



PACIFIC LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Internship

Manual for
Supervisors and Interns

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PACIFIC LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (PLTS), a seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is a faith and learning community dedicated to excellence in theological education for developing leaders for the church in the world.

Our location (West Coast, best coast!), dynamic faculty, cutting-edge curriculum, closely-knit community, and membership in the Graduate Theological Union provide a unique setting for engaging issues of Christian faith, discipleship, and the communication of the gospel to a world in need of truly good news.

PLTS is an inclusive community and offers hospitality to all who participate in our programs of study. As disciples of Christ committed to public leadership among God's people in diverse and challenging cultural contexts, we eagerly learn from and welcome one another's diversity, including, but not limited to, theological perspective, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, relationship status, age, physical ability, social and economic status, and sexual orientation.

PLTS Orientating Perspectives

- **Nurturing a life-giving relationship with God** includes embracing and sharing the life-changing power of God's love through Jesus and cultivating spiritual practices and skills for building community that strengthens people spiritually.
- **Intellectual engagement with Scripture, faith traditions, and the world** involves hearing and interacting with theological voices from the margins of power and privilege and putting Christian beliefs and practices into collaborative engagement with other religious traditions and secular disciplines.
- **Faithful social transformation** grounded in the good news of Jesus Christ endeavors to build communities of resistance and hope by integrating the spiritual and political dimensions of life through theological reflection, social analysis, and implementing strategies to work for justice and ecological healing.
- **Learning through a socio-ecological lens** that looks at race, class, gender, and earth in order to develop competencies for effective community engagement in diverse cultural and political contexts.

INTRODUCTION

What is internship in the ELCA?

Candidates for ELCA ordination into the Ministry of Word and Sacrament are required to complete 2000 hours of internship in a congregation or an agency/congregation combination under the supervision of an experienced pastor. At PLTS, students typically meet this requirement through a full-time, 12-month immersive experience.

Candidates for ELCA ordination into the Ministry of Word and Service are required to complete 1000 hours of internship in a congregation or an agency/congregation combination, under the supervision of an experienced deacon, pastor, and/or nonprofit leader. At PLTS, this requirement is met through full-time or part-time experience, the details of which will be agreed upon in conversation with the Director of Contextual Education and the Intern's Candidacy Committee.

The purpose of internship is to facilitate vocational skill development and assist in the diaconal and pastoral formation of the Intern. Supervisors work with Interns in the various areas of ministry and reflect with them about their learning and growth in regular supervisory sessions. The internship Lay Committee also meets regularly with the Intern and is involved in the preparation of the Intern for ordained ministry. Periodic evaluation reports are submitted to the Office of Contextual Education by the Supervisor, Intern, and Lay Committee.

How to use this manual

This manual provides information – ranging from boundaries to vacation time to financial and health questions – for both Interns and Supervisors as they prepare for and journey through the internship year together. It has been shaped with both Intern and Supervisor in mind and thus may answer most logistical questions for the year. Should you need clarification around any topic or encounter an issue that is not included in the manual, please contact the Office of Contextual Education. *There is a separate Manual for the Lay Committee, which can be found on the PLTS website.*

WORD AND SACRAMENT INTERNSHIP TIMELINE (based on a 12-month internship)

- All PLTS Internship Forms can be found at <https://www.plts.edu/students/forms.html>
- Evaluation Forms can be found on the ELCA Website on the [Candidacy Resources page](#).
- Interns should be in close communication with their Candidacy Committee, and the PLTS Associate Dean, regarding their individual timeline for Approval, and in close communication with their Office of the Bishop regarding their individual timeline for the First Call Process.
- Those in ELCA Region 2 will attend Cluster meetings arranged by the Director of Contextual Education at PLTS. Other ELCA seminaries will contact those in other ELCA Regions.

Before Internship starts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team Building Workshop in May (Intern and Supervisor) • Intern & Supervisor talk about start date, vacation time, weekly schedule, and hopes for self-care • Establish Lay Committee (Supervisor)
First Two Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service of Installation/Welcome – found in Lay Committee Manual (Supervisor + Lay Committee) • Intern and Supervisor review basic plans for vacation time, weekly schedule, and hopes for self-care • Complete and submit Arrival Form and Assignment Due Date Form to the Office of Contextual Education
First Month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Book/Resource Declaration Form, Learning Service Agreement, and Proposed Preaching Schedule to the Office of Contextual Education.
Second Month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on Project Plan • Submit Project Plan to the Office of Contextual Education by the end of the month
Third Month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit LSA <i>before</i> working on the Three Month Evaluation • Complete, discuss and sign the Three Month Evaluation Form (Intern + Supervisor only) • Submit Three Month Evaluation Forms to the Office of Contextual Education and the Candidacy Committee by the end of the month
Sixth Month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit LSA <i>before</i> working on Midyear Evaluation • Work on Midyear Evaluation Forms (Intern, Committee, and Supervisor) • Submit Midyear Evaluation Forms to the Office of Contextual Education and the Candidacy Committee by the end of the month

<p>Ninth Month</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit LSA <i>before</i> working on Final Evaluation and Summary Paragraph Forms • Work on Final Evaluation Forms (Intern, Committee, and Supervisor) • Complete and submit the PLTS Summary Recommendation Paragraph Form to the Office of Contextual Education • Discuss, sign and submit the Final Evaluation Forms to the Office of Contextual Education and the Candidacy Committee once completed
<p>Tenth Month</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Book/Resource Reporting Form to the Office of Contextual Education
<p>Eleventh Month</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn in Internship Project Review Paper to the Office of Contextual Education by the end of the month, or schedule a one-to-one with the Director of Contextual Education
<p>Final Month</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit LSA • Complete, discuss, and sign PLTS Final Evaluation Update Forms before the intern departs and submit to the Office of Contextual Education by the end of the month • Service of Godspeed and Farewell • Appropriate closure

WORD AND SERVICE INTERNSHIP TIMELINE (based on a 6-month internship)

Notes:

- All PLTS Internship Forms can be found at <https://www.plts.edu/students/forms.html>
- Evaluation Forms can be found on the ELCA Website on the [Candidacy Resources page](#).
- Interns should be in close communication with their Candidacy Committee, and the PLTS Associate Dean, regarding their individual timeline for Approval, and in close communication with their Office of the Bishop regarding their individual timeline for the First Call Process.
- Those in ELCA Region 2 will attend Cluster meetings arranged by the Director of Contextual Education at PLTS. Other ELCA seminaries will contact those in other ELCA Regions.

Before Internship starts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team Building Workshop in May (Intern and Supervisor) • Intern & Supervisor talk about start date, vacation time, weekly schedule, and hopes for self-care • Establish Lay Committee (Supervisor)
First Two Weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service of Installation/Welcome in Congregation- found in Lay Committee Manual (Supervisor + Lay Committee) • Intern and Supervisor review basic plans for vacation time, weekly schedule, and hopes for self-care • Complete and submit Arrival Form and Assignment Due Date Form to the Office of Contextual Education
First Month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Learning Covenant, Learning Service Agreement, and Proposed Preaching Schedule to the Office of Contextual Education.
Second Month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on Project Plan • Submit Project Plan to the Office of Contextual Education by the end of the month
Third Month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit Learning Covenant and LSA <i>before</i> working on the Mid-Year Evaluation • Complete, discuss and sign the Mid-Year Evaluation Forms • Submit Mid-Year Evaluation Forms to the Office of Contextual Education and the Candidacy Committee by the end of the month
Sixth Month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit Learning Covenant & LSA <i>before</i> working on Midyear Evaluation • Work on Final Evaluation Forms • Submit Final Evaluation Forms to the Office of Contextual Education and the Candidacy Committee by the end of the month

RELATIONSHIPS AND BOUNDARIES DURING INTERNSHIP

During the internship year, relationships are formed, change, and develop as the Intern learns about serving in a ministerial setting. This happens on many different levels.

The Intern's Personal Life

The internship year presents many challenges to maintaining a healthy personal life in the midst of a very public vocational life. Internship likely means moving away from vital friendships and support networks. Thus, some issues may arise, such as getting personal support on internship, balancing public ministry with private time, and having a social life outside of the congregation. The ELCA expects interns to maintain the professional, ethical boundaries of clergy. This is a good topic for conversation with the Supervisor, Lay Committee, and any external mentor or spiritual guide the Intern may have.

Understanding boundaries is an important skill to be developed during internship – especially for those serving in a congregational setting.

For a married/partnered intern, the spouse/partner will also have to make adjustments. The spouse/partner often enters into the new context without their own reasons for being there. Instead, they are present only because of the relationship to the Intern. Individual goals, aspirations, careers, and family plans need to be considered while living into the realities of ordained ministry.

Interns who are single also face challenging issues since building community and relationships outside the congregation require extra time and energy. Loneliness is common, and heightened attention on one's singleness can amplify the feeling of living in a fishbowl. Because of this, finding places for exploring common interests with people outside the congregation, such as book clubs, community choirs, hiking, biking, etc., is important.

Maintaining ties with family and friends in other locales is tremendously helpful, and time should be made to continue to nurture these relationships of support and care.

Seminary and the internship experience can bring times of economic hardship. While interns are encouraged to share their life experience and the fullness of their emotions with the congregation, they should be mindful of doing so in a manner that does not encourage community members to step up and help them financially. Congregations may decide to offer financial support through difficult times, but interns should not solicit or seek out such help intentionally. The Intern should never take a loan, advance, or credit from any member of the community in which they are serving. If a financial need arises, interns should consult with financial aid personnel at California Lutheran University. Should supervisors notice such behaviors on the part of the Intern, they are encouraged to contact the Director of Contextual Education to discuss appropriate steps for addressing the issue.

The Intern needs to be systematic, intentional, and able to set priorities so that all relationships continue to develop. Internship should not be superficial or exhausting, but rich, deep, and satisfying.

With the Congregation

Many important relationships in the congregation must be developed and nurtured over the course of the Intern's service. The Intern's relationship with the Supervisor is the most important one to be developed as the Supervisor will become the Intern's mentor and supporter as the Intern takes on the role of ministering in and through the congregation or agency.

Establishing an open and trusting relationship with the Lay Committee will help the Intern understand the congregation or agency and give the Intern a safe place to discuss their experiences. The Congregation Council or agency Board, along with the Supervisor, exercises formal authority over the internship on

behalf of the congregation or agency. The Intern will attend meetings of the Council or Board, with participation varying from site to site. The Intern may be expected to make regular reports on their activity, work with committees, and work with certain Council or Board members on particular projects.

Relationships developed with individuals form the heart of ministry. Relational abilities and a willingness to enter into relationships with individuals are necessary skills for effective ministry. Often, an intern will be expected to work more closely with some groups – such as children, youth, seniors, etc. – than others because of individual educational developmental needs. Care should be taken to maintain appropriate boundaries in all relationships. In a congregational setting the Intern should not date a member of the congregation or a congregational staff member during the time of internship.

A note on our Sexual Harassment Policy: The Criteria and Standards for Settings in the Candidacy Manual stipulate that “congregations are expected to have a written policy for sexual ethics.”. The Intern is to read this policy.

With the Larger Church

The Supervisor and Intern serve in the context of an institution that extends beyond the boundaries of the congregation, agency, or ministry. The opportunity for involvement with structures of the larger church varies among internship settings. Effort should be made to become familiar with the Churchwide Organization, the local Synod, and Conferences or Clusters. Likewise, some awareness of the other churches and nonprofit agencies within the local community would be valuable, as would participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities.

With the Seminary

The seminary intentionally assumes a lower profile during the internship year to permit full immersion in the local setting. On-going communication with the Director of Contextual Education will occur to reflect, affirm strengths, discuss areas of growth, and suggest plans and goals. It is important to contact the seminary sooner rather than later if there are concerns or conflicts in the internship. In addition to the Director of Contextual Education, faculty advisers, other faculty, contextual education, and other staff, the Spiritual Care Team and fellow interns are resources for the Intern during this year. The frequency of this contact depends upon the inclination and interest of the Intern.

The contextual education offices at each ELCA seminary will take collective responsibility for organizing cluster meetings in the various geographic regions. These clusters provide the opportunity for fellowship, the enhancement of personal and professional growth, and the strengthening of supervisory relationships. Cluster meetings are held twice each year, and attendance is a required part of internship.

With the Community

While the location of ministry may be a particular congregation, ministry, or agency, the context of ministry includes the larger community. The extent and specific details of the Intern’s involvement in the community are an individual matter, but some involvement should occur.

Two of PLTS’s Orienting Perspectives are 1) the lenses of the faithful social transformation; and 2) learning through a socio-ecological lens that considers the nexus of race, class, gender, and earth. The internship should provide opportunities to analyze the causes of oppression and injustice in the local community as well as at a regional and national level, and the Intern should begin to develop leadership skills in addressing those causes. And, as “tellers of the Christian story,” the Intern will hone their skills in proclaiming the Gospel message with its healing and freeing power.

Understanding the Supervisor-Intern Relationship

The relationship between the Supervisor and the Intern is at the core of the internship. The Supervisor is expected to serve as a faithful embodiment of leadership and the office to which they have been called, give guidance and instruction about ministry and provide feedback and evaluation for the Intern about the Intern's competence for the diaconal or pastoral role and function. These expectations are at the heart of the Supervisor-Intern relationship, and they are to have high priority.

The Supervisor essentially is an adjunct faculty member for the internship year. Together, the Intern and the Supervisor develop the goals and objectives in the Learning Service Agreement (LSA). While the Intern should guide the conversation based on their understanding of their own growth needs, the process should be collaborative as the Supervisor reflects how the Intern might learn and grow within their particular context.

The learning and vocational formation of the Intern is the primary focus of the supervisory sessions. These sessions should be scheduled once a week for a minimum of one hour in a setting relatively free from outside disturbances. Although planning may be a part of such sessions, attention to theological reflection and integration are the most crucial elements of this time together.

It is expected that personal concerns will enter the conversation during reflection sessions. The relationship should not intentionally become that of counselor-counselee in any professional sense. A helpful rule of thumb is: if more than half of the session is spent on a personal problem, it is time to find another resource, such as a therapist or spiritual director. It is too difficult to keep proper boundaries if either the Supervisor or Intern takes on the role of counselor. If the Supervisor or Intern needs professional counseling, they should seek it from someone outside the ministry.

Because of the close working relationship, friendships may develop between the Intern and Supervisor. This is natural and good! It is important to remember that there is an imbalance of power in the supervisory relationship. Awareness of this power dynamic is important for a healthy learning environment. The Supervisor and Intern should seek a relationship that is personally satisfying as well as professionally valuable.

Professional loyalty is an essential principle of a viable Supervisor-Intern relationship. As we know, unhealthy triangulation is common in groups of people. It means issues, complaints, problems, or difficulties are privately discussed with each other before being discussed anywhere else. Both the Intern and Supervisor need to be alert to this possibility. Members and staff of the congregation, ministry, or agency need to know that the Intern is in a supervised ministry setting and that all pastoral and ministry concerns will be shared with the Supervisor.

Conflicts can also develop between the Supervisor and Intern. When conflicts arise, we urge the Supervisor and Intern to approach conflict creatively, treating each situation as an opportunity for learning. The Director of Contextual Education is an available resource for both the Supervisor and the Intern for strategizing, especially if the conflict becomes problematic.

Goal Setting and the Supervisory Role

Internship is a journey in the development of diaconal and pastoral identity. Aptitude and ability for leadership in ministry are tested under supervision. A supportive and helpful setting provides the most effective formation for ministry.

First and foremost, the Supervisor's role is to help the Intern learn through the action-reflection model inherent in the internship setting. The goals of these conversations are many, including:

1. To help the Intern set meaningful and realistic goals for growth for the internship year.
2. To see the internship as part of a larger process of development in preparation for ministry.
3. To be supportive as the Intern's strengths and growth areas are pointed out.
4. To help the Intern integrate theological and conceptual learning with ministerial and administrative skills.
5. To aid the Intern in perceiving personal and professional growth dynamics and accepting constructive criticism and compliments that may accompany such growth.
6. To help the Intern achieve a realistic understanding of the nature of the church and its ministry.
7. To help the Intern develop a habit of theological reflection in the practice of ministry.

These goals make it clear that supervision includes the careful planning of the Intern's responsibilities, the periodic review of the Intern's ministry, and the constructive consideration of the Intern's professional growth and diaconal or pastoral identity.

The tracking of learning outcomes are the primary responsibility of the Intern, and include the following: (samples of which can be found in the appendix and the full versions on the PLTS website and Moodle)

1. The Learning Service Agreement
2. The Internship Project Plan
3. The Book/Resource Choice
4. The Book/Resource Project Reflection
5. The Preaching Schedule
6. The Internship Project final reflection paper or conversation
7. Scheduling the Fall and Spring Zoom "site visits" with the Intern, Supervisor(s), Lay Committee Chair, & the Director of Contextual Education

Time Management and Leadership Style

The task for the ordained minister is to develop a leadership style that achieves some balance between spontaneity and structure, discipline and serendipity, opportunities and responsibilities, giving and receiving. The deacon or pastor needs to decide what to leave undone and what priorities to set, and what things to let shape the working agenda.

While we recognize that pastors and deacons regularly work more than 40 hours/week, we ask that the Intern's responsibilities typically be limited to an average of 40 hours/week, recognizing that some seasons require more hours worked than others. The internship year is a pivotal year of transition for the Intern from classroom student to a well-trained novice deacon or pastor. Easing the Intern into the full schedule of leadership is key to a successful launch into a first call. It is important for the Intern to discuss scheduling expectations with the Supervisor and that the Intern is given their allotted vacation time (see the 'Money Talk' section of this document for allotted time).

Priorities in ministry are determined by a faithful reading of scripture, one's theological convictions, church policies and polity, and contextual circumstances. In most settings, pastors are expected to see that the worship, educational, pastoral care, administrative, and ministry needs of the community to which they are called are addressed. Deacons are expected to fulfill the specifics of their job description and be the bridge between the faith community and the world. Usually, there will be both opportunity and desire for developing particular interests in ministry as well. As ministries seek to witness to the Gospel in their communities and in the larger global context, the leadership of the deacon or pastor becomes especially important. Effectiveness in any or all of these areas will involve both discipline and commitment.

There is freedom to the ministry that should not be ignored. Neither should it be thrown away by undisciplined or unfocused activity. There is some flexibility in planning the schedule. There will be periods in the year when the demands of the ministry may occupy much of the time for several days or even weeks on end. However, when that particular period is over, the well-disciplined pastor or deacon can devote time and attention to interests neglected earlier, including personal and family interests, study, and recreational needs.

CHANGING DIRECTIONS: ENDING AN INTERNSHIP

When an internship begins to falter, there can be many different reasons. Most challenges and conflicts can be overcome and a healthy relationship restored. When problems are addressed directly, it often results in an even more effective and successful internship experience. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to consult with the Director of Contextual Education sooner rather than later.

Still, there are situations when careful and attentive conflict resolution does not work. The Office of Contextual Education desires healthy and life-giving internship experiences for the Intern, the Supervisor, and the internship site. Thus, when an internship becomes problematic or harmful for either or both the Intern and the ministry, it may be necessary to end an internship. This does happen occasionally, and it is important for the Intern, the Supervisor, and the internship site to be gentle and gracious in this difficult process.

The Process for Ending an Internship

Following consultation with those involved, including the Intern, Supervisor, and Lay Committee as well as, when deemed appropriate, the Intern's academic advisor and other administrators, and/or the synod's Office of the Bishop, the decision to end an internship early is made by the PLTS faculty.

The Director of Contextual Education will attempt to provide the opportunity for the congregation and the Intern to process what has happened.

For the student whose internship has ended, there is often a need for time and space to review what has happened, attend to the variety of emotions involved, and consider realistic options for the future. Accordingly, it is not advisable to seek another assignment immediately. While resuming seminary coursework may be an option for some students, most students are well served by stepping back from the process entirely for at least one month. Students should be aware that they will receive such counsel routinely. The Dean's Office determines the student standing of the Intern.

Prior to any decision being made concerning another internship assignment, a consultation will occur. The consultation will include the student, a peer accompanier (if desired), the academic advisor, a Dean's Office representative, the Director of Contextual Education, and a synodical candidacy representative. Following the consultation, the decision to place a student in another internship is made by the faculty in executive session based on the consultation report and recommendations, presented by the Director of Contextual Education.

Support will be extended to the student and their immediate family during and after an internship termination. This may include:

- Provision for counseling
- Continuation of the internship stipend for one month
- Transportation and relocation expenses, not to exceed \$500

The candidacy process requires Interns to adhere to ELCA Candidacy Guidelines.

HARASSMENT & BULLYING

While the hope is always that the relationship between Supervisor, Intern, and congregation is one of mutual respect, we recognize that at times people do not operate out of their healthiest selves and on rare occasions bullying or harassment may occur. This is not acceptable behavior, and any bullying or harassing behavior should be reported immediately to the Director of Contextual Education. In cases where the person reporting does not believe that they can report to the Director of Contextual Education, or if the Director of Contextual Education is unavailable, reports can be made to the Associate Dean or the Rector. Contact information for all persons can be found on the PLTS website (www.plts.edu).

When a notification of bullying or harassment is made to PLTS, the person receiving the report will begin a file which may include one or more of the following: verbatims of conversations had; written reports, emails, or letters received or shared with PLTS; social media posts; and notes made.

The person receiving the report will notify the Associate Dean and they will make a decision about who else at PLTS to include in the process. The person who made the report will be notified of who is in this group. Should the Intern wish to report a Title IX grievance, they should work directly with the Associate Dean.

When a report of bullying or harassment perpetrated by the Supervisor or member of the congregation is filed, the appropriate Office of the Bishop will be notified. When a report of bullying or harassment perpetrated by the Intern is filed, the intern's bishop will be notified.

If the internship is terminated due to harassment or bullying by the Supervisor, a staff member, or member of the congregation, the Contextual Education Offices of the other ELCA seminaries may be notified that an internship was terminated early through no fault of the Intern.

The power differential between Supervisor and Intern means that the Supervisor holds significant sway over the Intern and their evaluations, and this may impede the willingness of the Intern to report bullying or harassment. The concern is always for the physical, emotional, and spiritual safety of all involved, and while the cessation of an internship may impact the Intern's timeline, this should not be seen as punishment or an impediment to reporting, but as intent to have the Intern in a healthy learning environment free from harassment or bullying.

Definitions: (from the CLU [Student Handbook](#))

Bullying - the verbal, written, or physical abuse of another person beyond a reasonable expression of opinion which causes or is likely to cause another person physical or psychological harm. Behavior that causes humiliation, stress, or emotional harm is considered bullying.

Harassment is any unwelcome behavior that is reasonably regarded as offensive. Typically, such behavior may do one or more of the following:

- a. Sufficiently offend, humiliate, distress, or intrude upon its victim, so as to disrupt the victim's emotional tranquility in the living or learning environment, or
- b. Affect the victim's ability to participate in the educational program as usual, or
- c. Otherwise interfere with and undermines the victim's personal sense of well-being.

A single incident of harassing conduct may create a hostile environment if the harassing conduct has unreasonably interfered with the victim's educational program or created an intimidating, hostile, or offensive living or learning environment.

A person's intent is not germane to this policy. This means that the policy is violated when a community member, whether a recipient or mere observer, is actually offended by comments or conduct, even if the speaker or actor did not mean to offend (provided such comments or actions are deemed offensive by a reasonable person).

Examples of conduct that may constitute harassment may include but are not limited to:

- Making gestures, threats, derogatory comments, or slurs that may be reasonably regarded as offensive to individuals in a particular group
- Bullying behavior that is threatening, intimidating, verbally abusive or results in other disruptive actions in the living or learning environment
- Displaying derogatory objects, photographs, cartoons, calendars, or posters
- Displaying symbols or slogans associated with hate group

Required financial support to the seminary in support of the internship process

- The congregation/agency agrees to contribute to the seminary the sum of \$500 toward a Travel Pool to help subsidize the travel expenses to the place of internship.
- The congregation/agency agrees to pay a \$1000 administrative fee for the internship year.

Required Financial Support of the Intern

- **Stipend:** The congregation/agency will provide a monthly, undesignated cash stipend of \$2,000.00 directly to the Intern. It is called a stipend because it is not a minimum wage salary but that notwithstanding, the IRS considers the intern an employee of the church.
- **FICA:** The congregation/agency will pay the employer's share of FICA based on the total value of the stipend plus housing provided. If the housing is paid in cash (rather than the congregation renting the apartment or offering a parsonage), that amount is also considered income. With this in mind, the congregation pays the employer's portion of FICA and withholds the employee's portion for the Intern.
- **Medical Insurance:** PLTS does not require that internship sites provide health insurance coverage for Interns. Students applying to seminary should have their own health insurance to be compliant with the federal mandate for health care coverage. ELCA Seminaries do not offer student health insurance. Individual health insurance coverage is expected to be maintained throughout attendance at PLTS. Students studying abroad through the Horizon International program are provided additional coverage in foreign countries by the ELCA.
- **Work Expenses:** The congregation/agency will reimburse the Intern for approved expenses incurred in their work.
- **Travel Reimbursement:** The congregation/agency will pay automobile expenses incurred in the performance of assigned duties at the rate specified by the IRS as an allowable deduction.
- **Day Off/Vacation:** The congregation/agency will grant the intern *at least* one day off per week and two weeks paid vacation for a year's internship or a ten-day paid vacation for a nine-month internship. A two-week paid vacation is 14 days which includes weekends. The vacation is scheduled in consultation with the Supervisor.
- **Housing:** The congregation/agency will provide adequate housing, utilities included (water, electricity, gas, trash, and internet). The congregation/agency may assist in paying moving expenses in addition to the travel pool costs if they so desire. To maintain professional boundaries, the Intern should not be housed with congregants, clients, or other individuals related to the ministry programs and communities in which they will be serving.
- **Cluster Gatherings:** The congregation/agency will cover the cost of travel to and from the gatherings, including overnight accommodations, for both the Intern and the Supervisor.
- **Team-Building Retreat:** All Supervisors are required to attend an overnight retreat in late spring during which they will have the opportunity to work with Interns, other Supervisors, and the Director of Contextual Education to begin to establish hopes and expectations for their internship experience as well as to learn about seminary expectations through the internship program. The congregation/agency will pay a \$200 registration fee, and the seminary will cover the costs of the supervisors' travel.
- **Travel Pool Subsidy:** The travel pool subsidy is based on the total funds received from all internship sites. Interns will be reimbursed up to \$500 for the costs of travel to the internship site.

Other matters related to finances need to be explored by the Intern. Residency requirements differ from state to state and may affect car insurance, licensing, etc. It is the Intern's responsibility to find out what the obligations are and fulfill them as necessary.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES ON INTERNSHIP

Pastoral Vacancy

If a pastoral vacancy occurs in a congregation to which an Intern has been assigned, an automatic review of the assignment occurs. If the vacancy occurs before the internship begins, the Intern will usually be re-assigned. If the vacancy develops after the internship begins, every effort will be made to continue the internship by seeking to find alternate forms of supervision – either with the assistance of an interim pastor, a neighboring pastor or, on rare occasions, taking advantage of supervisory expertise that may be exercised by lay people within the congregation.

Family and Medical Leave

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is federally regulated. Currently, the regulation states that an employee is eligible if the employer employs 50 or more employees and the employee must have worked at least 12 months in the past year for the employer. This would mean most interns are not covered under the FMLA. We both recognize this legal fact and know that the church should be places where we treat employees, and others, following the command of Jesus to love neighbor. We offer the following guidelines in that spirit.

An extended illness or leave of the Intern can become problematic for an experience of such relatively short duration as an internship. In such situations, a careful balance must be maintained, assuring fairness to the Intern and the ministry.

1. Congregations having sick leave policies for its paid staff should apply that same policy to the Intern.
2. In the absence of an operative sick leave policy, the following is offered to the Intern and the site as counsel and advice:
 - a. For the purposes of this policy, “sick leave” may be granted for any Intern absent from duty because of accident or illness, including any illness resulting from pregnancy or childbirth.
 - b. Medical Leave Policy
 - i. Short-term illness - up to two weeks - shall not affect the stipend or housing arrangement.
 - ii. Long-term illness or disability - more than two weeks - may necessitate adjustments as negotiated by the Intern and the site, in consultation with the Office of Contextual Education and the Intern’s Candidacy Committee.
 - iii. Extended sick leave may interfere with the Intern’s ability to meet the time requirement of the ELCA and PLTS, so the Office of Contextual Education and the Intern’s Candidacy Committee should be involved in all stages of these conversations and negotiations. There is normally some flexibility allowing for negotiation for an absence of a maximum of three months. For instance, an Intern may surrender their vacation time or negotiate a reduction of stipend or even waiver of stipend if that seems appropriate. On occasion, interns can fulfill a portion of their duties by working part-time, permitting them to achieve some of their educational goals. The internship requirement should be fulfilled with a balance of integrity and compassion for one who is ill.

c. Parental Leave Policy

- i. In certain circumstances (for example, pregnancy during internship or adoption of a child), time off will be negotiated among the Intern, Congregation, and the Office of Contextual Education on a case-by-case basis.
- ii. Standard policy following the birth of a child while on full-time internship is six consecutive weeks of leave if the Intern is the one who gives birth, and four consecutive weeks if the Intern is the spouse or partner of the one who gives birth, divided as follows:
 - 2 weeks paid leave (birthing parent only to allow more time for healing)
 - 2 weeks standard paid vacation time (birthing parent or non-birthing spouse or partner)
 - 2 weeks unpaid leave (birthing parent or non-birthing spouse or partner)

Housing support continues during this time.

- iii. Note that parental leave includes the paid vacation time required as standard for all internships. Understanding the limited duration of pastoral and diaconal internships, these are to be considered reasonable, if basic, amounts. Congregations may choose to accommodate additional parental leave in consultation and agreement with the Intern, the Office of Contextual Education, and the Intern's Candidacy Committee.
- iv. When pregnancy occurs prior to the start of the internship, the internship plan will be reevaluated by all parties. Intern, congregation, seminary, and candidacy committee will together determine the suitability and timing of the internship.

RESTRICTIONS ON PASTORAL FUNCTIONS

Interns are restricted in some pastoral functions, either because of church policy or state law. Some of these are:

Holy Communion

Word and Sacrament Interns are not expected to preside at Holy Communion, and in most cases, are prohibited from doing so. Consultation with the appropriate synodical bishop(s) as well as the congregation council is necessary if exceptions to the general expectation are desired.

Baptism

In emergencies, an Intern may perform a baptism, as may any layperson. However, any non-emergency situation is governed by the policies of the ELCA, which call for an ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament to preside at baptisms.

Wedding

In most states, an intern may not legally officiate at a wedding service. Although there are exceptions to the general rule, they are rare, and interns should not assume the right or privilege of performing a wedding while on internship.

Funeral

Neither church policy nor state law insists that an ordained person conduct funerals. Therefore, interns are free to conduct funerals with the consent and guidance of the supervising pastor.

APPENDIX

- i. Instructions for Learning Service Agreement
- ii. Instructions for Internship Project Plan
- iii. Instructions for the Book / Resource Project
- iv. Evaluations & Summary Recommendations

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE LEARNING SERVICE AGREEMENT

The Learning Service Agreement (LSA) is used to help set meaningful and realistic goals for the Intern over the course of the year. The Intern should propose goals, taking into account their growth areas. These goals may be in areas such as administration, preaching, leadership skills, or dealing with conflict. The Intern's proposed goals are developed in consultation with the Supervisor and Lay Committee to determine if the congregation's ministry can support the goals. The goals may help frame the Intern's responsibilities, the periodic review of the Intern's ministry, and the constructive consideration of the Intern's personal and professional needs.

Underneath each goal is a series of objectives. While the goal is a broad summary statement that is inclusive, far-reaching, and visionary, an objective is "a mini-goal" that focuses on a specific aspect of the overall goal. Effective objectives are:

1. achievable
2. agreed to by the principal parties
3. specific
4. measurable, containing some means of evaluation
5. possible, given the time limits of the program
6. moderately challenging

The LSA also involves strategies, resources, and evaluation. Strategies and resources specify how an objective will be achieved. Strategies are activities, techniques, and tools. Resources are people and materials (media, curriculum, books). Evaluation determines if the goals have been achieved. When creating goals, consider how they will be evaluated - questionnaire, comments from parishioners, verbatims, observation from supervising pastor and peers, etc.

The LSA form can be found on the PLTS website. Before submitting the form to the Office of Contextual Education, the Intern, Supervisor, and Lay Committee should all discuss the goals, objectives, strategies, resources, and modes of evaluation.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE INTERNSHIP PROJECT

The purpose of the internship project is twofold:

1. to provide the Intern with an opportunity to initiate and organize a program new to the life of a congregation or agency, and
2. to encourage the Intern to do additional study and ministry in an area of special interest.

The Intern's project is to be "new" to the life of the congregation or agency so that the Intern will have an opportunity to exercise initiative and to take responsibility for a project or program that is not already developed. Although the Supervisor and Lay Committee approve the Intern's project, they must also be willing to allow the project to fail. The project is a learning experience, even if it didn't 'succeed' as initially envisioned. If the Intern took initiative, was organized, and learned from the experience, it is considered a successful project.

Choosing a Project Area

The project should be selected from one of these areas: Evangelism, Stewardship, Advocacy in the Public Sphere, Ecumenism/Religious Pluralism or the Race, Class, Gender, Earth Nexus. Below are some examples of possible projects in some of the above areas.

PLEASE NOTE: Students on the Evangelism & Justice or Climate Justice and Faith tracks need to do a project related to their concentration. Please speak with the Director of the appropriate concentration if you have questions or need direction.

Evangelism Project Examples

- Do a religious survey of a particular neighborhood or area of the congregation.
- Find ways to make the congregation aware of people new to the area.
- Develop religious programs in community institutions such as hospitals, nursing homes, schools, parks, prisons, halfway houses, etc.
- Meet with evangelism committees from other congregations and denominations to see what could be done together and/or adapted to congregational use.
- Make evangelism a special congregational emphasis for Advent, Epiphany, Lent, or some other season of the church year.
- Contact people who are engaged in evangelism and who are supported by the congregation's benevolence and invite them to share their experiences.
- Establish contact with those working with migrants, inner-city or rural subsidized missionaries, and/or overseas missionaries.
- Systematize follow-up work with worship visitors by using letters, phone calls, visits, introductions during coffee hour, etc.
- Follow up on contacts made as a result of weddings, funerals, or other events where visitors or friends of congregational members are present.
- Develop an evangelism library and a system to encourage engagement with the materials.
- Use films or other media to teach evangelism to all age levels in the congregation.

Stewardship Project Examples

- Meet with stewardship committees from other congregations and denominations to see what could be done together and/or adapted to congregational use.
- Develop an adult education curriculum with a stewardship theme and teach it as a series
- Develop a stewardship library and a system to encourage reading in the area.

- Analyze the stewardship patterns of the congregation over a five-year period: the number of people making financial commitments and donating time and effort to various programs and projects—and inaugurate a plan to mobilize the “inactive.”
- Publicize the leadership contributions that members make to various volunteer organizations beyond those sponsored by the congregation and devise ways to recognize such contributions as a congregation.

Advocacy in the Public Sphere Examples

- Reach out to the state ELCA Advocacy Office and/or that of an ELCA full-communion partner. Interview the staff and/or board of the office and bring that information to the congregation – either as an educational series and/or an opportunity for the congregation to engage in new ways.
- Lead an adult or youth forum series introducing the ELCA Social Statements and Social Messages to the Congregation.
- Lead an adult or youth forum series on any ELCA Social Statement or proposed ELCA Social Statement (*if any are up for public review and comment*)
- Engage with local neighborhood groups or local elected officials to learn more about the community's needs and find ways to bring this to the congregation for meaningful engagement.
- Investigate Community Organizing groups active in your area and find ways the congregation or agency can be informed and connect with the group and/or their work.

Ecumenism/Religious Pluralism Project Examples

- Reach out to leaders of denominations or religious groups that have not participated in traditional ecumenical or interfaith activities to discover their particular needs or concerns.
- Lead an adult forum series that introduces representatives from other denominations or religions with which the congregation is unfamiliar.
- Contact an ecumenical representative from the synod and plan with them a program on ecumenism for your congregation and others in the community.
- Become involved with a local ecumenical or interfaith group, and work on ways for the congregation to intersect with their work.
- Organize visits to congregations of other denominations or faiths, and meet with appropriate counterparts (adult forums, youth group, congregation councils, committees, etc.)

Nexus Project Examples

- Introduce a new theological framework to the congregation in an education series or study (e.g., Feminist, Mujerista, Womanist, Queer, Eco or Liberation Theologies)
- Recruit congregation members to engage in work with local ecological groups and facilitate theological reflection on that work with members of the congregation who participate
- Engage with the Evangelism, Outreach, and/or Social Justice Committees to contact and interact with local leaders to discuss diversity, equity, and inclusion and then work together to pick a project for the congregation to engage with.

Creating a Project Plan

1. The Intern should write a specific project plan in consultation with the Supervisor, including the following four points:
 - a. Describe what the project will be and what it will entail.
 - b. Describe the rationale behind choosing this as the internship project.
 - c. Outline the timeline for completing the project.
 - d. Tell how you will measure the level of success of the project.
2. The Supervisor and the Lay Committee are expected to help determine if the plan is appropriate for the development of the Intern and able to be completed in the congregation.
3. The Internship Project Plan form is completed with a thought-out summary of the project plan. This is sent to the Office of Contextual Education for feedback from the Director of Contextual Education.
4. In October, the Intern will complete the Moodle assignment related to the Project – check the syllabus for the full description and due dates.
5. Interns may refine the plan as circumstances change throughout the year. If significant changes to the plan are needed, a new proposal may be necessary to be submitted to the Office of Contextual Education – please check with the Director if you are wondering if this applies to you.
6. Interns should reflect on the Project with the Supervisor and Lay Committee throughout the process and after completing the project.

Evaluation of the Project

The Supervisor and the Lay Committee should engage with the Intern in reflective conversation throughout the process and a review once the project is completed. They should consider whether the Intern demonstrated initiative and organizational skills and if the project resulted in significant new learning for the Intern.

Project Report

After completing the project and no later than one month before the completion of the internship, the Intern will submit a 3-page Project Review Paper describing the project, how it was implemented, its level of success, lessons learned through the process and the outcomes, and how this information will be useful in the Intern's future ministry. A one-to-one conversation with the Director of Contextual Education may be substituted for the paper, with prior arrangement and approval.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE BOOK / RESOURCE PROJECT

The goal of the Book / Resource Project is to engage with the work of an author or creative who is Black, Indigenous, or a Person of Color (BIPOC) and apply the information and experience of engagement with the work to the learning of all who are involved. There should be a 'what next' component to the plan – the point is not to simply do another book study, but for the material and the engagement with it to be a step toward transformative change.

At minimum, the Intern and Supervisor should engage in the resource together. If determined to be appropriate, the Lay Committee, and /or other members of friends of the congregation or agency can be invited to engage with the book or resource as well. You can choose from books, videos, podcasts, vlogs, movies, TV shows, art, etc. – whatever you decide will work for you, the context, and the people involved.

Once the choice of resource has been made (hopefully by the end of the 1st month), the Book/Resource Choice form is submitted to the Office of Contextual Education. When the work is completed, and no later than the final month of internship, the Book/Resource Reflection form should be submitted to the Office of Contextual Education. Both forms can be found on the PLTS website.

EVALUATIONS AND SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

The ELCA provides evaluation forms for use during the internship year. They are provided for use on a quarterly basis, and they should be sent to the Contextual Education Office and the Intern's Candidacy Committee on the schedule identified on the Due Dates form. PLTS asks for the ELCA forms at the three, six and nine month marks, with an update to the Final Evaluation at the end of the internship year. *Please note that the Final Evaluation is completed at the nine month mark.*

The forms can be found on the ELCA website in the Candidacy Resources section, on the Internship & Seminary tab. There are different forms for Interns, Supervisors, and Lay Committees. *Also, please note that there are different forms for Word and Sacrament and Word and Service students, so double check to make sure you are using the correct form.*

Because all PLTS interns participate in a capstone (final year) internship, the summary recommendation paragraphs that are part of the Final Evaluation are needed earlier in the year so the faculty can complete their portion of the Approval process during the academic year. Therefore, PLTS has created a Summary Recommendation form (found on the PLTS website). For Word and Sacrament Interns, the Final Evaluation can be completed at the same time, as the work on that form leads to the summary recommendation paragraphs. In the final month of the internship, the Final Evaluation Update form should be submitted to address any changes or additions to the Final Evaluation form.

The following forms will be used for Word and Sacrament Interns

- Three Month Evaluation (Intern and Supervisor only)
- Six Month Evaluation (Intern, Supervisor, and Lay Committee)
- Summary Recommendation Form
- Final Evaluation
- Evaluation Update form

The following forms may be used for Word and Service Interns. Due to the varied lengths of Word and Service internships, the decision about which forms, and the timeline will be decided between the Director of Contextual Education, the Intern, and the Supervisor on an individual basis.

- Word and Service Internship Learning Covenant
- Word and Service Check-in
- Midterm Evaluation
- Summary Recommendation Form
- Final Evaluation