



Independent Student Handbook
2023-24

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I. Introduction, Mission, and Vision

Interest in Chaplaincy is a major driver of enrollment in theological education today, with schools offering courses, concentrations, certificates, and other opportunities for students. But we know from seminary graduates and employers in various contexts professional competencies, skill refinement, and particular content areas are not being adequately addressed. Often this is due to related costs, competing priorities, or inadequate understanding of the scope of chaplaincy professions.

The good news is that the Center for Chaplaincy Studies (CCS) is equipped to offset structural, curricular, and programmatic deficits that limit student learning and future success. Here's how it works: the Center for Chaplaincy Studies provides courses, expert faculty, professional advisement, and networking opportunities. CCS will ensure that students are not only ready for future CPE residencies and a wide range of employment possibilities, but Board Certification as well. The faculty are not only specialists in their fields of inquiry, but are highly trained and proficient educators in multiple learning platforms.

Our world needs chaplains more than ever, but the burden of educating and training chaplains we need can't be carried alone. The traditional institutional model of 'do-it-yourself' is neither efficient nor likely to be effective. CCS offers students uniquely diverse learning environments and the highest standard of formation and education with competency-based outcomes. CCS courses equip successful and sustainable professional chaplains for contexts where they're needed.

Mission Statement:

Preparing the hearts, minds, and hands of all those called to chaplaincy.

Vision Statement:

The Center for Chaplaincy Studies is a collective of theological thought leaders committed to equipping chaplains to minister courageously, compassionately, and creatively at the highest standards of care and competency. We are educators, scholars, and chaplains developing and delivering a broad range of agile learning opportunities.

II. Enrollment, Course Drops, and Withdrawals

Students who are not enrolled in a partner school may request enrollment as Independent Students via an application form available on the CCS website at www.chaplaincystudies.org.

Students must pay for the course in full to receive access to the course via Canvas. Students who delay payment for a course may lose their spot in the course if the course fills to capacity. Students who have not paid in full by seven days prior to the beginning of the term will be considered to have withdrawn their registration.

Students may drop courses for a full tuition refund through the second Friday of each term via Populi or by contacting the CCS Registrar. After the drop deadline, students may request to withdraw from a course. In general, tuition refunds are not available for course withdrawals after the drop deadline.

III. Academic Procedures and Policies

A. Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage
A+	97–100 %
A	93–96 %
A–	90–92 %
B+	87–89 %
B	83–86 %
B–	80–82 %
C+	77–79 %
C	73–76 %
C–	70–72 %
D+	67–69 %
D	63–66 %
D–	60–62 %
F	0–59 %

Grades will be available via Populi within one month of the end of a given term. Students may request official electronic course transcripts via Populi for a small fee.

B. Incomplete Policy

Students who seek an extension on coursework beyond the end of a given term may request an Incomplete using the Incomplete Form, which should be provided to the course instructor prior to the end of the term. The approval of an Incomplete,

deadline for incomplete work, and final grade if such work is not submitted by the deadline are at the discretion of the course instructor.

C. Plagiarism Policy

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with appropriate citation practices for graduate education and to properly attribute all sources in written work and assignments. A recommended resource is *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers* by Kate Turabian - see also <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/turabian.html>.

Instructors who determine that a student has committed plagiarism will provide a report to the CCS administration. In cases of minor or accidental plagiarism, students will generally be permitted to revise and resubmit the plagiarized work. In cases of substantial deliberate plagiarism, students will receive a grade of F for the relevant assignment. Students who are found to have plagiarized may be prohibited from enrollment in subsequent CCS courses.

IV. Communication

All communication from CCS will be sent to the email address provided at the time of application. Students are responsible for regularly checking their email while enrolled in a CCS course.

V. Technology

CCS courses are located on Canvas, our Learning Management System (LMS). Students will receive access to Canvas following payment of tuition in full.

Since CCS courses are primarily online, students are expected to meet minimum technology requirements:

- You must have a reliable computer. We recommend a device with a current and supported operating system (Windows, Mac, etc.)
- You must have a video camera and microphone, either built-in or external.
- You must have reliable and steady access to high-speed internet, sufficient for video conferencing.

- Office software capable of viewing, creating, and editing documents, spreadsheets, and presentations such as any of the following: Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), iWorks (Pages, Numbers, Keynote), Google Suite, or LibreOffice.
- A PDF viewer such as Adobe Reader.
- A media player capable of playing video and audio files such as Windows Media Player, VLC Media Player, or iTunes.
- Zoom Video conferencing will be used as a teaching strategy over the course of your study. Students should expect to use Zoom and should download the application to their computers, if possible.

VI. Accessibility/Disability and Accommodations Policy

CCS welcomes students with disabilities and will make reasonable accommodations as necessary for students to participate in CCS courses. Students seeking accommodations should be in touch with the CCS Registrar.

VII. Student Records and Privacy

All personally identifiable information accessed or held by CCS will be protected in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Students have the right to inspect and review those educational records that are held by CCS. Students may request in writing that CCS correct records they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If CCS decides not to amend the record, the student has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth their view about the contested information.

CCS will not release any personally identifiable information about students without consent except as legally required by state or federal law or judicial order.

VIII. Tuition, Fees, and Financial Aid

The Independent Student application fee (\$50) is non-refundable.

Tuition for the 2023-24 academic year will be \$2000 per course, due prior to the beginning of each term. Tuition must be paid in full for students to receive access to the course on Canvas.

CCS does not participate in the Title IV federal education loan program. Students enrolled at other graduate theological institutions may consult with their home schools about whether it will be possible to use Title IV loans for CCS courses.

Students may request a tuition scholarship of up to 50% of tuition at the time of application.

IX. Non-Discrimination Policy

CCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national or ethnic origin, age, status as an individual with a disability, protected veteran status, genetic information, or any other protected class. CCS prohibits discriminatory harassment of students, faculty, and staff.

Any person who wishes to make a complaint regarding harassment or discrimination or who believes that harassment or discrimination has taken place in the context of a CCS course or program may make a report of such harassment or discrimination to any member of the CCS faculty or administration.

Retaliation in response to a complaint of harassment or discrimination by any CCS staff, faculty member, or student is prohibited. Retaliation may be reported to CCS staff and faculty, and will be investigated and reported in the same manner as any initial claim of harassment or discrimination.

Sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, and sexual exploitation, can be a form of sex discrimination and will be addressed and investigated in the same manner as other harassment or discrimination.

X. Academic Calendar

The academic calendar consists of three 14-week terms - Fall, Spring, Summer.

2023-24 Academic Calendar	
Fall Registration Period	April 17 - August 18
Labor Day	September 4
Fall Term Begins	September 5
Fall Drop Deadline	September 18
Thanksgiving Recess	November 20-24
Fall Term Ends	December 15
Spring Registration Period	November 1-December 22
Spring Term Begins	January 8
Martin Luther King Day - no classes	January 15
Spring Drop Deadline	January 22
Spring Break	March 25-29
Spring Term Ends	April 19
Summer Registration Period	March 11 - April 26
Summer Term Begins	May 6
Summer Drop Deadline	May 20
Memorial Day - no classes	May 27
Juneteenth - no classes	June 19
Independence Day - no classes	July 4-5
Summer Term Ends	August 9