GRACE BIBLE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026–2027

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IDENTITY & DISTINCTIVES

1.1. Core Values

Grace Bible Theological Seminary (GBTS) esteems the following core values in its policies, procedures, programs, principles, and practices:

1) Glorifying God
2) Proclaiming the Sufficiency of Scripture
3) Prioritizing the Church
4) Investing in Students
5) Equipping Pastors
6) Embodying Experiential Christlike Character
7) Promoting Confessional Reformed Baptist Theology

1) Glorifying God

Thesis Statement

GBTS serves a triune God whose supreme act is to glorify himself in all things, such that our highest privilege as creatures of the Most High God is to glorify him and enjoy him forever.

Affirmations

The three-in-one God of the Bible is an all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-present being who has eternally existed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He will not let his name be defamed, and he will not yield his glory to another (Isa 48:11). Our God has supremacy in creation, providence, and in the work of salvation (Col 1:15–20). He does everything for the praise of his glory (Eph 1:6, 12, 14). Therefore, it is our chief duty as creatures of the triune God to glorify him (Baptist Catechism, Q. & A. 2). God humbled himself by taking on human flesh in the person of the Son, and his supreme act of glorification occurred when the Son of God was lifted up on the cross as a sacrifice for sinners (John 12:27–33) and raised victoriously in the resurrection (John 20:8–9). The indwelling Holy Spirit ensures that all believers will one day, too, share in the Son's glorification (Rom 8:28–30).

Denials

We do not seek to glorify the names of our faculty, staff, or students. We do not even want to glorify the name of our beloved institution or the names of the churches with whom we are partnered. God's name alone must be exalted. Anything else about which we would seek to boast becomes an idol and a vain pursuit. We vow not to make an idol of our status, stature, books, buildings, donors, or donations. All of the preceding blessings are mere instruments the Lord has given to us that exist solely to uphold our mission of worshipping Christ.

Purpose & Implementation

At GBTS, we seek, in all things, God's glory alone (*soli Deo gloria*). We want a sense of awe and wonder for God to undergird every class, every prayer meeting, and every special event under our watchful care. We will strive to make the triune God the center of our attention and discourse. We will help our students remember that the Christian life is one of making little of ourselves and making much of God. The call to follow Christ is the very antithesis of platform-building and status-seeking. We marvel that the God of the universe would save and sanctify helpless and lost sinners such as us, and thus, we join in the apostle Paul's doxology: "From him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever!" (Rom 11:36).

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2) Proclaiming the Sufficiency of Scripture

Thesis Statement

GBTS proclaims the sufficiency of Scripture and affirms that the Bible is the only infallible rule of faith and practice, providing the reader with abundant knowledge for salvation, doctrinal instruction, and practical holiness.

Affirmations

The Bible is the only book in all of the universe that is God-breathed. It is perfect and trustworthy because God himself, the Bible's ultimate divine author, is perfect and trustworthy (Prov 30:5). Scripture is the only infallible rule of faith and practice (2 LBCF 1:1). As such, it is qualitatively different from every other piece of literature in human history. The Scriptures are sufficient, meaning they provide plentiful knowledge not only for salvation (2 Tim 3:15) but also for Christian doctrine and practice so that the man of God may be equipped for every good work (2 Tim 3:16–17). The Bible is the chief book by which a man may watch his life and doctrine closely, persevering in them (1 Tim 4:16–17).

Denials

The sufficiency of Scripture is the protector of another key attribute of Scripture, its authority, because the moment an outside authority is added alongside of it, the Bible no longer speaks uniquely and supremely. God's Word allows for no rivals or competitors. We reject the idea that Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) literature, Second Temple Jewish literature, human philosophy (whether of ancient Greece or otherwise), secular psychology, modern scientific theory, the writings of the early church fathers, the writings of other secondary theologians, business growth strategies, sociological metrics, or any other external body of knowledge provides the "lens" through which we must interpret the Bible.

Purpose & Implementation

At GBTS, we are unashamed to affirm with full conviction that the Bible is our chief textbook. Even though we will supplement the Bible's teaching with various other helps and guides, any

other textbook chosen by an instructor in a given course should merely serve as an aid to help students interpret the sole infallible rule of Scripture. The great interpretive principle that we will teach and embody to our students is "Scripture interprets Scripture." The doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture is the foundation on which our entire institution hangs or falls. Many Christian schools, colleges, and seminaries that were founded on noble purposes have compromised on the sufficiency of Scripture, and in doing so, they have departed from their core mission and have led their students into serious and even deadly error.

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3) Prioritizing the Church

Thesis Statement

GBTS assists churches in training the next generation of missionaries, church planters, and pastors under the authority of a local church.

Affirmations

Christ Jesus works in this world through his church. Christ builds his church through his Spirit working through the ministry and outreach of the church. As the head of the church, Christ has entrusted his Word to the church. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim 3:15). It is through the administration of the Word through the power of the Holy Spirit that the church carries out its mission and brings glory to Christ (Matt 28:19–20, Eph 3:21). And a vital component of the church's mission is to train faithful men for the ministry of the Word for the growth and perpetuity of the church around the world (2 Tim 2:2). Therefore, we heartily affirm that it is the local church's responsibility to train the next generation of church leaders. We also affirm that before someone is qualified to lead a local church spiritually, they must learn and master what it means to be a submissive and active member of a local church.

Denials

With the centrality of the local church in Christ's ongoing work in the world, we deny the notion that local churches are insufficient and ill-equipped to train the next generation of church leaders. We deny that seminaries should function outside the authority and oversight of the church. Because we are convinced that God works by, in, and through his church, we are committed to working under the church's authority to assist local churches in training the next generation of pastors to expand and build the church worldwide.

Purpose & Implementation

To maintain the centrality of the local church in pastoral training, GBTS operates under the authority of the board of directors, which consists of the elders of Grace Bible Church, Conway, Arkansas. Moreover, GBTS will only accept students who are committed churchmen who have been affirmed and continue to be overseen by the elders of their local churches. We require our students to maintain an active church membership that consists of practical service to its

membership. Recognizing that God has chosen to build his kingdom through his church, we strive to keep the church at the center of all we do.

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4) Investing in Students

Thesis Statement

GBTS exists for students. We prioritize and invest in our students' ongoing spiritual growth, healthy academic advancement, strong commitment to family, and active participation in local churches.

Affirmations

Scripture affirms that pastors are among the gifts given by Christ to his church with the responsibility to equip the saints for the work of ministry, which builds up the body of Christ (Eph 4:11–12). Christ equips those called to be pastors with certain character traits that allow the church to recognize that calling (1 Tim 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9) and live lives that others can follow and imitate (Heb 13:7). Scripture also gives these men responsibilities within the church to oversee, shepherd, protect (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2), feed (John 21:15–19), and lead (1 Tim 5:17) those under their care and authority. Our students come to GBTS to be further equipped and strengthened for these tasks, so we take the opportunity God grants us to invest in them seriously.

Denials

We deny the opposite, namely that students exist for GBTS. We reject the paradigm that places the needs of the institution and faculty above the needs of students. We reject the paradigm that requires an increasing number of students to provide an increasing financial base to sustain our institution and faculty's increasing fame and exposure. We also deny that academic success alone, without increasing spiritual growth and personal holiness, is a reliable indicator of a pastor's faithfulness to serve Christ in ministry.

Purpose & Implementation

From a student's initial inquiry to their graduation, GBTS prioritizes investing in students. Scripture's description of the character and work of a pastor requires preparation and training, and whether actively serving in pastoral ministry or beginning the journey, we invest in each student's training and preparation. Our admissions process focuses on the student's academic and spiritual readiness and whether GBTS is the best place for them to pursue their training. Our advising program is designed to forge strong relationships between GBTS and our students that facilitate consistent academic advancement and active spiritual growth. All of our professors have pastoral ministry experience and regularly invest in students with the wisdom they have been granted. Though our academics are rigorous, our pursuit of holiness is incessant because, while grades are important, character is essential. We invest in students.

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5) Equipping Pastors

Thesis Statement

GBTS educates and equips the next generation of pastors, church planters, and missionaries to see churches established and strengthened across the globe.

Affirmations

The New Testament clearly shows that first-century churches were led by men referred to as pastors (Eph 4:11), elders (Titus 1:5), overseers (Phil 1:1), or stewards (Titus 1:7). These designations are used together in several passages to refer to the same office (Acts 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5–9; 1 Peter 5:1–5) with the same character qualifications required for men that serve in that office (1 Tim 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9). Men who will serve as pastors of local churches and missionaries across the globe must be trained for the purpose of godliness (1 Tim 4:7), so they demonstrate their calling as pastors by living lives in accordance with the biblical qualifications for pastors/elders. They must be equipped to shepherd the flock of God (Acts 20:28), devote themselves to prayer and ministry of the word (Acts 6:4), and entrust other faithful men with what they have been taught (2 Tim 2:2). Pastors must labor to preach and teach well (1 Tim 5:17) and Scripture alone is sufficient for training and equipping men for the good work (2 Tim 3:16–17) of shepherding God's flock through the ministry of the word (2 Tim 3:16–17).

Denials

At GBTS, we firmly deny the need for psychological models of spiritual soul care, corporate models of leadership, or worldly models of wisdom in equipping pastors for the work of ministry. While we affirm the worth, value, and roles of women in our families and churches, we deny that women may serve in the office of pastor. We deny that students should reduce their involvement in their local church to pursue pastoral ministry training.

Purpose & Implementation

At GBTS, pastors train pastors. All of our professors have pastoral experience and help students apply each academic discipline to pastoral ministry in the local church. Because we are committed to training pastors, we only admit male students who are pursuing or currently engaged in pastoral ministry and have been affirmed in this pursuit by their local church. Scripture requires that pastors meet character standards, so our faculty and staff actively pursue the spiritual formation of each student through classroom instruction, personal relationships, our advising program, and modeling Christ-like character.

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6) Embodying Experiential Christlike Character

Thesis Statement

GBTS models and promotes experiential relationships with Christ that lead to practical holiness in sound doctrine, earnest prayer, and humble service.

Affirmations

The heart of Christianity is a personal relationship with Christ that is rooted in faith in the gospel that works through love (Gal 5:6). Because theological education is not an end in itself, we affirm that sound doctrine is not understood until it has been personally applied to all of life. According to the Scriptures, theological education aims to lead believers to glorify God through the enjoyment of his Son (Ps 37:4). We affirm, therefore, that personal godliness is essential to growing in the knowledge of the Lord. We affirm that progressive sanctification in holiness is necessary for our students to be equipped and qualified to preach and pastor God's people.

Denials

At GBTS, we deny that sound doctrine can be separated from personal godliness (Titus 2:1–8). We deny that academics and scholarship have to be in opposition to individual piety. We deny that we have to choose between theological scholarship and heartfelt devotion to Christ. Because all Scripture is designed to lead us into a loving relationship with God, we can promote the highest academic standards while fostering a deeper passion for knowing, loving, and enjoying the Lord.

Purpose & Implementation

At GBTS, we seek to embody experiential Christ-like character among our faculty, staff, and student body. Because humble devotion to the Lord is not merely taught but caught, we seek to fill all faculty and staff positions with those who model godliness and humble dependence upon the Holy Spirit (Phil 3:17). Our faculty consists of the humble and godly men that we desire our students to become. To grow in Christlike character, the faculty and staff maintain a weekly prayer meeting where the needs of the seminary and student body are brought to the Lord. With the grace provided by God, we seek to personally disciple each student through our advising program, which consists of mentoring and accountability in sexual purity and personal service to one's local church. We are convinced that the spiritual energy, knowledge, and love needed to train and carry out the work of the ministry are not principally found in the classroom or theological textbooks but upon our knees as we abide by faith in personal fellowship with Jesus Christ (John 15:4). For it is only in the strength and joy of the Lord that we can serve the Lord.

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7) Promoting Confessional Reformed Baptist Theology

Thesis Statement

GBTS intentionally stands in the historical line of those who have confessed Reformed and Baptist theology. Our confessional standard is the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith. Our commitment to Reformed confessional theology unites us with other Reformed theologians and institutions, while our commitment to Baptist confessional theology sets us apart from some of those same institutions in secondary, yet vital ways.

Affirmations

The concept of confession stands at the heart of biblical salvation, whether confessing that Jesus is Lord (Rom 10:9, 10; Phil 2:11), agreeing to a common confession (1 Tim 6:16; Heb 10:23), or publicly confessing Christ before men leading to Christ confessing our name before the Father (Matt 10:32). Throughout the church's history, confessions have bound believers in unity to a common view of biblical doctrine. GBTS affirms that the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith is a faithful summary of biblical doctrine, and our faculty teach within the stream of this historic, Reformed, and Baptist theology. This confessional adherence promotes institutional unity while also placing us within distinct historical and theological streams.

Denials

We deny that any creed or confession has authority over the Scriptures (see Core Value 2, Proclaiming the Sufficiency of Scripture). We also deny any salvific authority to this or any other confession of faith. We deny the often-used mantra, "we have no creed but the Bible," as it stands as a creedal confession in itself. Although this confessionalism is a mark of our institution's identity, we deny that it implies any superiority over those who disagree.

Purpose and Implementation

Our faculty members agree to teach in substantial agreement with the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. This institutional unity allows prospective students and supporters to understand the historical stream of doctrine taught at GBTS and how it distinguishes us from some other institutions. Our commitment to Reformed theology permeates our classes because it permeates the Scriptures, and we teach our students how a consistent commitment to confessional, Reformed, Baptist theology informs and directs every aspect of pastoral ministry and the mission of the church. We teach the Scriptures, not systems of theological thought, yet, as we teach the Scriptures, we find a consistent confessional, Reformed, and Baptist theology and its implications for the local church.

1.2. Purpose Statement

The purpose of Grace Bible Theological Seminary is to glorify God in the church by educating and equipping the next generation of pastors, church planters, and missionaries to see churches established and strengthened across the globe.

1.3. Mission Statement

The mission of Grace Bible Theological Seminary is to facilitate biblically faithful theological training that prepares students in both sound doctrine and practice in the context of the local church and under the guidance of pastoral mentorship for the service of Christ and his church.

1.4. Distinctives

Sufficiency of Scripture: GBTS adheres to and teaches the sufficiency of Scripture in all things, not only in matters of salvation (2 Tim 3:15) but in all Christian theology and ethics (2 Tim 3:16–17). Accordingly, as an institution, Grace Bible Theological Seminary affirms:

- Christ-centered, biblically rooted theology
- Presuppositional apologetics
- Biblical counseling
- Strong complementarianism
- Biblical sexuality

Seminary distinctives include the following:

> **a.) Confessional:** While maintaining a primary commitment to the authority and sufficiency of Scripture, GBTS is a confessional seminary that holds to a historical summary of doctrine in accordance with what Scripture teaches. All faculty must affirm substantial subscription to the *Second London Baptist Confession of Faith* (1689) as an accurate representation of biblical doctrine. An electronic version of the 2LBCF (1689) can be found at: https://www.the1689confession.com/. Other doctrinal and ethical standards of the seminary are explained in Section 1.4 below.
>
> Being a confessional seminary has many benefits. First, GBTS teaches a unified theology. The faculty and lecturers complement one another as they provide instruction from the same theological foundations and commitments. Second, being a confessional institution allows GBTS to benefit from the fellowship and cooperation of others within the broader Reformed tradition.
>
> **b.) Church-Based:** Grace Bible Theological Seminary is a ministry of Grace Bible Church (GBC) of Conway, Arkansas, and is governed by the Pastors/Elders of GBC. GBTS was founded as a local church ministry of Grace Bible Church as an informal pastoral mentoring class. Although the Lord has developed and matured the ministry significantly, GBTS has not forgotten its roots. The seminary is founded upon a church-based seminary model, and its continual development will be thoroughly grounded in the local church. In addition to the seminary being in a church context, all current faculty and

instructors are either actively involved in pastoral ministry (or eldership) or have had extensive experience in it.

c.) Pastorally Focused: GBTS delivers seminary instruction from the front lines of pastoral ministry. Teaching serves as an extension of our instructors' calling as pastors and elders. Our aim is to prepare men with eyes and hearts toward pastoral ministry, church planting, and missions. Our instructors are expected to exhibit a passion and love for the local church.

1.5. Doctrinal and Ethical Standards

Grace Bible Theological Seminary requires: (a) Student Doctrinal and Ethical Affirmations for all incoming students as part of the admissions process; and (b) Faculty Doctrinal and Ethical Affirmations for all teaching faculty and course instructors.

a.1.) Student Doctrinal Affirmations

Students must affirm the following statement of evangelical essentials for admission to GBTS:

1. I believe in the authority and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

2. I believe that the God of the Bible is the only true and living God.

3. I believe that God is one in essence and three in persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

4. I believe that Christ was born of the virgin Mary.

5. I believe that Christ became a man in his incarnation while remaining at the same time fully God.

6. I believe that Christ lived a sinless and perfect life.

7. I believe that Christ died innocently on the cross to pay for the sins of guilty sinners.

8. I believe that Christ rose bodily from the dead.

9. I believe that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

10. I believe that Christ will physically appear again at the last day.

11. I believe that there will be a bodily, general resurrection of the dead.

12. I believe that those who are in Christ will enter into eternal joy, and those who are lost shall enter into eternal punishment.

a.2.) Student Ethical Affirmations

Students must also affirm the following statements:

- *The Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (1988) —The full text for this statement may be found at: https://cbmw.org/about/danvers-statement/
- *The Nashville Statement on Biblical Sexuality* (2017) —The full text for this statement may be found at: https://cbmw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/The-Nashville-Statement.pdf
- *The Dallas Statement on Social Justice and the Gospel* (2018) —The full text for this statement may be found at: https://statementonsocialjustice.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/SSJG-FINAL.pdf

b.1.) Faculty Doctrinal Affirmations

Faculty must affirm the following doctrinal distinctives:

Sufficiency of Scripture: We affirm that Holy Scripture is the written revelation of God, verbally inspired by the Holy Spirit and penned through the instrumentation of men. The Bible is self-testifying, infallible, inerrant, and authoritative in all that it says. The complete canon of the Old and New Testaments is necessary and sufficient for a proper knowledge of God, self, and salvation.

Protestant: We affirm the five *solas* of the Reformation as essential doctrines of the faith: Scripture Alone (*Sola Scriptura*), Grace Alone (*Sola Gratia*), Faith Alone (*Sola Fide*), Christ Alone (*Solus Christus*), and Glory to God Alone (*Soli Deo Gloria*).

Reformed: We affirm the doctrines of grace, covenant theology, the importance of a confessional legacy, and the regulative principle of worship.

Baptist: We substantially affirm the distinctives of the *Second London Baptist Confession of Faith* (1689), Reformed Baptist covenantalism, believer's baptism, regenerate church membership, liberty of conscience, and separation between church and state.

Humility and Charity: We recognize the diversity of thought among Reformed Baptists and other Reformed traditions, as well as non-Reformed traditions. For this reason, we wish to show humility and charity toward those of other theological persuasions, while still maintaining our doctrinal commitments.

b.2.) Faculty Ethical Affirmations

Faculty must also affirm the following statements:

- *The Danvers Statement on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (1988) —The full text for this statement may be found at: https://cbmw.org/about/danvers-statement/
- *The Nashville Statement on Biblical Sexuality* (2017) —The full text for this statement may be found at: https://cbmw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/The-Nashville-Statement.pdf
- *The Dallas Statement on Social Justice and the Gospel* (2018) —The full text for this statement may be found at: https://statementonsocialjustice.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/SSJG-FINAL.pdf

1.6. History

Grace Bible Church (GBC) of Conway, Arkansas, was founded by Jeff Johnson in 2000, when a few families met in the living room of his apartment to start a church that would be established upon faithful exposition of Scripture and Christ-centered worship. In 2011, Johnson began an informal theology and ministry class on Wednesday evenings to train men within the church for various leadership roles. This class would be a small seed that the Lord would eventually grow into a seminary.

In 2016, Grace Bible Church hosted two courses in partnership with Reformed Baptist Seminary (RBS). In 2017 Grace Bible Institute (GBI) was established. Classes were offered on a more regular basis and the variety of courses increased each year. In 2019 GBI's first three students graduated. Later in the year, the institute became an official seminary and was renamed Grace Bible Theological Seminary (GBTS). The school moved into a new, on-campus facility that was provided by a generous donor.

In 2020 GBTS formally began a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) program, which serves as the flagship degree program of the institution. The seminary now offers four (4) degree programs (M.Div., MTS, MAPS, and Cert.) and has a teaching faculty comprised of six (6) instructors/professors, along with six (6) part-time staff members.

1.7. Governance

All school policies and decisions are subject to the seminary's confessional documents and statements of faith (see Section 1.4 and 1.5 above). As a ministry of Grace Bible Church (Conway, Arkansas), the seminary's employees and volunteers operate in a ministerial capacity and perform ministerial functions. The seminary is under the oversight and supervision of the elders of Grace Bible Church and are accountable to them.

Grace Bible Theological Seminary is organized in the following manner:

a.) Board of Directors (i.e., "Trustees"): The Elder Board of Grace Bible Church of Conway, Arkansas, functions as the Board of Directors (i.e., "Trustees") of GBTS. The Board maintains authority over and manages the affairs of the seminary. The Board may authorize any officer(s) or agent(s) of the seminary to enter any contract or execute or deliver any instrument in the name of and/or on behalf of the corporation. Such authority may be granted generally or confined to specific instances with defined parameters.

The Board of Directors elects a President of the seminary by a majority vote of the Directors present at a duly called meeting where a quorum is present. The Board of Directors assists the President of the seminary as needed.

In addition to the annual meeting of the Board of Directors, any officer or any two Directors may call a special meeting of the Board at any time. A quorum for meetings consists of a majority of the Directors.

b.) President: The President of GBTS has the primary decision-making authority in the seminary under the Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ (1 Pet 5:4), and his decisions are final in all matters of hiring and termination of employees, as designated and regulated in the GBTS Constitution and Bylaws, once confirmed by a majority approval of the Board of Directors. The President is responsible for leading the seminary in functioning as a biblically based training institution for current and future ministers of the gospel. The President is the chief academic officer of the seminary.

c.) Faculty and Staff: Faculty and staff positions are appointed by the President of the seminary, with the approval of the Board of Directors, as deemed necessary for the needs and circumstances of the institution.

The leadership of Grace Bible Theological Seminary conducts meetings in the following manner:

a.) Board Meetings: In addition to an annual board meeting, there may be special board meetings as determined by the Board of Directors.

a.1.) Annual Board Meeting

The annual meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held at such a time and place as the Board determines. At the annual meeting, Directors may be elected, and the transaction of the organizational and business affairs of the corporation shall be considered.

a.2.) Special Board Meetings

Any Officer of the Board or any two Directors of the Board may call a special meeting of the Board at any time.

b.) Staff Meetings: There are regular staff meetings for the seminary during the Fall and Spring academic terms and special staff meetings as determined by the President.

b.1.) Regular Staff Meetings

The seminary shall hold regular staff meetings once a month (usually on the first Wednesday of each month) during the Fall and Spring academic terms unless the President communicates otherwise.

b.2.) Special Staff Meetings

GBTS may conduct called staff meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. A one (1) week notice must be given for the special staff meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, the date, time, and place, and it must be given in such a manner that all staff members have an opportunity to know of the meeting. The specified matter or matters will be considered at a special staff meeting.

1.8. Board of Directors, Faculty, & Staff

The following individuals serve as directors, faculty, and staff for Grace Bible Theological Seminary:

a.) Board of Directors:

Jeffrey D. Johnson
President of the Board of Directors, Director

Daniel Thursby, Jr.
Secretary of the Board of Directors, Director

Tommy Walls
Treasurer of the Board of Directors, Director

Ryan Bush
Director

James Fetterly
Director

b.) Faculty:

Jeffrey D. Johnson
President; Professor of Systematic Theology

Preston Kelso
Academic Dean; Instructor of Old Testament

Rob Davis
Dean of Students; Instructor of Pastoral Studies

Jeff Moore
Director of Admissions and Enrollment; Assistant Professor of New Testament

Ryan Bush
Professor of Missions

James White
Professor of Apologetics and Church History

c.) Staff:

Kayla Irons
Special Events Coordinator; Custodial Technician

Teddy James
Media Director

Allen Nelson, IV
Admissions Assistant

Kym Nies
Administrative Assistant

Beau Walter
Staff Accountant

John Winham
Chief Financial Officer

1.9. Accreditation

Accreditation is the confirmation, credentialing, and endorsement of a particular school in its *internal* effectiveness to offer and deliver quality education by an *external* accrediting body. An accrediting organization (e.g., the Association of Reformed Theological Seminaries, or ARTS) provides quality assurance (QA) that its member institutions are providing legitimate educational services and granting substantive degrees. This external credentialing body analyzes the organizational health and educational content provided by an individual school.

a.) GBTS's Current Status: Grace Bible Theological Seminary is an accredited member of the Association of Reformed Theological Seminaries (ARTS) as of October 2023.

GBTS is in a collegial association of like-minded seminaries who aim to connect the academy to the church for the glory of Christ. Member seminaries affirm Scripture as the inerrant Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practice along with commitment to confessional standards in the Protestant Reformed tradition. Member schools include Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary (GPTS) and Toronto Baptist Seminary (TBS), whose graduates have gone on to pursue doctoral work at Cambridge University, Westminster Theological Seminary, and Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, among other notable institutions. In a day and age in which many accrediting bodies, once conservative, now sanction doctrinal drift and a worldly ethic in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), ARTS schools actively subscribe to biblically rigorous confessions of faith, most of which stem from the Reformation and Post-Reformation eras.

In May 2024 ARTS gained official recognition from the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), marking a prestigious milestone for its member seminaries. CHEA is a higher accreditation body that provides oversight and validation of accreditation bodies themselves, overseeing accountability for theological associations. CHEA's recognition of ARTS represents a substantial validation of ARTS's commitment to ensuring academic excellence and the highest standards in theological education for its member institutions.

b.) Rationale for Accreditation: Accreditation is a voluntary process for a seminary. Such status is not mandated, and at GTBS we are under no obligation to be under such status. However, accreditation for a seminary is similar to the ordination process for a man called to vocational ministry. Christian ordination is the public validation by qualified leaders of a man's giftedness and fittedness for preaching God's Word and shepherding his people (Acts 13:1–3). In a similar way, accreditation for a seminary is the public validation by a qualified accrediting body of a school's fittedness to provide theological education and to train ministers. At Grace Bible Theological Seminary, we want to be held accountable and to share a partnership with other like-minded, Bible-believing, and educationally rigorous seminaries.

Accreditation ensures transparency and accountability in everything from fiscal management to student learning outcomes and placement on the ministry field. GBTS students should anticipate increased recognition of an accredited degree for postgraduate studies and vocational opportunities. Accreditation with ARTS places GBTS among peer schools with rich histories and a commitment to theological education in the Reformed tradition.

Accreditation provides accountability for an institution from top to bottom—for administration, faculty, staff, the board of trustees, and students. It seeks to help us address the question: Are we fulfilling our stated purpose and mission? To break things down further, putting our institution through the accreditation process enables us to answer four significant questions:

1. Are we teaching content consistent with our doctrinal values and distinctives?

2. Do we have adequate resources to deliver an effective learning experience for our students?

3. Are we producing student outcomes commensurate with our goals?

4. Do we have a solid financial plan to sustain our mission and to enable future growth?

In sum, the accreditation process is meant to ensure a high quality of content delivery, institutional checks and balances, and student success. Significantly, it also allows credits from our institution to be transferable to other graduate schools and seminaries.

c.) Danger of Non-Accreditation: Some unaccredited institutions may provide quality instruction, rigorous academic coursework, and legitimate degrees. Nevertheless, many institutions that do not possess formal accreditation status often become "diploma mills." A "diploma mill" is a school that does not require substantiated academic work commensurate with the degree(s) that it purports to offer. Student fees are charged by the school and paid by the student, but either: (a) student work is not required; or (b) the amount of work completed by a student is falsified; or (c) student work is not properly vetted and evaluated (i.e., the "everyone gets an 'A'" approach). Programs that err in any of these areas fall woefully short of the rigorous test required for those aspiring to pastoral ministry (1 Tim 3:1–7).

ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

2.1. Requirements for Admission

Paul commanded Timothy to equip faithful men who would, in turn, be able to train others (2 Tim 2:2). GBTS seeks to fulfill this biblical mandate by equipping faithful pastor-theologians. Scripture and our doctrine of the church shape our standards for admission requirements. We believe that it is the church's role and responsibility to identify and equip God-called men for the ministry. Our seminary's role is to partner in cultivating, equipping, and evaluating men's giftedness and aptitude for the ministry. Therefore, any man who seeks enrollment must first have the approval of and encouragement from the pastor(s) of the church in which he is a faithful member. Further, a student's enrollment in GBTS should be understood as a privilege, not a right—and it may be revoked at any time at the sole discretion of the school's administration.

a.) Admission Requirements for Master's Degree-Seeking Students:

1. Because all GBTS curriculum is designed for pastoral ministry students, in keeping with the biblical and confessional convictions of Grace Bible Church (GBC) and Grace Bible Theological Seminary (GBTS), only biologically *male* students may apply to these degree programs.

2. All master's degree applicants must submit a pastoral letter of recommendation confirming the student's good standing in the local church and potential for future pastoral and church ministry.

3. A completed Bachelor's degree is required for admission to the M.Div., MTS, and MAPS programs. An official academic transcript must be sent from the Registrar's Office of the applicant's previous educational institution(s).

b.) Admission Requirements for Certificate-Seeking (and Diploma) Students:

1. Because all GBTS curriculum is designed for pastoral ministry students, only biologically *male* students may apply to the certificate (and diploma) programs.

2. Certificate-seeking (and diploma-seeking) students must have a letter of recommendation from their pastor confirming their good standing in the local church.

3. No undergraduate degree is required.

c.) Admissions Process:

1. **Application:** An application must be completed and submitted online via Populi. Applications will be good for one (1) year from the date of creation.

2. **Pastoral Recommendation:** A pastoral recommendation letter must be submitted to the Administrative Assistant or a designated GBTS staff member.

3. **Academic Transcript(s):** Academic transcripts from all previous undergraduate and graduate studies must be submitted to the Administrative Assistant or a designated GBTS staff member.

4. **Interview:** Pending the approval of all submitted materials, the Admissions Assistant will schedule an interview with the applicant.

During the GBTS admissions process, special care will be taken to ensure that applicants are members in good standing of a Bible-believing evangelical church that supports the doctrinal standards of the seminary's Student Doctrinal Affirmation. If a student has been formally disciplined (i.e., excommunicated) from any previous church of which he was once a member, Grace Bible Theological Seminary expects that such information will be disclosed by the student with honesty and clarity in a forthright manner in the student's application for admission.

2.2. Classifications of Admission

Applicants will be assigned to one of the following categories upon completion of evaluation of their application to GBTS:

a.) Unconditional Admission: Unconditional admission is granted when the applicant meets all requirements set forth in the catalog.

b.) Provisional Admission: At the discretion of the Director of Admissions and Enrollment or the Academic Dean, a student who lacks one or more requirements needed for unconditional admission may be admitted with provisional status. However, a student who is admitted on provisional status will normally be required to satisfy any deficiencies within the first year of study and will be evaluated for satisfactory academic progress by the Director of Admissions and Enrollment or the Academic Dean.

c.) Denial of Admission: Applicants who are denied admission, and who desire to reapply, must wait at least one (1) year before resubmitting an application for admission. All requirements not previously met must be satisfied before admission is possible. The decision to deny an applicant is made by the GBTS Admissions office on a confidential basis. It is not the policy of the Admissions office to discuss the exact reasons why an applicant has been denied or accepted. This procedure is followed in order to protect the members of the Admissions office from uninvited duress by a denied applicant.

All admitted students must start classes at GBTS within six (6) months of their acceptance date unless given a deferred date by the Admissions office.

2.3. Transfer of Credits

The following parameters will apply for students seeking a transfer of credits from other educational institutions:

- **Time Limit and Expiration:** The time limit on an applicant seeking to transfer credits from another institution is ten (10) years. For example, a student who took three courses from Agape International Seminary back in 1999 would not be eligible for possible credit transfer.
- **Audit:** Students may petition the seminary to conduct an *unofficial* transfer credit audit of course credits completed at another institution. The student must submit the name of the course(s) for which credit is sought and a transcript showing completion at another institution. (The course syllabus and course description from the other institution may be required as well.) This request should be submitted to the Admissions Assistant during the admissions process. Due to time constraints of our staff, a student must have started an application in Populi in order to be granted an unofficial transfer credit audit by the seminary. An *official* transfer credit audit will be conducted upon request after the student has been accepted to GBTS and once an official transcript has been sent from the Registrar's Office of the previous institution.
- **Grades:** Master's-level courses completed with a "C" or higher grade may be approved for credit by the Registrar on a case-by-case basis. Bachelor's-level courses will generally not be approved for transfer credit except for language courses upon passing a comprehensive examination.
- **Percentage:** Transfer credits may constitute no more than 45% of the student's degree program.

No transfer credits are accepted for Certificate of Ministry candidates.

2.4. Residential vs. Distance Education

Grace Bible Theological Seminary was founded on the conviction that residential education in a committed community of scholars and learners is the most profitable course of study whenever possible. We realize, however, that due to present life, ministry, and familial circumstances that some students may not be able to relocate to Conway, Arkansas. During the admissions process, students will be classified as "Residential" or "Distance" according to their proximity to the physical campus of Grace Bible Theological Seminary, 1076 Harkrider Street, Conway, AR 72032.

a.) Classification of Students

Students will be classified according to the following parameters:

1. Residential: Students who live at a distance of ninety (90) minutes or less from the physical campus of GBTS are considered residential students and are expected to attend classes in-person in all circumstances.

2. Distance-Eligible: Students who live at a distance of ninety (90) minutes or more from the physical campus of GBTS are eligible to take classes via Zoom, our hosted video conferencing platform. Students who are slightly over this threshold are encouraged to participate residentially when able. During their academic career at GBTS, distance students will need to attend multiple on-campus intensive courses to complete their degree program, usually one (1) intensive per year, as an approximation. Our desire is to facilitate opportunities for all of our students to have personal, face-to-face interaction with professors and fellow students during their studies. We require all students, whether in the M.Div., MTS, MAPS, or Certificate programs, to make a trip to our seminary campus in Conway, Arkansas, at least once per academic year.

b.) Course Delivery

Grace Bible Theological Seminary is committed to providing students with access to robust theological education, while maintaining the personal interaction between students and professors needed to thrive in learning. With this commitment in mind, GBTS offers courses in the following formats:

1. Traditional Classroom Instruction (in-person and via Zoom): Traditional classroom instruction takes place at our Conway, Arkansas campus. These classes are available to distance students in real-time through Zoom, a hosted video conferencing platform, so that non-residential students also may participate in the classroom experience. Distance learning via our virtual classroom allows GBTS to involve both students and faculty who cannot attend courses at our Conway campus.

2. On-Campus Intensives: Intensive courses are typically 3 to 5 days in duration, requiring students to travel to our seminary campus for lectures and interaction with faculty and students.

2.5. Degree Programs

Grace Bible Theological Seminary confers four (4) academic degrees:

- Master of Divinity (M.Div.)
- Master of Theological Studies (MTS)
- Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies (MAPS)
- Certificate of Ministry (Cert. Ministry)

The following information contains a program description and admissions requirements for each of the aforementioned degrees:

a.) Master of Divinity (M.Div.)

Total Credits: 98

Program Description:
The Master of Divinity, our flagship degree program at Grace Bible Theological Seminary, is an academically rigorous, pastorally focused degree program to equip men who are currently involved in or preparing for vocational ministry in the local church. Students are challenged to heighten their exegetical skills, engage in a robust program of systematic theological study, and to prepare for the pastoral duties of preaching, teaching, and serving in the local church. The Master of Divinity program is designed to integrate the Reformed Baptist distinctives of Grace Bible Church and Grace Bible Theological Seminary into the traditional graduate curriculum.

Admission Requirements:
Acceptance into the M.Div. program requires meeting the stipulations outlined in the requirements for admission.

For full information about program objectives, program requirements, and complete course listings, please see the Grace Bible Theological Seminary Academic Catalog.

Petitionary Provision:
For students who entered GBTS prior to Fall 2026, an M.Div. student may petition to be transferred to the legacy MAPS program or the MTS program if life hardships would make the M.Div. degree program unfeasible (e.g., challenges in family and work responsibilities, a health setback, etc.). The student must make a formal request to the Academic Dean in a multi-page letter (Word document) with a thorough explanation and substantive reasoning provided. The petition will be read and assessed by the GBTS Enrollment Committee to determine the favorability of the request.

b.) Master of Theological Studies (MTS)

Total Credits: 74

Program Description:
The Master of Theological Studies is an academically rigorous degree program to equip men who are currently involved in or preparing for vocational ministry in the local church. Like the M.Div. degree, students are challenged to heighten their exegetical skills, engage in a robust program of systematic theological study, and to prepare for the pastoral duties of preaching, teaching, and serving in the local church. At the same time, however, the MTS degree requires only two (2) Hebrew courses and two (2) Greek courses—four (4) total—instead of the eight (8) biblical language courses required in the M.Div. program. There is also more built-in flexibility for course requirements in the categories of Exegetical Theology and Pastoral Theology.

Admission Requirements:
Acceptance into the MTS program requires meeting the stipulations outlined in the requirements for admission.

For full information about program objectives, program requirements, and complete course listings, please see the Grace Bible Theological Seminary Academic Catalog.

c.) Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies (MAPS)

Total Credits: 56

Program Description:
This program is intended for men who aspire to serve in pastoral ministry and are seeking to:

- Sharpen their exegetical competence
- Better understand the theology of the Bible in a systematic and cohesive way that appreciates the key periods of history in which it was more clearly developed
- Understand their role as pastor/teacher better in order to carry out their calling more faithfully

To achieve these goals, the MAPS program offers students important courses for developing a higher degree of exegetical competence, theological acumen, and pastoral commitment for service in the local church.

Admission Requirements:
The MAPS degree is for men whose ministerial, employment (if bi-vocational), family, and other commitments make it difficult to carry out the rigorous requirements of the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) or Master of Theological Studies (MTS) programs.

Acceptance into the MAPS program requires meeting the stipulations outlined in the requirements for admission.

For full information about program objectives, program requirements, and complete course listings, please see the Grace Bible Theological Seminary Academic Catalog.

d.) Certificate of Ministry (Cert. Ministry)

Total Credits: 32 (TRW 512 + 10 Courses)

Program Description:
The Certificate of Ministry is designed for students who currently are, or are planning to, serve in a local church in a non-vocational ministry capacity. This certificate program offers biblical and theological training in a flexible format that serves the needs of students and their local churches.

All applicants without a Bachelor's degree are encouraged to apply to the Certificate of Ministry program. There will be an opportunity for students who are admitted to GBTS and excel in the Certificate program (i.e., ultimately finishing it to completion) to go further in their studies and take Diploma-level courses if approved by GBTS administration. All credits earned in the Certificate program may be transferred to the

Diploma program (Diploma of Pastoral Studies; Diploma of Divinity). Our courses are quite challenging, though, requiring: (a) high-level research and writing; and (b) about 800 pages of reading per course. We want students without a Bachelor's degree to achieve success, and starting them in the Certificate program is the best way to ensure that goal.

Admission Requirements:

1. A written recommendation letter from the leadership of their local church confirming their good standing and ministry potential.
2. No Bachelor's degree is required.
3. No transfer credits are accepted for Certificate of Ministry candidates.

Scenarios of Granting Multiple Degrees to the Same Student:
In the event of a Certificate of Ministry student completing a certificate but desiring to pursue further studies in the Diploma of Divinity program, the student will be granted the Certificate of Ministry, and he will be allowed to walk in the graduation ceremony since the degrees in view are in separate academic classifications.

In the event of a Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies (MAPS) student or a Master of Theological Studies (MTS) student completing a degree but desiring to pursue further studies and enroll in the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) program, the student will *not* be granted a MAPS or MTS degree and will not be allowed to walk in the graduation ceremony since the degrees in view are in the same academic classification of "master's." GBTS will not issue multiple master's degrees to the same student in the current configuration of its degree programs.

For full information about program objectives, program requirements, and complete course listings, please see the Grace Bible Theological Seminary Academic Catalog.

2.6. Populi Learning Management System (LMS)

Upon acceptance to Grace Bible Theological Seminary, the admitted student will receive credentials to log in to Populi, our seminary's Learning Management System (LMS). The student will use Populi to facilitate communication with the course instructor and fellow students, to access course content, to submit assignments, and to take assessments (quizzes and tests). Student records (grades, degree program information, academic history, etc.) are available via Populi, and students have access to their unofficial student transcripts through this medium.

2.7. Microsoft Outlook Student Email Address

Upon acceptance to Grace Bible Theological Seminary, the admitted student also will be assigned a unique student email address on the Microsoft Outlook platform. ***This official GBTS student email address should be used for all subsequent correspondence with the institution, its staff, faculty, and affiliates.*** Communication from a personal email address cannot be verified by the recipient, and thus, it will not be considered "official" institutional communication and the seminary's representatives are not obligated to respond to it.

2.8. Library & Electronic Research Resources

The Stevens Library at GBTS offers a collection of resources primarily but not exclusively from the Reformed, Puritan, and Baptistic tradition. The goal of the library is to provide our students and local pastors a breadth of biblical, theological, historical, and pastoral resources. The library consists of roughly 5,000 physical volumes and continues to expand.

Upon acceptance to Grace Bible Theological Seminary, GBTS students are able to access an electronic catalog of available resources in the Stevens Library through Populi. Students also currently have access to two electronic resource databases. The EBSCO eBooks Religion Collection contains approximately 9,300 volumes covering a wide range of religious and philosophical topics. The ATLA Theological eBook Lending Program gives students additional access to a large collection of full-text theological volumes. These e-book databases may be accessed from the "Library" tab in Populi, under "Links." (Single sign-on has been set up so that students may access these databases using their Populi credentials.) GBTS is actively pursuing opportunities to expand student access to theological journals, monographs, and other collections in order to make the highest-quality resources available.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

3.1. Academic Advising, Academic Calendar, & Academic Catalog

Upon admittance as a student at Grace Bible Theological Seminary, incoming M.Div., MTS, and MAPS students will be assigned to an academic advisor who will guide and steer the student's future course registration decisions on a term-by-term basis. In addition, the assigned advisor will also seek to have a Christ-centered relationship with the student and disciple him in managing academic, ministerial (ecclesiastical), and familial duties alongside his schoolwork. The GBTS Admissions Committee will assign an advisor upon acceptance of the student into a degree program.

Formal meetings between the academic advisor and student will take place in July (ahead of the Fall term) and November (ahead of the Spring term) of each year, either in person, by phone, or by videoconferencing. Meetings will last for approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour. The meeting will be documented by the academic advisor. The advisor also will make himself available to the student throughout his studies at GBTS on an as-needed basis.

The goal of GBTS Academic Advising is to:

- Provide guidance in course selection and feedback on the student's progress in the degree program.
- Foster and guide the student in his spiritual and intellectual development as well as in his ministry aspirations.
- Assess needs, experiences, and levels of student satisfaction in order to improve services.
- Evaluate the student's personal, academic, spiritual, ministerial, and familial well-being.
- Encourage the student's involvement in local church ministry.

The Grace Bible Theological Seminary Academic Calendar will be published annually with a precise timeline for each academic term, including dates associated with admissions, institutional events, and other academic and financial deadlines for students. In addition, the Grace Bible Theological Seminary Academic Catalog will be updated annually to reflect current tuition fees and expanded course offerings.

3.2. *Grace Style Guide*

The *Grace Style Guide* provides the student with information on writing tips, formatting, citing sources, punctuation, and using abbreviations in assignments at GBTS. All research papers and book reviews assigned in GBTS courses are expected to conform to the parameters of the *Grace Style Guide*, whether or not that expectation is formally stated in the course syllabus. Please note that the formatting of a source is different if it is cited in a footnote versus if it is cited in a bibliography. The style guide also provides sample pages of a perfectly formatted research paper and book review in its appendices.

3.3. Student Status

It is the student's responsibility to communicate life changes or interruptions in his degree program to the Director of Admissions and Enrollment in a punctual manner. **Students are expected to enroll and take classes in successive terms each academic year, both Fall and Spring (notwithstanding the Summer term), so that they can make adequate progress in their respective degree programs.** If an active student does not enroll in classes in a given term (other than the Summer term) and the student fails to submit a Change in Status form to the seminary, the Director of Admissions and Enrollment will fill out a Change in Status form on the student's behalf and classify the student as "inactive" on (or following) the end date of the term in which formal communication ceased.

Once admitted to GBTS, from that point onward a student will be in one of the following categories with regard to his student status:

- Active status
- Interrupted status
- Inactive status
- Withdrawn status

a.) Active Status: The student is in good standing, both academically and financially, with the seminary. (For probationary status or dismissal, see Section 3.13.)

b.) Interrupted Status: Due to unexpected life circumstances, a student may wish to be placed on interrupted status for reasons related to medical issues, job transfers, geographical relocation, and/or military service. The maximum time allowed for interrupted status is one (1) year. Requests for interrupted status must be made by the student to the Director of Admissions and Enrollment by submitting a Change in Status Form (Appendix B) in advance of each term and must be approved, accordingly. The deadlines to request interrupted status during any term are May 1 (for Summer term), August 1 (for Fall term), and November 1 (for Spring term). Requests for interrupted status that are submitted after these deadlines will not be approved. Once a student is granted interrupted status, it is assumed that the student will return to classes within the calendar year. Failure to maintain enrollment in seminary courses without approval from the Director of Admissions and Enrollment or failure to contact the Director of Admissions and Enrollment with a formal request for interrupted status will be assumed as *de facto* withdrawal from one's degree program at GBTS.

c.) Inactive Status: Due to prolonged and unexpected life circumstances such as those listed above, a student may wish to be placed on inactive status. Inactive status may be granted for a student who will not be in a course of study for an anticipated period of time greater than one (1) year to a maximum of three (3) years. Requests for inactive status must be made by the student to the Director of Admissions and Enrollment by submitting a Change in Status Form (Appendix B) in advance of the anticipated extended absence and must be approved, accordingly. Once a student is granted inactive status, it is assumed that the student will return to classes within the anticipated time specified. Failure to maintain enrollment in seminary courses without approval from the Director of

Admissions and Enrollment or failure to contact the Director of Admissions and Enrollment with a formal request for inactive status will be interpreted as *de facto* withdrawal from one's degree program at GBTS.

d.) Withdrawn Status: A student may request to withdraw entirely from GBTS as an academic institution. This category is comprehensive and differs from merely withdrawing from an individual course at GBTS. Requests for institutional withdrawal must be made by the student to the Director of Admissions and Enrollment by submitting a Change in Status Form (Appendix B) in advance of an upcoming academic term, whenever possible, and must be approved, accordingly. The deadlines to request withdrawn status during any term are May 1 (for Summer term), August 1 (for Fall term), and November 1 (for Spring term). It is not the normal practice for students who request a withdrawal from the institution as a whole to be readmitted at any time in the future.

Reactivation Process: After being granted interrupted status or inactive status by the Director of Admissions and Enrollment, a student must communicate his desire to return to regular studies and be granted permission to register for classes in an upcoming academic term. At all times, the student should maintain current records and update his personal contact information with the seminary, including a working email address, phone number, and physical mailing address. Failure to contact the Director of Admissions and Enrollment with a formal request for reactivation will be interpreted as *de facto* withdrawal from one's degree program at GBTS.

3.4. Financial Information

Grace Bible Church and Grace Bible Theological Seminary are committed to an affordable model for pastoral training and education. Tuition and fees are kept at a reduced cost through the generous support of partner churches and individual donors. Our seminary does not want prospective students to take on debt in order to embark on seminary studies.

a.) Tuition & Fees

2026–2027 Academic Year Costs:

Semester Fee: $220
Tuition: $200 per credit

Fees and tuition are subject to change in ensuing academic years.

b.) Registration, Course Withdrawal ("Drop"), and Course Addition ("Add") Policies

1. **Registration Policies:**
   The following registration policies apply to all GBTS students:
   - Students will only be able to enroll in courses once they pay a non-refundable semester fee of $220.

- Once enrolled, the student's remaining balance must be paid by the end of the semester. Payment in full or a payment plan (i.e., installments) can be arranged.
- Students will not be able to enroll in any future terms if they have an outstanding balance.

2. **Course Withdrawal ("Drop") Policies:**
   - There will be no refund of the semester fee of $220 for any student under any circumstances. The semester fee is a non-refundable payment that must be made at the time of registration.
   - ***Course Withdrawal 0–7 Days:*** Students who wish to withdraw from a course within 7 days of the semester start date must make a written petition to the Academic Dean. If the Academic Dean grants approval, the student will receive a 100% refund of the tuition charged. Courses dropped within this period will not appear on the student's transcript.
   - ***Course Withdrawal 8–21 Days:*** Students who wish to withdraw from a course between 8 and 21 days from the semester start date must make a written petition to the Academic Dean. If the Academic Dean grants approval, the student may receive a 20% refund of tuition. The remaining 80% is still due and payable. The student will receive a "W" (Withdrawal) on his transcript for the course.
   - ***Course Withdrawal after 21 Days:*** Students who wish to withdraw from a course 21 or more days after the semester start date must make a written petition to the Academic Dean. The Academic Dean will determine whether the student will receive a "W" (Withdrawal) or an "F" (failing letter grade) on his transcript. No refund will be given for such withdrawals.

3. **Course Addition ("Add") Policies:**
   - After the semester starts, if a student wishes to add a course, such action will require the approval of (a) the course instructor; and (b) the Academic Dean, in that order.
   - A student can only add a course if he is already enrolled in 1 or more courses for the semester.
   - Course additions may only be made within 7 days of the semester start date.

c.) Financial Accountability

In order to provide financial management accountability to students and to help them pay off their tuition in timely fashion unto the Lord (Prov 3:27-28), GBTS has adopted the following policies that will apply to all students:

1. **Semester Fee:** A non-refundable semester fee of $220 is due at the time of registration. After initial registration, a student will only be able to remain registered for courses in Populi (with continued visibility and access to courses) *after* he pays a non-refundable semester fee of $220.

2. **Tuition:** Once the student is registered for courses, the student's remaining balance for tuition must be addressed by one of the following two options: (a) payment in full; or (b) via a payment plan. This policy will be implemented by a corresponding financial accountability mechanism in Populi. Upon registration, the student will be invoiced for tuition, and a course lock will be placed on the student's courses until he completes one of the following actions:
   - Pays the tuition invoice in full; or
   - Sets up a recurring payment plan (i.e., installments) with payments being drafted on or around: Sept. 14, Oct. 14, Nov. 14, and Dec. 14.

3. **Future Registration:** Students will not be able to enroll in future terms if they have an outstanding balance from a previous term.

3.5. Scholarships

a.) **Spare No Arrows Scholarship:** Grace Bible Theological Seminary automatically applies the Spare No Arrows Scholarship for all admitted students. Through the giving and support of generous donors and churches, all donations for scholarships are placed into one lump sum in the seminary's budget each academic year to reduce the cost of tuition and fees for *all* students, making student costs as low as possible. The Spare No Arrows Scholarship is directly reflected in the affordability of a GBTS education.

One of our values at GBTS is to keep our education and training cost-effective. We do not believe that men should hinder their future ministries by burdening themselves with debt. This scholarship allows us to offer pastoral education in sound doctrine at an incredibly affordable tuition rate, and it enables students to prepare to lead the next generation of faithful churches without incurring student loan debt.

The approach of the Spare No Arrows Scholarship also allows Grace Bible Theological Seminary to avoid entanglement with government regulations that may work against our convictions. GBTS has made the deliberate decision to receive no funds at all from the U.S. Department of Education, Federal Pell Grants, Student Loan Programs, IRS Code Title 26 §529, College Savings Plans, or the State of Arkansas.

b.) **Grace Bible Church of Conway Scholarship:** Grace Bible Church of Conway provides a 2/3 tuition discount for residential students who are active members of GBC who remain in good standing during the duration of their studies. Upon registration for classes each term, students who fall into this category should wait to pay their tuition and fees until *after* the GBC scholarship is applied to their accounts. Students are expected to maintain steady enrollment in GBTS courses in each major term (i.e., Fall and Spring) and attend classes regularly. GBC members should strive *not* to bounce back and forth between for-credit status and auditing status.

3.6. Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all class sessions for their courses at GBTS. Any unexcused absences will result in a 5% reduction of the student's final grade in the course. Absences will not be excused except at the course instructor's discretion and only in truly extraordinary circumstances. Ministry services, pastoral labor, counseling sessions, mission trips, out-of-town conferences, work obligations, family vacations, having a sizeable amount of other seminary schoolwork, and the like do not constitute extraordinary circumstances. ***Examples of truly extraordinary circumstances include:***

> (i) the student himself being hospitalized shortly before or during the time in which class meets;
> (ii) a student's wife going into labor shortly before or during the time in which class meets;
> (iii) a tornado warning (not a watch) going into effect shortly before or during the time in which class meets.

Simply put, we expect our students to act like men (1 Cor 16:13) by honoring their commitments and tackling life's challenges in a forthright manner.

a.) Possible Penalties: The penalties for unexcused absences may include a reduction of the student's final grade and/or expulsion from the course. Any disputes about excused and unexcused absences may be appealed to the Academic Dean for final determination.

b.) Communication of Requested Absences: If there is an exceptional circumstance that providentially hinders a student's attendance in class (for specific examples, see above), it is incumbent upon the student to make a ***request*** to his instructor for an excused absence via email as soon as he becomes aware of dire extenuating circumstances. It is essential to note that the student should not simply "tell" the instructor that "he's not going to make it to class." ***Rather, the student must request permission from the instructor, and whenever possible, the student should wait to hear back for an official response before proceeding.***

c.) Rationale: GBTS has a stringent attendance policy because students' presence and participation are critical to their success in their seminary studies. Our triune God has created us to function in community with an embodied presence as human beings consisting of an inner man and outer man, both body and soul (2 Cor 4:16–17). Students are expected to participate in their classes through real interaction and proactive engagement with the course instructor and other students.

3.7. Late Work Policy

Late Assignments: It is important to make sure that students submit all coursework in a timely fashion. Because we are covering a lot of material in a roughly 14-week semester, it will be difficult to catch up if students fall behind on their assignments. ***No late work will be accepted, except at the instructor's sole discretion, in truly extraordinary circumstances. Any work***

submitted late will receive an automatic ZERO (0). Character formation in seminary is even more important than the intellectual aspect of it. We want our students to act like men (1 Cor 16:13) as they prepare for the most challenging profession on earth. We want them to manage their time well to the glory of God, to meet important deadlines, and to establish healthy habits that they can take into ministry.

The instructor will determine what constitutes an "extraordinary circumstance," not the student. Students are expected NOT to ask instructors for extensions or special arrangements when they submit an assignment late. If the instructor deems it wise to follow up, he will do so. The student is encouraged to submit every assignment on time in Populi, even if it is only partially completed. Ministry services, pastoral labor, counseling sessions, mission trips, out-of-town conferences, work obligations, family events, vacations, and the like do not constitute extraordinary circumstances.

3.8. Registration & Course Add/Drop Policies

Please see the policies outlined under Section 3.3 Financial Information (above).

3.9. Class Participation Expectations

Students are expected to abide by the following norms and standards related to the learning process:

a.) Punctuality: Students are expected to arrive to class on time, whether in-person at our physical campus or by logging into Zoom, our video conferencing platform for distance learning. Orderliness is a fruit of one's connection to Christ (Col 2:5). An instructor may make a request to the Academic Dean for a student to be removed from his class in the case of repeated tardiness.

b.) Notetaking: All students are expected to take notes in class, whether degree-seeking students or auditors, and they should be actively engaged in the process of making handwritten annotations or typing on a laptop or electronic device. ***Students should never ask an instructor/professor for his lecture notes.*** It is the sole discretion of the instructor/professor as to whether he wants to make any additional content available for students via handouts, slides, or otherwise. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with material covered in lectures.

c.) Class Discussions: All discussions and interaction should be respectful both to the instructor and to fellow classmates and must be pertinent to the material being discussed in the class. Students should aim to stay on subject and to avoid taking the class on repeated "rabbit trails" unless allowed or encouraged by the instructor.

d.) Intellectual Property and Copyright Issues: Students may not share any content in the course with non-enrolled individuals without the express authorized consent of the instructor of record. Students' enrollment in the course constitutes their concurrent understanding that all original course material is the intellectual property of the instructor

(whether residential or adjunct faculty), and content is not to be disseminated or posted without the instructor's permission. (See Section 5.3 Intellectual Property Policy.)

e.) Correspondence with Faculty and Staff: Students are expected to display cordial Christlikeness in speech and interactions with GBTS personnel, including personal conversations, emails, exchanges on Populi or social media, and via other platforms. Faculty and staff are not expected to respond to communication that is threatening, offensive, abusive, off-color, controversial, or otherwise inappropriate.

3.10. Video Meeting (e.g., Zoom) & Chat Policy

With new instruments of communication come new challenges. Zoom is the hosted video conferencing platform that GBTS uses to facilitate a virtual classroom experience for its distance students. The same expectations of propriety for an in-person classroom hold true for Zoom interactions. Please adhere to the following principles of "Zoom etiquette":

- Keep your audio and video on during the entire duration of the class; do not toggle in and out of attendance. If your instructor cannot visibly see you, he will assume that you are absent. Instructors may call roll at any time during class.
- Minimize distractions in your own physical background.
- When utilizing the Zoom chat box, please stay on topic and please seek to edify your instructor and fellow classmates with your responses (1 Cor 10:24).
- The Zoom chat box should *not* be used in the following ways: to answer rhetorical questions posed by the instructor in a lecture (before the instructor has time to finish); to challenge the instructor's theological position; to undermine the instructor in any way; to display one's erudition on a particular subject; to make silly jokes that are childish or not germane to the topic of the class; to rant about a hot-button issue; or other foolish behavior.

Use electronic channels of communication in a responsible manner. If you would hesitate to make a particular comment or exhibit a certain behavior in an in-person classroom environment, please refrain from doing so on Zoom.

3.11. Auditing Policy

Courses are available to audit for: (a) men currently serving in pastoral ministry (i.e., pastors/elders of local churches that are inerrancy-affirming and Protestant evangelical in conviction); (b) retired pastors of like-minded churches; (c) GBTS alumni; and (d) faithful men (2 Tim 2:2) of Grace Bible Church, Conway, with the formal approval of GBTS. An auditor's application must be completed. A flat fee of $200 per course will be charged to auditors. (Approved GBC auditors will have a church-provided stipend to cover the auditing fee.) International students or students living in different time zones will need to make sure that they can attend course lectures live via Zoom before enrolling. Auditors are expected to be present at all class meetings within a given course unless advanced permission is granted by the course instructor. Individuals who do not qualify as auditors are encouraged to apply for the Certificate of Ministry program.

Degree-seeking (i.e., for-credit) students may audit one (1) course for free per academic term upon the approval of the course instructor. The degree-seeking student must obtain permission from the course instructor in order to register for the course as an auditor. Students are strongly encouraged not to bounce back and forth between degree-seeking status and auditing status. Repeated behavior of such nature may be subject to an indefinite hold being placed on the student's account by GBTS administration.

3.12. Grading

All GBTS courses follow the grading policy outlined in the Grace Bible Theological Seminary Academic Catalog as listed below:

Letter	Minimum Points	Grade Points
A	92.0	4.00
A-	90.0	3.70
B+	88.0	3.30
B	82.0	3.00
B-	80.0	2.70
C+	78.0	2.30
C	72.0	2.00
C-	70.0	1.70
D+	68.0	1.30
D	62.0	1.00
D-	60.0	0.70
F	0.0	0.00

A final grade of a C- (70.0) or better must be achieved in any course in order to pass the course successfully. A final grade below a 70.0 in any course falls into the "D" or "F" range and represents a failing mark.

3.13. Extension & Course Retake Policies

Extension Policy: Students who are unable to complete course assignments in accordance with the dates set forth in the course syllabus may appeal for an extension to complete these assignments. An extension will only be granted in truly exceptional circumstances. A student who desires an extension shall make a written request to the Academic Dean detailing the circumstances that prohibit the completion of the course according to the schedule set forth in the syllabus. The Academic Dean, upon consultation with the course instructor and/or administration, will make a final determination to approve or disallow an extension. The terms of the extension will be determined by the course instructor and communicated to the student within seven days of the extension request.

Course Retake Policy: A student may retake a course whether a failing or passing grade was achieved the first time the class was taken. For courses in which the student initially received a failing grade, both courses will be shown on the transcript, and both grades will be calculated into the cumulative GPA. For courses in which the student initially received a passing grade,

both courses will be shown on the transcript, but only the grade received in the first course will be calculated into the cumulative GPA.

3.14. Grade Reports & Appeals Process

a.) Grade Reports: All students may check grades at any time through Populi, the learning management system utilized by GBTS. Likewise, all students have access to their unofficial student transcripts through Populi.

b.) Appeals Process (and Conflict Resolution): Any questions or appeals of a grade on the student's transcript should be directed to the Academic Dean within six months of the completion of the course. The Academic Dean, in consultation with the course instructor and/or administration, will make the final determination of the grade awarded on the transcript.

3.15. Academic Probation & Dismissal

a.) Academic Probation: Any student who fails to maintain a minimum acceptable GPA will be contacted by the Academic Dean to discuss probationary status within their program of study. The acceptable minimum GPA for all degree programs is a cumulative 2.5. Upon contact from the Academic Dean, the student will be expected to raise their cumulative GPA to the acceptable minimum standard within the next two semesters of study.

b.) Dismissal: If the student fails to raise his cumulative GPA to the acceptable standard, he may be terminated from the program. The goal of probationary status is to encourage and assist the student to maintain an elevated level of learning and engagement in his seminary studies.

3.16. Graduation

Requirements: In order to graduate from GBTS, the student must demonstrate:

(a) Completion of all course requirements for his degree program;
(b) Proven character in loving God and loving others (Matt 22:37–40) in conformity to the GBTS Code of Conduct (having moved off of probation of any kind, if applicable);
(c) Faithful service to his local church evidenced by his successful completion of all requirements in ST 563 Ecclesiology, including the Church Service assignment.

Closing Pastoral Recommendation Letter: In the student's last semester of enrollment at GBTS, if he has successfully fulfilled the preceding marks, he must contact a pastor/elder in his local church to compose a closing pastoral recommendation letter (similar to the one submitted upon his admission to GBTS) and to submit it to the Administrative Assistant. The letter should affirm that the student remains in good standing in his local church and attest that the student has demonstrated growth in the grace and knowledge of Christ (2 Pet 3:18) fitting for an aspiring candidate of gospel ministry.

Exit Interview: In the student's last semester of enrollment at GBTS, upon his pastor/elder's submission of a closing pastoral recommendation letter, the student must contact the Director of Admissions and Enrollment to set up a joint exit interview with at least two (2) of the following: (a) the Director of Admissions and Enrollment; (b) the Academic Dean; (c) the Dean of Students; and/or (d) the President.

Public Ceremony: Upon successful completion of all credits and required courses in a student's degree program (M.Div., MTS, MAPS, or Cert.) at Grace Bible Theological Seminary, certificates and diplomas will be conferred in a public ceremony for graduates conducted by the seminary. Teaching faculty will participate in the ceremony, and administrators will confer degrees. Certificates and diplomas will be withheld until a student's financial account is clear with all library books having been returned and corresponding fees paid. Graduating students will receive more information about ordering regalia, rehearsing for graduation, and the graduation ceremony from the Director of Admissions and Enrollment or designated personnel as the event approaches.

If the Spring term concludes and a student has nine (9) or fewer credit hours remaining, and he intends to complete all unfinished coursework in the immediately ensuing Summer term, GBTS administrators will allow the student to walk in the public graduation ceremony. The student's diploma will be retained after the ceremony, however, until all course credits are completed. Students are highly encouraged to attend the in-person graduation ceremony; however, if a student is unable to attend, his diploma may be mailed to him at the physical address he has listed with his personal information in Populi.

CODE OF CONDUCT

4.1. General Conduct Expectations

Students of Grace Bible Theological Seminary, as followers of Jesus Christ who are currently serving or preparing for ministry, are expected to imitate their Savior and Lord in the following ways both in their on-campus and off-campus behavior, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, both in-person and on social media or other electronic platforms:

- Loving God (Matt 22:37–40)
- Loving their neighbors, including faculty, staff, and classmates (Matt 22:37–40)
- Loving their families (1 Tim 5:8)
- Loving their local church (Acts 20:17–38)
- Being men of truth and honesty (Eph 4:15)
- Being men of courage (1 Cor 16:13)
- Working hard unto the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31)
- Displaying not even a hint of sexual immorality or impropriety (Eph 5:3)
- Not being argumentative or divisive (1 Tim 3:3; Rom 16:17–18; Titus 3:9–10)
- Displaying the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22–26)

Students should strive to display heartfelt repentance whenever they fall into sin and a spirit of reconciliation toward others, forgiving others as God has forgiven them. Students should aim to say "no" to ungodliness and "yes" to righteousness (Titus 2:12), putting before their eyes whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy (Phil 4:8).

Students, as "Christ-ones," must recognize first and foremost that they bear the name that is above every name, Jesus Christ as Lord (Phil 2:9–11), and they should strive, accordingly, at all times and in every way to make his name respected and honored among men. Students should also be cognizant of the fact that, as students of this institution, they bear the name of Grace Bible Theological Seminary and should seek to uphold the good name and reputation of our seminary in every way possible.

Grace Bible Theological Seminary maintains the right, according to the wisdom of its leadership, to discipline and/or dismiss a student at any time for any conduct which does not hold to a biblical standard and the expectations of the seminary. Student behavior requiring disciplinary action may include (but is not limited to) the following:

1. Inappropriate conduct (whether through sins of commission or omission, i.e., via negligence or willful transgression)
2. Inappropriate speech
3. Inappropriate use of technology
4. Inappropriate conduct or speech by a family member or friend who is in the purview of the student's day-to-day life and the seminary
5. Inability to manage one's household well (1 Tim 3:4–5)
6. Consistent neglect of dress code expectations
7. Consistent disrespect to faculty, staff, or fellow students
8. Disruption of the classroom environment

9. Property vandalism or littering
10. Expression of ungodly attitudes, such as disrespect toward administration, faculty, staff, or students, including but not limited to arguing, complaining, and gossiping
11. Intimidation, harassment, or bullying of staff or other students, whether in-person or electronically
12. Sexual misconduct
13. Use of illegal drugs or the misuse of legal drugs or substances
14. Any action which breaks a state or federal law
15. Any conviction by a state or federal court

Issues of conduct will be addressed, as needed, by the Dean of Students, in conjunction with other faculty/staff members and administration. Physical force may be used by Grace Bible Theological Seminary personnel to stop a behavior that may cause immediate harm to the perpetrating individual or to others in the area.

GBTS views its mission as being in partnership with local churches in which its students are members. As a result, in all matters of student discipline within the life of the seminary, GBTS leadership reserves the right to contact leadership of the student's church when deemed appropriate for any violations of the student code of conduct, including, but not limited to, termination/expulsion from the program.

4.2. Active Church Membership

Since GBTS seeks to produce godly men who love Christ and his church, students are expected to maintain active membership and remain in good standing in their local churches during the duration of their time of study at GBTS. A student facing difficult issues in his local church which might necessitate a possible transfer of membership is expected to contact his GBTS academic advisor as soon as possible. If a student moves his membership to another church at any time while pursuing his degree program, he must contact the Dean of Students and provide the name of his new church and pastor(s)/elder(s). The seminary strives to maintain accurate record keeping for students and their church affiliations at all times.

Pastoral Mentor Annual Progress Report: This form will be sent to pastoral mentors of our students on an annual basis. (The "pastoral mentor" is a pastor/elder in the student's local church, preferably the pastor who completed the pastoral recommendation letter as part of the student's entrance into GBTS.) In April or May of each year, shortly after the conclusion of the Spring academic term, pastoral mentors will be sent an email by the Dean of Students, encouraging them to complete a survey with questions about the progress of the student's service to his local church. The pastoral mentor will fill out a survey, charting the student's progress, which will be collected by the Dean of Students, analyzed, and kept on file.

If there are major shortcomings in any of the listed areas, the pastoral mentor will be urged to work with the student in devising a plan for improvement and further accountability. Any students showing significant lack of improvement in year-to-year comparison will be contacted and exhorted, and the student could lose his active student status at GBTS due to subpar service in his local church.

4.3. Active Service (Residential Students)

Jesus Christ our Savior came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matt 20:28; Mark 10:45). As Christ's followers and especially as men who currently lead or are aspiring to lead in local church ministry, we want to exhibit the same attitude and practice. Accordingly, we want to provide opportunities for our residential students to serve at a minimum of two (2) seminary-sponsored events per academic year, requiring all students (a) to serve at the Head & Heart Conference (in years when it is hosted by the seminary), and (b) to choose one (1) additional event per year to offer their labor and assistance. Students may choose from the following options:

- Convocation
- Fall Intensive—Thursday lunch, Friday lunch, or Saturday cleanup
- Spring Intensive— Thursday lunch, Friday lunch, or Saturday cleanup
- Graduation
- Summer Intensive— Thursday lunch, Friday lunch, or Saturday cleanup

A link to an electronic sign-up page (e.g., SignUpGenius) will be sent to residential students every August, and they are expected to sign up for a slot of service *before* submitting their Student Enrollment Agreement for the academic year.

4.4. Effective Communication

GBTS staff aims to communicate with students in a timely and charitable manner. The best way to ensure effective communication is for the student to contact designated personnel in various areas of seminary life (see Appendix A: "Communication Flowchart"). Please do not pick one staff member and make them a one-stop-shop or one-size-fits-all solution to all of your seminary needs. Rather, figure out what category your inquiry entails, and contact the individual in closest proximity to you in that respective category.

4.5. Purity Policy

In our time, sexual purity is abnormal. Capitulation to the wildness of lust in the fallen human heart is normal. This is a battle that many face, and many men fail. As a seminary training men called by a holy God to a holy ministry, we at GBTS desire to stand for purity. We want to train men who fight for holiness and make real growth in godliness amid temptation. Toward this end, we have adopted the following theological policy as a school.

First, we recognize that temptation is external. It is frankly challenging to be a Christian man in our modern context. Media bombards us with images, videos, and enticements. We have compassion borne of honesty for men, and for all believers, who yearn to kill sin yet feel overwhelmed at times by external temptations that come not from within, but from outside us.

Second, we recognize that temptation is internal. Quite apart from worldly allurements, we have instincts in our heart that scrape and claw and scheme to lay hold of what our sinful desires covet (Matt 15:19; Jas 1:13-15). This is true even for the born-again believer, for whom the power of sin is decisively broken, even conquered (Rom 6). We not infrequently choose the fleeting

"pleasures" of iniquity over the surpassing joy accessible to us at all times through union with Christ. We all stumble in many ways, necessitating humility in our pursuit of godliness (Jas 3:2).

Third, we confess that holiness is not optional for believers, let alone future pastors. Even as we note that temptation is common to man, we cannot diminish the vital role of holiness in both the Christian life and the Christian minister's life. Holiness is not the pre-qualification of ministry; it is the very essence of ministry. Without holiness, no one will see the Lord (Heb 12:14).

Fourth, we resolve to help students fight for holiness by God's help. Our desire is not to stand over students in a ministry of condemnation. Instead, we want to help our students fight for purity. We therefore resolve to point students repeatedly and regularly to the grace of God. The grace of God is both our forgiveness and our power for godliness. It makes us "more than conquerors" both in terms of our identity and our reality (Rom 8:37).

Fifth, we will hold accountable students who choose sin over holiness. A crucial part of helping students fight for holiness is holding them to account. Pastors—and all Christians—must watch their life and doctrine closely (1 Tim 4:16). Accountability, like moral duty of a God-centered kind, is essential to any serious pursuit of sexual purity.

The following is our structure of accountability at GBTS, in general terms, with respect to pornography and sexual sin. In order to keep their consciences free before God and man (Acts 24:15), students are under obligation to self-monitor and report failures in the area of sexual purity:

a.) A student who chooses to view pornography or enter into sexual sin needs to confess such behavior to his academic advisor. The academic advisor will work with the student's elders—whether at Grace Bible Church or another congregation—to frame and implement a practical purity plan for overcoming temptation (see below). For students without an academic advisor (Certificate and Diploma students), the student needs to confess such behavior to a trusted faculty member of his choosing.

b.) Depending on the nature, severity, and duration of the sin, it is at the discretion of the student's academic advisor (or trusted faculty member) to contact the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students may place the student on probation but retain his active status.

c.) Depending on the nature, severity, and duration of the sin, the Dean of Students, in consultation with the student's academic advisor, church elders, and other pertinent individuals (either in GBTS or in the student's church) may decide to suspend the student from active status for a semester with the goal of overcoming temptation for that season.

d.) Depending on the nature, severity, and duration of the sin, the student may face expulsion from GBTS by seminary administration and have a letter placed in his student file.

A Practical Purity Plan:

1. Identify what sins you are prone to committing. What patterns of sin are in your life?

2. Identify what draws you to commit sin. Are there factors that frequently culminate in you sinning?

3. Meditate on the holiness of God. Our Trinitarian God is thrice holy, and calls his redeemed people to a life of holiness (Is 6:3).

4. Identify steps you can take to break up your sinful patterns. Play proactive offense instead of playing shamed defense.

5. Take any and all practical steps necessary to kill sin (Col 3:5) so that it does not kill you. This could include:

- Not being on your phone constantly
- Not being online at night
- Not watching Netflix or such outlets, except with friends or family members
- Redirecting your sight in a reasonable and wise way when in tempting situations
- Not spending time alone in private with a person of the opposite sex with whom you are or have been romantically involved

6. When you sin, immediately confess it to God, repenting of it (1 John 1:9).

7. Keep close accounts with mature brothers who will encourage you to kill sin. Do not merely discuss your failings with peers. Find a way to partner up with brothers who will show you compassion, but will even more push you to kill sin, trust Christ afresh, and know the joy of building patterns of obedience.

8. In this whole process, patterns of obedience for the glory of God are your goal. We are never going to eradicate all indwelling sin in this life. But we can see major victories won in our spiritual lives. A big part of such victory is establishing patterns by the grace of God. Being in patterns means that your life "settings" are oriented to holiness, not worldliness.

9. Never let up, but remain in a state of vigilance all your days. This is what Proverbs 4:23 tells us: to keep our heart with all "vigilance." Resting in Christ, whose work is finished on our behalf, we must constantly battle the flesh and keep a close watch on ourselves. There is no off-season for us.

4.6. Technology Policy

Students who take classes residentially at GBTS or who use the resources of the physical campus have access to Student/Campus Wireless Internet (Wi-Fi). Students may access the Wi-Fi network with their own electronic devices or, on occasion, with those associated with the

seminary. Students are expected to maintain the highest of standards in their use of technology, keeping in mind that they are utilizing it before the face of God.

a.) Classroom Expectations: Students are expected to use electronic devices, while class is in session, only for educational purposes directly related to the class. Students should not be texting, making phone calls, checking Facebook, Twitter, or other social media, looking at the latest sports scores, catching up on news and current events, playing music or videos, or engaging any electronic content otherwise unrelated to the class in which they are participating. Earbuds and headphones should be removed during class.

b.) General Expectations: Students are not to use the seminary's Wi-Fi network or electronic devices, whether personal, those of the seminary, or shared devices, to engage in any of the following behaviors:

- Downloading or disseminating inappropriate pictures or messages
- Downloading or disseminating illegal material or content
- Posting, uploading, or making available sinful, slanderous, abusive, or threatening material that encourages emotional, psychological, or physical harm to another person or oneself
- "Hacking" into another student's account or a faculty/staff member's account
- Attempting to gain access to services or facilities of the seminary, whether physical or electronic, or to penetrate electronic networks or security systems
- Attempting any data gathering of information from other individuals or devices in the seminary
- Creating, redistributing, or sending malicious software such as viruses, spyware, malware, adware, worms, Trojan horses, or the like
- Engaging in any activity that infringes the intellectual property rights of Grace Bible Theological Seminary, its authors, faculty, instructors, content creators, or affiliates
- Cyberbullying, defined as using electronic means to create a hostile environment for an individual, which may include: (a) the sending of uncharitable, harmful, potentially embarrassing, or false messages; (b) revealing sensitive personal information about a staff member or student to others; and/or (c) creating electronic content to defame an individual or present them in an unfavorable light.

Violations of these standards are determined solely at the discretion of the administration of the seminary. The administration of GBTS has discretion to monitor students' electronic activity, including their use of social media. The use or suspected use of electronic devices or platforms in inappropriate ways by a student (or campus visitor) may result in the confiscation of the device by GBTS staff, faculty, or law enforcement. Grace Bible Theological Seminary is not responsible for the loss, destruction, malfunctioning, or theft of electronic devices brought on school property.

Misuse of electronic devices can be, at minimum, a major distraction in a learning environment, and also positively destructive, at maximum. At all times, the proper question for a student to ask is: Am I using this device to build up and edify myself and those around me unto God's glory?

4.7. Social Media Policy

Social media is a relatively recent tool in human history that has the power to communicate information quickly to a wide audience. With such technology, however, comes both benefits and pitfalls. Social media may be used for advancing in gospel proclamation and it may be used for indulging in sinful temptation of the tongue. GBTS encourages its students to use the following two principles for effective, Christ-honoring use of social media: (a) "whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy" (Phil 4:8)—to promote such things; and (b) "be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry" (Jas 1:19).

Student may use social media to promote ideas in conformity to the gospel of Jesus Christ, to encourage Christians, to bring truth to bear on cultural situations, and to edify friends and family. Student should avoid using social media in a harshly critical way, to demean other seminaries or the personnel of other seminaries, or to engage in fruitless speculations or controversies (1 Tim 1:4). GBTS students should never aim to speak on behalf of the seminary in a given matter. Further, they should remember that they are ambassadors of Christ, of their local church, and of Grace Bible Theological Seminary, and if they even have a question about the propriety of a social media post, they should contact their pastor(s)/elder(s) and/or seminary personnel before posting or refrain altogether.

The administration of GBTS has discretion to monitor students' electronic activity, whether on-campus or off-campus, including their use of social media. All of the guidelines in Section 4.3 ("Technology Policy") of this handbook apply to this current section.

4.8. Posture of Humility (i.e., Non-Platforming)

Grace Bible Theological Seminary wants its students to remember that they are *students* and *disciples*, first and foremost, as they utilize their minds and prepare for ministry. Students should strive to stoop down in serving others, following in the footsteps of their Savior, "doing nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit but considering others better than themselves" (Phil 2:3ff.). The Christian life is often downwardly mobile in the eyes of the world, and it is the very antithesis of platform-building and status-seeking. Thus, students should not be looking at seminary as an avenue to build platforms for themselves, whether in real life or online.

Accordingly, it is not appropriate for a seminary student to ask a professor: (a) to seek out publishing opportunities, (b) to read a manuscript in hopes of getting published, (c) to be the co-author of a blog, article, book, or podcast, (d) to give an endorsement of a book, podcast, or similar pursuit, or (e) to exhibit any type of approximating behavior outside of exceptional circumstances that will be determined collectively by the GBTS administration. GBTS students should strive to be faithful in the current lot to which God has called them, knowing that the Lord often entrusts faithful servants with greater opportunities once they have proven to be faithful with "a little" (Matt 25:21). A conscientious student should strive to write solid book reviews and robust papers *in their seminary classes*, not to place outside writing projects in front of faculty members. Rest assured that your professors *will* notice if you exhibit an attitude of servant-like humility and produce superior work in a consistent manner.

If you receive positive feedback on a paper at GBTS, that means you have performed solid, master's-level work. To God be the glory! That does not necessarily mean, however, that you are now ready to write a master's thesis, a doctoral dissertation, or the next Christian bestseller. Please understand that becoming a precise and effective communicator, whether in speech or in writing, often takes decades to master.

4.9. Sexual Harassment Policy

Grace Bible Theological Seminary will not tolerate sexual harassment or sexual impropriety, defined as the unwanted advance in word or deed of a sexual nature directed at an individual—or, more broadly, any such action that is out of accord with God's design for one-man, one-woman sexual union in the context of the marriage covenant (Gen 1:26–27; 2:20–25; Matt 19:4–6). GBTS's student body consists of men due to the focused nature of our seminary's calling to train pastors, church planters, and lead missionaries for vocational service, yet we are fully aware that women may serve in staff roles and may be present at special events of the seminary. All image-bearers of God must be treated with respect and dignity. The seminary has a zero-tolerance policy for sexual harassment and/or abuse.

In keeping with the seminary's doctrinal and ethical affirmations, sexually immoral conduct, whether committed on-campus or off-campus, will not be tolerated. Sexually immoral conduct is defined as bodily contact with another individual, whether actively undertaken or passive permitted, for the purpose of satisfying desires of the flesh. The Bible strictly forbids such conduct, and thus, any sexually immoral actions may constitute grounds for expulsion from the seminary (Lev 18:1–30; 1 Cor 5:1–13; 1 Thess 4:1–8; Heb 13:4). Homosexual or transgender-affirming speech or conduct is incompatible with enrollment at GBTS and is a basis for dismissal (1 Cor 6:9–10). The hope of the gospel is that those struggling with such sins can be liberated from them—washed, sanctified, and justified—through the cleansing work of Christ and the Spirit of God (1 Cor 6:11).

4.10. Plagiarism and Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) Policy

In research and writing, students must give credit to any author(s) from whom they learn ideas by acknowledging dependence on the author's work through the direct citation of sources. Such attribution should take place in the text of a paper (or academic assignment), in footnotes/endnotes, and in a bibliography.

> **a.) Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the practice of a student, intentionally or unintentionally, borrowing ideas, concepts, direct quotations, or paraphrases of any part of an author's written or spoken content—whether in books, articles, papers, blogs, sermons, lectures, or any other medium, whether published or unpublished—for which the student has not given credit to the original author. In addition, plagiarism may include misattribution of sources or the attempt to cover and conceal non-academic electronic sources with legitimate academic sources. Plagiarism also may include reproducing a bibliography from another source, submission of work by another author (with or without financial compensation), or submitting work turned in for a previous class without self-attribution or without substantial reformulation of the content. Plagiarism of any sort is unacceptable

for students at GBTS since it involves falsely claiming the ideas of another author as one's own (Eph 4:25). At all times the student's work should reflect his own conscientious, purposeful, and disciplined study unto the Lord (Col 3:17). Accordingly, our faculty's feedback on tests, papers, and other academic assignments should assess each student's original reflection and work ethic for the task assigned.

b.) Artificial Intelligence (A.I.): Students may use artificial intelligence (A.I.) *with an abundance of caution* in the research process, but they need to check and verify every A.I.-generated assertion with rigorous academic sources, and all sources must be cited in their assignment(s). Any A.I.-generated assertion that cannot be independently verified through outside sources should be jettisoned. Students are welcome to use word-processing resources like Microsoft Word Spell Check and Grammar Check (without Microsoft Copilot) to check for spelling and grammatical mistakes. However, students may *not* use A.I. in the actual writing or content editing of any written document or paper. Students should avoid writing tools that use paraphrasing, automatic text generation, form-filling, mining, prediction, extraction, and/or translation.

c.) Possible Consequences: Since plagiarism or impermissible use of artificial intelligence (A.I.) involves the presentation of another person's thoughts, work, statements, or information as the student's own, whether intentional or unintentional, any instances of plagiarism or impermissible A.I. use will be reported by the course instructor to the Dean of Students for investigation. Upon consultation with any or all of the following: course instructor, student, Academic Dean, Director of Admissions and Enrollment, or President, the following actions may be taken:

- A written reprimand to the student;
- A failing grade on the assignment(s) in question, with or without opportunity to repeat or substitute the assignment;
- Expulsion with failing grade from the course in which the offense(s) was/were committed;
- In extreme, lengthy, or repeat cases, termination from the program

Plagiarism and impermissible use of artificial intelligence (A.I.) will not be tolerated in official academic coursework at GBTS nor in any personal or ministerial publication or platforms. Plagiarism and impermissible use of artificial intelligence (A.I.) discovered after the student's completion of a degree program may result in the revocation of an awarded degree or diploma.

4.11. Dress Code Expectations

Our goal as Christians is to honor God in all that we do, including the way that we present our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19) with our accompanying clothing and hairstyles. Our actions, including outward adornment of the body, communicates the desires of the heart. We expect our students to display physical modesty in their dress consistent with their vocational calling as students and ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We encourage our students to maintain a neat appearance reflecting proper care for one's body (Eph 5:29). All these actions

will help foster a learning environment that is conducive to deep thinking and study of the things of God.

Accordingly, we ask that our students dress in ***business casual*** attire. Respectable attire will normally include slacks/pants, collared or button-down shirts, and shoes. We realize that certain students will have jobs that will necessitate their showing up to class in a more informal manner (e.g., a work uniform), and that is certainly acceptable in such circumstances. Above all, we encourage students to dress in a manner that is glorifying to the Lord without calling an undue amount of attention to themselves, whether in clothing or in hairstyle. Students or visitors to the seminary who choose to wear immodest or distracting clothing or clothing with offensive words or pictures may be asked to change their attire or to leave the premises.

4.12. Food & Drink Policy

Food and drink are not permitted in GBTS classes except for closed-container drinks such as covered coffee cups or water bottles. Beverages and snacks may be eaten during assigned breaks in the café area and in certain designated common areas. Students are expected to pick up after themselves, to dispose of items as needed, and to take care of the seminary space which God has entrusted to them. Food and drink should be kept away from library books and other similar resources that are property of the seminary.

4.13. Facility Use Policy

Our seminary facility was provided through God's generosity and by the sacrificial giving of a donor in 2019. We desire that our facility be used for the glory of God and for the fellowship of the body of Christ. GBTS students are welcome to use the seminary building at any time (with their individual staff-issued access code) as long their usage: (a) does not conflict with regularly scheduled activities by the seminary and its constituents; and (b) does not exceed the size of a small study group or coffee/lunch between GBTS students.

Although our facility is not generally open to the public, we make our facility available to Grace Bible Church members outside of regularly scheduled church and seminary activities upon their request (and if granted prior approval) as a means of demonstrating the kindness and hospitality of Christ. Due to the increasing number of demands for the use of our seminary building and with a desire to avoid conflicts of schedule and competing uses of space, official requests must be made.

We want to ensure:

- A safe, secure, and God-glorifying environment for all individuals *during* use of the facility;
- A facility that is secure *after* use, including doors being locked and lights being turned off (except lights along the walls of the upper floor);
- Proper care and respect for the property that the Lord has entrusted to us;
- Children under the age of 18 are supervised at all times by a parent, legal guardian, or church-appointed leader or supervisor (of an official event) to ensure safety for all.

Requests for use of the seminary facility shall be made to the GBTS Administrative Assistant at least one (1) month in advance under normal circumstances, by submitting the Facility Reservation Request and Agreement form via email (email address available from the seminary). Only when the GBTS staff approves the requested use will the event be reserved and placed on the GBTS Facility Reservation Calendar.

INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

5.1. Non-Discrimination Policy

GBTS shall not discriminate against members, employees, applicants for enrollment or employment, students, or others on the basis of race, color, nationality, age, or ethnic origin; however, as a religious institution, the seminary reserves the right to deny or terminate enrollment/employment and to deny or terminate any other status of persons whose lifestyle, words, actions, or otherwise do not align with GBTS's statements of faith, standards of conduct, or other policies. Furthermore, this policy statement is not intended to waive the ministerial exception or any other exception or exemption to federal, state, or local anti-discrimination laws or regulations.

5.2. Statement of Church-State Relations

Grace Bible Theological Seminary exists as a religious institution for ecclesiastical purposes only and, as a non-public institution, is exempt from certain obligations and requirements from the Arkansas Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. For example, as a religious institution, GBTS is exempt from certain provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Section 106.12 of the Title IX regulation exempts an educational institution from mandated compliance with any provision of the regulation which conflicts with the religious beliefs and values of the church (or denomination) controlling the institution. Thus, Grace Bible Theological Seminary, as a ministry affiliate of Grace Bible Church (Conway, AR), is exempt from various stipulations of Title IX, including those referring to "sex" and "discrimination" associated therein. Exemptions from Title IX would include but not be limited to: Sections 106.9; 106.21; 106.23(a); 106.31; 106.36; 106.37(a)&(b); 106.38(a); 106.51; 106.53; 106.55; 106.59; and 106.60.

5.3. Intellectual Property Policy

The instructor of each course at GBTS (whether faculty or adjunct) is considered by the seminary to be the "author" of all original material in the course—including syllabi, lecture content, slides, files, class notes, handouts, exams, videos, audio clips, online content (including personal websites), and all content contained within the course's platform on the institution's learning management system. All the aforementioned original material is considered by Grace Bible Theological Seminary to be the intellectual property and the copyrightable content of the course instructor or "author." Copyrightable content is considered by U.S. law to be content that is creative, fixed, and original in nature (U.S. Code Title 17 § 1–8, 10–12, 14–15).

5.4. Student Records

In personal and electronic communications with students through Populi, Microsoft Outlook, or other platforms, GBTS faculty and staff have access to student records and information that is to be kept private. Faculty and staff are accountable at all times not to disclose the personal information that they access—including admissions qualifications, biographical background, grades, and financial records—*to any party other than the individual student*, unless special

circumstances arise, including: (a) circumstances that affect the welfare or well-being of the student; or (2) the seminary being contacted by law enforcement personnel or leadership of a local church (for ecclesiastical or spiritual disciplinary matters) or a church denominational entity (or a similar organization of affiliation) or a seminary/academic institution or a member of the broader body of Christ who has some sort of personal stake.

Exceptions to this policy include GBTS having the right to disclose matters of public record such as: (a) an individual's first and last name and state of residence; (b) an individual's enrollment status in the institution (active, inactive, withdrawn, or dismissed); and (c) graduate information, such as the individual's degree earned and month/year of graduation. This privacy policy encompasses the student's spouse, parents, siblings, children, etc., unless the individual student has provided express written consent in a document addressed to the Academic Dean accompanied by a physical signature. GBTS is not bound by FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974) since the institution does not receive government funding, but GBTS administration deems FERPA to contain generally reliable policies and beneficial common grace insights (in various places), serving as a helpful guide in our approach to this subject.

5.5. International Students

Distance Students at GBTS are required to attend live Zoom classes and to participate in a select number of on-campus intensives as part of their degree program. Accordingly, we are only able to accommodate international students at the current time if the prospective student lives in North America or South America, in order to ensure that the individual is able to commit to faithful videoconferencing attendance (amid time zone differences). International students in North America or South America are exempt from our normal requirement of traveling to Conway once a year to take an on-campus intensive course, since such students are granted a travel hardship exemption.

Since GBTS is not certified by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) overseen by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), we cannot legally require international students to travel to Arkansas each year. Once a school is SEVP-certified, the school can issue a Form I-20 to admitted international students, which is a Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status. Students can then use the I-20 form to apply for a visa to travel to the United States. A student F-1 visa would be required for academic studies. An international student who enters the United States on a B-1 visitor visa, coming as a tourist, or through the Visa Waiver Program (VWP), could only take a course for recreational study (i.e., not-for-credit).

5.6. Students with Learning Disabilities

GBTS does not discriminate against students with disabilities in its admissions process or in its subsequent delivery of services to students. As a private educational institution that exists only for ecclesiastical purposes and as a school that does not receive public funding, GBTS does not have unlimited resources to provide special academic services or accommodations to students with disabilities. Nevertheless, GBTS aims to provide reasonable measures to aid individual students in the learning process as such services are operationally and financially feasible for the

institution. Students with special needs will be addressed on an individual basis by the administration.

5.7. Inclement Weather Policy

GBTS wishes for students to exercise discretion in situations of severely inclement weather. Our policy may be summed up in three parts:

> **a.) We prioritize meeting for class.** Only in unusual circumstances do we cancel class and close the campus. (In such instances, we send out a school-wide notification.) Given that our classes are held after work hours in most settings, we have the benefit of knowing the weather throughout the day. We also regularly consult weather reports in order to make informed decisions. While always desiring the safety of our students, our burden is to train our students for pastoral ministry. For this reason, while always using discretion, we may decide to hold classes even when other organizations or churches close.
>
> **b.) We expect students to use wisdom.** We care greatly for our student body. We would never want a student to act foolishly, nor to unnecessarily put themselves in harm's way. Courage is not foolhardiness. If a given road that must be taken to campus is impassable, as just one example, we understand that a student facing such conditions will log onto Zoom and join class in that manner. While moderately cold weather alone should not cause a GBTS student to opt out of class, other conditions do merit careful consideration: icy roads, snowstorms, and like circumstances. In normal inclement situations, we trust our student body to make their own judgment calls in this respect; in unusually difficult situations, GBTS will close.
>
> **c.) We expect students to exercise courage.** In general, the men who attend our school need to learn to push through obstacles. We do not want our work to fold up at the first possibility of trouble or danger. In like form, we do not want the education of our students to fold easily. We want them to demonstrate boldness, deep dedication, and masculine doggedness in pursuing the mission of training well for ministry. God is richly glorified in such persistence and bravery.

If it is truly impossible, due to weather, to hold in-person residential classes, our faculty may choose to hold class on Zoom.

5.8. Medical Emergencies

In the event of a medical emergency, Grace Bible Theological Seminary personnel may call 911 and seek other relevant services appropriate to the circumstances. Students are encouraged to notify the seminary of any medical conditions that may "flare up" on occasion which could contribute to disruptions or difficulties in the learning environment.

5.9. Searches & Law Enforcement Involvement

The administration, staff, and faculty of Grace Bible Theological Seminary reserve the right to conduct random searches and/or scans of a student's (or visitor's) belongings, including but not limited to bags, books, electronic devices, online platforms, school-provided accounts, vehicles, or any other items in the event the seminary suspects the student may possess an item that could cause harm to himself, another individual, or disruption to the learning environment. Such a search may be conducted without the student's (or visitor's) permission. The student's enrollment at GBTS constitutes consent to such searches.

Further, the administration, staff, and faculty of Grace Bible Theological Seminary reserve the right to contact law enforcement if they determine that such a measure is warranted by the actions of a student (or visitor) to the campus.

If a student has been arrested by law enforcement, the student is responsible to inform the seminary immediately. The seminary reserves the right to assess the situation and can assign consequences and disciplinary measures independent of any subsequent action by law enforcement or formal adjudication by a court of law.

5.10. Arbitration Agreement & Grievance Policy

All legal disputes between a student and Grace Bible Theological Seminary may not be litigated in civil courts, as such behavior is biblically forbidden (1 Cor 6:1–8). If such a dispute arises, the dispute must be arbitrated in a Christian manner with a third-party mediator as agreed upon by both parties.

A Student Grievance Form (Appendix C) is provided in the event of a serious grievance so that the concerned student may make a formal complaint regarding specific policies or personnel of the institution. This form is not intended for making casual suggestions, presenting ideas for improvement, or providing informal feedback. The form should be completed by the student only for matters that are of the highest seriousness and of the utmost gravity in nature. Students are expected to provide as many details as possible, including date, time, location, attempts to resolve the issue, individuals contacted, and individuals consulted.

Completed Student Grievance Forms should be submitted via email to the Dean of Students, who will receive and process the formal complaint. (If the complaint is *against* the aforementioned individual, the form should be submitted to the Director of Admissions and Enrollment.) The Dean of Students will contact other administrators, as needed, and he will formally list the action steps that will be taken to attempt to resolve the matter.

5.11. Liability Release (including Photo/Video Permission)

When enrolling in the seminary, the student agrees to release, hold harmless, and forever discharge Grace Bible Theological Seminary, its directors, employees, successors, affiliates, and agents, from any and all liability, claims, and demands of whatever kind or nature, either in law or in equity, which arise or may hereafter arise from the student's use of tools, resources,

intellectual content, or property of the seminary. The student acknowledges that he releases GBTS from any and all liability for injury (whether emotional or physical), illness, death, or property damage resulting from his enrollment in the seminary to the fullest extent permitted by law.

The student also grants Grace Bible Theological Seminary the right to use photos, associated names, images, or likenesses of the student in school promotional/advertisement literature and on websites/social media sites.

5.12. Student Enrollment Agreement

Every year students will be required to sign the Student Enrollment Agreement (Appendix D) upon enrollment or re-enrollment, acknowledging that they have read the GBTS Student Handbook, including the seminary's doctrinal and ethical statements of faith, and they affirm their agreement to abide by and not violate the handbook and the policies contained therein. This agreement also includes granting consent to GBTS to use photos, associated names, images, or likenesses of the student, and the student agrees to abide by the Arbitration Agreement and Service Agreement of the seminary. In addition, students will use this form to provide us with the current name and contact information of their pastoral mentor (i.e., elder) who has oversight over them in their local church.

Appendix A: Communication Flowchart

FIRST, Categorize …

Assess the nature of your question according to the following categories:
Billing, Library, Degree Program/Transcript, Course, or Enrollment/Student Status/Policy.

THEN, Contact …

BILLING QUESTIONS
Beau Walter
Staff Accountant
bwalter@gbtseminary.org

LIBRARY QUESTIONS
Kym Nies
Administrative Assistant
knies@gbtseminary.org

DEGREE PROGRAM & TRANSCRIPT QUESTIONS
Preston Kelso
Academic Dean
pkelso@gbtseminary.org

COURSE QUESTIONS

If you have a question, the first person to contact is …

Course Professor

If you do not receive a timely response, then contact …

Kym Nies
Administrative Assistant
& Admissions
knies@gbtseminary.org

ENROLLMENT, STUDENT STATUS, & POLICY QUESTIONS

If you have a question, the first person to contact is …

Your Academic Advisor

If you do not receive a timely response, then contact …

Jeff Moore
Director of Admissions
& Enrollment
jmoore@gbtseminary.org

Appendix B: Change in Status Form

Interrupted Status, Inactive Status, or Institutional Withdrawal Application

STUDENT INFORMATION

Student Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Student E-mail: _____@gbtseminary.org__ Phone:_____

Degree Pursuing: M.Div. ☐ / M.T.S. ☐ / M.A.P.S. ☐ / Dip.Div. ☐ / Cert.Min. ☐

Status: Residential ☐ / Distance ☐

I am requesting:

Interrupted Status (max. 1 year) ☐ / Inactive Status (1-3 years) ☐ / Withdrawal from Institution ☐

Reason(s) for requesting a change in status or withdrawal from GBTS:

_____

_____

1. Have you paid all outstanding financial balances up to this point? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Do you have any outstanding work for classes at GBTS? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. The date you effectively wish to change your status or withdraw from the institution is: _____
4. The academic term for which a change in status or withdrawal from the institution is requested:

   ☐ Fall ☐ Spring ☐ Summer Year: 20____

CERTIFICATION

I certify that the above is accurate as of the date of signing. I understand that I am responsible for any remaining or resulting balance due to Grace Bible Theological Seminary.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS & ENROLLMENT APPROVAL

I certify that correspondence has been conducted with this student in advance of finalizing this decision.

Director: _____ Date: _____

GBTS ENROLLMENT NOTES

- Update student record in Populi
- Notify GBTS Academic Dean and pertinent staff

Appendix C: Student Grievance Form

Grace Bible Theological Seminary

The following form is provided for students in the event of a serious grievance in order to make a formal complaint regarding specific policies or personnel of the institution. This form is not intended for making casual suggestions, presenting ideas for improvement, or providing informal feedback. It should be completed by the student only for matters that are of the utmost seriousness and gravity in nature.

Name of Student Filing Complaint _____

Signature of Student Filing Complaint _____

Date _____

Student ID Number _____

Student Email Address _____

Student Phone Number _____

COMPLAINT DESCRIPTION (Please provide as many details as possible, including date, time, location, attempts to resolve issue, individuals consulted, individuals contacted, etc.):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

WHAT IS YOUR INTENDED GOAL IN FILING THIS FORMAL COMPLAINT?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

FOR GBTS STAFF ONLY – Dean of Students (i.e., who, in normal cases, will be the individual who receives and processes the formal complaint) completes the items below this line.

Name of Dean of Students _____

Signature of Dean of Students _____

Date Received: _____

Other Administrators Contacted/Consulted (List Name and Position):

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Action Steps Taken:

_____

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Summary of Final Decision(s):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix D: GBTS Student Enrollment Agreement

Handbook Acknowledgment

I have received a copy of the GBTS Student Handbook and understand the doctrinal and ethical positions laid out therein, along with the detailed policies and procedures of the institution.

Enrollment Agreement

As a student of Grace Bible Theological Seminary, I agree to abide by the code of conduct, to adhere to the academic expectations, and to undertake my financial responsibilities for the duration of my course of study. I agree to be held accountable to the seminary's policies and procedures in word and in deed. If, at any time, whether in school or out of school, I violate any provisions of the handbook or associated policies, including the Purity Policy, I understand that I will be subject to the discipline described in the handbook, which may include termination/expulsion from the school. Enrollment at GBTS is a privilege, not a right, and may be terminated at any time by the sole discretion of the administration. I will strive with all due diligence to uphold the name of Jesus Christ (Phil 2:9–11) and the name of the seminary.

Photo/Video Permission

I grant Grace Bible Theological Seminary the right to use photos, associated names, images, or likenesses of me in school promotional/advertisement literature and on websites/social media sites.

Arbitration Agreement

As a student of Grace Bible Theological Seminary, I agree that I will not make threats of litigation or litigate any dispute relating to or resulting from my enrollment at GBTS, since this is a violation of biblical teaching (1 Cor 6:1–8). Such litigation or threat of litigation constitutes sufficient grounds for immediate termination/expulsion of the student's enrollment at Grace Bible Theological Seminary. All disputes will be resolved through Christian arbitration as agreed upon by both parties. Both parties expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit against one another in a civil court, except to enforce a legally binding arbitration decision.

Service Agreement

If I am a residential student, I agree to serve at a minimum of one (1) seminary-sponsored event per year (in addition to H&H Conf.), and I have signed up on the online platform sent to me by GBTS leadership.

Your Full Name, Printed: _____

Your Full Name, Signed: _____

Academic Year: _____ Date: _____

Church Name (City, State): _____

Pastoral Mentor's Name: _____

Pastoral Mentor's Email: _____

Pastoral Mentor's Phone: _____