLDoE/CIE.

## LIBRARY

### HOURS OF OPERATION

Hours are subject to change during breaks and holidays. The library is closed during Chapel.

8:00 am to 10:00 pm	Monday through Thursday
8:00 am to 5:00 pm	Friday
10:00 am to 2:00 pm	Saturday

Library Front Desk	321.244.3823
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### STAFF

Michael Farrell	Library Director	mf Farrell@rts.edu	407.278.4635
Greg Gale	Library Assistant	ggale@rts.edu	407.278.4483

Please ask a library staff member or one of our student desk workers for assistance. When you need help, we encourage you to come into the library, pull up a chair, and chat with us. We are here to help you. You can also check out some of the libguides on our website. These provide useful research tips and detailed instructions on find and using library resources. Our libguides can be found at <http://rts.libguides.com/>

### ARRANGEMENT OF THE LIBRARY

#### GENERAL COLLECTION

The library is classified by the Library of Congress System. The reference books are on the shorter shelves at the front of the library. The circulating collection starts behind the reference section with the oversized books and then moves on to the A-BS. BS-Z is found on the shelves perpendicular to the A-BS section and stretches the length of the library. If you need help locating an item please ask for assistance at the front desk.

#### PERIODICALS

The current year's periodicals are arranged alphabetically along the front two walls of the library. Past periodicals are bound and housed in the shelves to the left of the general collection.

For a complete listing of periodicals refer to the library website at <https://rts.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/orl-periodicals.pdf>

## **ELECTRONIC RESOURCES**

The library subscribes to several databases such as ATLA, Proquest E-Books, EBSCO E-Books, and several others. These databases give you access to thousands of scholarly articles and books in a variety of disciplines.

### **Access**

To access our subscription databases, go to <https://rts.edu/academics/library/databases/> and click on any of the databases listed. If you are on campus, you will be automatically logged in. If you are off campus, you will be asked to enter a user ID and password. Your credentials are the same that you use for Canvas. If you forget your credentials, you will need to reset them at the RTS website. If you need assistance resetting your credentials, please contact [bdewitt@rts.edu](mailto:bdewitt@rts.edu)

### **Other Resources**

A great place to find free digital books is <http://oadtl.org/> This is a catalog of books and periodicals that are in the public domain and have been scanned. Most are pre-1923 and all are full text-available. Much of the material comes from reputable publishers such as Brill, Oxford, and Cambridge.

## **LOCATING BOOKS**

The online catalog (<http://library.rts.edu/>) allows you to search the library's holdings by author, title, keyword, subject, etc. The computer is menu-driven and it will give you step by step instructions for how to use it. The catalog will tell you the status and location of the item as well as the call number. Please ask for assistance if you have difficulty finding what you need.

## **CIRCULATION POLICY (STUDENTS ONLY)**

Any item may be checked out for a period of 28 days and renewed by phone or in person as long as another patron has not requested it. Late fees are \$.15 a day per item. A processing fee of 10 dollars plus the replacement cost of the book is charged for any lost item. Students may check out up to 15 books at a time. You must return all overdue books and pay any outstanding fine before you may check out books. You can request a renewal of items as long as they have not been requested by another patron. Renew items by asking at the library desk, calling the library (321.244.3823), or emailing Greg Gale, [ggale@rts.edu](mailto:ggale@rts.edu).

## **RESERVE POLICY**

Patrons may check out books that are on the reserve shelves for 2 hours at a time. They may be checked out overnight during the last hour before the library closes and must be returned during the first hour of the next open day. This is the only time a reserve book may be removed from the library. Copies of articles are sometimes available on reserve and may also be checked out for

two hours at a time. You must sign the article out. A \$5.00 fine is assessed for any missing or torn page or a removed staple. Articles may never leave the library even during the last hour.

## **OTHER LIBRARY POLICIES**

You are allowed to leave books on tables in the library overnight if you are going to be using them again when you return. We ask that you check these books out at the front desk first so that we can keep track of who is using them. You must leave a note on the books that includes your name, the date, and a request to leave them. The library staff does not guarantee that books will remain on the tables if left.

In order to protect the library materials, eating is not allowed in the library but you may have drinks that are covered. Please also do not adjust the blinds. They break easily. Library staff adjusts the blinds according to a schedule that will help protect the books and make the library comfortable.

Holdings can be placed on library books that are currently checked out. Request the hold at the library desk. You will be contacted for pick up when they are returned.

## **INTERLIBRARY LOANS (STUDENTS ONLY)**

1. Any book or journal article may be requested through the ILL program.
2. Please check to make sure that we do not own the item before requesting it. We cannot request books that we own, even if they are currently checked out.
3. You may email the author, title, and any other bibliographic information to Michael Farrell (mfarrell@rts.edu)
4. Items usually arrive in one week and may be held for a month.
5. This is a free service, and there is no limit to how many items you may request.
6. Use ATLA to find theological journal articles that may be held by other libraries.

There are many good ways to find books for your research needs.

1. Use [www.worldcat.org](http://www.worldcat.org) to find books held by other libraries. Worldcat is a catalog of all books held by hundreds of participating libraries around the world including RTS.
2. Find yourself a quality book on the subject and look at its bibliography.
3. Use google books not only to find titles, but to receive full-text access to certain titles and partial text access to other titles at [books.google.com](http://books.google.com).

## **SCANNER**

The library has a scanner located by the bound periodicals near the windows (separate from copier). You can scan items for free to your email, google docs, smart phone, or USB drive. The library staff is available to make scans for Orlando students that live out of the Orlando area. This service is mainly intended to aid students on the Hybrid track who are not regularly on

campus. To request a scan, email Greg Gale (ggale@rts.edu). Include detailed information such as title, author and page numbers in your request. Be aware that scans are limited by copyright law and Greg will limit accordingly.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

The seminary offers free wireless internet access in the library. If you have difficulty using the wireless, we cannot offer our assistance with your computer. If the wireless is down, we will contact IT to solve the problem. The library does offer printing services, and you can print to the Library via the wireless network, or you can use one of the library computers. **WARNING** - If you store documents on one of the library computers, they will be deleted. All student printing will be billed to your student account.

# **CONDUCT**

## **GUIDELINES**

Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times as mature believers. Exemplary Christian conduct should control our words and our actions, both 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 hand in assignments on time. Classroom etiquette also includes leaving cell phones turned off, refraining from surfing the Internet and laptop computer games, and communicating to your neighbor during lectures.

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 stated policy.

## **STUDENT APPEALS**

An appeals process exists to resolve any behavioral or academic problem that cannot otherwise be settled in a Biblical manner and assures 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, then the student may submit a subsequent written appeal to the campus President requesting a hearing. The campus President may or may not grant the request.
3. 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.
4. 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 the appeals process was properly observed.

## **CHILDREN ON CAMPUS**

Families and children are welcome on campus but must be closely supervised by their parent or guardian at all times. Unaccompanied minors are not allowed on campus. Children under the age of 17 are not allowed to use the RTS library computers.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

The seminary expects all members of its community to apply sanctified 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 which 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 does 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 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 which is believed by the reporting individual to be in violation of this policy.

## **STUDENT’S ROLE IN INSTITUTIONAL DECISION MAKING**

The seminary recognizes that students may contribute positively to institutional decision making. Therefore, an open-door policy exists throughout the institution, through which students may voice their concerns, suggestions, and needs. In addition, pertinent matters may be brought to the attention of the faculty, administration, or Board of Trustees through the student leadership team.

## **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.

## **FIREARM POLICY – 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, public buildings, or on the grounds of the seminary.

## **GENERAL BAN 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. This authority will be the Business Manager/VP of Administration on each campus unless otherwise indicated (Rob McAdams in Orlando).

# **FACILITIES**

## **GUIDELINES**

We have been blessed with excellent facilities at RTS. In order to keep these facilities as useful and clean as possible, the cooperation of every member of the Seminary community is necessary. You can help share that responsibility in several ways:

1. Wherever you see litter or trash, please pick it up and throw it away. If you see a spill, please clean it up, or contact Maintenance for assistance.
2. Please refrain from consuming food or drink in the Chapel. Covered drinks are allowed in the library, but food is not.

3. If you should see a need for maintenance, contact Student Life or Maintenance.
4. Do not remove furnishings from the Student Commons or classrooms. If you are part of any student function requiring rearrangement of chairs or tables, it is your responsibility to see that all furnishings are replaced exactly as they were when you are finished.
5. Please turn off lights in the classrooms when you are the last person to leave.
6. Children on campus must be under the direct supervision of an adult. Please do not leave young children unattended. Unaccompanied minors are not allowed on campus.
7. No dogs, cats, or other pets that could cause damage or bring offense to others are allowed in any Seminary building.
8. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on Seminary property.
9. Firearms are not permitted on Seminary property.
10. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on Seminary property.

## **PARKING**

Parking in the front circle is reserved for campus visitors and patrons of BrightLight Books. However, students taking evening or weekend classes or working in the clinic at night are welcome to park in the circle. Please do not park in the reserved spaces next to handicap parking. Overnight parking is prohibited unless approved in advance. For approval, please contact the Maintenance Supervisor to obtain an overnight parking permit, otherwise the vehicle will be towed at your expense.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Hours subject to change during holidays and summer/winter terms.

Student Life & Admissions	Monday-Thursday	8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Library	Monday-Thursday	8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
	Friday	8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
	Saturday	9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Oviedo Counseling Clinic	Monday-Thursday	4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
	Friday	9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

## **CAMPUS SECURITY**

The campus is equipped with six security cameras that provide both audio and visual coverage. Two are located in the parking lot, one near the library entrance, one at the back Chapel entrance, one at the front reception lobby, and one near the entrance to the bookstore.

# RTS CAMPUS DIRECTORY

Atlanta	1580 Terrell Mill Road Marietta, GA 30067 770.952.8884
Charlotte	2101 Carmel Road Charlotte, NC 28226 704.366.5066
D.C.	8227 Old Courthouse Road, Suite #300 Vienna, VA 22182 703.448.3393
Global	2101 Carmel Road Charlotte, NC 28226 704.366.4853
Houston	8300 Katy Freeway Houston, TX 77024 832.377.1675
Jackson	5422 Clinton Blvd. Jackson, MS 39209 601.923.1600
New York	1166 Avenue of the Americas 16 <sup>th</sup> Floor New York, NY 10036 704.633.5066
Orlando	1231 Reformation Drive Oviedo, FL 32765 407.366.9493

# ORLANDO DIRECTORY

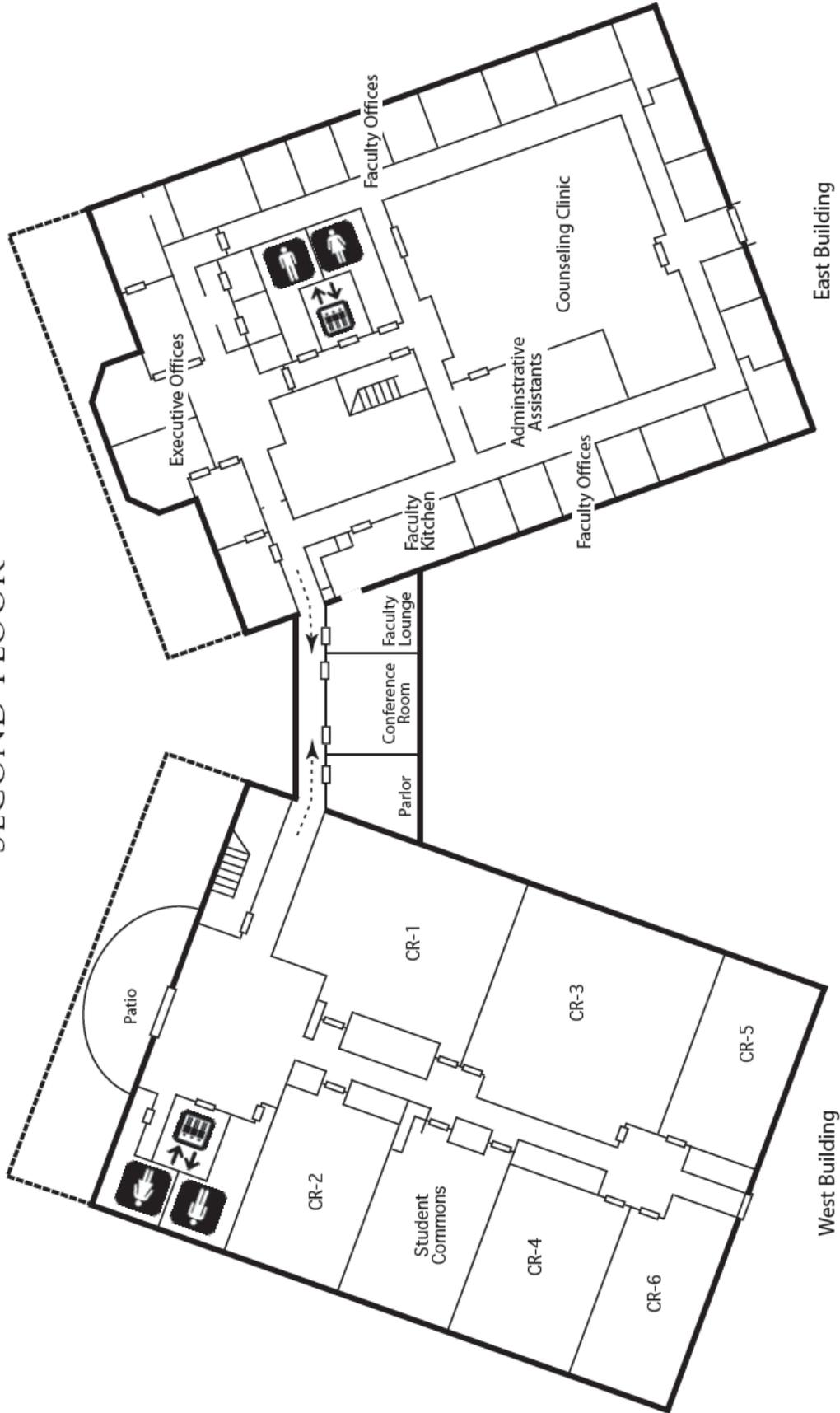
DEPARTMENT	NAME	DIRECT LINE	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Academic Dean	Michael Allen	407.278.4445	mallen@rts.edu
Accounts Payable	Abby MacDonald	407.278.8827	amacdonald@rts.edu
Admissions Assistant	Karlie Bigham	407.278.8845	kbigham@rts.edu
Admissions Director	Caleb Burnison	407.278.4550	cburnison@rts.edu
Communications Director	Savannah Howard	407.278.8833	showard@rts.edu
Community Relations VP	Leigh Swanson	407.278.5288	lswanson@rts.edu
Counseling Clinic	Sarah Baker	321.244.3576	sarah.baker@northlandchurch.net
Counseling Clinic	Liz Perez	321.244.3308	liz.perez@northlandchurch.net
Financial Aid	Christina Mansfield	407.278.4550	cmansfield@rts.edu
IT Department	Blake DeWitt	407.278.8831	bdewitt@rts.edu
Library Assistant	Greg Gale	407.278.4483	ggale@rts.edu
Library Director	Michael Farrell	407.278.4635	mfarrell@rts.edu
MAC Coordinator	Kathie Earll	407.278.4486	kearll@rts.edu
Maintenance	Gary Miller	407.901.4155	gmiller@rts.edu
Maintenance Assistant	Gary Roth	407.901.4155	groth@rts.edu
Operations	Rob McAdams	407.278.4454	rmcadams@rts.edu
President	Scott Swain	407.278.4452	sswain@rts.edu
President's Assistant	Tyler Freire	407.278.4406	tfreire@rts.edu
Registrar	Lanny Conley	407.278.8832	lconley@rts.edu
Student Life	Abby MacDonald	407.278.8827	amacdonald@rts.edu
Dean of Students	Mike Osborne	407.278.8824	mosborne@rts.edu
Women in Ministry	Jeanna Freire	N/A	wimorlando@rts.edu
Work Study	Rob McAdams	407.278.4454	rmcadams@rts.edu

## FACULTY DIRECTORY

NAME	DIRECT LINE	E-MAIL ADDRESS
<b>Allen, Michael</b> Systematic Theology	407.278.4555	mallen@rt.edu
<b>Cole, Zach</b> New Testament	407.278.8167	zcole@rts.edu
<b>Coupland, Scott</b> Counseling	407.278.4466	scoupland@rts.edu
<b>Futato, Mark</b> Old Testament	407.278.4459	mfutato@rts.edu
<b>Glodo, Mike</b> Pastoral Theology	407.278.4476	mglodo@rts.edu
<b>Hill, Chuck</b> New Testament Emeritus	407.278.4471	chill@rts.edu
<b>Lanier, Greg</b> New Testament	407.278.4961	glanier@rts.edu
<b>Muether, John</b> Church History	407.278.4439	jmuether@rts.edu
<b>Pennock, Elizabeth</b> Counseling	407.278.5931	epennock@rts.edu
<b>Reid, Nicholas</b> Old Testament Hybrid MDiv Director	407.278.8834	nreid@rts.edu
<b>Swain, Scott</b> Systematic Theology	407.278.4452	sswain@rts.edu

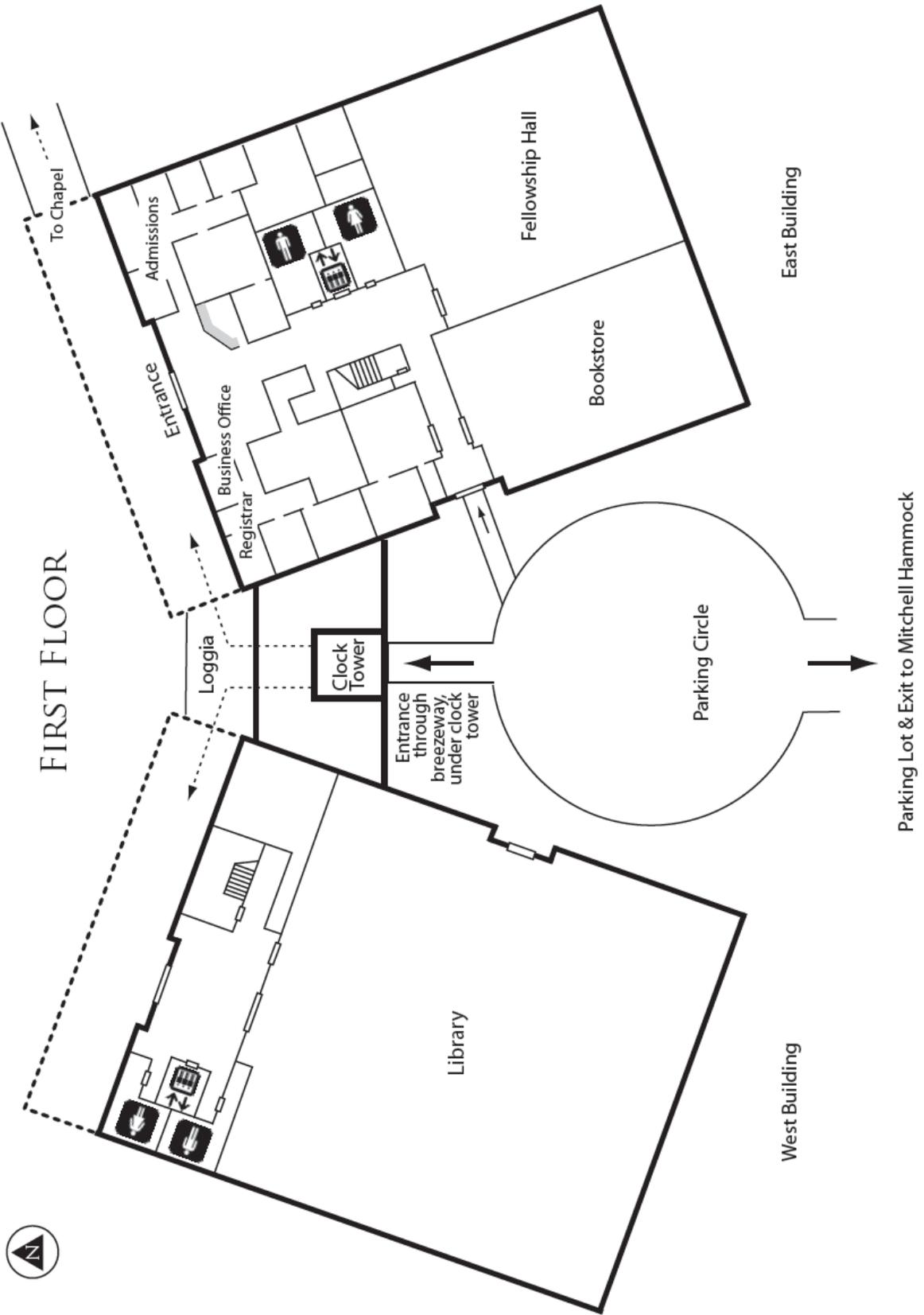


# SECOND FLOOR



East Building

West Building



REFORMED  
THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY



**Student Handbook Addendum**  
**Master of Arts in Counseling Program**

Last Revised: July 2021

REFORMED  
THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY



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

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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 Associate Site Administrator by the end of Orientation.*

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Department Use Only:

Site Program Admin. Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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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. Jim Hurley 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 Administrative Coordinator 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 2 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 into 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 to pursue licensure. RTS has designed its program to meet CACREP standards and has entered 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](http://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](http://lpc.ms.gov))

**MS Counseling Association** ([mica.memberclicks.net](http://mica.memberclicks.net))

**FL Mental Health Professions** (<https://floridamentalhealthprofessions.gov/licensing/>)

**FL Counseling Association** ([flacounseling.org](http://flacounseling.org))

**American Counseling Association** ([counseling.org](http://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

### 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](http://caps.net))

**American Association of Christian Counselors** ([aacc.net](http://aacc.net))

**Mississippi Counseling Association** ([mica.memberclicks.net](http://mica.memberclicks.net))

**Florida Mental Health Counselors Association** ([fmhca.wildapricot.org](http://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 <sup>st</sup> year		
Course #	Course Name	Credits
PSY5100	Counseling and Helping Relationship Skills	3
PSY5220	Group Theories & Practice	3
PSY5170	Research & Program Evaluation	3

Fall – 1 <sup>st</sup> year		
Course #	Course Name	Credits
PSY5150	Psychopathology	3
PSY5210	Theory and Practice of Counseling	3
PSY5240	Neuroscience Informed Counseling	2
ST5350	Theological Foundations for Counseling	2
NT5500	New Testament Foundations	3

Winter – 1 <sup>st</sup> year		
Course #	Course Name	Credits
PSY5260	Substance Abuse & Addiction	3
PSY5110	Psychodiagnostics	2

<b>Spring – 1<sup>st</sup> year</b>		
<b>Course #</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Credits</b>
PSY5190	Couples & Family Counseling 1	2
PSY5200	Couples & Family Counseling 2	3
PSY5180	Professional, Ethical, and Legal Studies	3
PSY5280	Practicum	3
OT5500	Old Testament Foundations	3

<b>Summer – 2<sup>nd</sup> year</b>		
<b>Course #</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Credits</b>
PSY5250	Counseling in Community Setting	3
PSY5230	Human Sexuality	3
PSY5290	Counseling Internship	3

<b>Fall – 2<sup>nd</sup> year</b>		
<b>Course #</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Credits</b>
PSY5120	Social & Cultural Issues in Counseling	3
PSY5130	Human Growth & Development	3
ST5355	Systematic Theology Foundations	3
PSY5290	Counseling Internship	3

<b>Winter – 2<sup>nd</sup> year</b>		
<b>Course #</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Credits</b>
PSY5160	Assessment & Testing	3

<b>Spring – 2<sup>nd</sup> year</b>		
<b>Course #</b>	<b>Course Name</b>	<b>Credits</b>
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 can 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 Administrative 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 150 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 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 several 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 work in professional relations effectively and cooperatively 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, considering 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 student counselor and 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 – 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 to adversely impact clients should immediately communicate their concerns to MAC program supervisors or MAC program leadership.