

**SAINT**  
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX



**SOPHIA**  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## **SELF-STUDY REPORT**

**PREPARED FOR**  
The Association of Theological Schools  
**NOVEMBER 2023**







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### Terminology and Abbreviations

UOC of the USA	- Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA
St. Sophia Seminary	- Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary







# ATS SELF-STUDY NOVEMBER 2023

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## Introduction



**SAINT SOPHIA**  
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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## **INTRODUCTION TO THIS SELF-STUDY**

The Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary self-study is a report indicating the ways it puts into practice, into policy, and into perspective its missional self-understanding. The changing academic and cultural contexts in which the seminary operates and the dynamic nature of the ecclesial world with which it engages and in which its students will serve, require a commitment to on-going discernment and careful self-evaluation. The self-study process presented by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) facilitates this evaluation in a confessional model. Honestly undertaken, this encourages and gives St. Sophia Seminary the tools to rise to a higher level of excellence, academically and institutionally.

Many of the policies and processes presented in this report have been in continuous use since the opening of St. Sophia Seminary in an unofficial, organic way, and are here more clearly enunciated and formalized. Some policies have been put in place during the process of self-evaluation when that evaluation has revealed a need.

Since the initial application and acceptance of St. Sophia Seminary for Associate Membership in ATS in 2020, the Seminary has taken several important steps to understand and evaluate its own mission as a theological seminary; to better understand the needs and expectations of its students, faculty, staff, donors, and the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA (UOC of USA); and to expand its educational programs and administrative policies accordingly.

### **INVOLVEMENT IN STUDY**

His Eminence Metropolitan Antony (Rector) appointed Archbishop Daniel (Provost) to oversee the Self-Study process. Additional faculty members were appointed by the Rector to serve on the Self-Study Steering Committee including: Very Rev. Anthony Perkins (Assistant Professor of Church History and Spiritual Theology), Rev. Theophan Mackey (Vocations Director and Adjunct Instructor of Pastoral Theology), and Natalia Honcharenko (Adjunct Instructor of Financial Administration and Ukrainian Studies). In 2022, these were charged with the preliminary draft of the St. Sophia Seminary Self-Study. Submitted in April of 2023, that draft was returned for rewriting, clarification, and revision.

In May of 2023 the steering committee enrolled four subcommittees who were charged with the rewriting, revision, and editing process. The subcommittees were composed in localities to make the process more efficient.

The subcommittees have met numerous times, in their localities in-person, and nationally through virtual conference and by phone. The members of the subcommittees, if not immediately involved in the life of St. Sophia Seminary, as noted below, are faithful members of the UOC of USA with a vested interest in the health and growth of the seminary and highly educated and experienced individuals. They have reviewed all available information about the seminary, spoken with faculty, students, alumni, and in some cases have visited the seminary, and have provided unique perspectives about its operation and future.

In the subcommittee meetings they discussed the changes necessary to clarify the status of St. Sophia Seminary in relation to the standards of ATS and when there was a short-coming, suggest the implementation of a remedy.

Clarifications and remedies suggested by the subcommittees were reviewed by members of the steering committee and consensus was formed before they were implemented and added to the documentation of the self-study.

This self-study has been approved by the St. Sophia Seminary Board of Trustees on 10 October 2023 during a special meeting.

The subcommittees were led by:

Rev. Theophan Mackey MDiv, MCS (Vocations Director): Standards 1,2,3,4

Kathleen MacDonald MPA, Project manager, Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL)

Tyler Jordan MSE, PhD candidate UC Berkley

Robert Dwyer BS, Graduate Research Assistant, LANL

Reid Yentzen R&D Engineer, LANL

Pani Oksana Pasakas MMSt (Head Librarian of St. Sophia Seminary): Standard 6

Victoria Swindle MLS (Current member of the Metropolitan Council and library liaison)

Rev. Ivan Tchopko MDiv (Assistant Academic Dean of St. Sophia Seminary)

Rev. Richard Jendras (former student of St. Sophia Seminary): Standards 7,8,9

Rev. Anthony Perkins, MDiv. (Faculty member of St. Sophia Seminary)

Robin Marie Bodnar BA, (Former assistant to the Provost of Lehigh University)

Mary Kennedy MA

Xenia Martha Misko, M.Ed.

Michael Misko, M.Ed.

Natalia Honcharenko (Treasurer of St. Sophia Seminary): Standard 10

Very Rev. Stephen Hutnick (Treasurer of the UOC of USA)

William Scannell, CPA



Special thanks goes to Dr. Richard Steele, PhD (Professor Emeritus, Seattle Pacific University) for general guidance in the compilation of this report.

Final editing and proofreading were completed by Else Tennessen MS (Communications Specialist, LANL, student at St. Sophia Seminary) and Kristi Mackey M. Ed. (National Board Certified Teacher).

Design and layout were completed by Elizabeth Symonenko BS (IT Engineer, General Motors, former student at St. Sophia Seminary and current member of the Board of Trustees).

### **OUR HISTORY**

The history of Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary and that of the UOC of USA begins with the inception of the Church. Jesus Christ's Apostles, receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, became the first bishops of the Christian Church. It is from those original bishops, and in collegial unity with other Orthodox jurisdictions around the world, the current hierarchy draws Apostolic Succession, and the Church maintains its core identity.

From its cradle in the Middle East, monastics and missionaries spread Christianity, to the North and East into the Slavic lands where it gradually developed into the traditions of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Divided from the western Roman Catholic Church officially in 1054, it retained and developed a uniquely Eastern flavor, never being shaped by the Protestant Reformation, the Enlightenment, and other subsequent divisions that have defined Christianity in the West.

With the advent of safer and more efficient global travel and immigration, Eastern Orthodox Christians from the Ukraine began coming to North America some 150 years ago. They retained their faith and their love of their homeland but came to love America as well.

In 1974, recognizing the contemporary and future needs of the UOC of USA, the late Patriarch Mstyslav (Skrypnyk), who served as the church's spiritual leader from 1971 to 1993, took the proactive step of establishing Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary. Situated within the church's spiritual center in South Bound Brook, New Jersey, this initiative aimed to address specific requirements of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church that were not adequately met by existing seminaries affiliated with different jurisdictions in the United States and Canada. The solution emerged in the form of creating a seminary that could authentically encompass Orthodox traditions while retaining the distinctiveness of the Ukrainian expression of Orthodoxy. As a result, in 1975, Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary was officially founded, with its permanent location set in the historic Heatherington Estate mansion located at the crossroads of Davidson and Easton Avenues.

Since its establishment, Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary has been educating, training, and forming the clergy and the faithful of the UOC of USA. In that time, great men and women of the faith have graduated to lead and contribute to the strength and vitality of the Church as a whole. Through flexibility and adaptability, balanced with a loyalty to Tradition and the ancient faith established by Jesus Christ and conducted through the Apostles, the Fathers of the Church, and all the saints, St. Sophia Seminary has fulfilled and will continue to fulfill its mission, as an extension and support of the UOC of USA and accordingly the whole Orthodox Faith.



## IDENTITY

The UOC of USA, as with any Eastern Orthodox Church, is fundamentally structured as a hierarchical institution led by bishops, similar to other traditional Christian denominations. What sets it apart is its distinct belief in Holy Tradition. Tradition is not merely an attachment to the things of the past, but as the great twentieth century theologian Vladimir Lossky stated, “Tradition is the life of the Holy Spirit in the Church.” The Church is the body of Christ, with Jesus Christ as the head, enlivened by the Holy Spirit.

The hierarchs (bishops, archbishops, metropolitans, etc.) oversee the local church, through their ordained priests and deacons, while maintaining a connection to the Apostles and bishops of the past through the sacrament of ordination to Holy Orders and collegial communion with the other Orthodox churches around the world. Ordination is bestowed upon individuals as deacons and priests, while Bishops are selected from priests who have embraced monastic vows. As a result, the faithful peoples’ encounter with the Church greatly relies on the caliber of individuals chosen for ordination.

Those trained for the vocation of ministry are prepared in specific ways that cannot be applied to Churches or organizations that do not rely upon a hierarchy. Their formation is more than intellectual and scholastic. The student of St. Sophia Seminary is formed in obedience and therefore humility, humility being the only attitude which allows for learning and growth.

St. Sophia Seminary serves the students, the hierarchs, and, ultimately, the parishes and the faithful of the entire UOC of USA. It produces both well-rounded clergy and educated and enlightened laity, ready and willing to serve and support the rest of the faithful.



Language is a major part of one's culture and identity, and St. Sophia Seminary is now poised between Ukrainian and American cultures that are bridged by a common Orthodox faith. The Seminary student body is comprised of Ukrainian-Americans, American-born converts, and students from Ukraine, Brazil, and Romania. And like other Orthodox Theological Schools in North America, St. Sophia Seminary now enrolls women who wish to pursue an education in Theology.

Prayer life is at the heart of a seminarian's day; the services in the chapel are both a joy and an education in themselves. Services take place at least twice daily, in the morning and evening, providing spiritual food as well as providing an opportunity for students to become familiar with the Hours, Vespers, Compline, Midnight Office and other services of the daily cycle. To sing Vespers or the Divine Liturgy in the St. Andrew Memorial Church is also a valuable experience. At times students visit parishes as they join the hierarchs during their parochial visitations. Not only does this provide practice with liturgical services, but it gives exposure to practical parish life.

The students of St. Sophia Seminary are trained in the study and exegesis of the Christian Scriptures, for it is there that the words and actions of our Lord Jesus Christ are recorded, and it is from there that most of the Church's liturgical texts are gleaned. Our Father among the Saints, St. John Chrysostom, doctor and pillar of the Church, famously said, "Most of the Church's problems stem from an ignorance of the Scriptures." The Orthodox Church, as dependent upon the Scriptures as it is, is not a "sola scriptura" (scripture alone) Church. The Scriptures hold a special and central place in the Tradition of the Church, but the Holy Spirit continues to lead the church into all truth (John 16:13).

Buttressed by the hierarchy and informed by the Scriptures, students at St. Sophia Seminary have a third focus. They are required to learn the liturgical function of the Church through serving, in administration of its rites and mysteries. Chief among these is the Divine Liturgy and the administration of the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.

The three-legged stool of humble formation, scriptural study, and sacramental worship, form the identity of the students of St. Sophia Seminary and ultimately its graduates and the future pastors of the UOC of USA.

### **CONCLUSION**

St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary welcomes this opportunity to review and to evaluate the many aspects that comprise this school's life and work, and in particular, the activities of the past 10 years.

However, St. Sophia Seminary has changed considerably since the ATS Readiness Report of 2019, and many of the challenges and changes are discussed in this report. It is St. Sophia Seminary's contention that these changes illustrate the many ways the seminary listens, learns, and grows, and is faithful to the vitally important work of theological education in the 21st century.

## SCHOOL SYNOPSIS

Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary presently provides three distinct degree programs: a comprehensive MDiv program for full-time residents, tailored to immigrant students primarily from Ukraine; a part-time MA program for remote students; and a part-time MDiv program composed of numerous brief residencies. Both the full-time and part-time MDiv tracks meet the academic prerequisites outlined by the hierarchs of the UOC of USA for ordination to the priesthood, whereas the MA program fulfills the academic criteria for diaconate ordination. At present, there are eleven students enrolled in the full-time, residential MDiv program which consists of 92 credits, and ten students in the part-time, distance learning MA program which consists of 36 credits. Currently, there are no students enrolled in the short-residency, MDiv program. All in-person classes take place at the primary campus located in South Bound Brook, New Jersey.

The MA program involves remote learning supplemented by a retreat held at the main campus at the conclusion of each semester. During these retreats, final seminars are conducted, and examinations are administered. The remote learning aspect encompasses both synchronous and asynchronous modes of instruction. Each course utilizes periodic readings, written assignments, and virtual classroom seminars and lectures to satisfy the requirements of the curriculum.

The faculty of St. Sophia Seminary has ten full-time and thirteen adjunct/part-time faculty, and there are nine members of the Board of Trustees.

Upon acceptance of its application to full membership in ATS, St. Sophia Seminary will apply for membership in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) which authorizes and regulates distance learning between member states.

St. Sophia Seminary maintains a close, reciprocal relationship with the UOC of USA, and collegial relationships with all Orthodox jurisdictions that the UOC of USA is in communion with.

Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary operates with the license from (see attachment 4) The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education of the State of New Jersey.

Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary invites comments on the upcoming site visit <https://stsuots.edu/accreditation>.

“Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary is hosting a comprehensive evaluation visit, for initial accreditation by the ATS Commission on Accrediting on March 11 through Thursday, March 14, 2024. The purpose of this visit is to verify that the school meets all applicable Commission Standards of Accreditation. Comments regarding how well the school meets those standards and/or generally demonstrates educational quality may be sent to [accrediting@ats.edu](mailto:accrediting@ats.edu) at least two weeks before the visit. Comments may also or instead be sent in writing to his eminence Archbishop Daniel at [vladykadaniel@aol.com](mailto:vladykadaniel@aol.com). All comments will be shared with the onsite evaluation committee.”

Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary’s statement of accreditation status can be accessed here: <https://stsuots.edu/accreditation>

Upon being granted full accreditation by the ATS, St. Sophia Seminary will examine the possibility of Title IV programs with ATS as its gatekeeper agency.





## STANDARDS

### Standard 1: **Mission and Integrity**



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## Standard 1. Mission and Integrity

The current iteration of St. Sophia Seminary's mission statement is a reflection of its core values and vision. Over time, this mission has evolved from its original focus, which was centered on preparing priests for the UOC of USA. This evolution demonstrates the seminary's commitment to a more inclusive and expansive mission, one that aims to serve not only the wider Orthodox Church but also a broader and more diverse demographic of individuals seeking spiritual education.

**ST. SOPHIA SEMINARY'S VISION** is to strengthen, ensure, and expand the future of the Orthodox faith in the USA through rigorous Christian education.

### ST. SOPHIA SEMINARY'S CORE VALUES:

- **VIRTUE** - More than a high moral standard and a checklist of dos and don'ts, the pursuit of virtue as the highest good in relationship with others and the world, virtue is the identity with the Truth as revealed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- **SCHOLARSHIP** - Academic rigor and intellectual discipline are essential to today's clergyman. Superficial Christian education and blind faith is no longer enough to answer the complex issues of today's secular society. Orthodox Christians must be prepared to give an answer for the hope they hold.
- **SERVICE** - As Jesus Christ exemplified and instructed his disciples at the last supper, Saint Sophia Seminary exists to serve the larger Christian community. First and foremost, the UOC of USA, but more broadly the Eastern Orthodox churches and the world.
- **TRADITION** - Being an Orthodox Christian institution, Saint Sophia Seminary is grounded in the faith of the Apostles, the Ecumenical Councils, and the Church Fathers. The tradition provides the bedrock and perspective from which direction can properly be divined.

It is in service to and support of the UOC of the USA, and more broadly all Orthodox jurisdictions present in the United States, that St. Sophia Seminary operates. The Seminary exists to provide the UOC of the USA with high quality candidates for ordination to the diaconate and priesthood, educated and formed in Christlikeness, and well-educated faithful parishioners who can give a good answer for the hope that they carry into their world. (1 Peter 3:15).

## Mission

### The Official Mission Statement of St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary

*(Approved and adopted on 10 October 2023)*

Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary's mission is to form, train, and educate the future clergy and faithful parishioners of the UOC of USA and the greater Eastern Orthodox Church.

### 1.1

The mission of Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary of forming, training, and educating the future clergy and the faithful parishioners of the UOC of USA, in service to the greater Eastern Orthodox Church, has been in action for close to 50 years. The current iteration of the Mission Statement is the result of the self-reflection necessary to complete this document and a distillation of the statement of purpose that has been in place for some time on the seminary website and has been approved by the Board of Trustees.

The tripartite mission of St. Sophia Seminary informs of all the activities, programs, and courses that are made available to the students (*see Attachment 1*). The full-time residential students in South Bound Brook, New Jersey, are a family that live together, work together, study together, and worship together. The part-time students, whether in the priestly formation or the diaconal formation courses, are required to be full, active, and faithful members of their local parishes serving them in a way that prepares them for future ordained service. In both cases, it is imperative that the seminarian be linked to a religious family, either a church family or the seminary family located in South Bound Brook.

St. Sophia Seminary is a self-renewing community, a network of interpersonal relations reflecting the fundamental unity of faith and love that comes only from the Holy Spirit and links the seminary to the larger communities of Church and world. St. Sophia Seminary offers a specific challenge of higher learning and more intense spiritual formation to men and women of good will who are called to serve Christ and His people at a more conscious and intimate level.

The mission statement of St. Sophia Seminary has been proven by the quality of the graduates and ultimately the clergy that it has produced over the past 50 years. The priests and pastors that are formed by St. Sophia Seminary have been effective in their ministries and stalwart in their support of the faith and the individual parishes of the Church. Several of the graduate clergy have been accepted for various reasons into the service of other Orthodox jurisdictions in the United States and have continued their service effectively there. The continued service of these men and their effectiveness in ministry bears witness to the excellence of the education and formation that they received at St. Sophia Seminary.

The ability of the graduates to serve their liturgical functions well and precisely, their ability to relate to, and to minister to the people of their congregations as well as their broader community, is a witness to the quality and efficacy of their education at the seminary.

Because liturgical function in the administration of both parish life and the mysteries of the Church are physical and observable, the quality and results of a graduate's education in these disciplines is immediately evident to an observer who is well acquainted with the liturgical cycles of the Church. Thus, the priest with whom a new deacon serves, or the bishop under whom a new priest serves, can easily judge whether the training received was efficacious and sufficient. When something is deficient, the priest and the bishop can make a recommendation for a change in the structure or content of the educational experience of the student at St. Sophia Seminary.

## 1.2

At its core the mission of Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary cannot greatly vary. Its mission is to produce and to raise up men and women of virtue and of knowledge to serve both liturgically and non-liturgically within the parishes of the UOC of USA and pastorally both inside and outside of the confines of the Church proper. The hierarchs of the Church, the Board of Trustees, the Administration, the faculty, and the evaluation committee have the mission of the Church and the mission of the seminary in mind when they make adjustments to the direction of the seminary (*see Appendix 2*)

The mission of St. Sophia Seminary lies behind all choices made by the Board, Administration, and Faculty, which is the commitment to educating and nurturing the faithful. This commitment extends to financial matters, whether they pertain to immediate or future needs. By maintaining affordable tuition rates, it aims to open the doors of opportunity to individuals who might not otherwise have the means to attend, especially those who exhibit strong potential. Likewise, safeguarding the endowed funds ensures the enduring legacy of St. Sophia Seminary's mission, securing its vitality for generations to come.

## 1.3

St. Sophia Seminary and the UOC of USA have a reciprocal and interdependent existence (*see Attachment 2*). The seminary trains up the next generation of clergymen and laity to serve and continue the mission of the Church and the local parishes of the UOC of USA provide the next generation of seminarians and candidates for ordination that populate the seminary. If either one or the other stumbles in its mission, the other will suffer. They are inextricably intertwined.

As a result of this self-study, the Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and Core Values of the Seminary is reviewed by the Board of Trustees at the beginning of each three-year program cycle.



### Integrity

#### 1.4

Through its connection with the UOC of USA, under the omophorion (authority) of the Ecumenical Patriarch in Istanbul (Constantinople), St. Sophia Seminary is connected to the global Orthodox Church (*see Attachment 3*). Most of the full-time students are immigrants from Ukraine and Eastern Europe. The majority of part-time students taking part in the diaconal and priestly formation courses are American-born and primarily English-speaking. This combination connects the UOC of USA with the Churches of Eastern Europe in a unique and organic way, while connecting the Seminary to the parishes here in America.

The non-clergy staff, the librarians, cook, and grounds keeper, have been in the employ of the seminary for many years, are well compensated, and have become part of the family of the seminary. Both clergy and non-clergy staff of the seminary are committed to health and growth of the seminary and the seminarians.

#### 1.5

The UOC of USA has 110 parishes and missions distributed across the United States (*see Attachment 3*). Approximately one third of these are primarily Ukrainian speaking, one-third are bilingual, and one third are primarily English speaking. St. Sophia Seminary serves a multicultural Church and a Church with roots linguistically and culturally both in Eastern Europe and the United States.

In the last ten years, St. Sophia Seminary has been accepting more female students. This is a change of culture in the UOC of USA as it is for many Orthodox churches. Seminary, historically, has been a male endeavor in that it is a prerequisite for ordination to Holy Orders. Ministry, more broadly however, is effected by both men and women in the Church and the change is observing and acknowledging that reality, and changing admissions' emphasis to encourage women to enroll. In the past few years, five women have enrolled in classes, one has graduated, and two are currently taking classes.

St. Sophia Seminary's global engagement has in recent days taken on a decidedly different flavor in support and defense of the Ukrainian homeland in the face of aggression. These links to Ukraine are often familial and personal. This provides great strength and firmness of purpose. With the integral help of St. Sophia Seminary, the UOC of USA has, to date, raised over four million dollars to aid the oppressed people of Ukraine.

#### 1.6

Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary operates with a license from The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education of the State of New Jersey (see Attachment 4).

As of June 2020, Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary is an Associate Member of ATS in the United States.



Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary enjoys signed cooperation agreements with:

- Saint Tikhon's Theological Seminary of the Orthodox Church of America (*see Attachment 5*)  
The two schools are associated institutions. Credit hours completed at St. Sophia Seminary are unconditionally accepted by St. Tikhon's Seminary.
- New Brunswick Theological Seminary (*see Attachment 6*)  
New Brunswick Theological Seminary will accept credit hours completed at St. Sophia Seminary according to their policy, to their MDiv and MA programs.
- Kyiv Theological Academy of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (*see Attachment 7*)  
Kyiv Theological Academy has established an agreement of mutual cooperation in regard to a variety of research projects.
- Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology (*see Attachment 8*)  
The two schools are associated institutions. Students from St. Sophia Seminary are eligible to complete their studies at Holy Cross.

Moreover, St. Sophia Seminary maintains ongoing relationships with other Orthodox Schools of Theology in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Australia, sponsoring faculty and student exchange programs with several of these schools.



Saint Sophia Seminary is investigating the possibility Title IV federal loan programs but is not participating in the program currently.

### 1.7

St. Sophia Seminary and its faculty, staff, and administration stand ready to respond accurately and punctually to any accreditation requests they receive from the Board of Commissioners of ATS. St. Sophia Seminary publications, including the website ([www.stsuots.edu](http://www.stsuots.edu)), indicate compliance with all relevant State and Federal regulations. St. Sophia Seminary is in good standing in all instances.

#### **Areas of effectiveness:**

1. Integration of Ukrainian and American Cultures

St. Sophia Seminary successfully integrates Ukrainian and American cultures into its curriculum, fostering the rich heritage within the UOC of USA. This integration benefits both native Ukrainian and American students, nurturing a shared cultural legacy. The seminary excels in maintaining this integration, producing knowledgeable clergy and laity capable of serving their parishes with a deep understanding of both cultures.

2. Endurance

The strength and endurance of St. Sophia's mission and the integrity of its programs, faculty and staff, are evidenced by the steady and consistent formation of graduates since 1975. Despite its small size it shows its effectiveness in understanding and addressing the needs of the Church through its academic, spiritual, and pastoral teachings.

3. National and Global influence

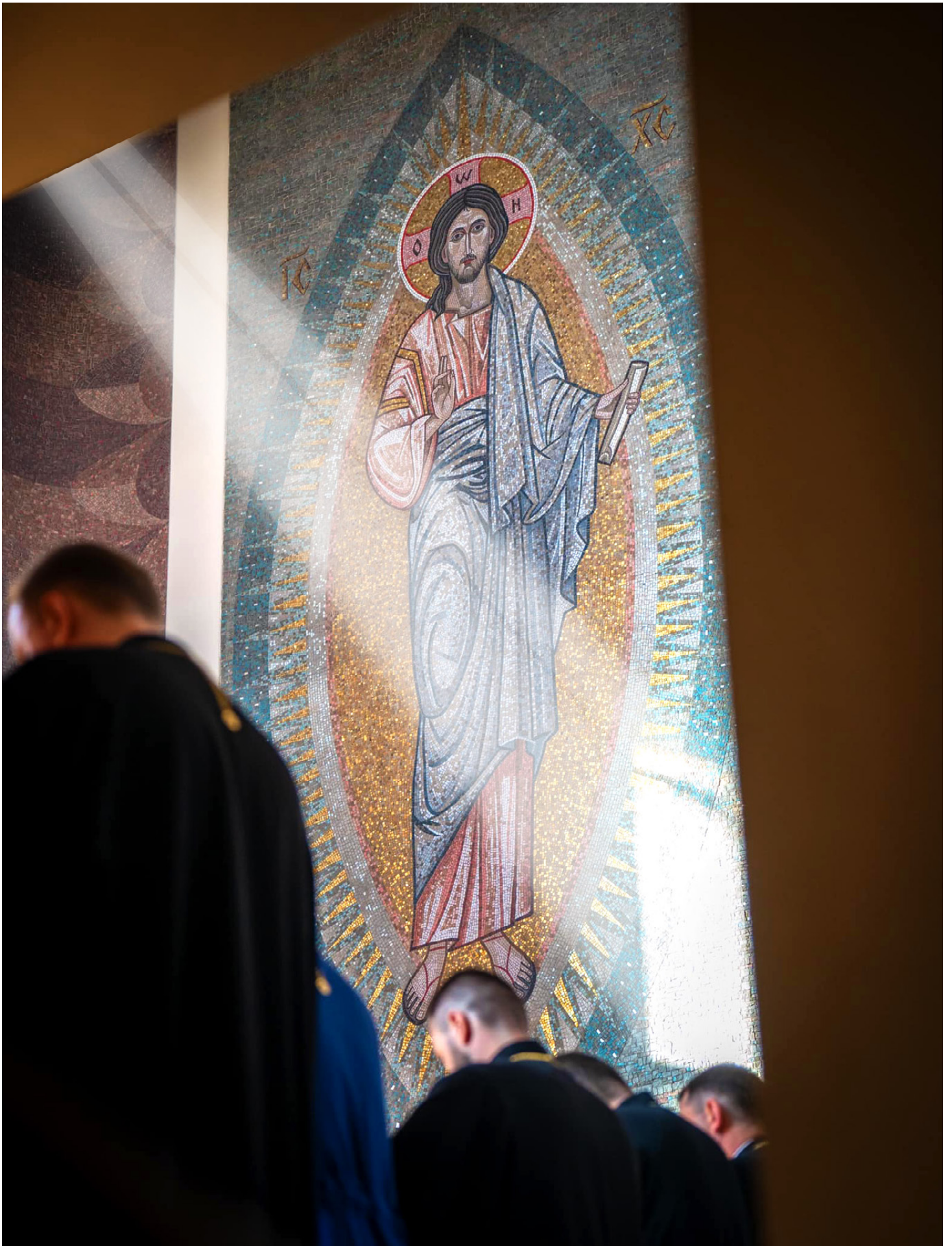
St. Sophia Seminary continues to attract a faithful set of students because it has remained true to its mission. In part, this has been successfully accomplished by accommodating students full-time, onsite, as well as students studying remotely. This type of flexibility enables a smaller school like St. Sophia Seminary to have significant impact across the country and even globally, as graduates depart and serve the Church in many places.

#### **Areas of growth and opportunity:**

1. Admission in the NC-SARA

Upon the full acceptance into ATS, St. Sophia Seminary will apply for admission into the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) which authorizes and regulates interstate distance learning programs.









## STANDARDS

### Standard 2: **Planning and Evaluation**



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## Standard 2. Planning and Evaluation

### 2.1

The main emphasis for planning in St. Sophia Seminary dovetails into the [Strategic Plan for the UOC of USA](#) which was undertaken in 2016. Clergy Goals 2.1, Clergy Development Program, and 2.3, US Clergy Recruitment, speak directly to the long-term plan of St. Sophia Seminary. The strategic goal of the seminary is development of well trained and formed clergy, in numbers great enough to allow for replacement of reposed and retired clergy and missional growth of the church and planting new parishes.

As part of the mission to grow the UOC of USA, St. Sophia Seminary reaches out to individual parishes and the faithful of those parishes from across the country during the hierarchical visits that the bishops undertake each year. They regularly identify parishes that may require new clergy and persons who may be educated and formed into new clergy and ministry.

The local clergy and lay leadership of each parish are encouraged to set forth candidates for seminary and ordination. Recruitment is a grassroots effort that benefits each locality and in turn, the larger Church. Each parish priest, parish board president, and member becomes a recruiting officer for St. Sophia Seminary. It is necessary to have local people feed candidate information to the national Church through their clergy, because the most humble and most suitable candidates for holy orders may not apply to seminary due to humility and thus be overlooked.

### 2.2-3

The Strategic Action Plan (SAP) outlines the direction of St. Sophia Seminary in its mission, vision, and priorities. The SAP is focused on six goals. These goals were identified under the guidance of His Eminence Metropolitan Antony (Rector), His Eminence Archbishop Daniel (Provost), and the Seminary Board of Trustees (*see Attachment 18*).

The Six Strategic Goals are:

1. Continue to provide high quality Orthodox religious education.  
*Metrics for this goal are compiled and reported by the evaluation committee.*
  - a. Retain current skilled, professional and enthusiastic faculty.  
 Measured by faculty retention rate, percentage over the next five years.
  - b. Continue to review course evaluations and adjust as necessary.  
 Measured by course improvement rate, percentage of courses adjusted based on feedback from students and faculty.
  - c. Regularly review course tracks to ensure their effectiveness and relevance.  
 Measured by graduation rate and post-graduation academic and professional achievements.

2. Develop a promotional plan to increase awareness of St. Sophia Seminary within the UOC of the USA as well as other Orthodox jurisdictions.
  - a. Develop and distribute promotional materials to target potential candidates in local parishes.  
Measured by distribution rate to local parishes throughout the UOC of USA.  
*Metrics compiled and reported by the hierarchs during their local visits.*
  - b. Increase the online presence of St. Sophia Seminary especially through social media.  
Track the seminary's online presence including website traffic, social media followers, and engagement metrics.  
*Metrics compiled and reported by IT support.*
  - c. Recruit donors to fund new and renewing scholarships.  
Measured by scholarship funding rate, including new scholarships and donations to existing funds.  
*Metrics compiled and reported by the treasurer's office.*
3. Increase applications and admissions.
  - a. Review admissions policies and procedures.  
A review and report are generated and presented to the Board.  
*To be completed by the admissions board.*
  - b. Continue to increase the diversity of the student population to include more women, minorities, and under-represented demographics.  
Measured by student diversity ratio, the percentage change in women, minorities, and immigrant students enrolling in the seminary.  
*Metrics compiled and reported by the evaluation committee.*
4. Review and adjust the financial structure to ensure stability, longevity, and comparability with similar institutions.
  - a. Review per hour cost of credits.  
A review and report are generated and presented to the Board.  
*To be completed by the treasurer's office.*
  - b. Review student fee schedule.  
A review and report are generated and presented to the Board.  
*To be completed by the treasurer's office.*
  - c. Explore housing possibilities for visiting students and married full-time students.
  - d. Increase the number and variety of scholarships available.
5. Onboard new staff to support and enrich the student experience.  
*Metrics compiled and reported by the evaluation committee.*
  - a. Create an onboarding program.  
Track the number of new staff added to the program.
  - b. Encourage ongoing professional development.  
Track the number of participants in continuing education programs and seminars.
6. Improve the liturgical training received by the graduates.
  - a. Collaborate with experienced liturgical scholars and clergy.  
Assess the success of collaborations with experienced liturgical scholars and clergy by evaluating the quality and impact of the training programs.  
*Assessment made by hierarchs during concelebration and observation of clergy.*
  - b. Offer specialized courses and workshops.  
Measure the enrollment rates in specialized liturgical courses and workshops to gauge student interest and participation.  
*Metrics compiled and reported by the Evaluation Committee.*

## 2.4

An annual review by the evaluation committee of the Strategic Plan's progress is presented to the Board of Trustees of St. Sophia Seminary, with yearly reports presented to the Council of the Metropolia of the UOC of the USA for review.

## 2.5

Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary began to develop an institutional culture of intentional self-evaluation over the past several years. Historically, evaluation of the seminary and its outcomes were in the hands of the hierarchs of the church. As St. Sophia Seminary began seeking external validation and acceptance into an ever-changing and wider Christian and specifically Orthodox world, a wider perspective became necessary. Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary 2023-2025 Assessment and Evaluation Plan (see Appendix 3) was developed to formalize those processes that have been heretofore less well defined.

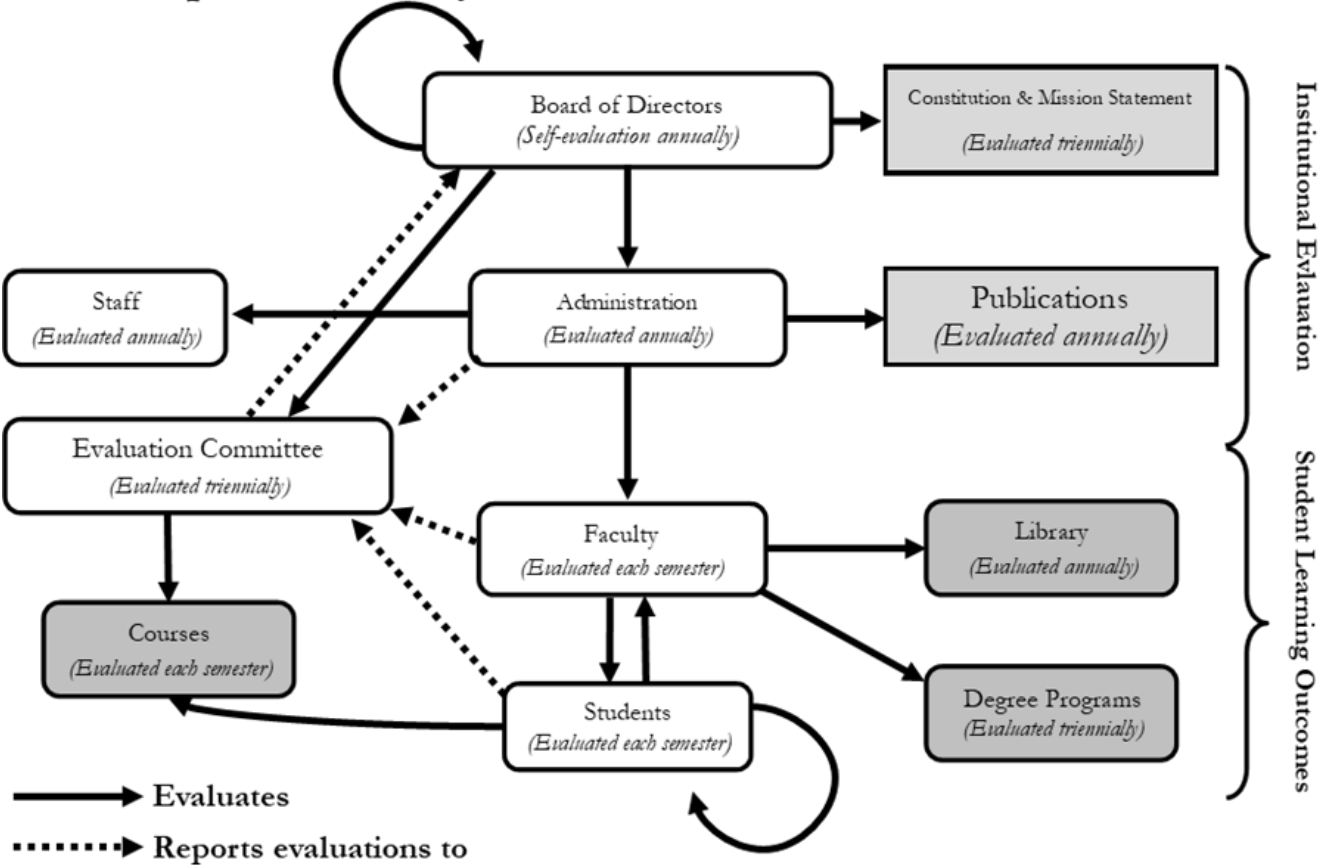
In 2019, the faculty of St. Sophia Seminary reviewed the coursework for the distance learning MA and MDiv programs. This review resulted in changing the curriculum map for both programs. Moving courses pertaining to canon law and homiletics (content most often required of priests) were moved to the MDiv program, and courses pertaining to pastoral care and history were moved to the MA program (part of diaconal formation). This type of review is becoming more regularized with the implementation of the Assessment and Evaluation Plan (AEP).

## 2.6

The Mission, Vision, and Core Values of St. Sophia Seminary delineate its educational and spiritual development outcomes in Standard 4.8. St. Sophia Seminary's institutional goals are spelled out in the Strategic Plan Goals 2023-2028 (see Appendix 2).

The Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary 2023-2025 Assessment and Evaluation Plan (AEP) (see Appendix 3) details the processes that are being implemented to foster the culture of self-evaluation at St. Sophia Seminary. Forms for the evaluation of the Board of Trustees, Administrators, Instructors, Staff, and Programs are included in the appendix, as well as timetables for their completion and who the required evaluators are. The standing evaluation committee is charged with the collection, compilation, and reporting of the data to be submitted to the Board of Trustees with suggestions for appropriate actions if necessary.

### Saint Sophia Seminary Evaluation and Assessment Flow Chart



### 2.7

St. Sophia Seminary recognizes the need to measure institutional effectiveness and assess student learning outcomes more intentionally. While many of these practices of assessment and evaluation have been in place and used consistently for many years in an unofficial capacity, the attached AEP establishes a more official, comprehensive, and robust process (see Appendix 3).

### 2.8

Evaluation encompasses two fundamental aspects of St. Sophia Seminary: student learning and institutional effectiveness. However, in the context of a theological school, the primary emphasis is placed on students, their education, and their spiritual development. The evaluation process seeks to assess how effectively students are learning and how their learning experiences contribute to their personal and vocational growth, enabling them to attain their desired goals.

Just as students value the feedback they are given on their performance; faculty members are eager to hear how students rate the experience they have at the Seminary and in the courses. During their studies, seminarians are given the opportunity to provide feedback on a variety of questionnaires and surveys.



The End of Course survey gives the students the opportunity to provide their feedback on the whole course experience (*see Attachment 9*).

After reviewing each survey, the provost shares anonymous results with course instructors. The information from the surveys helps the instructors and the Seminary gain insight into how seminarians experience each course, including the delivery, content, and resources provided. The information is collected to help improve course design and teaching. It is also used for quality control, which includes course monitoring, subject area reviews, and the annual Seminary report which is presented to the Board of Trustees and the Council of Metropolia of the UOC of the USA. See Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary, [Statement of Educational Effectiveness 2023](#)

Student outcomes in the past ten years			
	Fall 2013-Spring 2018	Fall 2018 – Spring 2023	Current
Total Students Enrolled	31	29	24
Students withdrawn	23	5	
Graduates not ordained	2	12	
Graduates Ordained	6	12	
Graduation percentage	25.8%	82.8%	

As illustrated in the table above, over the past ten years St. Sophia Seminary has become more efficient in selecting candidates who would immigrate to attend classes and graduating those who enroll. From 2013 to 2018, 10 of those students who withdrew from the seminary have returned to their country of origin. Their withdrawal is due most often to the difficulties associated with living in a new and unfamiliar country and culture in America.

### **Areas of effectiveness:**

#### **1. Unity.**

The culture of familial bond, reciprocal support, and intimate knowledge of the students, graduates, and candidates for ordination, by their parish priests, their faculty, and their hierarchs builds a unity among the structures of the Church and the Seminary.

#### **2. Personal Direction.**

The Assistant Dean of Students interacts with each of the full-time students in residence in South Bound Brook, NJ each day, lives on campus, and often leads their prayer services. The office of the Vocations Director exists to advocate for, encourage, and promote the part-time students and helps guide them through the application process and their seminary career. The Vocations Director interacts with the part-time students on a monthly basis, noting their progress and any concerns.

### 3. Individualized Instruction.

The relatively small size of St. Sophia Seminary allows for flexibility in meeting the needs of individual students. Jurisdictional differences suggest different coursework when students originate outside of the UOC of USA. St. Sophia Seminary and its administration are broad-minded enough to look outside of the UOC of USA to find instructors to fill the specific needs of diverse students. Experts on the history and/or liturgical life of other jurisdictions are often employed on a temporary basis to better meet the needs of specific students.

## Areas of growth and opportunity:

### 1. Student Diversity.

Although a number of women have attended and graduated from St. Sophia Seminary, with two women currently enrolled, the administration is looking to increase that constituency. Educated women have always been invaluable in their parishes and communities, and St. Sophia Seminary is working to continue to enable them in greater numbers.

### 2. Broader Reach.

Once full ATS accreditation is achieved, St. Sophia Seminary will transition from existing as a parochial seminary operating almost exclusively for the forming of priests for the UOC of the USA, to a broader reach outside of the jurisdiction.

### 3. Continuous Evaluation.

Continuous evaluation benefits students and aids the Board, Administration, and Faculty in identifying successes and areas needing improvement. This ongoing analysis informs course adjustments, enhances student outcomes, and sets benchmarks for St. Sophia Seminary. The more robust evaluation process outlined in the attached Evaluation and Assessment Plan is a result of the self-study efforts and will empower St. Sophia's to assess students, staff, administration, and institutional effectiveness effectively. It will also establish a feedback mechanism for the evaluation committee and Board of Trustees to evaluate program curricula alignment with the school's mission.

### 4. Inter-Orthodox Connection.

This initiative could potentially enable credit transfers between St. Sophia's Seminary and other seminaries aligned with the Orthodox Tradition. This practicality becomes particularly valuable if a student from another seminary needs to retake a course like Greek or a related subject. Such an arrangement benefits not only St. Sophia's and the UOC of USA, but also extends its advantages to the broader Orthodox faith community.





## STANDARDS

### Standard 3: **Student Learning and Formation**



**SAINT SOPHIA**  
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

### Standard 3. Student Learning and Formation

St. Sophia Seminary adheres to the Tradition of the Orthodox Church in the formation and education of its students. The Tradition is the teaching of Christ, and the various programs reflect the faithful adherence to these teachings, handed down to the Church since apostolic times. As a reflection of commitment to the Ecclesiastical Tradition, St. Sophia Seminary submits to the ecclesiastical authority of the Church through the Council of Bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA.

St. Sophia Seminary demonstrates a holistic approach to student education and formation that encompasses the intellectual, human, spiritual, and vocational dimensions of learning.

The seminary ensures that students, regardless of their mode of study (residential and distance learning), have access to the same quality of education and formation. It provides resources, including library access and support services, to facilitate learning in various modalities.

#### 3.1

The primary, though not exclusive, goal of St. Sophia Seminary is to help form and train true Orthodox pastors, teachers, and leaders of the people of God who follow the example set by our Lord God and Savior, Jesus Christ, in His own earthly ministry. Through a program of professional education, spiritual growth, vocational awakening, the following, longstanding spiritual objectives are set before the student:

- A deepening of one's own personal Orthodox Christian experience and commitment to more profound service in the Lord's vineyard.
- A vivid awareness of the contemporary world in which God works with and through people of faith.
- A growing understanding of the Orthodox Faith through critical theological reflection and liturgical worship.
- An awareness of the nature of the Orthodox Christian priesthood and diaconate and cultivation of the vocation of those men called to these holy orders.
- An integration of one's theological understanding and worldview with one's own life in Christ.
- An appreciation of the Ukrainian Orthodox ethos and polity, and the Church's salvific mission in the modern world.

Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary gives intense individual attention to each student. Each student is an investment of the Church in its future. Pious, educated, and well-formed students and graduates are an asset to the Church and the foundation on which the Church will be built. The academic life of St. Sophia Seminary is balanced by the liturgical and social life of its students. The full-time students live, learn, and worship together on a daily basis with their professors, the Assistant Dean of Students, and the hierarchs, who are in residence. The part-time and distance-learning students are required not only to excel in their academic pursuits but are expected to be full and active members serving in their local parishes in accordance with the direction of their parish priest or spiritual father. The hierarchs, the provost, the faculty, and the vocations director all work together to build up the students. Both the retreats for the part-time, distance, students in New Jersey and regular visits by the hierarchs to their local parishes allow the hierarchs to observe and interact with the distance and part-time students (*see Attachment 11*).

St. Sophia Seminary takes a comprehensive approach to the development and nurturing of its students, ensuring that the four crucial dimensions of student learning and formation are integrated into both its formal curriculum and the broader co-curricular experiences provided.

1. **Intellectual Dimension:** The seminary places a strong emphasis on academic pursuits. Students engage with complex theological, historical, and philosophical concepts, challenging the intellect and encouraging critical thinking. The curriculum is designed to foster intellectual growth by offering diverse courses, seminars, and theological discussions. Through these academic endeavors, students acquire the knowledge and analytical skills necessary for effective ministry and service.
2. **Human Dimension:** St. Sophia Seminary recognizes the importance of personal growth and interpersonal relationships in the formation of future clergy and leaders. Students are encouraged to develop empathy, cultural sensitivity, and effective communication skills. The seminary's close-knit community provides a supportive environment where students learn from one another, share experiences, and build lifelong friendships. This human dimension extends beyond the classroom, emphasizing the development of well-rounded individuals capable of connecting with diverse communities.
3. **Spiritual Dimension:** At the core of St. Sophia Seminary's mission is the spiritual formation of its students. Through daily worship, prayer, and participation in the sacraments, students cultivate a deep and meaningful relationship with God. The seminary's chapel serves as a sacred space where spiritual growth is nurtured. Students also learn the practical aspects of pastoral care, guiding them in providing spiritual support to others.
4. **Vocational Dimension:** St. Sophia Seminary prepares students not only for academic and spiritual challenges but also for their future vocational roles within the Church. The curriculum includes courses on pastoral ministry, homiletics, liturgy, and more, equipping students with the skills and knowledge necessary to serve their communities effectively. Additionally, students engage in practical experiences, such as Archpastoral visits and parish work, that allow them to apply their learning in real-world ministry contexts.

### 3.2

The faculty of St. Sophia Seminary is highly educated and experienced in service and pastoral ministry (*See Standard 8*). Most of the instructors have been priests for several years. Their experience and education are of great benefit to the students in that they are not only academic instructors but also have real-world experience applying those concepts which they teach (*see Attachment 12*). St. Sophia Seminary Library is an excellent resource available not only to those who are in residence, but also to students online (*See Standard 6*).

Curriculum development is an ongoing process. Minor changes in curriculum occur in response to student feedback via surveys taken after each course, as well as input from faculty and administration. Major changes are undertaken when the evaluation committee identifies a need or challenge which must be addressed in a broader context. When the evaluation committee identifies a negative trend in the surveys it collects from outgoing students and faculty recommendations will be compiled and



suggestions made to the board of trustees for a remedy. Responsiveness and flexibility are key in continuing to offer valuable and effective courses and programs. An ongoing challenge of curriculum development is recruiting well-prepared instructors to teach various subjects, using appropriate and active teaching methods (*see Attachment 1*).

The formation of a standing evaluation committee is a direct result of this self-study. They will undertake the examination of all syllabi and compare them with other Orthodox and non-orthodox seminaries of similar standing (*see Supporting Document 12*).

St. Sophia Seminary's commitment to academic rigor is evident through the caliber of its faculty and the high standards set for graduate-level education. This ensures that students receive an education that meets the demands that will be placed upon them in their ministry.

### 3.3

The nature of St. Sophia Seminary demands an intercultural competency since nearly half of its students hail from Ukraine and other countries of Eastern Europe. Many of the church members whom the graduates will serve are also from Ukraine and Eastern Europe or are descended from them. With the invasion of Ukraine, this has become an even more pressing issue.

A new wave of immigration from Eastern Europe to the United States has begun. A good portion of these immigrants will most probably be Eastern Orthodox, and they will be looking for support and a religious community here in the United States. While numbers of immigrant families moving into a vicinity is not a long-term ministerial plan, it does present a current ministerial opportunity and challenge. The native Ukrainian graduates of the full-time program are uniquely qualified to minister to these immigrant families. During their three years of studies, the students are immersed in American culture. The retreats attended by the part-time students bring them in contact with the full-time Ukrainian students and facilitates the free exchange of cross-cultural ideas. Additionally, various academic agreements have been established for joint ventures with the schools of theology in Ukraine (*see Attachment 7*).

The most recent additions to the student body that hail from Ukraine, are coming from a country that is caught up in the middle of war. Their fellow students who are already enrolled, still have family under attack. The psychological, mental, and spiritual health of these students is in the forefront of the efforts of St. Sophia Seminary. These students need special attention and care so as to overcome the trauma that this has caused. The Assistant Dean of Students, who is a bilingual priest and is a caring counselor, lives in the dorm with the seminarians and is always available to them.

### 3.4

The invasion of Ukraine has brought a superficial awareness of Eastern European politics, geography, and culture to the forefront of the minds of the American people, but it is a reality to the people in Ukraine, and to those whose friends and relatives reside here in America. The friends and family of the students, faculty, and administration are being affected directly by the conflict and it is constantly on

their minds. However, isolationism, defensiveness, and ethno-phyletism, have no place in the Orthodox Church. Part of the mission of the UOC of USA and every Orthodox Church in every jurisdiction in the United States is to first identify as Orthodox before identifying with its national origin. This attitude is taught through an honest reading of Church history and politics which demonstrates that no one nationality holds the monopoly on spiritual and religious perfection, and that the future of the Church lies in unforeseen directions. The parishes of the UOC of USA and therefore its candidates for clerical orders must be willing and able to minister to those of different national backgrounds, including those who are presently adversarial.

### 3.5

Graduation from Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary is preparation for a journey for the graduate, not an end. Once a student has finished the MA or the MDiv program, they are academically qualified to become a candidate for ordination to the diaconate or to the priesthood, respectively. Ordination is not a foregone conclusion, however, but a matter of discretion for that graduate's hierarchy. The call to ministry is a lifelong vocation to service, and ordination initiates a steep learning curve for the graduates as they become a competent deacon or priest. Many of the liturgical and pastoral requirements for being deacon or a priest can only be learned through experience, and so instilling in the new deacon or priest a mind and heart for God, His people, and His Church is essential to the continued growth of the candidate.

Graduates who are ultimately ordained and positioned in a parish of the UOC of USA are recalled to South Bound Brook, NJ every year for a clergy conference where they make and strengthen their connections with other clergy and the hierarchs. Clergy, as well as a selection of lay delegates from each parish, are also required to attend the regular Sobor of the UOC of USA every three years.

The hierarchs of the UOC of USA endeavor to make annual Archpastoral visits to each parish in their care. During these visits, the bishop assesses the health of the parish and the effectiveness of the clergy positioned there.

### 3.6

St. Sophia Seminary offers two distinct programs to cater to the diverse needs of its student body, each designed to address different requirements and lifestyles.

The first program is tailored for full-time resident students pursuing an MDiv. These students reside within the seminary's premises in South Bound Brook, New Jersey. Their daily routines involve attending classes on-site and actively participating in services at the Seminary Chapel.

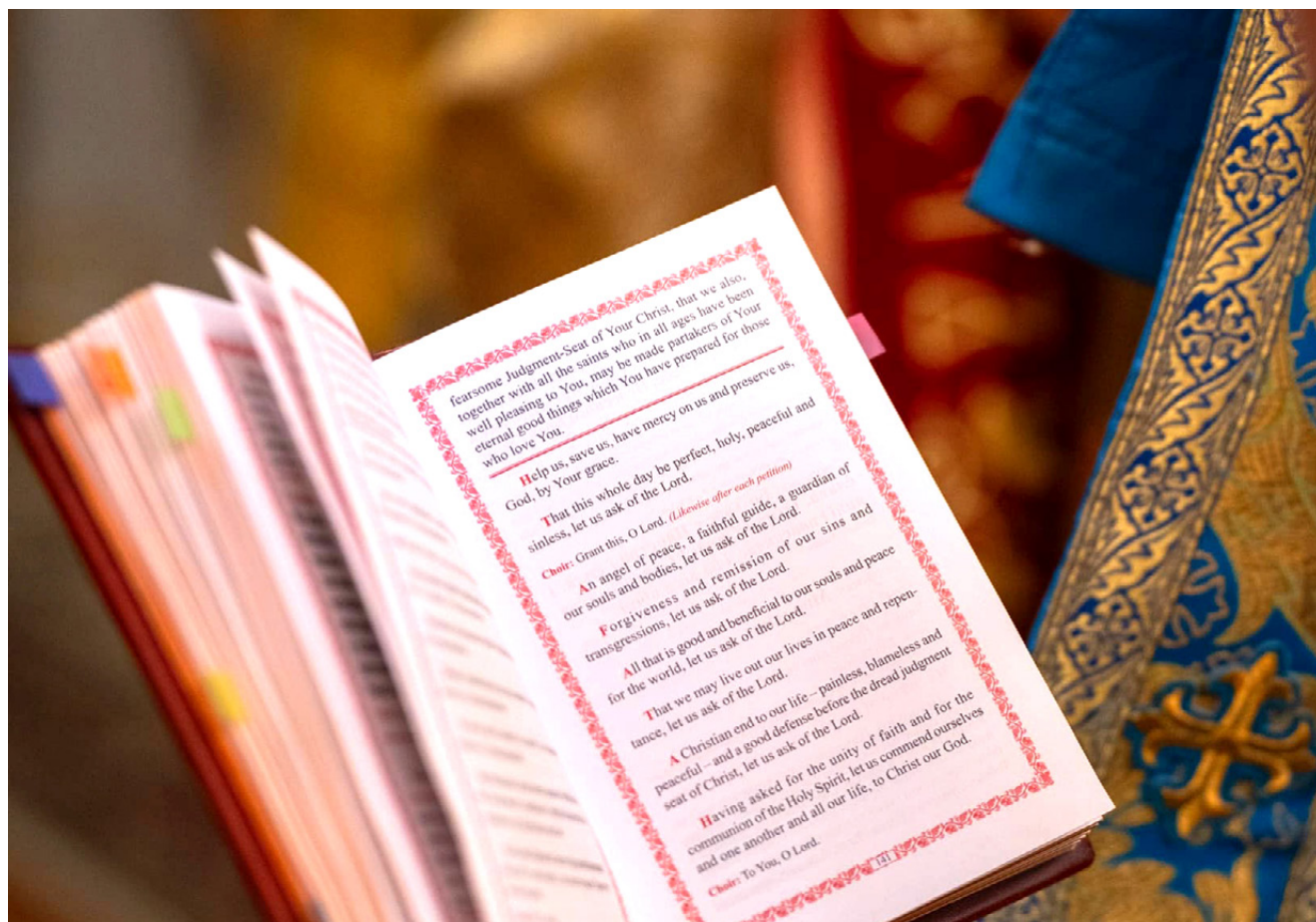
Conversely, the second program is split into two, part-time students, pursuing either an MA or an MDiv. These individuals continue their secular lives and employment while embarking on their academic journey. They participate in virtual classes that are occasionally complemented by in-person retreats held at the seminary in New Jersey. Given that these distance learning students do not have the opportunity to live in a campus community, they are encouraged to engage actively in service within their home

parishes, embodying the spiritual life of their local church.

The on-line learning components of both part-time programs are structured in weekly or bi-weekly segments where students are assigned reading and writing assignments, responses to questions and fellow students' comments, and quizzes. Most classes will also have some form of term paper that will count toward their final grade. Courses such as homiletics may also have verbal requirements that can be made in person or recorded for later assessment.

The short residencies and end-of-semester retreats mandated for distance learning students go beyond mere additional class periods or time for test taking. Ministry, especially within the context of ordained ministry, can be a solitary path. Therefore, establishing connections with peers and fellow ministers is essential for maintaining a healthy spiritual and mental well-being. During these retreats, seminarians have the invaluable opportunity to meet face-to-face, fostering bonds of fraternity that will provide invaluable support throughout their future endeavors in ministry. These retreats serve as not only a forum for academic growth but also as a source of strength and camaraderie within the seminary community. The vocation of Holy Orders, both deacon and priest, is often one of volunteer service, and one that requires sacrifice on the part of the candidate (*see Attachment 1*).

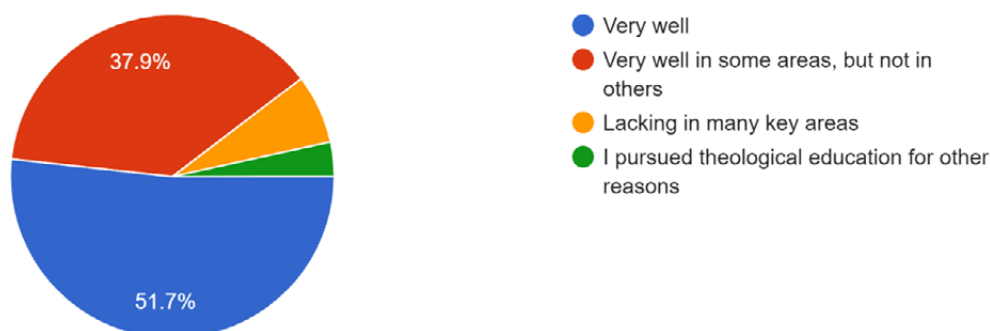
### 3.7



### Results from St. Sophia Seminary Alumni Survey, September 2023:

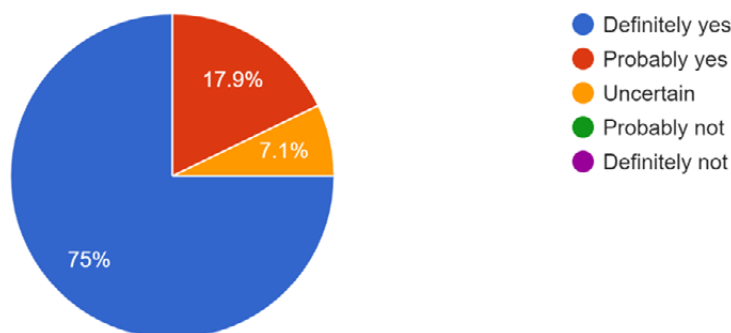
Overall, how well did your theological education at St. Sophia Seminary prepare you for your current work?

29 responses



If you had it to do over again, would you choose to attend the St. Sophia Seminary?

28 responses



St. Sophia Seminary's approach to student learning and formation, encompassing both curricular and co-curricular aspects, is grounded in a holistic perspective. The seminary fosters a collaborative environment where faculty and various stakeholders communicate efficiently to shape a comprehensive and unified course of study.

Faculty members, drawing from their wealth of experience and expertise, engage in meaningful discussions with key contributors such as the librarian, hierarchs, and clergy when developing their syllabi. This collaborative process ensures that each course is well-structured, aligning with the seminary's mission and educational goals.

Conversely, the seminary's evaluation committee plays a vital role in upholding the quality and relevance of the curriculum. They conduct assessments that involve a thorough examination of syllabi,



comparing them with those of peer institutions, scrutinizing course evaluation feedback from students, and evaluating faculty performance.

St. Sophia Seminary's commitment to continuous improvement is evident in its openness to new ideas and courses. Recently, two new courses have been proposed by individual clergy members of the UOC of the USA. These proposed courses are under review by the evaluation committee and will be presented to the Board of Trustees in due time. This dynamic approach to curriculum development ensures that St. Sophia Seminary remains responsive to the evolving needs of its students and the Church community it serves.

### 3.8

St. Sophia Seminary is housed physically in South Bound Brook, New Jersey. The library resources available in New Jersey are also available to those who are not in residence, and the material resources and personnel resources are available when the distance learning program students attend their retreats. (<https://uocofusa.org/library>) The library is continually being upgraded as technology advances.

The resident students are cared for primarily by the Assistant Dean of Students. The nonresident students are cared for and advocated by the Vocations Director. If a student has a specific need, or an adjustment needs to be made, these two members of the staff are available to facilitate it.

### 3.9

St. Sophia Seminary employs exceptionally qualified instructors (*see Attachment 12*). Besides being duly educated, most of the instructors of St. Sophia Seminary are parish priests themselves with many years of service to their credit. The full-time resident students interact with their instructors daily, face to face. The part-time students use various means of interaction synchronously, through biweekly zoom meetings (recorded only for those who have an excuse to miss) and asynchronously through periodic assignments and written discussion questions posted to their Google Classroom board. They meet and get to know their professors and fellow students in person at the retreats, either monthly for the MDiv students, or at the end of each semester for the MA students.

Independent studies are offered, especially when students originate from jurisdictions and traditions that are outside of the UOC of USA. These usually replace the requirements of Ukrainian Church History in the basic curriculum by the history of their own faith tradition or jurisdiction. St. Sophia Seminary is flexible enough to hire, and has hired, an adjunct professor for a single student taking a single course.

Because the distance students are spread out over the United States and sometimes abroad, regular office hours are not feasible. But since class size is so small, the professors of the part-time students can make themselves available by phone or video chat often, when it is convenient for the students.

### 3.10

*Not applicable.*

### 3.11

Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary reviews and publishes a catalog annually and posts it to the Seminary website (*see Attachment 1*). Contained therein are the policies of the two programs, one full-time resident, and a part-time, short residency and/or distance learning. These programs continue to be adapted to the needs of the constituent churches, the faithful, and the students. The seminary catalog is reviewed and revised annually by the administration; changes are made to keep it aligned with the offerings of the seminary.

### 3.12-3

Within the seminary catalog and its corresponding webpage is the policy for the transfer of credits from other schools ([https://www.stsuots.edu/transfer\\_credit](https://www.stsuots.edu/transfer_credit)). These are not to exceed more than 1/3 of the entirety of the credits for any degree at St. Sophia Seminary. The Seminary only offers master's degrees; therefore, only graduate credits can be transferred. Courses where there is substantial intersection with Orthodox study, e.g., Scripture or pastoral care, may be transferred from non-Orthodox seminaries. This determination is made by the admissions board.

### 3.14

The research conducted for papers and exams at St. Sophia Seminary does not include direct data collection. Plagiarism is prohibited and instances of suspected plagiarism are reviewed by the provost of the seminary and proper action is taken (*see Attachment 13*).

### 3.15

Part of the mission of St. Sophia Seminary is to prepare some students to become lay ministers in the Church, and ministers can be called out of every walk of life. Therefore, licenses may be conferred upon graduates who do not hold an undergraduate degree. Previous studies undertaken at other institutions of higher education and/or in other faith backgrounds and extended service to the local church community, and other qualifications are reviewed by the admissions committee to determine whether a student without an undergraduate degree will be admitted to St. Sophia Seminary for the license. These candidates may or may not be considered for candidacy to holy orders at the discretion of the hierarchy upon their graduation.

### **Areas of effectiveness:**

#### 1. Quality of Learning.

Demonstrated by the contents of the Educational Effectiveness Report, St. Sophia Seminary is already carrying out its mission to train and form spiritual leaders for the UOC of USA and other Orthodox Churches. Keeping to its core vision and virtues, while remaining flexible in their application, bodes well for the future of the seminary.

**Areas of growth and opportunity:**

1. Spanish Language Learning.  
Although English and Ukrainian can both be heard regularly at St. Sophia Seminary and during the services of the UOC of USA throughout the nation, more and more often, Spanish is heard, and will become necessary if ministry is to remain effective and relevant. Exploration of Spanish language classes will be required.
2. Continuing Education.  
Since the completion of seminary is only the beginning of a journey in ministry, St. Sophia Seminary should expand its service to its graduates by offering them continuing education programs.







## STANDARDS

### Standard 4: **Master's Degree**



**SAINT SOPHIA**  
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## Standard 4. Master of Divinity

### 4.1

The Master of Divinity Degree (MDiv) offered by Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary requires a minimum of 72 credit hours offered in either three years of fulltime enrollment or six years of halftime enrollment (*see Attachment 1*). The program is designed to prepare students for ministry within the context of a local church or mission.

CURRENT SAINT SOPHIA SEMINARY FULL-TIME RESIDENTIAL MDIV PROGRAM							
YEAR ONE							
FALL SEMESTER				SPRING SEMESTER			
	CREDITS		CREDITS		CREDITS		CREDITS
BIB101: Intro to OT	3	BIB151: Koine Greek 1	3	BIB102: Intro to OT	3	LIT102: Sacramental Theology 1 & Practicum	3
THEO101: Dogmatic Theology 1	3	UDS151: History & Culture of Ukraine	3	THEO102: Dogmatic Theology 2	3	BIB152: Koine Greek 2	3
CH101: Church History 1	3	LIT203: Typica & Practicum	3	CH102: Church History 2	3	THEO201: Fundamental Moral Theology	3
TOTAL CREDITS			18	TOTAL CREDITS			18

CURRENT SAINT SOPHIA SEMINARY FULL-TIME RESIDENTIAL MDIV PROGRAM							
YEAR TWO							
FALL SEMESTER				SPRING SEMESTER			
	CREDITS		CREDITS		CREDITS		CREDITS
BIB201: OT Prophets & Wisdom	3	LIT201: Sacramental Theology 2	3	BIB202: NT Epistles & Acts	3	LIT202: Festal Cycles & Practicum	3
CH201: Patristics 1	3	LIT221: Ecclesiastical Music 1	3	CH202: Patristics 2	3	LIT322: Ecclesiastical Music 2	3
THEO202: Orthodox Social Ethics	3	PPM372: Canon Law 1	3	THEO203: Medical & Ethical Issues	3	PPM372: Canon Law 2	3
TOTAL CREDITS			18	TOTAL CREDITS			18

CURRENT SAINT SOPHIA SEMINARY FULL-TIME RESIDENTIAL MDIV PROGRAM							
YEAR THREE							
FALL SEMESTER				SPRING SEMESTER			
	CREDITS		CREDITS		CREDITS		CREDITS
PPM363: Pastoral THEOLOGY2: Counseling	3	PPM301: Field Education Ministry Seminar 2	3	PPM382: Pastoral THEOLOGY3: Vocation	3	PPM302: Field Education Ministry Seminar 2	3
PPM352: Pastoral THEOLOGY1: Homiletics	3	Elective	3	PPM453: Pastoral THEOLOGY2: Homiletics	3	CH304: Ukrainian Church History 2	3
CH301: Ukrainian Church History 1	3	Elective	3	THEO301: Spiritual Theology	3	Elective	3
TOTAL CREDITS			18	TOTAL CREDITS			18

MDIV PROGRAM: 107

CURRENT SAINT SOPHIA SEMINARY PART-TIME SHORT RESIDENCY MDIV PROGRAM							
YEAR ONE				YEAR FOUR			
FALL SEMESTER	CREDITS	SPRING SEMESTER	CREDITS	FALL SEMESTER	CREDITS	SPRING SEMESTER	CREDITS
BIB101: Intro to OT	3	BIB103: Intro to NT	3	PPM253: Homeletics2	3	PPM342: Priestly Vocation	3
THEO101: Dogmatic Theology 1	3	THEO102: Dogmatic Theology 2	3	PPM372: Canon Law	3	PPM346: Homiletics	3
Total Credits	6	Total Credits	6	Total Credits	6	Total Credits	6
YEAR TWO				YEAR FIVE			
FALL SEMESTER	CREDITS	SPRING SEMESTER	CREDITS	FALL SEMESTER	CREDITS	SPRING SEMESTER	CREDITS
BIB201: OT Prophets & Wisdom	3	BIB202: NT Epistles & Acts	3	CH101: Church History 1	3	CH102: Church History 2	3
CH201: Patristics 1	3	CH202: Patristics 2	3	THEO204: Orthodox Christian Ethics	3	THEO303: Spirituality of Kyivan-Rus	3
Total Credits	6	Total Credits	6	Total Credits	6	Total Credits	6
YEAR THREE				YEAR SIX			
FALL SEMESTER	CREDITS	SPRING SEMESTER	CREDITS	FALL SEMESTER	CREDITS	SPRING SEMESTER	CREDITS
PPM364: Introduction to Pastoral Care	3	CH342: Ecclesiastical Art & Architecture	3	THEO404: Chistology	3	THEO103: Theology of the Icon	3
CH301: Ukrainian Church History 1	3	CH304: Ukrainian Church History 2	3	LIT203: Typica & Practicum	3	LIT204: Festal Cycle & Practicum	3
Total Credits	6	Total Credits	6	Total Credits	6	Total Credits	6

MDIV PROGRAM: 72

## 4.2

St. Sophia Seminary uses the standard Master of Divinity (MDiv) nomenclature for its divinity degrees

## 4.3

St. Sophia Seminary is acutely aware of the legacy it holds, which must be imparted to its graduates to enable them to effectively continue the mission of the UOC of the USA or their respective jurisdictions. To this end, above and beyond learning the structure of the divine services, the students must continually and regularly serve in the church, either in residence in South Bound Brook, NJ, or in their local parishes. The Traditions of the Orthodox faith are vast and complex, varying with each jurisdiction, while remaining united at its core. There is much to learn about Ukrainian Orthodoxy, as well as becoming at least conversant in other Orthodox Traditions.

Interactions with Orthodox jurisdictions outside of the UOC of the USA are beneficial to the students of St. Sophia Seminary. (Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America: <https://www.assemblyofbishops.org/directories/jurisdictions>) Because Orthodoxy is represented on every continent and its tradition spans the entirety of the Christian epoch, it has many local variations in expression. The pluralistic and mobile population of North America makes it imperative that the understanding of a minister or priest be more than parochial. The priests and those who would minister



must become all things to all people, exemplified by Saint Paul. Graduates must be able to hear and be conversant with those who come to them from a variety of backgrounds, jurisdictions, and denominations.

The graduate of St. Sophia Seminary must be formed through participation in the Holy Mysteries of the Church before they themselves can effectively facilitate them. Among these are the Mystery of confession and absolution, facilitated by a spiritual father, a confessor who takes on the responsibility of the spiritual well-being of the student.

Interviews with the students and their spouses are conducted by the hierarchs before consideration of their candidacy for Holy Orders.

Canon Law, Ethics, and Pastoral Theology are included in both the full-time program of study and the priestly formation short residency program. These courses are invaluable for the future priest. They instruct how a church community should be led and provide guidelines on how parishioners and those outside of the Church should be treated.

Student Learning Outcomes for St. Sophia Seminary Master of Divinity degree graduates:

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME	CORRESPONDING ATS CONTENT AREA	C: SPIRITUAL AND PERSONAL FORMATION
Graduates should be able to exegete both verbally and in writing passages of Scripture in a sophisticated manner so as to reveal several levels of the meanings therein.	A: Religious Heritage	Students deepen their understanding of Scripture by distilling their own thoughts and what they have learned into sermons.
Graduates should be able to explain the fundamental aspects of the Orthodox Faith, liturgy, and praxis in ways accessible to both Orthodox Christians and persons of varied faith backgrounds.	A: Religious Heritage & B: Cultural Context	Students are formed by serving the Church and living the life of an Orthodox minister in community.
Graduates should be able to reference a variety of Scripture, writings of the Church Fathers, Ecumenical Councils, and pious Traditions in support of Orthodox Church doctrine and dogmas.	A: Religious Heritage	Students are formed by the consistent reading of Scriptures and other traditional writings of the Church.
Graduates are expected to facilitate discussions on contemporary, contentious topics with Orthodox Christians, Orthodox catechumens, and individuals from other faith traditions, maintaining a pastoral approach that neither compromises the Church's stance nor alienates the individuals they engage with.	B: Cultural Context	Students are confronted with the tendency for discontinuity of secular life and religious life and thought. The benefits and results of a spiritually formed life are pronounced.
Graduates should be able to speak comfortably in public, both in the context of a sermon in the midst of a service or and in the secular sphere.	D: Religious and Public Leadership	Students sharpen their apologetic skills and deepen their faith by enunciation of ecclesiastical truths.
Graduates who will become candidates for Holy Orders should be able to properly conduct the services of the Divine Liturgy, Vespers, Great Vespers, Akathist, and Funeral services (etc.) with attention to the changeable aspects of the Church calendar and season.	D: Religious and Public Leadership	Students are formed by the liturgical life of the Church and by regular participation in the sacraments.

St. Sophia Seminary takes the spiritual formation of its students with the utmost seriousness. Through regular attendance and serving of the Divine Services, and regular confession and absolution, as well as living in community with others, their forming is completed. Obedience and service to others, with things as simple as kitchen or laundry responsibilities or as lofty as hierarchical liturgies, breed humility and patience, a co-curriculum that is vital in their future as ministers.

The above SLOs encompass the academic life of the students, their spiritual and personal growth and formation are the primary focus of the entire learning experience at St. Sophia Seminary. In review for this self-study and in the coming years of review, specific courses may be developed to address this content area specifically.

### 4.4

Although formal internships are not included in the course work of St. Sophia Seminary master's degree programs, the fulltime students in residency in South Bound Brook, NJ, participate regularly in services with the priests in residence and the hierarchs. They travel to different localities across the country with the hierarchs, attending to them and assisting in services during these Archpastoral visits.

During these visits, seminarians are provided with a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in the reality of parish life. This encompasses not only the celebratory moments of a parish's festivities but also the more challenging and earnest discussions that unfold between a hierarch and the clergy as they engage with their congregations and parish councils. The seminarians who attend these visitations witness the operational aspects of church administration, gaining firsthand insights into the demands and responsibilities faced by a pastor in fostering community cohesion and spiritual growth.

For part-time students who participate in the distance learning programs, active involvement in their local churches and communities is a fundamental requirement. They are encouraged to play an active role whenever possible, taking on responsibilities such as serving on the parish council, engaging in Sunday school instruction, directing choirs, and more. This active engagement in their local communities equips them with practical experience, enabling them to better understand and appreciate the dynamics of parish life as they prepare for their future roles as ministers. By participating actively and consistently in these local settings, the part-time students not only deepen their spiritual connections but also develop essential pastoral skills that will serve them well in their future ministry.

When a graduate of St. Sophia Seminary nears ordination, they may elect to do an intensive workshop with a priest well versed in liturgics, so as to flatten the learning curve unavoidable in the beginning of actually serving the Holy Mysteries of the Orthodox Church. The final evaluation is made by the provost in consultation with the Rector of the Seminary.

### 4.5

As stated in the AEP the MDiv program undergoes a comprehensive evaluation at the conclusion of each academic year. The primary objective of this process is to ensure St. Sophia Seminary is efficiently equipping the graduates with the knowledge and skills essential for their future roles as ministers. It is

important to recognize that no academic program can encompass the entirety of knowledge and experience required for effective priesthood. Much of what is needed to serve in this capacity is acquired through hands-on experience and personal growth as individuals step into their priestly roles.

However, it is equally imperative for the faculty and the evaluation committee to have a forward-thinking approach in assessing the MDiv program and recommending potential enhancements. While acknowledging that the program cannot provide all-encompassing priestly training, it must remain proactive in identifying areas where improvements and adjustments can be made. This proactive stance allows the seminary to anticipate and address the evolving needs and challenges that future priests may encounter.

By regularly evaluating the MDiv program and considering emerging trends and challenges within the priesthood, St. Sophia Seminary can ensure that the graduates are well-prepared to navigate the complexities of their ministry. This ongoing commitment to excellence in priestly education underscores a dedication to producing compassionate, knowledgeable, and adaptable clergy members who will serve their communities with wisdom and grace.

The role of the AEP and the evaluation committee is a continuous process. Throughout the year, the evaluation committee sends appropriate survey forms to those who must make evaluations. Administrators evaluate staff and faculty; faculty evaluate courses and programs, students evaluate their classes, etc. These forms are collected and distilled into useful and clear reports that are presented to the Board of Trustees at their annual in-person meeting.

In addition to distributing and collecting data, the evaluation committee also collects the current syllabi being used and compares them to other peer institutions as to content and academic rigor. They are also compared to the published student learning outcomes of the seminary as to their applicability.





## Standard 4. Master of Arts

### 4.6

Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary offers a Master of Arts in Orthodox Studies which is a 36-credit program, usually completed in three years of half-time distance learning. The purpose of the Master of Arts Degree is both academic and vocational. It is the academic requirement for ordination to the diaconate in the UOC of the USA, although it does not guarantee ordination (see Attachment 1). It is a flexible degree program designed to prepare students to serve competently and effectively in contemporary ecclesial ministries and lay leadership, especially within parish settings. This includes religious education at all levels, catechetical leadership, and youth ministry. A primary objective of the program is to develop in students an understanding of the ministry within the life and mission of the Orthodox Church.

CURRENT SAINT SOPHIA SEMINARY PART-TIME MA PROGRAM			
YEAR 1			
FALL SEMESTER		SPRING SEMESTER	
	CREDITS		CREDITS
BIB101: Intro to OT	3	BIB102: Intro to NT	3
THEO101: Dogmatic Theology 1	3	THEO102: Dogmatic Theology 2	3
Total Credits	6	Total Credits	6

CURRENT SAINT SOPHIA SEMINARY PART-TIME MA PROGRAM			
YEAR 2			
FALL SEMESTER		SPRING SEMESTER	
	CREDITS		CREDITS
BIB201: OT Prophets & Wisdom	3	BIB202: NT Epistles & Acts	3
CH201: Patristics 1	3	CH202: Patristics 2	3
Total Credits	6	Total Credits	6

CURRENT SAINT SOPHIA SEMINARY PART-TIME MA PROGRAM			
YEAR 3			
FALL SEMESTER		SPRING SEMESTER	
	CREDITS		CREDITS
PPM364: Introduction to Pastoral Care	3	CH342: Ecclesiastical Art & Architecture	3
CH301: Ukrainian Church History 1	3	CH304: Ukrainian Church History 2	3
Total Credits	6	Total Credits	6

MA PROGRAM: 72



## 4.7

St. Sophia Seminary uses the standard Master of Arts (MA) nomenclature for the non-divinity master's degrees.

## 4.8

Student Learning Outcomes for St. Sophia Seminary Master of Arts graduates:

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME	CORRESPONDING ATS CONTENT AREA	C: SPIRITUAL AND PERSONAL FORMATION
Graduates should be able to explain the fundamental aspects of the Orthodox Faith, liturgy, and praxis in ways accessible to both Orthodox Christians and persons of varied faith backgrounds.	A: Religious Heritage & B: Cultural Context	Students are formed by serving the Church and living the life of an Orthodox minister in community.
Graduates should be able to reference a variety of Scripture, writings of the Church Fathers, Ecumenical Councils, and pious Traditions in support of Orthodox Church doctrine and dogmas.	A: Religious Heritage	Students are formed by the consistent reading of Scriptures and other traditional writings of the Church.
Graduates should be able to engage with Orthodox Christians and those of other Faith traditions in relation to hot-button issues of the day in a pastoral manner, neither softening the Church's position nor embittering the person they are conversing with.	B: Cultural Context	Students are confronted with the tendency for discontinuity of secular life and religious life and thought. The benefits and results of a spiritually formed life are pronounced.
Graduates who will become candidates for Holy Orders, specifically the diaconate, should be able to properly assist with the services of the Divine Liturgy, Vespers, Great Vespers, and Funeral services, (etc.).	D: Religious and Public Leadership	Students are formed by the liturgical life of the Church and by regular participation in the sacraments.

As previously mentioned, ATS Content Area C, which focuses on personal and spiritual formation, remains at the core of St. Sophia Seminary's mission and identity. It's important to emphasize that the process of personal and spiritual formation is not confined to any single course; rather, it permeates every aspect of a student's journey at the seminary.

At St. Sophia Seminary, the formation of students extends beyond the classroom. It encompasses a diverse range of experiences, including coursework, religious services, interactions within the seminary community and the local parishes. These elements collectively contribute to nurturing and shaping each student's personal and spiritual growth.

In essence, the entire seminary environment, from academic endeavors to communal worship, serves as a fertile ground for the transformation and development of the students as they prepare for their future

roles in ministry. This comprehensive approach ensures that formation remains central to the seminary's educational mission. Some assignments do speak directly to the spiritual formation of the students, these include:

During the course "Introduction to Pastoral Care in the Sacramental Life" PPM363 the students were required to interview a clergyman or their wife, who had been in service for at least 15 years. The goal was to gain insight from a first-hand account what the life of cleric or their wife is like, what interactions were the most difficult, where joy was found, and how to maintain a work-life balance.

During "Ecclesiastical Art and Architecture" CH442 the students discussed the theology of beauty, and how beauty joins with love as the person patterns their life in and through the Logos. This led to the discussion of needing to adjust one's mind and to serve sacrificially.

In "Patristics II," CH202 readings from St. Gregory Nyssa, St. Maximus the Confessor, St. Gregory Palamas, and St. Seraphim of Sarov address topics such as humility, silence, relaxation into God, the transformation of the mind, practical hesychasm, and their application to one's life. These readings influence and contribute directly to the spiritual formation of the students who engage in discussions of them.

### 4.9

The AEP provides a process for the regular assessment of St. Sophia Seminary's MA program. This program primarily caters to individuals with goals that include those who aspire to serve in the diaconate, engage in lay ministry, or for their own spiritual enrichment.

The MA program at St. Sophia Seminary is designed to accommodate a wide range of students, each pursuing their path within Orthodox religious education. For some, it serves as a steppingstone towards the diaconate, equipping them with the knowledge and spiritual foundation necessary to fulfill that calling. Others turn to this program to prepare for active engagement in lay ministry, where they can make meaningful contributions to their parishes and beyond. Additionally, many individuals choose the MA program as a means of deepening their personal spiritual growth, enriching their lives, and fostering a profound connection with their faith.

The AEP plays an important role in ensuring the continued excellence of the MA program by facilitating systematic reviews, assessments, and enhancements. This dedication to program evaluation reflects St. Sophia Seminary's commitment to serving a diverse range of students while upholding the highest standards of Orthodox religious education.

The Assessment and Evaluation plan and formation of the evaluation committee are direct results of the self-study process and reinforces the review processes that have been, up to this point more organic and unofficial.



**4.10-12**

*Not applicable as the Saint Sophia Seminary does not offer a Master of Theology degree.*

**Areas of effectiveness:**

1. Sustained presence.

For almost 50 years, the MA and MDiv programs of St. Sophia Seminary have been effective in producing skilled and capable leaders for the UOC of USA.

**Areas of growth and opportunity:**

1. Restructuring Part-Time MDiv.

A restructuring of the short residency MDiv may be in order. Over the past five years, only one student has completed this course of study. The monthly residencies are valuable and effective to those who have enrolled in the past, but for those students who live outside of driving distance from New Jersey, it is a difficult commitment to make. To attract more students to this program, changes need to be made.

**Standard 5. Doctoral Degree**

*Not applicable as the Saint Sophia Seminary does not offer a Doctoral degree.*





## STANDARDS

### Standard 6: **Library and Information Services**



**SAINT SOPHIA**  
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## **Standard 6. Library and Information Services**

The St. Sophia Theological Library mission and purpose is to serve the needs of the students, faculty, and staff (see Attachment 14). The library is located within the administrative (consistory) offices of the Metropolia Center of the UOC of USA, on campus with and adjacent to the primary seminary building. The library is open to the public five days a week, occasionally on weekends, and by appointment for researchers. Students may access the library on weekends by contacting the librarian. Information about the library can be found in the Course Catalog, the website of the UOC of USA, and the St. Sophia Seminary website. Students, staff, faculty, clergy of the UOC of USA and members of the library have access to the library's collection and online catalog. The staff of the library is available for research requests and mailing library material to distance-learning students. (<https://uocofusa.org/library>)

### **Library Purpose and Role**

#### **6.1**

According to the Collections Policy of the Saint Sophia Theological Library (see Attachment 15), the library collects and preserves materials and is committed to being a center for learning, research, and writing for the St. Sophia Seminary community and the UOC of USA. The library collects works that are primarily theological, with emphasis on the Holy Orthodox Church. The needs of the clergy, laity and youth ministers is also taken into consideration when evaluating the collections. In addition, the library's holdings include books on history, art, religious art and architecture, culture, language, and literature.

The library's collection has grown to include over 70,000 books, periodicals, music, pamphlets, brochures, maps, commemorative books, secular and religious calendars and almanacs, dictionaries, and encyclopedias. The collection also includes centuries-old rare books: materials published in the Displaced Persons Camps in the 20th century, music collections from parishes and choir directors, parish commemorative books, select DVDs and music records (CDs and albums). In addition, the library has a unique and extensive collection of materials (books, periodicals, educational materials, pamphlets, exhibition information, audio/visual materials) pertaining to the Ukrainian Holodomor (the man-made Famine of Ukraine in 1932-1933), directly associated with the St. Andrew Memorial Church located on the campus of the Metropolia Center.

Electronic resources provided by the library include subscriptions to: Directory of Open Access Journals, The Getty Research Portal, Globethics.net, and Index Theologicus.

### **Library Staffing and Evaluation**

#### **6.2**

The library staff at St. Sophia Seminary offers reference and research assistance to all library patrons, with a particular emphasis on the faculty and students of the seminary. In their commitment to serving the academic community effectively, the library staff proactively engages with the seminary's faculty, addressing their requirements and gathering input on potential additions to the library's holdings.



A key facet of their collaboration involves working closely with the faculty to explore strategies for enhancing the library's collection and resources. This collaborative partnership extends to the identification of specific areas where the library's collections can grow, aligning their efforts with the priorities set forth by the faculty and Board of Trustees.

At the beginning of each semester, faculty members meet with the librarian to ensure that the library maintains an adequate supply of the necessary texts, supporting the seminary's educational objectives. Additionally, the library staff proactively offers recommendations for required texts to instructors, facilitating a streamlined process for the acquisition of new materials when the need arises. This dynamic interaction underscores the library's integral role in supporting the academic pursuits of the seminary's community, fostering an environment conducive to educational excellence.

### 6.3

The library employs a full-time librarian and a part-time library assistant. The librarian is responsible for acquisitions, cataloging, evaluation of collections, reference and research requests. The current librarian is bilingual and can assist patrons in both English and Ukrainian. The library assistant aids in cataloging, reference and research. The current librarian has a B.A. in History, with a minor in Slavic Language and Literature and an M.A. in Museum Studies. The library also has a liaison to the librarian who has a bachelor's degree in information science (with minors in Museum Studies and English Literature) and a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science. The librarian and the liaison meet virtually weekly and in person several times a year.

Over the past several years, the library has also had several volunteers, student interns, and seasonal employees who assist on projects such as cataloging and digitization projects. In addition, the library staff work closely with a liaison member of the Metropolitan Council of the UOC of USA (governing body), who provides assessment and advice to the library staff.

The library staff participate in ongoing professional development, both virtually and in person. The library's budget is created in such a way that expenses for professional development are included into the library's expense line. Since COVID-19, many of these professional development workshops have been held virtually at no cost, or at a small fee, for participants. The library staff takes every opportunity to update their professional skills and knowledge in their respective areas of work.

Some of the recent workshops attended by the library staff:

- Practical Preservation: Applied Approaches to Collections Care
- Emergency Preparedness with Ellen Korpar
- Translation in Museums: Tips and Tricks to Get it Right by Melisa Palferro
- Ukrainian Heritage Consortium of North America Conference 2023:
  - Protecting Ukraine's Cultural Heritage by Olha Honcar
  - Reclassification of the Ukrainian LC Classification & Subject Headings by Jurij Dobczansky

The Board of Trustees and the library liaison advise the librarian and make recommendations on all matters relevant to the library. This includes but is not limited to: collection management, general library

policies and services, development of the facilities, technological needs of the library, and the library budget.

## 6.4

The librarian plays a pivotal role at St. Sophia Seminary, collaborating closely with faculty members to oversee collection development and manage day-to-day library operations. This partnership with faculty underscores the institution's commitment to fostering a robust learning environment. Moreover, the library functions as an integral part of the seminary's leadership and administrative framework, actively engaging with the rector and provost.

The librarian's responsibilities extend beyond mere bookkeeping and cataloging. Instead, they actively participate in shaping the academic landscape of the seminary. Together with faculty members, they curate and expand the library's collection, ensuring that it aligns with the evolving needs of the seminary's educational programs.

Furthermore, the library serves as a hub for addressing a diverse array of academic concerns, including program development, class support, facilitating lectures, granting access to audiovisual materials, assisting in research endeavors, and catering to various other requirements of both the seminary and its faculty.

This collaborative approach, where the librarian works hand in hand with the seminary's academic leadership, underscores the seminary's dedication to providing exceptional library services that enhance the learning experiences of its students and faculty. It reflects the institution's commitment to weaving library and information services seamlessly into its decision-making structures, budgeting processes, and strategic planning initiatives, thereby creating a vibrant and thriving academic community.

## Library Services and Resources

## 6.5

In order to align the Library's resources to support the mission and vision of the St. Sophia Seminary and its programs, the library staff consult with the faculty and review course syllabi to ensure that required, recommended, and significant course readings become part of the print collection; invite faculty and staff to make recommendations for the acquisition of material(s); and read publishers' catalogs/websites, and book reviews to acquire resources within the directive of the library's collection policy.

## 6.6

Every year, the seminary library has a mandatory library orientation session for all new students. In this session, the librarian introduces the students to the library staff, to the library, and its collection. A brief orientation on how to use the library catalog is also provided. (<https://uocofusa.org/library>) During this session, students are strongly encouraged to ask questions and to engage with the staff for support during the year. The library staff provides reference and research assistance for all patrons, especially for the Saint Sophia Seminary student body.

During an annual seminar, the library staff provide instruction to the student body on enhancing their research skills, developing their academic writing skills, how to write and curate a bibliography and citation skills, and educate them on plagiarism.

### 6.7

The St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Library's staff use their training, subject knowledge, and familiarity of the community, to select materials for the collection. Before each semester, the members of the faculty who will be teaching, communicate with the librarian what new materials will be needed for the upcoming classes. The librarian also suggests materials that may be pertinent to the subject. This conversation can be facilitated either in-person or through electronic means of communication.

The library collection primarily includes materials (books, periodicals, music, video, listening courses, etc.) which are theological, with emphasis on the Holy Orthodox Church. The library also incorporates materials that provide other perspectives, such as comparative religions. In addition, the library's holdings include books on history, art, religious art and architecture, culture, language, and literature. Books and periodicals are both in English and Ukrainian, and do include other languages such as Latin, Greek, and Russian. Material in the library represents published works not only from North America, but also from Ukraine, and other countries of the Ukrainian diaspora (the Ukrainian Orthodox communities throughout the world).





## 6.8

Saint Sophia Seminary maintains a strong collection development and access policy that plays a pivotal role in its library operations. This policy is consistently applied, annually evaluated by staff and faculty, and periodically updated to ensure it remains aligned with the evolving needs of the seminary community.

This policy comprehensively guides the library's management of its collection, covering both print and electronic resources. It is instrumental in resource allocation, aiding in the prioritization of subscriptions and annual expenditures. Additionally, the policy actively oversees the curation and assessment of access to free resources, ensuring optimal utilization of available materials.

With a forward-thinking approach, this policy addresses both current and future seminary requirements, striving to provide a diverse range of research resources to meet the needs of students across various modalities and teaching locations.

While the complete policy document is accessible in the supplemental materials of the self-study, this description offers a comprehensive overview of how Saint Sophia Seminary's collection development and access policy supports its mission and commitment to academic excellence.

Moreover, the Seminary Library's Collections Policy strongly aligns with its mission, emphasizing the acquisition of materials to enhance the education of the student body. The library ensures that all full-time, part-time and distance learning students have access to its resources and materials. It lends its support to distance learning students by allowing them to request research materials, receive mailed books for the school year, and access scanned reference materials or periodicals for their academic needs.

The seminary boasts an attractive and spacious library spanning approximately 5400 square feet, with 30 percent of shelving dedicated to accommodating future library collection growth. The facility comfortably seats 50 students and provides ten computers for student use. The library is staffed by one full-time bilingual librarian with qualifications that include a master's in museum studies, archiving courses, and some theological training.

This dedicated librarian is committed to obtaining an MLS in the near coming years and is supported by two part-time assistant librarians and is overseen by a liaison from the metropolitan council who has an MLS. This collective effort ensures that the library serves as an invaluable academic resource for the seminary community.

Additionally, St. Sophia Seminary students enjoy library privileges at neighboring New Brunswick Theological Seminary.

### 6.9

The Board of Trustees meets annually to review the library budget. This involves a discussion about projected expenditure and anticipated needs of the library.

Regarding physical resources, both the library's shelving capacity and the rare book collection storage are deemed sufficient to meet foreseeable future demands. The library actively opens its general area to accommodate student classes throughout the week, ensuring accessibility. Additionally, distance learning students benefit from the library's facilities during their in-person residency weekends on the seminary's campus. The library staff efficiently manages loan requests from distance learning students, including mailing books for the duration of the loan period, and also provides scanning and emailing of reference materials as needed.

In terms of resources, the library is well-equipped with the necessary financial, technological, and physical assets to fulfill its mission effectively. It prioritizes equitable access and attention to all degree programs and educational delivery modes offered by the school.

### 6.10

The library is located on the main campus adjacent to the primary seminary building. The library creates an environment that is comfortable to its patrons and secure for the collection. The library is wheelchair accessible, and staff are present to help with handling library material for all patrons. Wireless internet access is available throughout the library and includes posted signs with login information for all students and patrons to see. In 2023, new LED lighting was installed. The main reading table of the library provides multiple ports to plug in electronics and has comfortable seating for researchers or students. The library also provides an A/V cart with equipment for plugging in laptops for presentations. In 2020, an after-hours book return was installed in the library. The librarian's office is located at the front of the library for ease of accessibility.

The library also has a dedicated workstation for any library patron to use. At this workstation, there is a computer for patrons to use while at the library that provides access to the library catalog, internet resources, academic research tools and websites, and other resources. Printing, photocopying, and scanning is available free of charge. The library also has an overhead scanner for scanning books and other fragile library materials.

The library has auxiliary areas that hold library materials: a conference room at the administrative offices (where classes are occasionally held), the classroom/computer room at the main seminary building, and the Three Holy Hierarchs Chapel. Books and materials held in these auxiliary areas are periodically updated, inspected, and holdings reassessed by the library staff in order to determine which materials should be readily available to the students throughout the academic year and during the many various services held at the chapel.

**Areas of effectiveness:****1. Size and diversity of collection.**

The St. Sophia Seminary Library boasts a significant collection that not only encompasses contemporary theological and religious studies materials but also includes a wealth of historical, local, and primary resources, all of which prove invaluable for in-depth research endeavors.

**2. Facilities.**

The facilities of St. Sophia Seminary Library are easily accessible; modern, spacious, and bright; and conducive to study. They are made accessible to the distance learning students with the aid of the library staff.

**3. Staff**

The current library staff is bilingual which is essential in serving and equipping a culturally diverse student body.

**Areas of growth and opportunity:****1. Librarian Credentials.**

The current librarian is well suited for her position with a master's degree in museum studies and her years of experience, and she is overseen by a liaison from the Metropolitan Council of the UOC of USA who holds a Master of Library Science degree. The librarian has committed to attaining a MLS degree in the coming years.

**2. Facilitating Distance Learning**

The library is a center of learning for the residential students, and is accessible to the distance-learning students, but could be better utilized if more electronic resources were made available and more connection was made with the distance-learning professors.







## STANDARDS

### Standard 7: **Student Services**



**SAINT SOPHIA**  
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## Standard 7. Student Services

### 7.1

At St. Sophia Seminary's current enrollment levels, the number of staff is sufficient to care for the students. The residential students form a familial unit in the main seminary building and share daily chores and responsibilities. Their daily activities are overseen by the Assistant Dean of Students.

St. Sophia Seminary currently has 11 full-time residential students. This small student body has extraordinary access to support of the staff, faculty, and administration. Five members of the administration, and most of the faculty, are ordained priests and some bishops. These are knowledgeable and experienced in pastoral care, and this extends to the seminarians in their care. Archbishop Daniel and Fr. Vasyl Pasakas, visiting Ukraine regularly keeping ties strong, are in the perfect situation to counsel the students who have immigrated to attend St. Sophia Seminary. Currently this includes counseling in response to the on-going aggression against the citizens of Ukraine, often friends and family of the seminarians. Fr. Ivan Tchopko, Assistant Dean of Students, lives in the main building alongside the seminarians, and is available to them around the clock.

There is a cook on staff who makes two meals a day for the residential students, and a fully stocked pantry and kitchen are available day and night for other meals. Cleanliness of the kitchen and the rest of the seminary building is the responsibility of the seminarians and part of their routine obediences.

There are currently 15 students enrolled in the part-time programs of St. Sophia Seminary. These, distributed across the country, are under the care of their local priests as well as the vocations director (also a priest). The vocations director is tasked with monitoring, supporting, and advocating for the distance-learning students.

St. Sophia Seminary's Administration:

- His Eminence Metropolitan Antony, Rector and Chairman of the Board
- His Eminence Archbishop Daniel, Vice-Rector and Provost
- V. Rev. Stephen Hutnick - Treasurer
- Rev. Vasyl Pasakas - Registrar and Dean of Students
- Rev. Ivan Tchopko – Assistant Dean of Students
- Rev. Theophan Mackey - Vocations Director
- Mrs. Natalia Honcharenko - Financial Aid Officer
- Mrs. Oksana Pasakas – Librarian

### 7.2

Recruitment for the academic program at St. Sophia Seminary begins at the local, parish level in every parish of the UOC of the USA. It is there that callings are understood and recognized. The local priest provides the first and most intimate layer of recruitment to the Church, recognizing the love of and commitment to Christ's Church in a prospective candidate, and discerning a personality, intellect, and temperament that would be conducive to clerical ministry.



The vocations director then interviews the candidate on these same qualities, their educational background and family situation, as well as canonical conditions (marital status, etc.) which may be present. When a candidate is acknowledged by their priest and the vocations director, the hierarch is contacted to make arrangements for interviews with the possibility of a blessing to commence enrollment and classes. Often these interviews distinguish whether or not a student has the temperament and aptitude for attending seminary, and thus there are few students rejected once they actually apply to the seminary. This may change with St. Sophia Seminary's accreditation status when more applications are received without prior contact with seminary administration.

Students from Ukraine apply, not only to St. Sophia Seminary, but also to travel to the United States on a F-1 student visa. In a normal year, St. Sophia Seminary will receive 30-40 applications of this kind. The provost and the dean of students travel to Ukraine to interview the applicants and administer three tests: logical reasoning, religious knowledge, and basic church history. This number has jumped to 50 applicants due to the war in Ukraine and that students are exempt from the draft there.

Over the past five years, the attrition rate of students travelling to the United States to study at St. Sophia Seminary has fallen dramatically. This is partially due to the gained experience of those making the selections in Ukraine, and in the restriction of candidates to those who are already in the midst of seminary training there. In past years application to St. Sophia Seminary from Ukraine was open to all.

Only three or four Ukrainian applicants are accepted annually. These are then assisted in immigrating officially and becoming US citizens in due time. Currently the seminary is at capacity for these residential students.

### 7.3-4

The admissions policy and requirements are presented in the annual course catalog and the corresponding webpage ([stsuots.edu/admissions\\_policy](https://stsuots.edu/admissions_policy)). These policies are implemented in order that those who feel a true calling to ministry in the Orthodox Church are encouraged to apply and proceed with the programs of study. Both men and women are encouraged to apply, as well as those who, for a variety of reasons, have not attained a bachelor's degree. Vocation is not fully correspondent with academic aptitude. Those students who have not previously completed a bachelor's degree, or academic equivalent, may be awarded a licensure in place of a degree (*see Attachment 1*).

There are four students who are currently enrolled in the part-time program that do not have undergraduate degrees. These, when they complete their program of study, will receive licensure in the UOC of USA, and will be academically qualified to be ordained deacons. This is not a MA and this is made clear during the admissions process.

The admission of students without an undergraduate degree was a necessity when St. Sophia Seminary was educating ministers for position in the UOC of USA exclusively. This practice will be curtailed in the future.

St. Sophia Seminary annually receives between 30 and 50 applicants for the full-time residential program from foreign students and accepts three or four. The vocations director fields, on average, about ten



inquiries from American students. These conversations usually end in self-regulation and a decision whether St. Sophia Seminary is a good fit for their expectations and abilities. This nets between three and five applicants who are most likely to be accepted.

## 7.5

The full-time residential students of St. Sophia Seminary are supported by the faculty and staff on the premises. Access to proper health care is provided once the seminarian arrives at the seminary and begins classes. Nutritious meals are provided by the cook on staff, and their daily needs are looked after by the assistant dean of students who lives in the main residence (*see Attachment 13*).

The part-time distance learning students are most often engaged in secular employment and family situations while attending classes. These students are autonomous for the most part, although help is available through the vocations director who advocates for them and their needs (*see Attachment 13*).

## 7.6

Those who become students at St. Sophia Seminary are expected to share the goal of ordination to Holy Orders or ministry in the Church of some other kind. Therefore, they are expected to conduct themselves in the strictest moral and ethical manner, befitting a servant leader in the Orthodox Church. Behavior on or off campus, in South Bound Brook, or in a student's residential locality, that discredits either the individual or the seminary will result in disciplinary action. The faculty retains the right, in concert with the Church hierarchy and the disciplinary board, to review and make all decisions relative to such matters, employing ecclesiastical regulations, moral standards, and patterns of behavior traditionally required from seminarians in the Orthodox Church. The faculty of St. Sophia Seminary, in concert with the disciplinary board, reserve the right to suspend or dismiss any student for breaches in seminary discipline or deficiencies in attitude and/or academic achievement (*see Attachment 16*).

The basic requirements of a residential seminarian are as follows:

- All liturgical services, meals, and classes are obligatory for all students.
- Seminarians should check the new schedule complying with all their assigned duties for the following week. They should inform the Dean of Students of any conflicts and/or replacements.
- Seminarians are expected to treat each other with respect.
- Seminarians' dress should always be clean and neat. At no time are seminarians allowed to wear shorts on seminary grounds unless actively engaged in a work detail.
- Rooms must be kept clean and neat. At least once a month the Assistant Dean of Students will conduct an inspection of all rooms.
- Conversations must be conducted in restrained tones. From 10pm until 6am there must be absolute quiet in their rooms. Common areas will be kept reasonably quiet during evening hours.
- Resident Seminarians may not leave the grounds of the Seminary without a blessing from the Dean of Students, Provost, or Rector.
- If a Resident Seminarian plans to leave the Seminary for a night or longer, they must have a blessing to do so from the Dean of Students. The seminarian must inform the Dean of Students of his travel plans.

These requirements and a full explanation of them are made available in the student handbook. Along with expected conduct and the rights of students, the student handbook contains the seminary complaint policy. (*see Appendix 6.2*)

### 7.7

St. Sophia Seminary complies with all applicable regulations for security and non-disclosure of its students' personal, financial, and academic information. Only authorized administrators have access to grades, evaluation forms, and transcripts and these are only regularly released to the student requesting them or to an institution at the direction of the student.

Hard copy records are kept at the consistory offices of the UOC of USA and electronic student records related to admissions and coursework are maintained using GradPro, a Robinsoft Corporation, online platform.

GradPro offers the following key features and assurances:

1. FERPA notice is displayed on the logon screen.
2. Security and permission settings allow control over data access.
3. Robinsoft, governed by its Terms of Service, safeguards data and limits disclosure to third parties, only sharing with authorized school staff.
4. Health information is not stored intentionally to comply with HIPAA.
5. Credit card transactions are not stored or processed intentionally to avoid PCI Compliance.
6. Data security is a priority, with trusted cloud vendors and professionals ensuring server security.
7. RD Gateway enhances security, permitting only approved RDP traffic and strict user access control within the cloud hosting system.

Records compiled before 1996 are kept in hard-copy securely at the UOC of the USA Consistory and are currently in the process of being transferred into Grad-Pro (Appendix 8). Student financial records are kept by the financial officer in Consistory.

### 7.8

All students at St. Sophia Seminary enjoy a substantial reduction in actual expenses since tuition covers only a part of the cost of their theological education. The reduction is made possible in part by services contributed by faculty members, as well as voluntary charitable contributions from Ukrainian Orthodox benefactors, parishes, and interested friends of the seminary.

An element of the philosophy of St. Sophia Seminary is that tuition is only a part of the cost of a theological education. To that end, tuition and room and board costs historically have been kept low, so as not to hinder or burden the students.

St. Sophia Seminary has several scholarship funds from which qualified seminarians are awarded either full or partial scholarships based on financial need. The scholarship funds are listed in the Seminary catalog and on the Seminary website. Foreign students, typically from Ukraine and in some cases from other foreign countries, who enter the full-time Master of Divinity program and are in residence, receive 100% financial support for tuition, room and board from scholarship and endowment funds established under the UOC of USA. Seminarians who are accepted to the Post-Deaconate Program or lay students accepted for study receive deeply discounted and/or subsidized tuition rates.

An annual appeal is sent to the 6,500 members of the UOC of USA and 110 parishes in the Metropolia to request donations to support priestly vocations. These contributions are allocated equitably towards tuition costs for all enrolled students, thereby further decreasing the students' financial burden. Funds are also received from the Ukrainian Orthodox League and the Rev. Volodymyr Lewytsky Scholarship Fund to further support the seminarians and students' tuition costs.

It is the Seminary's intent to keep all students who meet academic requirements enrolled in their appropriate course of study, and the Treasurer's office will find appropriate funding either through scholarships, contributions, appeals, or other means in order to do so. For those students whose tuition is not fully paid by scholarship funds, and who have financial shortfall, the Treasurer's office will work out a repayment plan. Typically, St. Sophia Seminary does not offer formal financial counselling services; however, if there is a need, the Treasurer's office will refer students to a financial counselling service.

Students may also participate in a work-study program, which offers financial remuneration for services rendered to the Seminary or elsewhere within the Metropolia Center. A ten-hour weekly workload is the maximum to be borne by the student.

Scholarships and grants are available to full-time seminarians preparing for the priesthood of the UOC of the USA from the following scholarship funds:

- The METROPOLITAN JOHN SCHOLARSHIP FUND OF THE UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX LEAGUE of the U.S.A., by which the Vocations and Clergy Support Commission has chosen to honor Metropolitan John Theodorovich of blessed memory;
- The METROPOLITAN ANDREW KUSCHAK SCHOLARSHIP FUND
- The MAKAR WOLOSCHUK STIPEND FUND
- The STEPOWYJ SCHOLARSHIP FUND
- The REV. MYKOLA MOHUCHY STUDENT AID FUND
- The IHUMEN GREGORY (WOOLFENDEN) MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Seminarians from abroad are granted financial support from available scholarship funds of the UOC of USA.

## 7.9

Financial Aid programs, policies, and scholarship funds are published in the Seminary catalog and on the Seminary web page. The policies and programs are reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees, financial personnel, and the Seminary's auditors to ensure that they are adequate and conform with any applicable regulations.



FULL-TIME MDIV RESIDENTIAL STUDENT FEES	
TUITION per semester:	\$3,750.00
ROOM AND BOARD per semester:	\$3,750.00
STUDENT FEE per semester:	\$100.00
APPLICATION FEE:	\$50.00
GRADUATION FEE:	\$100.00
TRANSCRIPT FEE:	\$10.00

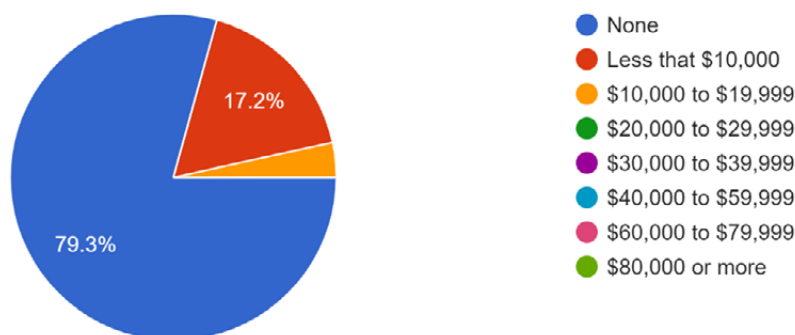
MA AND M.DIV. PART-TIME STUDENT FEES	
TUITION per semester:	\$150 per credit
STUDENT FEE per semester:	\$200.00
APPLICATION FEE:	\$50.00
GRADUATION FEE:	\$100.00
TRANSCRIPT FEE:	\$10.00

Currently, St. Sophia Seminary does not facilitate any form of student loans, ensuring that no direct financial obligations are linked to the seminary. The institution maintains affordable fees to prevent placing excessive financial strain on enrolled students.

The full-time students that immigrate from Ukraine to attend classes do not, normally carry any debt burden. From the alumni questionnaire circulated for this self-study, a large majority of the students do not incur educational debt throughout their time at St. Sophia Seminary.

How much educational debt did you incur while in this program?

29 responses



## 7.10

There are three general categories of graduates from St. Sophia Seminary: those whose goal is priestly ordination, those whose goal is diaconal ordination, and those who will be involved in non-ordained ministry or continue in higher academic pursuits.

Since ordination to the priesthood and placement in a parish is the prerogative of the student's hierarchy, conversations with the student with this goal must be continuing, throughout the program and after graduation. Ordination to the priesthood is often postponed until an appropriate parish location is identified. In general, a priest must be assigned to a specific parish. There are other canonical considerations that are distinctly Orthodox, such as marital status, which need to be considered in preparation for ordination. A graduate whose goal is to become a deacon and not move on to ordination to the priesthood will most often fill a volunteer role at their local parish. They are ordained for the parish they already serve.

## 7.11

Up to the present time, a significant majority of St. Sophia Seminary graduates have moved on to be ordained to the diaconate and/or priesthood. In the past five years 50% of graduates have been ordained either to the diaconate or the priesthood. All those ordained are assigned a parish. Once the graduate is ordained or assigned to a place of ministry, they are under the Archpastoral supervision of the hierarchs of the Church or the immediate supervisor of the place of ministry.

It is important for St. Sophia Seminary to recognize the practical and career value of the education it provides. Thus, development of alumni tracking, and career development counseling are critical to rounding out the full St. Sophia Seminary experience.

### Areas of effectiveness:

1. Dedicated and experienced staff.  
The staff of St. Sophia Seminary has been in place for numerous years and their efficacy is evident in the continued smooth operation of the seminary.
2. Large pool of candidates from which to draw students.  
With 110 parishes and missions in the UOC of USA, there is no shortage of possible candidates for seminary education. A corresponding area of growth and opportunity is more efficiently reaching out to these demographics.
3. Personal attention.  
Students at the seminary receive personalized attention. With such a small population, the outcomes of each student are important to the whole school. There is little chance of a student falling through the cracks.
4. Low cost.  
The current cost of a credit at St. Sophia Seminary is much lower than comparable schools at this level.

### Areas of growth and opportunity:

1. Increased Recruitment.  
There needs to be a more concerted effort made to reach prospective students within and outside of the UOC of USA. Within the UOC of USA, All Saints Camp, the Junior and Senior Ukrainian Orthodox Leagues, and other organizations, can be used as recruitment grounds for the seminary. Inter-Orthodox gatherings should be taken advantage of to reach outside the jurisdiction.
2. Married student housing  
The current facilities of St. Sophia Seminary are ideal for single, male students who are in residence. If the seminary is to expand, accommodations will need to be made for women and married students to attend full-time and reside on campus.
3. Graduate Tracking.  
Graduates who are ultimately ordained are straightforward to track, they become employees of the UOC of USA and have regular interaction with the national church and the hierarchs. There must be a better understanding of the continued progress of students who do not seek ordination.
4. Continuing Education.  
For graduates who both are and are not ordained, continuing education would be of great benefit. Currently a proposal is being considered for diaconal internship, chaplaincy, and clinical pastoral education.





## STANDARDS

### Standard 8: **Faculty**



**SAINT SOPHIA**  
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



## Standard 8. Faculty

The faculty members at St. Sophia Seminary are carefully chosen, representing diverse backgrounds and forming a sufficiently sized team to fulfill the educational mission of the seminary and support the comprehensive development of students.

The responsibilities, composition, and qualifications of the faculty align with the objectives of graduate theological education. The institution ensures that faculty members receive proper support and opportunities for professional development to remain current in their respective fields.

The roles of the faculty in teaching and learning, scholarly endeavors, and community service are precisely defined and consistent with Saint Sophia Seminary's mission. These roles are executed effectively, nurturing an environment conducive to both academic excellence and spiritual growth among students.

### 8.1

St. Sophia Seminary has ten full-time and thirteen adjunct/part-time faculty (*see Attachment 1*). The status of faculty, whether full-time or part-time, and whether fully graduate faculty or with other assignments outside of the seminary, is currently under review. To foster academic cooperation and diversity of ideas, the faculty hail from diverse backgrounds, Ukrainian, Greek, Romanian, etc. What is key, is that all faculty must adhere to the mission of St. Sophia Seminary as articulated in its mission, vision, and values.

### 8.2

St. Sophia Seminary employs four levels of instructor: Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor. All ranks but instructor are required to have completed an earned doctorate. Instructors are not normally granted tenure. Full regulations can be found in the [Faculty Handbook](#) (*see Appendix 6.1*).

Academic tenure means continuous employment for full-time faculty at St. Sophia Seminary. Faculty members with tenure will have their contracts automatically renewed each year. The authority to grant tenure lies solely with the seminary and is exercised by the Board of Trustees based on the seminary administration's recommendations. Tenure is awarded for exceptional teaching performance and strong recommendations from the Rector. It depends on factors like enrollment, admissions, financial stability, staff availability, academic requirements, and other similar considerations.

Professors are required to have research doctorates. This is true for half of the regular faculty. The exceptions to this include three professors with Doctorates in Ministry and two with master's degrees, one of whom recently completed coursework for his PhD. These exceptions were made because each of them has either a strong publishing record or substantial pastoral and teaching experience (or both).

As a group, the faculty of St. Sophia Seminary has strong ministerial, ecclesial, and liturgical experience. The UOC of USA relies on them for consultation, leadership, and spiritual guidance. The resident clerical faculty have additional seminary or diocesan responsibilities and are involved with parish ministry. They are also responsible for leading services, providing spiritual direction, and leading retreats at the seminary and several local parishes. For example, one of the faculty members is the rector of three parishes, is

a member of the Council of the Metropolia, sits on the Board of the Consistory, serves as the Church Treasurer, and is completing a multiple-volume translation of the Daily Menaion.

Special expertise is found variously among the faculty: one has been appointed as an Exarch of the Ecumenical Throne to manage complex and high-profile diplomatic work in Ukraine, another was formerly a Director of Music, several have served in hospital chaplaincy, two have popular podcasts, and two were founders and primary organizers of the first international Orthodox theological association and its plenary academic conference in Romania.

### 8.3

The Seminary faculty members come from a wide background of specializations and interests (*see Attachment 13*). Often, the faculty members work on collaborative projects; for example, two of them have a weekly podcast on ecclesiology for Ancient Faith Radio (<https://www.ancientfaith.com>). The diverse areas of specialization and publications provide strong evidence of the freedom and support faculty is given to conduct research and communicate findings.

When necessary, St. Sophia Seminary draws from other experts to teach courses. For example, a priest with substantial musical and language experience was employed to teach liturgical music in both Ukrainian and English. In such cases, a clear distinction is made between their adjunct professor or instructor status.

Because St. Sophia Seminary is a seminary that trains men for the priesthood, a majority of the professors are clergy, and they are ethnically, regionally, and nationally diverse. On the faculty are Americans, Ukrainians, Greeks, and Romanians. Some are cradle Orthodox (Orthodox from birth) while many are converts in adulthood, being raised in a variety of Christian traditions. St. Sophia Seminary recognizes the need for balance in this; two of the most accomplished research faculty are women, as are the librarians. Most of the faculty are at least bilingual.

The Curricula Vitae of the faculty professors the diversity of methodology and areas of specialization (e.g., ecclesiology, gender, bioethics, spiritual formation) with doctorates from many diverse universities. The faculty have published books and articles on ecclesiology, stewardship, gender, liturgy, ritual, and genetics. The faculty come from a wide background of schools including, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, University of Durham, England, St. Petersburg Theological Seminary, Chicago Theological Seminary, among others, each of which has its own research and methodological traditions. Methodologies employed by the professors include comparative case studies, liturgical analysis, and archival research.

#### Regular Faculty:

- HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP DANIEL, D. Min., Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (2007).
- V. REV. GUS GEORGE CHRISTO, Ph.D., University of Durham [England] (1991).
- DR. CARRIE FREDERICK FROST, D. Min., Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (2006).
- V. REV. ROBERT HOLET, D. Min., Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (2006).

- V. REV. STEPHEN HUTNICK, M.A. (Theology), Catholic University (1990).
- V. REV. HARRY LINSINBIGLER, D. Min., St. Petersburg Theological Seminary (2010).
- REV. DEMETRIUS NICOLOUDAKIS, M.A., St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary (1988).
- V. REV. ANTHONY DOUGLAS PERKINS, M.Div., St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary (2012).
- V. REV. GABRIEL JAY ROCHELLE, Ph. D. Chicago Theological Seminary (1988).
- DR. GAYLE WOLOSCHAK, Ph. D., (Microbiology) Medical University of Ohio (1980); D. Min., Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (2012).

#### Adjunct Faculty:

- DR. MICHAEL ANDREC, Ph. D., Yale University (1998).
- V. REV. PAVLO BODNARCHUK, D. Th., St. Petersburg Theological Academy [Russia] (1994)
- REV. GREGORY JENSEN, Ph.D., Duquesne University [Pittsburgh, PA] (1995)
- MRS. NATALIE KAPELUCK, B. A., St. Point Park University [Pittsburgh, PA] (1994).
- REV. THEOPHAN KENYON MACKEY, M.Div., Saint Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary (2014); M.C.S., Crown College (2016).
- DR. PAUL MICEVYCH, Ph. D. University of Minnesota (1980); Post Doctoral (Neurosurgery), Mayo Clinic (1982).
- V. REV. TARAS NAUMENKO, M. Div., St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary (1994)
- MRS. NATALIA HONCHARENKO, MAcc, Rider University (2010).
- REV. CHARLES W. SANDERSON, M.Div. St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary (2013).
- V. REV. VASYL SENDEHA, M. Div., St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary (2007).
- REV. VASYL SHAK, M.Th., Lviv Orthodox Theological Academy [Ukraine] (2015).
- V. REV. VOLODYMYR STELIAC, D. Min., Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (2012).
- V. REV. ANTHONY UGOLNIK, Ph. D., Brown University (1975).

## 8.4

In contrast to the standard practice of providing an annual salary, St. Sophia Seminary opts for a per-course compensation model for its professors, offering competitive rates. This approach reflects the professors' commitment to teaching as an integral part of their ministry to the church community and contributes to keeping tuition costs affordable for students.

The provost collaborates closely with each professor to ensure a sustainable teaching workload and provides them with all the necessary materials and information to effectively conduct their courses. Although the current faculty members primarily prepare and work from their off-site offices, the seminary maintains an office and library space accessible to its professors as needed.

## 8.5

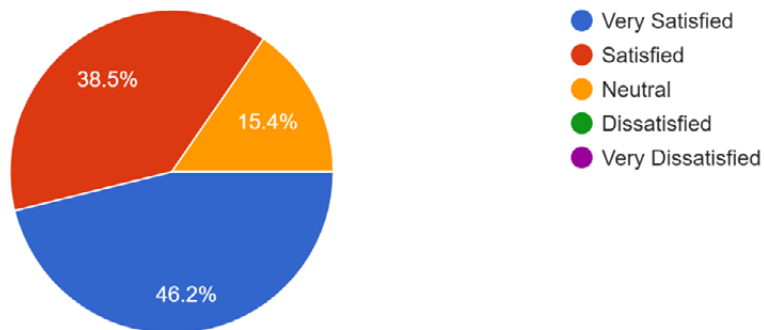
The provost is responsible for recruiting, appointing, and caring for faculty. Should a professor fail to meet expectations, the provost would work with that professor to either correct the behavior or, should that not be possible, remove them from the faculty. The provost has considerable pastoral and administrative skills, and they use these in all their relations with faculty, always following the guidance of the faculty handbook (see Attachment 16). The provost reviews the faculty handbook with the Board of Trustees and the Rector on at least an annual basis.



Results from faculty survey conducted September 2023:

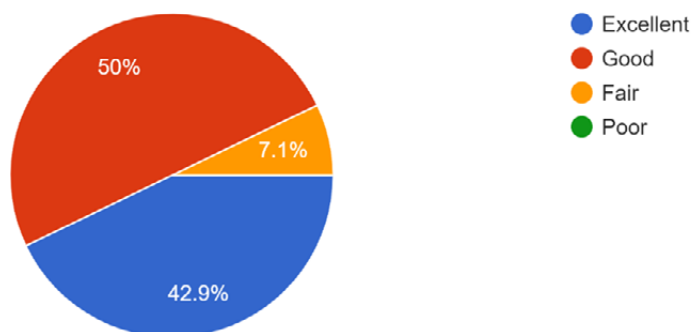
How satisfied are you with your current role and responsibilities at St. Sophia Seminary?

13 responses



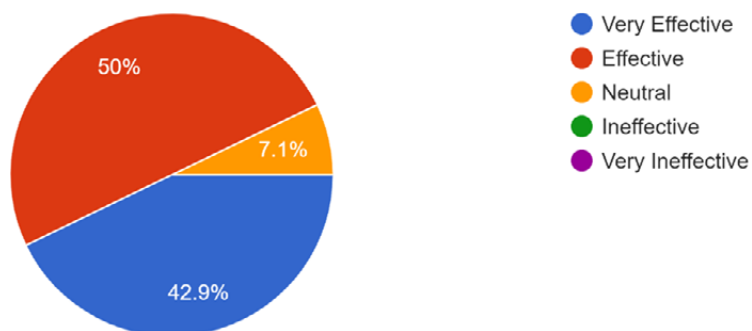
Please rate your overall experience as a faculty member at the seminary.

14 responses



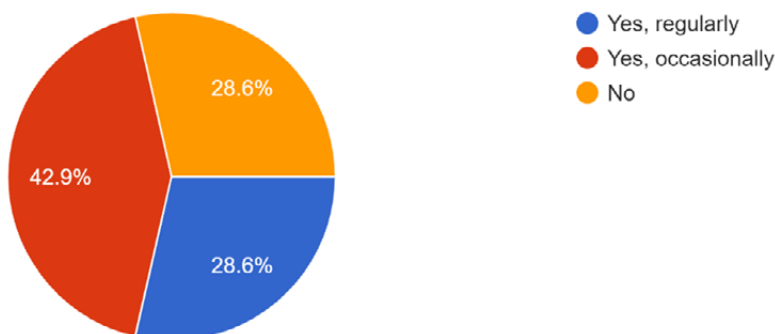
How would you rate the effectiveness of the seminary's curriculum in achieving its educational goals?

14 responses



Do you feel that there are opportunities for collaboration with other faculty members?

14 responses



## 8.6

While all the professors are expected to adhere to the basic tenets of Orthodox Christianity, St. Sophia Seminary supports freedom of inquiry, discussion, and publication. This policy is described in the faculty handbook. This handbook is reviewed annually (*see Attachment 16*).

## 8.7

St. Sophia Seminary provides assistance to faculty to support their research, especially through the purchase of library materials and assistance with archival work. The seminary sponsors conference travel on a case-by-case basis and provides reimbursement for all seminary-related travel. Reimbursements and compensation are described in detail in the faculty handbook. This handbook is reviewed at least annually (*see Attachment 16*).

## 8.8

Faculty are assigned courses that match their areas of expertise, which allows them to share this knowledge with their students. The professors are selected not just for what they know, but also for their dedication to the craft of teaching. They vary their pedagogies based on the immediate circumstance and the varying needs of their students. In addition to graded assignments, the seminary professors provide immediate feedback in the form of guided discussions and question-and-answer sessions, with the goal of increasing their capacity to serve and evangelize in the diverse, multicultural, and increasingly interconnected global community.

Since many of the faculty do not reside in Southbound Brook, and many enrolled are distance students, office hours are necessarily flexible. Instructors make themselves available to their students outside of regular class hours by phone, email, and/or video call.

### 8.9

Given the small size of the full-time faculty, and significant reliance on adjunct/part-time faculty scholarship is supported primarily by how faculty are hired and scheduled. Part of the reason for research on the part of faculty is to model continued professional development for students. Having faculty who can demonstrate this in class is clearly important to positive student outcomes. Other faculty scholarship support is currently under review with new leadership in academic affairs.

Some of the published material of the seminary faculty include:

Dr. Gayle Woloschak:

- Orthodox Tradition and Human Sexuality, 2022
- Chance, Necessity, Love: An Evolutionary Theology of Cancer, 2017
- Science and the Eastern Orthodox Church, 2011

V. Rev. Gus George Christo:

- The Church's Identity, 2006
- Bishops As Successors to the Apostles According to John Chrysostom, 2008
- The Consecration of a Greek Orthodox Church According to Eastern Orthodox Tradition, 2005
- Martyrdom According to John Chrysostom: "To Live Is Christ, to Die Is Gain", 1997

Dr. Carrie Frederick Frost:

- Church of Our Granddaughters, 2023
- Maternal Body: A Theology of Incarnation from the Christian East, 2019

V. Rev. Robert Holet:

- The First and Finest: Orthodox Christian Stewardship as Sacred Offering, 2013

V. Rev. Harry Linsenbigler:

- On Ukrainian Autocephaly (Orthoanalytika Podcast), 2018

V. Rev. Gabriel Rochelle:

- A Staff to the Pilgrim: Meditations on the Way with Nine Celtic Saints, 2016

V. Rev. Anthony Perkins: Podcasts:

- Good Guys Wear Black
- Orthoanalytika
- Of Little Green Men and Long Black Robes (Foreign Policy Research Institute), 2017
- Book Review of 'Red Famine' by Anne Applebaum (Acton Institute) 2017



### 8.10

The faculty stay current in their fields by serving as pastors, liturgists, and leaders, as well as through their scholarship. The latter includes presenting papers at conferences, publishing articles and books, and less rigorous activities like podcasting and serving as experts for newscasts. The seminary supports this through its research library and by providing funding on a case-by-case basis. The provost discusses the seminary's research and service expectations with professors in individual meetings as needed. General expectations are described in the faculty handbook. This handbook is reviewed at least annually (*see Attachment 16*).

The faculty are evaluated on their instruction by a member of the administration sitting in on one of their classes each semester. Most of the faculty are priests, and these are expected to continue in the service to their parishes and serve on boards and committees on an as needed basis. Although many of the faculty have published scholarly works in recent years, it has not, up until this time, been a requirement to remain active in the seminary. If and when the seminary begins publishing its own journal, this requirement may be increased.

### 8.11

All of St. Sophia Seminary's faculty members are committed to the mission, ethos, and values of the seminary, and the seminary treats each faculty member with dignity and respect, including supporting them as they adjust to changes in their discipline and life circumstances. Their roles are clearly described in the letters of assignment and the faculty handbook and are covered and clarified as needed in discussions with the provost. To meet the full demands of the course offerings, the seminary consistently adapts to ensure that it has a well-rounded and diverse faculty.



### Areas of effectiveness:

1. Number and Quality of faculty  
The number of faculty with doctoral degrees is high relative to the number of students currently enrolled. With seven full professors and six adjunct professors with doctoral degrees, and 25 total students, the student to faculty (holding doctorates) ratio is 2:1.
2. Responsiveness and approachability of faculty  
Because of the small class sizes and intimate nature of the school, communication between the faculty and the students is natural and efficient. With ten full-time students and 15 part-time students, the average class size will not exceed 15.

### Areas of growth and opportunity:

1. Increase PhDs  
The seminary will enhance the academic qualifications of its faculty by increasing the proportion of professors who hold research PhDs. While the current faculty includes members with master's degrees, encouraging and supporting them in pursuing doctoral programs would have a positive impact. Doctorally-qualified faculty can contribute to the scholarly environment of the seminary, bringing advanced research skills and knowledge to the institution.
2. Faculty association  
The seminary will foster a stronger sense of community and collaboration among the faculty members. Establishing a faculty association or similar mechanism to help create a more cohesive and supportive environment. Faculty members should work together more closely and share insights, experiences, and best practices, so as to improve the quality of instruction across courses and programs.
3. Continuing Education  
Facilitate continuing education for the faculty, either with doctoral programs as above, or through in-house instruction by specialized experts in the field.
4. Publications  
Encourage writing and research by the faculty by publishing an annual journal of St. Sophia Seminary.



**+Daniel,**

by the Grace of God, Archbishop  
of the Western Eparchy of the Ukrainian  
Orthodox Church of the United States of America



## Andrii Vatrach

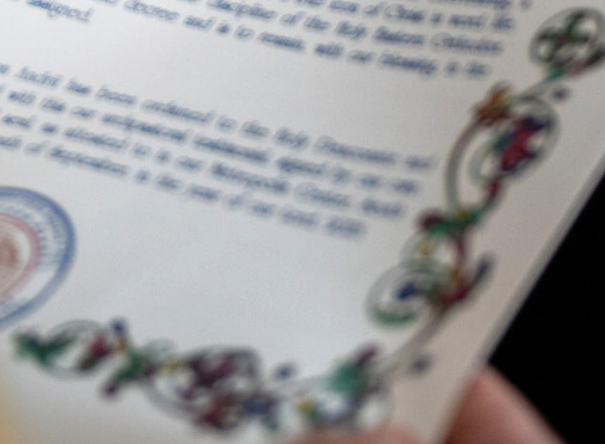
By the Grace, the Gift and the Authority of the All-Holy and Life-giving Spirit, transmitted to us by our Great High Priest and Lord Jesus Christ through His Holy and Sacred Apostles and their successors, the devout servant of God, Subdeacon

having been carefully examined in matters pertaining to Sacred Orthodox Theology and accounted worthy, in accordance with the Tradition and Rite of the Holy and Apostolic Eastern Orthodox Church, was elevated by the laying on of our hands and the bestowal of our blessing to the Diaconate of the Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, on the sixteenth day of the month of September - the feast of Saint Phocas, Deacon, at Cenchrese near Corinth (1st century) - in the year of our Lord 2023, in three Holy Hierarchal Chapters of the Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary in South Bound Brook, New Jersey. He is granted by us the authority to assist in the celebration and administration of the Holy Mysteries and worship services of the Church and to service (diaconia) in the Love of Christ as assigned by us and/or his parish pastor.

By our decree and that obligation which arises by virtue of ordination, Diacon Vatrach is to be diligent in his prayer life, the reading of the sacred Scriptures and in expounding them in accordance with the interpretations given by the Holy luminaries of the Church - our Godfearing Fathers, Teachers and Fathers. In accordance with apostolic injunction, he is to be sober, continent, Godfearing, a man of honor, hospitable to all and knowledgeable. He is to be a true son of Christ in word, in love, spirit, faith and purity. He is to adhere to the discipline of the Holy Eastern Orthodox Church in accordance with our guidance and decree and is to remain, with due humility, in the parish or position to which he is assigned.

Be it known to all that Diacon Andrii has been ordained to the Holy Diaconate and blessed by us. He is presented with the our episcopal seal and signed by our own hand and bearing our episcopal seal, we allowed it to be attested in our Metropolitan Throne, South Bound Brook, NJ on the 16th day of the month of September in the year of our Lord 2023.

+Daniel







## STANDARDS

### Standard 9: **Governance and Administration**



**SAINT SOPHIA**  
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## Standard 9. Governance and Administration

The seminary draws strength and stability from its Board of Trustees, a dedicated group of individuals who bring a deep-seated commitment to St. Sophia Seminary's mission, along with valuable expertise in various fields. The board consists of nine members, each appointed by the Metropolitan, serving three-year terms that are renewable indefinitely. They engage in quarterly meetings virtually and at least one annual in-person gathering, as well as other means of communication to fulfill their responsibilities.

The board embraces its role of providing guidance and oversight to advance the seminary's mission and ministry effectively. Members are thoughtfully chosen to fulfill specific needs of the seminary. This diverse group includes an immigration lawyer whose expertise is invaluable in navigating changing immigration regulations that impact international seminarians. Additionally, the board comprises priests with backgrounds spanning student services, admission, curriculum development, parish management, and technological quality assurance. Moreover, a former senior executive from a government agency contributes a unique perspective.

Collectively, the board members possess a deep understanding of the nuances associated with different waves of Ukrainian immigration and their implications for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church's needs. They are well-informed about the seminary's operations and are effective in fulfilling their roles of oversight and responsibility. Furthermore, they actively engage in strategic planning, collaborating closely with the Church to involve the seminary in tactical initiatives. This dedicated group maintains excellent working relationships not only among themselves but also with the Metropolitan, who serves as the Chair of the Board, reinforcing a cohesive and productive governance structure.

### 9.1

Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary has been operating under the approval of the state of New Jersey since February, 1991. The original certificate of incorporation was signed by Patriarch Mystyslav Skrypnyk (see Attachment 2).

St. Sophia Seminary operates with a license from the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education of the State of New Jersey (see Attachment 4).

St. Sophia Seminary is an Associate Member of ATS in the United States as of June 2020.

The Board of Trustees of St. Sophia Seminary permanently shares Metropolitan Antony and Archbishop Daniel with the Metropolitan Council of the UOC of USA. Two more board members are currently on the Metropolitan Council, Elizabeth Symonenko and V. Rev. Gregory Czumak. The Board of Trustees makes report to the Metropolitan Council annually about the status of the seminary, but no direct control is exercised by the UOC of USA.

### 9.2

The members of the Board of St. Sophia Seminary are each outstanding in their respective fields. Most of the board is comprised of clergy of the UOC of the USA, in addition to three lay people. New Trustees are appointed by the Primate of the UOC of the USA, currently his Eminence, Metropolitan Antony (*see Attachment 17*).

Current members of the Board of St. Sophia Seminary:

- Metropolitan Antony, Chairman of the Board
  - Primate of the UOC of USA
- Archbishop Daniel, Vice-Chairman of the Board
  - Ruling hierarch of the Western Eparchy of the UOC of USA
- V. Rev. Stephen Hutnick, Wilmington, DE – Treasurer
  - Treasurer of the UOC of USA
- Ms. Elizabeth Symonenko, Troy, MI – Secretary
  - IT Business Analyst for General Motors
- Ms. Olga Stepowij Coffey, Silver Spring, MD
  - Former Central Intelligence Agency Senior Executive Service Officer
- V. Rev. Harry Linsinbinler, Dover, FL
  - UOC of USA Canonist and Canon Law Professor
- Mr. Serhiy Hoshovsky, New York, NY
  - Senior Partner of the Hoshovsky Law Firm
- V. Rev. Gregory Czumak, Bel Air, MD
- V. Rev. Mykola Andrushkiv, Warners, NY

The members of the board of trustees are chosen from those who show great interest, commitment, and aptitude in service to the UOC of USA. There are many times in the life of the national church that people can step forward to take on responsibilities for its health and growth (boards, committees, etc.), these are taken note of by the hierarchs. Members of the board are also selected for their professional skill sets (law, design, leadership, etc.) which will further the mission of the seminary.

### 9.3

The current bylaws that outline the function, authority, and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees, as well as procedural minutes from meetings, are retained on file at the Consistory Office located in South Bound Brook, NJ (*see Attachments 2, 18, 22*). They are available for review upon request. The board manages the school's finances, assets, and budget (*see Attachment 19, 20, 21*).

As a result of this self-study, a Board of Trustees Handbook has been developed to guide the board in their work for the seminary. It is currently under review and awaits approval (*see Appendix 9*). The handbook covers all aspects of the board's responsibilities and procedures.

The Primate (Metropolitan) of the UOC of USA, by virtue of his position serves as the CEO and Rector of St. Sophia Seminary. He may appoint another individual to serve as Rector, confirmed by the Holy synod of Bishops. The Metropolitan remains as CEO of the Seminary as long as he serves as Primate of the Church. Removal of the Primate would require a decision of the Holy Synod of Bishops, confirmed by the highest administrative body the UOC of USA, the Sobor (general clergy-laity council). A Rector appointed by the Metropolitan may be removed from office only by decision of the Synod of Bishops.



## 9.4

Keeping in mind the mission of St. Sophia Seminary and its constituencies, the Board makes decisions that facilitate clear direction, improvement, and smooth operation of the institution. Meetings are held annually in person and virtually on zoom every other quarter of the year. The board endeavors to make decisions by consensus whenever possible.

The quarterly (three virtual, one in-person) board of trustees meetings follow the format of Robert's Rules of Order with the approval of the current agenda and minutes from the previous meeting following the call to order. The hierarchs make their remarks, then reports on seminary life, academics, finances, and immigration, etc. are made. Then board members are encouraged to discuss any issues that have arisen over the past year.

All board decisions are communicated to the effected faculty, staff, and students by the hierarchs, Metropolitan Antony and/or Archbishop Daniel, and are posted on the website when appropriate.

## 9.5

The board of St. Sophia Seminary is working toward enacting a regular self-evaluation process which would review the effectiveness of all of its efforts. This evaluation is included in the AEP which has been developed during the course of this self-study.

The intent of the Board of Trustees is to be as transparent and true to its values as possible. Thus, the process of continual evaluation is something that the seminary aspires to. The future success of the seminary relies on such accountability.

## 9.6

The Board of St. Sophia Seminary is growing toward a fuller realization of shared governance and drawing from broader sources of experience and knowledge in fields with which they may not be familiar. In recent years, the seminary has expanded the administrative team to carry out the vision and mission set forth by the board. While some members of the board have dual responsibilities, there is a sense of shared governance that occurs in practice.

## 9.7

Metropolitan Antony and Archbishop Daniel play central roles in guiding both the UOC of USA and St. Sophia Seminary. As leaders of these institutions, they facilitate a seamless transfer of decisions made by the respective boards into practical actions and implementation. Their leadership provides a strong bridge between the governing bodies and the day-to-day operations of the church and seminary.

Nevertheless, it's crucial to emphasize that, despite this interconnected leadership, the UOC of USA and St. Sophia Seminary maintain distinct legal and practical independence. Each entity operates under its unique mission, administrative structure, and set of goals. This independence allows them to address their specific objectives effectively while still benefiting from their collaborative relationship, ensuring a harmonious balance between the spiritual and educational aspects of their shared mission.

### 9.8

Through regular meetings of the hierarchs, faculty, dean of students, and vocations director, the academic, personal, and spiritual progress of each student is reviewed, as well as the effectiveness of the curriculum selections, coursework, and instruction. These decisions and outcomes are reported back to the board in order to maintain clear communication.

### 9.9

The administration of St. Sophia Seminary is small, but sufficient for the number of students currently enrolled. Each member of the administration has proven his/her effectiveness over multiple years of holding office (see Attachment 10).

St. Sophia Seminary's current administration:

- Metropolitan Antony - Rector
- Archbishop Daniel – Provost
- Rev. Vasyl Pasakas - Registrar and Dean of Students
- Rev. Theophan (Kenyon) Mackey – Vocations Director
- Rev. Stephen Hutnick – Treasurer
- Mrs. Natalia Honcharenko – Financial Aid Officer
- Mrs. Oksana Pasakas - Librarian





**Areas of effectiveness:****1. Dedication and Experience.**

The Administration of St. Sophia Seminary represents the best of the seminary and the UOC of USA. These associates work, and have worked, tirelessly for the good of the seminary for many years out of a love and dedication to the future of the school and the UOC of USA.

**Areas of growth and opportunity:****1. Expand Diversity.**

The board of trustees should add to its membership those who represent the different constituencies of the St. Sophia Seminary community, to include students, alumni, and/or persons external to the seminary proper. Widening the base of experience of the members of the board will strengthen the school for the future.

**2. Complete a Cycle of Evaluation**

Now that an assessment and evaluation plan has been instituted as a result of this self-study, completing that cycle and compiling the harvested data will be an enlightening sign of the progress of the seminary.







## STANDARDS

### Standard 10: **Institutional Resources**



**SAINT SOPHIA**  
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## Standard 10. Institutional Resources

Financial stability has been the biggest challenge St. Sophia Seminary has faced over the years. Compared to other educational institutions, the Seminary is of a modest size, charging an affordable tuition, which leaves the school in constant need of additional support. The annual budget has increased, however, as has support and funding over the last five years, permitting the Seminary to achieve financial stability.

The infrastructure of the school is strong and robust enough to support the needs of the student body. The main building of the seminary is sufficient to meet the needs of the students for residence and education.

### Human Resources

#### 10.1

St. Sophia Seminary has core staff and faculty who are well qualified and sufficient in number and diversity to fulfill the educational mission of the Seminary. The Seminary staff fulfills their duties with care and dedication to its mission.

Administrative and support staff (financial office, student housekeeping, cook, groundskeeping, librarian) and instructors are hired based on qualifications, skills, education, and experience, irrespective of age, race, gender, nationality, religion, disability, or other factors prohibited by the laws enforced by the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Administration and support staff are hired on a part-time basis, while instructors are engaged each semester on a per-course basis. All staff, including clergy, are subject to background checks. Remuneration for work performed is fair and in line with local wage rates. However, due to the size of the Seminary and financial limitations, employees are not offered group medical insurance or other benefits.

Job descriptions, instructor evaluations, staff evaluations, and other employment records are kept in the Finance Office. All new hires and/or engagements are required to acknowledge receipt of the Sexual Abuse Policy of the UOC of USA, which also governs the Seminary. (*See Attachment 23*)

#### 10.2

St. Sophia Seminary has policies that are published, followed, and strictly enforced. Guidelines include Academic Policies and Procedures (*see Attachments 1, 13*), Handbook for Faculty (*see Attachment 16*), Handbook for Students (*see Attachment 13*), Handbook for Seminarians (in Ukrainian language), Sexual Misconduct Policy (*see Attachment 23*), and the St. Sophia Seminary Library Collection Policy (*see Attachment 15*).

The evaluation committee has overall responsibility for seeing that manuals are updated and accurate and for implementing the AEP and reporting on the overall performance operations of the seminary. This also includes a review of any policies related to diversity, inclusion, Title IX, sexual harassment, and other local, state, and federal mandates, as well as on-boarding and separation practices.



## Financial Resources

### 10.3

The Seminary budget process is managed by the Treasurer's Office. The annual operating budget is prepared based on historical data and prudent projections and/or assumptions and is presented to the Board of Trustees for approval (*see Attachment 19*). Financial reports are examined on a quarterly basis, variances from the budget are examined, and adjustments to the budget are made as needed. Cash flow projections are reviewed monthly to ensure adequate funds to cover operating costs.

Sources of revenue for the Seminary are direct contributions, legacies and bequests, draws on the Seminary and the UOC of the USA Scholarship funds, as well as scholarship funds from the Ukrainian Orthodox League and the Rev. Volodymyr Lewytsky Scholarship Fund. The distribution from the Olga Tychonia Trust contributes to the annual revenue stream (\$33k total in FY2022). The Seminary receives 2% of the fair market value of the assets of the trust in equal quarterly installments, which are to be used for general operations. (Market value as of 12/31/2022 is \$1.2 million). The Trust remains in effect until December 5, 2064, 50 years from the Grantor's death. At the end of the 50-year period, the remaining principal, together with any accumulated income, will be transferred to the Seminary (*see Attachments 19, 20*).

Operational costs are reviewed quarterly, and every opportunity for cost savings is explored. However, the Seminary cannot allow cost cutting measures to impact the quality of the theological education and experience offered through its programs. The largest and most important expenses are salaries and wages, and room and board. These are constant, if not fixed, costs and have only increased in the last year due to inflation.

In FY 2020, there was a net operating loss of \$123,000, while in 2021 and 2022 there was a positive change in net assets of \$105,000 and \$130,000 respectively, with total net assets in FY 2022 of \$750,000.

The Seminary facilities are owned and operated by the UOC of USA; therefore, they require no capital budget. Inasmuch as the Church is the owner of the facilities, all maintenance and repairs of the building and grounds work, is paid for by the Church, as are any capital improvements.

Should the Seminary ever find that there is significant financial shortfall, the UOC of the USA will guarantee any funds needed to meet programming needs.

### 10.4

Because of the size of the Seminary, and the philosophy of providing 100% financial support to the Master of Divinity Students from Ukraine, enrollment is limited. For the part-time students, the Seminary chooses to keep tuition fees low in order to make the program financially accessible. Students typically do not incur any debt while enrolled in Seminary.

### 10.5

St. Sophia Seminary has adopted investment and spending policies for endowment assets that attempt to provide a predictable revenue stream to support tuition and operations (*see Attachment 21*). Endowment



assets are those of donor-restricted funds which are held in perpetuity, as well as trustee-designated funds. With a long-term rate-of-return objective, the endowed assets are invested in such a manner as to mirror the results of the Standard and Poor's 500 Index and other market indexes, while assuming a moderate level of investment risk. Employing a total return investment strategy, returns are achieved through both capital appreciations, as well as current interest and dividend yields. Greater emphasis is placed on well-diversified equity-based investments to achieve the portfolio's long-term objectives given prudent risk constraints. The Seminary expects its endowment funds to provide an average rate of return in excess of 5%.

Each year, the Seminary distributes from the endowments only such amounts that are deemed necessary to supplement external revenue sources. While considering the long-term expected returns on its endowments, over the long term, the current spending policy will allow for moderate growth.

In 2022-23 \$0 was drawn from endowments, due to bequests/contributions.

In 2021-22 \$0 was drawn from endowments, due to bequests/contributions.

In 2020-21 \$86k or 16% was drawn from endowments.

In the year immediately following the onset of the COVID pandemic, the seminary accessed endowment funds that had temporarily decreased in value that did not have restrictions from donors or legal prohibitions. It is important to emphasize that this was not a standard procedure, nor is it a practice that the seminary continues to employ. Rather, it was an exceptional, emergency measure taken when no alternative sources of funding were accessible.

## 10.6

In the Fall of each year, the Seminary mails its annual appeal to 6,500 members of the UOC of the USA and 110 parishes of the Metropolia to request donations in support of priestly vocations. To cultivate donor relationships, the Seminary hosts "Christmas at the Seminary" and a St. Thomas Pilgrimage Weekend Picnic in order to raise funds for the seminary. Divine Liturgy and other services are held regularly at the Seminary Chapel, and the faithful are given an opportunity to fellowship with the Seminarians and clergy while enjoying refreshments or a meal. Throughout the year, the resident Seminarians travel to parishes for their practica, and in so doing, get acquainted with the parishioners, while the parishioners become familiar with the Seminary's programs, opening the doors for parish and individual financial and spiritual support.

Any donation received for which the donor has a specific intention is honored. If the gift is intended as an endowment while the donor is alive, an agreement is made between the donor and Seminary outlining the specific intent and spending restrictions or allowances of the funds. Any endowments created as a result of a bequest is respected and used for their intended purpose.

## 10.7

The day-to-day financial management and reporting of the Seminary is performed by the Treasurer and the part-time in-house accountant, and other staff as required. The finances are managed in a responsible manner in accordance with United States Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Internal control mechanisms are in place to ensure division of duties.

Financial reports are prepared quarterly and presented at the Board of Trustees meeting, where they are reviewed and acted upon as necessary, including adjusting budgets when required. The Finance Committee meets quarterly to review the performance of the investment portfolio and make investment decisions as needed. They also address any financial matters and policies, as necessary.

An external CPA firm is engaged annually to perform an audit, to test internal controls, prepare financial statements, and render an audit opinion. The Seminary will continue to receive a qualified audit; the restrictions on net assets date back many years, and over time, some donor records could not be located to obtain appropriate and sufficient audit evidence to support the donor restricted net asset balances. Any issues on the auditor's management letter are addressed and corrected (*see Attachment 20*).

## Physical Resources

### 10.8

The physical resources of the Seminary provide for housing, recreation and wellness activities, study, social, worship/ministry activities, and classroom space. Housing for single students is available in the main residential building. Housing for married students is available in a residential building of the Seminary and the UOC of the USA Metropolia Center. The Seminary provides a workout facility, as well as weekend access to a gymnasium with a pool. The Seminary Library includes study space along with its collections. The Three Holy Hierarchs Seminary Chapel provides for worship and ministry activity. The Ukrainian Cultural Center and the Metropolia of the Church grounds provide space for enjoyment of the arts and social gatherings.

St. Sophia Seminary encourages recycling, conservation, and other initiatives to provide for the best stewardship of the environment.

The Seminary provides faculty members with modern and well-equipped office space. In addition, there is a commons area and a chapel within the main Seminary building where students, staff, and faculty may meet for community activities. The grounds around the building have seating areas, garden areas, and picnic areas to encourage social interaction.

## Technological Resources

### 10.9

St. Sophia Seminary is supported by the UOC of USA's information technology infrastructure and services. The Church's Technological Office provides technology services to faculty, staff, and students in classrooms and offices and provides technical assistance as needed. The Church's Technological Office also provides telecommunication support to the Seminary, including telephone, cable TV, audio conferencing, and classroom and office internet access. Distance learning classes are organized and facilitated using Google Classroom. The small class size and free usage makes it suitable for the current levels of enrollment and the philosophy of keeping costs down for the student.

## Shared Resources

### 10.10

St. Sophia Seminary shares resources with the UOC of USA. Property ownership and related obligations have been documented and are continually being updated.

The resources necessary for the Seminary to fulfill its purposes include the human, financial, organizational, physical, intellectual and spiritual. One of the most rewarding elements of sharing resources is the ability to share financial gains generated through financial offerings with the entire UOC of USA community.

There are eleven Orthodox Theological institutions offering theology degrees in North America in addition to St. Sophia Seminary. This context provides a rich potential for sharing resources and has already resulted in a number of joint ventures. St. Sophia Seminary currently utilizes the facilities at several of these schools for course work (one seminarian a member of the UOC of USA is enrolled at St. Tikhon's, but plans to finish his studies at St. Sophia Seminary, this has been common over the past 10+ years), and St. Sophia Seminary professors have served as lecturers (Rev. Nicoloudakis, V. Rev. Rochelle).

Library access at these schools is available to students in the process of research. All use of facilities is arranged through memorandums of understanding agreed upon between the entities and drawn up by the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America.

Faculty from St. Sophia Seminary, V. Rev. Robert Holet and Rev. Theophan Mackey, have been invited to participate in the Theological Education Task Force set in place by the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA. Other schools that have representatives on the task force are: Antiochian House of Studies, St. Athanasius College, Christ the Saviour Seminary, Holy Cross Seminary, Holy Trinity Seminary, St. Sava Seminary, St. Tikhon's Seminary, and St. Vladimir's Seminary. These have been tasked with developing a foundations course for integrating Scripture, liturgy, and spirituality, that would be appropriate for inclusion in all of their seminaries.

### Areas of effectiveness:

1. Stability.  
St. Sophia Seminary is supported by the continuing generosity of the people of the UOC of USA and its administration, and in return it supplies for the future of its mother church. This cooperation has kept St. Sophia Seminary stable for fifty years and will continue into the future.
2. Flexibility.  
The small size of St. Sophia Seminary coupled with its centralized authority and stable foundation allow for flexibility and response to the changing needs of its varied constituencies in a timely manner. Needs once identified, may be fulfilled quickly and efficiently.

### Areas of growth and opportunity:

1. Diversity.  
There are 110 parishes and missions in the UOC of USA, but only a portion of them directly support St. Sophia Seminary or send candidates for seminary regularly. Although there are valid reasons for this lack, better communication and relations with the local churches may garner more buy-in by a larger portion of the parishes and the faithful.





## CONCLUSION



**SAINT SOPHIA**  
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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## CONCLUSION

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This self-study has been a rigorous yet rewarding process for Saint Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary. Through the lens of close investigation, the committees, reviewers, and other constituents involved in the self-study process have come to appreciate the diverse and well-knit community of faculty, staff, and students united by a common commitment to the Lord and the single purpose the seminary has been given to prepare effective leaders for His service. St. Sophia Seminary has a beautiful and welcoming space in which to carry out its work, and the UOC of USA provides the support and accountability that enables it to serve the students with academic excellence.

St. Sophia Seminary is grateful for the incredible backing it continues to receive from its dedicated donors and the devoted parishioners of the Church. This support encompasses not just financial contributions but also underscores the faith and confidence these individuals place in the seminary's mission to prepare the next cohort of ministry leaders and to offer guidance in the realm of theological contemplation essential for a church community's unwavering commitment to God.

The faculty at the seminary play a pivotal role in providing this leadership not only at a national level but also on an international scale. This is exemplified through the sacrifices made by international students who journey to the seminary, as well as through collaborative efforts with other theological institutions. St. Sophia Seminary's faculty possess a wealth of theological knowledge and practical experience, which attracts students and has established its reputation as a sought-after center of learning for conferences and discussions worldwide.

St. Sophia Seminary has an excellent library with a dedicated Seminary Librarian eager to assist students and faculty in maximizing the use of information resources. St. Sophia Seminary has an organizational structure that has served the seminary well in creating and sustaining the environment out of which all of this can grow and be carried forward.

St. Sophia Seminary has established a standing evaluation committee to ensure that the insights that have been acquired through this study are not dismissed or disregarded but are used to shape and improve the school as a whole.

With God's grace, the coming years will be filled with growth and change for the St. Sophia Seminary community.



### Recommendations

The self-study process yielded new insights and opportunities. Actions toward improvement will particularly focus on the following areas over the next several years:

- Continue with the review and refinement of the academic structure, giving particular attention to the relationship between programs.
- Take the system of evaluation and assessment to the next level of maturity, reviewing goals and outcomes, and strengthening the data collection and interpretation processes.
- Facilitate the completion of a Master of Library Information Science by the head librarian so as to fully meet the requirements of Standard 6.
- Continue to develop the faculty and services to ensure that the students are receiving the best possible theological education from the best sources available.
- Continue work in developing capacity for information literacy and lifelong learning among the students through the library's engagement with the curriculum, faculty within individual courses, and responsiveness to individual students.
- Create processes and platforms to better capture and promote St. Sophia Seminary's own intellectual output through re-establishing an institutional publication.
- Develop an overall enrollment strategy that identifies new approaches for existing programs and marketing tactics with a plan for moderate enrollment growth.
- Identify housing options and opportunities for the various student needs (full-time residential, international students, and distance learning students).
- Invest in the development of a long-term Strategic Plan for the Seminary, which will set goals for a 5-year period.
- Build upon the successful programs already in place to help the Seminary adapt and respond to rapidly changing contexts of ministry.





**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment 1: Academic Catalog
- Attachment 2: Seminary Constitution and By-Laws
- Attachment 3: UOC of the USA Constitution
- Attachment 4: NJ License
- Attachment 5: Academic Agreement–St. Tikhon Seminary and St. Sophia Seminary
- Attachment 6: Academic Agreement–New Brunswick Seminary and St. Sophia Seminary
- Attachment 7: Academic Agreement – Kyiv Theological Academy and St. Sophia Seminary
- Attachment 8: Holy Cross Agreement
- Attachment 9: Seminary Evaluation Form
- Attachment 10: Educational Effectiveness
- Attachment 11: Seminary Applications
- Attachment 12: Faculty CVs
- Attachment 13: Student Handbook
- Attachment 14: Library Brochure
- Attachment 15: Library Collections Policy
- Attachment 16: Faculty Handbook
- Attachment 17: St. Sophia Seminary Board
- Attachment 18: Strategic Goals
- Attachment 19: 2022-2023 Seminary Budget
- Attachment 20: Audited Financial Statements
- Attachment 21: Investment Policy
- Attachment 22: Organizational Chart
- Attachment 23: Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Attachment 24: Seminary Board Minutes
- Attachment 25: Seminary Bylaws



## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:**

SD 1:	Seminary Board Minutes: 2018
SD 2:	Seminary Board Minutes: 2019
SD 3:	Seminary Board Minutes: 2020
SD 4:	Seminary Board Minutes: 2021
SD 5:	Seminary Board Minutes: 2022
SD 6:	Audit – 2020
SD 7:	Audit – 2021
SD 8:	Audit – 2022
SD 9:	Seminary Courses – 2020-2021
SD 10:	Seminary Courses – 2021-2022
SD 11:	Seminary Courses – 2022-2023
SD 12:	Syllabi
SD 13:	Faculty CVs
SD 14:	M.Div. Thesis – Subdeacon Yaroslav Bilohan
SD 15:	M.Div Thesis – Fr. Yurii Bobko
SD 16:	M.Div Thesis – Fr. Myroslav Mykytyuk
SD 17:	M.Div Thesis – Fr. Ihor Protsak
SD 18:	M.Div Thesis – Fr. Mykola Zomchak
SD 19:	Seminary Chapel Prayer Book
SD 20:	2019 Promotional Poster
SD 21:	2020 Promotional Poster
SD 22:	2021 Promotional Poster
SD 23:	2022-2023 Promotional Poster
SD 24:	2023 Seminary Feast Day Poster

## **APPENDICES:**

Appendix 1:	Organizational Chart
Appendix 1.2:	Board of Trustees
Appendix 2:	Strategic Plan Goals
Appendix 3:	Evaluation and Assessment Plan
Appendix 4:	Budget
Appendix 4.1:	Budget Plan
Appendix 5:	Audited Financial Statement
Appendix 6:	Seminary Constitution and By-Laws
Appendix 6.1:	Faculty Handbook
Appendix 6.2:	Student Handbook
Appendix 7:	Academic Catalog
Appendix 8:	Robinsoft Co. statement
Appendix 9:	Board of Trustees Handbook





