

# **Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary and Bible School**

## **Assessment Plan**

**May 2017**

Revised and adopted by the BOT on May 19, 2017

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## **Assessment Plan**

### **I. Guiding Principles:**

1. The institution must have developed and implemented a comprehensive assessment plan that includes all aspects of the institution.
2. The assessment results and subsequent new goals must be used to implement changes.

### **II. History of AFLC Schools**

The founding of the Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary (AFLTS), a graduate program of theology, grew out of the need for biblically trained pastors and Christian workers in the tradition of orthodox Lutheran pietism.

After prayerful consideration and planning, the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations (AFLC) proceeded to establish a theological seminary committed to historic Lutheran theology. The seminary opened its doors to the first class of ten students in September, 1964. More than 325 men have studied at the seminary, most of whom have served or continue to serve as parish pastors in the United States while others have served or continue to serve as missionaries, teachers and evangelists in many countries of the world. Dr. James Molstre will begin serving as the Dean of the seminary on June 1, 2017.

The Association Free Lutheran Bible School was established in 1966 by the Annual Conference of the AFLC. The Bible school was begun in order to meet the need for a conservative Lutheran Bible school where students, irrespective of race and color, could be given a firm foundation in the Christian faith. The first class was enrolled in September of 1966 with thirteen students. More than 2700 men and women have studied at AFLBS, representing the United States and many countries throughout the world. Rev. Joel Rolf is the Dean of the Bible School, having served in this position since 2006.

Rev. Wade Mobley serves as president of the Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary and Bible School (also know as the AFLC Schools) with Dr. Mark Olson serving as the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

A seven-person Board of Trustees (nominated by the Annual Conference of the AFLC and elected by the AFLC Schools Cooperation at its annual meeting) oversees the work of AFLC schools. By design, three pastors and four lay people make up its constituency. Meeting about eight times a year, they set policy and provide direction to the business of the schools in consultation with the President, the Vice President of

Academic Affairs, the Deans, the Vice President of Operations, and the Director of Recruitment and Communications.

The AFLC Schools are located on a beautiful 25-acre campus on the shores of Medicine Lake in a northwestern suburb of Minneapolis. Also located on the site is the headquarters of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. The original 21 acre property was purchased from the Hauge Lutheran Innermission Federation in 1964. An additional four acres have been acquired since that time. Among the buildings housing AFLC schools are the seminary Administration and Classroom Building including the Hans Nielsen Hauge Memorial Chapel. Heritage Hall contains the Bible school administrative offices, classrooms, library, campus bookstore and the cafeteria. There are three four-unit townhouse clusters on the campus for seminary students and their families and two dormitories for Bible school students. The maintenance garage completes the buildings serving the seminary and Bible school. All of the buildings are owned by the AFLC Schools with no outstanding debt.

### **III. Mission Statement of AFLC Schools**

The mission of the Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary and Bible School is to establish students in the eternal and inerrant Word of God for a life of faith in Jesus Christ and faithful service in His Kingdom.

### **IV. Institutional Objectives**

Our objectives are that graduates of the Free Lutheran Theological Seminary and Bible School will:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of Scripture, subscribing to its inspiration, infallibility, and inerrancy without reservation, confessing its authority and demonstrating the ability to accurately interpret it.
- Grow in spiritual maturity informed by the Law and motivated and empowered by the Gospel.
- Understand the function of the local congregation and the place of the individual believer in its fellowship and ministry as guided by the AFLC Fundamental Principles.
- Participate in making disciples of all nations, especially through involvement in the local congregation.

### **V. Program Outcomes**

#### **AFLTS Program Outcomes**

Graduates of the Free Lutheran Theological Seminary, an orthodox school of theology in the tradition of Lutheran pietism for the training of servant pastors, will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of Scripture and its doctrines, subscribing to its inspiration, infallibility, and inerrancy without reservation, confessing its authority and demonstrating, especially through exegetical and systematic studies, the ability to accurately interpret it.
2. Explain the biblical, Lutheran perspective of the Means of Grace (Word, Baptism, and Lord's Supper) as the instruments through which God saves and sanctifies by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
3. Demonstrate growth in spiritual maturity that is informed by the Law and motivated and empowered by the Gospel.
4. Demonstrate the ability to properly distinguish between the Law and the Gospel in teaching, preaching, and practice.
5. Understand and embrace the role of the servant pastor and the New Testament model of the congregation and its commitment to scriptural evangelism, discipleship, worship, education, and stewardship, as guided by the AFLC Fundamental Principles.
6. Describe, evaluate, and communicate God's work in the past through His Church, and exhibit a willingness to participate in making disciples today, especially through involvement in the local congregation.

### **AFLBS Program Outcomes**

Graduates of the Free Lutheran Bible School, through the study of God's eternal and inerrant Word, will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of Scripture, subscribing to its inspiration, infallibility, and inerrancy without reservation, confessing its authority and demonstrating the ability to accurately interpret it.
2. Communicate the assurance of personal salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ by explaining the basis for their faith and be able to explain the Lutheran perspective of the Means of Grace.
3. Demonstrate growth in spiritual maturity that is informed by the Law and motivated and empowered by the Gospel.
4. Understand and embrace the New Testament model of the congregation and its commitment to scriptural evangelism, discipleship, worship, education, servant leadership, and stewardship, as guided by the AFLC Fundamental Principles.
5. Describe and communicate God's work in the past through His Church, and exhibit a willingness to participate in making disciples today, especially through involvement in the local congregation.

### **VI. Explanation of the Assessment Process**

The Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary and Bible School identify the following areas of the institution that are systematically assessed: mission statement, foundational documents, Board of Trustees, president, administration, staff, academic

programs, student learning, program objectives/student learning outcomes, faculty, student development/services, financial health of the institution, alumni, library, and technology. The Assessment Calendar identifies the months in which selected assessment are conducted. A variety of assessment methods are used: surveys, minutes, external financial audit data, state and accreditation agency reports, student course evaluations, grade distribution analyses, and administration/faculty/staff performance evaluations.. The data is collected, reported, and analyzed. Recommendations are formulated as well as actions plans and strategies developed in order to accomplish the recommendations. The senior leadership team of the institution meets weekly and regularly considers current assessment data in order to guide their decision making process and to bring significant recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

**VII. Areas of Assessment**

The following areas of the institutions are assessed as follows:

**A. Mission statement**

Reviewed by the Board of Trustees during their annual review and validated by minutes.

**B. Foundational documents**

- 1. Biblical Foundation Statement**
- 2. Philosophy of Education Statement**

All foundational documents are reviewed by the Board of Trustees during their annual review and validated by minutes.

**C. Institutional Objectives**

**D. Program Outcomes**

**E. Governing Board**

- 1. Board Self-Evaluation and Survey**

**F. Presidential and Leadership Team Evaluations**

**G. Staff Evaluation**

- 1. Staff review and evaluations**
- 2. Staff Satisfaction Inventory**

**H. Academic Programs – Program Review Process**

The degree and diploma programs of the seminary and Bible school are reviewed every three years according to the following schedule:

<u>Degree/Diploma Programs</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
AFLTS (MDiv/GTh)		X			X	
AFLBS (Diploma)			X			X

## **I. Student Learning**

### **1. Bible Content Examination**

Incoming students are required to take an entrance and exit exam in Bible content proficiency.

### **2. Written Evaluation of Seminary Program Outcomes**

Seminary students are to write a reflective paper regarding how well each of the program outcomes are addressed and met through their training.

### **3. Internship Program**

Seminary students are assigned a twelve-month internship in a cooperating congregation under the direct supervision of an experienced pastoral supervisor. In addition to reading assignments and reporting to a faculty advisor, the student completes a major paper on an approved topic relating to the internship experience which is then read to the student body and faculty at the final internship workshop.

### **4. Sample Syllabi**

### **5. Student Retention and Graduation rate**

## **J. Program objectives/student learning outcomes**

Data is collected from the curriculum by department, senior research papers, course exams, exit Bible Proficiency Exam, and internships. One of the major indicators of student learning is the course syllabus that indicates how course objectives are met.

## **K. Faculty**

### **1. Instructional Staff Listing (ISL)**

Faculty credentials for teaching assignment

### **2. Student Professor and Course Evaluations**

### **3. Faculty Annual Review**

### **4. Faculty Satisfaction Survey**

## **L. Student Development or Services**

### **1. New Student Orientation Survey**

- 2. Student Services Survey**
- 3. Spiritual Life Survey**
- 4. Athletics and Co-Curricular Survey**

**M. Finances (demonstrate financial healthy institutions and financial stability)**

**1. External financial audit**

The external audit is reviewed by the Vice President of Operations, senior leadership, and the Board of Trustees. The audit data will reveal the overall financial position of the Schools with the goal of a strong balance sheet, low debt burden, and the vast majority of the costs having a direct relationship to the core programs. This will also show the level of commitment to sufficiently providing for the learning needs of our students.

**N. Alumni Survey**

**O. Library**

**1. Student Services Survey**

**2. Library Director's Report**

Library materials currently catalogued, patron use, patron use of electronic resources, usage stats for custom search engine for journal articles, inter-library loans, library survey results, reference transactions per week, gate count, library online software, professional development, library shelving and space, and acquisitions.

**3. Collection Development Analysis**

**P. Physical Plant and Health and Safety**

**Q. Technology**

**R. Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives**

**S. Institutional Reach**

Quarterly reports on the website and social media reach and effectiveness.

**VIII. Assessment Calendar**

The following schedule includes many of the most significant assessments occurring on an annual basis:

<b>Foundational Assessments</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>
Entering Student Survey (ESS)	X		
Faculty Satisfaction Survey (FSS)		X	
Student Experience Survey (SES)		X	
Graduating Student Survey (GSS)		X	
Alumni Survey (AS)			X
Staff Satisfaction Survey (SSS)			X
<b>Academic Assessments</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>
Classroom evaluations of faculty	X	X	
Professor and Course Evaluations (end of each course)	X	X	
Program Review (typically each program is reviewed on a three year cycle)	X	X	X
Course Review (linked to the program being reviewed)	X	X	
Bible Knowledge Exam	X (entering)	X (graduating)	
Internship Project (AFLTS Program)		X	
Ministry Internship (AFLTS Program)	X	X	X
Faculty Oversight Internship Visit	X		
Summer Team Evaluations			X
<b>Library Assessments</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>
Library Annual Report			X
<b>Business/Administrative Assessments</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>
Evaluation of Institutional Mission & Purpose		X	
Staff & Administrator Supervisor Evaluation	X	X	
Board Member Self-Evaluation		X	
Evaluation of the President		X	
Strategic Planning			
Review/Analysis			X
Planning			X
Budgeting		X	
Implementation	X	X	X
TRACS Annual Report	X		
<b>Institutional Reach Assessments</b>	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>
Website and Social Media Engagement Analytics	X	X	X

## **IX. Annual Assessment Report**

The data is collected per assessment calendar and is summarized. The data is then analyzed and recommendations are made based on the data. A strategy or strategies to address a recommendation is (are) identified and assigned to an individual or group. Progress on accomplishment of the strategy or strategies and completion of the recommendation are tracked and documented. Changes based on the assessment are identified. An annual assessment report is prepared in August of each year.

## **X. Explanation of Using Data to Develop Strategic Plan:**

The data is collected during the year as per schedule and the Assessment Report is prepared during the summer. The data and recommendations are reported to the senior leadership, faculty, staff and the Board of Trustees. A plan of action to address each recommendation is developed and duties are assigned to the appropriate personnel. Action plans and timelines are implemented. The senior leadership team and the Institutional Effectiveness Director oversees the implementation of the action plans. The data from the Assessment Report is used during the fall for the development and revision of the Strategic Plan, which is approved by the Board of Trustees in January.