

## 2. STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

### 2.1. Introduction

As a representative of Jesus Christ, we are expected to be men or women of high moral character whose conduct is consistent with standards of Scripture. Certain exemplary standards of conduct and appearance govern the students, faculty and administrators of Shepherds Theological Seminary. Members of the Seminary are recognized as Christian leaders by people in the immediate church, residential and business community, as well as in the broader community of sister seminaries.

Shepherds Theological Seminary, as an institution dedicated to equipping servant leaders for life and ministry, necessarily requires the highest ethical standards for every one of us connected with it, whether a student, faculty member or staff member. All of us come under the instruction of Scripture to live as mature Christians under the leadership of the Holy Spirit and the clear teachings of Scripture. On the one hand, we are taught to be walking in the Spirit, and live so that the Holy Spirit is able to produce His fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal. 5:22–23). On the other hand, the works of the flesh have no place in the lives of us who are striving to please Christ and glorify God: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing and things like these (Gal. 5:19–21).

### 2.2. Christ-like Behavior

Our conviction is that STS belongs to Jesus Christ. We believe that all faculty members, staff members and students (whether preparing for ministry in counseling, the pastorate, missions or education) should seek to imitate our Lord's model of servant leadership. This includes:

1. Maintaining Christ-like attitudes and behavior towards those in our secular and Christian communities, including respect, courtesy, humility and caring (Eph. 5:15–17; Col. 4:5–6).
2. Maintaining conduct consistent with biblical principles, including refraining from gossip, cheating, stealing, vulgarity, dishonesty, slander, fraud and profanity (Eph. 4:25–32; 5:3–4).
3. Refraining from improper and pornographic involvement with the print, internet and broadcast media that are dangerous to one's life of godliness (Rom. 12:1–2; Jas. 1:21; Gal. 5:22–23).
4. Refraining from all types of illegal behavior, from enslavement to any activity or habit (1 Cor. 6:12), and from any activity that would cause a weaker brother to stumble (Rom. 14).
5. Upholding with priority one's family roles and responsibilities as detailed in the Scriptures (Eph. 5:22–33; 6:1–4).

6. Maintaining a biblical standard of sexual morality, as detailed in the following statement.

### 2.3. Personal Sexual Purity Statement

This statement is the logical out working of doctrinal beliefs as stated in the “Moral Issues” section of the Doctrinal Statement in this Catalog. STS believes it is important that it be clear that faculty, students and staff members are to uphold the highest standards of biblical purity in their interpersonal relationships. Without a clear understanding of sexual identity and consistent practice of sexual purity by these, STS cannot be an effective agent of the healing power of Jesus Christ to the advocates of sexual sin in our world.

We believe that God’s design for the gift of sexuality is that it is to be exercised and enjoyed only within the covenant relationship of marriage between one man and one woman. It is God’s intention that those who enter marriage shall seek in mutual love and respect, to live, one man and one woman, in Christian fidelity as long as both shall live (Genesis 1:27; 2:24; Mark 10:9; Luke 16:18).

We believe God has expressly condemned sexual intercourse outside of the marriage covenant. This prohibition applies to married persons committing adultery, unmarried heterosexual relationships, and any form of homosexual relationship. It is God’s expectation that the unmarried shall live pure and celibate lives, refraining from sexual intimacy (Leviticus 18:22; Deuteronomy 23:17; Romans 1:26–27; 1 Corinthians 6:9).

Because of the serious consequences unrepentant sexual sin can have on ministry, faculty, students and staff members who disagree with this policy or who do not conform their conduct to it are expected to resign their relationship with STS or they will be dismissed.

### 2.4. Permanence of Marriage

We believe that Scripture teaches us that marriage should be a permanent relationship and do not condone divorce as a desirable way of solving marital differences. A student who is experiencing marital difficulties is encouraged to meet with the dean or a faculty member for counsel immediately. If divorce becomes probable, the student must notify the dean. The student may be asked to drop out of school for a period of time to work on resolution and/or reconciliation.

Divorce does not necessarily bar a student from attending or graduating from Shepherds, although it may limit ministry recommendations and placement.

### 2.5. Dress Code

The appearance of STS students should reflect modesty and normally means shirts with collars and long pants for men and skirts or pants for women. ***No shorts or tank tops please.*** Exceptions can be made when it is a hardship to change from special work clothes prior to class.

## **2.6. Classroom Decorum**

Students are expected to address faculty with traditional classroom respect that recognizes their academic standing. They are to be addressed as “Doctor,” “Professor,” “Mister,” “Miss,” or “Mrs.”

## **2.7. Sexual Harassment and Misconduct**

STS will not tolerate sexual harassment or misconduct of any sort. This policy includes the following types of sexual misconduct: sexual discrimination; sexual harassment; sexual exploitation; hostile environment; sexual violence/assault; dating violence; and stalking.

This policy applies to all applicants for admission or employment, enrolled students (full-time or part-time, credit or audit), employees (full-time, part-time, resident faculty, adjunct faculty, and staff), volunteers and third parties who associate with the seminary either on the main campus in Cary, NC or at designated teaching sites.

This policy applies to conduct occurring within the context of providing an educational program or activity, either on or off seminary grounds.

Any sexual harassment or misconduct should be reported immediately to Mr. Ed Maness, Title IX Coordinator: 6051 Tryon Rd., Cary NC; 919-573-5350.

## **2.8. Code of Conduct Policy**

As representatives of Jesus Christ, we are expected to be men and women of high moral character whose conduct is consistent with standards of Scripture. Certain exemplary standards of conduct and appearance govern STS students, faculty and administrators. Members of the seminary are recognized as Christian leaders by people in the immediate church, residential and business community, as well as in the broader community of sister seminaries.

1. A Code of Conduct and a policy against Academic Dishonesty are written by faculty for students, and approved by the faculty and Board.
2. Each student signs a statement on the STS application agreeing to adhere to the Code of Conduct and policy against Academic Dishonesty.
3. The student Code of Conduct and standards against Academic Dishonesty are distributed regularly to students.
4. A Faculty Code of Conduct is written for faculty by administration and approved by the faculty and Board.
5. Each faculty member signs the faculty Code of Conduct statement, indicating their intention to adhere to it.

## 2.9. Cheating and Plagiarism

All STS students must comply with the seminary's academic dishonesty policy (Adapted from "Academic Dishonesty," The Master's College, Santa Clarita, CA)

Ephesians 4:28—*He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good. . . .*

Seminary education is based upon certain shared values concerning the nature of learning and the pursuit of knowledge. One of the most basic assumptions is the respect for intellectual property and right of recognition for this pursuit of knowledge. Violation of this basic assumption includes such practices as cheating, plagiarism, and abuse of technology, falsification of research data, unapproved collaborative research, and other deceptive academic practices. Sometimes these abuses are unintentional, but much intentional abuse is found in higher educational institutions, even Christian seminaries.

### Policy Guidelines

In an attempt to clarify the problem and offer consequences for participation in such activities, the following materials are offered as both a warning and as a guideline to avoid unconscious participation in questionable practices. Of course, questions regarding the appropriateness of any debatable activity should be cleared in advance with an instructor. Certainly students preparing for the Lord's work need to make sure that truth and honesty pervade their lives.

### Definitions

Plagiarize—to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own; to use someone else's material without crediting the source (see Merriam-Webster Dictionary On-Line).

Cheat—to deprive of something valuable by the use of deceit or fraud; to violate rules of honesty as on an examination (see Merriam-Webster Dictionary on-Line).

### Unquestionable Violations of Academic Integrity

The faculty will generally approach the following cases with severe academic penalties.

Violation	Standard Consequence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copying answers directly from another student.</li> <li>• “Cribbing” answers in any form to be accessed during the examination.</li> <li>• Usage of a substitute person for writing an exam or term paper.</li> <li>• Altering answers on a returned exam for re-submission.</li> <li>• Falsification of reading report</li> </ul>	F for the assignment, and probable F for the course
Unauthorized access to faculty files (electronic and or paper)	F for the course and probable expulsion
Unauthorized discussion of exam content	F for the course for both parties
Usage of purchased or pre-existing term paper	F for the assignment, probable F for the course, and possible expulsion

### **Questionable Violations of Academic Integrity**

The issues following are deemed unacceptable by most STS faculty members and will result in confrontation with the student over potential charges of academic dishonesty. In most cases, such unacceptable practices will result in at least a warning, and possibly an F for the assignment.

#### **Violations**

- Significant amount of continued writing after the conclusion of an exam.
- Multiple submission of the same assignment or paper without approval.
- Technological manipulation of electronic text by copy and paste without citation.
- Usage of a source without documentation or citation credit.
- Artificial additions and inflation of bibliographic sources.
- Deliberate alteration of time and date on late assignments.
- Exaggerated computer problems or technical problems due to procrastination.

## 2.10. Suspension or Dismissal

Attendance at STS is a privilege, and not a right. Students who in the opinion of Seminary faculty and administration violate these standards of conduct may be recommended for suspension or dismissal by the Vice-President of Academic Affairs or director of mentoring. The student can appeal this decision through the Provost. Readmission in the case of suspension would have to receive approval of the Faculty Council. A dismissal will require a student to go through the application for admission process.

## 2.11. Grievance Resolution Policy and Procedure

### Policy

Students have an opportunity to present their complaints and to appeal faculty or administrative decisions through a dispute resolution or grievance procedure. STS will attempt to resolve promptly all grievances that are appropriate for handling under this policy.

### Procedures

An appropriate grievance is defined as a student's expressed feeling of dissatisfaction concerning any interpretation or application of a work/study-related policy by management, faculty or other employees.

Students must notify STS in a timely fashion of any grievance considered appropriate for handling under this policy. The grievance procedure is the exclusive remedy for students with appropriate grievances. As used in this policy, the terms "timely fashion," "reasonable time" and "promptly" will mean seven days.

Students will not be penalized for proper use of the grievance procedure. However, it is not considered proper if a student abuses the procedure by raising grievances in bad faith or solely for the purposes of delay or harassment, or by repeatedly raising grievances that a reasonable person would judge to have no merit.

Students who feel they have an appropriate grievance should proceed as follows:

Promptly bring the grievance to the attention of a faculty member. If the grievance involves a faculty member, then it is permissible to proceed directly to Step B. The faculty member is to investigate the grievance, attempt to resolve it and give a decision to the student within a reasonable time. The faculty member should prepare a written and dated summary of the grievance and proposed resolution for file purposes.

The student may appeal the decision to the Provost, if dissatisfied with the faculty decision, or initiate the procedure with the Provost if the grievance involves a faculty member. If the grievance involves the Provost, then it is permissible to proceed directly to Step C. An appeal or initial complaint must be made in a timely fashion in writing. The faculty member's version of the grievance and decision will then be submitted, also in writing. The Provost will, in a timely fashion, confer with the student, the faculty member and any other members of management considered appropriate; investigate the issues, and communicate a decision in writing to all the parties involved.

The student may appeal an unsatisfactory Provost decision to the chairman of the Board of Directors, or initiate the procedure with the chairman if the grievance involves the Provost. The timeliness requirement and procedures to be followed are similar to those in Step 2. The chairman will take the necessary steps to review and investigate the grievance and will then issue a written, final, and binding decision.

Final decision on grievances will not be precedent-setting or binding on future grievances unless they are officially stated as STS policy. When appropriate, the decision will be retroactive to the date of the student's original grievance.

Information concerning a student's grievance is to be held in strict confidence. The office of the Provost will collect, file and report all student complaints. Faculty members, department heads and other members of management who investigate a grievance are to discuss it only with those individuals who have a need to know about it or who are needed to supply necessary background information.

Students who feel that the administration or faculty are not dealing properly with their complaint may contact The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS) [10 Summit Park Drive Pittsburgh, PA 15275, Telephone: 412-788-6505, Fax: 421-788-6510, E-mail: [tanner@ats.edu](mailto:tanner@ats.edu), Website: [www.ats.edu](http://www.ats.edu)].

In compliance with state regulations and the rules promulgated by the U.S. Department of Education, The University of North Carolina is committed to implementing a student complaint process that is fair, timely, and effective. This policy establishes a process by which students can initiate complaints against a post-secondary institution offering programs in the state of North Carolina when all other forums at the institutional level have been exhausted.

The University of North Carolina General Administration, serving as the clearinghouse for complaints concerning post-secondary institutions that are authorized to operate in North Carolina, will act upon those complaints within its purview and forward all other complaints to the appropriate agency.

### **Complaints against UNC Constituent Institutions**

The North Carolina General Assembly established the University of North Carolina Board of Governors as the body responsible for the oversight of the University of North Carolina, its constituent institutions and other post-secondary institutions licensed to operate in North Carolina.

The Board of Governors has formal and informal involvement with, and control over, the complaints and appeals that arise at its constituent institutions. In addition to direct involvement, the Board of Governors has also delegated authority to the constituent institutions and to the President of the University of North Carolina to receive complaints and to act on them accordingly.

Student complaints are routinely resolved at the institutional level. If there is no specific policy to appeal to the University of North Carolina Board of Governors, the President's staff at UNC General Administration maintains an open student complaint process "to review and appropriately act on complaints concerning the institution." Students from all constituent institutions may utilize the application form provided by the UNC General Administration Office of Post-Secondary Education Complaints to submit these complaints.

### **Complaints against Licensed Institutions, Independent Colleges and Universities, and State Community Colleges**

Complaints received against post-secondary institutions licensed in the state of North Carolina, state community colleges, and the 36 statutorily-recognized independent colleges and universities will be forwarded to the appropriate agency for action. Students may utilize the application form provided by the UNC General Administration Office of Post-Secondary Education Complaints to submit these complaints for processing.

### **Student Compliant Process**

Step 1. Have you filed a complaint at your institution? If yes, proceed to the next step. If no, please refer to your institution's student complaint process. You must exhaust all opportunities for resolution with the appropriate persons at your institution before filing a complaint with the Office of Post-Secondary Education Complaints.

Step 2. Using the student complaint form, submit all relevant information and supporting documentation regarding your complaint to the North Carolina Office of Post-Secondary Education Complaints, C/o Student Complaints, 910 Raleigh Rd., Chapel Hill, NC 27515-2688 or email your complaint to: [studentcomplaint@northcarolina.edu](mailto:studentcomplaint@northcarolina.edu).

Step 3. Once received by the Office of Post-Secondary Education Complaints, complaints will be forwarded to the appropriate staff or agency for investigation as follows:

- a. Complaints against any of the 17 UNC constituent institutions will be forwarded to the Office of Academic and Student Affairs at UNC General Administration
- b. Complaints against any of the 58 state community colleges will be forwarded to the North Carolina Community College System
- c. Complaints against any of the 36 independent colleges and universities will be forwarded to the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities
- d. Complaints against any licensed North Carolina institution will be forwarded to the Licensure Division of UNC General Administration
- e. Complaints against out-of-state institutions authorized to operate in the state of North Carolina will be forwarded to the Licensure Division of UNC General Administration



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Step 4. Students will be notified of the investigation results and/or resolution of the complaint.

## **2.12. Drug Awareness Program and Rehabilitation Counseling**

For policies and procedures for Drug Awareness, see the Security, Health, and Crisis Response Handbook. This handbook can be found on our website at [shepherds.edu](http://shepherds.edu) under Current Students/Forms & Downloads.

Shepherds Theological Seminary will refer a student who needs any drug and or alcohol counseling, treatment, or rehabilitation to the Care Department of The Shepherd's Church where trained counselors will assess, counsel, and if necessary, refer to ministries and or agencies that help with these specific kinds of issues.