

Cherry Hill Seminary



Professional Pagan Ministry Education

STUDENT HANDBOOK

AUGUST 3, 2009

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Cherry Hill Seminary

P.O. Box 5405 ♦ Columbia, SC 29250-5405 ♦ www.cherryhillseminary.org ♦ 888-503-4131

Welcome

Imagine that you are in a sacred learning place – a classroom, a forest, a library, a home, a courtroom. Imagine that you are in the presence of sacred teaching -- a professor's questions, an animal's presence, the words or traditions of a people who may no longer walk this earth, a group of friends, a stranger.

Imagine that you hear a call to sacred service – a voice, an aptitude, a vision, a need, a yearning.

You may feel connected to those who have gone before, as well as those yet to be. Some from our past you can name, such as Hypatia and Julian Faithkeeper. Through your connections to our histories and traditions, our contemporary expressions, our communities, our world, and your own unique sense of calling, you seek preparation to serve those who are present now, and those who follow.

And to this we – the faculty, staff, students and supporters of Cherry Hill Seminary – say “Well come, and well met.” We marvel that we can, with pride and honor, greet you as you begin your graduate studies with us in Professional Pagan Ministry. Not long ago such a phrase – Professional Pagan Ministry – was unthinkable. Yet here we are engaged in exactly that!

At Cherry Hill Seminary, we strive for academic excellence, deep and broad Pagan spiritual formation, practical ministry skills, and community connection and support. We are committed to these things: for you, for ourselves, and for the gods – this is our sacred service.

May your sacred service be enhanced by your study at Cherry Hill Seminary.

Blessings,
Cynthia Jane Collins, M.Div., M.S.
Academic Dean

INTRODUCTION

About Our Institution

Cherry Hill Seminary exists to train Pagans to do the work of professional ministry.

Cherry Hill Seminary recently celebrated its tenth anniversary as a learning community. In March 2008, our Board of Directors voted to move forward on two important goals. The first is to develop and implement a plan to offer Master of Divinity (M.Div.) and other Master's level degrees. Although under South Carolina law, as an institution whose sole purpose is religious or theological training, Cherry Hill Seminary is exempt from oversight of the state Commission on Higher Education, we intend voluntarily to meet the same standards that would be required for licensure of a secular school.

Our second goal is to become an accredited institution of higher learning. In the United States educational accreditation is a peer review process coordinated by accreditation commissions and their members. Accreditation requirements vary, but are generally quite stringent. The process can usually be expected to take several years to complete. As we move towards future accreditation, Cherry Hill Seminary continues to endeavor to ensure our programs are of the highest quality.

As there is currently no accrediting religious organization for Pagan schools, we expect to apply for accreditation from the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC), a nonprofit educational accreditation agency in the United States specializing in the accreditation of distance education institutions. DETC was established in 1926 and is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and the United States Department of Education as an accreditor of institutions of higher education.

Guardian Ancestor

Cherry Hill Seminary has chosen Hypatia of Alexandria, a woman of extraordinary accomplishments who was martyred in 415 CE, to honor as we pursue our vision of providing professional Pagan ministry education. In June 2004 in Bethel, VT, Hypatia was ritually installed Guardian Ancestor using the formal name, Despoina Hypatia Polumathes. *Despoina* is "Lady, Mistress"; *Polumathes* means "much-learned." See http://cherryhillseminary.org/about_ancestor.html.

About This Manual

The Cherry Hill Seminary student handbook and website www.cherryhillseminary.org contain policies and procedures that affect all students applying to or enrolled in courses and programs at the seminary.

Cherry Hill Seminary reserves the right to change its policies, programs, course offerings, or regulations at any time.

This first edition was produced by Academic Dean Cynthia Jane Collins; Dean of Students Maggie Beaumont; Executive Director Holli S. Emore, CFRE; President Kirk S. Thomas; and Treasurer Diane Edgecomb, J.D., who served as legal advisor.

Our Mission

Cherry Hill Seminary provides quality higher education and practical training in Pagan ministry.

Our Vision

Cherry Hill Seminary supports Pagans and their communities by:

- ◆ Providing an extensive education in diverse aspects of Pagan philosophy, practice, and skilled ministry;
- ◆ Supplementing existing ritual and magical skills with training for professional ministry and pastoral counseling;
- ◆ Serving as an ongoing resource for individual continuing education; and
- ◆ Providing a forum for scholarship and community.

Our Values

Cherry Hill Seminary:

- ◆ Honors the sacredness of the Earth;
- ◆ Values scholarship;
- ◆ Respects diversity
- ◆ Encourages individual and spiritual autonomy;
- ◆ Values community; and
- ◆ Promotes service.

Organization

Cherry Hill Seminary is a 501(c)3 nonprofit public charity incorporated in the state of South Carolina.

As the chief governing body of Cherry Hill Seminary, the Board of Directors delegates management authority to the Executive Director in accord with its policies.

Subject to review by the Executive Director and the Board of Directors, the Academic Dean holds responsibility for standards of admission, registration, instruction, research and extracurricular activities; the requirements for the granting of degrees earned in course; the curricula; the educational policies and standards of the Seminary; and all other matters affecting the conduct of academic affairs.

2009 Board of Directors

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Trout Lake, WA

Jason Pitzl-Walters, Secretary
Eugene, OR

Diane Edgecomb, J.D., Treasurer
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Columbia, SC

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Academic Dean
Saco, ME

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Chair, Text, Tradition & Interpretation
Austin, TX

Valerie Cole, Ph.D.
Chair, Pastoral Care & Counseling
Rochester, NY

Jennifer Bennett, B.A.
Chair, Pagan Community Education for Lifelong
Learning (PCELL)
Turners Falls, MA.

Megan A. "Maggie" Beaumont, M.A.
Dean of Students
Hopewell, NJ

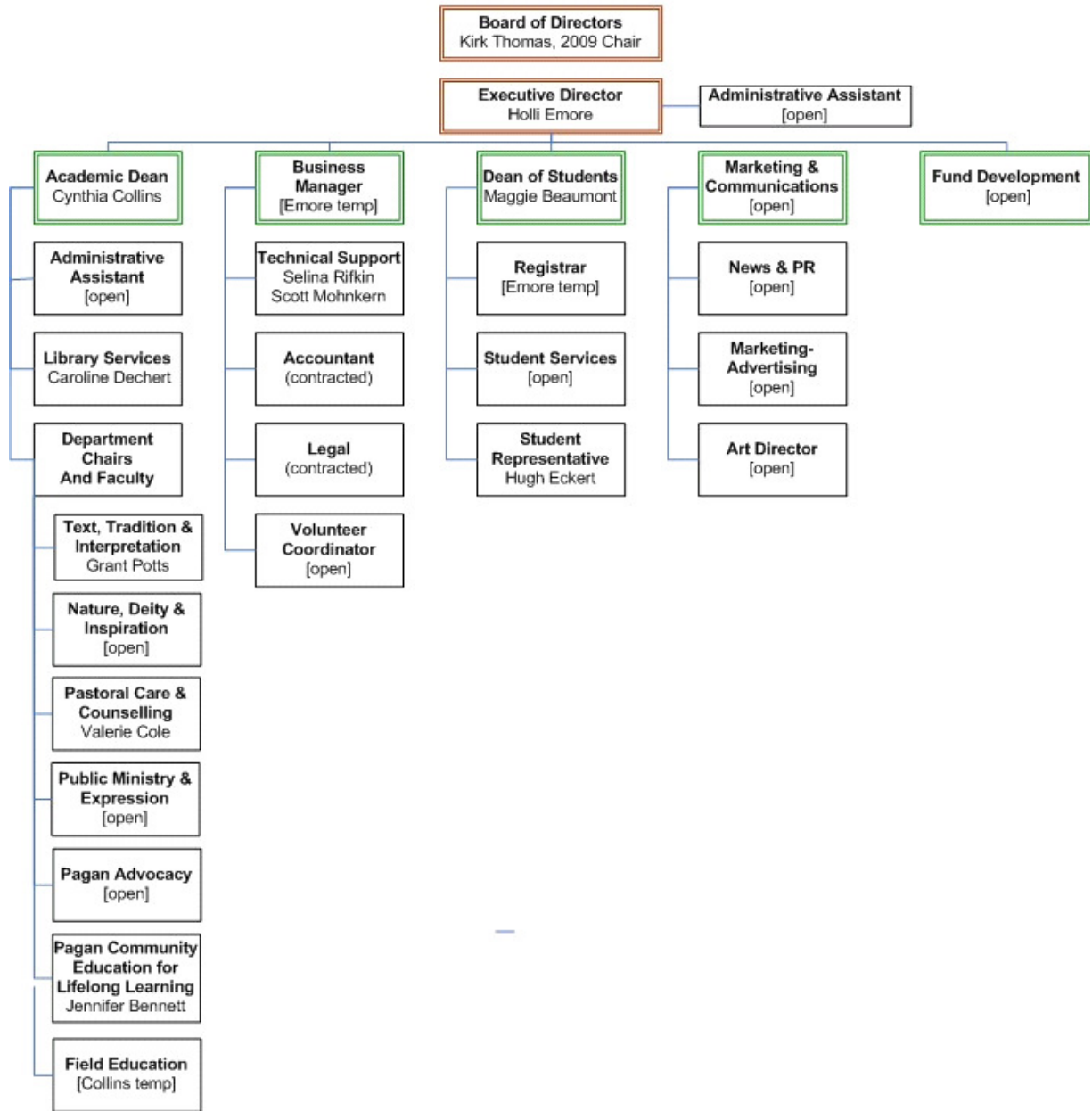
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Librarian
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IT Training and Support
Germantown, MD

Selina Rifkin, M.S.
Web Tech
Trumbull, CT

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Cherry Hill Seminary



ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Of the seven academic departments at Cherry Hill Seminary, five offer the following areas of major concentration:

- ◆ **Text, Tradition, & Interpretation** studies the literature, language(s), traditions, arts, philosophy, th-logy¹, history, ethics, development and contemporary expressions of Pagan groups, tribes, and communities throughout the world.
- ◆ **Nature, Deity & Inspiration** studies the history and development of human interaction with the natural world and its ecosystems, spiritual formation, direct personal and community mystical experience, divination and augury, practice, devotion, meditation, and prayer.
- ◆ **Pastoral Care & Counseling** trains students to become Pagan Pastoral Counselors and enhances ministry skills in Pastoral Care, explores how they as Pagans serve others, and studies the counseling and/or care-giving encounter. Includes clinical chaplaincies – those that focus on providing service to persons in immediate, acute crisis, such as hospital and military chaplaincy.
- ◆ **Public Ministry & Expression** equips students to serve the intra-religious Pagan community, and includes ritual, religious leadership, education and the arts, as well as chaplaincy that provides service to Pagans in long-term, ongoing or chronic settings such as prisons, educational or residential institutions or organizations.
- ◆ **Pagan Advocacy** prepares students to serve the pan-Pagan community in interfaith, inter-religious and secular venues, and to promote religious and other rights and responsibilities, through interfaith chaplaincy and dialogue, media relations, activism and public advocacy.

Two departments oversee educational processes beyond the Master's Degree classroom:

- ◆ **Field Education** provides supervised experience, emotional and intellectual integration, and on-site and on-line support for students as they exercise their knowledge and skills in community and other settings.
- ◆ **Pagan Community Education for Lifelong Learning (PCELL)** provides contemporary education and practical application on topics of Pagan interest, taught by leaders in the Pagan community, on a more accessible and flexible schedule than master's-level classes. Beginning in Fall term 2009, the PCELL programs replace our previous certificate programs. The PCELL department will offer certificate programs.

Degree Programs

Master of Divinity (M.Div.), the basic professional degree for the work of clergy supported by academics, requires the equivalent of three years of full-time study, 72 credit hours. A Master of Divinity degree is considered a "terminal degree" because no additional education is needed to practice this profession. Ordination by one's specific group or tradition may be required for endorsement or employment, in addition to the degree.

¹ The study of religious faith, belief, practice, and experience, especially the study of the gods and goddesses of many forms and genders, and of their relation to the world.

Master of Pagan Pastoral Care and Counseling, designed to meet various practice standards, requires the equivalent of two and a half years of full-time study, 60 credit hours. This degree focuses on academics and practices, and will require specific types of supervision and testing.

Master of Pagan Ministry, an in-depth development of professional ministry specialization, requires 48 credit hours, the equivalent of two years of full-time study.

Master of Pagan Studies, study and research in one particular area of discipline, requires 48 credit hours, the equivalent of two years of full-time study.

All of our degrees at this time are Master's level. Most classes will continue to be online, i.e., distance education. Practicums and internships must be done locally, with Seminary and local supervision.

Our programs are designed to meet the needs of working adults, living in a complex and demanding world. Because Cherry Hill Seminary teaches primarily through distance education, students have more flexibility in the specific hours each week they need to reserve for study. With no need for daily travel to classes, Cherry Hill Seminary classes are both environmentally sound and time-efficient. Each degree has specific requirements for face-to-face "Academic Intensive" sessions, held in various retreat locations. A student can expect to travel to a four- to seven-day event once for each "full-time-equivalent" year.

Majors, also called focus areas or areas of concentration, are fields of specific study within a degree. We offer the five areas described in #4, above, each with unique content, goals and objectives, academic expectations and practical application.

Certificate Programs

- ◆ **Certificate of Professional Development** is designed for those who wish to study and develop specific professional ministry skills, within a directed, focused framework for their particular application. **27 total unit hours**

Participation in one Academic Intensive	1 unit hour
Professional Project	2 unit hours
Ethics & Boundaries	3 unit hours
Survey of Global Paganisms	3 unit hours
Courses in any area of major	15-18 unit hours

- ◆ **Certificate of Continuing Education** is designed for those who wish to expand their knowledge of Pagan ministry and skills in specific areas. **14 total unit hours**

Focus Project	2 unit hours
Courses in any area of major	12 unit hours

- ◆ **Certificate of Lifelong Learning** is designed for those enhancing their knowledge of Pagan ethos, ministry and skills. **18 total unit hours**

Any 18 unit hours of Cherry Hill Seminary courses or classes	18 unit hours
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About Credit

One credit hour is the equivalent of 45 hours of academic work over about 15 weeks. Thus, a student enrolling in a three-credit-hour class can expect to put in 135 hours of effort for that class during that term. Credit hours are awarded at the successful completion of Masters level classes.

Unit hours are awarded upon the successful completion of PCELL classes and certain designated Foundations classes. Credit hours may be applied to Certificates, but unit hours may not be applied to Degrees.

Core Curriculum

All degree programs require the following two core curriculum classes:

C 5101	Ethics & Boundaries
C 5121	Survey of Contemporary Global Paganisms

These two courses must be completed within the first 24 credit hours of instruction.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The academic year calendar at Cherry Hill Seminary is divided into three 15-week academic terms: Fall, Spring, and Summer sessions. The Fall and Spring terms emphasize academic and field education courses. The Summer term emphasizes noncredit, prerequisite foundational review courses as well as a few academic classes.

At least once each year, Cherry Hill Seminary offers residential Academic Intensives; each student is required to complete two or three such Academic Intensives before graduation, depending on the particular program. Typically Academic Intensives require readings and homework in the several weeks before and after the face-to-face portion. Academic Intensive gatherings are four- to seven days long, depending on the topic, and are held in various retreat locations. Students are welcome to consult with their Advisor in choosing their Academic Intensives.

Current year Academic Calendar may be found at our web site, under "For Students."
Please check the website periodically for updates.

2009 Fall Term

August 3 Begin Fall Registration
September 7 End Fall Registration
September 14 Begin Fall Classes
September 21 Drop/Add Last Date
December 18 End Fall Classes

2010 Spring Term

December 14 Begin Spring Registration-Master's students
December 17 Begin Spring Registration-PCELL students
January 11 End Spring Registration
January 18 Begin Spring Classes
January 25 Drop/Add Last Date
April 23 End Spring Classes

Complete application package for either degree or PCELL students must be received at least eight weeks before registration opens for either the Spring or the Fall term, if the student wishes to register for classes in that term.

Since degree applications are competitive, we recommend that full application packages be submitted

by March 15, and by September 15, in order to receive priority consideration. Degree applications received after these dates, but at least eight weeks prior to opening of registration may also be considered, if openings remain in the class cohort for that year.

The Admissions Committee will notify students accepted for degree programs by May 1 and November 1. The committee will normally process later applications and PCELL applications within four to six weeks, then notify an applicant of its decision.

Accepted degree applicants must notify Cherry Hill Seminary of their intention to begin studies within two weeks of receiving notification of admission.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR LEGACY STUDENTS

Students whose application packages were complete, under the old system, on or before June 30, 2009, *and* who have taken a class since June 1, 2008, will receive legacy standing. If you feel an exception should be made for you, please contact the Cherry Hill Seminary office with a letter of request for an exception.

Legacy students may register for Fall 2009 master's classes, provided that they comply with their new admissions requirements (see below) by December 31, 2009. Legacy students will be given preference in the admissions process and a tuition reduction in consideration of their support, loyalty, and patience during our formative years.

Whether you plan to study for a degree or a certificate,² each legacy student must fill out the new Application for Admission form. This will standardize our student records going forward, and will also serve to notify the Seminary of the student's intention to continue study under the new structure.

Most legacy students will not need to re-submit transcripts that were included as part of their original admissions package; you will be notified if a transcript needs replacement for any reason.

If you have attended other post-secondary institutions in the years since your original Cherry Hill Seminary application, you must have those transcripts sent to us by each such institution.

Legacy students will not need to submit new letters of recommendation or personal referral.

Under the new structure, Cherry Hill Seminary admissions are competitive; therefore the original application packages of legacy students will be re-evaluated by the current Admissions Committee.

Some legacy students may be asked to submit a new essay.

The Admissions Committee may have specific questions for some legacy students, in which case a member of the Admissions Committee will contact you by telephone or e-mail.

A legacy student whose application package does not contain direct evidence of the award of an earned Bachelor's Degree, but is otherwise acceptable, will be conditionally admitted pending receipt of an official transcript from the institution showing the granting of the degree.

² Certificate students please note: You will need to designate which of the three new Certificate programs you wish to complete; Certificates described under the old system will no longer be granted.

Legacy students who are applying to one of the Master's Degree programs may wish to have their previous work at Cherry Hill Seminary counted toward that degree. In order to determine what credit may be awarded, legacy students must submit the syllabus from each Cherry Hill Seminary course they wish to transfer into the degree program as part of their new application package. Syllabi will be evaluated by the Academic Dean to determine whether and how previous courses match the requirements of the degree program to which the student is applying.

A legacy student will receive a significant reduction in the tuition for Master's-level classes up to the number of credits required to complete the degree or certificate in the program for which the student has been accepted.

Legacy Tuition Rate as of August 1, 2009 for Master's classes: \$75 per credit hour.

Tuition for PCELL and Foundations classes will be the same for all students regardless of admission date.

From time to time it may be necessary for Cherry Hill Seminary to raise its tuition rates. At such times the legacy tuition rate will rise by the same percentage as the increase in the regular tuition rate. The legacy tuition rate will apply to all Master's degree classes taken for credit toward completion of the degree program to which the legacy student has been accepted.

ADMISSIONS

Choosing to serve through professional Pagan ministry is a life-changing decision, one that requires spiritual assessment, community support and personal commitment. If you desire to enhance your ability to serve others and your community; are prepared for commitment to graduate-level coursework or community education; and find yourself in harmony with the Cherry Hill Seminary mission and values, then we invite you to review the admissions criteria below.

Admission to Cherry Hill Seminary is competitive.

Applicants are responsible for making sure that all materials reach Cherry Hill Seminary in a timely manner. The Admissions Committee will only review completed application packages.

All students must:

- ◆ Have proficiency and access to an up-to-date computer, including Skype with voice-to-voice capability and reliable internet access, preferably high-speed (see Technology Requirements for details);
- ◆ Be able to attend and participate in online chat class sessions;
- ◆ Be competent to perform graduate level work;
- ◆ Demonstrate basic competence in English language and writing; and
- ◆ Demonstrate interest in Pagan leadership and service.

Note that students enrolling solely in single-day PCELL programs presented face-to-face are exempt from these requirements.

After careful personal consideration of your self, your career goals, and the literature, to begin the process please feel free to contact the Seminary at CHS@cherryhillseminary.org or to fill out the online application at our main site, under "For Students," then "Admissions."

Application Requirements for Degrees and Certificate Programs

Each completed application package must include:

- ◆ Student's official transcripts, sent to Cherry Hill Seminary by each institution directly, for all post-secondary education. (See Transcript Policy below.)
- ◆ With limited exception (see below) Cherry Hill Seminary requires each matriculating candidate for a Degree or a Certificate of Professional Development to have a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited school (any subject). A Bachelor's Degree is currently recommended, though not required, for other Certificate programs.
- ◆ Non-refundable application fee of \$35
- ◆ Application form (available at www.cherryhillseminary.org; select "For Students.")
- ◆ Résumé or curriculum vitae (CV)
- ◆ Personal essay: In this written document, please describe the following:

Your background in religious faith or spiritual practice. What traditions and ideas have been most formative for you? How did you make the decision to seek education in preparation for ministry?

Your educational background. What has been helpful to you? Less important? How do you see your personal, spiritual and career goals enhanced by further study?

Your work experience. Where have you been most successful? Why do you think that is?

Your leadership in the Pagan community. Discuss how you hope to serve the Pagan community as a result of your Cherry Hill Seminary studies.

Reflect on how your background will support your experience as a Cherry Hill Seminary student.

In what areas do you feel you will need additional support?

How do you feel Cherry Hill Seminary can meet your present needs?

How do you see your participation enhancing the Cherry Hill Seminary community?

Share any other information that you feel would be helpful to the Admissions Committee.

(We anticipate that this essay can be completed in 4-15 pages for most students.)

- ◆ Letters of professional recommendation, which must be sent directly from each reference to Cherry Hill Seminary, from professionals in your field, or your chosen field of study, who know you personally. Each letter should include the reference's contact information, how they know you, for how long, and their opinion of your interest, character, fitness and ability to complete a graduate-level seminary program.

Two letters For Degree Programs, Certificate of Professional Development, and Certificate of Continuing Education programs, two such letters are required.

OR

One letter For Certificate of Lifelong Learning program, one such letter is required.

PLUS

One letter For students in all programs, one letter of personal recommendation from someone who is currently acquainted with you and who is not a family member or a peer in coven or tribe. This letter should include the reference's contact information, how they know you, for how long, and their opinion of your interest, character, fitness and ability to complete a graduate-level seminary program. This letter may be from an elder or priest/ess who has overseen your training.

- ◆ Official Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or Miller Analogy Test (MAT) scores (if applicable - see below)
- ◆ Official Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or TOEFL Internet-Based Test (iBT) scores (if applicable - see below).

All transcripts, letters of reference, and other application materials must be e-mailed to CHS@cherryhillseminary.org, or mailed to Cherry Hill Seminary, P.O. Box 5405, Columbia, SC 29250-5405.

When an Application Package is complete, a representative from the Admissions Committee will contact the applicant to schedule a required personal interview, which may be conducted by telephone or Skype. The applicant's references will be verified. After the interview, the Admissions Committee will review the completed Application Package. Applicants will be informed of the committee's decision within 30 days after final review.

Notification of Student's Decision

An accepted student who has applied for a degree program must promptly notify the Seminary of the student's decision to matriculate, to postpone entrance, or to decline the opportunity. The student's decision must be received by Cherry Hill Seminary no later than the date indicated in the student's acceptance letter.

Transcript Policies

During the application process, students must arrange for official transcripts of all prior education above secondary school level to be sent directly from the previous educational institution to Cherry Hill Seminary.

As different schools have different policies for sending transcripts, we suggest you contact each school early in your application process. Any fees charged by the sending institution are your responsibility.

All transcripts from institutions outside the United States and Canada must be evaluated, which may require more time. All transcripts in languages other than English must be translated at the student's expense. Please contact the Cherry Hill Seminary office for details.

Official transcripts become Seminary property and cannot be returned. Transcripts received before your Application for Admission will be kept on file for one year and evaluated after your application is received. Transcripts issued directly to the student will not be accepted by Cherry Hill Seminary. Transcripts must be received from all institutions listed by the student as part of educational experience.

Non-Matriculated Students

Enrolling in a course without admission to a program, that is, auditing a Master's class or PCELL course for no credit, requires:

- ◆ Application form.
- ◆ One letter of recommendation from someone who is currently acquainted with you and who is not a family member or a peer in coven or tribe. This letter should include the reference's contact information, how they know you, for how long, and their opinion of your interest, character, fitness and ability to benefit from auditing a graduate level seminary class.
- ◆ Two approvals:

Approval by Instructor, including conditions, if any; *AND*
Approval by Academic Dean.

All Foundations courses are available to the general public without application for admission to Cherry Hill Seminary. Foundations students may simply register and pay the tuition, plus a processing fee of \$25 per academic term.

For all other classes and courses for credit or unit hours, application for admission to the Seminary is required.

Exceptional Situations

Cherry Hill Seminary may on occasion conditionally admit a non-baccalaureate student to a master's degree program. The Academic Dean, in consultation with the Admissions Committee, determines equivalency and other conditions. Such exceptions are strictly regulated by the state Commission on Higher Education and by accrediting bodies, and so are only considered for exceptional situations.

Cherry Hill Seminary may admit a limited number (no more than 5%) of applicants without undergraduate degrees), provided we have reasonable assurance that the applicant can complete a graduate-level program. Applicants for this exemption should have excellent scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or the Miller Analogy Test (MAT) and a minimum of 7-10 years of experience in their field. They must document their experience and the reasons they seek this exemption.

For students granted such exceptional admission, the Academic Dean's letter of exception will serve in place of the documentation of bachelor's degree required of all other students before master's degree graduation.

Applicants whose native language is not English, and who have not earned a degree from an

appropriately-accredited³ institution where English is the principal language of instruction, must receive a minimum score of 530 on the paper-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or 71 on the Internet-Based Test (iBT) or its equivalent.

Conditional Admission

If a student is offered conditional admission to a degree program, that student shall complete at least two terms in one academic year, including a minimum of nine credit hours. At that time, at the student's request, the Academic Dean and a committee of faculty will review the student's progress and assess the student's potential for successful completion of the degree program.

All work shall be completed at a 3.0 GPA or better, and any other conditions for admission must be met. At that time, the student may be approved for unconditional admission, in which case all successfully completed classes will count toward the degree.

The conditional admission may be extended by up to one calendar year, at which time the student must be either unconditionally admitted or dropped from the degree program. If the student is not admitted to the degree program, classes successfully completed may be credited toward a specific certificate program.

Postponement/Readmission

A student who has been accepted for admission to Cherry Hill Seminary may postpone entrance into the program for up to one year. An accepted student must promptly notify the Seminary of the student's decision to matriculate, to postpone entrance, or to decline the opportunity. The student's decision must be received by Cherry Hill Seminary no later than the date noted in the student's acceptance letter.

If a student fails to matriculate within one calendar year after acceptance, the student will not be permitted to register until a new application has been submitted and a new application fee paid.

Transfer Credit Policies

All applicants who seek credit from Cherry Hill Seminary for prior studies at another institution must provide certified transcripts of academic work from the institution where the work was completed. If you have relevant graduate level work you wish to have considered for advanced standing, you may submit the syllabi for those classes. All previous classes, from Cherry Hill Seminary or any other school, will be evaluated individually to match our specific degree criteria, seeking to balance academic excellence and Pagan ethos.

As is best practice for a degree-granting institution, all prior work must be evaluated during the admission process. A maximum allowable transfer credit (usually about 10% of the required credits) is available to a student.

At this time, no credit is awarded for life or work experience towards a Master's Degree.

The Academic Dean may authorize transfer credit for applicable post-baccalaureate classes completed at other institutions provided that the student has earned a grade of B or better (or equivalent). Under no circumstances will the student receive more than nine credit hours as transfer credit toward a

³ Accredited by an agency recognized for the purpose by the U.S. Secretary of Education

Master's Degree from Cherry Hill Seminary. No credits will be accepted for transfer toward a Cherry Hill Seminary degree if another institution has counted them toward an earned degree.

To apply for transfer credit, download the Credit Transfer Evaluation Form and submit the completed form per instructions on the form.

STUDENT RECORDS

Confidentiality Statement

Cherry Hill Seminary will disclose information from a student's education records only with the written consent of the student, except:

1. To school officials with legitimate educational interests;

A school official is a person employed by the Seminary in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position; a person or company with whom the Seminary has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
2. To officials of other institutions in which the student seeks or intends to enroll provided that the student has previously requested a release of his/her record;
3. To authorized representatives of the U.S. Department of Education, the Comptroller General of the United States, state educational authorities, organizations conducting studies for or on behalf of the Seminary, and accrediting organizations;
4. In connection with a student's application for, and receipt of, financial aid;
5. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
6. To parents of dependent students as defined by the Internal Revenue Code, Section 152;
7. To appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency; or
8. To the alleged victim of any crime of violence by a Cherry Hill Seminary student, instructor or staff member, the results of any related disciplinary proceedings conducted by the Seminary.
9. The Seminary may disclose the result of a disciplinary proceeding to a parent or guardian so long as the student is under the age of 21 at the time of the incident and the incident involved violation of any federal, state, or local law.
10. To students currently registered in a particular class, the names and email addresses of others on the roster may be disclosed in order to facilitate class discussion.

In addition to our policy about the Seminary's disclosure of student information, the Cherry Hill Seminary Student Conduct policy includes the following statement about confidentiality:

Student e-mails, addresses, and such personal information as students may discover about each other may be used only for purposes of networking within the seminary. Use for solicitation, fund-raising, advertising, promotion, or any type of commercial purpose is specifically prohibited without written permission from the Seminary. Violation of this policy may be grounds for dismissal from Cherry Hill Seminary.

How Records Are Stored

Student records are stored in the main office of Cherry Hill Seminary in Columbia, S.C. Records are maintained electronically, as well as in hard copy. Both on-site and off-site electronic backups are maintained. The Executive Director and the Dean of Students are the only staff members with access to confidential records.

Transcript Requests

Upon graduation, each student will receive one complimentary Student Copy of his or her official transcript. Additional transcripts of a student's completed work at Cherry Hill Seminary will be provided upon written request and payment of a \$10 fee. Transcripts and diplomas will be held if the student's financial account with Cherry Hill Seminary has not been paid in full.

Cherry Hill Seminary complies with all requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Title 34 Part 99 of the Code of Federal Regulations) (FERPA).

Questions concerning this law and Cherry Hill Seminary's procedures concerning release of academic information may be directed to the Cherry Hill Seminary office at CHS@cherryhillseminary.org or 1-888-503-4131.

Questions concerning FERPA may be directed to 202-260-3887 (voice), TDD call the Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339, or to the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

ENROLLMENT POLICIES

The Seminary reserves the right to make changes in curricula, degree requirements, course offerings, and all academic regulations, at any time when, in the judgment of the Executive Director or the Board of Directors, such changes are for the best interest of the students.

The Seminary assumes that students, through the act of registration, accept all published academic regulations appearing in this catalog, class schedule or in any other official announcement.

Unforeseen circumstances may interfere with the scheduling of any particular course or degree offering. Each academic department concerned works closely with students facing such problems in an effort to resolve them. Classes may be cancelled for such circumstances as insufficient enrollment.

Registering for a Class

Students are responsible for registering for each class or course during the open registration period

before the term in which it is offered.

Master's-level classes are open to all matriculated students on a first-come, first-served basis, but students admitted to a Master's degree program will be permitted to register for Master's classes three days earlier than other students. PCELL students successfully completing a Master's class will earn Unit Hours instead of Credit Hours and will receive a grade of Pass annotated with the letter grade they would have received if they were receiving Master's credit

PCELL classes are open to all matriculated students on a first-come, first-served basis.

Foundations classes are open to the general public without Application for Admission, and to all matriculated students, on a first-come, first-served basis.

All listed course prerequisites must be met before registering for a class with prerequisites, unless a waiver is granted by the instructor. Waivers must be copied to the Cherry Hill Seminary office at CHS@cherryhillseminary.org.

Auditing a Course

Non-matriculating students and auditors may be permitted to take individual classes with approval from the Instructor and the Academic Dean (see Admissions section for details).

Adding, Dropping, or Withdrawing from a Class

Students may add or drop a class at any time before midnight of the seventh calendar day of the term. Students adding a class may do so from the main Registration page of the website. Students dropping a class may do so by e-mailing CHS@cherryhillseminary.org. No entry for a dropped class will appear in the student's transcript.

Students dropping a course by e-mailing CHS@cherryhillseminary.org by midnight of the seventh calendar day of the term will receive a refund of 85% less the merchant's fee charged by any processing agent. No refunds will be given after that date.

Students may withdraw from a course during the first 30 days of the term by e-mailing both the Instructor and CHS@cherryhillseminary.org, receiving a grade of W, which has no effect on the student's grade-point average.

After the 30th day of the term, withdrawing students will receive a grade of W annotated with the grade they have earned up to the point where their participation ended. The student's grade point average will be unaffected.

MATRICULATION POLICIES

Continuous Enrollment Policy

Students who are matriculated must enroll in and successfully complete a minimum of six credit hours per Academic year.

Cohort Learning

All matriculated students in a master's degree program will participate in Cohort Learning, an online

discussion community. Students must participate at least monthly. There is no charge for Cohort Learning.

Leave of Absence from a Certificate or Degree Program

If a student desires to take a leave of absence from a Degree or Certificate program, the student must notify the Dean of Students and the Academic Dean in writing, including the reason for the leave of absence and an anticipated return date. Return date may not be more than one Academic year later. If the Leave of Absence is approved by the Academic Dean, and the student desires to extend the Leave of Absence, the same procedure must be followed. Under no circumstances shall a Leave of Absence be granted for more than two academic years.

Medical Leave of Absence from a Certificate or Degree Program

If a student desires to take a Medical Leave of Absence from a Degree or Certificate program, the student must notify the Dean of Students and the Academic Dean in writing, including medical substantiation and a medically approved anticipated return date. Upon receipt, the Academic Dean may grant a medical leave of absence for up to one year.

If the student is medically prohibited from returning by the anticipated date, the same procedure must be followed. Under most circumstances Medical Leave of Absence shall not be granted for more than two Academic years.

Withdrawal from a Certificate or Degree Program

If a student desires to withdraw from a Degree or Certificate program, the student must notify the Dean of Students and the Academic Dean in writing. The student will be encouraged to participate in an exit interview.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS-COMPETENCIES

At a minimum, all students must meet these technical requirements:

- ◆ Have proficiency and access to an up-to-date computer including Skype with voice-to-voice capability and reliable Internet access, preferably high-speed.
- ◆ For most students the computer requirement can be met with Windows XP/Vista, Macintosh, or Linux computer that is capable of accessing the Internet with one of the standard web browsers. For most students the Skype requirement can be met with a free account at www.skype.com and a working sound card and microphone plus broadband Internet access.
- ◆ Be able to attend and participate in online chat class sessions; and
- ◆ Be able to read web pages, text documents, and other materials that may be posted by an instructor or linked from other websites.

Many courses will have audio or video components that require you to have a working sound card and microphone, plus broadband Internet access. Many courses may require that you upload or download documents with a .doc file extension. Students are responsible for their own software.

ACCESSIBILITY

Cherry Hill Seminary intends our classes to be accessible to students with various abilities and disabilities. As assistive technology is a rapidly changing field, we make no claim to have a “perfectly

accessible” website at any time. We ask our students, faculty and staff to please make us aware of any accessibility problem, challenge, or issue in any of our web pages or classrooms. We gratefully accept suggestions for ways to make our classes more easily accessible to all.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition rates as of August 2009	Master’s classes	\$125 per credit hour
	PCELL classes	\$ 65 per unit hour
	Foundations classes	\$ 75, plus \$25 registration fee per term

Costs are subject to change at any time, but students will be charged only for costs listed online at the time of registration for each term. Important note: Legacy students (those who are already admitted as of Spring 2009 and have been enrolled in a course since June 1, 2008) will receive a special rate, in appreciation for their loyalty to Cherry Hill Seminary in its formative years.

Students may drop courses with no academic penalty if a request is made in writing (by email) by midnight of the Drop/Add date listed in the online calendar. Tuition for courses dropped by the Drop/Add date will be refunded at 85%, less the merchant's fee charged by any processing agent. Refunds may be applied to the next term's tuition, if requested. Courses dropped after the Drop/Add date will not be refunded.

Tuition and fees must be paid in full before certificates and/or degrees are conferred or transcripts provided.

GRADING POLICIES

Grades are submitted in accordance with the academic calendar and students are notified by Cherry Hill Seminary via e-mail. If you have not received your grade within 30 days, please e-mail CHS@cherryhillseminary.org promptly. On occasion, students and teachers may have differing opinions about grades. If you wish to request a grade review, a form is available online under “For Students.”

Grading and Quality Points

All graduate classes require 45 hours of effort per credit in a semester. Therefore, a 3-credit class will require at least 135 hours of effort per semester. All degrees and certificates require a 3.0 cumulative GPA for graduation.

Cherry Hill Seminary 4.5 Quality Point Grading Scale		
A+	4.5	(98-100%) <i>only available for 6000+ level classes</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently demonstrates extraordinary work and practice; • Greatly exceeds expectations in academic, professional and participation standards; • Original ideas, research, practice, synthesis and contributions; • Insightful academically, professionally and personally; • Incisive logic, presentation and methodology; • Incisive analysis, contrast, comparison and evaluation; and • Creative initiation, development and use of content. 	

A	4.0 (95-100%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently demonstrates excellent work and practice; • Exceeds expectations in academic, participation and/or appropriate standards; • Original ideas, research and and synthesis; • Insightful academically, personally and/or professionally; • Incisive logic, presentation and methodology; • Incisive analysis, contrast, comparison and evaluation; and • Creative development and use of content.
A-	3.75 (90 - 94%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly demonstrates strong work and practice; • Exceeds expectations in academic, participation and/or appropriate standards; • Original research and synthesis; • Insightful academically, personally and/or professionally; • Appropriate logic, presentation and methodology; • Incisive analysis, contrast, comparison and evaluation; and • Creative use of content.
B+	3.50 (87-89%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently demonstrates appropriate work and practice; • Meets expectations in academic, participation and/or appropriate standards; • Competent and reflective research; • Thoughtful academically, personally and/or professionally; • Appropriate logic, presentation and methodology; • Appropriate analysis, contrast, comparison and evaluation; and • Competent and reflective use of content.
B	3.0 (83-86%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently demonstrates appropriate work and practice; • Meets expectations in academic, participation and/or appropriate standards; • Competent research; • Thoughtful academically, personally and/or professionally; • Appropriate logic, presentation and methodology; • Appropriate analysis, contrast, comparison and evaluation; and • Competent use of content.
B-	2.50 (80-82%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly demonstrates appropriate work and practice; • Meets most expectations in academic, participation and/or appropriate standards; • Adequate research; • Adequately thoughtful academically, personally and/or professionally; • Adequate logic, presentation and methodology; • Adequate analysis, contrast, comparison and evaluation; and • Regular competent use of content.

C+	1.0 (77-79%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates inconsistent quality in work and practice; • Meets academic, participation and/or appropriate standards; • Incomplete/inadequate research; • Functional academically, personally and/or professionally; • Adequate logic, presentation and methodology; • Adequate analysis, contrast, comparison and evaluation; and • Competent use of content.
C	0.5 (73-76%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates inconsistent quality in work and practice; • Inconsistently meets academic, participation and/or appropriate standards; • Incomplete/inadequate research; • Inconsistently functional academically, personally and/or professionally; • Adequate logic, presentation and methodology; • Adequate analysis, contrast, comparison and evaluation; and • Competent use of content.
N	0.0	Not acceptable
T		Audit, no credit
U		Grade not reported
W		Withdrawn, no grade
X		Extraordinary circumstance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No credit, no effect on GPA. (Student must request this grade, which requires the approval of the Instructor and the Academic Dean.)
I		Incomplete
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An “Incomplete” is issued by the instructor with the approval of the Academic Dean. A grade of Incomplete must be resolved within 30 days of the last day of class or it will convert to N. If you have an Incomplete, it is your responsibility to resolve the Incomplete and confirm with CHS@cherryhillseminary.org that your final grade has been received from the instructor.

Audited classes are not graded, and will be reported as “audit” on transcripts if the instructor indicates that the student fulfilled the auditing requirements. Grade-Point Average (GPA) is determined by multiplying each individual class’s grade points by the credit hours earned, adding all totals together, then dividing the total grade points by the total credit hours.

Honors are available for Master’s degrees at the following levels:

4.00 +	Summa Cum Laude
3.75-3.99	Magna Cum Laude
3.50-3.74	Cum Laude

GRADUATION

Upon completion of the academic requirements and approval by the Board of Directors, the student's participation in a graduation ceremony will be scheduled. Please note that no diploma or certificate will be issued while the student has an unpaid financial obligation to Cherry Hill Seminary.

Under no circumstances will a student admitted as holding a Bachelor's degree be awarded a Master's degree or a Certificate of Professional Development unless Cherry Hill Seminary has received appropriate documentation of the student's Bachelor's degree.

At commencement of senior year, contact the office for instructions to apply for graduation.

A NOTE ABOUT ORDINATION AND LICENSURE

Please note that Cherry Hill Seminary does not ordain graduates, but completion of Cherry Hill Seminary studies may qualify you to seek ordination by the religious group of your choice. Similarly, study at Cherry Hill Seminary will not, by itself, qualify you for licensure but may enhance your secular education in those disciplines.

ABOUT DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT: OUR POLICY

Cherry Hill Seminary prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, marital status, national origin, mental or physical disability, political belief or affiliation, veteran status, or sexual orientation and any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under state or federal law in any aspect of the access to, admission, or treatment of students in its programs and activities, or in employment and application for employment. Furthermore, Seminary policy includes prohibitions of harassment of students and employees, i.e., racial harassment, sexual harassment, and retaliation for filing complaints of discrimination.

GRIEVANCES

Cherry Hill Seminary recognizes that from time to time conflict arises in any organization. People sometimes find it necessary to clear up miscommunication, to speak truth to power, to recognize injustice and seek redress, to negotiate boundaries and settle disputes.

As a matter of policy, the members of the Cherry Hill Seminary community, whether students, faculty, administration, or governors, are encouraged to begin by speaking directly to the person involved. We recommend beginning the conversation in an informal way, naming what is true for you without labelling or judging the other person. Perhaps that will be by face-to-face or voice-to-voice communication, or perhaps by e-mail; but let it begin with a conversation limited to those directly involved.

If this first step of speaking directly is not successful in reaching resolution, or if the situation requires third-party intervention, then please take the second step of speaking with the next person up the hierarchical ladder.

For example, if a student has a dispute with another student, the second step would be to talk to an instructor whose class both of you are taking. If a student has a dispute with a faculty member, the second step would be to speak with the department head. If a third step is needed, the person to contact would be the appropriate dean.

If a faculty member has a dispute with a student, the second step would be to contact the Dean of Students. For a dispute between faculty members the second step might be their department chair if they're in the same department, or the Academic Dean if not.

Advocates can be appointed to assist and represent the parties to a dispute if needed.

Senior administrators (i.e. the Deans and Executive Director) will act in concert and may impose a settlement if resolution cannot be worked out among the parties. Any appeal of an administrative decision will require a called committee composed of faculty and board members as appropriate.

COMMUNICATION POLICY

Cherry Hill Seminary's primary method of communicating with students, as well as providing forms, paperwork, and coursework, is electronic. Students are responsible for providing their e-mail addresses to Cherry Hill Seminary during the application process and for notifying the seminary and each instructor of their current classes of any change of e-mail address and other contact information. Students are responsible for confirming, prior to the start of each term, that the computer they will be using is able to access each part of the Cherry Hill Seminary website including all parts of the classroom Moodle and/or Skype as required by each class.

STUDENT CONDUCT POLICIES

Cherry Hill Seminary expects each student to take responsibility for knowing the information contained in this handbook and the Cherry Hill Seminary website www.cherryhillseminary.org, including all policies that affect your program of study and participation in seminary activities.

You are expected to monitor your own progress toward the degree or certificate of your choice. In particular, you are responsible for keeping your own records, including all records of official grades earned, copies of student papers and posted homework regardless of format, and all official communications to or from seminary administration. You are responsible for keeping copies of the syllabi of all courses and classes.

Student e-mails, addresses, and such personal information as students may discover about each other may be used only for purposes of networking within the seminary. Use for solicitation, fund-raising, advertising, promotion, or any type of commercial purpose is specifically prohibited without written permission from the Seminary. Violation of this policy may be grounds for dismissal from Cherry Hill Seminary.

Other grounds for dismissal from Cherry Hill Seminary may include, but are not limited to, such actions as:

- ◆ Misrepresenting yourself, your education, your experience, or your connection with Cherry Hill Seminary.
- ◆ Misrepresenting the quality or quantity of your studies.
- ◆ Plagiarism or Academic Dishonesty

Cherry Hill Seminary maintains a zero-tolerance policy regarding plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Sanctions for violation of this policy will include a rehabilitative, reparative and punitive aspect depending on the nature and severity of the violation, the nature and severity of the harm caused, and the interest in encouraging and

promoting quality and reliable scholarship. Specific sanctions may include expulsion from Cherry Hill Seminary, probationary regulation of conditionally continued enrollment and/or reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities. Cherry Hill Seminary will assess reported violations and determine sanctions in accordance with its Mission Statement as set forth below.

Academic Honesty

Cherry Hill Seminary, as an institution, affirms the following values, which inform our policies on academic and personal integrity.

◆ Honors the Sacredness of the Earth

As we seek to be in harmony with our world, so we recognize our dependence on one another. When we acknowledge our debt we as part of the whole celebrate our own sacredness. Thus, when we learn from others, or wish to honor their offerings, we gratefully refer to their contribution. It is the policy of Cherry Hill Seminary that we be scrupulously careful to cite as fully and informatively as possible, in professional and appropriate ways, the sources of our own offerings.

Where we cannot cite a specific contribution, we document what material is available to us. For example, if we were inspired during a private ritual, we include as much information as possible, including place, date, time and other pertinent information.

◆ Values Scholarship

We value the work, effort, and reflection that are the core of scholarship. It is the policy of Cherry Hill Seminary that we be extraordinarily thoughtful in discerning the presence of the scholarship of others, and to give credit where credit is due.

We use the format approved by the academic disciplines to cite those sources, such as the American Psychological Association or Strunk's guidelines for annotation and citation. We obtain written permission to use materials wherever appropriate.

◆ Respects Diversity

We delight in the many forms that the work of others can take. We delight in our own creativity. It is the policy of Cherry Hill Seminary that we be deliberate in striving for the expression of individuality and uniqueness, and in openly celebrating that which we find in others.

We find that our inspiration and formation often come from experience, rather than direct scholarship. For example, in witnessing a dramatic performance, we may gain insight that we wish to express. Thus, we would cite the performance (with credits as approved by the academic disciplines), date, time and place, and annotate our expression describing as appropriately as possible the original intent of the author(s) and our particular opinion or insight.

◆ Encourages Individual and Spiritual Autonomy

We are deeply committed to the inseparability of rights and responsibilities, of authority and accountability, of leadership and self-determination. It is the policy of Cherry Hill Seminary that we be acutely aware that balancing those things often requires an intentional and sustained effort.

In this age of instant global communication, blogs and social networking Internet sites, it is often difficult to discern the origin of thoughts or material. We are intentional and deliberate in discerning sources of material, and use research in a scholarly fashion to determine and credit those sources as appropriate.

◆ **Values Community**

We find inspiration and affirmation in community, and strive to enrich our own and other's experiences. It is the policy of Cherry Hill Seminary that we affirm our own efforts, using the best practices of the communities with whom we engage.

We identify those communities, and follow their own citation and annotation customs, striving for respect and accuracy before ease and consistency. For example, if a community cites a verbal source or authentication, we include that in our citations and notations, including information as will help the reader understand the impact of such sourcing.

◆ **Promotes Service**

We acknowledge that we grow and develop the skills of Pagan ministry within the context of service to others. It is the policy of Cherry Hill Seminary that collaboration with others requires both respect for individual privacy and informed consent regarding that collaboration.

We identify our methodology, epistemology and/or other relevant topics, and where appropriate, obtain signed forms that permit the use of materials. Because of the unique circumstances faced by Pagans who may experience discrimination when known publicly as Pagans, citation of individuals may be designated by a pseudonym.

Keys to Your Success at Cherry Hill Seminary

A Cherry Hill Seminary Student:

Honors personal responsibility, and values continuing growth in all areas.

- ◆ Enjoys the right to use time, energy and resources to give appropriate priority to Seminary work as well as other areas of life; and
- ◆ Bears the responsibility to realistically assess the extent to which commitment to the expectations of a graduate level education interacts with other responsibilities

Honors respectful, fruitful inquiry, and values the willingness to learn.

- ◆ Enjoys the right to encourage their own and others' curiosity and learning as guided by scholarship, experience, intuition and practical application
- ◆ Bears the responsibility to listen carefully and fully, ask appropriate questions, and thoughtfully consider the results

Honors a balance between authority and accountability, and values the dialogue between them.

- ◆ Enjoys the right to receive clear and appropriate directions and expectations, including regular advisement and feedback, and to exercise compassionate self-discipline in completing tasks in a timely manner
- ◆ Bears the responsibility to keep current on discussions, topics and other expectations within

the Seminary environment, to bring forward any questions or concerns that may address that balance, and to participate in the distance learning experience

Honors spiritual and religious freedom, and values their expression.

- ◆ Enjoys the right to apply spiritual principles and practices to any and all aspects of life
- ◆ Bears the responsibility to nurture personal and community practices appropriate to their context

Honors service and values the preparation for and practice of Pagan ministry.

- ◆ Enjoys the right to consider preferences, talents and interests in choosing or developing a vocation or profession
- ◆ Bears the responsibility to seek appropriate opportunities to enhance preparation for ministry and to keep all pertinent records, including syllabi, transcripts, grades, class and course work, reports from or about field placements, and progress toward degree or certificate

A FINAL WORD

Cherry Hill Seminary strives to offer the best Pagan education possible, with a caring professionalism. As we make the transition to our new programs, no doubt we will encounter issues not yet addressed, discover editing mistakes, and realize that some procedures need additional changes in order to function smoothly. We appreciate your understanding during this time of change, and always welcome your feedback and suggestions. We will do our best to ensure that your experience with CHERRY HILL SEMINARY deepens your Pagan service in a positive, meaningful way.