

## **General Institutional Standards**

mance of the program, service, or person based on this information; and (4) the establishment of revised goals or activities based on the assessment. Institutions shall develop and implement ongoing evaluation procedures for employees, students, educational programs, and institutional activities.

1.2.3 A comprehensive evaluation process is the primary resource an institution uses to determine the extent to which it is accomplishing its purpose. The various institutional and educational evaluation procedures shall be analyzed, coordinated, and employed in comprehensive institutional planning.

## **2 INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY**

Institutional integrity is demonstrated by the consistency of a theological school's actions with commitments it has expressed in its formally adopted statement of purpose, with agreements it assumes with accrediting and governmental agencies, with covenants it establishes with ecclesiastical bodies, and with ethical guidelines for dealing with students, employees, and constituencies.

2.1 Schools accredited by the Board of Commissioners shall carry out their educational programs and institutional activities according to the standards and procedures established by the Commission and its Board of Commissioners, communicate honestly and forthrightly with the Board, comply with requests for information, and cooperate with the Board in preparation for and conduct of visits.

2.2 With regard to state, provincial, and federal authorities, schools shall conduct their operations in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

2.3 The school shall ensure that all published materials, including catalogs, academic calendars, and promotional literature, accurately represent the institution to its various constituencies and publics, including students and prospective students. All charges and fees, including refund policies, should be fully disclosed. Schools should exercise care in advertising to portray the institution fairly and honestly to the public. Wherever appropriate, published institutional documents shall employ gender inclusive language with reference to persons.

2.4 The institution shall seek to treat students, faculty, administrators, employees, and the publics to which it relates in ethical ways. Such treatment includes, among other concerns, an equitable policy of student tuition refunds; nondiscriminatory practices in employment, insofar as such practices do not conflict with doctrine or ecclesiastical polity; clearly defined

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processes for addressing faculty, employee, and student grievances; and integrity in financial management.

2.5 Integrity in theological education includes institutional and educational practices that promote awareness of the diversity of race, ethnicity, and culture widely present in North America. Schools shall seek to enhance participation of persons of racial/ethnic minorities in institutional life. According to its stated purpose, the school shall seek to address the concerns of women and to increase their participation in theological education. In all cases, schools shall seek to assist students in gaining the particular knowledge, appreciation, and openness needed to live and practice ministry effectively in changing cultural and racially diverse settings.

2.6 Institutions participating in U.S. federally guaranteed student financial assistance programs shall comply with prevailing governmental guidelines regulating these programs. Default rates on student loans above the federal threshold, or failure to comply with federal guidelines, is cause for review of an institution's overall conformity to the standards of accreditation of the Commission.

2.7 For schools related to colleges or universities, integrity requires that these schools contribute to the overall goals of the larger institution and support its policies and procedures.

## **3 LEARNING, TEACHING, AND RESEARCH: THEOLOGICAL SCHOLARSHIP**

A theological school is a community of faith and learning that cultivates habits of theological reflection, nurtures wise and skilled ministerial practice, and contributes to the formation of spiritual awareness and moral sensitivity. Within this context, the task of theological scholarship is central. It includes the interrelated activities of learning, teaching, and research.

### **3.1 Activities of Theological Scholarship: Learning, Teaching, and Research**

3.1.0 Learning and teaching occur in the classroom and through experiences outside the classroom; the responsibilities of teaching and learning rest with both students and faculty; the collaborative nature of theological scholarship requires that people teach and learn from one another in communal settings; and research is integral to the quality of both learning and teaching.