



OBLATE
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

STUDENT HANDBOOK

(Revised August 2009)

MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATE ACADEMIC DEAN

Welcome to Oblate School of Theology! May you be blessed in your time of theological study at Oblate.

You are taking your place among thousands of men and women who have been educated for ministry over the more than 100 year history of the School. Since its founding in 1903, ordained and lay graduates of Oblate have gone all over the world to serve the Church. Oblate continues this tradition of reaching out to the global community in the twenty-first century by adding to its strong academic foundation the use of new technology and electronic communication.

This Handbook serves to introduce you to the School's policies that affect you as students. It gives you an orientation to procedures that will serve to facilitate your time with us. It is our hope that it will provide you with the information you need to guide you through the details of academic and community life at the Oblate.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or other members of the faculty or administration if you have questions concerns, or suggestions to better our collaborative effort of studying, learning and praying together.

Please drop by my office on the first floor of the main administration building – I am always delighted to talk with students and to hear your thoughts.

In Christ's peace,

Linda

Sr. Linda Gibler, OP, PhD
Associate Academic Dean

FOREWORD

The *Student Handbook* provides information on the main areas that affect the life and work of students at OST. This *Student Handbook* was prepared with the purpose of making the most current information available and assessable to students. The policies and procedures in these pages are constantly being evaluated and improved. The electronic version of the *Student Handbook* and the *OST Catalog* are updated annually and are available online at www.ost.edu. Together they comprise much of the information needed by both students and faculty.

This *Handbook* serves as a reference guide for many policies that can be found elsewhere in materials readily available to OST students. Detailed information on procedures that students may find helpful is included in this *Handbook*. Other detailed information referring to particular courses, programs, use of Library, etc., are available in the *OST Catalog* and *Library Handbooks* and are updated regularly. Designated personnel and offices maintain other student services.

OST reserves the right to change any and all contents without notice.

Revised: September 2009

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATE ACADEMIC DEAN	ii
FOREWARD	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
SECTION A: STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION	1
I. OVERVIEW OF OST GOVERNANCE: THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES	2
II. STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE	2
Institutional Commitment to Collaboration	2
Joint Committees of Faculty and Students	2
Academic Committee	3
Library Committee	4
Worship Committee	5
SECTION B: ACADEMIC / PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION	1
I. GENERAL ACADEMIC POLICIES	2
Academic Advising	2
Process for Student Advising	2
Academic Integrity and Plagiarism	3
Copyright Infringement and Fair Use	3
Atmosphere and Order in Class	4
Class Attendance	4
Institutional Review Board	5
Probation	5
Transferring from One Master Program to Another Master Program	5
II. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REGARDING COURSES	6
Auditing Courses	6
Course Numbering System	7

	Credit for Courses at Non-Accredited Institutions	7
	Core Course Challenge	8
	Off-Campus Study: Taking Courses off the OST Campus	9
	Lebh Shomea	9
	Withdrawal From Courses	10
III.	POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REGARDING EXAMS AND GRADING	11
	Grading Policy	11
	Grade Grievance Appeal Procedure	11
	Scheduling of Final Examinations	12
	Semester Grades and Reports	12
IV.	ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS	12
	Language Proficiency Requirements	12
	Style of Academic Papers	12
V.	PROGRESS TOWARD COMPLETION OF STUDIES	13
	Final Projects for Masters Degree Programs	13
	Graduation	13
	Process for Applying For Candidacy	13
	Student Awards: The Outstanding Scholarship Award	14
VI.	POLICY ON STUDENT RECORDS AND TRANSCRIPTS	15
	Transcripts and Records	15
	Policy on Student Records	15
	Types, Locations, and Custodians of Education Records	15
	Students' Review of Education Records	16
	Right of the School to Review Access	16
	Refusal to Provide Copies	16
	Fees for Copies of Records	17
	Correction of Education Records	17
	Record of Requests for Disclosure	18
	Directory Information	18
	Disclosure of Education Records	18
	Retention and Disposal of Records	19
	Non-Compliance Policy	20

VII.	EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS	20
	Purpose	20
	Process	20
	Course Evaluations	21
SECTION C: POLICIES RELATING TO STUDENT LIFE		1
I.	SERVICES FOR STUDENTS	2
	The Comprehensive Fee	2
	Student Lounge	2
	Beverages and Food	2
	Smoking	2
	Recycling	2
	Parking	2
	Copy Machine	3
	Counseling and Guidance	3
	Health Services	3
	Housing and Board	3
	International Full-Time Non-Immigrant Students	3
	Identification Cards	4
	Information Technology	4
	The Donald E. O’Shaughnessy Library	5
	Overdue Book Fees	6
	The Oblate School of Theology Directory	6
	Student Rights and Responsibilities	7
	Swimming Pool	8
	Telephones	8
II.	WORSHIP GATHERINGS OF THE OST COMMUNITY	8
III.	OTHER REGULAR ACTIVITIES OF THE OST COMMUNITY	8
IV.	FACULTY EVALUATION OF SEMINARIANS	9
V.	FACULTY EVALUATIO OF MAPM AND MDIV STUDENTS	9

VI.	CONDUCT POLICY	10
VII.	POLICY ON HARASSMENT	11
	SECTION D: WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION	1
I.	ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	3
II.	TUITION-AID PROGRAM FOR ON-CAMPUS STUDY	5

**SECTION A: STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE
AND ADMINISTRATION**

I. OVERVIEW OF OST GOVERNANCE: THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Oblate School of Theology is established under a charter issued in 1968 by the State of Texas to the Missionary Society of the Oblate Fathers of Texas. The Provincial and Council of the U.S. Province of Oblates of Mary Immaculate constitute the Members of the OST Corporation. The Board of Trustees is established through the by-laws of the corporation and entrusted by the members with the legal responsibility of operating the School in accordance with the terms of the Charter.

The trustees of the School are so called because, as in all professional schools, colleges, and universities, they are involved in trust relationships. Among the trust responsibilities are those to manage the School in the interest of the wider Church as well as in the public interest, to account to official bodies and to the public for actions taken, to carry out the ethical responsibilities involved in theological education, and to administer the endowment funds of the School.

The membership and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees are delineated in its by-laws. The Board's primary concern is in the area of policies. Board policy development guides the administration and directs the School's pursuit of its mission. The Board entrusts the conduct of the administration to the President and the administrative officers and, through the administration, the conduct of teaching and formation to the faculty. The Board reviews appointments to the full-time faculty.

In addition to the official duties stated in the by-laws, the Board serves as a link and interpreter between the School and the wider Church, as well as between the School and the community, defending and explaining the institution on the one hand, and on the other presenting the concerns of the Church community and of society beyond the campus to the School.

II. STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE

Institutional Commitment to Collaboration

Oblate School of Theology is appreciative of its students' own commitment to Christian ideals and to ministry in the furtherance of God's reign. The School recognizes that its students have already spent years in education; some come to OST after years in professional life. One of the greatest resources the School has is the mature self-understanding and life-shaping commitment of members of its Student Body. Oblate School of Theology is eager, therefore, to have the collaboration of its students in its daily operation and its long-range vision. The participation of the students in OST's governance is accordingly highly valued.

Joint Committees of Faculty and Students

Three OST Committees enjoy representation from the Student Body as well as from Faculty and Administration. The Academic Committee, the Library Committee, and the Worship Committee

are so constituted that they operate by collaboration among those three constituencies of the School. Student participation is integral to the functioning of these Committees. The responsibilities of these Committees and the role the Students have in their workings are described below.

Academic Committee

The Academic Committee is a standing committee of the Faculty. The Committee is guided by the Statement of Purpose of Oblate School of Theology and the standards of accrediting agencies.

1. Its function is to discuss matters pertaining to the development of the academic life at Oblate School of Theology, including degree programs, requirements for admission, curriculum (such as integrating cultural awareness), academic policies, and quality of instruction.
2. Membership consists of:
 - Academic Dean (Chairperson)
 - Associate Academic Dean
 - Three faculty members elected by the faculty
 - Three students representing a cross-section of the student body including students from the M.Div. and M.A. programs
3. Process of Student Representative election:
 - All students vote on representatives from all three categories:
 - a. One student from Assumption Seminary
 - b. One student from a religious house
 - c. One student not from Assumption Seminary or a religious house
4. Student members are elected annually with elections in the Spring for the following year. Alternates will also be elected. In order to provide for committee continuity, faculty membership consists of two members serving two-year terms on a staggered basis and one member serving a one-year term, elected accordingly.
5. Faculty members represent the general views of the faculty. Students represent the views of the student body. It is important that the elected representatives seek the views of other constituencies on pertinent matters prior to the scheduled meeting.
6. The Committee will normally meet three times a semester during the academic year. The agenda will be published with sufficient notice so constituencies can be consulted.
7. Minutes of the meeting are distributed to the faculty after each meeting. If no faculty member objects to the recommended action within five (5) school days, the recommended action is considered approved by the faculty.

If a faculty member objects to the recommended action so passed, by informing the Academic Dean, the matter will be referred to the faculty for discussion at the faculty meeting.

8. Major policy decisions (e.g. the inauguration or cancellation of degree programs, major curriculum revisions, etc.) must be formally presented to the faculty for decision and approved by a majority of the faculty present at a faculty meeting.
9. The Administrative Assistant to the Dean's Office normally takes the minutes. The minutes are kept on file in the Dean's Office.

Library Committee

The Library Committee is a standing committee of the Faculty.

1. The functions of the Committee are:
 - a. To discuss matters relating to Library policies, procedures and services
 - b. To review requests for purchases
 - c. To review library holdings and periodical subscriptions
 - d. To deal with agenda items submitted by committee member
 - e. To ensure all purchases are available to the academic community
2. The membership of the Committee consists of:
 - a. Director of Library (Chairperson)
 - b. Associate Director of the Library
 - c. Assistant Director of the Library
 - d. Academic Dean
 - e. Two faculty members elected by the faculty
 - f. Two students, one of who is an M.Div. student, elected by the student body in accordance with normal student election procedures
3. The Assistant Director will normally act as secretary. Minutes will be kept on file in the office of the Director of Library.
4. The Committee will meet once each semester or more frequently as needed.
5. The Committee minutes will be distributed to the Faculty within a reasonable time after each meeting.
6. If no faculty member objects to any motion made by the Committee within five (5) school days after the minutes have been distributed and posted, that motion will be considered approved by the Faculty. If a faculty member objects to a motion so passed --

by informing the Academic Dean -- the matter will be referred to a meeting of the Faculty for further study. Major policy decisions (e.g. acquisitions and removal policies) must be reviewed and approved by a majority of the Faculty present at a faculty meeting.

Worship Committee

The Worship Committee is a committee of the OST community, responsible to the Administrative Council of the School.

The purpose of the Committee is to assure on-going facilitation, evaluation, and support of the School's worship life.

Functions of the Committee:

- 1) Organizing and planning properly and adequately the liturgies of the School community, including the Convocation and Baccalaureate celebrations
- 2) Developing and implementing methods for involving members of the School community in the various functions of planning and celebration for the School's worship, including areas such as environment, music, readers, and presiders/preachers
- 3) Evaluating regularly the School's liturgical events so as to guide future planning accordingly
- 4) Supervising the provision of worship aids, ensuring their quality and legality

Membership of the Committee:

- 1) One faculty member, who will serve as Chair
- 2) Three students representing a cross-section of the student body, preferably to include an M. Div. student and an M.A. student. One student will be from Assumption Seminary; a second will be from one of the religious houses; the third will be a student not described by either of the above two categories. It is important that these elected representatives seek the views of others in their constituencies on pertinent matters prior to the scheduled meeting.
- 3) Such consultants as the Committee shall find necessary or helpful. The faculty who teach in the area of liturgy and worship serve permanently as consultants.
- 4) The Director of Chapel, who serves as ex-officio member.

Election of membership:

- 1) The faculty will elect one of its members to serve as Chair for this Committee.
- 2) All students will vote on representatives for all three categories, with the ballot indicating the nominee's program status and giving instructions to vote for one nominee for each category.
- 3) Both faculty and student members will be elected annually.

Committee meetings:

- 1) The Committee will be convened once each semester and according to need. A Secretary will be appointed by the Chair to keep minutes. Minutes will be approved by the Committee and kept in file in the Associate Dean's Office.
- 2) Any major policy decisions by this Committee will be formally referred to the Faculty and to the Administrative Council for their deliberation.

SECTION B: ACADEMIC/PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION

SECTION B: ACADEMIC/PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION

Information on admissions, registration, grades, and degree requirements may be found in the current *OST Catalog*. Specific policies and procedures relevant to a particular issue are also made available here, particularly procedures for students. An effort has been made to not repeat information available elsewhere. Information available in the current *Catalog* is listed as such.

Policies in this section of the handbook are arranged alphabetically, in the same manner they may be found in the current Catalog.

I: GENERAL ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Advising

Academic advising allows students to enter into an extended conversation with their faculty academic advisor as they progress through their degree programs. A student will be able to express interests in specific areas of theology and ministry and the academic advisor will be able to guide the student accordingly. During the designated registration periods, the student will also be able to raise concerns and questions concerning the academic program. The student should expect to develop a degree plan with the advisor. The advisor is the first contact point for the student for all academic policies.

The Office of the Academic Dean will assign each student an academic advisor. The M.Div. Director(s) will advise new M.Div. students in their first semester. These students will be assigned to another faculty member after that first semester. Students in the MAPM., MA (Theology) and (Spirituality) will have the Director of their program as academic advisor. They may also request that another faculty member be their advisor after the first year of study.

Process for Student Advising

1. Students are assigned an academic advisor by the Academic Dean.
2. Students may make appointments with the advisor anytime during the semester to discuss academic matters.
3. Students make an appointment before each registration week to complete the registration form for the next semester. They take the form to the Registrar's Office to complete the registration process. At times, other forms may be needed such as when a student adds or drops a course. Advisors must sign these forms.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Students at OST are expected, according to principles prevalent in the United States, to maintain ethical standards in their academic endeavors. Academic integrity is key to all teaching and learning at this institution. Failure to maintain such integrity is a violation of the institutional conduct policy.

Copyright Infringement and Fair Use

Using the protected works of others without the appropriate permissions may lead to infringement liability; unless the use falls within the exceptions outlined in current Copyright Law. Fair use doctrine provides limited copying of copyrighted works without permission of the owner for certain teaching and research purposes. In determining fair use, the purpose and character of the use, the nature of the copyrighted work, the amount and substantiality of the portion used and the effect of the use upon the potential market for, or the value of, the copyrighted work must be considered. When in doubt, the user should obtain permission to use the material in question.

Definitions:

Falsification

Falsely representing one's academic work for academic gain is unacceptable. Instances which violate this policy include lying to or deceiving others in matters relating to a course, presenting work completed for another course or by another person without due credit and authorization, falsifying records or data, intentionally assisting another in such activity, or similar actions.

Cheating

Cheating involves the use of unauthorized or unethical assistance in completion of assigned work. Instances include unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes or examinations and the acquisition, dissemination, or use of tests or other academic materials belonging to an instructor or a member of the staff without prior approval.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation of another's work as one's own. This may include, but is not limited to, the use of quotations from a text without properly noting the author and/or source according to the approved style manual. All sources must be properly noted including electronic data from websites or databases, interviews, unpublished material, etc.

Such offenses are considered serious violations of institutional policy and may result in failure, suspension, or expulsion from the school. If detected as an occurrence in the past, such a violation may result in the revocation of credit or a degree.

Procedures to handle violations:

If a faculty member suspects that academic integrity has been violated by a student, the following procedure will take place:

1. The faculty member will notify the student and the Academic Dean of the suspicion.
2. The student has three days to respond to the faculty member regarding the allegation.
3. After three days, if the faculty member remains convinced that unethical academic conduct has occurred, the faculty member and the Academic Dean will consult to determine the credibility of the allegation.
4. If the allegation is found credible:
 - a. The faculty member assigns zero credit for the relevant assignment.
 - b. The Academic Dean notifies the student that the allegation has been found credible.
 - c. The Academic Dean may, depending on the seriousness of the offense or any history of previous offenses, impose a penalty on the student, including probationary status or dismissal from OST.
5. If the allegation is not found to be credible, the faculty member is to grade the work as submitted without prejudice or penalty to the grade of the relevant assignment or the course as a whole.
6. A student who wishes to dispute the grade will need to follow the Grade Grievance Policies in the Student Handbook.
7. The Academic Dean will keep a record of all cases of academic dishonesty found to be credible.

Atmosphere and Order in Class

Given the nature of this academic community, a positive learning environment exists. Students have a right to expect a classroom atmosphere where all participate fully in the learning experience and where there is respect for others' opinions. Behavior not conducive to learning environment will be addressed on an individual basis.

Students may use laptop computers in the class to take notes. The professor may specify the acceptable use of technology in the classroom.

Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend all meetings of a class for which they are registered. Professors may establish specific attendance requirements for their classes. A student who has 3 unexcused absences in succession may be administratively dropped from the course. Repeated absences during a semester may result in a failing grade.

Concern over repeated absences will be discussed with the Academic Dean.

It is a courtesy to notify the instructor when an absence may occur, even in emergency situations. It is entirely appropriate to have another student contact the instructor if need be.

A student is not formally withdrawn from a course until it is documented in the Registrar's Office with all of the proper signatures. (See below: *Withdrawal from Courses*).

Institutional Review Board

The Oblate School of Theology Institutional Review Board serves to ensure compliance with appropriate regulations with respect to research. Students need to submit an IRB Form to the IRB prior to beginning research. The IRB will review the request to complete their research and either approve or disapprove their project.

The IRB works to ensure compliance with federal, ecclesia, and moral guidelines with respect to research. They will screen research conducted by students so that the institution and students will not be involved in illegal or unethical projects or procedures. They will also ensure that risks to subjects are minimized; that risks are reasonable in relation to anticipated benefits and the knowledge expected to result; that subject selection is equitable; that informed consent is obtained and documented; that data monitoring is in place; and that privacy and confidentiality are adequately provided.

Probation

M.Div. and MAPM, students are expected to maintain a 2.5 Grade Point Average (GPA). Students in the M.A. (Theology) and M.A. (Spirituality) programs are expected to maintain a 3.0 GPA. A student who does not maintain the required cumulative GPA will be placed on academic probation until the cumulative GPA meets the standard for their degree. A student who fails to maintain the minimum cumulative GPA for two semesters will be suspended for a semester. Such a student may apply for readmission.

The situation of students with an *F-I* status attending OST and who have been placed on suspension will be reviewed on an individual basis.

After readmission, failure to maintain the grade point average for the semester will result in dismissal from the degree program and the School. (See more details in the OST Catalog.)

Transferring from One Master's Program to another Master's Program

Students moving from one master's program to another master's program must apply for admission to that program. The full policy may be found in the current Catalog under *Academic/Professional Information*.

II: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REGARDING COURSES

Auditing Courses

With the permission of the professor of the course and the Dean, students may audit certain courses. Auditors should normally possess a bachelor's degree. Auditors are expected to attend class sessions and keep up with assigned readings but are not required to take examinations or fulfill other course requirements. Courses taken for audit cannot be counted for credit at a later time. Audit courses are entered on the transcript but are not counted as fulfilling degree requirements. Tuition and registration rates for auditing courses may be found on the current Financial Information card or on the OST web site.

Oblate School of Theology assumes that auditors are capable of performing at the academic level of the course offering. Auditors are present at the pleasure of the School and the instructor, and their participation level will vary according to the demands of the course. An instructor may determine if his/her course may be audited. The prime focus of all course offerings are degree-seeking students accepted into such programs at Oblate School of Theology.

Doctoral courses are offered only for credit.

The following courses are never offered for Audit:

- TS 8296 Integration of Theological Studies
- PS 6192 Orientation to Supervised Ministry I
- PS 6193 Orientation to Supervised Ministry II
- PS 6350 Basic Pastoral Care
- PS 7334 Introductory Preaching / Predicación Introductoria
- PS 7235 Liturgical Preaching / Predicación en la Litúrgica
- PS 7351 Pastoral Counseling
- PS 9195 (2nd year Theology, 1st semester) Theological Field Education
- PS 9196 (3rd year Theology, 1st semester) Theological Field Education
- PS 9295 (2nd year Theology, 2nd semester) Theological Field Education
- PS 9296 (3rd year Theology, 2nd semester) Theological Field Education
- PS 9379 Practicum in Theological Education and Scholarship
- PS 9681 Thesis M.A. (Theology)
- PS 9699 Ministerial Internship
- NC 9002 Pastoral Practicum
- NC 9003 Thesis

Course Numbering System

Course numbers indicate the level of study as well as the number of credit hours awarded for the course.

4000-level courses are undergraduate courses.

6000-level courses are introductory and usually are required before taking other courses in the same area.

7000-level courses are the majority of courses for graduate study.

8000-level courses are advanced courses requiring more research and/or writing and/or presentations.

9000-level courses are doctoral courses.

The second digit of the four-digit course number indicates the number of credit hours awarded for the course. Thus 7193 indicates a mid-level graduate course for 1 credit hour.

The prefix used in course numbers indicate the courses' particular area of study

CH, SS, TS, PS, PL (preceding course numbers):

CH.....	Culture and History
SS.....	Sacred Scripture
TS.....	Theological Studies
PS.....	Pastoral Studies
PL.....	Philosophy
RS.....	Religious Studies
PSC.....	Pastoral Studies on Campus (D.Min.)
PSH.....	Pastoral Studies at Hospital (D.Min.)
PSL.....	Pastoral Studies Latino/Hispanic (D.Min.)
IPE.....	Intensive Pastoral English
IPS.....	Intensive Pastoral Spanish

Credit for Courses at Non-Accredited Institutions

Credit may be granted for courses taken at certain non-accredited institutions of higher learning, e.g. Mexican American Catholic College (MACC), The Ecumenical Center, Lebh Shomea, etc. The following procedure is to be followed:

1. The course must be pertinent to the student's degree program.
2. The faculty member of the other institution must send his/her curriculum vitae and OST must accept that person's credentials in line with ATS and SACS accreditation standards.
3. A syllabus for the course must be sent to OST. The Academic Dean's office will be responsible to verify that the course is equivalent to a graduate level course. The syllabus must include information concerning how the student will be evaluated. The syllabus

should also include a class schedule and requirements. An assignment of credit hours will then be made.

Ordinarily, these first three steps should be completed by OST's registration day. In any event, approval must be given before the course starts.

4. OST will charge the student 20% of the normal tuition.
5. The other institution will send a final grade to the OST Registrar. The deadline is one week after the close of the OST's semester or summer session or one week after the end of the course.
6. A student may take no more than 6 credit hours toward a degree under this policy.

Core Course Challenge

Oblate School of Theology students who hold a B.A. and have had course work appropriate to the core (6000 level) course which they wish to challenge for credit may apply to do so.

The student must have met the following prerequisites for a credit challenge: 1.) Earned a 'B' grade or better in the core course area at the undergraduate level. 2.) Not have already registered for credit in the course being challenged. A course challenge should be completed before the semester in which the course is taught. The deadline is the final registration date for the semester. In the case that a student wishes to challenge a course in his/her first semester at OST, the student needs to register as a challenge student and attend the course to be challenged until the grade of the written examination is recorded in the Registrar's Office.

For a successful challenge the Oblate School student must earn an evaluation of 'B' in the written examination. When successfully challenged, the core course will be recorded on the student's permanent record for credit. An unsuccessful challenge may not be repeated.

All who challenge a core course must pay 20% of the normal tuition.

Courses successfully challenged shall earn credit applicable toward the student's degree. No student can earn credit for more than three courses by challenge.

Procedures

1. Faculty who teach core courses are free to determine what the format of the evaluation process to handle the challenge will be. It will include a written record of the process. This will facilitate administrative and faculty review of the quality of challenge evaluations.

2. The student may at any time discuss the possibility of challenging a course with the instructor of that course. To formally challenge a core course, a student must have approval from his/her academic advisor, then submit a written request to the Dean's office. His/her eligibility will be reviewed. If eligible, the student will meet with the course instructor for final approval of the challenge. The student can expect some study guides and a bibliography from the instructor. The student will apply to register for the challenge at the Registrar's office by the ADD/DROP date of the current semester. The student will receive materials from the instructor within five (5) working days of registering for the challenge.
3. When the student judges that s/he is ready, s/he will arrange with the course instructor a mutually acceptable date for the evaluation. The challenge is to be completed by the third week after the ADD/DROP date. When the instructor has graded the challenge, s/he will report it to the Registrar's Office.

Upon verification of fees paid, the Registrar will record the grade for credit in the student's Permanent Record.

Off-Campus Study: Taking Courses off the OST Campus

Graduate courses in theology or religious studies may be taken at other colleges and universities and credits applied to the degree program at Oblate School. An inter-institutional registration arrangement among the Catholic Colleges of San Antonio (Oblate School of Theology, University of the Incarnate Word, Our Lady of the Lake University, and St. Mary's University) can also be used. This arrangement is simpler and more convenient than the regular matriculation and transcript-forwarding procedures.

The Registrar will assist the student and provide the appropriate forms and instructions for registration and transfer of grades.

A student who wishes to take a course during the summer away from campus must meet with his or her advisor *prior* to registering for the course, complete the *Request to Transfer Courses to OST* form, and submit that form to the Registrar. After the course is over, students should officially request that their transcripts be sent to the Registrar at OST.

Students who attend the *Institute of Priestly Formation* at Creighton University may transfer up to 6 credit hours for elective credit only. A grade of "B" or better must be achieved for transfer of graduate credit.

Lebh Shomea

Candidates with a concentration in spirituality have the opportunity to take a limited number of credit hours at Lebh Shomea, a house of prayer sponsored by the Missionary Oblates at Sarita,

Texas. Permission for special studies is granted in individual cases by the Academic Dean and with the approval of the Director of Lebh Shomea. The following procedures will be followed:

1. Oblate School of Theology students will be referred to Lebh Shomea only with the permission of the Academic Dean of OST and the Director of Lebh Shomea.
2. Ordinarily, an OST student may take a maximum of six (6) credit hours at Lebh Shomea plus the pastoral Practicum. (The Academic Dean may extend this to nine (9) credit hours if a particular case warrants it.)
3. The Pastoral Practicum in Spiritual Direction will include a 15-20 page paper plus bibliography, which will be the student's reflections on the three phases of the Practicum: receiving spiritual direction, the study of the theology of spiritual direction, and the actual exercise of spiritual direction.
4. The student will pay tuition and fees to OST. OST will remit 2/3 of the tuition to Lebh Shomea.
5. Only core members of Lebh Shomea who have been accepted as faculty members of OST will tutor students in courses at Lebh Shomea for credit at OST.

Withdrawal from Courses

Students may withdraw from or change status (audit to/from credit; letter grade to/from Pass-Fail) in courses prior to the eighth week of the semester.

Withdrawal from a course within the first week will not be noted on the student's transcript. After the first week, however, the transcript will indicate withdrawal from the course. A withdrawal from courses before the mid-semester break is WP (withdrawal passing). Withdrawal after the mid-semester break is a WF (withdrawal failing). The Academic Dean can override the policy in hardship or exceptional cases.

Refunds for courses dropped are prorated according to the weeks of the semester.

III: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REGARDING EXAMS AND GRADING

Grading Policy

If a grade of “D” or “F” is received in a core course (as specified in the degree plan), the course must be repeated. When an acceptable grade is achieved, it will be computed in the GPA. The “D” or “F” remains on the transcript but no longer affects the GPA.

If the grade for an elective course is a “D” or “F” it will negatively affect the GPA and will remain on the transcript. The course may be repeated or another course may be taken to improve the GPA. If the elective course is repeated, the “D” or “F” remains on the transcript but no longer affects the GPA.

Other policies on grades may be found in the current Catalog under *Academic/Professional Information*.

Grade Grievance Appeal Procedure

If a student at Oblate School of Theology considers that a professor has unfairly evaluated him/her in a course, and if discussions between the student and the instructor prove inadequate to resolve the matter satisfactorily, the student may follow the steps in the Grade Grievance Appeals Process. This procedure is to begin within 10 working days after receiving the grade in question. The burden of proof lies with the student. Therefore, the student's paperwork and/or other evidence of prejudicial judgment on the part of the instructor must be available to the Dean and other persons involved in the process.

- Step 1: The student, not having obtained satisfaction in dealing directly with the instructor in question, may approach the Academic Dean with the matter.
- Step 2: The Academic Dean will serve as a mediator between the student and the professor.
- Step 3: If, at this level, individual mediation fails or seems unlikely to resolve the dispute, the Dean appoints a committee of two faculty members familiar with the academic area in question. This committee reviews the evidence, and, to the extent feasible, hears the testimony of both parties regarding the charges of unfairness and/or prejudice. Subsequently, it makes its recommendations to the Dean who will decide whether to change the grade. The Dean in turn communicates the decision to the student and the instructor. If the grade is to be changed, the Registrar is instructed to make the necessary adjustment to the student's records.
- Step 4: If the student or instructor communicates dissatisfaction in the Dean's decision after Step 3, the Dean brings to the School President all the evidence, the

recommendations of the faculty committee, the Dean's decision and the written response of the student and of the instructor. The School President makes the final decision, which is communicated to the instructor and the student.

Scheduling of Final Examinations

All final examinations, if required by the professor, will be held during exam week, the final week of the semester. No regular classes will be scheduled that week. Written exams will be given at the regularly scheduled class meeting time. Oral exams, or other suitable forms of evaluation, may be scheduled at any time during that week convenient to both student and instructor. The Dean's office needs to be notified of examination arrangements outside of these provisions.

Semester Grades and Reports

Final grades should be submitted to the Registrar's Office no later than one week after the end of a semester or a summer school course. The student will receive a grade report from the Registrar's Office within 2½ weeks after the end of the semester or of the second summer session.

IV: ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Language Proficiency Requirements

Oblate School of Theology recognizes the growing pluralism in Church and society in the United States. *The Program of Priestly Formation* of the USCCB emphasizes this reality by stating, "The theological curriculum, both in its planning and its execution, should address the unique needs of a multicultural society. The study of the Spanish language and Hispanic cultures as well as other pastorally appropriate languages and cultures is essential for most dioceses and is strongly recommended for all seminarians." (*The Program of Priestly Formation*, #228.)

The Mission Statement of Oblate School of Theology states, "The pastoral orientation of OST requires careful and critical attention to the complex historical and cultural dimensions of church and society, with special emphasis on the Hispanic reality of the Southwest." For these reasons, Oblate School of Theology requires all Master of Divinity Degree graduates to normally be able to minister in both the English and Spanish languages. The detailed policy on language proficiency requirements may be found in the current Catalog under *Admissions* and *Master of Divinity*.

Style of Academic Papers

Academic papers at OST are expected to adhere to the most recent edition of Turabian *A Manual for Writers* and to follow the option for footnotes rather than in-line citations. Students who

matriculated prior to the Fall of 2005 may use either MLA or Turabian. A style sheet with examples of citations for Catholic documents can be found on OST's Moodle Webpage.

V: PROGRESS TOWARD COMPLETION OF STUDIES

Final Projects for Masters Degree Programs

The program director for each particular degree program has developed a set of guidelines for the final project. These guidelines are often presented in the context of a Handbook which may include additional tools and information regarding the completion of the final project for a given degree. These guidelines must include specific details informing the student of deadlines for completion and requirements for binding of the completed paper.

Guidelines for the correct format must be clearly stated. This includes the type of paper required, Title Page information and layout, and places for appropriate signatures.

The graduation fee includes the cost for one bound copy of the final project for the library. Students who wish to have one or more copies bound need to pay \$25 for each copy which includes the binding and the handling fees. Unbound copies are taken to a designated librarian who receives payment for the binding at the time of the request.

The student presents the final unbound thesis copy to the Project Director, who then checks that all is in acceptable order and signs off on the Title Page. The Project Director then gives the copy to the Program Director who checks off that an acceptable copy has been submitted. In turn, the Program Director gives the copy to the designated librarian who sends it to the bindery at a specific time, usually before July.

Students may obtain additional information from their Program Director.

Graduation

Formal graduation is held in May and diplomas are conferred at that time. All graduating students are encouraged to attend their commencement exercises. A graduation fee is charged whether or not students are present for the commencement exercises. If a student finishes all class work in Summer or Fall and requires verification of completion of studies, the Registrar will provide the student with a copy of the permanent record and a letter verifying completion of studies, but the diploma will not be given until graduation in May.

Process for Applying for Candidacy

After a period of successfully completed course work at Oblate School of Theology, a student will be eligible to apply for candidacy for the degree(s) sought. Candidacy must be granted prior to the awarding of the degree. The various degrees have certain requirements that must be met prior to applying for candidacy.

Students are responsible for making the application for candidacy for the degree. Students need to check the appropriate degree description in the current Catalog for candidacy requirements. Forms are available in the Registrar's Office or from the student's Academic Advisor. The application must be signed by the appropriate degree Program Director before it is submitted to the Registrar's Office.

The granting of candidacy for the degree will take into account the student's progress toward completing all requirements for the degree including grade point average, language proficiency, spiritual formation, and ministerial leadership. The Admissions Committee formally approves a student's status as a candidate for a degree.

Student Awards: The Outstanding Scholarship Award

The Award for Outstanding Scholarship at Oblate School of Theology is offered on occasion for exemplary achievement. The names of the awards for each degree program are:

Fr. Theodore Labouré, OMI Award for the Doctor of Ministry
Bishop Sinfiorano Lucas, OMI Award for the Master of Arts (Theology)
Fr. Pierre Keralum, OMI Award for the Master of Divinity
Sr. Dorothy Folliard, OP Award for the Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry

Criteria and process:

1. The Award is granted in recognition of outstanding academic achievement for the final written component of the Doctor of Ministry, Master of Arts in Theology, Master of Divinity, and Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry degrees.
2. The director of the student's academic project or thesis submits the work to the Academic Dean at least one month prior to graduation. This submission is subject to agreement between the director of the project or thesis and the second reader or readers that the work merits consideration. Directors are encouraged to submit every work of outstanding merit.
3. The Faculty Members of the Academic Committee will use the criteria of the goals and objectives of each degree program as set forth in the current OST Catalogue to judge the worthiness of the work for an award.
4. The Academic Dean will notify the Faculty of the granting of the Scholarship Award.
5. The Award will be presented at the annual graduation ceremony.
6. The honor for this achievement will consist of an OST logo desk award that celebrates the academic achievement of the recipient. Notation of the granting of the Award will be made in the academic record of the winning student. OST Publications will offer a limited hardcover binding of the awarded work, including one copy for the OST Library

and up to three copies for the Award recipient or the costs thereof. The names of all Award recipients will be engraved and placed upon a plaque in the main hall as a lasting memorial to their achievement.

VI: POLICY ON STUDENT RECORDS AND TRANSCRIPTS

Transcripts and Records

The Registrar issues one official transcript without charge. The current fee for additional copies of transcripts may be found on the Financial Information section of the OST web site. Transcripts will be issued only for current and former students who are free of financial and other obligations of the School. Requests for transcripts must be made in writing and include the signature and date of request. Request Forms are available in the Registrar's Office.

Student records at Oblate School of Theology are subject to provisions of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). The prescribed Education Records of a student are open to his/her inspection upon request. Every effort is made to safeguard these records. A written Release of Information form is signed by the students in formation to release their grades to the Formation Director of their community.

Policy on Student Records

Oblate School of Theology complies with the policies and guidelines of the General Education Provisions Act, Section 438, P.L. 90-247, Title IV as amended, 88 stat. 571-574. In compliance, Oblate School provides the following information.

Students will be notified of FERPA annually by publication in the Student Handbook. This information is also available upon request.

All records in a student's file become the property of Oblate School of Theology and will not be returned to the student.

The term *student's education record* means any information recorded in any way, including but not limited to, handwriting, print, tape, film, microfilm, and microfiche.

Types, Locations, and Custodians of Education Records

<i>Type of Record</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Custodian</i>
Admission Records	Registrar's Office 285 Oblate Drive San Antonio, TX 78216-6693	Registrar
Cumulative Academic Records (transcripts)	Registrar's Office	Registrar

Financial Records	Business Office	Finance Director
Progress Records:		
Current Degree	Registrar's Office	Registrar
Disciplinary Records	Academic Dean's Office	Academic Dean

Student's Inspection and Review of Education Records

Each student has the right to inspect and review his/her Education Records in the presence of the Custodian within 45 days of a written request. The request should identify as precisely as possible the record(s) to be inspected. The Custodian will notify the student of the time and place for the records to be inspected.

The Education Record is any record maintained by Oblate School, or an agent of the School, which directly relates to the student, except the following:

1. Personal records kept by a staff member, if they are kept in the sole possession of the maker of the record and are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a temporary substitute for the maker of the record.
2. Employment records of individuals, whose employment is not contingent on she/he being a student, provided the record is used only in relation to the individual's employment.
3. Alumni records which contain information about a student after she/he is no longer in attendance at Oblate School, and which do not relate to the person as a student.

Right of the School to Refuse Access

Oblate School of Theology reserves the right to deny access to:

1. Records connected with an application to attend if the applicant was denied.
2. Letters and statements of recommendation for which the student has waived his/her right of access, or which were placed in file before January 1, 1975.
3. Any and all records which are excluded from the FERPA definition of Education Records.

Refusal to Provide Copies

The Oblate School reserves the right to deny transcripts or copies of Education Records not required to be made available by FERPA in any of the following situations:

1. If the student has an unpaid financial or any other obligation to Oblate School of Theology.

2. If there is an unresolved disciplinary action against the student.
3. If the student lives within commuting distance of Oblate School.

Fees for Copies of Records

The fee for copies of records is presently \$0.25 per page.

Correction of Education Records

Students have the right to request to have those records corrected which they believe are inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of a student's privacy or other rights. Following are the procedures for the correction of the record:

1. A student must request, in writing to the Registrar, to amend that record. The student should identify the part of the record that he/she desires to be amended and specify why it is believed inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of his/ her privacy or other rights. The School must respond to the student within 3 weeks.
2. Oblate School may comply with the request or may decide not to comply. If the School decides not to comply, Oblate School will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his/her right to a hearing to challenge the information believed to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's rights.
3. Upon written request to the Academic Dean, Oblate School will arrange for a hearing and notify the student reasonably in advance of the date, place, and time of the hearing. The hearing will take place within 3 weeks, as outlined in subsection 99.22 of FERPA.
4. The hearing will be conducted by a Hearing Officer who is a disinterested party; however, the Hearing Officer may be an official of Oblate School. The student shall be afforded a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues raised in the original request to amend the student's Education Records. The student may be assisted by one or more individuals, including an attorney, at the expense of the student.
5. Oblate School will prepare a written decision based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing. The decision will include a summary of the evidence presented and the reasons for the decision.
6. If Oblate School decides that the challenged information is not inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's right of privacy, it will notify the student that he/she has the right to place in the record a statement setting forth reasons for disagreeing with the decision.

7. The statement will be maintained as part of the student's Education Record for as long as the contested portion of the Record is maintained. If Oblate School discloses the contested portion of the Record, it must also disclose the statement.
8. If Oblate School decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's right of privacy, it will amend the record and notify the student, in writing, that the record has been amended.

A hearing may not be requested to contest the assignment of a grade (except where explicitly outlined in the Oblate School of Theology Student Handbook) but only to contest whether or not the assigned grade was recorded accurately on the student's record. Another procedure is available when a student considers that the instructor assigned an unfair grade. Please see the relevant section in this Handbook.

Record of Requests for Disclosure

Oblate School of Theology will maintain complete records of all requests for and/or disclosure of information from a student's Education Records. The record will include the name and address of the person making the request, any additional party to whom it may be disclosed, and the legitimate interest in the requesting or obtaining of the information. The student and responsible institutional officials have a right to inspect this Record.

Directory Information

Oblate School of Theology will not disclose any personally identifiable information (except Directory Information) without the written consent of the student, unless permitted within the strict guidelines of FERPA. The complete policy on the *OST Directory* may be found in Section C of this handbook.

Disclosure of Education Records

Oblate School will disclose information from a student's Education Record only with the written consent of the student, except:

1. To Oblate School officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the Records.

A School official is:

- A person employed by Oblate School of Theology in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position
- A person employed by or under contract to Oblate School to perform a special task, such as an attorney or auditor

A School official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is:

- Performing a task that is specified in his/her position description or by a contract agreement. Faculty members must currently have a student in a class.
 - Performing a task related to a student's education
 - Performing a task related to the discipline of a student
 - Providing a service or benefit relating to the student, such as a job placement or financial aid
2. To officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll; the student should request this disclosure in writing
 3. To certain officials of the U.S. Department of Education, the Veterans' Administration, and Texas State educational authorities in connection with certain state or federally supported education programs
 4. In connection with a student's request for or receipt of financial aid, when these Records are necessary to determine the eligibility, amount, or conditions of the financial aid, or to enforce the terms and conditions of the aid
 5. To organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of Oblate School
 6. To accrediting organizations/agencies to carry out their functions
 7. In order to comply with a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena
 8. To appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency

The Faculty and Administrative staff should make a written record, which is precise and literate, of conversations and transactions concerning a student, which are considered out of the *norm*. Such records are considered private and not accessible to the student or to others.

Retention and Disposal of Records

The Registrar follows the guidelines of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) for the retention and disposal of records. The Registrar maintains a list of documentation and how long the records must be retained. Disposal of records is accomplished by shredding the material.

Official transcripts are not destroyed. Once a student has requested access to his/her Education Record, however, such Record cannot be destroyed until inspection and review have been provided or all relevant procedures have been complied with.

Applicants who have never attended Oblate School will have their admission documentation retained for three years. After that time, all material in that person's file is destroyed.

Non-Compliance Policy

Complaints regarding Oblate School of Theology's compliance with the above-mentioned Act should be directed to:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
Room 3017, FB-6
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605
(202-401-2057)

VII: EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Purpose

The purpose of doing assessments is to systematically gather information regarding the accomplishment of our goals and objectives. Responses are used to improve the curriculum and educational experience at OST.

Process

Entrance Level Assessment — Entering Student Questionnaire

1. New students are emailed information about the Association of Theological Schools' Entering Student Questionnaire (ESQ). This note includes a hyperlink to the ESQ and instructions for completing and submitting the questionnaire.
2. The Associate Academic Dean tracks the electronic submission of the ESQ to insure full student participation.
3. The Association of Theological Schools compiles data from the ESQ and prepares a report for review by OST faculty and administration.

Exit Level Assessment—Graduating Student Questionnaire and Focus Groups

The Graduating Student Questionnaire is used to gather information about students' general experience during their time at OST.

1. Graduating students are emailed information about the Association of Theological Schools' Graduating Student Questionnaire (GSQ). This note includes a hyperlink to the GSQ and instructions for completing and submitting the questionnaire.
2. The Associate Academic Dean tracks the electronic submission of the GSQ to insure full student participation.
3. The Association of Theological Schools compiles data from the GSQ and prepares a report for review by OST faculty and administration.

Focus Groups are used to assess the students' experience of their specific degree programs

1. Graduating students are invited to participate in focus groups to discuss their experience of their degree program with their program director.
2. Information from this discussion is summarized and passed on to faculty and administration.

Course Evaluations

1. Students have the opportunity to evaluate each of their courses. The course evaluation is completed in class at the end of the semester.
2. Evaluations are distributed by the faculty and returned to the Dean's Office by a student in the course.
3. Faculty review the evaluations after grades are submitted.

SECTION C: POLICIES RELATING TO STUDENT LIFE

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I: SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

The Comprehensive Fee

Each student is charged a Comprehensive Fee each semester based on the number of credit hours for which s/he is registered. This fee helps defray a percentage of the costs associated with the following activities or services provided by OST: Information technology and e-mail service, Chapel Service, free public lectures, coffee, swimming pool, the Commencement Luncheon, the Convocation Mass at the beginning of the Academic Year and the accompanying dinner, photo IDs, photo copies of course hand-outs by faculty, and a portion of designated social activities.

Student Lounge

The Student Lounge is located in the basement level of OST's main building. The Lounge has a piano, fuse-ball table, ping-pong table, and TV, as well as space for students to eat, relax, or study. Students are welcome to use the Lounge whenever the main building is open.

Beverages and Food

Coffee and tea are available in the Student Lounge and vending machines for beverages and snacks are located in the hallway outside of the Lounge. Coffee and other beverages are permitted in the classrooms. Place all empty containers in the recycling or trash receptacles. The consumption of coffee, beverages, and food is prohibited in the Library and Morell Hall.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted inside the buildings. Smoking is permitted outside in designated places.

Recycling

Recycling containers are located in the Student Lounge and in the third floor hallway. Please place all paper, aluminum, and plastic in these containers. Recycled items do not have to be sorted. Paper used for food or beverages should be rinsed before disposal. Students are welcome to deposit paper from home in the paper recycling dumpster in the parking lot.

Parking

Student parking is located behind the Library. For the safety of all, OST has a one-way traffic pattern. When entering the School from Oblate Drive, drive counter-clockwise around the main building to enter the parking lot. Parking for the Grotto can also be reached by driving behind

the main building. The speed limit on campus is 20 miles per hour. Please respect all parking signs including handicapped parking, visitor parking, and fire lanes.

Copy Machine

There are copy machines in the library near the circulation desk and in the periodical reading room. These machines are for the use of the students. Seminarians and members of religious communities may charge their copying costs to their houses.

Counseling and Guidance

There is no formal program for personal counseling offered at OST. Faculty members, however, are available upon request for personal, vocational, and spiritual counseling. All full-time faculty have posted office hours.

Aptitude testing and counseling services of many kinds can be arranged off-campus. In any matter related to counseling, the office of the Academic Dean is pleased to offer information and assistance.

Health Services

The School has a small medicine first aid kit in the Receptionist's Office. Health care requiring professional attention is available at several hospitals located within a few minutes' drive from the School.

Housing and Board

Oblate School of Theology is a non-residential institution. Lunches are available in the Oblate Renewal Center after the Tuesday liturgy. Meal tickets for lunch on other days may be purchased in the OST Finance Office. Coffee, soft drinks, and snacks may be obtained in the basement of the main administration building.

International Full-Time Non-Immigrant Students

The Designated School Official (DSO) at Oblate School of Theology is responsible to know and follow all U.S. Federal Government's laws pertaining to the non-immigrant full-time students. The DSO represents Oblate School in all dealings with the BCIS (Bureau for Citizenship and Immigration Services) and international students. One of the DSO's main responsibilities is to keep student information current in the computerized US tracking system to monitor non-immigrant students. This computer system is named **SEVIS** (Student Exchange Visitor Information System).

International students in the F-1 category are responsible to let the DSO at Oblate School know of any changes to: name, sponsorship, current US address and phone number, degree program, number of credit hours registered for each semester, trips planned outside of the San Antonio

area, transfer to another US school, or any changes to their status as full-time students. Non-immigrant, full-time students **must** have the DSO's permission to: 1) drop or withdraw from a class that will make the student less than full-time, or 2) seek employment in the US. **Students who do not inform the DSO risk being "out of status" and subject to deportation.**

The DSO also needs to know when the student will apply for a US Social Security number, what courses are being taken at another school in San Antonio, and Summer plans. Attendance at meetings that the DSO offers is **mandatory** for each international student. An appointment must be scheduled to meet with the DSO; there is a form to request an appointment.

Services that OST's DSO provides are: the SEVIS Form I-20, visa information, coordinating courses that an OST student will take at any other school in San Antonio, a letter to apply for US Social Security number, information about US income tax, a letter to re-enter the US at border, US federal government forms that the international student needs, and more.

Identification Cards

All students are issued photo identification cards during the registration process of their first semester at OST. This card is valid for the entire time someone is a student at OST. Students are required to carry their ID cards while on campus or while off campus and acting as a student of OST -- such as on a field education site. The ID card serves as an access card to the library and must be presented in order to check out materials. It also is the card used to charge services, such as a Tuesday Lunch, to a student's account. The cost for the initial ID card is covered by the Application Fee. Replacement cards are available for a \$10 fee.

Information Technology

OST Information Technology (IT) resources are made available to a community of faith committed to an educational venture, dedicated to scholarship, and reaching out in service to society in order to share, improve communication, and exchange ideas. All students, faculty, staff, and administrators are provided with access to the OST computer system. All policies relating to IT resources concerning legal and ethical issues are intended to be within the context of the OST mission statement. The Information Technology Department (IT Department) is here to provide service and assistance to all members of the OST community who use OST IT resources. Questions regarding IT use or issues may be addressed to the staff of that department.

Authorized user

An authorized user of the OST computer system is a current student with privileges to access the OST network, both from the LAN (local-on campus) and WAN (internet) for the purpose of exchanging data. Each student will be assigned a user account, e-mail address and password to use while accessing the OST computer system. This information will be provided by the IT department through the Registrar's office. The OST e-mail account should be used for all OST school business and school related

communications. Students are expected to use these resources in accordance with current legal and ethical constraints. Additionally, students should not give out password information to anyone except authorized IT personnel. Privileges to use the OST computer system are extended to currently enrolled students who are in good standing. User accounts will remain active from semester to semester and will be closed upon graduation or withdrawal. User e-mail data and personal files stored on OST computers will be deleted three weeks after graduation or withdrawal unless prior arrangements with the IT department are made.

Privacy

Students must recognize there is no guarantee of privacy associated with their OST user account and its privileges. OST reserves the right to access equipment (hardware and software) which it owns at its convenience when necessary. OST may find it necessary to view electronic data and could be required by law to allow third parties access to that data (e.g. electronic data may become evidence in legal proceedings). It is possible that others could view electronic data.

Each student should be respectful of the privacy of others, behave ethically, and comply with all legal restrictions regarding the use of electronic data.

In addition, each student is responsible for his or her OST user account activity; therefore, the following are applicable but not limited to:

- Respect of intellectual property
- Adherence to software licensing (EULA-End user License Agreements) requirements
- Responsible for backup of personal data
- Using the OST computer system for legal and ethical endeavors in light of the school's mission
- Log off computer system when not in use

OST is not responsible or liable for time or data loss incurred while using the OST computer system.

The Donald E. O'Shaughnessy Library

The Donald E. O'Shaughnessy Library at Oblate School of Theology is a resource center for the reading, research, and study of the OST community. All students are encouraged to make good use of the wealth of material available there. In addition to the material at hand on the OST campus, there are extensive facilities for inter-library loans and the Tex-Share program. The Library catalog and circulation are fully automated using the Voyager system. Copy machines and computer services are also available in the Library.

The policies of the Library, its hours and the services it provides are detailed in the OST Library Handbook available at the Circulation Desk. The Library staff also provides orientation sessions and tours for incoming students. Throughout the year, they remain eager to be of any help they can.

Students are encouraged to make suggestions to the Library Director and staff for any acquisitions they consider would be helpful. The Library staff has forms available for written book suggestions.

The Library maintains reading lists for the courses offered at OST. Many of the materials that professors put on their reading lists are available at the Circulation Desk in the Main Room of the Library.

The O'Shaughnessy Library is here to serve you, the patron. The Director and Associate Director as well as all Library staff are always ready to assist.

Overdue Book Fees

A library staff person issues an overdue notice the day after a book is due and not returned. Each book is \$.35 a day. Students may not check out additional books if there is an outstanding overdue fee. Overdue fees are paid to the Library Staff at the Circulation Desk. Periodically students receive a statement of copy expenses and overdue fees.

Notices of outstanding fees are sent to the Registrar's Office. Students must clear all financial obligations each semester. Students cannot register for a new semester until library overdue fees are cleared.

The Finance Office will inform the Library when an outstanding bill is paid. The Library can then allow the student to check out books.

The Oblate School of Theology Directory

At the beginning of each semester and of the Summer Session, the Registrar's Office compiles and makes available to OST students, faculty, administration, and staff, a new edition of The Oblate School of Theology Directory. This Directory includes the names, local address, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of members of the Student Body and the Faculty. The Oblate School of Theology Directory is for the use of students, faculty, administration, and staff. Ordinarily, it is sent by e-mail to those with OST e-mail access.

At registration, students are asked for their permission to publish their information in the Oblate School of Theology Directory. To restrict the release of this information, a student may indicate **No** in the appropriate space on the Registration Form or file a written request with the Registrar each semester within the first week of a semester or the first three days of the summer school session.

The following is Directory Information and may be made public without prior written consent of the student: name, local/permanent address and telephone number, date and place of birth, classification, degrees and awards received, major/concentration, participation in official activities, and dates of attendance. At OST, however, the Directory includes only name, address, phone number, and e-mail address.

The Oblate School of Theology Directory is for the use of students, faculty, administration and staff. It is not sold for distribution nor given to companies for promotions.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Students belong to the community of Oblate School of Theology, which has as its stated purpose theological education for pastoral ministry. Participation in the community is both a right and responsibility. When students qualify for study they have the rights necessary to successfully complete their degree plan. It is a responsibility that students abide and accept the philosophy and standards of the School. Procedures and policies are given to enhance excellence in all teaching and learning in the realization of the goals of the School.

It is a responsibility that all students abide by the rules of conduct and treat all members with respect and human dignity. Every student has the right due him/her of mutual respect proper to a school of theology. All instances of misconduct, as outlined in the conduct policy and in the harassment policy, will involve investigation and admonition. Oblate School of Theology views students as adults and responsible for their actions.

Regulations regarding honesty and integrity in course work are formed to promote growth in the educational community.

Actions that indicate an intolerance of others' religion, race, sexual orientation, gender, or disability is unacceptable. Status as students does not exempt persons from either the rights or responsibilities as citizens or guests of this country.

Students have the right to participate in the governance of the institution through school committees. They have the right to due process to address grievances as described in the *Grievance Appeal Procedure*. Federal law guarantees certain rights to students regarding student records. OST honors these rights as described in the *Policy on Student Records and Transcripts*. Students have the right to receive information pertinent to their program of studies such as requirements for completion and financial information. OST seeks to provide for these rights by publishing this information in the current catalog, the student handbook, and on the OST web site.

Swimming Pool

The pool is open from April through September. It is available to currently enrolled students and their dependents, OST faculty, staff and their dependents. Similar privileges are extended to the

staff and dependents of various other Oblate entities in the area. The OST student or employee must be present when family members are using the pool. Reservation of the pool for special gatherings may be made by contacting the Receptionist. All users of the pool are cautioned that lifeguards are not provided. The combination for the lock on the pool gate may be obtained from the Receptionist.

Telephones

A telephone is available for students' convenience in the downstairs corridor of the main building. Local outside calls may be made free of charge. Cell phones must be turned off during classes.

II: WORSHIP GATHERINGS OF THE OST COMMUNITY

Public worship is organized at OST each Sunday during the school year and each Tuesday during the Fall and Spring semesters for students and faculty members who wish to participate. All in the OST community are encouraged to participate in the Tuesday liturgy and to attend the luncheon immediately following.

Eucharistic Liturgies are also regularly available at the Saint Joseph Chapel and the Grotto.

Spiritual counseling and the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation are available from members of the faculty and administration upon request.

III: OTHER REGULAR ACTIVITIES OF THE OST COMMUNITY

The School Administration sponsors the celebrations of the Convocation of the School Year and the Commencement Exercises at the end of the year. The Tuesday luncheons, however, are self-supporting and are planned for the number of people expected. Students are encouraged to join the OST community for these lunches.

There are no organized athletic programs at the School. There are, however, facilities on campus for swimming, which are available to students and faculty at no further charge. Students frequently organize sports activities and announce these on the bulletin boards. The OST Student Activities Coordinator (currently, the Associate Academic Dean) coordinates student activities with representatives of the various houses of formation, other interested students, and OST Students are welcome at all times to suggest ideas for activities to the Student Activities Coordinator.

IV: FACULTY EVALUATION OF SEMINARIANS

Purpose

Seminarian evaluations are provided to students during the Fall and Spring semesters to give them feedback on how they are perceived by the faculty. The evaluation is a consensus report of the student's instructors. It is intended to assist students in personal, spiritual, and professional growth. The evaluation is meant to be a positive aid as well as to point out areas for improvement and concern.

Process

Evaluation sessions are scheduled by the Dean's office. Evaluation sessions are usually held 1-2 weeks before the Thanksgiving break in the Fall semester, and 1-2 weeks before the Easter break in the Spring semester.

Faculty receive a schedule for the sessions, a copy of the seminarian evaluation instrument, a list of students by year, and a copy of the list of characteristics of suitability for ministry (as listed in the current OST Catalog) for their review during each evaluation session. Faculty may attend the sessions or complete an evaluation for each of his/her students in writing and submit them to the Dean for use during the sessions. The seminarian evaluation sessions are listed on the OST public calendar.

During the evaluation sessions, faculty reach consensus on each student. The evaluations, addressed to individual students in sealed envelopes, are distributed to the each formation house. A cover note accompanies each student's evaluation explaining the evaluation process.

Students are given time to review their evaluations and an opportunity to seek further clarification from the Academic Dean concerning their evaluation. Copies are then made and sent to appropriate Formation Directors with a note explaining the evaluation purpose and process. (Students are not permitted to take another student's evaluation.)

The Dean keeps copies of evaluations for three weeks after being distributed to Formation Directors. After that date, the copies are destroyed. The School does not maintain evaluation records.

V: FACULTY EVALUATION OF MAPM AND MDIV STUDENTS

The Faculty offers an evaluation of MAPM and MDiv students according to the criteria, or list of ministerial qualities, found in the current OST catalog. The evaluation is intended to assist students in personal, spiritual, and professional growth. It is meant to be a positive aid as well as to point out areas for improvement and concern.

This evaluation is done formally after each semester of the Pastoral Formation Seminar and as a part of the MAPM Practicum process. In each case, the instructors, the field supervisor, and the student employ written forms.

The Faculty may, at any time, raise concerns or compliments with the Director of the MAPM or the MDiv regarding a particular student. It is the responsibility of the Director to communicate these issues to the student. If deemed necessary or helpful by the faculty member, the director, or the student, a written record may be maintained in the student's official file.

VI: CONDUCT POLICY

Conduct at a graduate school of theology will need few regulatory prescriptions considering the maturity and the calling of the students.

Unsatisfactory conduct includes but is not limited to the following:

- Disregard for academic integrity by cheating, collusion, or plagiarism in exams, essays, projects, term papers, or comprehensive exams
- Abusive conduct toward students, school officials, or school employees
- Harming or threatening to harm students, school officials, or staff
- Presence on school property under the influence of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs
- Possession of illegal substances or weapons on school property
- Theft of property belonging to school, staff, employees, or students
- Willful destruction of or tampering with property belonging to the school, staff, employees, or students, to include computer hardware and/or software
- Conduct that is detrimental to the best interest of the students and the School
- Violation of the School's Harassment Policy and/or Code of Ethics

Students who violate any of the above will be placed on probation, normally for the remainder of the semester or a period of time determined by the Academic Dean. Further violations during this probationary period will result in dismissal. Depending on the severity of the initial violation, as determined by the Academic Dean, the student may be dismissed immediately.

The student may appeal the probation in accordance with the appeals policy as detailed in the Harassment Policy. The full appeals procedure may be obtained from the Associate Academic Dean or the Academic Dean.

Students who are dismissed due to unsatisfactory conduct may apply for readmission no earlier than thirty (30) days after termination. Any reinstatement will be effective the following semester. Readmission will be approved at the discretion of the Academic Dean.

VII: POLICY ON HARASSMENT

Oblate School of Theology strives to provide a workplace and educational environment for all faculty, administration, staff, and students that is free of unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment. Unlawful harassment is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated by any faculty, administration, staff, or student. The Institution will also attempt to protect students from unlawful harassment by non-students in the school.

All students must adhere to OST's policy prohibiting discrimination and harassment while on the institution's premises or while engaging in school-related activities. They are also required to adhere to the policies at Institution sponsored training or other functions and non-OST activities when conduct at those activities may affect the educational environment. All students are prohibited from discriminating against or harassing OST employees, OST students, guests, retreatants, suppliers, and vendors. A violation of the institution's non-discrimination and non-harassment policy may result in corrective action, up to and including expulsion from the School.

The Associate Academic Dean is the designated resource person to educate students regarding this policy.

Harassment Defined

Unlawful harassment includes any speech or conduct that is intended to, or has the effect of, abusing or harassing any employee because of his or her race, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, physical, mental or emotional disabilities, or religious beliefs. This may include racial slurs, ethnic jokes, posting of offensive statements, posters, cartoons, or other similar conduct.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991. The 1972 amendment to the 1964 Civil Rights Act (Title IX) prohibits sexual discrimination and sexual harassment of students and all employees in academic institutions. This applies to students who are harassed whenever they are working and/or studying through Oblate School of Theology either on or off campus. Sexual harassment can occur in many forms, including but not limited to, unwelcome physical contact, verbal abuse, written communication of a sexual nature, leering, gestures, and more subtle advances or pressure inviting sexual activity. Such conduct is unlawful where:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or educational experience.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting an individual.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work, academic performance, participation in extracurricular activities, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment.

Oblate School of Theology is in compliance with the policy on sexual misconduct of the Archdiocese of San Antonio. All new OST students must participate in a workshop given by OST and the Archdiocese. A certificate is awarded each participant and a copy is kept in the student's TFE file.

Reporting Incidents

If a student feels that he/she has been unlawfully harassed, or a student witnesses unlawful harassment, the student should report the incident immediately to the Associate Academic Dean. If the Associate Academic Dean is the subject of the complaint, the student should report the incident to the Academic Dean.

Persons who receive complaints are responsible for reporting the incident to the Human Resources Director for the purpose of beginning an investigation of the incident. Failure to report a complaint of harassment to the Human Resources Director may result in corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

Oblate School of Theology will investigate all reported harassment incidents thoroughly and promptly, with as much confidentiality as possible. If, after investigation, it is established that unlawful harassment has taken place, OST will take prompt corrective action against the harasser. The corrective action may consist of verbal or written warnings or other action, up to or including expulsion, depending on the circumstances.

If a non-student harasses a student, the student should report the incident to the immediate supervisor or to the Associate Academic Dean. After investigating and consulting with the appropriate supervisors, the Institution will take the necessary corrective action.

Oblate School of Theology will not tolerate retaliation of any kind against students or employees who in good faith report incidents of unlawful harassment.

**SECTION D: WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED
INFORMATION ON....**

SECTION D: WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ON. . . .

This section seeks to assist students with finding the appropriate office, person, or location where information on various topics may be found. Much of this has been covered in this Handbook or in the current Catalog. Almost all of it is also available on the OST web site – www.ost.edu. It is listed here for your convenience.

Academic Programs	current Catalog
Academic Calendar	OST web site
Admissions Procedures	current Catalog or Registrar’s Office
Alumni Programs	Development Office
Continuing Education	OST web site
Evaluation and Assessment of Academic Programs	Academic Dean
Field Education	TFE Handbook or TFE Director
Financial Aid.....	Student Handbook or Finance Office
Financial Information.....	Finance Office
Final Projects for Master Degrees.....	Program Director and current Catalog
Fund Raising Programs.....	Development Office
Harassment Policy	Associate Academic Dean or Student Handbook
Information Technology Issues.....	Student Handbook or IT department
International Student/Immigration Issues	Registrar’s Office or Student Handbook
Military or VA Benefits	Registrar’s Office
Other Programs at OST such as MTM, LMI, IFP	current Catalog or Program Director
Semester Schedule	OST website

See your Advisor...

First for help with any issue you may have regarding selection of classes, and development a plan of study for your degree.

See your Program Director...

With questions regarding your degree program or to investigate other programs.

See the Office of the Academic Dean...

If you need further assistance, if your advisor recommends you do so, or if the policy you are following calls for you to do so.

See the Registrar’s Office....

For information on immigration status, military or VA benefits, for documentation of any kind for just about anything, or to register for classes after you have seen your advisor.

See the Finance Office....

With any questions about billing, payments, or financial aid.

I. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AACRAO.....	American Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admissions Officers
ATS.....	Association of Theological Schools
Cand.	Candidate (for a degree)
CCVI.....	Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word
CELAM.....	Latin American Bishops' Conference
CICM.....	Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary -- Missionhurst
CMF.....	Congregation of the Sons of Mary --Claretians
CORAL.....	Council of Research and Academic Libraries
COSTS.....	Council of Southwestern Theological Schools
CPE.....	Clinical Pastoral Education
CPS.....	Certificate of Pastoral Studies
CR.....	Clerics Regular - Theatines
CSB.....	Congregation of St. Brigid -- Brigidine Sisters
CSC.....	Congregation of Holy Cross
CSsR.....	Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer -- Redemptorists.
D.Min.....	Doctor of Ministry
DD.....	Doctor of Divinity
EdD.....	Doctor of Education
ESL.....	English as a Second Language
FERPA.....	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974
FTE.....	Full Time Equivalency
GED.....	General Equivalency Diploma
GPA.....	Grade point average.
GRE.....	Graduate Record Exam
HECSA.....	Higher Education Council of San Antonio
IFP/PFI	Instituto de Formación Pastoral / Pastoral Formation Institute
JCD.....	Doctor of Canon Law
JCL.....	Licentiate in Canon Law
JD.....	Doctor of Law (Civil law)
LMI.....	Lay Ministry Institute
MA.....	Master of Arts
MACC.....	Mexican American Catholic College
MAPM.....	Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry
MA (Spirituality).....	Master of Arts (Spirituality)
MAT.....	Miller Analogies Test
MA (Theology).....	Master of Arts (Theology)
MCL.....	Master of Canon Law
M.Div.....	Master of Divinity

M.Ed.....	Master of Education
MLS.....	Master of Library Science
MM.....	Maryknoll Missioners
MRE.....	Master of Religious Education
MSF.....	Missionaries of the Holy Family
MTM.....	Ministry to Ministers
MTS.....	Master of Theological Studies
OCLC.....	On-Line Cataloging Library Center
OFM	Order of Friars Minor
OFM Conv.	Order of Friars Minor Conventual
OLLU.....	Our Lady of the Lake University
OMI.....	Oblates of Mary Immaculate - Missionary Oblates
OP.....	Order of Preachers - Dominicans
OP.....	Dominican Missionaries for the Deaf Apostolate
ORC.....	Oblate Renewal Center
OSF.....	Order of Saint Francis
OST.....	Oblate School of Theology
OSU.....	The Order of Ursulines
OSST.....	The Order of the Most Holy Trinity (Trinitarians)
PFS.....	Pastoral Formation Seminar
PhD/Ph.D.....	Doctor of Philosophy
PhL/Ph.L.....	Licentiate in Philosophy
PPF.....	Program of Priestly Formation (of the U.S. Bishops)
RCIA.....	Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults
SACS.....	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
SAT.....	Scholastic Aptitude Test (or: San Antonio, Texas)
SS.....	Society of Priests of St. Sulpice - Sulpicians
SSL.....	Licentiate in Sacred Scripture
STB.....	Baccalaureate of Sacred Theology
STD.....	Doctor of Sacred Theology
STL.....	Licentiate in Sacred Theology
TFE.....	Theological Field Education
ThD/Th.D.....	Doctor of Theology
TOEFL.....	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TOR.....	Third Order Regular - Third Order Franciscans
UIW.....	University of the Incarnate Word
USCCB.....	United States Catholic Conference of Bishops
VA.....	Veterans' Administration

Many of the abbreviations, initials and acronyms listed above can also be found with periods after each letter.

II. TUITION AID PROGRAM FOR ON-CAMPUS STUDY

The Tuition Aid Program is offered to assist those students who are in need of financial support while in studies, to attract certain types of students, and/or to provide for greater service to the Church. The table below summarizes the tuition assistance offered directly by OST. Check the “Who’s Eligible” column to see which may apply to you. Applications for each are available in the Finance Office and on the OST website.

In addition to these listed below, the school also participates in the Federal School Loan program, military and VA benefit programs, and other programs provided by governmental and ecclesial agencies. For more information, contact the Finance Office or your program director.

Tuition assistance, grants, and scholarships do not cover fees. They are applied only to tuition.

Tuition Discounts	Who's Eligible?	Amount	How to Apply
Women Religious Parish Personnel	From the same Community From the same Parish Enrolled in the MAPM or MA (Theology).	10% for 2 students 20% for 3 students 30% for 4 students 35% for 5 or more	Complete the <i>Tuition Discount Eligibility Form</i> available from the Finance Office. Deadline for application is the drop/add date of the applicable semester.
Permanent Deacons from the Archdiocese of San Antonio	Permanent Deacons as referred to OST through the Archdiocesan Office of the Permanent Diaconate.	10% for each student.	No Application needed. Student must register for the class in the Registrar's Office.
Seminarians	Seminarians from the same diocese or religious community.	10% for 10-14 students 20% for 15-19 students 30% for 20-25 students 35% for 26 or more	Diocese or Religious Community completes the <i>Tuition Discount Eligibility Form</i> available from the Finance Office.
Formation Directors	Formation directors collaborating with OST.	50% tuition discount.	Complete the <i>Tuition Discount Eligibility Form</i> available from the Finance Office.
Tuition Waivers	Who's Eligible?	Amount	How to Apply
Audit Tuition Waivers	TFE and MAPM Field Supervisors, LMI Field Supervisors, and Adjunct Faculty.	Covers the tuition cost of auditing one course within 12 months of certificate issuance. Additional cost for credit is borne by the student.	No application process. Eligible supervisors are issued a waiver certificate by the program director.

Tuition Waivers	Adjunct Faculty.	Covers the tuition of one course within 12 months of teaching course.	No application process. Eligible adjunct faculty are issued a waiver certificate by the dean.
OST Employees and Dependants and Board of Trustees	All regular OST, ORC, PGC employees and spouses and any member of the OST Board of Trustees.	Covers all tuition and fee.	No application process. Finance Office verifies name of employee.
Tuition Assistance	Who's Eligible?	Amount	How to Apply
OST Tuition Assistance	Any Student in any degree or non-degree program at OST.	Up to 1/3 of total tuition costs for a semester.	Complete the <i>Tuition Assistance/Grant Form</i> available from the Finance Office. Deadline for application is the drop/add date of the applicable semester.
Tuition Grants	Who's Eligible?	Amount	How to Apply
OST/VIVA! Tuition Grants	Any student in any degree program at OST.	Up to \$500 per semester per applicant subject to available funds.	Complete the <i>Tuition Assistance/Grant Application Form</i> available from the Finance Office.
Jack Joyce, OMI Tuition Grant	Participants in the Ministry to Ministers program who are native to or have served in Zambia or Africa.	1/2 the tuition cost for Ministry to Ministers.	No Application process. Director of MTM makes the grant known to applicants and notifies the Finance Office of recipient.
Jim Sullivan Grant	Participants in the Ministry to Ministers sabbatical program.	Up to \$1000 for Ministry to Ministers.	No application process. MTM Director makes availability known to potential recipients.
Rufus Whitley Scholarship Grant	Participants from 3rd world countries registered in the Ministry to Ministers sabbatical program.	Depending on fund availability, up to 100% of cost for MTM Program.	No Application process. MTM Director makes the grant known to applicants and notifies the Finance Office of recipient into the program.
Kenedy Grant	Participants in the Lay Ministry Certification Program	Up to amount of cost of program (varies depending on number of students)	No application process. LMI Director makes availability known to potential recipients.
Scholarships	Who's Eligible?	Amount	How to Apply
Pat Guidon Scholarship	Students continuing from the Lay Ministry Institute to the MAPM degree program.	Covers all tuition for the MAPM degree. Grant is forfeited if student fails to register in two consecutive semesters.	Complete the <i>Pat Guidon Scholarship Application Form</i> available from OST Website or the Finance Office and return to MAPM Director by August 1st. and January 2 nd .

Hispanic Women in Ministry Scholarship	Hispanic women accepted into OST & MAPM program.	Covers one-third of tuition for the MAPM degree.	Complete the <i>Hispanic Women in Ministry Scholarship Application Form</i> available from the OST Website or the Finance Office and return to MAPM Director by August 1st and January 2nd.
Lewis Family Scholarship	Any Student in any degree program at OST.	Up to \$2,300 per academic year.	Use the Lewis Family Scholarship Application Form available from the Finance Office.
Gordon Family Scholarship	Any student in any degree program at OST.	Up to \$500 per academic year (depending on fund availability).	Use the Gordon Family Scholarship Application Form available from the Finance Office or online. Submit application by August 1st.
Friends of Oblate Scholarship	Any student in any degree program at OST.	Up to \$500 per academic year (depending on fund availability).	Use the Friends of Oblate Scholarship Application Form available from the Finance Office and online. Submit application by August 1st.