

We encourage all seminaries to use the Institutional Assessment to determine their institution's sexual health in the areas of curricular offerings, training opportunities, institutional environment including specific policies, and advocacy and support for sexuality-related issues.

# Institutional Assessment

## Criteria for a Sexually Healthy and Responsible Seminary

Check the box for each criterion your institution meets. Notice which areas need strengthening and develop plans to address them.

### Curricular Offerings

#### A sexually healthy and responsible seminary:

€ Requires coursework on human sexuality and healthy professional boundaries.

#### Offers regularly scheduled courses or workshops on sexuality issues, including:

€ Sexual ethics Women in religious traditions and faith communities  
€ LGBT/queer studies in religion Sexual abuse and domestic violence

#### Includes sexuality topics in introductory and core courses:

€ Hebrew Bible/Old Testament/Tanakh Midrash/Rabbinics/Code  
New Testament, Theology/Systematics Pastoral Counseling  
Ethics Worship and Preaching  
History Denomination-specific/polity classes

#### Graduating students are required to have:

€ Opportunities for personal reflection on one's own sexuality  
€ Knowledge of human sexuality  
€ Ability to counsel, preach, educate, and advocate on sexuality issues in professional religious settings

#### Ideas for Next Steps

Few checked criteria in this area indicate the need for development of specific course offerings and integration of sexuality-related issues across curricular offerings. An institution may address this need through changes to degree program requirements, securing instructors for additional courses or workshops outside of current faculty specialties, and mandating syllabi that have a course design and required readings that address sexuality-related issues in at least one session in core introductory classes.



## Ideas for Next Steps

Many institutions and religious denominations have resources to assist in strengthening sexuality-related programs and policies. A minimum number of checked boxes indicates a need to develop more frequent opportunities and resources for students to engage sexuality issues. Many of the centers listed on pages 30-31 offer resources for worship services across religious traditions. The Religious Institute's website includes bibliographies of sexuality-related books, articles, and sexuality education curricula for libraries to reference and/or acquire. Model inclusive language policies can be acquired from other institutions or denominational bodies.

## Policies

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### **A sexually healthy and responsible seminary:**

#### **Has anti-discrimination and/or inclusion policies addressing:**

- € sex
- € race
- disability
- sexual orientation
- gender identity
- marital status

Includes anti-discrimination and/or inclusion policies in catalogs, admission materials, faculty and student orientations, websites, and periodic postings in newsletters and announcements.

#### **Has sexual harassment prevention or professional ethics and healthy boundaries policies for:**

- € students
- faculty
- staff€

Includes sexual harassment policies and guidelines for reporting harassment in catalogs, admission materials, faculty and student orientations, websites, and periodic postings in newsletters and announcements.

## Ideas for Next Steps

In some instances, there is a legal requirement to comply with anti-discrimination and sexual harassment policies. Seminaries should be aware of state and federal laws for educational institutions. When mandates do not exist, institutions can be proactive in creating policies that contribute to a safe and welcoming environment. The Religious Institute and the FaithTrust Institute assist seminaries in developing policies and provides training on professional ethics and healthy boundaries.

## Advocacy and Support

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### **A sexually healthy and responsible seminary:**

#### **Supports student groups that address sexual and gender identities and sexuality needs, such as:**

- |   |   |                                |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
| € | Women's Center                          | HIV positive persons           |
| € | LGBTQ groups                            | Single persons                 |
| € | Reproductive justice group              | Celibate persons               |
| € | Support for married/coupled seminarians | Other sexuality-related groups |
| € |   |                                |

#### **Encourages faculty and leadership to be active on social and sexual justice issues including public witness and/or activism in:**

- € research and publications
- € professional organizations
- € advocacy organizations
- € denomination settings
- € community

### Ideas for Next Steps

Institutions that do not have student groups or do not support specific sexuality-related groups should provide students with community-based references to organizations which can offer support such as Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice regional affiliates, open and affirming congregations, or organizations such as Dignity and Lutherans Concerned. However, many students do not have time to seek support outside the institution. Faculty and administrative leadership in sexuality-related advocacy on a community, denominational, and professional society level should be recognized not only in the service requirement of tenure processes, but also as an avenue to supporting similar work within the seminary walls. Faculty and administrators can also serve as a religious voice in the public square on sexuality issues.