

Disability and Theological Education – Self-assessment Tool

This tool was derived from the Policy Guideline on Disability and Theological Education* (C9-11) adopted as advice and counsel by the Association of Theological Schools in 2008. Unlike the ATS Standards of Accreditation, however, neither the guidelines nor this self-assessment tool holds ATS member schools accountable for implementing them in school policies or procedures.

Seminary _____

Directions: Read through the *Disability and Theological Education* document first to get a sense of the background and scope of the guideline. Have faculty and students with and without disabilities complete the form independently.

Key: Rate each item on a scale of 5 (we do this frequently and/or well; we agree strongly) to 1 (we do this rarely or poorly), depending on how consistently and thoroughly each item is applied or carried out at the seminary.

5 4 3 2 1	Item	Comments
Mission		
5 4 3 2 1	This school lives toward a vision of inclusion of all God's people.	
5 4 3 2 1	We welcome people with disabilities into the communal life and mission of this institution.	
5 4 3 2 1	We work to become a model for our constituents regarding ministry with persons who have disabilities.	
5 4 3 2 1	We concur that issues of disability play a crucial role in Christian ministerial formation.	
5 4 3 2 1	We have examined our mission statement to ensure that qualified persons with disabilities are not excluded from education for ministry.	
5 4 3 2 1	We prepare students for ministry with attention to the unique gifts and needs of person with disabilities who will be in their congregations and communities.	
Recruitment, admission, hiring, and retention of people with disabilities		
5 4 3 2 1	Qualified students with disabilities are recruited with the same care and enthusiasm as other students.	
5 4 3 2 1	Qualified students with disabilities are admitted under the same guidelines and screening as other students.	
5 4 3 2 1	Qualified persons with disabilities are sought and equally considered as faculty members, administrators, board members, and staff.	

5 4 3 2 1	Qualified persons with disabilities are recruited with the same intentionality as other underrepresented groups.	
Curriculum and outcomes		
5 4 3 2 1	We provide curricular attention to issues of disability and interaction with persons living with disabilities to cultivate the capacity of leaders to respond in ministry, teaching, and congregational settings.	
5 4 3 2 1	We infuse knowledge about the experience of disability throughout the curriculum.	
5 4 3 2 1	We offer courses specifically focused on disability.	
5 4 3 2 1	We have a process to assess whether our curriculum includes the contributions of persons with disabilities and responds appropriately to their needs. This process includes:	
5 4 3 2 1	1) Advances in curriculum development and formation for effective ministry to and with persons with disabilities	
5 4 3 2 1	2)	
5 4 3 2 1	3) Our progress in recruiting qualified persons with disabilities including students, staff, and faculty.	
5 4 3 2 1	4)	
5 4 3 2 1	5) The impact on students and their ministries from the greater presence of persons with disabilities in our seminary community.	
Removing barriers to participation; access and physical environment		
5 4 3 2 1	We strive to provide access to all aspects of seminary life by removing barriers to full participation unless doing so would result in an undue hardship or fundamentally alter our programs and requirements.	
5 4 3 2 1	We remove barriers by making changes in customary practice, routines of activities and events, and the individual's environment.	
5 4 3 2 1	We have a clear set of guidelines and a process for responding to students who present the need for changes and services.	
5 4 3 2 1	We support faculty and staff with training and resources to deal appropriately and sensitively with students who have special educational needs.	
5 4 3 2 1	We provide a physically hospitable environment for study, work, worship, and everyday activities.	

5 4 3 2 1	We have addressed environmental barriers related to parking, steps, doorways and bathrooms as needed.	
5 4 3 2 1	We have addressed accessibility to classrooms, offices, library, food service, living quarters, and social and worship spaces as appropriate.	
5 4 3 2 1	We ensure that access to technology and its ease of use are readily available to all in the community.	
5 4 3 2 1	We have completed a recent accessibility audit of the campus to identify needed modifications, creative approaches to alter customary patterns, and priorities for the future.	
5 4 3 2 1	The audit involved consultation with people with disabilities.	
Financial commitment		
5 4 3 2 1	Financial constraints do not unduly prohibit us from making the commitments necessary to becoming an environment that employs and educates qualified persons with disabilities and to developing the resources needed to make this vision a reality.	
5 4 3 2 1	We seek out potential resources and partner organizations that might provide expertise and assistance in meeting our needs.	
Seminary community awareness		
5 4 3 2 1	We intentionally consider the necessary steps to ensure a hospitable community and to identify and remove barriers of attitude.	
5 4 3 2 1	We provide opportunities to raise awareness and understanding of the gifts and needs that accompany the presence of persons with disabilities in the school community.	
5 4 3 2 1	Our training provides theological grounding and practical equipping that enhances our inclusion of persons with disabilities.	
5 4 3 2 1	We examine our personnel practices to ensure our workplace is open to persons with disabilities.	
5 4 3 2 1	We offer assistance to our faculty in identifying and implementing strategies for providing hospitable learning environments and sensitive pedagogies for students with disabilities. The strategies attend to classroom, study experiences, and contextual learning settings.	

5 4 3 2 1	We give attention to formation issues in the student community that include a broadened understanding of persons living with disabilities.	
Relationship with church bodies		
5 4 3 2 1	As appropriate and when requested, we serve as advocates and interpreters on behalf of students who may be negotiating processes with church officials and committees that are unaccustomed to working with candidates who have a disability.	
5 4 3 2 1	We provide clergy continuing education regarding ministry to and with persons with disabilities.	
5 4 3 2 1	We raise awareness and foster action around issues of inclusion for persons with disabilities.	
<p>*Source: http://www.ats.edu/uploads/about-ats/documents/association-policy-guidelines.pdf, Approved 6/2010, Posted 2/17/15, pp 13-17.</p>		

Recommendations and priorities:

Date _____ Completed by _____