

Student

Handbook

2011-2012

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY STUDENT HANDBOOK 2011-12

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STUDENT SERVICES

All student services are coordinated through the Office of Student Services. In addition to provision of academic services, the Coordinator of Student Services is available on a limited basis to help with problems or needs that may arise within the student population, as well as to make counseling referrals and schedule student social events. For an appointment, contact the Coordinator of Student Services at 937-529-2201, ext. 3101.

Building Hours

Access will be granted during normal operation hours only. During the fall and spring semesters, the building will usually be open from 8:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. T-F and 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. on Saturday. During weekdays for which evening classes are held, the building will be open 30 minutes later than the conclusion of the last class.

Admissions

The Office of Admissions provides application forms and information about academic programs, processes application materials, and posts application deadlines. This office also provides advanced standing information and administers the scholarship program. Admissions staff members work with students who request a change in degree status and with students who withdraw from the Seminary. The Office of Admissions is located directly behind the Receptionist's desk. To speak with someone in the Admissions Office, please contact admissions@united.edu. The Admissions Officer may be contacted at 937-529-2201, ext. 3306.

Registration and Student Records

Business hours are 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. The Registrar provides a number of services: verifies student enrollment, maintains student transcripts, prints schedule information for distribution during registration periods, generates registration forms and distributes Directed Study Request forms, Course Change Record forms, and Intent to Graduate forms. You may contact the Registrar at 937-529-2201, ext. 3301.

Requests for transcripts must be made in written form including a signature to the Registrar's Office. Forms for this purpose may be obtained from the Registrar, the Receptionist, or the website. There is a \$10 fee per transcript (waived for current students).

Registration materials are available two weeks before the registration period begins. Dates for registration are posted in the catalog and on the web.

Registration is billed to student accounts and sent to home addresses. Payments received after the posted deadline date will be assessed a late fee. Late fee schedules will accompany the student statement of account.

After registration is completed, students may, if necessary, drop or add courses according to the policy stated in the catalog. All current policies related to the registration process are explained on the policy statement that accompanies the student statement of account.

Financial AidBusiness hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 on Saturdays for which classes are in session. Afterhours service is available by appointment only by calling 937-529-2201, ext. 3303.

The Financial Aid office works with:

- Federal Family Education Loan Program
- United Methodist Student Loans
- United Methodist denominational conference aid requests
- Other Denominational aid requests
- Federal Work Study eligibility, contracts, time cards
- General Board of Higher Education and Ministry application forms

Written policies and procedures along with the paper work needed to complete the financial aid process are available in the Financial Aid office. The Registrar's Office processes Government Education Loan Deferments. United Theological Seminary's academic scholarships are obtained and processed through the Office of Admissions. Further financial aid information is included in the catalog. Each January, all students will receive a Financial Aid packet including current paperwork and deadlines.

Business Office

The Business Office hours are 9:30 a.m.-noon and 1:30-4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday.

After-hours service is available by appointment only. Contact the Student Billing Coordinator at 937-529-2201 to make an appointment. Please honor these hours.

The Business Office provides the following students services:

- Maintenance of student accounts—statements are sent monthly to student mailboxes unless the mailroom supervisor is otherwise instructed.
- Payments on accounts are taken, including Visa, MasterCard, Discover and ATM Debit Cards
- Checks may be cashed for amounts up to \$50 (there is a \$20 charge for checks returned for insufficient funds)
- Stamps (domestic and international) may be purchased

Counseling Referrals

Counseling referrals are available through the Office of Student Services. For more information, please contact the Coordinator of Student Services at 937-529-2201, ext. 3101.

United Student Photo ID Badge A color photo of each student will be taken to produce a plastic Student ID Badge; the reverse side of the ID badge serves as the student's Library Card. The photo is also posted in the student's VirtualUnited account.

A student may submit a personal photo for these purposes prior to the first week of the term. The photo must be a digital file attached to, not embedded in, an email message. The photo must be in color and framed in a manner similar to a driver's license or passport photo; that is, a front facing head shot. The Seminary reserves the right to reject any photos it deems inappropriate for these purposes. To submit a photo, email vuhelp@united.edu; be sure to include your first and last name in the message body.

For on-campus students, the ID badges are typically distributed towards the end of the first week of the first term in which the student has enrolled. Check with the Main Reception Desk – when available, the Receptionist will have the badges and acknowledgment of receipt statements for students to sign. The first Badge is issued free of charge; replacement badges are assessed a fee of \$10.

The distance-learning students are required to submit a photo as part of the Admissions process; this photo will be used for the Student ID badge and VirtualUnited posting.

COMMUNICATIONS

United Theological Seminary is a small but vibrant school. We all need to make deliberate efforts to communicate with each other and to receive communications. This section addresses the various avenues used for communication at United Theological Seminary.

Phone numbers and email addresses for faculty and staff are available on the United web site at http://www.united.edu.

E-Mail E-mail is our primary means of distribution announcements and information, as well as information updates for specific classes.

The IT Department provides *united.edu* mail accounts for all masters students. Please be aware of the following:

1. The *united.edu* mail account is the account-of-record.

All masters' students are issued a *united.edu* mail account and password; this account will be the **official account-of-record** for the students; no other email account will be accepted.

2. The *united.edu* mail accounts are web-accessible.

The *united.edu* mail account is accessible via any Internet-enabled computer using Microsoft Outlook for Web Access (OWA); the IT staff will train student-users in the use of OWA.

3. There will be no forwarding of mail from *united.edu* mail accounts.

The software used by United does not allow for the automatic forward of *united.edu* mail accounts to other accounts, and our IT Department is unable to validate and manage forwarding addresses for student-users.

Campus telephone extensions may be reached (from a touch-tone phone) after the switchboard is closed by dialing 937-529-2201, listening to the message, and then entering the number of the extension. This voicemail menu also includes an extension that provides weather-related class cancellations. United students can make local calls and toll-free calls from the phone located in the Student Center.

Student Mailboxes

All masters students taking classes on the Dayton campus (except for Special Students and WV In-Context students) are assigned a mailbox located outside of the Student Center on the second floor of the building. Please retrieve your mail regularly. Mail is delivered daily Tuesday through Saturday. Students who receive a package that is too large for the mailbox will receive a notice to pick up the package in the Mailroom. Mail for faculty and staff should be dropped in campus mail at the central receptionist's desk.

Mail Room

The Mail Room is located in the administrative wing near the end of the hallway. Mail is delivered daily, Tuesday through Friday, to student mailboxes (located upstairs in the Student Center). Stamps may be purchased at the Business Office.

The United States Postal Service (USPS) and United Parcel Service (UPS) pick up and deliver Tuesday through Friday. To ship a package, take it to the Mail Room to be processed. The mailroom personnel will calculate the postage (including \$.50 handling fee). All postage and related charges must be paid in the Business Office and the paid receipt returned to the mail person before the package will be shipped. All processed pieces ready for shipment by 2:00 PM will ship out that day. Pieces not available to be processed in a timely manner will ship on the next business day. Packages must be properly sealed and addressed. They must show the Seminary address as the return address. Should you need to make a claim for a lost or damaged package, please contact the Mail Room Supervisor at 937-529-2201, ext. 3204. When needed, shipments via other carriers can be arranged.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Room Reservations

Those wishing to reserve rooms on the Dayton campus should contact the following persons, according to the occasion and

group:

- Receptionist: (meeting space) 937-529-2201, ext. 4500
- Registrar: (classroom reservations) 937-529-2201, ext. 3301

Maintenance

If something in the facilities needing attention is observed, please inform the Receptionist.

SEMINARY POLICIES

Student Code of Conduct

United Theological Seminary is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which administrators, faculty, staff, and students can work and study together in an atmosphere where all can flourish in our learning and in worship. In today's working and studying environment, we realize it is important and necessary to use communication technology to stay in touch with other areas of our lives. We encourage the respectful use of cell phones, computers, IPods, and PDAs as well as other modes of communication necessary for learning in a digital media environment, as long as these communication tools do not inhibit or prohibit the learning environment of others.

To maintain an environment conducive to study and meditation for all, the policy of United Theological Seminary is to require that cell phones be set to silent mode during class, seminar, or chapel times. Emergency calls can be taken outside of the classroom. The appropriate use of a laptop computer is encouraged during class or seminars as long as the use is not disruptive to those around you. It is disrespectful and inappropriate to play computer games, to surf the net, or play music during class sessions unless invited to do so by the professor. If there is a conflict between students that cannot be otherwise resolved, please see the Director of Student Services at 937-529-2201, ext. 3300.

United Theological Seminary is committed to the application of the above policies to maintain a respectful working and studying environment for all in the Seminary community.

Academic Integrity

United Theological Seminary is an institution of graduate theological education affiliated with the United Methodist Church. The central purpose of United is the formation of

pastors and leaders for the Christian ministry. Academic integrity is held in high esteem at United; it is considered one of the foundations of formation of Christian character in servant leadership for the Church.

Academic integrity is characterized by diligence and honesty in research, writing, preaching, and all communications related to worship and learning in this community.

Several commonly used guides to research and writing are available in the library. Some instructors may include detailed guidelines in a syllabus, and others may simply refer to the writing guides that are available. If you feel unprepared or uninformed about an instructor's expectations for academic performance, you may ask for clarification All students will be held accountable for academic integrity.

Policy

This policy is in effect by the vote of the faculty and approved by the Board of Trustees as binding for all students of United Theological Seminary: degree and non-degree, all Masters Programs, and the Doctor of Ministry program.

The purpose of this policy is to clarify and codify the rights and responsibilities inherent in the faculty-student relationship of this community. Academic integrity is integral to formation of Christian character in servant leadership for the church.

Academic integrity is characterized by mutual respect, honest inquiry, and honesty in the discovery and dissemination of knowledge, including academic instruction, evaluation, study, research, writing, preaching and all communications related to worship and learning in this community.

Dishonesty in academic work is a serious violation of scholarship and community, just as stealing another person's property is illegal and harmful to persons. Students are to accept, embrace, and live in harmony with the concept of academic integrity. Academic integrity includes fair and impartial evaluations on the part of faculty and honest conduct on the part of students. Consistent with Christian and academic standards, the following conduct is expected:

- 1. Faculty and students are expected to attend classes when scheduled, keep scheduled appointments, make appropriate preparations for classes and other meetings, students should submit assignments when due and faculty should perform evaluations and grading in a timely manner.
- 2. Faculty should use reasonable accuracy in describing course expectations and standards of evaluation, inclusive of the limits of permissible assistance available to students during a course or academic evaluation.
- 3. Academic evaluations should be based upon good-faith professional judgment in accordance with applicable standards.
- 4. Cheating, fraud, and plagiarism are three types of academic dishonesty that are a violation of this policy inasmuch as the integrity of the academic process requires that credit be given where credit is due.

- Cheating may include stealing another person's answers to items on an examination or breaking rules in order to gain an advantage, as well as providing assistance during an academic evaluation. Cheating includes engaging in the intentional and unauthorized purchase, sale, or use of any materials intended to be used as an instrument of academic evaluation in advance of its administration and engaging in conduct that is so disruptive as to infringe upon the rights of faculty members or fellow students.
- Fraud is also known in biblical language as "bearing false witness" and may include lying; giving false information in admission documents; altering records of grades and narrative evaluations; misrepresenting your status in relation to the Seminary in any setting of course work, contextual education, Clinical Pastoral Education, Intercultural trip, or other off-campus Seminary-related experience; acting as or utilizing a substitute for another person in any academic evaluation; and attempting to influence or change your academic evaluation or record for reasons other than achievement or merit.
- Plagiarism is submitting the work, ideas, representations, or words of another and claiming it as your own, such as copying text from a book or journal, copying text posted on an internet site, or purchasing a paper from someone (a "paper mill"). Plagiarism can also be called "stealing," as in the practice of claiming as your own the information or results of research projects that were actually conducted by someone else. Plagiarism is also knowingly permitting another to present your own work without customary and proper acknowledgement of the source.

Violations of this policy may have serious consequences for students as explained in the Procedures below.

Instructors are encouraged to post a reference to this policy, a statement of standards for assignments, and consequences for violation of the policy and course standards in their syllabi. Not doing so does not constitute exemption of anyone from adherence to this policy or the enactment of the procedures described below. For additional information, students may find helpful the discussion of intellectual honesty¹ in Vyhmeister's guide.

¹ Nancy Jean Vyhmeister, *Quality Research Papers: For Students of Religion and Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 45-46. Master's students receive this style manual in the *Introduction to Theological Education*. This and other style manuals are available in the UTS library, and may be purchased from the campus bookstore and online booksellers.

How to Avoid a Common Type of Plagiarism

A common violation that can lead to serious consequences is the failure to cite properly references to quotations of another person's work by using reference notes (footnotes or endnotes). Chapter 8 of Vyhmeister's guide provides detailed instruction about the use of footnotes in papers from the smallest class assignment to the doctoral thesis.²

Nancy Jean Vyhmeister has this to say about the use of reference notes:

Reference notes ... are provided to show where information was obtained. They serve a triple purpose: (1) to indicate that there is authority behind statements made, in order to strengthen the researcher's assertions; (2) to help the scholar who is looking for information on the topic to easily find the material referred to; (3) to honestly admit intellectual indebtedness to another author.³

The previous paragraph is an example of a few lines of quoted text used to strengthen the assertions of this policy on academic integrity. The paragraph is formatted to indicate that it is a quotation, and the footnote number (reference note) follows the text.

A quotation may also consist of just one or a few words enclosed in quotation marks, and it is equally important to use a reference note. A student must take care when mixing in a sentence or paragraph the student's own words with the words of another author without giving proper credit for the source.

The following paragraph is an example of mixing one's own words with a phrase used by another author without properly citing the source of the words borrowed from the author, which is a serious violation of academic integrity:

Example of incorrect citation:

The fifth concept of systems theory in this course is the emotional triangle. Emotional triangling is the formation of a three-part relationship within a system when any two parts become uncomfortable with one another and triangle in or focus upon a third person, or issue, in order to stabilize their own relationship with one another.

The following paragraph example provides the correct acknowledgement of the student's use of the author's words. The correct way to differentiate the author's words from the student's is to use quotation marks around the author's words and to follow the sentence with a reference note.

² Ibid., 62-68.

³ Ibid., 63.

Example of correct citation:

The fifth concept of systems theory in this course is the "emotional triangle." ⁴ Friedman defines "emotional triangling" as the formation of a three-part relationship within a system "when any two parts ... become uncomfortable with one another and 'triangle in' or focus upon a third person, or issue" in order to "stabilize their own relationship with one another." ⁵

The mark or number of the note, in this case, a footnote, follows the quoted text, with the very small number elevated slightly or in "superscript." Most word processing programs have a command that automatically formats footnote numbers and places the footnote in the proper location in the paper after its correct number. The term in quotes followed by the number 3 instructs the reader to read footnote 3 to learn that the term occurs on page 35 in the book.

When other quotations of the author's words continue to be taken for use in the next sentence, the footnote marked with the number 4 follows the end of the sentence to show that those words are not the student's but are the author's. It is not necessary to repeat the entire citation of the book in footnote 4. Rather, it is correct to use the term "Ibid." which means that the reference is to the same book in the previous footnote, and the quotes are found in the same location in the book. The ellipsis (...) within the second sentence indicates that the student has omitted some of the author's words because they were not necessary for the definition, and omitting them does not change the meaning.

Another example of correct footnote use is to notice the footnotes in this policy. Footnotes 1, 2, and 3 refer to the same book. Footnote 1 is the first occurrence of the book in the footnotes of the policy, therefore, footnote 1 contains a full citation of the book's bibliographic details (author, title, and publisher), and the book's pages referenced in the sentence. Footnotes 2 and 3 follow immediately after footnote 1; it is not necessary to repeat the full citation of bibliographic information, but to use the term "Ibid." with the pages on which the author's words and ideas are found. Even though the pages referred to in footnote 1 include the page that is referred to in footnote 3, footnote 3 refers to the particular quotation that the student used from that particular page. The pages in footnote 2 are used to indicate the span of the pages (62-68) in the chapter referred to in that sentence.

Students may be instructed to use a writing guide other than Vyhmeister's. Some Doctor of Ministry students use the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA). APA uses in-text citations of references and a reference list, and does not use "Ibid." to indicate a quotation obtained from the

⁴ Edwin H. Friedman, *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*, (New York: Guilford Press, 1985), 35.

⁵ Ibid.

same source as the previous one, but uses a different format. Students must adhere to the style guide required by the course or the focus group.

Procedure

One who is accused of violating the Academic Integrity Policy ("the policy") is entitled to due process that may include an investigation and review of the charges under the supervision of the Academic Dean. The following steps should be followed in reporting an incident of academic dishonesty.

- 1. Who may report an incident: Members of the faculty, instructors, Doctor of Ministry mentors, staff members, employees, members of the administration, and fellow learners at United may submit evidence of a violation of the policy directly to the course instructor or to the Academic Dean. If the incident is first reported to the Academic Dean rather than to the instructor or mentor, or to any other party, the instructor or mentor will be informed of the incident unless, at the discretion of the Academic Dean in consultation with the President, there is justification to do otherwise.
- 2. **Investigation**: In most cases, the instructor will be charged with initiating the investigation. In some cases, the instructor may elect to refer the case directly to the Academic Dean or Dean's proxy for investigation. The instructor or Doctor of Ministry mentor will gather documentation of the incident and complete a Report of Academic Dishonesty.
- 3. **Document the Incident:** Documentation may include the paper or examination in question, the signed statement of another party who witnessed the incident, a copy of the original text or material in question that was found in a book, journal, internet site, tape, CD, DVD, floppy disc, or other medium, and any other evidence of the incident. The context of the incident may be any setting of teaching and learning, i.e., classroom, contextual education, transcultural trip, ministry formation group, etc.
- 4. **Meet with the student**: The investigator of the incident will meet with the student to determine the facts. An impartial observer should be present. Others who witnessed (first-hand) the incident should be present. The signatures of all persons present should be obtained on the Report of Academic Dishonesty. The student's signature indicates informed consent to the procedure.
- 5. **Notification of Resolution**: If the instructor or mentor finds evidence of violation of the policy, the instructor or mentor may respond in several ways: give a failing grade for the course; offer the opportunity to revise the assignment; or recommend additional intervention by the Academic Dean.

The instructor will indicate the recommendation of resolution on the Report of Academic Dishonesty and forward that form and copies of all documentation to the Academic Dean.

The student will receive a copy of the Report of Academic Dishonesty by postal mail or document delivery service, with a tracking number and delivery confirmation receipt attached.

- 6. **No violation has occurred**: If the initial investigation determines that violation of the policy did not occur, no additional action will be taken.
- 7. Administrative Intervention: If additional intervention of the Academic Dean is required, the Dean may resolve the case in one of several ways: place the student on academic probation for one year; suspend the student from enrollment with the requirement of remedial education in academic processes of research and writing, with re-admission on probation after one year, according to the Seminary's policy and procedures stated elsewhere; or immediate and permanent dismissal from the Seminary.
- 8. **The Student's File**: Documentation of the procedure of investigation and resolution will be included in the student's permanent file. The Report on Academic Dishonesty, all documentation of the incident (with a description of the outcome of the investigation and resolution of the case, and signed by the student, the instructor or the mentor, and the Academic Dean), and delivery confirmation of notification will be placed in the student's file.
- 9. **Appeal**: A student who is found guilty of academic dishonesty may appeal the finding by use of the process described below.
- 10. Additional Confirmed Incidents: If a student succeeds in the recommended remedy for the violation, and another incident of academic dishonesty is reported, investigated, and confirmed, the student will be notified in writing that s/he will be dismissed immediately and permanently without recourse to appeal. Copies of written notification will be kept in the student's file.
- 11. **Privacy**: A student's right to privacy will be honored to the extent that privacy can be expected in the course of due process.

Appeal

A student who, through due process described above, is found to have violated the Policy of Academic Integrity, may appeal outcome of the procedure by submitting a request⁶ to the Academic Dean. The process of appeal is outlined as follows:

- 1. **Number of Appeals**: One. A student is only eligible to appeal a first properly confirmed incident of having violated the Academic Integrity Policy. If the incident is not overturned as a result of the appeal, any subsequently confirmed (by due process) incident will be cause for immediate and permanent dismissal from United Theological Seminary.
- 2. **Time Limit**: A student must initiate an appeal of the decision within fifteen working days (holidays and weekends excluded) of having received the resolution of the incident from the instructor, the Doctor of Ministry mentor, or the Academic Dean.

⁶ In writing, on paper, in permanent ink.

The beginning date of the time limit will be documented by the student's signature on postal or document delivery service receipt. A student's appeal will proceed on a date and time agreed upon by the student and the Academic Dean, in consultation with other designated participants.

A student's failure to keep the appointment of the appeal will serve as the student's acceptance of the terms of the resolution of the incident and no additional appeal may be filed.

- 3. Who Should Attend the Appeal: In most cases, the appeal hearing will be presided over by the Academic Dean. The hearing will be attended by the student, the Academic Dean, the instructor or Doctor of Ministry mentor who initiated the investigation, and one additional member of the faculty of United Theological Seminary who is chosen by the student. The student may invite to the hearing one support person. The support person chosen by the student may not be an attorney, a spouse, a parent, a sibling, or a child. In extraordinary circumstances, the student and other members of the session may attend the hearing by conference call. The Appeal Hearing Report will be signed by all who are present. Conference call attendee signatures will be obtained by fax, postal mail, or document delivery service.
- 4. **Basis of Appeal**: A student must provide documentation in support of arguments against the resolution of the incident.
- 5. **Duration of Appeal**: A student's appeal will be heard in one sitting. Deliberation and notification of the outcome will take place within fifteen days following the hearing, holidays and weekends excluded.
- 6. **Outcome of the Appeal**: The student will be informed in writing by the Academic Dean of the outcome of the appeal. The outcome of the appeal may take one of the following forms:
 - a. No action-the appeal is denied, and the instructor's or mentor's resolution of the case is affirmed.
 - b. The student receives a grade of NC (no credit) for the course and continues to be enrolled on academic probation for one year. If the student wants credit for the course, the course must be repeated at the student's expense.
 - c. The student is suspended from enrollment for one year and must complete one year of remedial study at the college level and at the student's expense, emphasizing research, writing, or other medium and context in which the violation occurred.

⁷ The assignment of expenses for the appeal will be made upon disposition of the hearing. If the charge of academic dishonesty is upheld in any way, the student will be responsible for the expenses. If the student's support person incurs expenses in the appeal process, the student will be responsible. If the finding of academic dishonesty is overturned on appeal, the Seminary will be responsible for the expense.

- d. Upon application for re-admission, the student must provide documentation of having completed the remedial education (writing, public speaking, statistics, multimedia, HTML, XML, etc.).
- e. The finding of having violated the Academic Integrity Policy is overturned and documentation is removed from the student's file.

The forms required for reporting Academic Dishonesty may be acquired from the Academic Dean's Office.

Academic Probation and Dismissal

United Theological Seminary reserves the right to place under advisement, suspend, or dismiss any student who fails to maintain a satisfactory academic record.

A student whose GPA drops below 2.0 will go on academic probation. After two semesters, if the student's GPA has not risen to a 2.0 or better, the student will be dismissed. He or she will be allowed to reapply after one year.

The student on probation will not be allowed to take more than nine credit hours per semester until the GPA is 2.0 or better.

As a student is placed on probation, the Registrar sends a copy of the transcript to the Director of Student Services. A letter outlining his/her status is sent to the student by the Director of Student Services. Copies will also be sent to the advisor, Registrar, contextual education, financial aid, business office and admissions offices, and if appropriate, the director of the West Virginia In-Context program.

Students being academically dismissed will be issued a written notice of dismissal from the Director of Student Services. Readmission will not be considered for one year from the time of dismissal, will require duplication of all usual procedures for admission, and will require the approval of the Academic Dean.

A student may appeal his/her academic probation or dismissal through the Office of the Academic Dean, using the problem clearance procedure outlined in the Student Handbook.

Inclusive Language Guidelines

The following is presented with the intention of fostering discussion, awareness, and wisdom regarding the implementation of inclusive language in our various contexts. It also lays out some guidelines and expectations for our life together as a community of faith in an academic setting.

Our speech is a reflection of our personal attitudes about one another and God. Our language must be congruent with our beliefs. As a Seminary, we celebrate the call to a new relationship: We are one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26). Our words and behaviors must then reflect this oneness. Likewise, if we believe that God is Spirit (John 4:15) then we need to expand our images of the Deity so that all persons can identify with and feel close to the reality of the Deity we name.

We are concerned about the use of inclusive language in the classroom because it indicates what we feel about other persons, how we relate to each other, and how we model to the world. We want to assert that all persons are in equal status and standing. Language reflects power in relationships and power in institutional structures.

Inclusiveness concerns more than the words that we use. Body language, tone of voice and eye contact communicate much that is left out of actual words. Our beliefs, words, and actions must be congruent.

There are a variety of ways we can structure our language to include both men and women. We can reduce the use of unnecessary or excessive gender-specific pronouns, re-phrase sentences to use plural pronouns, or alternate female and male pronouns. Male pronouns may be replaced by the impersonal pronoun, "one." "Mankind" and "men" in contemporary English refer to groups of males, while "humans," "persons," and "all people" more accurately describe a group that includes both women and men.8

The language we use in public worship is responsible for molding our attitudes at the deepest levels. Because these attitudes are often formed in our early years, we may confuse the language of the experience with the experience itself. It is necessary that we be cognizant of and careful of every person's sense of the sacred. Therefore, we seek in worship to raise the awareness that no language can be wholly adequate when we address and are addressed by the Divine. God is a present reality not to be comprehended by any one exclusive use of a term, name, or pronoun. Christian liturgy should be as representative of the diverse ways of experiencing and describing God as is the Bible, the source book for our liturgical activity.

The scripture readings in the worship service present a peculiarly complex problem in regard to inclusive language. It is not advisable to alter the language indiscriminately. The Bible is distinctive precisely at the point of its insistence that the Word of God comes to us in and through human experience. If this be true, the words used by those who experienced the divine presence and interpreted those experiences must be heard in their own setting and mode.

We wrestle with the tension between being faithful to the words of our tradition and being faithful to the overarching message of liberation. There is no clear norm to follow in this area, though some have chosen to use minimally adapted versions of the Bible for study and exegesis, while employing inclusive translations for liturgy. 10

⁸ See also Nancy Jean Vyhmeister, *Quality Research Papers for Students of Religion and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 92. Most other current style books also contain helpful guidelines for proper writing with respect to inclusive language.

⁹ See Bruce M. Metzger "To the Reader," preceding every *New Revised Standard Version Bible* (New York: Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches, 1989). See also Phyllis Bird, "Translating Sexist Language as a Theological and Cultural Problem" in Phyllis Bird, *Missing Persons and Mistaken Identities: Women and Gender in Ancient Israel*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 239-247.

¹⁰ For instance, see *An Inclusive Language Lectionary Revised Edition*, 3 vols. (New York: Cooperative Publication Association / Division of Education and Ministry, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., 1985-1988.)

The purpose of the public reading of the scripture will help to inform the reader as to what to do. In all circumstances, the one who preaches on a given text must dialogue with the text and invite interaction.

Though we are created "male and female" "in the image of God" (Gen 1:27), God supersedes those gender categories. 11 Therefore, God's self is neither a "he" nor a "she." This theological assertion may be reflected in liturgy and music by using various names and biblical images for God, or replacing third person pronouns ("he," "his") with second person references ("you," "your").

We are reminded that all of creation was created by God and found to be good. Therefore, environmentally sensitive language celebrates all of creation rather than focusing exclusively on humans. We are linked with the rest of creation in our struggle for unity and justice. Our struggle for unity with our sisters and brothers is hampered by the use of negative images and words for disabilities that are part of the human condition. Relating disabilities or illness to sin suggests that they are linked causally. Instead, we need to reflect upon, discuss, and pray for the ways our many disabilities can help lead us to God. In addition, we encourage careful use of imagery that has racial implications, including light and dark, and black and white.

When one is singing with a gathered community, the community's needs as people of faith must be the first consideration. This may necessitate the changing of words in a hymn to respect and include not only those present but also others around the world. Hymn text changes should not be made lightly but with much consideration for the intended meanings, poetry, original language, history, and theology. It can be helpful to remember that many beloved hymns exist in forms that have already been modified over the years. A number of resources may need to be consulted.

There is less ambiguity with regard to current writings and speeches. In term papers, lectures, textbooks, curriculum topics, liturgies, sermons, and prayers, all of which are current expressions of individuals within this community, inclusiveness is essential.

We need to help each other to see if or when we exclude, so that each of us may grow. This helping need not be in the form of attacks but as one standing beside another, looking toward wider horizons. As a community, we stand willing to grow. The faculty at United expects student work to employ these guidelines for inclusivity. Students who do not do so may expect to receive corrective suggestions.

There is not much debate about our need to use inclusiveness for people. We need to consider people from all walks of life, at every economic level, male and female, all ethnic backgrounds, all ages, and varying physical conditions. A theology of incarnation calls us to include all people in our thinking and expression. This particular concern of language may lead us to be more faithful in our practice of Christianity, which calls for ever-increasing growth in love and respect for God and one another.

¹¹ Phyllis Bird, "'Male and Female He Created Them': Genesis 1:27b in the Context of the Priestly Account of Creation," in Bird, *Missing Persons and Mistaken Identities*, 123-154. For a different view of this text, see Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), 1-30. For another helpful discussion on this issue, see Christine Cozad Neuger, "Image and Imagination: Why inclusive language matters," in *Engaging the Bible in a gendered world: An introduction to Feminist biblical interpretation in honor of Katharine Doob Sakenfeld*, (Louisville: Westminster, John Knox, 2006), 153-165.

To be the Body of Christ is not always easy. There is pain and joy for *every* member. To be in relationship requires us to be attentive to the other's pains as well as joys. The joy of discovering a poignant word, which names a meaning, is one that we seek to share. The pain of hearing or reading a hurtful word is one that we want to address and work to overcome.

Our Redeemer introduces the real opportunity of repentance, new life, resurrection and a new heaven. It is with this sense of expectancy that we journey together and call each other into transformative speech and action.

Privacy Policy

A staff person's privacy may include one of several possibilities, i.e., a phone call relaying confidential information, a face-to-face meeting sharing confidential information, a project with a critical due date, etc. If a staff person will be unavailable for a long period of time (during the daytime), s/he may post a note on the door and inform the receptionist. If a staff person will be unavailable for a succession of days/weeks, s/he will inform the receptionist and ensure prompt response/service from another co-worker.

This applies also to staff persons who have no office walls. Each staff person may require privacy to help a student, each other, etc. Thank you for your attention and respect for individual privacy.

Students also have privacy, particularly as this relates to personal and academic performance. Faculty and staff are reminded daily of students rights and know NOT to discuss information about a student in public. Attempts to "help" a student may require the sharing of information among staff and this exchange of information must be done in a manner in which the student's right to privacy is protected. Therefore, faculty and staff are aware that they must maintain the utmost care in protecting the student's privacy.

The same also applies to students. Students congregating in the halls discussing class-related information occasionally also discuss other students, presumably in an attempt to assist a fellow student. Students must be reminded that they should take great care in respecting their fellow students' rights. It may be inappropriate to discuss (by name) a student's personal or academic situation, particularly in a public hallway. Therefore, United reminds faculty, staff, and students to be mindful and respectful of each other's right to privacy.

Sexual Harassment Policy
United Theological Seminary is a Christian institution that considers human relationships to be sacred and the human body to be holy. Therefore, it seeks to create a safe, grace-filled environment for all persons in which human worth and relationships are honored and respected.

It is the policy of United Theological Seminary to provide all of the members of its community (students, faculty, staff, consultants, mentors, facilitators, field education supervisors, employees, and anyone acting on behalf of the Seminary) with an environment free of sexual harassment and its interference with their comfort or performance in the classroom or the workplace. Any behavior that constitutes sexual harassment is a violation of human dignity and rights and will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment in the workplace is a prohibited practice under Section 703 of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1973. In 1980, The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission established guidelines, revised in 1990, which defined sexual harassment as a form of illegal sexual discrimination. In 1986 the Supreme Court of the United States and the state of Ohio adopted the EEOC's definition of sexual harassment in the guidelines and ruled that sexual harassment on the job is illegal discrimination even if the victim suffers no economic loss.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is used either explicitly or implicitly as a condition of employment, admission as a student to the school, or participation in any program or activity;
- 2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions, such as promotion, demotion, or raises, or as a basis for academic decisions, such as grades, evaluations, or references;
- 3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment. Examples of acts that create a hostile environment include, but are not limited to, repeated unwelcome sexual comments or advances, inappropriate or unwelcome and uninvited touching, repeated unwanted asking for dates, taunts regarding sexual preference, taunting jokes directed to a person by reason of their gender, obscene posters, threats, and favoritism based on gender. One's *intent* of behavior may not coincide with and does not supersede the effect of the behavior upon another person.

Any person who is in the United workplace and/or the classroom and feels that s/he has suffered sexual harassment, is encouraged to issue a complaint and follow the steps as outlined in the Problem Clearance Procedure. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated and the sexual harassment policy will continue to be scrutinized so that the United community can be reasonably assured of a safe and enjoyable working and learning environment.

Substance Abuse Policy

It is the policy of United Theological Seminary to provide all students and employees with a drug-free environment at the Seminary. In compliance with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act and the Drug-Free Workplace Act, the Seminary has established the following substance abuse policy.

All students and employees of United Theological Seminary are hereby notified that the following conduct is prohibited:

Unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of controlled substances (drugs) or alcohol on Seminary property or as a part of any Seminary activity, whether on- or off-campus and whether academic, professional, or social in nature.

As a term of employment and/or enrollment, students and employees will:

- abide by the terms of this policy, and
- notify the Vice President for Administration of any drug statute conviction for a violation occurring on Seminary property or during any Seminary activity no later than five days after such conviction.

Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and/or expulsion and referral for prosecution.

Whereas alcohol is a legal substance, this policy applies to the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of alcohol-i.e., unlawful activities involving alcohol, including by or with underage persons.

Whereas some controlled substances (i.e., prescription drugs) are legal when used under the care and guidance of a licensed physician, their use may cause adverse side effects which can impair one's performance. Misuse of prescription drugs can lead to dependence and/or to any of a variety of adverse physical conditions.

The abuse of any drugs or alcohol can affect one's health, emotions, behavior, performance, productivity, attendance, decision-making abilities, and safety. It can be costly-and even fatal-for the abusers and for those around them.

Campus Violence and Firearms Policy

United Theological Seminary is committed to preventing intimidation, harassment, violence, and threats of violence in the campus setting, and to maintaining a safe environment for students, faculty, and employees. To help accomplish this goal United prohibits the possession, transport, and storage of all weapons on United property (except as otherwise specifically permitted below).

Weapons are defined to include, but not limited to, handguns, firearms, explosives, and other items that may be defined as weapons under state, federal, or local laws or ordinances. Given the increasing violence in society in general, United has adopted the following guidelines to deal with intimidation, harassment, or violence or threats of violence that may occur on its premises.

Campus violence includes acts or threats of violence including conduct that is sufficiently severe, offensive, or intimidating to alter the academic conditions or create a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment for one or more of its employees or students. Any conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, a student, a United volunteer or a member of the public at any time will not be tolerated.

Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1. All threats or acts of violence occurring on United premises, regardless of the relationship between United and the parties involved in the incident.
- 2. All threats or acts of violence occurring off United premises involving someone who is acting in the capacity of a representative of United.
- 3. Specific examples of conduct, which may be considered threats or acts of violence, include but are not limited to:
 - Physical assault of an individual (hitting, shoving, kicking, or otherwise having unwelcome physical contact).
 - Threatening harm to individuals, their family, friends, associates, or property.
 - Verbal assault for the purposes of intimidation and/or coercion.
 - The intentional destruction or threat of destruction of United or personal property.

Students who are licensed to carry a concealed handgun may not carry a concealed handgun into any building owned or leased by United, or onto the United campus, except that license-holders may bring a handgun into United parking facilities. License-holder students must leave the handgun in the student's own locked vehicle locked in the glove compartment, locked in the trunk, or locked inside a gun case. License-holder students must disclose to United management their intent to bring a handgun onto United property before bringing it onto the property. Peace Officers and other law enforcement officers privileged to carry a concealed handgun on United property pursuant to Ohio law may do so to the extent permitted by law.

All acts or threats of violence (both direct and indirect) should be reported as soon as possible to any member of the Executive Staff. This includes threats by employees, as well as threats by students, volunteers, or members of the public. When reporting a threat of violence, you should be as specific and detailed as possible.

All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible to a member of the Executive Staff. Do not place yourself in peril. If you see or hear a commotion or disturbance, do not try to intercede or see what is happening.

United will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of acts or threats of violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as is practical. In order to maintain campus safety and the integrity of its investigation, United may suspend students pending investigation.

Anyone determined to be responsible for acts or threats of violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt disciplinary action, up to and including termination of student status.

United encourages students to bring their disputes or differences with employees to the attention of the Executive Staff before the situation escalates into potential violence.

United is eager to assist in the resolution of disputes and will not discipline students for raising such concerns.

Problem Clearance Procedure

Any student wishing to make a complaint should begin by following the three steps listed below.

We are a theological school moderate in size. We have in the past found that informality has encouraged harmony, which in turn has eliminated situations requiring formal procedures. However, in any educational organization, problems are inevitable.

The necessity for prompt attention to such problems and misunderstandings is unquestionable. Students must be assured that it is their right and privilege to follow a formal procedure to the top if necessary, without fear of censure or reprisal. We, therefore, have adopted the following Problem Clearance Procedure that applies to all students of United Theological Seminary:

The Problem Clearance Procedure for students of United Theological Seminary shall consist of three levels. Any aggrieved student may be accompanied at any meeting or hearing by another United Theological Seminary student or employee, in the case of a complaint. However, the aggrieved student must always be present during any meetings or hearings, which take place within the outlined procedures. Students shall have the irrevocable right to present their problems and complaints in private.

Step One

- (a) The aggrieved student's problem or complaint shall be presented by the student and her/his accompanying student or employee, if any, to her/his supervisor or professor or designated representative.
- (b) The problem or complaint shall be discussed by the parties at an informal meeting. The student shall, within three days subsequent to said meeting, receive an answer to her/his complaint.

Step Two

(a) If the student is not satisfied with the answer received, s/he shall, within three days after receiving said answer, prepare a concise written account of her/his complaint, and the supervisor or professor or designated representative shall prepare her/his answer in writing, and both documents shall be submitted to the supervising Vice President or Academic Dean.

Said Vice President or Academic Dean shall hold a meeting with the student and accompanying student/employee, if any, and the supervisor, professor, or designated representative. The Vice President or Academic Dean will render her/his decision within three working days subsequent to said meeting.

Step Three

(a) If the student is not satisfied with the decision made in Step Two, s/he may, within three days after receiving said decision, take her/his complaint to the President of United Theological Seminary for review and final decision.

the President, a Vice President, Academic Dean, one member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, and one member of the Board of Trustees, both to be selected by the President, and hereinafter designated the "Panel" shall review said complaint. The Panel may hold a meeting with the student and accompanying student or employee, if any. The President shall act as chairperson of the meeting and shall regulate the time to be allotted to each party for discussion.

(b) The student shall be given the decision within three days subsequent to the later date of the referral of the complaint to the President or the date of the meeting. This decision shall be final.