

Erskine Theological Seminary

Statement of Educational Effectiveness

Updated December 1, 2020

EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS STATEMENT

The Board of Commissioners of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) has had a policy for many years that requires schools to publish a statement regarding the school's educational effectiveness (ATS Educational Standard ES.6.4.4). Erskine Seminary has established the percentage of students who obtained employment or pursued additional education preparation, related to their degrees, after graduation as criteria for effectiveness. Data used to evaluate student success is determined by ATS Annual Report data and alumni surveys and is used to measure how well the Seminary has succeeded in its goal to "to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ through theological higher education that is ecclesial, missional, and confessional."

HISTORY

The Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States came into existence in November 1782, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Associate Reformed Synod of the South, today called the General Synod, was organized in 1803. One of the most serious problems confronting the Church in the early period of its history was to secure ministers to serve its scattered congregations and carry the missionary work in the rapidly growing population. Since the Church had a deep heritage in Scotland, with a long emphasis upon an educated clergy, the need for a theological seminary was keenly felt. The first attempt to fill this need was made in 1822 when the Synod appointed two pastors to provide theological training for young ministerial candidates. The seminary had no buildings, no books, and no money. When one professor died in 1829 and the other left in 1831 to accept work in Pennsylvania, the Synod began plans for an institution to provide scholastic and theological training of ministerial candidates.

In 1836, the Synod opened an academy in Due West, South Carolina; the following year added a professor of divinity and incorporated the institution under the name of "Clark and Erskine Seminary." The addition of a professor of divinity in 1837 was the beginning of Erskine Theological Seminary.

In 1839, Clark and Erskine Seminary was reorganized and the faculty was enlarged to establish the first four-year denominational college in South Carolina. The name of the institution was shortened to "Erskine College" around 1843, and in the following years the Seminary functioned as an adjunct of Erskine College.

In 1858, the Seminary became a separate institution, but continued to operate under the same Board of Trustees as Erskine College. During the War Between the States, the student enrollment was greatly reduced in both the College and Seminary, resulting in the sharing of teachers between the two faculties. In 1926, the College and Seminary again combined resources and the Seminary became the professional school of Erskine College, an arrangement which continues to exist.

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Completion Rates						
MDiv						
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
<2 years	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 to < 3 years	24%	29%	25%	20%	30%	30%
3 to < 4 years	24%	21%	25%	15%	15%	-
4 to < 5 years	48%	6%	12%	30%	10%	20%
5 to < 6 years	4%	22%	25%	20%	30%	-
6+ years	-	22%	11%	15%	15%	50%
MAPM						
<2 years	25%	-	-	-	-	-
2 to < 3 years	38%	-	-	50%	75%	-
3 to < 4 years	13%	25%	20%	-	-	100%
4 to < 5 years	-	-	10%	-	-	-
5 to < 6 years	13%	25%	20%	-	-	-
6+ years	13%	50%	40%	50%	25%	-
MATS						
<2 years	33%	50%	-	-	-	-
2 to < 3 years	-	-	-	10%	-	45%
3 to < 4 years	-	-	-	-	75%	45%
4 to < 5 years	-	-	100%	-	-	-
5 to < 6 years	-	-	-	45%	-	-
6+ years	67%	50%	-	45%	25%	10%
DMin						
<2 years	-	16%	11%	-	-	-
2 to < 3 years	18%	4%	15%	80%	50%	20%
3 to < 4 years	50%	36%	3%	20%	5%	25%
4 to < 5 years	12%	20%	30%	-	15%	5%
5 to < 6 years	12%	-	11%	-	-	25%
6+ years	6%	24%	30%	-	30%	25%
ThM						
<2 years	50%	-	100%	-	-	-
2 to < 3 years	-	-	-	-	-	-
3 to < 4 years	50%	-	-	-	-	-
4 to < 5 years	-	100%	-	-	-	-
5 to < 6 years	-	-	-	100%	-	-
6+ years	-	-	-	-	-	-

Data Source: ATS Annual Reports/Institutional Research

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Placement Rates						
MDiv						
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Vocational ministry placement	86%	87%	100%	80%	84%	83%
Non-ministry placement	7%	13%	-	13%	-	-
Further study	-	-	-	-	-	17%
Seeking placement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	7%	-	-	-	8%	-
Unknown	-	-	-	7%	8%	-
MAPM						
Vocational ministry placement	66%	-	50%	-	75%	100%
Non-ministry placement	16%	-	33%	-	-	-
Further study	-	-	-	100%	-	-
Seeking placement	-	-	-	-	25%	-
Other	16%	-	-	-	-	-
Unknown	-	-	16%	-	-	-
MATS						
Vocational ministry placement	67%	100%	-	20%	20%	40%
Non-ministry placement	-	-	100%	40%	20%	40%
Further study	-	-	100%	20%	60%	10%
Seeking placement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	33%	-	-	-	-	-
Unknown	-	-	-	20%	-	-
DMin						
Vocational ministry placement	100%	100%	100%	90%	64%	84%
Non-ministry placement	-	-	-	10%	13%	8%
Further study	-	-	-	-	5%	8%
Seeking placement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	13%	-
Unknown	-	-	-	-	5%	-
ThM						
Vocational ministry placement	100%	100%	-	-	-	100%
Non-ministry placement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Further study	100%	-	100%	100%	-	-
Seeking placement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	-

Data Source: ATS Annual Reports/Institutional Research

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Overall Experience During Theological Program				
	MDiv	MAPM	MATS	DMin/ThM
I have been satisfied with my academic experience here.	88%	90%	90%	90%
Field education/internship has been a helpful experience.	86%	86%	70%	74%
Faculty were supportive and understanding.	90%	92%	90%	90%
I have felt accepted within the school's community.	88%	88%	84%	88%
I have grown spiritually.	90%	90%	88%	88%
My faith is stronger than when I came.	88%	88%	86%	86%
My personal faith has been respected.	88%	90%	88%	90%
Individuals of other faith traditions have been respected.	86%	88%	86%	88%
I know at least one faculty member well.	88%	84%	82%	86%
I have been able to integrate the theology and practice of ministry.	90%	88%	86%	90%
The school has tried to be a diverse and inclusive community.	86%	86%	84%	88%
I have come to know students from other racial, ethnic, and cultural groups.	88%	86%	84%	88%
I have made good friends here.	88%	84%	80%	86%
Seminary was a good experience for my spouse/family.	76%	76%	74%	76%
Commuting increased the time it took to complete my program.	54%	58%	54%	56%
I have been able to manage financially.	80%	80%	80%	82%
If I had to do it over, I would still come here.	88%	88%	88%	88%

Data Source: ATS Annual Reports 2019

To properly interpret the above data, please note the following numbers for each degree program for each year. Also, when more than 100% appears in a column above it indicates that more than one category applied to one or more students (i.e., student may be placed in a ministry setting AND pursuing further study).

YEAR/DEGREE	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
MAPM	-	-	6	2	4	1
MATS	3	2	1	5	5	5
MDiv	14	8	15	15	13	6
ThM	2	1	1	1	-	1
DMin	14	22	14	9	14	12
Total	33	33	37	32	36	25