



Academy of Christian Training and Service

Students

NOTE: Please read ALL chapters in this handbook.



WELCOME, NEW STUDENTS!

Welcome to the Academy of Christian Training and Service (ACTS)! You are to be commended for taking this step toward enriching your study of the Bible and learning effective ways to share your faith with others. The thought of studying and taking tests may seem intimidating to you as many may have been out of school for several years, yet with God’s help it is possible.

The following list is offered as encouragement as you prayerfully and intentionally begin your journey:

1. Set goals. These can be as simple as, “I want to complete this class,” with a challenge goal of - “Complete ACTS in 2 years.” Or, “I want to become a more effective Sunday School Teacher.” Share the goals with someone who can help you keep on target.
2. Arrange your schedule to designate time to study (reading, writing, typing, and review of class notes included). Plan ahead to avoid last minute time crunches.
3. Learn to say, “No, but thank you for asking!” when invited to do things that conflict with class hours or study time.
4. Use what you learn. Let the material impact you personally. Use the knowledge appropriately in your teaching and speaking. Listen to scriptures and hymns, class presentations and your pastor’s sermons with expectation. Let God speak to you and through you.
5. Take each assignment seriously. Don’t worry over it. Instead, pray and prepare. Remember, “The Joy of the Lord is My Strength,” a song based on Nehemiah 8:10. As we study we give God joy and He gives us the strength we need, as well as joy as we complete each assignment.
6. Ask for help when you need it.
 - a. From God, who calls and supports you.
 - b. From Instructors, when you have questions.
 - c. From your family to respect your study time.
 - d. From your pastor and church, when you need ministry opportunities.
 - e. From your mentor to keep up to date with checklists and material needing to be turned in to the Dean of Academics.
 - f. From financial aid resources if necessary:
 - g. Your family and friends
 - h. Your church
 - i. American Baptist Men
 - j. ACTS Scholarship Fund
 - k. Region Scholarship Funds (contact regional staff regarding availability)



7. Thank God for choosing you and giving you this time in your life to study and to prepare for ministries He has in mind for you to accomplish for Him.

8. Encourage each other. You are not in competition for grades or attention. Some assignments are more difficult for some than for others. Health and family concerns may present special needs for prayer support.

9. Pray for each other, for your instructors, and for your mentors. You are all growing, learning and trusting God in this adventure.

10. Begin with your goal in mind. Allow yourself to be molded by God's will for you in ministry. God will bless you as you become a more effective communicator of the Gospel.

Revised 2017



ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

Certified Lay Minister Preparation Program

Persons who desire to enroll in ACTS seeking credit toward the Certified Lay Minister Preparation program must meet the following criteria:

1. Be at least 21 years of age.
2. Be a high school graduate or the equivalent.
3. Be a participating member of an American Baptist church within the participating Associations of the American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware. Members of other ABC regions or Christian denominations may participate. However, non-American Baptist applicants should check with their church leadership about how to fulfill the polity and history and other requirements of their particular denomination.
4. Submit a letter of recommendation from the church of membership stating its willingness to:
 - a. Formally endorse the student's gifts for ministry by a vote of the church (either by the congregation as a whole or by an appropriate committee or group within the church).
 - b. Provide a brief background of the student's current involvement in the life of the church.
 - c. Be willing to consider the student for certification.
 - d. Provide support and prayer for the student as he/she pursues the program.
5. Confirm that requirements 1, 2 and 3 above are true for this student.
6. Submit three other brief letters of recommendation (at least one, but no more than one American Baptist minister and one relative can be included) commenting on the applicant's fitness for ministry.
7. Students who meet these requirements and are accepted into the Academy must make note of the fact that the Academy does not certify persons for ministry. Completion of studies does not guarantee a student will be certified or placed in a pastoral position in a church. Please see page entitled "A Word About Certification and Placement" for further details on this subject.



Diploma in Christian Studies Program

The Diploma in Christian Studies is offered to students who do not feel called to certified lay ministry, but who complete all of the course work satisfactorily. These students have the same entrance requirements as outlined above, except for points 1, 4c, and 5. In addition, Christian Studies students will not participate in the supervised ministry/mentorship program.

If a Christian Studies student wishes to transfer into the Certified Lay Minister Preparation program at a later time, this person must meet the additional enrollment criteria for that program at that time. All applicable fees for the new program will then apply at the rate published at the time of transfer. An additional administrative fee for program transfer may also be charged.

Personal Enrichment

In order to be able to benefit from and participate fully in the courses offered, it is suggested that the personal enrichment student who is only taking a few selected courses meet the following minimum standard: Have a high school diploma or the equivalent. If a personal enrichment student later wishes to transfer to a diploma program, he/she must meet the enrollment criteria for that program at that time. All applicable fees for the new program will apply at the rate published at the time of transfer.

Continuing Education

Lay people and professional church leaders, either active or retired, may elect to take courses to enrich their personal lives and ministry. Continuing Education Units for professional church leaders will be offered, accredited through ABCOPAD. Fees will vary depending on the course being offered. From time to time, special continuing education events for church leaders will be offered.

Auditing a Class

For those who would like to attend a class of personal interest, but don't want to commit to taking all the classes, we offer the opportunity to audit any of the ten basic classes: New Testament, Biblical Interpretation, Baptist History and Polity, Old Testament, Preaching, Pastoral Leadership, Christian Education, Theology, Pastoral Care, Missions & Outreach/Evangelism. Attendance would be at the student's desire and discretion. Auditing students would have the privilege of participating in class discussions and receiving handouts of class material from the instructors. However, they are not required to do homework or write term papers. No grades or credits are awarded. Cost for Auditing a Class is ½ of the current full tuition.



STUDENT APPLICATION

2017-2019 Cycle

Fill in both sides of form and return to The Dean of Academics being sure to check the desired courses on the second sheet. Obtain admissions criteria from The Dean of Advancement if not included with this form. Thank you.

1. PERSONAL

First Name _____ Middle Initial _____ Last Name _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____

ZIP+4 _____ Phone: home (____) _____ cell (____) _____

Referred by: _____

email address: _____

2. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Church/Association: _____ Pastor: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ ZIP+ 4 _____ - _____

Church Phone: (____) _____ Denomination of Membership _____

Church email _____

Church position(s)/Involvement: _____

3. PROGRAM TRACK SELECTION:

I wish to be considered for admission into the following course of study:

___ Certified Lay Minister Preparation (complete all 10 courses and mentoring),

yes no I'm at least 21 years of age.



- Diploma in Christian Studies (complete all 10 courses)
- Personal Enrichment (occasional course selections)
- Continuing Education Credit (for professional church leaders, active, inactive or retired)
- Auditing a Class (may take any of the 10 classes, but will not receive credit). See tuition cost under 4, D

Note: Students admitted Mid-Program (after Fall of 2015) are advised that changes in the sequence of classes may be made in the academic calendar. Such changes will likely extend your completion date. Courses are offered once every two years. If you do not select both courses each term, you will prolong the time it takes to complete the program beyond two years.

4. FEES AND TUITION

- a. Make all checks payable to “**ACTS or Academy of Christian Training and Service**”.
- b. Registration fee: \$25.00 **one-time, non refundable fee must** accompany this form. (No need to pay this, if you have previously paid.)
- c. Tuition: \$225.00 per course, payable on or before the first class session
- d. Tuition: \$112.50 per course for Auditing a Class
- e. Late fee: \$10.00 will be assessed for applications received any later than 6 weeks before a course is scheduled to begin.
- f. Mentor fee: \$100.00 each year in the program, for Certified Lay Minister Preparation students only. Payable at the time a mentor is assigned.
- g. Books: Approximately \$40.00 per course, varies.
- h. After a student has explored scholarship opportunities through their local church, they may under exceptional circumstances be granted a scholarship through ACTS. Scholarship assistance may be considered for all American Baptist students, regardless of program track selected. An application for Scholarship Assistance can be obtained from the Dean of Advancement and must be mailed in at least two weeks prior to the beginning of each term. Applications must be made separately for each term. After the application is returned to the Chairman of the Finance Committee and is reviewed, the student will be notified of the amount of scholarship given.

5. ADDITIONAL FORMS REQUIRED:

Certified Lay Minister Preparation students need to submit a Letter of Support from their church of membership, three letters of personal recommendation and copies of a State police Record Check and State Child Abuse History Clearance and an FBI Criminal Record Check to be kept in the student’s permanent file. Diploma in Christian Studies students need to submit a Letter of Support from their church of membership and a copy of a Criminal Record Check and State Child Abuse History Clearance to be kept in the student’s permanent file.

TERM YOU WISH TO BEGIN TAKING CLASSES:

Fall 2017 ”J” 2018 Spring 2018 ”M” 2018 Fall 2018 ”J” 2019 Spring 2019 ”M” 2019



6. PLEASE ANSWER ALL THESE QUESTIONS FULLY

Marital Status (circle one) Single Married Other _____

Name of spouse or contact person in case of emergency: _____

Telephone No. _____ Your occupation: _____

Name and location of High School you graduated from _____

Date of graduation _____

List the name of institution attended _____

Degree or certificate awarded and date of graduation of any post secondary education completed _____

Have you ever been convicted of a crime other than a minor traffic violation _____ yes _____ no

Are criminal charges pending against you? _____ yes _____ no

7. ESSAY QUESTIONS

The ACTS courses require a significant amount of writing. The purpose of answering the questions below is to review your writing ability to help insure your success in the program. Please write a one-page double spaced response for each of two questions chosen from the following:

- i. Explain why you are interested in ACTS and your goals after graduation.
- ii. Elaborate on any issues you disagree with related to the Academy of Christian Training and Service Statement of faith.
- iii. What is your viewpoint regarding human sexuality and marriage?
- iv. Identify two issues in society today which are contrary to Christian teaching and what you feel may reverse this trend.
- v. What do you hope to receive from the ACTS in terms of educational and personal growth?



8. **HOW I LEARNED ABOUT ACTS:**

my pastor a friend online newspaper ad other _____

DECLARATION: The Academy of Christian Training and Service expects a lifestyle that is consistent with our understanding of Biblical teaching.

I hereby certify that the information that I have presented is complete and truthful to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the falsification of any question or statement can result in denial to or expulsion from the program with any and all prior recognized achievements withdrawn.

Signature _____ Date: _____

Send application and registration fee to:

Eleanor Siegrist, Dean of Academics
1331 Logan Blvd
Altoona, PA 16602



2017-2019 Course Choices

Please place an (X) on the line before each course name, indicating your desire to take this course. Fall and Spring term courses are held on Saturday mornings from 8:00 - 10:00 a.m. with a 15 minute break and again from 10:15 - 12:15 p.m. J Term courses are held as an intensive.

Orientation online to be arranged individually
Mentor Training online to be arranged individually

Fall 2017
 Theology,
 Pastoral Care
Dates Aug 26, Sept. 9, 16, 23, 30, Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28 Nov. 4, 11, 18,
Location online

J Term 2018
 Missions/Evangelism
Dates: Jan 5-6: 19-20
Location: online

Spring 2018
 New Testament,
 Biblical Interpretation
Dates: Feb. 3, 10, 17, 24 Mar. 3, 10, 17, 24 Apr. 7, 14, 21, 28
March 31 Easter Break
Location: Online

Fall 2018
 Pastoral Leadership,
 Preaching
Date
Location: On-line

J Term 2019
 Baptist History and Polity
Date:
Location: online

Spring 2019
 Old Testament,
 Christian Education & Discipleship
Date:
Location: On-line

Graduation Graduation recognition is the responsibility of the local church. Members of the ACTS council and the Regional staff would be honored to participate in the service as schedules permit.

American Baptist Personnel Services Orientation (placement seminar)
TBA, 2017



FINANCIAL POLICIES

Registration Fee

A \$25.00 one-time, non-refundable registration fee is to be paid at the time of application.

Late Registration Fee

An additional \$10.00 non-refundable fee will be added if registration is received after the published deadline.

Tuition

Tuition has been set at \$225.00 per course. Tuition must be paid to the Dean of Academics by the first class session. There will be no refund of tuition after two weeks. A Promissory Note will be required if you need to defer a portion of the required fees, and a schedule of monthly payments will be arranged. There will be no refund of tuition for courses dropped after 2 classes.

Mentor Fees

A fee of \$75.00 per year will be assessed to the mentorship program (supervised ministry) which is required of Certified Lay Minister Preparation students. This fee must be paid to the Dean of Academics prior to the first meeting with the student's assigned mentor. There will be no refund after a mentor is assigned.

Textbooks

The student is responsible for obtaining the textbooks used in each course. The ACTS academy will provide all the information required to purchase the books (i.e. title, author, publisher, ISBN number, etc.) in a timely manner. Because many of the textbooks are technical in nature they are not commonly carried in most bookstores, but they can usually be ordered through any Christian or secular bookstore. They may also be ordered through Christian book catalog companies. Possible sources for books will be included with the textbook information. Students are advised not to delay in ordering/obtaining the books in order to have them by the start of the course. At its discretion, ACTS may order and distribute textbooks for students registered for a course. Payment for books is due upon receipt. Students who register for a course after the books are ordered will be given the textbook information and they will be responsible for obtaining their books. There are NO refunds for books purchased on behalf of registered students.

Computer Access

The student is required to obtain access to a computer that can run the online program for the classes.

Graduation Fee

A \$75.00 graduation fee is required for all persons who graduate. The fee is due on the first day of classes in the student's last term. This fee covers printing of the diplomas, and other administrative costs.

Transcripts

You are entitled to one free copy of your official transcript after concluding your program. Each additional copy will be provided upon receipt of a \$10.00 transcript processing fee.

NOTE: ACTS reserves the right to change fees if necessary.



**REQUEST FOR LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION
AND SUPPORT FROM CHURCH**

(To be given to the pastor or moderator, who will then compose a letter and send it to the Dean of the Institute)

_____ is seeking admission to the Academy of Christian Training and Service with the intent to study in one of the following diploma programs:

_____ Certified Lay Minister Preparation

_____ Diploma in Christian Studies

The ACTS is an online training school of the American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware (ABCOPAD). The programs listed above require that students complete a minimum of 18 out of a possible 20 credits invested in ten required courses. The Certified Lay Minister program is designed for persons seeking to be certified as a lay pastor in ABCOPAD. During their two years (minimum) of study, these students must also be involved in a mentoring program and in supervised pastoral ministry in a church setting. Certified Lay Ministry students will also be required to assist or participate in performing the Lord's Supper, Believer's Baptism, a wedding, a funeral, a service of dedication of parents and children, as well as assist in leading a church board, leading a Bible Study and preaching.

One of the requirements for admission to the ACTS is a letter of recommendation and support from the student's church. The student's formal acceptance is dependent upon the Academic Dean's receipt of your church's letter.

For persons indicating interest in studying toward certification as a Certified Lay Minister, ACTS requests that your letter:

1. Acknowledges that the student's gifts for ministry have been formally endorsed by a vote of the church (either by the congregation as a whole or by an appropriate committee or group from within the church).
2. Confirms that your church will provide the opportunity for practical ministry experiences that are required by ACTS and that will be designed and supervised in cooperation with and under the guidance of the student's assigned mentor.
3. States your church's willingness to consider the student for certification upon completion of the program.
4. Describes the extent of the student's former and current involvement in the life of the church.
5. Affirms your church's commitment to provide ongoing support and prayer for the student as he/she pursues the program.



3. Confirms that the student who desires to participate in ACTS meets the requirements of being a High School graduate (or the equivalent), is at least 21 years of age, and is a member in good standing of an American Baptist Church (or church of the certifying agency for non ABC students)(for Certified Lay Ministry Students).

Upon confirmation of the support of the church, it will be assumed that the student is a suitable candidate for certification by your congregation through the process outlined by your local American Baptist Region (or other certifying body for non ABC students). It is in the best interest of the student that you be completely frank at the beginning of the program as you discern his/her call to certified lay pastoral ministry. If he/she is not so suited, he/she may choose to pursue the Diploma in Christian Studies; this program does not include a supervised ministry requirement. Students may also choose to take ACTS courses for enrichment.

For persons indicating interest in pursuing the **Diploma in Christian Studies**, ACTS requests that your letter address points 4 and 5, as stated above.

The Academy of Christian Training and Service keeps the costs of tuition, fees, and textbooks as low as possible. Your church might also wish to consider assisting the student financially.

Thank you for your attention to this request. Please send your letter to:

Rev. Eleanor Siegrist
1331 Logan Blvd
Altoona, PA 16602
Phone: (814) 944-1468
e-mail: acts@abcopad.com

If you are interested in learning more about the Academy of Christian Training and Service, and have access to the Internet, please go to our web site at: www.acts4ministry.org

If your denomination is not American Baptist, please contact the appropriate judicatory official for your denomination.

We look forward to hearing from you.



DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS

Certified Lay Minister Preparation Program Diploma in Christian Studies Program

Completion of Course Work: To earn a diploma from ACTS, a student must complete a minimum of 18 out of a possible 20 credits invested in the 10 required courses as described below. When beginning the Certified Lay Minister preparation track of the program, students are required to attend classes online for at least two years. Each required course will provide 24 hours of instruction in an online class setting with the instructor. Some weekend courses will be offered with 12 hours of class contact for 1 credit per course.

Re-enrollment Policy: If a student withdraws and later desires to re-enroll, credit will be retained for those classes that have been completed within the preceding 6 years. If there has been a break in studies of 2 or more years, a re-application will be required, including new letters of recommendation.

Computing Credits Earned: Each class is worth 2.0 credits for 12 two-hour classes. Each individual two-hour class is worth .167 credits (.167 cr. X 12 classes = 2.0 cr.). If you miss two class sessions (one approved by the instructor, and one unapproved) there will be no reduction in course credit. However, if you miss more classes than these, your total credits will be reduced by .167 X the number of classes beyond the two allowed which you missed. A minimum of 1.8 credits must be earned to pass each course.

Attendance: Course credit will be granted based on attendance as well as academic performance. A student may have one (1) instructor approved absence and one (1) unapproved absence and still earn the full 2.0 credits for a course. However, the student must make up any work assigned for the online instruction missed by the next scheduled class. The student will be expected to watch a video of the class, if available. Work that was done in a class session during which a student was absent may be made up at the discretion of the instructor. If no work is made up, credits will be deducted from the total credits based on the formula stated above. Since a minimum of 18 credits is required for graduation, a poor attendance pattern can be a crucial factor in keeping a student from graduating.

If a student misses four total classes (one instructor approved and three unapproved), no class credit will be awarded. If no attempt at instructor approval of an absence is made by the student, none of the absences may be counted as instructor approved. Therefore, three total absences, when none is instructor approved, earns an automatic non-passing grade. Students should contact the instructor in advance when reasonably possible or within 48 hours of the absence when classes are missed to discuss make-up work or other special arrangements. (Extraordinary circumstances may be appealed to the Academic Committee).

Making up class by viewing a recording of the class when available. - A class may be "made up" by watching a video and completing any other work as may be required by the instructor. A maximum of 4



classes may be "made up" in this manner (the 2 "allowed" absence and 2 additional absences with the approval of the academic dean that the reason for missing the additional classes was valid and beyond the control of the student.

Completion of Supervised Ministry: For Certified Lay Minister Preparation student only. See the section about Supervised Ministry Standards for details about mentoring and practical ministry requirements.

Fall and Spring Terms:

- Two courses running concurrently for 12-weeks at two (2) hours each or
- 1 course for 6 weeks at 4 hours per week followed by the second course following the same format
- (2.0 credits per 24 hour course) with the assumption that the student will spend at least two (2) hours outside of class for each hour in class. The following is a list of the required courses:

- New Testament
- Baptist History and Polity
- Pastoral Care
- Theology
- Old Testament
- Biblical Interpretation
- Pastoral Leadership
- Missions and Outreach
- Christian Education
- Preaching

Winter Weekends/J Terms: During the two year cycle of ten courses, two courses are offered during January. These courses are 24 credit hours spread over two weekends (Friday evening and all day Saturday). These are required courses for those students enrolled in the Christian Studies and Certified Lay Minister tracks. The J Term courses are Baptist History and Polity, and Missions and Outreach/Evangelism.



CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Certified Lay Ministry Preparation Program Diploma in Christian Studies

ACTS Recognition within the American Baptist Churches: The Institute is recognized nationally by the American Baptist Churches' Commission on Ministerial Leadership as a model for preparation for certified lay ministry. However, ACTS is not otherwise academically accredited.

1. Students will be required to attend online at least 10 out of 12 class sessions for each course in order to receive full credit for that course. Students will be allowed one instructor approved absence during a course and one unapproved absence. (See the discussion of credits and attendance on the Requirements page in this Handbook).
2. Students should note that two courses are offered each term. **If a student wishes to complete the cycle and graduate in two years, he/she must take both courses when offered.** Courses are not repeated until the next two-year cycle begins, and they are generally offered in the same sequence. Thus, if you miss a course, it may take an additional two years or more before it is offered again.
3. It is anticipated that students will spend at least two hours completing work outside of class for every hour spent in class.
4. Grades to be assigned at the end of class shall be:

A+ = 97-100	A = 93-96
B+ = 89-92	B = 85-88
C+ = 81-84	C = 77-80
D+ = 73-76	D = 69-72
Not Passing = 68 and below	

Personal Enrichment Students will be assigned a Pass/Fail grade, unless the student specifically requests a letter grade.



ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Timeliness standards for assignments:

Students are expected to complete all assignments on time. Students are further encouraged to check the course syllabus carefully, listen carefully in class for assignments and seek clarification from the instructor about any assignments, what is expected and when the assignment is due.

Knowing that life can be busy and that unexpected events do occur: Any assignment that is late will receive a penalty of 5% of the grade for that assignment. If an assignment is more than 48 hours late the penalty is 10%. Any assignment more than 1 week late will not be accepted.

If a student experiences a "major life event" that prevents him or her from completing work in a timely manner, that student should inform the instructor and the Dean of Academics and request an extension according the information below.

Students are expected to complete all course work on time as outlined in the syllabus for each course. If a student is unable to complete the required course work within the 12-week term, he/she may file for an extension of up to three months under the following conditions

1. Prior approval is granted by both the instructor and the Academic Committee of the Coordinating Council.
2. Student has written a paragraph explaining why the extension is being requested, and the date the student expects to complete the course work. The student must first obtain the instructor's signature on the petition to the Academic Committee, indicating the instructor agrees to the need for this request. This petition for extension of time to complete the course work must be filed by the 10th week of the term with the Dean of Academics.
3. An instructor's fee of \$25 is paid when the petition is approved by the Academic Committee.

A grade of "Incomplete" will be given until passing work is completed and presented to the instructor by the end of the third month. If the course work is not completed by the end of the third month, or if the work is not of passing quality, a grade of "Not Passing" will be given. If all work is completed on time and meets the instructor's grade standard, the appropriate grade will be given. Students should not expect the new grade before the end of the semester in which the work is completed.

No extensions will be granted after the 10th week of the term.

"J" term does not allow for any extensions.



Instructors will be able to use their discretion in awarding points for attendance, participation, and additional work to supplement grades earned on papers and tests.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is a serious infraction of the law of God and a violation of A.C.T.S. academic integrity as plagiarism is a violation of the eighth and ninth commandments (Exodus 20:15-16), which commands us “to not steal and give false testimony against your neighbor.”

A.C.T.S. defines Plagiarism as *Using someone’s ideas, words, or data, without proper acknowledgement, as one’s own original work.*

If you claim someone’s words, as your own, you are committing plagiarism – you are stealing. Information from the Internet is the same as information from a physical book, the source must be cited.

Paying someone, an Internet service for a paper, or cut and paste text from the Internet to your paper without citing the source is also considered plagiarism.

To avoid plagiarism:

- You must cite the original author every time you use an author’s exact written or spoken word. You identify the words by enclosing them with quotation marks or indenting the quote on both sides of the margin.
- Paraphrase someone’s written or spoken words recognizing the author/source

For clarity on plagiarism, discuss your research with your instructor if not sure how to cite the work, before you hand in your paper. There are tools that instructors use to detect acts of plagiarism. Remember, Plagiarism is an act of dishonesty and violation of academic integrity.

Personal Integrity

Truthfulness and honesty are necessary in all situations.

Examples of behavior that will not be accepted include, but are not limited to:

- Lying about reasons for late or incomplete work or reasons for absence from class.
- Collaboration on exams, quizzes, or assignments unless otherwise specifically instructed.
- Submitting work done by someone else as your own.
- Possession of exams, answer keys etc. without the knowledge and approval of the instructor.

Consequences

If an instructor or administrator determines that a violation of the academic integrity policy has occurred, after talking with the student, the Academic Dean will be notified.

Possible consequences for violation of any part of the academic integrity policy that will be considered include: receiving a failing grade for the work, failing grade for the entire course, asking the student to



redo the assignment, dismissal from the program etc....

Council will have 30 days to make a decision about any consequences for a violation of the policy.

The Academic Dean will notify the student of any decision by council and the consequences as well as the student's rights for redress or appeal to council. Any appeal by the student must be made in writing within 30 days from the time he or she is notified by the Academic Dean of the council's decision.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS ON WRITING A FORMAL PAPER

The following guidelines are offered to help you as you write assigned papers and to make it easier for the instructor to read and interact with your work. While footnoting and bibliographies may seem like an unnecessary chore, we as Christians want to maintain the highest standards of integrity. Properly crediting the work of another author you use in your paper prevents plagiarism (i.e. the taking of "ideas, writings, etc. from another and passing them off as one's own"). If you have any questions, please ask your instructor or contact the Dean of Academics.

General Term Paper Format

Most papers should include the following (but always check with the instructor for specific requirements):

1. A cover sheet (including: Title of Paper, Your Name/Address/Phone Number, Email Address, Class, Instructor, Date)
2. The body of the paper (according to the directions given by the instructor). Note the following:
 - i. Font/Type: Should use a size 12 font (Arial or Times New Roman is preferred). The style should be non-italicized except when citing a book title or when occasionally used for emphasis.
 - ii. Spacing: Everything should be double-spaced, with the exception of footnotes, endnotes and bibliographies.
 - iii. Margins: 1 inch on all sides (including footnotes). Page numbers may be closer to the edge.
 - iv. Secure the paper using staples or a binder, not paper clips.
3. Endnotes (if you are not using footnotes)
4. Bibliography page(s)

Footnotes/Endnotes

Footnotes (which appear at the bottom of a page) or **endnotes** (which provide the same information as footnotes but appear at the end of the paper) list the source(s) of information you include in your paper. (From here on, the term "footnotes" will also include "endnotes" unless otherwise specified.) The purpose for listing these citations is to allow the reader of your paper to identify where he/she can look up the information you include.

Broadly speaking, you must footnote the source of any information that you quote directly or indirectly



(see the section on Quotations below), any data or statistics you cite (population figures, percentages, etc.), and any substantial ideas you refer to that did not originate with you. Information that is commonly known does not need to be footnoted. For example, if you read in a book that Calvinism has been a major Protestant theology for many years, that is a commonly known fact and does not need to be footnoted if you include that thought in your paper. If, however, the author made the claim that Calvinism *alone* was responsible for *every* great advance in Protestant theology, that would not be a commonly held theory and you would need to footnote it.

Today's computers, with their ability to automatically insert footnote numbers in the text and the actual footnote at the bottom of a page, have made footnoting less of a chore. Footnotes are numbered successively, beginning with 1, and the number is raised a half a line (called a "superscript") at the end of the information you are footnoting.

There is a book which is the standard reference on how footnotes should be listed¹², but in the interest of simplicity, the following two examples should guide you in the most common situations:

- a) that of a citation from a book with a single author; and b) that of a citation from a book that is part of a series (such as a commentary or an encyclopedia). Example a) The single author reference includes the following: the superscripted footnote number, name of author, title (underlined or in italics), city where the publisher is located, publisher's name, copyright date and page number where the information is found:

¹⁴ Wade Clark Roof, *A Generation of Seekers* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1993), 157.

(Note that we are using the number "14" as a fictitious number for the footnote. In this case it would mean this is the 14th footnote of the paper. The superscripted number ¹⁴ would also appear in the text of your paper at the point where you are citing information from this book.)

Example b) For a book that is part of a series, you would have the following: the superscripted footnote number, the name of the editor of the series, title of the series (underlined or in italics), volume number (if any), title of the book in the series (underlined or in italics), city where publisher is located, publisher's name, copyright date and page number where the information is found:

¹⁴ F. F. Bruce, ed., *The New International Commentary On The New Testament*, vol. 6, *The Epistle To The Romans*, by John Murray (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980), 123.

If you can't find all this information, put down as much as you can find in the format suggested here.

Citations for information you find on the Internet don't fit easily into these formats, but do your best to list as much of this information as you have, along with the web site name and any other identifying information necessary to find the material cited.

¹ Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writer of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 6th ed./rev. John Grossman and Alice Bennett (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997)



Bibliography

Bibliographies are essentially designed to list the books you have referred to in your research. List only the books that you have referenced with a footnote or that have contributed significantly to your paper. Do not list books that you looked at but which did not contribute significantly to the information in your paper.

The format of bibliographies carries much the same information as do footnotes, but in a different order namely, by listing the authors' last names *in alphabetical order*. Aside from this, a bibliography page is written pretty much the same as a footnote. (Author's last name, first name, middle name (or initial), title (underlined or in italics), city where the publisher is located, publisher's name, copyright date.): Again, the following examples will guide you in the two most common situations:

Roof, Wade Clark. *A Generation of Seekers*. (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1990).

Bruce, F. F., ed. *The New International Commentary On The New Testament*. Vol. 2, *The Epistle To The Romans*, by John Murray (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.,1980).

(Note that for bibliography entries with two or more lines, the second line is indented.)

Quotations

If you are including the exact words of an author, these must appear in quotes. If you are giving the gist of what the author has said but are paraphrasing rather than using his/her exact words, simply attribute the thought to the author. Some examples:

Quote: As Dr. Philip Hughes wrote, "The history of the Christian Church testifies plainly to the fact that blessing is never remote from affliction that is endured for Christ's sake."

Paraphrase:

Dr. Philip Hughes has said it is evident from church history that those who suffer for Christ will also experience blessing.

Remember - Either of these would need to be footnoted, since you are citing the expression of another person's thought.



SUPERVISED MINISTRY STANDARDS CERTIFIED LAY MINSTER PREPARATION

The student will receive evaluation on three different levels: (1) Through an approved mentor, (2) through the student's own reflection, and (3) through persons involved in ministry with the student.

1. The student must serve a local church in a position or positions which will allow for preparation and observation time of at least two hours each week (e.g., one hour preparation time to teach a one hour class).
2. The student must meet in person with an approved mentor assigned by ACTS at least five times each year for two hours per session or a total of 20 contact hours to provide an opportunity for focused discussions, reflection, evaluation, modeling and support.
3. The student will write an initial "Spiritual Formation" paper in which he/she relates the persons and events most influential in the shaping of his/her life and Christian pilgrimage. This paper is to be presented for discussion in the first meeting with the student's mentor. Make three copies of the completed paper - one for the Dean of Advancement one for the mentor and one for your permanent student file to be given to the Dean of Academics.
4. The student will write a response to the initial "Spiritual Formation" paper to be presented and discussed in one of the last meetings with the mentor at the end of the program.
5. The student will work with his/her mentor in developing a "Covenant of Learning," with two primary purposes: (1) to gain practical ministry experience in the local church setting, and (2) for the personal development and growth of the student. The Covenant is to include: the weekly time requirement and brief job description for the ministry position(s); definition of priority needs in the targeted local church experience and of the personal growth and development of the student; goals and objectives that are set to meet the defined needs; strategies for their attainment; and a plan for evaluating the student's progress toward achieving them. A copy of the Covenant must be on file with the mentor and the Academic Dean.
6. The student will write a response to the "Covenant of Learning" to be presented at the last meeting with the mentor at the end of the program.
7. The student will work with his/her mentor and personal pastor to participate in each of the following pastoral ministry functions: (1) believer's baptism, (2) a service of dedication of parents and children, (3) Lord's Supper, (4) a wedding, (5) a funeral, (6) leading a church board, (7) leading a Bible Study, and (8) preaching. An Apprenticeship Checklist will be provided to the mentor so he/she can verify that the



student has fulfilled this requirement.

8. The student will prepare a personal journal for a two week period each year which will include setting daily goals, time evaluation, feelings about the day, and theological reflection. The mentor will review the journal with the student, but it is not to be used as a grading tool.
9. The student will prepare a written statement of beliefs that will meet the requirements of the regional standards of certification as outlined in “Steps to Becoming a Certified Lay Minister” published by ABCOPAD (American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware) for COML. The Theology course will include a focus on this project as part of the required course work. In the case of students who enter this program having already completed this paper, the statement will be rewritten with special attention to be given to the development of the student’s faith and beliefs throughout his/her study with the Institute. A copy of the Statement of Faith must be sent to the Dean of Academics for the student’s permanent file. **This paper is normally due by the first class of the term prior to your graduation.**
10. For a student who is providing pastoral leadership to a church while also attending ACTS, a committee of at least three persons from the church the student is serving will be established. This committee, facilitated by the student’s mentor, will meet twice each year and will serve to evaluate the student’s service with the church. It is preferable for these meetings to be held soon after the mid-point of each year. (See Chapter 6.)
11. It is the student’s responsibility to schedule and keep appointments and follow through with assignments on time.
12. Students will travel to the mentor’s location. Only under exceptional circumstances will the Mentor travel to the Mentee. This would need to be approved by the mentor chair beforehand. Every effort will be made by ACTS to match a student with a mentor whose ministry location is reasonably close to him or her.



WHAT CAN A LAY MINISTER TRACK GRADUATE DO?

A lay minister track graduate of the Academy can be certified by his or her local American Baptist church, after being recommended by the church's Baptist Association. To facilitate this, the graduate should make contact with the chairperson of the Certification, Licensure, and Ordination Committee of the Association and arrange to present a formal paper stating Christian experience, theological beliefs, and call to American Baptist ministry. He or she should also sign "The Covenant and Code of Ethics" of the American Baptist Ministers Council. After the Association recommends it, a certification service can be conducted by the graduate's church. If the local church follows the proper procedures in the certification process, the graduate's certification will be recognized nationally.

After a graduate is certified, he or she may pastor a church, be an associate, youth or interim pastor, do supply preaching, and/or generally work in his or her own church in a more educated and experienced way. Opportunity will be given for the graduate to register with the American Baptist Personnel Services, and this can facilitate the possibility of being called to a regular church ministry position.

A graduate, who is properly certified and when authorized by their particular local church, may perform weddings, dedicate children, baptize, officiate at the Lord's Supper, and conduct funerals. A certified graduate usually has the opportunity to do what an ordained person can do.

The proper recognition which can be used before the *certified* person's name is "Lay Minister" or "Certified Lay Minister" (CLM). "Pastor" is also acceptable. A person who is not fully ordained should not use the title "Reverend" before his or her name. For additional information and requirements for *ordination*, please contact a Regional Pastor.

A graduate will be well-served to conduct quality ministry in the name of Christ.



A WORD ABOUT CERTIFICATION AND PLACEMENT

- I. Certifying persons for lay ministry is not the prerogative or the purpose of the Academy of Christian Training and Service program. The certification of a person for lay pastoral ministry is not guaranteed upon completion of the requirements of this academy because the decision to certify a candidate rests with the local church and its American Baptist Association.
- II. **Certified Lay Minister** is the designation which our graduates are given in the professional registry of the American Baptist Churches. This new title is in keeping with recent changes in definitions of lay ministers and lay pastors within the denomination. Certification as a lay minister is the process generally pursued by persons who are not on a seminary track leading toward ordination. Licensure is generally reserved for persons who are in the process of completing requirements toward a “standard ordination” within the ABC.
- III. **The procedures for certification** in each Association may be slightly different. Consult with your Association’s moderator for details. However, in ABCOPAD the process generally begins with the recommendation of a local church that a person should be considered as a candidate for certification. Then the appropriate committee of the candidate’s ABCOPAD Association will conduct an interview and review the candidate’s certification paper. If approved, the candidate is then referred back to the congregation for certifying.
- IV. Certified Lay Ministers **may not properly use the title “Reverend.”** This title is reserved for ordained ministers. Lay ministers may use the title “Lay Minister” or “Certified Lay Minister” (CLM). “Pastor” is also acceptable.
- V. **Placement within the American Baptist Churches**
Graduates of the Academy of Christian Training and Service may register with the American Baptist Personnel Services. This can facilitate the possibility of being called to a church ministry position. Toward the end of the second year of the program, a seminar is offered in which students are assisted in completing the documents required for the computerized placement profile which is utilized by all Regions within the American Baptist Churches for placement of ministers and other professionals. For graduates of the Academy, the normal application fee of \$25 for this service is waived. After certification you may pastor a church, be an associate, youth or interim pastor, do supply preaching, and/or generally work in your own church in a more educated and experienced way. A Certified Lay Minister has the necessary recognition, when authorized by his/her local church, to: perform weddings, dedicate children, baptize, officiate at the Lord’s Supper, and conduct funerals. A Certified Lay Minister usually has the opportunity to do what an ordained person can do and should be well equipped to conduct quality ministry in the name of Christ.

Please see “Ministry Recognition in the American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware” This document was written by the commission on ministerial leadership and is available on line at www.abcopad.org or from ABCOPAD 15 Wild Rose Lane Mechanicsburg, PA 17050 (717) 791-9158 or from a Regional Pastor.



ACCREDITATION

The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) adopted redeveloped standards in June, 1996, and among these is one permitting schools to grant advanced standing (with credit), if students can demonstrate by written and oral examination that they have the same level of competence in seminary subjects that is expected from students who have earned credit by satisfactorily passing those courses at the seminary. This means that students who do well in the diploma programs, and plan to undertake Master of Divinity (M. Div.) work as well, now have the possibility of earning advanced standing. The maximum advanced standing one may receive is one-sixth of the total credits required by the seminary degree program.

It should be emphasized that ACTS is not an accredited academic institution. Therefore, **we do not claim to guarantee that any individual student will be granted advanced standing by any accredited seminary or university toward a degree.** However, the ATS standards open the door to exploration of further study should students discover they have an aptitude for theological study and wish to pursue a degree which will move them beyond certified lay ministry and give them the academic credentials required for ordination.

If you desire more information about advanced standing at Palmer Theological Seminary, you may write to the Director of Admissions, Palmer Theological Seminary 1300 Eagle Road St. Davids, PA 19087, or call the seminary at (800) 220-EBTS. Palmer Seminary is located in the western suburbs of Philadelphia.



CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING

In rare instances, credit for prior learning may be granted by the Academy of Christian Training and Service toward satisfaction of courses required in the diploma program. Students should be aware that any course taken more than ten years in the past does not qualify for credit. No standardized tests are available to validate prior learning. Instead, the Academy uses a prior learning assessment process modeled after the Charter Oak State College Portfolio Assessment Handbook.

Experience in a particular subject, although of great value, is not in and of itself evidence of Academy-level learning. By “Academy-level learning” we mean achieving an understanding of the general course content as well as the “theories, schools of thought and principles underlying the course and the subject at large.” What is being assessed is the degree to which your experience has enabled you to achieve a level of understanding in the subject matter which might have been gained had you taken the course by the Institute.

To grant credit for prior learning you must develop a portfolio, that is, documents that support your claim to have achieved Academy-level learning in a particular subject. The portfolio will have three sections:

1. **Course Description** - You must select the Academy course for which you feel your experience and learning have given you Academy-level mastery of the subject.
2. **Evidence** - Provide evidence to demonstrate your learning.
3. **Narrative** - Create a written statement explaining the evidence and how it supports your contention that you have achieved Academy-level learning in the subject.

Credit for Prior Learning Process

1. Obtain the form, “Petition for Credit for Prior Learning” from the Dean of Academics and, upon completion, submit it to the Dean of Academics for processing by the Academic Committee. Based on this form, the Academic Committee will make a decision as to the advisability of proceeding further in compiling a prior learning portfolio for assessment.
2. One person on the committee will be assigned to you to guide you through the portfolio process.
3. Obtain a course description of the course for which you hope to receive credit for prior learning. The description will list a number of course objectives and it is for these objectives you will have to provide evidence which supports your claim to Institute-level learning.
4. Compile your evidence. Each course objective must be represented by evidence that shows your mastery of that element. Examples of evidence include, but are not limited to: a course syllabus, examinations, term paper(s), or other work from a previously taken course in the subject; a term paper on the subject showing proficiency in each course objective (produced specifically for this portfolio); a course syllabus and related teaching materials you developed to teach the subject; an article you’ve written, a listing of the books you have read on the subject, etc. Please note that a certificate you may have received from a seminar or conference on the subject will generally constitute secondary rather than primary evidence. That is, unless the certificate indicates some measure of your proficiency in the subject material (e.g., a grade letter or a pass/fail designation) it will usually be regarded as a validation of attendance rather than attestation of learning. As your



claim for prior credit is reviewed, the Academy may interview you to pose questions designed to ensure that your prior learning evidence is connected appropriately to the course objectives.

5. The narrative portion is your opportunity to explain how your prior learning fulfills the requirements of the course. In this section you will be describing what your experience has been, “where you did it, how long you did it . . . what you learned, how you learned it and why you learned it.”

Format of the Portfolio

It should be typed and double-spaced. Don’t submit originals of any documents you use as evidence (that way we don’t have to worry about losing any materials important to you). The package should contain:

- cover sheet containing your name, address and phone number(s) and an email address (if any)
- the three elements of the portfolio, as described above.

Please submit two copies.

Submission of the Portfolio and Review Process

The portfolio should be submitted to the Dean of Academics of the Academy of Christian Training and Service, who will forward it to the Academic Committee. The Academic Committee will review the portfolio to ensure that it is complete and then refer it to an appropriate instructor in the subject for his/her review and recommendation as to whether or not the prior learning satisfies the course requirements. An interview, either in person or by way of phone or mail, may be held with you to discuss its elements. You may be asked to provide fuller documentation or explanation. Once the review process is complete the Academic Committee, whose decision is final, will make the decision with regard to granting credit and will communicate that decision to you.

Remember, while this process may seem somewhat involved, you are requesting credit for twenty-four hours of class work, assignments, and examinations. We desire to maintain the high academic quality of our program for the glory of God and the proper training of our graduates.



PETITION FOR CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING

Name:	
Address:	
City, State:	
Home Phone:	
Work Phone:	
E-Mail:	

Academy of Christian Training and Service course for which you desire credit _____
 Briefly state experience, training, course work, etc., which forms the basis for your request for credit for prior learning in this course (include details as may be applicable such as length of time involved in such prior learning, names of courses and institutions, nature of duties, etc.).

Please submit this completed petition to the Dean of Academics.



GRADUATION AUDIT AND COMMENCEMENT

(Diploma Programs Only)

Prior to graduation, student files will be reviewed by the Graduation Audit Committee to verify that the requirements have been met. The following items must be on file/complete before a student will be allowed to graduate:

Required before studies begin:

- ___ Application for enrollment
- ___ Letter of support from student's home church
- ___ Three letters of recommendation from others (Certified Lay Minister Prep.)
- ___ Letter of Acceptance into the Institute

Diploma in Christian Studies students must also have grade reports showing passing grades and sufficient credits earned to graduate, in addition to the above items.

Requirements Specific to Certified Lay Ministry Preparation students:

- ___ Grade reports showing passing grades and sufficient credits earned
- ___ Spiritual Formation Paper and mentor's report on the paper
- ___ Covenant of Learning -- Year One, completed and signed
- ___ Covenant of Learning -- Year Two, completed and signed
- ___ First and Second year Journal reports from mentor
- ___ First and Second year mentor/student meeting reports covering 10 sessions
- ___ Personal Statement of Faith
- ___ Apprentice Checklist
- ___ Fitness for Ministry report from mentor
- ___ Mentor & Local Church Committee Review
- ___ Certification Paper complete

Presentation of Diploma

Only students who have completed the requirements will receive a diploma.

The local church is encouraged to schedule a service of recognition for students when the student has completed the requirements of the ACTS program. Service suggestions for this celebration will be provided.



SCHOLARSHIP PARAMETERS

- Scholarship aid is available for those persons active in an American Baptist church.
- Scholarships shall be funded through grants from outside sources such as: ABCOPAD, Release God's Power, Association/Local churches.
- Individuals enrolled in any ACTS track may apply for scholarships.
- A student may receive only one ACTS scholarship grant up to a maximum of 50% of the tuition for that semester, but may apply for a scholarship as often as needed.
- The scholarship grant will be credited directly toward the student's account.
- Amount of scholarship will be based on financial need.
- Application for scholarship assistance must be submitted no later than two weeks before classes begin.

SCHOLARSHIP ACCESS GUIDELINES

In keeping with the Mission of the Academy the proper stewardship of the funds available and the need for timely response, the following protocol will be initiated upon the receipt of a completed Scholarship Application Form.

The Finance Committee will review the application and if necessary interview the applicant and/or the student's pastor. A determination will be made prior to class start date. In the event of non-approval, the request will be automatically submitted to the Executive Committee of the Coordinating Council for review and possible approval.

Upon approval, the Finance Committee will notify the Treasurer to distribute the funds and credit the student's account.

The maximum amount of ACTS scholarship per course is 50% of tuition, with the possibility of lesser amounts being granted if the demand for scholarships exceeds the funds available.



SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Term for which this application is made: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Church of Membership: _____

Have you asked your church for financial assistance? (Circle one) YES NO

If yes, how much? _____

If no, why not? _____

Complete this form, list specific amounts. Leave no blank spaces.

Total amount due for this term : (A) <i>Please add the applicable tuition & fees, list total on line (A)</i> Tuition: \$225.00 per course Registration fee: \$25.00 one time payment Mentor fee: \$100.00 per year, certified Lay Minister track Books: approximately \$40.00 per course Late fee of \$10.00 and graduation fee of \$50.00 cannot be covered by scholarship		_____ (A)
Amount of financial assistance from other sources: (D) From your church: _____ From another source, please list: _____ <i>Please add (B) and (C), list total on line (D)</i>	_____ (B) + _____ (C)	_____ (D)
Remaining un-funded amount: (E) <i>Subtract (D) from (A), list on line (E)</i>		_____ (E)
Amount YOU are able to contribute this term: (F) <i>Please list on line (F), Monthly time payments can be arranged.</i>		_____ (F)
Total amount of scholarship you are requesting from Academy of Christian Training and Service for this term: (G) <i>Please subtract line (F) from line (E), enter amount on line (G)</i> (NOTE: Maximum of \$200.00 per course.)		_____ (G)

Please explain your need for financial assistance. _____



I am confirming this student's need for financial assistance from ACTS.

Pastor's Signature: _____ Pastor's Phone: (home) _____

Pastor's Name (print): _____ Pastor's Phone: (office): _____

When complete, **please send to:**

Rev. Eleanor Siegrist 1331 Logan Blvd Altoona, PA 16602

Approved by: _____ Date: _____ Amount: _____
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American Baptist Men of Pennsylvania and Delaware Offer Scholarships

American Baptist Men of Pennsylvania and Delaware has been offering a total of \$500 in scholarships per year for up to 5 persons. To qualify, the applicant must be part of an ABC church and getting some education beyond the high school level. ACTS and seminary students are among those who qualify. Application can be made by writing a letter explaining the kind of education being sought to:

ABMOPAD Scholarship Program
Frederick A. Robbins
P.O. Box 240
Kulpsville, PA. 19443-0240

You may also contact Fred by phone. His number is (215) 855-5856 (home).
E-mail: far99har@aol.com

The American Baptist Men's Board has voted that the \$500 will be split between the qualified applicants, up to 5. If the deadline is missed for this year, it will be considered next year.