

Northwestern Theological Seminary

NTS Student Handbook



Welcome to NTS...

Congratulations! You are now a seminary student, and a member of the Northwestern Theological Seminary student body. You should have received an Acceptance Letter with the requirements for your specific degree program. Also, your enrollment requires fulfilling the agreement of your Love Offer payment as specified in your application, and your option of payment. Please commit to fulfilling your commitment, both academically and financially.

Getting Started

What happens now?

The structure of online education is somewhat different to that of attending a regular local seminary. For one thing, most if not all of your communication is done through email. This of course requires that you carefully take the time to read over the information provided in order to have a clear understanding of what is expected.

Here we will go through the process of your enrollment and how to get started:

- (1) You should have already received your Acceptance Letter and Curriculum for the degree program which you applied for.
- (2) You should have submitted your initial payment as agreed upon. Once the payment was submitted you should have received an Enrollment Receipt.
- (3) Begin your coursework and as you complete each class email as an attachment your work to your student advisor for grading. Please understand that although we do not work in semesters, your advisor will at times wait until you have submitted 2 or 3 classes before providing you with a Progress Report with your grades.
- (4) If you have specific questions, be sure to contact by email your student advisor for additional information.

How do the classes work?

The classes are formed primarily on a process of writing analytical research papers on the specific subjects. Why write research papers? The answer is twofold. First, you add new information to your personal storehouse of knowledge by collecting and investigating facts and opinions about a limited topic from various sources. Second, it is called “*docendo discimus*”, which is Latin for, “by teaching, we learn”. The paper actually represents a combination of facts and data that we have gathered in order to show our understanding of the topic as if we were teaching it ourselves.

Perhaps more importantly, learning to master research techniques will be of great help in your other courses and in your life after seminary. Since you will probably face several instances in your calling that will require careful research, you should acquire the techniques for retrieving information, knowing where and how to find it, and using it to your best advantage.

Another long-term advantage in this type of study utilizing the analytical research process will be learning to shape your material into coherent, logical patterns. You must be able to judge critically the merit of the evidence, which you have compiled through careful research techniques, and then be able to express precisely demonstrable conclusions about it. Such a task requires concentration and, more importantly, demands an imaginative molding of your material.

The research papers are primarily learning and training experience. That is, you learn thoroughly a selected topic and train yourself in the writing. At first the task may appear insurmountable: locating sources, reading books and articles, taking notes, footnoting source materials, outlining, writing, rewriting, typing, and proofreading. Obviously, you will need to apply some kind of order to this procedure.

Seminary graduates are not expected to know everything; but they should possess the ability to find accurate information about any subject and to communicate their facts and conclusions. Self-reliant library research and competent writing will be valuable assets in meeting the demands of assignments of other courses, research articles for publications, and thesis and dissertation papers in your graduate studies.

I. Academic Requirements



To begin your degree program, please review what the academic requirements are.

You may need to complete PDF Courses, Modules, Projects, Special Assignments, theses, and/or dissertations. Confirm that the degree program that you have received in the application is the same as the one chosen by you in your application.

You should have received a Degree Study Curriculum for your major. Please review this carefully and understand what is expected from you. Be sure to visit the Online Learning Center (OLC) and take the New Student Orientation which will provide you with instructions on your program.

II. Download of Modules

Download any required Modules. Modules are a combination of course classes that have been put together systematically to cover a range of required individual classes for your degree program. They include Modules 1 thru 5, with Module 6 being reserved for electives and provided only if necessary to cover your required credits. Be aware that there will be times when only certain courses from a specific module are assigned. Modules require that you provide analytical research based essays on the individual courses, making sure that the subtopics provided are addressed. You may use resources from the Virtual Library located at: www.ntslibrary.com or any other resources, both online and offline. Modules may be downloaded from the PDF Books page of the NTS Virtual Library.

Important: Not all students are assigned work from the Modules. If you are assigned work from the Modules, you will be notified by your advisor.

III. Module Six

Module Six: If you are given a course work from module 6, you will receive both the Module and required PDF book in order to complete your course.

IV. Special Assignments

Special Assignments:

- (1) Theology Argumentative Project – an assigned reading in the study of Systematic Theology, where the student provides an argumentative position on one of six parts.
- (2) Intense Analysis Assignment – used in order to enhance the study of a particular field in the NTS Degree Program. Requires an intense analysis in which the student highlights one or two issues or concepts in which they agreed or disagree with the authors of 3 published books in their field of study. A tightly focused and tightly structured assignment.

V. Projects



Projects

Biblical Relation Project – the student will provide an outline of how his/her major degree field is represented through out the Scriptures. (min. 25 pages) This is a highly informative project that provides the student a Biblical view of their specific field.

VI. Thesis

Thesis

The student is to complete a minimum of a 75 page thesis, double-spaced, following the guidelines established by the seminary. A thesis proposal is required. The theses needs to be written in a topic related to their degree field. Guidelines and helps will be provided to the student by the Faculty Advisor. Theses are mandatory for every Master Degree Program.

VII. Dissertations

Dissertations

The student is to complete a minimum of a 150-page dissertation, double-spaced, following the guidelines established by the seminary. A dissertation proposal is required. The dissertation needs to be written in a topic related to their degree field. Guidelines and helps will be provided to the student by the Faculty Advisor. Dissertations are mandatory for every Doctoral Degree Program. Once completed and submitted, the student will receive a defense form which must be completed and return for evaluation.

The defense form fulfills the requirement of providing a defense for your submitted work. You will receive a number of questions related to the work submitted.

VIII. Student Numbers

NTS Student Numbers:

You will receive a student number with your acceptance letter. It is important that you both secure this number and utilize it when communicating with the seminary.

Student numbers are unique to each student, avoiding confusion with other students who may have similar or exact same names.

In any type of communication that is done with regards to your student record, including financial or academic, the person making the contact will be asked certain questions including the student number, if it is emailed from an address other than the one on record or telephone, in order to assure that Privacy Policies are in place for all of our students.

Common Questions

Who do I contact with questions during my time with NTS?



The faculty advisor is there to answer any questions you may have with regards to your program, administrative issues, and financial issues. The advisor will lead you in staying within the course parameters, but will not do the work for you. You should keep your advisor updated as to your current status and provide some sample of your current work through email, if requested or required.

How do I submit complete course work?

Course work that is completed can be emailed to your Advisor as attachments. When the advisor receives your assignment, he/she will begin reviewing your work for course grading. Grading can take some time, as it depends on the time of the month that the work is received, and in some instances, Advisors will wait to receive 2 or 3 additional assignments before providing a Progress Report. Once you submit your work, continue on to the next assignment. Do not wait to hear from your Advisor with regards to your graded paper. Think of it as end of semester grades.

How is my thesis or dissertation graded?

Thesis and dissertations should first be emailed to your Advisor as an attachment. Thesis and dissertations that are completed and receive a passing grade will be accepted as fulfillment of the course requirement after the student has received and return their defense forms. An email will be sent to the student with a grade for their work. Students are no longer required to mail by postal a hard copy of the final thesis/dissertation work.

Where do I obtain my textbooks?

For the most part, the NTS student will not need to purchase textbooks, unless they have been assigned a course from Module Five. The required assigned textbooks for PDF Essays are found in the ‘Student PDF Courses’ on the main page of the Online Learning Center. The textbooks for Module Five are available in any bookstore including Barnes & Nobles, Walden Books, or many Christian Bookstores such as Family Bookstores, Lifeway Bookstores, and others. You can find these stores online under the ‘Classifieds’ of the NTS Library.

For the research the student may utilize personal books, books from a library, or online references. The seminary Virtual Library located at www.ntslibrary.com also has a variety of resources and books, free of charge for the student.

For Module Six, the student will receive instructions from their advisor.

Note: Some students would prefer to use hardcover books for their coursework instead of PDF books. This is accepted as long as the book chosen is compatible to the course and the book has been approved by the Faculty Advisor.

How do I receive my Grade Reports?

Grade Reports are provided to the student after a course has been submitted to the Faculty Advisor. Grades are logged on a monthly basis, so there may be a delay in obtaining your grades for a specific course submitted. Again, remember that at times your advisor will wait to receive 2 or 3 submitted class works before providing you with a Progress Report. Your Faculty Advisor cannot provide you with a timeframe as to when you will receive your grades. Once your grade has been filed, they will be posted on the Online Student Records for your viewing. The Faculty Advisor can send back a course work that has been submitted for grading to the student if he/she feels that the work will not meet the minimum requirements for a passing grade.



How long do I have to complete my degree program?

You do not have a specific timeframe, although we do ask that you dedicate some time to your studies. Distance learning is a very independent way of studying. Of course you understand that studies at seminary levels require a certain level of both maturity and responsibility on the part of the student. We suggest that if you are planning on taking a sabbatical or furlough, that you notify your faculty advisor.

When do I submit my monthly Love Offer payments?



You must submit your monthly payments for Option B at the beginning of every month. It is important that you send in your payments within the month that is due in order to update your account in a timely basis.

How do I submit my monthly Love Offer payments?

You submit your monthly payments by going to the 'Donations' page of the seminary website located at: www.northwesternseminary.com

You may choose what form of payment you would like to make from this page.

When do I receive my degrees?

Degrees are awarded and mailed out **within 30 days** after all academic course requirements have been met, and the full balance of the Love Offer has been paid. Both of these requirements must be met to receive your degrees. For Combination Programs, both programs must be completed as well as the Love Offer amount paid in full.

Whether you are enrolled in a single degree program or a combination program, the entire program and their financial requirements must be met prior to the mailing of any degree.

Note: If in the Combination Program the student has met the academic requirements for the first degree program and has **paid in full** the entire program, the student can then request for the first degree to be mailed ahead. But, there must not be an open balance on the program to make this type of request.

How do I receive my degrees?

Students that have met both the academic and financial requirements of their programs will receive their degrees by postal mail. The student will be contacted in order to confirm the mailing address.

Can I obtain an ordination or license to work in the field in which I have obtained my degree from NTS?

Ordinations are provided for those ministers that which to operate a ministry under the charter of "The Worldwide Church of Jesus Christ". Although your ministry will be independent and self-governing, it will fall under the covering of WCJC. WCJC will always have the right to terminate both the charter and ordination for improprieties and at the discretion of the Presiding Pastor of Christian Alliance Ministries and its Board.

Licenses are not provided by NTS and should be researched on an individual basis, based on the State or Country in which you reside. You must follow the laws established by your region in this regard.

Please keep in mind that the purpose of a Seminary Education is to prepare students for ministry related fields and not necessarily a field of the secular world. Although, it should be pointed out that the degrees obtain from NTS are legal and can be placed in your resume as level of educational attainment. Titles such as Doctor are also legally recognized as an accomplishment in a specific field of Religious Studies.

Special Note:

It is now possible for students to email their course work to the seminary, including their submissions of thesis and dissertations.

Because of our international student body, the board has found that this system is much more economical for the student providing a savings in printing and shipping costs. Completed course work will be filed electronically into an external student electronic file for safekeeping. Thesis and dissertations will also be accepted by electronic mail for review and grading.

Work should be emailed to your advisor.

Who do I contact with questions?

For Academic Questions:

Contact your Advisor (if you have not received an email from your Advisor, you may contact the Administration Office in order to have your Advisor re-send their information to you at: Admin@NorthwesternMail.com)

For Financial Questions:

Contact the Financial Office at: Admin@NorthwesternMail.com

For technical problems with the NTS Library: info@ntslibrary.com

For login problems to the OSR or OLC: helpdesk@NorthwesternMail.com

IRS Regulations With Regards To Contributions In Exchange For Services

Disclosure Statement

According to IRS regulations, because contributions are allowable to donors only to the extent that contributions exceed the value of the services received in exchange, and because the value of the Northwestern Theological Seminary Degree Programs far exceeds the contributions of Love Offers in lieu of tuitions, deductions of Love Offers are not allowable, for student income tax purposes...