

ABOUT FIELD EDUCATION



FIELD PROGRAM

APPLY ONLINE

VISIT CAMPUS

REQUEST INFO



Though all students are welcome, two degree programs at PTS require students to complete a field education experience, the master of divinity (MDiv) and the master of arts in pastoral studies (MAPS). These degrees require one field education placement.

PTS offers field education during the academic year. Students serve 10-12 hours a week in a placement and concurrently take a faculty-taught course for two consecutive semesters (FE210 and FE220). Both semesters must be completed to earn credit. The total time demand of a field education experience thus approximates the equivalent of two courses so students should plan their schedule accordingly.

THE APPLICATION AND MATCHING PROCESSES

PTS invites interested ministers to consider becoming a supervisor. Supervision is no small commitment, so potential supervisors should have the time, energy, and backing of their congregation or organization. They should be willing to prioritize a student's learning over the needs of their site, as field education is primarily education rather than employment. Because they share in the education and formation of seminarians, supervisors ordinarily have theological degrees themselves and/or are ordained. They are expected to have served their site for at least one year prior to participating in the program. To avoid conflicts of interest brought about by dual roles, normally a supervisor is not also their student's pastor, employer, partner, or family member. Programs and offices of the Seminary are not sites.

The placement process begins in early spring. Potential supervisors complete a new **application**. Continuing supervisors receive a chance to update their application. They then interview students sent to them by the director and indicate their

match preferences by the deadline in late spring.

Students also begin with an **application**, after checking with their advisor that they have taken the prerequisite courses. They attend a required orientation. Students then meet with the field education director to identify up to three supervisors with whom to interview, go on all their interviews, and indicate their match preferences to the director by the deadline ("Match Day") in late spring.

Some PTS students come to seminary already embedded in ministry sites. While new experiences in new places always promote learning, we recognize that learning is lifelong and that students can and do learn from reflection on ministry in their own contexts. Therefore, some students will not interview for a field education placement but use their own context as their placement. They must still identify a supervisor who must complete an application. The deadline for confirming these placements is the same as Match Day.

THE LEARNING–SERVING COVENANT

Once placed, the student and supervisor plan the field education experience together, keeping in mind the learning goals of the student, the needs of the site, the gifts of the supervisor, and the requirements of the Seminary. One hour is to be set aside for supervisory meetings. The co-signed covenant is due no later than the first day of fall classes and must be signed by both student and supervisor. Once the director has reviewed and signed it, the covenant formally establishes the field education placement.

The field education placement generally follows the PTS academic calendar; however, supervisors and students can covenant to certain specifications within it. They should pay special attention to whether the student will serve during the weeks of January term, religious holiday weeks that the PTS academic calendar observes as breaks, reading and exam weeks, and civic holidays when the Seminary is closed.

COMPENSATION

Students normally receive a stipend for their service—either directly from the site, from the Pittsburgh Presbytery, or through the Field Education Office at PTS. The current stipend is \$4,350. It is considered taxable income and is subject to Social Security withholding. Depending on the site's ability, students may also receive reimbursement for travel expenses related to their service, though not normally for commuting to the site.

EVALUATION

Evaluation is an ongoing part of the supervisory relationship in the sense that supervisors provide students feedback on a regular basis during supervision meetings. However, specific times are also set aside for formal evaluations, which are based on the Learning-Serving Covenant. At the mid-point, students and supervisors meet to evaluate how well they are living into the covenant they established at the beginning of the experience. At the end, they meet again to evaluate students' progress toward their learning goals and other progress made during the year. These evaluations are written, co-signed, and submitted to the Office of Field Education. It is the student's responsibility to submit the forms in a timely manner and completing them is necessary for meeting their graduation field education requirement.

The Office of Field Education will share the student's final evaluation with their sponsoring judicatories, or other parties that the student names, if the student provides written consent.

THE CONCURRENT COURSES

FE210 (fall) and FE220 (spring) are required of all MDiv and MAPS students. The courses invite students into the postures, habits, and practices of theologically reflective ministry. Interdisciplinary in nature, they pay particular attention to the integration of student experiences in their sites with work in contextual analysis and theological reflection (FE210), and communication and missional leadership (FE220).

This course sequence earns students three credits per semester. Completion of both semesters is normally required to receive credit for either.

The curricular prerequisites for FE210/220 are as follows: *Students need to be simultaneously enrolled in, or previously have taken, OT210, OT 220, NT210 or BI210, NT220 or BI220, TH210, PR210, and PC210. Students also need to have completed CS110.* While not required, completion of WS110 prior to field education is also recommended.

JOIN US IN FIELD EDUCATION

Become a Field Education Student

Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
616 North Highland Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Phone: 412-362-5610



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