



Cherry Hill Seminary FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions (February 2010)

Applying to Cherry Hill Seminary

Is CHS accredited? What is its present status, and how does that affect my eventual degree?

We are NOT an accredited institution yet. We anticipate that it will take several years for us to become accredited. Do bear in mind that it's the institution that is "accredited," not the degree. Since we must comply with all accreditation standards for at least two years before even applying for accreditation, our expectation is that a student graduating at any time after we received accreditation would be receiving "a degree granted by an accredited institution."

Does a Cherry Hill Seminary degree equal ordination?

No. A degree from Cherry Hill Seminary is an educational credential; ordination is a religious one. Graduates may use their education as part of their qualifications for ordination by the organization or tradition they choose.

Can I take non-Master's classes and later have them renumbered to count toward my degree?

No. Only two courses are offered with the same title and different numbers: the two required Core Courses (Ethics & Boundaries, and Contemporary Global Paganisms). Every matriculated student will take these classes. No other class will be cross-numbered or duplicated in this way.

Non-Master's classes taken at Cherry Hill Seminary before Fall 09 can only be credited toward a degree if they meet master's-level class criteria in several categories, including course design & workload, teacher's academic credentials, and the extent to which the content taught that semester matches what is included in a similar class at this time.

Non-Master's classes taken at Cherry Hill in Fall 09 and later will not be counted toward a degree.

What may cause confusion is that master's-level classes may be counted toward a Certificate. Students enrolled in a Certificate program are allowed to take master's classes, if there is room. Such students receive unit hours, not credit hours, for their work in the master's class.

PCELL classes, including Foundations classes, cannot become Master's classes. All master's classes are, however, transferable to PCELL as unit hours.

Do I have to take the GRE? the MAT? both?

No CHS applicant is required to take both. Only an applicant with no bachelor's degree is required to provide scores from one or the other of these tests. If you don't have a bachelor's degree and have already taken either of these tests, have the official scores sent to us. If you have taken neither, you can choose one, take it, and have scores sent to us.

How recent do GRE & MAT scores need to be?

No cut-off age has been established. Until further notice we will accept official scores regardless of age. The more recent, the better.

What is the CHS Designated Institution Number for the GRE test?

4901

What is the CHS Recipient Number for the MAT test?

2489

I only took one course each from several schools. Do I have to order a transcript from them?

Yes. This is a requirement for our accreditation process.

My degree included transfer credit for courses from another school. If those courses appear on my main transcript do I have to get one from the other school, too?

Yes. Again, it is a requirement for our accreditation process.

Choosing and Declaring a Major

What do the letters in the course numbers mean?

C Core courses all students are required to take -- we have only two of these, the Ethics and Boundaries course and the course in Contemporary Global Paganisms.

T Text, Tradition and Interpretation Department;

N Nature, Deity and Inspiration Department;

P Pastoral Care and Counseling Department;

M Public Ministry and Expression Department;

A Pagan Advocacy Department;

F Foundations courses, running approximately 4 weeks, shorter than full-semester PCELL or Master's courses and often introductory. Sometimes an "F" course will be shown as prerequisite to a course in one of the five departments. Foundations courses are open to the general public.

Five of these (T, N, P, M & A) are possible majors. For more information on these programs, please visit http://www.cherryhillseminary.org/students_masters.html on the Cherry Hill Seminary web site.

Do I have to declare a major in my application? Can I change majors later?

Yes, please declare at least a tentative major in your application, and yes, you can change majors later if necessary. If you are still unsure, make your very best intuitive guess, and talk to your advisor. As a Seminary, we will require all Master's students to take at least some coursework in each of the major areas.

How do the majors fit into the "master's programs"?

Your major is where you will take the greatest number of credit-hours. Part of the process of your Seminary education is to refine, clarify and actively participate in shaping your particular ministry and the class work and field work that will be helpful to you. Your faculty advisor will assist you in making these choices. Because advisors are assigned by major, it is important that you choose your initial major thoughtfully.

When I declare a major, is that one of the five departments? or a topic inside one of those?

A major is called by its department name.

Can I declare a major in Chaplaincy?

No, you cannot. Chaplaincy is a very, very broad field and what is helpful training for one type of

chaplaincy may not serve you as well in another. For example, the specific needs of the military are very different from an institutional college chaplaincy. What kind of work do you want to do and where? Let that guide you to choosing a major. Bear in mind that you may take electives in the other departments as well.

Cherry Hill Seminary Classes

What should I expect class format to be?

Most classes include a mix of formats, such as (but not limited to) the following:

- Moodle (classroom software) forums with some combination of directive questions and free-form discussions, not in real-time; you can read and post to the forums whenever you have an internet connection, 24/7. Forum posts may be required or optional; you may be given homework to post to a particular forum in a particular format. Forum posts may be read by the whole class. Some classes may require students to upload files of homework assignments.
- Live chats and/or conference calls. Live chats occur at a regularly-scheduled time with all participants present, in real-time from wherever they are; for example, a student in New York meets at 8 pm Eastern time with a student in California who is meeting at 5 pm Pacific time. Please note that you may not enroll in two classes that meet for live chat during overlapping scheduled times.
- Written assignments such as personal writing, a research paper, or an assignment to undertake some practical exercise or experiment and then write a report on that. These assignments will be uploaded to the class site, and may be seen only by the instructor or shared with classmates.
- Exams or quizzes, available only to the instructor.
- Field experiences of one kind or another, followed by discussion or a written report.
- Assigned reading or research, either in textbooks purchased by the student or in material posted or linked from the Moodle classroom, or through independent work or the use of our library resources.
- Downloading other audio or audio-visual components and responding to them.
- Research papers, which may require the student to cite published sources, to conduct personal interviews, to do independent research, to engage in personal reflection, or to work with other students as a team. Often research papers are required to be presented in a prescribed format such as APA, Chicago Manual of Style, or another professional or scholarly format (instructors are usually willing to offer guidance to students unfamiliar with their specific requirements).
- Creative, interactive or inventive projects, e.g., designing a workshop, producing art, music, dance, poetry, creating a ritual, etc.
- Some classes may require particular response formats, may have upper or lower limits for word count, or require that the student become familiar with specific types of tools, such as genograms, psychological tests, or professional databases for various disciplines.

Two classes I want to take meet on the same day. Can I enroll in both?

You can't attend overlapping live chats. Just as in a face-to-face classroom environment, you can't be scheduled in two live chats that occur simultaneously. It's fine if the first class ends at the same time that the second class begins, but not if they overlap. If there is no chat component in one or both of the classes, the student is free to enroll in two classes that "meet" on the same day.

What about classes that are offered by two departments?

A class may meet the department requirements for more than one Department. A cross-numbered class may often be co-taught by one instructor from each department.

When do I have to take the core courses (Ethics & Boundaries and Contemporary Global Paganisms)?

Core courses must be successfully completed during your first 24 credit-hours or unit-hours at CHS. Contemporary Global Paganisms will be offered each Fall Semester, and Ethics and Boundaries will be offered each Spring Semester.

Technology Issues

I don't understand how the technology works.

Students must have basic computer literacy. All students may participate in a Moodle tutorial designed by and for Cherry Hill Seminary students. The tutorial answers most technical questions with simple step-by-step directions, walking you through the system. After you receive your Moodle login information, we strongly recommend you immediately take the tutorial found inside Moodle, which will take about 45 minutes to an hour and a half, depending on your computer speed and personal computer skills. This will answer most of your technical questions; other questions may be posed to your instructor, or to tech staff.

Class chat may be by instant messaging via Skype.com, or it may be voice-to-voice via Skype.com, requiring a computer microphone. If your computer has sound, but no microphone, you may purchase a headset or webcam (with sound) for a reasonable price at any store which sells computer electronics.

My login information hasn't arrived. How can I get into my classroom?

Your login information will arrive in an e-mail from tech support or the CHS office. If you have not received this e-mail one week before your class starts please e-mail CHS@cherryhillseminary.org.