

Report to the 2018 Synod Moravian Theological Seminary

Mission, Purpose and Values

Moravian Theological Seminary offers graduate degrees and continuing education programs to prepare men and women for effective leadership and service in congregational, counseling, chaplaincy, teaching, and other ministries. The Seminary is rooted in the Moravian faith tradition—centered in Jesus Christ, grounded in Scripture, ecumenical in spirit, committed to community, and focused on missional leadership.

Responsibilities

MTS serves as the denominational seminary for the Moravian Church in America and as a regional, ecumenical seminary welcoming students from about fifteen religious traditions each semester. MTS serves as one of three schools within Moravian College and its work fits within the College's overarching mission: "Moravian College's liberal arts education prepares each individual for a reflective life, fulfilling careers, and transformative leadership in a world of change."

We constantly keep in mind the fact that on the other side of all of our programs are actual human beings with joys and sorrows, strengths and needs. We see our primary "constituents" to be the people and communities our graduates serve in the course of their ministries. To that end, we offer programs in which students critically and faithfully engage their traditions, seeking those beliefs and practices that endure while exploring new insights and approaches to ministry in light of the changing contexts in which we live—locally and globally. Our goal is to prepare our graduates to be lifelong learners who step into the future with faith, hope, and love, using their knowledge, skills, and being to develop new forms of ministry according to God's call, while also deepening their capacity to lead and serve.

In response to 2014 Synod's Resolution 20, MTS developed with Wake Forest Divinity School a process to facilitate transfer of credit to WFU for the 12-credit Certificate in Moravian Studies, as well as any additional requirements by the PEC. This is aimed at those WFU students who are candidates for ministry and who, with PEC approval, are completing Moravian Church ordination requirements through distance learning.

Summary of Activities

- MTS and Moravian College developed a Memo of Understanding with Teofilo Kisanji University in Mbeya, Tanzania to define areas for research, instruction, and administrative and infrastructure development in which we desire to work together. We also have worked with the Unity Board to facilitate online education for a student preparing for ministry in Albania. Two MTS faculty members—Craig Atwood and Riddick Weber—have assisted developing Moravian churches in Cuba by offering courses in Moravian history and theology. We also have been granted money by the Moravian Church Foundation to underwrite online education for persons in other Moravian provinces.
- The faculty revised the Master of Divinity, MA in Theological Studies, and MA in Clinical Counseling programs; added an MA in Chaplaincy program, and added Certificates in Spiritual Direction and Moravian Studies. We eliminated traditional departments (biblical studies, theology, etc.) and reorganized programs by learning outcomes: Biblical Knowledge and Interpretation, Intercultural Engagement and Action, Intellectual and Professional Integration, Theological and Ecclesiastical Heritage, Clinical Counseling, Pastoral Leadership, and Personal and Spiritual Formation.

- In response to needs in the Moravian Church, MTS built on technology existing at the College in order to offer graduate distance learning courses to candidates for ministry, as well as continuing education courses for lay persons through our Crossroads program. Using real time videoconference platforms, Moravian students have taken courses from Florida, Winston-Salem, Pittsburgh, Toronto, New York City, Charlotte, Wisconsin, England, and Albania. We seek to expand our use of these technologies in order to serve the larger Moravian Church more fully, both onsite and at a distance.
- In response to the diversity of our student body and society in general—in terms of race, ethnicity, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, age, veteran status, or mental or physical disability—we have worked with the Krista Foundation to increase faculty, staff, and students’ ability to work (and live together) well with diverse persons and to identify and engage the intercultural and social dynamics at work in various ministry settings.
- Like most nonprofit institutions, the Seminary operates within a constrained environment and works hard to balance our budget without sacrificing academic integrity. Thanks to the endowment, the financial support of Northern and Southern Provinces and prudent fiscal stewardship, each year we have balanced our budget and sought to maximize our service to the provinces and the larger Church.
- In 2015, the Seminary Board of Trustees—which had voted to end faculty tenure in the 1970s—concluded a year-long study of risks and positive effects of faculty tenure by reinstating tenure. This brings faculty into alignment with the rest of the College and strengthens our ability to recruit and retain quality faculty. Currently, five of the seven full time faculty have been granted tenure.
- Each year, faculty and some staff write denominational and academic publications and present papers or provide leadership at the Society of Biblical Literature, the American Academy of Religion, the American Psychological Association, or other conferences around the country. They also lead retreats and workshops, and teach a variety of educational programs in congregational, district, provincial, and interprovincial settings—in the Moravian Church and other denominations. Along with evaluation of teaching, these contributions play an important role in faculty evaluation and tenure.
- The Seminary’s Center for Moravian Studies has continued to work with the Moravian Archives, Moravian College, Moravian Music Foundation, and Moravian Historical Society to offer a biennial Moravian History and Music Conference. This attracts scholars, musicians, and participants locally, nationally, and internationally and contributes to increased depth of our understanding of Moravian history, music, and worship. The next conference will be held October 11-13 in Bethlehem, PA.
- During the 2016-17 academic year, faculty and staff spent significant time and energy writing an in-depth self study for the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). The previous reaffirmation of the Seminary’s accreditation took place in 2008, affirmed through 2018. An accreditation team visited the Seminary in February and submitted a very positive report, with final vote by ATS in June 2018.

Future Direction and Opportunities

The tables below provide key statistics related to the Seminary’s student body and academic programs. (Tables only show Fall numbers for each year. These provide an accurate snapshot, since spring enrollments typically show little change from fall.) Our Fall 2017 enrollment was lower than anticipated, with a full time equivalent (FTE) of 45 and Headcount of 82. In 2017-18 in particular, we experienced a lower than usual number of incoming MDiv students, including Moravian MDiv students. MTS seems now to be experiencing the downward enrollment trend (particularly in the MDiv) that other ATS schools have been experiencing for the past decade.

A discussion with the Seminary Board of Trustees in October reviewed the complex nature of enrollment and recruitment at seminaries in general and MTS specifically. It included these points:

- There is a challenge throughout North America in encouraging people to enter full time ministry.
- Most denominations now encourage MDiv students to consider or plan for bi-vocational work.
- Thirty-five to forty years ago, based on ATS data that said "don't put all your eggs in the MDiv basket," Seminary leaders created new programs to diversify offerings and increase sustainability.
- We have added new programs in the past eight years and are currently considering additional graduate and continuing education programs tailored to the educational and formational needs of different ministries—short term certificates, perhaps a 2 year degree in ministry (ATS still requires MDiv to be 3 years. We don't see that degree going away).
- We continue to determine the best methods of delivering programs: online, onsite, hybrid, etc.
- Both the Northern and Southern Province Synods will be considering the best ways for the Church and the Seminary to prepare people for a variety of traditional and new, ordained and lay ministries to which God calls us. The Seminary enthusiastically seeks to engage those conversations and offer programs that meet the needs of the individuals and communities our graduates lead and serve.

a. Overall Enrollment Profile:

	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017
Number of Students	95	98	95	82
Full Time Equivalents	53	52	50	45
Number of New Students	22	29	26	15
Full-Time Students (%)	29%	22%	22%	20%
Female Students (%)	52%	68%	69%	72%
Moravian Students (%)	16%	22%	22%	15%
Racial/Ethnic Diversity (%)	27%	22%	22%	23%

b. Enrollment in Academic Programs by headcount:

	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017
Master of Divinity	26%	26%	32%	22%
Master of Arts in Clinical Counseling	17%	20%	20%	26%
Master of Arts in Theological Studies	28%	26%	24%	23%
Master of Arts in Chaplaincy	n/a	n/a	n/a	7%
Formative Spirituality/Spiritual Direction	9%	9%	3%	9%
Non-degree	19%	19%	21%	13%

d. Moravian Students at MTS by Headcount

Headcount	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017
Total Northern Province				
MDiv	7	8	9	5
MACC	1	1	0	0
MATS	2	3	1	2
MACH	0	0	0	0
FS/SD	0	0	0	0
Non Degree	1	4	2	0
TOTAL	11	16	12	7

Total Southern Province				
MDiv	1	2	2	3
MACC	0	1	1	1
MATS	1	0	0	0
MACH	0	0	0	0
FS/SD	0	0	0	0
Non Degree (Distance)	2	3	6	0
TOTAL	4	6	9	4

e. Moravian Students at MTS by Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

FTE	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017
Northern Province	9.9	9.2	8.6	5.5
Eastern	6.2	5	4.9	3.2
Western	3.7	4.2	4.4	2.2
Canadian	0	0	0	0
Southern Province	3.2	4	4.9	3.8
Total	13.1	13.2	13.5	9.3