
The Pillar Seminary

for Contextual Leadership

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About The Pillar Seminary

History of The Pillar Seminary

Dr. Eric Smith founded The Pillar Seminary to address several persistent and wide-ranging problems in the local church, its leadership, and how its leaders are trained. Prior to the launch of the seminary, and during his time in ministry, he saw the local church suffering and losing people because of fundamental inability to make disciples. He saw that the leadership of the church was also suffering. On average, they were leaving ministry after four years of struggling to address needs they were ill-equipped to handle.

Within the academic wing of the church, which is traditionally responsible for equipping church leaders, he observed systemic problems tied to these sufferings and failures. First, seminary training is out of date, having widely been built for an early or mid-twentieth-century world that no longer exists. Second, the curriculum reflects a higher concern for right answers than right abilities, which is not helpful for practitioners. Third, seminary training comes at a high financial cost, saddling those who serve the church with debt.

So, in December of 2013, after consultation with several local ministries, Eric decided the time was right and launched The Pillar Seminary, built from the ground-up to address these problems. In March of 2014, Eric invited Dr. Scott Booth to join the project, with whom he had been discussing these issues for many years. The two worked together to conduct interviews with ministry leaders across the country, without regard for denomination, age, or gender, to design an ecumenical curriculum that would serve the core needs of the church. In the Fall of 2014, The Pillar Seminary launched its first semester with twelve students and two faculty.

After the first semester, Eric and Scott were not satisfied with the results in terms of efficiency, scalability, and diversity. To address efficiency, the educational approach was changed to a flipped classroom, wherein lectures are pre-recorded, and class time focuses on allowing students to practice desired skills with professors. To address scalability and diversity, they began offering a fully interactive online platform. This allowed students from across the world to work together on class projects under the shared interest of being better at reading the Bible and leading their ministries.

In the Fall of 2015, student enrollment had doubled, and Dr. Donnell J. Moore joined the team. He began to rework the Leadership Program in the direction of the practicality of a DMin for students at the MDiv level who are already in ministry. At the same time, The Pillar also brought on its first full-time administrative staff.

In June of 2017, The Pillar Seminary celebrated its first graduates. In the Fall of 2017, student enrollment continued to rise, and included the first international student. Dr. Daniel Lowery came on full-time to take over the New Testament side of the Bible Program, and the Institutional Development department was created. In the Fall of 2018, the student body grew to more than sixty students from across the United States, Thailand, and the United Kingdom, men and women representing many denominational traditions.

God is raising up people with a passion for the local church and a vision for what she should be: A disciple making powerhouse. Professors and staff have joined the team, committed to pouring themselves out to the students. Joining us in the mission are a board of wise men and women who provide godly counsel and oversight, students determined to represent God and build His kingdom in their local ministries, and an army of donors committed to growing the kingdom by growing its leaders.

Mission

The mission of The Pillar Seminary is to strengthen the local church by equipping and empowering its leaders.

Our unique Bible and Leadership training program profoundly deepens our students' understanding of Scripture, enriches and renews their relationship with God, increases their effectiveness in ministry, and encourages a sustainable and healthy home and work life.

Core Commitments

- The Pillar Seminary is founded upon the central and authoritative role of Scripture in the life of the Church.
- We are committed to growing, training, and equipping leaders to make disciples in their ministry context.
- We believe it is our responsibility to deliver effective training as efficiently as possible.
- We believe social, cultural, and ecumenical diversity in the classroom is both a matter of justice and a necessary component of effective and efficient training.
- We hold that academic rigor and intellectual integrity is a great freedom, privilege, and responsibility of the church.
- We believe students should not go into debt to train for ministry.

Full-time Faculty

Daniel Lowery (President, Associate Professor of New Testament)
dlowery@pillarseminary.org

Dr. Daniel Lowery joined The Pillar Seminary faculty in the Spring of 2016. He also pastors a church in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex in Texas and is married with two young children. He has been involved in vocational ministry of various capacities for over 20 years. His passion is to serve the Church, and the best way he knows how to do that in addition to pastoring is to be involved at Pillar, innovatively training church leaders to be more competent and compassionate exegetes and teachers of Scripture.

He has authored articles for Lexham Bible Dictionary and Lexham Theological Wordbook (Lexham Press) and a monograph in the Bulletin for Biblical Research Supplement Series (Eisenbrauns). His current project is co-authoring a forthcoming volume in the Evangelical Exegetical Commentary Series (Lexham Press).

Donnell J. Moore (Professor of Biblical Contextual Leadership, Academic Dean)
dmoore@pillarseminary.org

Dr. Donnell J. Moore began as Director of Contextual Biblical Leadership in the Fall of 2015. He designed the cohort-based model at The Pillar Seminary based on his many years in ministry and teaching experience at the doctoral level. His desire is to see students lead the church based on Scripture alone.

He received his DMin from United Theological Seminary. He specializes in church leadership and congregational development, with special interest in training and equipping pastoral, ministerial, and church leaders to serve the church in the twenty-first century. He has been an ordained pastor for forty years and has been teaching at the doctoral level for more than twenty years. He became a consecrated bishop of the church in 2013. He has successfully served churches in both Afrocentric and Eurocentric contexts, as well as rural and urban contexts. He has served at all levels of ministry, from church planting to district and general church executive leadership teams. He currently also serves as Executive Pastor at Salem Baptist Church, Omaha, and Professor of Doctoral Studies at Payne Theological Seminary.

Scott Booth (Associate Professor of Old Testament, Provost)
sbooth@pillarseminary.org

Dr. Scott Booth is a founding member of the faculty at The Pillar Seminary. He has been heavily involved in the design of the Bible curriculum as well as the online platform. His drive is to create a far higher capability and practicality in students' reading and understanding of Scripture than typically thought possible at a graduate level.

His PhD was completed at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He specializes in the texts and archaeology of the early Iron Age in Syria as well as the historical narratives of the Hebrew Bible. He is the author of a chapter on Arameans and Aramean influence on Israel in a forthcoming volume (Routledge Press) as well as a forthcoming article on religious practices in northern Israel and Aram. He is on staff at the Tel Abel Beth Maacah Excavations, and is a member of the Society of Biblical Literature, the American Schools of Oriental Research, and the American Oriental Society.

Beth Currier (Assistant Professor of Old Testament)
sbooth@pillarseminary.org

Beth focuses her research on Wisdom literature, poetry in the Hebrew Bible, and cognitive-linguistic approaches to Hebrew Bible texts. She is co-chair of the Cognitive Linguistics in Biblical Interpretation section of the Society of Biblical Literature, is editing a forthcoming introduction to cognitive linguistics for Bible scholars, and is working on articles

and book chapters for other publications. Beth has authored several dictionary entries for the Cambridge Dictionary of Christianity and is also writing a book on cognitive approaches to wealth, the rich, poverty, and the poor in the book of Proverbs.

Staff

LaRhesa Mays (Director of Student Services)
lmays@pillarseminary.org

LaRhesa joined The Pillar Seminary staff in 2018. She earned her bachelor's degree in education from the University of Central Arkansas, and prior to coming to The Pillar she was the Omaha Agency Director at Liberty Insurance. She has served on missions' teams in Pakistan and Haiti. She loves The Pillar's mission of strengthening the local church by pouring into and growing its leaders.

Andrew Cress (Director of Accreditation, Compliance, Institutional Effectiveness)
acress@pillarseminary.org

Andrew came to Pillar as a staff member and adjunct instructor in 2022. Andrew has supported various functions in faith-based higher education institutions for almost a decade: academic advising, registrar, assessment, accreditation, institutional research, degree program review, and curriculum. After pursuing training for pastoral ministry Andrew discovered a love for in depth study and teaching of the New Testament alongside a passion for higher education administration. His goal is to support organizations like Pillar by helping them operate ethically, efficiently, and effectively. Andrew loves Pillar's emphasis on flexible and accessible study of Scripture and ministry. Andrew received a Master of Theology in New Testament from Dallas Theological Seminary and is a Doctoral candidate in New Testament at the London School of Theology.

Lauren Lowery (Director of Development)
llowery@pillarseminary.org

Lauren came to Pillar as Director of Development in 2021. Previously she worked for a non-profit, educational organization for nearly 20 years in program development, sales, management, and speaking. Prior to that, she worked as a missionary in Manila, Philippines, as a church planter for college students, while having the privilege of teaching English through a special program at a local university. Lauren has a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Auburn University and a Master of Arts in Cross Cultural Ministries from Dallas Theological Seminary. Her heart for seeing church leaders equipped well to serve the Church both here in the US and abroad drives her passion for her work at Pillar.

Board of Trustees

Chair: Zack McCoy

Vice Chair: Neil Stanley

Derek Cooper

Kevin Kim

Dru Johnson

Dan Lowery

Kim Mackrill

Mandy Stewart

Academics

Academic Programs

The Pillar Seminary offers three programs, each of which is designed to progressively and profoundly advance the abilities of ministry leaders in Bible and Leadership. The programs build on one another; that is, all credits from one program can be applied to the next. This allows students to set goals and easily transition from one program to another. (Credits can only be applied to one degree.)

- Certificate in Contextual Leadership (11 Credits)
- Master of Arts in Contextual Leadership (47 Credits)
- Master of Divinity (74 Credits)

Degree requirements published in this catalog are effective for all new and reentering students.

Certificate (Contextual Leadership)

The certificate program was developed for those who want to know the story of the Bible in its historical, cultural, and geographic context, as well as gain insight into their individual calling and leadership tendencies.

Curriculum

The Certificate program takes students through the story of the Bible in its historical, cultural, and geographic context (Biblical Narrative 1-2), as well as addressing their individual calling and leadership tendencies in Introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership.

Bible	Biblical Narrative 1 (4); Biblical Narrative 2 (4)
Leadership	Introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership (3)
	Total Credits = 11

Students who have completed the Biblical Narrative sequence are eligible for the Bible Lands Trip.

Master of Arts (Contextual Leadership)

The Master of Arts in Contextual Leadership was designed for students who want the same extensive training in Bible and Leadership as that found in the MDiv, but who do not wish to study the Bible in Hebrew and Greek.

Curriculum

Like the Certificate program, the MA begins by taking students through the story of the Bible in its historical, cultural, and geographic context (Biblical Narrative 1-2), as well as addressing their individual calling and leadership tendencies in Introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership. The MA then takes students a significant step further. In Bible, MA students work through five additional canon courses in the “Canon in Context” series, gaining the skills in various genres necessary to exegete the rest of the Bible in English. In the “Biblical Leadership in Context” series, students learn to evaluate, correct, and grow their ministries in four areas applicable to all ministry types, and complete the capstone project. Lastly, MA students complete their degree by examining core doctrines of the faith in historical theology.

	<u>Course Name</u>	<u>Credits</u>
BIBLE	Biblical Narrative 1	4
	Biblical Narrative 2	4
	Canon in Context 1: Torah	3
	Canon in Context 2: Writings	3
	Canon in Context 3: Prophets	3
	Canon in Context 4: Gospels	3
	Canon in Context 5: Acts, Epistles, Revelation	3
	Life and Cultures of the Ancient World	3
LEADERSHIP	Introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership	3
	Biblical Leadership in Context 1: Disciple Making	3
	Biblical Leadership in Context 2: Worship and Membership	3
	Biblical Leadership in Context 3: Mission and Outreach	3
	Biblical Leadership in Context 4: Administration and Internal Controls	3
	Capstone: Ethics and Christian Responsibility	3
THEOLOGY	Historical Theology: The Creeds	3
		= 47

Students who have completed the Biblical Narrative sequence are eligible for the Bible Lands Trip. MA students are also eligible to take the Pastoral Counseling course.

Master of Divinity

An MDiv is typically designed to be *sufficiently broad* to cover a wide variety of church ministries or vocations. The Pillar Seminary has taken a different approach to this professional degree. Instead of breadth and exposure to many disciplines, the MDiv at The Pillar provides *depth of training* in skills shared across those ministries and vocations, focusing on excellence in Bible and Leadership.

Curriculum

Like the Certificate and MA programs, the MDiv begins by taking students through the story of the Bible in its historical, cultural, and geographic context (Biblical Narrative 1-2), as well as addressing their individual calling and leadership tendencies in Introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership. Next, MDiv and MA students work through five additional canon courses in the "Canon in Context" series, gaining the skills in various genres necessary to exegete the rest of the Bible in English. In the Biblical Leadership in Context series, students learn to evaluate, correct, and grow their ministries in four areas applicable to all ministry types, and complete the capstone project. MDiv and MA students also study common and core doctrines of the faith in historical theology.

The differences between the MDiv and MA programs are (1) the Bible Lands Trip and Pastoral Counseling courses are required in the MDiv program, and (2) the original languages are required.

	<u>Course Name</u>	<u>Credits</u>
BIBLE	Biblical Narrative 1	4
	Biblical Narrative 2	4
	Canon in Context 1: Torah	3
	Canon in Context 2: Writings	3
	Canon in Context 3: Prophets	3
	Canon in Context 4: Gospels	3
	Canon in Context 5: Acts, Epistles, Revelation	3
	Life and Cultures of the Ancient World	3
	Bible Lands Trip	1

	Hebrew Reading	3
	Hebrew Reading	3
	Hebrew Reading	3
	Hebrew Reading	3
	Greek Reading	3
	Greek Reading	3
	Greek Reading	3
	Greek Reading	3
LEADERSHIP	Introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership	3
	Biblical Leadership in Context 1: Disciple Making	3
	Biblical Leadership in Context 2: Worship and Membership	3
	Biblical Leadership in Context 3: Mission and Outreach	3
	Biblical Leadership in Context 4: Administration and Internal Controls	3
	Capstone: Ethics and Christian Responsibility	3
	Pastoral Counseling	2
THEOLOGY	Historical Theology: The Creeds	3
		= 74

Courses by department

Bible

Biblical Narrative Series

The Biblical Narrative series is required for all program tracks at The Pillar Seminary. In these two classes, students focus on learning each of the stories of the Bible from Abraham through Paul's journey to Rome within their historical, geographic, and cultural context. Special attention is devoted to learning the literary skills necessary for reliably deriving the meaning from the stories.

Biblical Narrative 1 (4 credits)

Students will learn the stories within the biblical narrative from Abraham to the beginning of the United Monarchy. This includes learning the geography of the stories, as well as understanding broadly the historical context in which the stories take place. Students are also introduced to concepts of historiography and current issues in historicity and historiography related to the biblical narrative. Importantly, students will acquire, and exercise skills needed to discover the meaning of the stories in their immediate, local, and book wide context.

Prerequisite: (none)

Biblical Narrative 2 (4 credits)

This course continues where Biblical Narrative 1 leaves off. Students will learn the stories within the biblical narrative from the death of David to Paul's arrival in Rome, including some Second Temple period material. This includes learning the geography of the stories, as well as understanding broadly the historical context in which the stories take place. Students continue to interact with concepts of historiography and current issues in historicity and historiography related to the biblical narrative. Students will also continue to exercise the skills needed to discover the meaning of the stories in their immediate, local, and book wide context.

Prerequisite: Biblical Narrative 1

Canon in Context Series

After completing the Biblical Narrative series, the Canon in Context series focuses on developing the skills necessary for interpreting the remaining genres in both the Old and New Testaments. In all the courses of this series, class time centers on growing abilities by

practicing them with the professor and fellow students. The Old Testament portion of the series follows the historical divisions of Torah, Prophets, and Writings. The New Testament portion is divided into the Gospels and the Letters.

Canon in Context 1: Torah (3 credits)

In this class, students acquire the literary competency needed for exegesis and continued study of the Torah (Pentateuch). Since the skills for reading narrative have been covered in Biblical Narrative 1-2, this class focuses on cosmology, law, and ritual. Students will create two genre handbooks, one for cosmology and one for law/ritual, to be used for future study. Students will also learn the introductory material for all books covered in the section, including authorship/composition, structure, major interpretive issues, and history of interpretation. Throughout the class students will review and refine their understanding of the narrative sections of Torah.

Prerequisites: Biblical Narrative 1, Biblical Narrative 2

Canon in Context 2: Writings (3 credits)

In this class, students acquire the literary competency needed for exegesis and continued study of the third section of the Hebrew canon, the Writings (Ketuvim). Since the skills for reading narrative have been covered in Biblical Narrative 1-2, this class focuses on poetry, wisdom, and apocalyptic. Students will create a genre handbook to be used for future study. Students will also learn the introductory material for all books covered in the section, including authorship/composition, structure, major interpretive issues, and history of interpretation.

Prerequisites: Biblical Narrative 1, Biblical Narrative 2

Canon in Context 3: Prophets (3 credits)

In this class, students acquire the literary competency needed for exegesis and continued study of the middle section of the Hebrew OT canon, the Prophets (Nevi'im). Since the narrative portion of this part of the canon has already been covered in Biblical Narrative 1-2 (i.e., Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, and 1-2 Kings), this course focuses on the four prophetic scrolls of the Book of the 12, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. Special attention is given to the Book of the 12. Students will create a genre handbook to be used for future study. Students will also learn the introductory material for all books covered in the section, including authorship/composition, structure, major interpretive issues, and history of interpretation. Reading prophetic literature requires competency in narrative, cosmology, law, ritual, poetry, wisdom, and apocalyptic. As such, both Canon in Context 1: Torah and Canon in Context 2: Writings are prerequisites

Prerequisites: Biblical Narrative 1, Biblical Narrative 2; Canon in Context 1: Torah, Canon in Context 2: Writings

Canon in Context 4: Gospels (3 credits)

In this class, students acquire the literary competency needed for exegesis and continued study of the four Gospels. This class builds on narrative reading skills developed in Biblical Narrative 1–2 and the OT Canon classes and hones the particular further skills required for competent Gospels reading. Class readings and exercises, as well as exegetical guides are designed to provide the student with the tools necessary to explore and teach the content of these books. All four Gospels are read and explored in the class, being mindful of how various literary and historical-cultural contexts inform our understanding of each book. Students will also learn the introductory material for all books covered in the section, including authorship/composition, structure, major interpretive issues, and history of interpretation.

Prerequisites: Biblical Narrative 1, Biblical Narrative 2; Canon in Context 1: Torah, Canon in Context 2: Writings, Canon in Context 3: Prophets

Canon in Context 5: Acts, Epistles, and Revelation (3 credits)

In this class, students acquire the literary competency needed for exegesis and continued study of the remaining portions of the New Testament beyond the Gospels. Most of the class time will focus on letter-reading and apocalypse-reading skills, though attention is also paid to narrative skills germane to reading Acts in particular. Class reading and exercises are designed to foster these skills, as well as to further explore 1st century contexts of this portion of the New Testament. Students will also learn the introductory material for all books covered in the section, including authorship/composition, structure, major interpretive issues, and history of interpretation.

Prerequisites: Biblical Narrative 1, Biblical Narrative 2; Canon in Context 1: Torah, Canon in Context 2: Writings, Canon in Context 3: Prophets, Canon in Context 4: Gospels

Capstone Courses (Bible)

Bible Lands Trip (1 credit)

After learning all the stories of the Bible in their historical, cultural, and geographical setting, students travel to the land of the Bible to further reinforce and deepen their understanding of the text. This experience can be accomplished in several ways. Typically, students travel with The Pillar Seminary faculty to Israel during the annual two-week trip. Trip preparation involves reviewing historical and archaeological information for sites on the itinerary, which will be presented by students on site. It is also required that students maintain a log and journal of their experience. Alternatively, students may enroll in one of the short-term study programs at Jerusalem University College (either Historical & Geographical Settings of the Bible or Jesus & His Times). Students may also participate in archaeological excavation in a biblical land (Israel, Greece, Turkey, etc.), touring the region on days off. All trips and tours must be pre-approved by the Academic Dean.

Prerequisites: Biblical Narrative 1, Biblical Narrative 2,

Life and Cultures of the Ancient World (3 credits)

Throughout the curriculum, students look briefly at aspects of various cultures as they are encountered in the biblical text. These topics range from the mundane, such as daily life and trade, to more profound, such as the theology behind idol worship. This capstone course is an opportunity to return to such topics, studying them directly and more in depth by using advanced cultural and sociological studies. The goal is to create better readers of the biblical text by developing a more advanced approach to, and understanding of, the cultures in which they were written.

Prerequisites: Biblical Narrative 1, Biblical Narrative 2, Canon in Context 1: Torah, Canon in Context 2: Writings, Canon in Context 3: Prophets, Canon in Context 4: Gospels, Canon in Context 5: Acts, Epistles, and Revelation

Biblical Languages

The Biblical Languages program at The Pillar Seminary is unique. It is designed specifically for students who want to achieve a level of reading fluency and comfort akin to that of a spoken language. This high-level ability is accomplished most efficiently and effectively by mirroring the natural language learning process of exposure to the target language in its environment. As such, taking one or two semesters to woodenly study beginning grammar is not a good use of time and resources. Instead, students at The Pillar Seminary gain basic proficiency in Biblical Hebrew and Greek through any one of several excellent online resources that utilize the same natural approach to language learning. Once basic proficiency is demonstrated, students enroll in a series of four reading courses in each language that progressively and more naturally build the students' knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and syntax. This process results in a far higher degree of knowledge retention over time and makes meaningful language acquisition possible for a wider population of students than traditional formats.

Hebrew Reading: Introduction to Narrative (3 credits)

This course introduces students to narrative syntax and increases their working vocabulary. Portions of Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, Kings, and/or others are read as the student grows in their ability to read the text out loud. Students are also introduced to the basics of using technical dictionaries and reference grammars. The objective is to gain a better

understanding of the stories through a deeper understanding and appreciation of how the stories are told. This course builds on the understanding of story and plot taught in Biblical Narrative 1-2.

Prerequisites: Basic Hebrew grammar and vocabulary proficiency, Biblical Narrative 1, Biblical Narrative 2

Hebrew Reading: Advanced Narrative (3 credits)

This course introduces students to more complicated narrative syntax and continues to increase their working vocabulary. Students are continuing to gain familiarity with the tools of exegesis, including technical dictionaries, reference grammars, and software. The objective continues to be to gain a better understanding of the stories through a deeper understanding and appreciation of how stories are told. This course builds on the understanding of story and plot taught in Biblical Narrative 1-2.

Prerequisites: Basic Hebrew grammar and vocabulary proficiency, Biblical Narrative 1, Biblical Narrative 2, Hebrew Reading: Introduction to Narrative

Hebrew Reading: Law (3 credits)

In this course, students work through legal portions of the Hebrew Bible, learning legal syntax and lexemes in effort to gain a better understanding of the Law. Students will learn how to do detailed word studies and begin to interact with technical commentaries. The ability to read the text aloud continues to be practiced and developed. Students will also review the context, purpose, and function of law in the ancient Near East. This course builds on the understanding of law established in Canon in Context 1: Torah.

Prerequisites: Canon in Context 1: Torah, Hebrew Reading: Introduction to Narrative

Hebrew Reading: Poetry (3 credits)

In this course, students develop their understanding of Hebrew poetry begun in Canon in Context 2: Writings. Concepts such as stanza, strophe, and parallelism are reviewed, examined, and enriched as students read, analyze, and discuss poems. The importance of sound and rhythm in poetry is introduced. Poetry from the Psalms, Song of Songs, and Lamentations is examined. Students will continue to develop their vocabulary. A high level of ability in grammar, syntax, and vocabulary is required prior to entrance.

Prerequisites: Canon in Context 2: Writings, Hebrew Reading: Introduction to Narrative, Hebrew Reading 2: Law

Hebrew Reading: Prophecy (3 credits)

In this, the final Hebrew Reading course, students will combine all the skills developed in Biblical Narrative, Canon in Context, and Hebrew Reading courses. The course will focus on the Book of the Twelve. Students will continue to develop their ability to read the text aloud, increase their vocabulary, as well as hone their skills to do word studies and examine syntax.

Prerequisites: Canon in Context 1: Torah, Canon in Context 2: Writings, Canon in Context 3: Prophets, Hebrew Reading: Introduction to Narrative, Hebrew Reading: Poetry

Greek Reading: John and Mark (3 credits)

This course introduces students to narrative syntax and increases their working vocabulary. Large portions of John and Mark are read as the student grows in their ability to read the text out loud. Students are also introduced to the basics of using technical dictionaries and reference grammars. The objective is to gain a better understanding of the stories through a deeper understanding and appreciation of how the stories are told. This course builds on the understanding of story and plot taught in Biblical Narrative 1-2.

Prerequisites: Basic Greek grammar and vocabulary proficiency, Biblical Narrative 1, Biblical Narrative 2

Greek Reading: Matthew (3 credits)

In this course, students work through portions of Matthew's Gospel as well as portions of John's and Paul's letters, furthering skills of Gospel narrative exegesis and introducing epistolary exegetical skills. Students will learn how to do detailed word studies and begin to interact with technical commentaries. The ability to read the text aloud continues to be practiced and developed. This course builds on the skills introduced in Canon in Context 4: Gospels and Canon in Context 5: Acts, Epistles, and Revelation.

Prerequisites: Greek Reading: John and Mark, Canon in Context 4: Gospels, Canon in Context 5: Acts, Epistles, and Revelation

Greek Reading: Paul, James, and Jude (3 credits)

This course will build on the previous reading courses by reading from Paul's letters and also James and Jude. Additionally, portions of Revelation will be explored to provide further opportunity for apocalyptic literature to be studied. In addition to Revelation, extra-biblical apocalyptic literature will also be read. A high level of ability in grammar, syntax, and vocabulary is required prior to entrance.

Prerequisites: Two semesters of Greek Reading, Canon in Context 4: Gospels, Canon in Context 5: Acts, Epistles, and Revelation

Greek Reading: Luke-Acts and Hebrews (3 credits)

In this, the final Greek Reading course, students will combine all the skills developed in Biblical Narrative, Canon in Context, and Greek Reading courses. The course will focus on Luke-Acts and Hebrews, the most advanced Greek in the NT. Students will continue to develop their ability to read the text aloud, increase their vocabulary, as well as hone their skills to do word studies and examine syntax.

Prerequisites: Three semesters of Greek Reading, Canon in Context 4: Gospels, Canon in Context 5: Acts, Epistles, and Revelation

Leadership

Introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership (3 credits)

The introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership course is designed to align a student's call, gifts, and leadership proclivities. During the semester, students will examine their own biography, spiritual gifts, and personality profile to gain clarity on their call and equipping. The examination is done with the professor and cohort as students learn to affirm who they are and how they are called to serve. This understanding is necessary in order to maximize their effectiveness in ministry, and thus a prerequisite to begin the "Biblical Leadership in Context" series.

Prerequisites: Biblical Narrative 1

Pastoral Counseling (3 credits)

This course is designed to introduce the student to the basic counseling skills involved in pastoral counseling and care. The course will include a counseling model, theories, personal assessments, and useful knowledge for developing proficiency in pastoral care-giving. Emphasis will be given to practice and acquisition of basic counseling skills, increasing personal self-awareness, an overview of mental health disorders, referral strategies, and the usefulness of science and Scripture in the counseling process.

Prerequisites: Biblical Narrative 1, Biblical Narrative 2; Introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership

Biblical Leadership in Context Series

This series is designed to train students to identify and solve ministry related problems in disciplines common to all ministries. During each semester of study, students work with their professor and cohort to create and implement context specific models based on Scripture to develop best practices for ministry. Students use Scripture as the foundation for creating vital and sustainable ministries for building the Kingdom of God.

Biblical Leadership in Context 1: Disciple Making (3 credits)

This course will explore the use of discipleship and evangelism and compare these methodologies to the biblical mandate of disciple making. Students will be taught how to be disciples, make disciples, and grow the church. Contextually, students will be required to

compare disciple making to the principles currently existing in their church. Finally, a new model of disciple making will be developed to strengthen or replace existing models in the student's local context.

Prerequisite: Introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership

Biblical Leadership in Context 2: Worship and Membership

This course has two main objectives: 1) To compare and contrast biblical worship with the way students are currently worshiping in their local context. For this discussion, students will be challenged to talk about their current worship setting and what would be different by observing the directives of scripture; and 2) To discuss the importance of membership care from a biblical perspective and compare care based on scripture to how membership care is observed at the local church level today. Students will be challenged to discover some of the ways that the local church can benefit from what the Bible teaches about membership care and its impact on the whole community of faith.

Prerequisites: Introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership, Biblical Leadership in Context 1: Disciple Making

Biblical Leadership in Context 3: Mission and Outreach (3 credits)

This course is designed to challenge students to move from a secular understanding of mission and outreach to a biblical approach. We will examine God's plan for God's people from creation to the new creation and dispel the notion that mission began in the Book of Acts. This course will combine your understanding of biblical narrative and discipling to help make the case for what God expects from his people and the purpose or mission we exist to engage.

Prerequisites: Introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership, Biblical Leadership in Context 1: Disciple Making, Biblical Leadership in Context 2: Worship and Membership

Biblical Leadership in Context 4: Administration and Self Care (3 credits)

To understand the foundations of Church Administration. The objective is to assist students understand the most efficient way to organize and administer the critical functional areas of their ministry by creating an administration and operations manual for use in administering the overall functions of their ministry.

Additionally, the student will understand and establish self-care protocols to ensure a balance between ministry, family, and social life to maximize effectiveness, minimize burnout, and avoid breaching healthy ministry boundaries.

Prerequisites: Introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership, Biblical Leadership in Context 1: Disciple Making, Biblical Leadership in Context 2: Worship and Membership, Biblical Leadership in Context 3: Mission and Outreach

Capstone Course (Biblical Leadership)

Capstone: Ethics and Christian Responsibility (3 credits)

This course is designed to examine processes used in ministry and their ethical implications for the church and the community around it. As a capstone course, students look back through the Biblical Leadership in Context series with an eye to avoiding unethical practices when engaging ministry in those areas. What emerges is a biblical prescription for doing ministry.

Prerequisites: Introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership, Biblical Leadership in Context 1: Disciple Making, Biblical Leadership in Context 2: Worship and Membership, Biblical Leadership in Context 3: Mission and Outreach, Biblical Leadership in Context 4: Administration and Self Care

Theology

Historical Theology: The Creeds

As a capstone to the Bible curriculum, this course will assume and build on the repertoire of skills honed from our unique approach and curriculum. Based on the understandings that good theology flows out of good exegesis, that good exegesis must operate within the broad boundaries of orthodoxy, and that context is important to both, we will explore the earliest centuries of the Christian Church to watch the canon and the creeds emerge in their historical and cultural contexts. We will understand what the major tenets of historical orthodoxy are and where, how, and why they emerged. This should also leave the student with foundational perspective for engaging theologically today.

Prerequisites: Biblical Narrative 1, Biblical Narrative 2; Canon in Context 1: Torah, Canon in Context 2: Writings, Canon in Context 3: Prophets, Canon in Context 4: Gospels, Canon in Context 5: Acts, Epistles, and Revelation

Academic Life

Academic Advisement

Academic advising is provided to students by the Academic Guidance Counselor. During the registration period each semester, students will have the opportunity to meet to review courses they would like to take the following semester. Counsel regarding transfer credit, graduation requirements, sequence of courses, prerequisites, and other academic issues can also be provided by the Academic Guidance Counselor. Students should feel free to contact the office any time they feel they would like help in planning their schedules. Students are also encouraged to visit with the faculty.

Academic Handbook and Catalog

Students are subject to the requirements of The Pillar Seminary catalog that is current at the time of initial enrollment. Students may choose to complete graduation requirements under the terms of any Pillar Seminary catalog published during the time of their uninterrupted study. Students who withdraw and are readmitted or who take a period of time off are subject to the requirements of the catalog that is current when they reenroll.

Academic Integrity

The Pillar Seminary defines plagiarism as the use of another author's research, ideas, or language without proper attribution. Plagiarism is intellectual theft. There are many degrees of accidental or intentional plagiarism. Students should avoid any impression of dishonesty by maintaining good research habits and by working within the basic rules of writing and documentation. Clearly distinguish between your ideas and those of others. Make the appropriate attributions.

In the case of suspected plagiarism on class assignments and papers, the individual professor will be responsible to decide whether there is a case of carelessness in acknowledging sources or actual plagiarism. If s/he determines there is plagiarism, s/he will report to the matter to the Academic Dean.

Submitting the same research paper in two different courses is also not acceptable, except by special arrangement with the professors involved.

Academic Course Load

Since Pillar students typically have many responsibilities outside of class (ministry, work, family, etc.), students typically begin their graduate studies by taking one class during the first semester. Students may increase to two classes during the second semester and beyond at their discretion. Approval of the Academic Dean is required for more than two classes, or any other exceptions.

Academic Probation & Reinstatement

A student who does not maintain a 2.0 grade point average, who receives an F, and/or who demonstrates serious difficulty with coursework may be placed on academic probation. Probation typically lasts for at least one semester and provides an opportunity for a student to give serious attention to problems that may adversely affect their performance.

At the end of the probationary semester, the Academic Dean will review the student's progress. If academic difficulties continue, the student may continue on academic probation or will be asked to withdraw from The Pillar Seminary.

Academic Year

The Pillar Seminary operates with a Fall and Spring semester. The Fall semester generally runs August through November, and the Spring semester February through May (with minor variations depending upon where weeks fall during a given calendar year). This leaves the busy month of December free for ministry. The annual Bible Lands trip will be scheduled for two weeks within the month of January. Students are also invited to participate, for any length of time, in an optional archaeological excavation which usually takes place between the last week of June and third week of July.

Auditing

Class time at The Pillar focuses on allowing students to practice and develop skills with professors. The time is highly valued and admittance into a course is guarded so as to create the most effective training. In this environment, auditing (attending class without academic credit) is permitted, but only insofar as the integrity and effectiveness of the classroom is assured.

Auditors are therefore subject to the same admissions standards and department participation rules as degree and non-degree seeking students. To audit a class, auditors must receive written approval from the course professor detailing the auditors class participation requirements and end-of-semester demonstration of subject competency. This agreement must be submitted for approval to the Academic Dean prior to the beginning of the course. Course completion will be regarded as qualifying to fulfill a prerequisite only if the auditor satisfies the participation requirements and can demonstrates subject competency.

Auditors may not receive scholarship funds and must pay full price to attend and participate in class. If, during the course of a semester, the professor and Academic Dean determine that the auditor does not meet the standards of the classroom and/or is not satisfying the agreed-upon requirements, the auditor will be removed from class without refund.

Academic Calendar

Fall Semester 2022

Convocation: August 1

Classes Start: August 2

Midterms: September 19-23

New Student Admission Application Priority Deadline for Spring 2023 - October 3
Financial Aid Application Deadline for Spring 2023 - November 7
Fall Break: November 14-18
Thanksgiving Break: November 21-25
Finals (to be scheduled): November 28 - December 2

Spring Semester 2023

Classes Start: January 31
Midterms: March 20-24
New Student Admission Application Priority Deadline for Fall 2023 - April 3
Spring Break: April 3-7 (Good Friday - April 7; Easter - April 9)
Financial Aid Application Deadline for Fall 2023 - May 8
Break: May 22-26
Finals (to be scheduled): May 29 - June 2
Graduation: June 3

Change of Degree Program

Students accepted to The Pillar Seminary can take classes on an individual basis (assuming prerequisites have been met) without pursuing a specific degree. Any student wishing to join a degree program track should consult with a faculty member(s) or the Academic Guidance Counselor for his/her best option.

Course Attendance

Attendance policies are set by individual professors.

Course Extensions

Students are expected to submit all work by the dates set by the professors and complete all course requirements on or before the last day of the semester. Students are strongly encouraged to be in close communication with their professors throughout the semester regarding any difficulty completing the course requirements. In rare situations, extensions may be granted in the form of incomplete grades by the professor and with the approval of the Academic Dean. The extension must be granted no later than the last Monday of the semester.

Course Prerequisite Policy

A passing grade of a C or above must be achieved in order for a course to be considered as

qualifying to fulfill a prerequisite.

Course Repeat

Any course in which an F grade is received may be repeated, and must be repeated if it is a required course. When a course is repeated, both grades will remain on the transcript, but only the later grade will be computed in the grade point average. Scholarships may not be applied toward repeated courses.

Department Participation

All students, whether degree seeking, non-degree seeking, or auditing, must proceed through the course offerings of both the Bible and Leadership departments at equal pace. It is not permissible to proceed through the course offerings of one department before moving to the next. For example, a student enrolled in one course per semester must alternate between courses offered within the departments each semester (i.e., Semester 1 = Leadership, Semester 2 = Bible, Semester 3 = Leadership, etc.). A student enrolled in two courses per semester must enroll in one course from both the Bible and Leadership departments.

An automatic one-semester exception is granted for first-year students who enroll in the Fall, and an automatic two-semester exception for first-year students who enroll in the Spring. Special exception may on occasion be made due to on limitations in course offerings, pre-requisites, and/or the student's schedule. Students wishing to be granted such an exception must receive permission from the Academic Dean.

Delivery

All classes at The Pillar Seminary are conducted and delivered via live, interactive videoconferencing. Students are required to have access to high-speed internet at rates sufficient for the software platform in use and as defined by that platform. Students are also required to have both video and audio capability for the classes and, when necessary, exams. The software system currently in use is [Zoom](#). System requirements for Zoom can be found on their website.

Dismissal

The following constitute grounds for dismissal: Inappropriate behavioral patterns which, on the basis of psychological evaluation, or observed traits, are disruptive to the academic and community life of the seminary; commission of a civil or criminal offense; plagiarism or cheating.

Any complaint against a student should be registered with the Academic Dean or your professor, who is then obliged to report the complaint to the Academic Dean. Each complaint will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Enrollment Status

To be considered full-time, a student must be enrolled in six or more credit hours of coursework. A student is considered part-time if enrolled in three hours.

Students who are in full or part-time ministry must receive permission from the Academic Dean to take more than two courses during a semester.

Grievances Regarding Academic Matters

A student who has a grievance with a professor on an academic matter must first work with the instructor to pursue a satisfactory resolution. If a resolution cannot be reached, the student may appeal to the Academic Dean, or if the Dean is the professor involved, a student should appeal to the Academic Guidance Counselor and President. After hearing the student's grievance and consulting with the professor involved, the Academic Dean (or Academic Guidance Counselor and President, if appropriate) will make a decision and will inform both the student and professor in writing.

No grade may be contested after ninety days from the date of issue have passed.

Grievances Regarding Non-Academic Matters

A three-tier system is in place for students who have grievances with a professor, staff member, or fellow student concerning a non-academic matter:

1. Directly address the individual(s) in question.
2. Report the matter to the Academic Dean.
3. Report the matter to the designated board member.

The student is encouraged to address their grievance directly with the individual(s) involved. If the student feels the matter is not then resolved, or the student is not comfortable addressing the individual(s) directly, the student may report the matter directly to the Academic Dean. The Academic Dean is obliged to report the grievance to the designated board member and, along with that board member, investigate the matter and take appropriate action. If that effort fails, or the student is not comfortable reporting the matter to the Academic Dean, the student may contact the designated board member directly, who will investigate and take appropriate action.

Grading

Students may expect evaluation of submitted material within two weeks of being submitted (or up to three weeks for late submissions). Semester grades are posted on the Student Management System (SMS) within two weeks of the last day of the semester.

The following system of grading is in use at Pillar Seminary:

- A: "Excellent" in comprehension of work submitted
- B: "Good" in comprehension of work submitted

C: "Fair" in comprehension and thoroughness of work submitted

D: Poor performance in comprehension and thoroughness of work submitted

F: Inadequacy of work submitted

Any course in which an F grade is received may be repeated and must be repeated if it is a required course. When a course is repeated, both grades will remain on the transcript, but only the later grade will be computed in the grade point average.

Grades are awarded for credit hours as follows:

Letter Grade	Percent Grade	Grade Points
A	94-100	4.0
A-	90-93	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	84-86	3.0
B-	80-83	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	74-76	2.0
C	70-73	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3
D	64-66	1.0
D	60-63	0.7
F	Below 60	0.0

Graduation Requirements

The total number of semester hours required for graduation in each program is as follows:

Master of Arts = 47 credit hours

Master of Divinity = 74 credit hours

Students are responsible for completing the graduation requirements set forth in the catalog at the time of their admission. A candidate for graduation must have successfully completed the requirements of his/her particular program with a grade point average of 2.25 or higher.

Graduation is held annually in the Spring. Students must complete an Application for Graduation, available from the Academic Guidance Counselor, during the Fall Semester of the academic year in which the student anticipates graduation. Students who have submitted an Application for Graduation will be provided information on academic regalia and graduation events. All degrees are granted by vote of the Board of Trustees upon recommendation by the faculty.

In addition to academic requirements for graduation, students must meet all financial obligations to the seminary.

Leave of Absence

Students are expected to remain actively enrolled. A student in good academic standing may petition the faculty for a leave of absence for up to two semesters.

Location

In keeping with The Pillar Seminary's unique mission to equip people in their own ministry context, all classes are offered *exclusively* via live interactive videoconferencing. Technology and the spread of high-speed internet allows students from all over the world, from various demographics, ministry types, and contexts, to participate together in live classroom projects and discussions. The increased diversity afforded by the live, online classroom creates an environment that focuses on strengthening the core disciplines common to students' shared faith and ministry. Thus, while many faculty and staff offices are located in Omaha, Nebraska, students of The Pillar Seminary do not relocate.

Registration and Withdrawal

The deadline for registration is July 23, 2020 for the Fall semester, and January 28, 2021 for the Spring semester.

Entering students should consult with the Academic Guidance Counselor regarding course plans and registration. Continuing students can register through the Academic Guidance Counselor.

Students desiring to drop or add courses after classes have begun must complete the appropriate form and get the approval of the professor before submitting the form to the Academic Guidance Counselor.

Students may add or drop courses up to three weeks after the first day of the Fall or Spring semester without penalty. Students dropping a course four to six weeks after the first day of the fall or spring semester forfeit fifty percent of their tuition.

Transcripts

An official transcript is a certified statement of a student's complete academic record to the date of issuance and bears the signature of a proper certifying officer and the seal of the seminary. Official transcripts are not issued directly to the student but are mailed from The Pillar Seminary to the institution or agency designated by the student.

A student's record is released only with his/her written request and permission. A copy of one's own record is available at no cost to any current student and differs from an official transcript in that it is not signed nor is it stamped with the Pillar seal.

After graduation, students receive an unofficial final transcript with their diploma. All transcripts from other schools remain the property of The Pillar Seminary and cannot be copied or released to the student or other parties. The Pillar Seminary only releases transcripts

with coursework completed at the seminary.

Admissions Information

Contact

Prospective students wishing to apply to The Pillar Seminary or interested in more information about The Pillar are encouraged to contact LaRhesa Mays, Director of Student Services

email: lmays@pillarseminary.org

Application Process

The training at The Pillar Seminary is uniquely challenging, requiring of students an openness to change both in terms of their understanding of Scripture and their practices in ministry. Certain persons and ministry contexts are not conducive to such demands and changes. It is therefore in the best interest of the prospective student that The Pillar Seminary works to ensure both that the student is a good fit and that their ministry context is open to the training process. To that end, we review each application closely, taking time to interview each student, contact all references, and discuss the training program with the applicant's ministry supervisor. Each application and ministry context is then reviewed by the faculty, after which a final decision is made and the applicant is contacted (see Admissions Decisions below).

Steps to take:

1. Fill out the online application and have your official transcript(s) mailed to us.
PO Box 31454
Omaha, NE 68131
2. We will call you, your references, and your ministry supervisor.
3. Your application is presented to the faculty and Academic Dean for review.
4. You are contacted via email (and phone if in the United States) regarding the admission decision.

The Pillar Seminary does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, theological perspective, sex, age, national origin, marital status, parental status, ethnicity, or disability in any form, nor does it condone, and will not accept, discrimination in any form. The Pillar Seminary seeks to create and maintain a positive educational and professional environment. In doing so, Pillar will openly communicate and educate our community about sexual harassment as appropriate to prevent its occurrence.

Admissions Requirements

Ministry: The mission of The Pillar Seminary is to strengthen the local church by equipping and empowering its leaders. As such, the first requirement for admissions is involvement in ministry. Priority in admissions will be given to applicants in active full- or part-time ministry. Prospective students involved in volunteer ministry are valued and welcome, and encouraged

to contact Nick Reuting, the Director of Student Development, for information about available slots (402-807-3060; nreuting@pillarseminary.org).

Education: A baccalaureate degree is strongly preferred, but not required. An applicant for admission into the MDiv or MA program who does not have a baccalaureate degree, but who meets all other admissions requirements, or an applicant possessing a baccalaureate degree from an unaccredited institution, will receive provisional admission. After completing one year of study (Biblical Narrative 1-2 and Introduction to Contextual Biblical Leadership), and having an interview with a faculty member, the provisional admission may be removed after the student has demonstrated ability to do acceptable graduate work in individual and classroom settings.

Admissions Decisions

Students who are accepted into The Pillar Seminary are given either Full, Provisional, or Conditional acceptance. Full acceptance is admission without further requirements. Provisional acceptance may be granted either in cases where the applicant still needs to submit final official transcripts with graduation date, or students who do not have an accredited baccalaureate degree (see Admissions Requirements). Conditional Acceptance may be given to applicants who have been admitted and have special conditions placed on their acceptance and may be denied registration or be subject to possible withdrawal from school if conditions are not met.

Transfer Credit

Each student who brings transfer credits to The Pillar Seminary will have them reviewed by the corresponding department leadership. A student may be asked to provide a syllabus, to take a placement exam or to provide sufficient evidence of The Pillar Seminary course knowledge required for advancement.

Advanced Standing

Each request for advanced standing or advanced placement will be reviewed by the corresponding department leadership. A student may be asked to provide a syllabus, to take a placement exam or to provide sufficient evidence of Pillar Seminary course knowledge required for advancement.

Financial Information

Tuition

At The Pillar Seminary, we believe people in ministry should have access to an exceptional education in Bible and Leadership without being made to go into debt. We want to make building The Kingdom affordable for all who are serious about it. To this end, The Pillar Seminary has been designed to be as efficient as possible in order to keep cost as low as possible. The Pillar Seminary charges students on a per semester basis, not on a per class basis. Tuition is \$2,500 per semester. (See also "Academic Course Load").

Financial Assistance

We know that every student's financial situation is unique. Cost should not be a barrier to your decision to attend, and it is a core commitment of The Pillar Seminary that students are not permitted to go into debt in order to be trained for ministry. Instead, the generosity of our donors enables scholarships to be given to students who have (1) made it through the selection process and have been accepted into the programs at The Pillar Seminary and (2) demonstrated that they are in need of assistance.

Our scholarship application process begins with the online Financial Assistance Form. This is followed by a confidential discussion between the Director of Student Development and the student. This conversation will take into account individual family needs and income. The student needs to be prepared to enter into a realistic conversation to establish need.

An important step in the scholarship application process at The Pillar Seminary is a conversation with student's employer or overseers regarding tuition (a step that applies to students in both full- and part-time ministry). This conversation gives the employer the opportunity to invest in the growth of the student, and allows the student to be aware of that investment. It also creates an expectation of change and development in the student's ministry that paves a way for the student to actively impact their ministry with what is learned in their program. The Director of Student Development works with students to equip them to have this conversation. If necessary or helpful, The Pillar Seminary faculty and staff will speak directly with employers or overseers regarding tuition and ministry impact expectations.

Following these conversations, we will create a tailored financial plan that arrives at a student's demonstrated need. After the application is reviewed, processed, and approved by The Pillar Seminary board, students who are offered a scholarship must agree to the scholarship parameters. These include, but may not be limited to, a letter thanking the donor and relaying the impact of The Pillar Seminary on the student's ministry, as well as GPA requirements.

Fees

Application – \$50

Late payment – \$25

Failed ACH Payment – \$25

Late Payment Plan Agreement Form – \$75

Payment Policies

The first payment of semester tuition is due August 27th for the Fall 2020 semester and February 22nd for the Spring 2021 semester. Students may choose to pay their tuition in full on or before the first payment date. Students may also sign up for a six-month payment plan using the Payment Plan Agreement Form, which must be submitted no later than one week prior to the first payment date of the semester. Payments may be made by check or automatic withdrawals (ACH payments). Students are subject to a \$75 fee if the Payment Plan Agreement Forms are not received prior to one week before the first payment due date. Late payments are subject to a \$25 fee.

If payment or the Payment Plan Agreement Form is not received one week prior to the scheduled first payment date, the student's access to class websites will be revoked until payment is received. If payment or the Payment Plan Agreement Form is not received within two weeks following the first payment date, students will be withdrawn from classes.

Tuition Refund Policies

Students may withdraw from a semester up to three weeks after the first day of the Fall or Spring semester without penalty. Students who withdraw from a semester four to six weeks after the first day of the Fall or Spring semester forfeit fifty percent of their tuition. Any student wishing to withdraw after six weeks forfeits their full tuition.