

Online Deaconess Studies (ODS) Manual



Policy Manual August, 2021

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Introduction

Welcome!

This booklet is a resource to orient Online Deaconess Studies (ODS) students and mentors/internship supervisors. It serves as a basic reference for the ODS program of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

Questions can be addressed to the Director of Deaconess Studies, Deac. Dr. Gillian Bond at (314) 505-7114 or bondg@csl.edu.

I. WHAT IS THE ODS PROGRAM?

Concordia Seminary's ODS program prepares women to share the Gospel through works of mercy, spiritual care and teaching the Christian faith in congregations, hospitals, nursing homes, social service organizations and foreign missions. The four-year distance education program leads to certification as a commissioned deaconess in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS).

The integrated curriculum includes 16 master's-level courses offered one at a time in a live, online format. Students are required to participate in three activities on campus: orientation at the beginning of the program, and formation seminars midway and again near the end of the program.

Students serve as interns in their location of service upon entering the program and beginning course work. Online deaconess students are advised by and supervised by Ministerial Formation. At the end of the program, students are eligible to receive deaconess certification and placement as a deaconess in the LCMS.

Participants

The ODS Program is tailored to meet the needs of women whom God is leading toward diaconal service but who are not able to relocate for residential studies or make frequent visits to campus. By allowing these students to remain within their local contexts, the program also better meets the needs of their congregations or organizations. Academic studies and concurrent internships are carefully interwoven in a way that benefits both students and the internship settings.

To be eligible for the program, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Be an active member of an LCMS congregation, and have been an active member of an LCMS congregation or church body in fellowship with the LCMS for at least two years before enrolling in the ODS Program.

- Have a high school diploma or an equivalent, such as the GED.
- Be committed to the Lutheran confession of faith and be willing to uphold the doctrinal position of the LCMS.
- Provide personal references attesting to the student's devotion to ministry and service, and be recognized as a person of exemplary Christian character.
- Pass the Old Testament, New Testament and Christian Doctrine Entry Level Competency Exams with a score of 70% or higher on each exam.

All ODS courses are taught at the master's degree level and, as such, applicants should have the experience and capability to study at this level.

The ODS Program leads to a theological certificate. If students choose, they can apply for a Master of Arts (M.A.) with a Spiritual Care Major in addition to the ODS certificate. Students wishing to apply for the M.A. must have an earned bachelor's degree, have a minimum GPA of 3.0 in the deaconess studies courses, complete four additional courses, and pass the Spiritual Care M.A. Comprehensive Examination.

Further information on admissions criteria is available from Concordia Seminary's Admissions Office. Questions regarding admission to the program may be addressed to them at admissions@csl.edu or (800)822-9545.

The ODS program is primarily a **partnership** of the Seminary, the students of the ODS program, their mentors, and the congregations or organizations with which they are placed on their internship; (internships may be with a congregation, a District of the LCMS, or a Recognized Service Organization of the LCMS). Each will contribute to the formation of deaconesses for the whole church, and each will grow in their own faith and service to our Lord Jesus Christ. We look forward to our growth together.

II. PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Course Work

The curriculum (see below, III) follows an intentionally designed sequence, with students engaged in cohorts that develop a community of learning and collegiality around their common service.

Courses are taught online and use distance education technologies that facilitate both asynchronous and synchronous learning. Online courses are guided by a syllabus that prescribes weekly reading, reflection, discussion with the student's mentor, and the submission of a journal for critical review in advance of a weekly online "live" (synchronous) classroom for two hours. Class sessions take place from 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Central Time, on Tuesdays for deaconess-specific courses and on

Mondays for courses taken together with SMP. Each course taught in the Spring, Summer or Fall is structured as an 11-week class.

Winterim courses are taught in an intensive online format, utilizing a hybrid of pre- and post-intensive assignments along with the online intensive.

Registration will be handled by the Registrar's Office according to the prescribed registration dates for each following term. Students are responsible for removing any STOP that will prevent timely registration, and they should check to make sure they are properly registered in advance of the next term.

Required On-Campus Events

Orientation

Orientation introduces participants to Concordia Seminary, its faculty and staff, the ODS program and course structure, mentor work, ODS program policies and procedures, internship, personality testing, graduation requirements, and procedures. Expenses for travel plus room and board are the responsibility of the students and mentors, respectively. (Limited, dormitory-style on-campus housing is available as an option at published seminary rates.)

Orientation is a required 4-day seminar. For fall cohorts it is held in late August, for spring cohorts in early February. Preparation for orientation begins once cohorts have been established. This involves pre-work for both students and mentors in taking a ministerial formation assessment (Harrison Assessment - see below) as well as coach training for mentors. ODS Orientation is a vital component of the program's success in preparing both students and mentors for participation in the ODS program. A student cannot begin the program unless both she and her mentor have been through Orientation.

Formation Seminars

Two Formation Seminars are required, one close to the mid-point and one near the end of the program. Each of these seminars takes the form of a week-long intensive on campus, running from noon on Monday to noon on Friday. The Formation Seminars carry no credit hours, but do contain substantive content pertinent to diaconal formation. Attendance and appropriate participation are required for successful completion of the program and for certification.

Recognition during the final Formation Seminar for students approaching completion of the program and certification will include a banquet during the week and recognition during the Friday morning seminary chapel service.

Mentor Participation

The success of the ODS program depends heavily on the role and participation of the mentor, who serves as the local presence of the church's teaching *ministerium* and extension of the seminary faculty. This is a key role and responsibility, and the choice and approval of the mentor must consider the commitment of time and involvement that will be necessary. The mentor ordinarily also serves as the supervisor for the concurrent internship, although that is not

necessarily the case. See below under “Mentor and Internship Supervisor” for further discussion of the role and responsibilities of the mentor.

Each ODS student will be expected to meet with her mentor weekly for 2 to 3 hours of discussion and work focused on the week’s learning material. This is time dedicated to the weekly material of the ODS courses and not that of other administrative or staff meetings that might engage both the student and the mentor.

More detailed responsibilities are discussed below (see section IV. MENTORS). In sum, the mentor will...

- Uphold the student in faith and life through encouragement, support and prayer.
- Mentor the student in formal studies on a regular basis.
- Work with the student to contextualize course content to her life and ministry.
- Provide feedback on the student, as needed or requested, to the Seminary and District.
- Encourage the student toward achievement of all program goals, to remain diligent about her studies, and to meet weekly and programmatic deadlines in a timely way.

Internship

The requirement of an academic year of supervised internship for full-time residential students is adapted for the ODS program as a four-year part-time (approximately quarter time) concurrent internship.

The ODS program internship begins at the same time as the student begins her course work at the seminary. Internship requirements and evaluations are the same as those for all programs of diaconal formation, including the qualifications of the internship supervisor, and are under the overall supervision of the Director of Vicarage and Internship of Concordia Seminary and the director of ODS internship.

Periodic reports are made by the student and the internship supervisor to the Director of Vicarage and Deaconess Internships of Concordia Seminary. Further details concerning the internship and internship reports can be found in the Deaconess Internship (Online) Manual, available from the Office of Vicarage and Deaconess Internships.

Ministerial Formation Assessment

The new student will take the Harrison Assessment through an online link, in advance of coming to the seminary for Orientation. Arrangements will be made for this by the Office of Personal Growth and Leadership Development. During on-campus Orientation the student will receive her Harrison Assessment results with an explanation of how to interpret them. She will later discuss her results individually with the Advisor on Personal Growth and Leadership Development. The Harrison Assessment is a tool that will help identify strengths and weaknesses

for diaconal ministry. The student will be encouraged to use the results to develop personal goals for her ministerial formation as an ODS student.

Faculty Certification

The requirements and procedures for “eligibility for individual membership” in the synod and for “qualification for first call” are discussed in the *Handbook of the LC–MS (2019), Bylaws § 2.7 and 2.8*. In sum, in order to be presented for certification a student must have satisfactorily completed all required courses and seminars through EXE411 and have conducted her internship in a satisfactory way. She “must have indicated complete dedication to the ministry and evidenced a readiness for service in the church” (§ 2.8.1(b)).

This process includes evaluation from both the church at large and the seminary faculty. In addition to the internship reports, a letter of evaluation and recommendation must be received from the mentor. Also, in order for a student to be declared qualified for a first call and recommendation by the faculty for the office of deaconess, the faculty must be satisfied that the student will meet all personal, professional, and theological requirements of the office. To that end a theological interview will be conducted as part of the certification process.

Assignment

A candidate declared qualified for call and commissioning shall receive her first call through an assignment by the Council of Presidents acting as the Board of Assignments of the Synod (*Handbook of the LC–MS (2019), Bylaws § 2.9*). This first call is ordinarily expected to be to the context in which she is receiving her training, since ODS students are typically not geographically mobile; it is here that she will be commissioned, and that she will carry out her ministry in this community.

PLEASE NOTE: The formal process leading to call and commissioning should be initiated by the mentor early in the quarter during which the student is taking the 14th course (PRA 475). Further information on this process may be obtained from the Placement Office at Concordia Seminary.

Completion

Students complete the program by taking and passing the 16th course PRA 476, successfully completing their concurrent internships, and fulfilling any outstanding obligations (including any outstanding payments due to the seminary and removal of any further STOPS on their accounts).

Program Costs and Billing

ODS costs include an initial application fee, standard master’s-level tuition for each course, and a student technology fee for each term. The standard congregational internship fee is billed in

two installments. These fees are adjusted annually, published in the *Academic Catalog* and on the ODS section of csl.edu. Financial aid is available from Concordia Seminary, currently covering one third of tuition. If the calling (sending) congregation or organization is able, it may share the remaining costs with the student.

Students should budget ca. \$200 per course for books. Travel, room and board expenses are the responsibility of the students for on-campus Orientation and for the two Formation Seminars. (Limited, dormitory-style on-campus housing is available at an established seminary rate.) These costs may also be shared by the calling (sending) congregation or organization.

Bills will be sent to the student's SemNet account since the student is ultimately responsible for this cost. Other billing arrangements may be discussed with Mr. Matt Daley at 314-505-7306, or daleym@csl.edu.

III. PROGRAM CURRICULUM

The “Narrative” that sets forth the vision

The ODS Curriculum (16 courses over four years) begins and ends with courses dealing with the diaconal ministry as a ministry of sharing the Gospel through works of mercy, spiritual care and teaching the Christian faith (“Introduction to Deaconess Ministry” and “Deaconess as Theologian and Leader”). In between these bookends the courses are organized around a narrative that integrates and binds the curriculum together. The deaconess speaks the Gospel of Jesus Christ within the context of the grand narrative of God’s activity in human history.

Given that a deaconess is called by the church to share the Gospel: (1) We explore the foundation of the diaconal office, and the source of different understandings of the role of women in different church bodies; (2) We then turn to how we share the Gospel through spiritual care as part of the master story of God’s activity. (3) We then consider what is the master story of the Biblical Gospel that the Christian church has proclaimed everywhere and at all times; and (4) “What are the key episodes and themes of that story?” (5) “What distinctions and themes do Lutherans find vital for the telling of Jesus’ story to others so that it is in fact the Gospel?” (6) With the Gospel having become ours, “How do we apply God’s Word to various specific situations in life with a Lutheran understanding of Law and Gospel, and assist in the provision of holistic care to women?” and, (7) “How do we teach the story of the Gospel to those who have little acquaintance with Christianity?” (8) Having explored the story, we now explore the questions, “How does the story of the Gospel become my story?” and (9) “How do we confess the Gospel before the world until Christ returns?”

Next we return to the master story of the Gospel but consider its instantiation in the particularities of the Biblical texts and history. Thus we begin by (10) Exploring the role and use of the Scriptures for speaking the Gospel. Then we explore how the one Biblical Gospel narrative is told and lived

out in (11) The Old Testament and (12) The New Testament, as well as (13) How the Reformation recovered the Scriptural Gospel for a new generation. Then we turn to the questions about how we include others in that story today through (14) The task of teaching the faith and (15) By means of the church as the means and goal of the *missio dei* within the role of the (16) Deaconess as leader and theologian.

Course Sequence and Course Descriptions

Note: All ODS courses are 2 (semester) credit hours.

1st Course (PRA 471)

Introduction to Deaconess Ministry: *This course is an introduction to the theology and practice of deaconess ministry as a ministry in which the identity, service and teaching of the deaconess are all rooted in God's Word. This course will explore issues related to the nature of the office and ministry of the deaconess, and the hermeneutical differences that have led other denominations to different understandings of the role of women in the church.*

2nd Course (PRA 472)

Introduction to Spiritual Care: *The deaconess may be called upon to give spiritual care not only to congregation members, but also to Christians from various church backgrounds as well as the unchurched or de-churched. This course will introduce basic methods of active listening and visitation, and explore the nature of Lutheran worship, the nature and function of prayer, the integral role of the theology of the cross in spiritual care and witness, and the importance of cross-cultural communication for spiritual care in a multicultural society.*

3rd Course (SYS 471)

The Master Narrative: *In speaking the Gospel, the deaconess confesses the work of Jesus Christ as central to God's involvement with the world (from creation to consummation). This course will explore how in worship and in the world, the master narrative of the Gospel restores our individual and corporate lives and shapes how we live.*

4th Course (SYS 472)

Creedal Themes: *The Gospel as summarized in the creed has a number of theological subplots that interlock with one another and whose meanings (doctrines) are indispensable for the master story. This course will explore how the Scriptures teach and how the church confesses the doctrinal truths that form the creedal story.*

5th Course (SYS 473)

Lutheran Distinctions: *The grand narrative of the Gospel has focused thus far on the presence and work of God within created history. It will now highlight the anthropological dimensions of that story and will explore how the Reformation brought those dimensions out by making distinctions between Law and Gospel, the two kinds of righteousness and the two kingdoms in order to confess the Gospel in its day.*

6th Course (PRA 473)

Spiritual Care of Women: *Spiritual care involves the application of God's Word to various specific situations in life, with a Lutheran understanding of Law and Gospel. The deaconess also may be called upon to assist in the provision of holistic care to women. This course will provide basic training in spiritual care of or by women with special emphasis on issues such as miscarriage, infertility, domestic abuse versus the biblical view of relationships, caregiving, ministry with the elderly, dementia, serious illness, grief, and death and dying.*

7th Course (PRA 474)

Teaching the Faith: *Because the story of God's dramatic redemption of the world takes a minute to hear but requires a lifetime to live, deaconesses are called not only to teach the Gospel but also to lead people into an ever-deepening understanding and appreciation of that inexhaustible story. This course will explore the nature and task of teaching the faith from cradle to grave. Special emphasis will be given to the task of catechesis and the teaching of Luther's catechisms.*

8th Course (SYS 474)

Means of Grace: *God's dramatic involvement within the world from creation to consummation centered in Christ also Courses 161 involves us. In a certain sense, the master story of the Gospel re-stories our lives by incorporating us into the mission and work of Jesus Christ. This course will explore how God's story of redemption becomes our story through the visible and spoken words of Baptism, Absolution and the Lord's Supper.*

9th Course (SYS 475)

Lutheran Confession of Faith: *The task of telling and confessing the dramatic story of God's mission within the world continues until Christ returns. The deaconess confesses that story against all errors that seek to distort it. This course will explore how the confessions of the church, the road map to the heart of Scripture, inform the diaconal task of dealing with errors that distort the master story of the Gospel.*

10th Course (EXE 471)

Scripture and Faith: *The master story of the Gospel is instantiated within the biblical accounts and told by them in various ways. As one who teaches and applies the Gospel, the deaconess uses these biblical accounts as the source and norm for teaching, witness and spiritual care. This course will explore the nature of the Scriptures, how the canon was collected and the purpose and use of the Scriptures within the Christian life.*

11th Course (EXE472)

Old Testament Theology: *God's dramatic involvement in the world begins with the mission of God in creation and the commission that He gave to his human creatures to care for it. Because they failed God re-enters his creation to redeem and restore it. This course will explore the theology of the gospel story as told in the Old Testament.*

12th Course (EXE 473)

New Testament Theology: *God's mission to save the world culminates in the incarnation, death and resurrection of His Son. With the creation of the New Israel on Pentecost, the church took the story of the Gospel to the far reaches of the world. This course will explore the theology of the New Testament with special emphasis on the themes that emerge as the New Testament writers tell the master story.*

13th Course (HIS 471)

Lutheran Reformation: *The Reformation was a recovery of the biblical story that resulted in a concomitant preaching revival. This course will demonstrate how the creedal and biblical narrative was at times hidden or lost in the centuries preceding the Reformation, how it was recovered by Martin Luther and the Reformation, and how it is proclaimed today.*

14th Course (PRA 475)

Teaching the Word to Women: *With a more thorough grounding in the nature of the Scriptures as well as the theology of the Old and New Testaments, the deaconess recognizes a number of interpretative questions and challenges to the teaching and application of the richness of the biblical Gospel. This course will focus on teaching the faith, particularly through the development of Bible studies, women's retreats, and devotions specific to women's contextual concerns and frequently asked questions, including issues relating to faith and science, and to the divinity of Christ.*

15th Course (EXE 474)

The Church and Its Life: *Within the grand narrative of the Gospel, the church appears as both the means and the goal of the mission of God. It is the means by which the mission of God is furthered in the world today and the goal of the mission of God in the new creation. This course will examine how Americans hear and filter the biblical Gospel, and will explore ways in which the church can tell the story in today's cultural context. The church has taken the master narrative of the Gospel into other cultures and found it necessary to translate that story. In living out that story, the church has found ways that are faithful to the Scriptures that take into account the challenges of culture.*

16th Course (PRA 476)

Deaconess as Leader and Theologian The curriculum ends where it began — with the deaconess who is called to tell the master story of God's Word. The course examines how the deaconess exercises appropriate leadership in the church, under the headship of the pastor. In particular, this course will explore how the deaconess can: identify needs and opportunities for works of service by the laity; guide, equip and empower lay leaders; interact with the community and the wider church in works of service; and proactively address conflict and the need for reconciliation, with humility and compassion.

IV. MENTORS

Purpose of Mentors in the ODS Program

The purpose of requiring mentors for students in the ODS program is to provide a supportive professional relationship in which the mentor guides, advises, and tutors the ODS student in her learning and ministerial formation for certification and commissioning.

The mentor is responsible to Concordia Seminary for tutoring, advising, and encouraging students as they participate in course and ministerial work, and for providing requisite feedback to the Seminary. The mentor usually also serves as the student's internship supervisor under the guidelines of Concordia Seminary's Office of Vicarage and Deaconess Internships. The focus in this section is on the role of mentor, with the understanding that there are areas of overlap in the two roles.

Mentoring and Theological Education

The ODS program views the mentor as an essential element of the theological education process. The mentor and the seminary are partners, working together to form the church's future deaconesses. Through this partnership the seminary consciously expands its educational community, further integrating local church leaders and faith communities (congregations, RSO's, districts, etc.) into the complex task of forming deaconesses. This results in a rich and broad community of faith, knowledge, and practice within which the student is shaped for diaconal ministry.

Qualifications and Training:

The mentor shall be:

- A rostered minister (ordained or commissioned) of the LCMS.
- Willing and able to lead the student to grow in the Christian faith and Lutheran theology and practice.
- Academically qualified (M.Div. or M.A. in an area of theology) to serve as content tutor to the student in her formal studies. [Courses are taught at M.A.-equivalent level, and can be counted by qualified students towards an M.A. degree.]
- Computer literate and in possession of a computer with Internet access that meets the program's "Computer System Requirements."

Note: For the concurrent internship, both the internship supervisor (who is normally also the mentor) and the internship site (congregation, RSO, district, etc.) will need to meet the qualifications as defined by the Office of Vicarage and Deaconess Internships.

Mentors of ODS students are required to attend the full on-campus Orientation with their students. Orientation for fall cohorts is held in late August, for spring cohorts in early February. As part of the training mentors are provided access to Blackboard, which includes the course syllabi and learning materials. Mentors also receive coach training.

The mentor and the student will arrange a work schedule that accommodates both of their schedules and accomplishes the work. Ordinarily, the mentor will spend 2-3 hours per week in conversation with the student that pertains to the contextualization and need for further clarification of course content, and in which mentors respond to questions which are brought to

them by their students from the weekly journal. This time may also include ministerial supervision activities.

Responsibilities:

The mentor will:

- Guide the student in faith and life through encouragement, support, and prayer.
- Advise the student regarding diaconal practice.
- Be familiar with the course materials and resources.
- Meet weekly with the student, prior to the due dates for the student to complete the mentor portions of the journal.
- Tutor the student in formal studies as needed.
- Offer support and encouragement to the student to continue the program and remain diligent about her studies.
- Provide counsel and support concerning the student's general state of physical and emotional wellness, including the well-being of her marriage and family if applicable.
- Observe the student in a variety of ministry situations, including Bible studies, visitation, spiritual care, outreach activities, etc. as described in the Deaconess Internship Manual and as appropriate to the internship setting.
- Incorporate circuit and district events into the student's experiences.
- Provide feedback, as needed or requested, to the seminary and district including, but not limited to:
 - Reports on internship progress as required, (if also serving as internship supervisor).
 - Recommendation of the student for certification or non-certification.
- Initiate the formal process leading to call and commissioning as the student nears completion of the program.
- Ensure proper procedures are followed if there is a need for the student to change mentors and/or internship supervisors (e.g. the mentor/internship supervisor is taking a call, moving, etc.). Both the ODS office and the Office of Vicarage and Deaconess Internships should be informed promptly by the calling (sending) organization about the new mentor, the new mentor's contact information, and the effective date of the change.
- If it becomes evident that the ministry context is no longer viable to qualify for the internship, or that, for any reason, the student should not be in the program, offer support and guidance for vocational redirection.

The mentor will be accountable to:

- The student in the role of mentor.
- The Seminary regarding the methods and means by which the mentor conducts his services.

Compensation:

The seminary will pay the mentor an honorarium for one student, per course, according to a schedule of such stipends as determined by the seminary and updated periodically. A mentor may have more than one student (but no more than three), and will then receive 50% of the stipend for each additional student. The mentor is to inform the Deaconess Studies Office of any change of address so that compensation may be sent to the correct address. Mentors honoraria are paid after the student successfully completes a course and final grades are submitted to the seminary registrar. (In case of student withdrawal, see procedures below.)

V. GRADING & ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

(See *Academic Catalog*, “*Academic Policies & Procedures*”)

All academic policies articulated in the Academic Catalog apply to the ODS program, including the Privilege of Enrollment, FERPA, Non-Discrimination, and Academic Grievance. The following are highlighted below, with specific reference to the procedures and policies of the program.

Grading System

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>(Academic Catalog description)</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>4.0</i>	<i>The student has demonstrated a superior mastery of the material and has met the objectives of the course in a superior manner.</i>
<i>A-</i>	<i>3.5</i>	
<i>B</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>The student has demonstrated a commendable mastery of the material and has met the objectives of the course in a commendable manner.</i>
<i>B-</i>	<i>2.5</i>	
<i>C</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>The student has demonstrated a satisfactory mastery of the material and has met the objectives of the course in an acceptable manner.</i>
<i>C-</i>	<i>1.5</i>	
<i>D</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>The student has not demonstrated a satisfactory mastery of the material but has met the objectives of the course in a minimal manner.</i>
<i>D-</i>	<i>0.5</i>	
<i>F</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>The student has failed to master the material or meet the objectives of the course.</i>

Incompletes, Course Failures and Leaves of Absence (LOA)

For the seminary’s policies on incomplete grades, course failures and LOAs, please consult the Academic Catalog.

NB: *During the time that a student is on an LOA she will normally continue to serve as an intern and the seminary will expect regular internship reports. Ordinarily no more than ONE (1) such hiatus will be allowed in the ODS program.*

Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating of any kind, including plagiarism (use of someone else's material without giving him credit), is considered unethical conduct, inconsistent with the habits of a Christian student, and may be grounds for immediate dismissal. (Academic Catalog)

In a program where most of the students' work will be done "on-line" this will be a constant concern, and plagiarism applies also and equally to electronic resources. While we encourage use of the internet for research, students may NOT copy this material word for word or make substantial use of it without giving credit to the author or web site where it was found.

Registration and Withdrawal Procedures

Registration:

ODS students will automatically be registered for their next course by the Registrar's Office. Students will not be registered for their next course if they have a **STOP** on their account. Typically a STOP indicates that a bill has not been paid.

NB: It is the student's responsibility to remove any STOP. Any STOP should be removed before the week of registration, so as to facilitate timely progress in the program. Do not wait until the end of the previous term to make sure you are registered for the next course. Students finishing the program's 16th course should note that successful completion of the program also requires them to remove any further STOPS and all outstanding obligations.

Dropping a Course:

1. Dropping a class before the class begins may be done with no fee.
2. Dropping a class or any registration changes after the first day of class results in a fee and a reduced refund. *Consult the Academic Catalog for student refund fees and rates.*

Leave of Absence, Withdrawal from program (sample forms in Appendix D)

1. A Leave of Absence can be requested for a short hiatus in the program (6 months or, if approved by Financial Aid, one year)
2. Procedures for Leave of Absence (LOA):
 - a. Contact the Director of the program.
 - b. Fill out the LOA form (see Appendix D).
3. To Withdraw from the ODS program:
 - c. Contact the Director of the program.
 - d. Fill out the WD (Withdraw) form (see Appendix D).

APPENDICES

- A. ODS Program: Diaconal Formation Outcomes, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis**
B. Forms: (B.1) Leave of Absence, (B.2) Withdrawal

APPENDIX A

ODS Program: Diaconal Formation Outcomes, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

Concordia Seminary equips students for diaconal ministry within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Concordia Seminary prepares women who will conduct their ministry faithfully according to the deposit of the faith in the Scriptures and the witness of the Lutheran Confessions, and who will conduct their ministries within the rapidly changing, pluralistic, post-modern and increasingly non-Christian world of the twenty-first century. In doing so, Concordia Seminary forms deaconesses who carry out their ministries with a view toward sharing the Gospel through works of mercy, spiritual care and teaching the Christian faith, in congregations, hospitals, nursing homes, social service organizations and/or foreign missions.

The Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) is designed to achieve the following student learning outcomes:

Theological Foundations

1. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) accepts the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions as authoritative for faith and life.
2. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) appropriates the theological disciplines as frameworks for theological reflection and diaconal practice.

Personal and Spiritual Formation

3. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates a life of spiritual health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
4. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates a life of vocational health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
5. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates a life of relational health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
6. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates a life of cultural health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
7. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates a life of physical health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
8. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates a life of emotional health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
9. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates a life of intellectual health,

characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

10. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates a life of financial health, characterized by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Cultural Interpretation and Engagement

11. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) analyzes and engages cultural and global realities.

Servant Practice and Leadership

12. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates the ability to provide Christ-centered care and counsel to people of various ages and social conditions according to their needs.

13. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates the ability to lead devotions in various situations and encourage personal and family devotional practices.

14. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates the ability to teach the Word of God for the benefit of the students.

15. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates the ability to support the work of the pastor(s) in the worship life of a congregation.

16. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates the ability to guide and support members of a congregation in their communal life in Christ.

17. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates the ability to prepare and lead members of a congregation to bring the Gospel to those outside the church.

18. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates the ability to guide and support members of a congregation to care for and serve those in need.

19. A graduate of the Deaconess Studies Program (Online-ODS) demonstrates the ability to provide appropriate advice to the leaders of a congregation to facilitate carrying out the congregation's goals.

APPENDIX B: Forms**MINISTERIAL FORMATION - STUDENT LEAVE OF ABSENCE (LOA)**

I, _____ request a leave of absence from Concordia Seminary's
(print name)

MDiv, **R**AR, **D**CS, **O**DS, **C**HS, **E**IIT, **S**MP program for the Fall, or Spring semester of the
(circle appropriate program) (circle)

_____ academic year. Anticipated date to return to class _____.

Contact Information (where you will be while on LOA):

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Leave of Absence Policy:

A student requesting a leave of absence (LOA) from enrollment at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, must consult with the director of the program in which the student is enrolled. In turn, the Director will be in consultation with the Dean of Ministerial Formation. A decision to grant the LOA rests with the Dean of Ministerial Formation. To take a leave of absence as a student in good standing, the student must have a satisfactory record of conduct and must have satisfied all obligations to the institution (e.g. return all library books, clear accounts with Accounting and Financial Aid).

Based on federal regulations, the following provisions apply to all Leaves of Absence.

- The student must apply in advance for an LOA if possible.
- A student is not permitted to be on LOA status more than 180 days in any 12 month period.
- A student on LOA status is not permitted to continue to attend any classes or fulfill any assignments for any courses.
- No additional charges can be applied to the student's account while he or she is on LOA status.
- When the student returns from an LOA, the student must resume his or her program at the point where he or she was before the LOA.
- LOA status has implications for financial aid and loans.

Prior to being granted the LOA and its announcement, the student is responsible for contacting the following offices for help in negotiating the particulars of his/her situation. The form should be returned to Ministerial Formation within 10 days of the effective LOA date.

Registrar _____ Accounting _____ Financial Aid _____

Library ___(N/A for ODS) Residential Services_ (N/A for ODS)

I have read the above Leave of Absence Policy and herewith request a leave of absence from Concordia Seminary.

Signature

Date

Please attach to this form a letter explaining the nature and cause of your request for a leave of absence from Concordia Seminary. **Please be sure to date and sign the letter.**

Program Director approval: _____
Date Signature

Leave of absence granted: _____
Date Dean of Ministerial Formation

Update the Ministerial Formation Office of contact information changes.

MINISTERIAL FORMATION STUDENT WITHDRAWAL FORM

A student who wishes to withdraw from Concordia Seminary must consult their program director before withdrawing.

I, _____ wish to withdraw from Concordia Seminary's
(print name)

MDiv, **R**AR, **D**CS, **O**DS, **C**HS, **E**IIT, **S**MP program effective _____ for
(circle appropriate program) (date)

personal / academic reasons.
(circle)

To withdraw as a student in good standing, the student must have a satisfactory conduct record and must have satisfied all obligations to the school. **Prior to being granted a withdrawal, the student is responsible for contacting the following offices for help in negotiating the particulars of his/her situation. The completed form should be returned to Ministerial Formation within 10 days of the effective withdrawal date.**

Registrar _____
Accounting _____
Financial Aid _____

Residential Services__ (not applicable for ODS)
Library_____ (not applicable for ODS)

Effective Dates for Withdrawing:

1. A student withdrawing during the semester — the date should be the actual date of withdrawal.
2. A student withdrawing between semesters — the date should be the first Monday after the previous semester.

My forwarding address will be:

Street: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

Signature

Date

Please attach to this form a letter explaining the nature and cause of your request to withdraw from Concordia Seminary. Please be sure to date and sign the letter.

Program Director Approval: _____
Signature

Date

Dean of Min. Form. Approval: _____
Signature

Da

