



CONCORDIA SEMINARY
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI
MAY 15-16, 2025

Thursday, May 15, 2025

Board Members present: Rev. Joel Brondos, Dr. Paul Edmon, Mr. Matthew Kenitzer, Rev. Bruce Keseman, Rev. Dr. Adam Koontz, Dr. John Lang, Rev. Peter Lange, Rev. Michael Mohr, Rev. W. Maximillian Mons, Mr. Bruce Paradis, Dr. Michael Staub, Mr. Mark Stern, Mr. Timothy Wood.

Board Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: President Thomas Egger, Provost Ronald Mudge, Mr. Michael Louis, Mr. Chad Cattoor.

Guest Present: Rev. Dr. Lee Hagan.

Chairman Mons called the meeting to order at 8 a.m.

Devotion. The meeting opened with prayer and a hymn.

Minutes and Agenda

Chairman Mons welcomed Mr. Timothy Wood as a new board member; Mr. Wood introduced himself.

MOTION: Dr. Edmon moved to approve the minutes from the February 6-7, 2025 meeting with a clarification to the fourth sentence of the "Board Manual Review" section on page 2, changing "He then led" to "Dr. Staub then led"; the motion [25-15] was seconded and carried.

MOTION: Dr. Edmon moved to adopt the agenda as presented; the motion [25-16] was seconded and carried.

MOTION: Dr. Edmon moved to adopt the consent agenda as presented; the motion was seconded and carried. This resulted in the adoption of the following action items:

- Board Policy Revisions and Clarifications [25-17]
- Designate Dr. James Voelz Faculty Emeritus [25-18]
- Appoint Dr. David Lewis as Kingsbury Chair [25-19]
- Approval of Authorized Account Signers [25-20]
- Fincke Shine Budgets [25-21]
- Establishment of Housing Allowance [25-22]

- Biermann Housing Allowance Modification [25-23]
- Definition of Student Aid [25-24]
- Assign Mr. Timothy Wood to Finance Committee [25-25]

Board Manual Review. Dr. Staub led a discussion of the Board Manual, commencing with section 8, Financial Information and Policies. Mr. Stern moved to remove sections 8.1 and 8.2 from the Board Manual, place section 8.1 as a separate document within the Board portal, and renumber the remaining subsections of section 8, seriatim; the motion was seconded and carried [25-26]. Discussion continued. Mr. Kenitzer moved to delete Section 8.8.1 and to amend section 8.8.2 to change “investment allocation” to “investment policy statement” the motion was seconded and carried [25-27]. Dr. Edmon moved to remove section 8.9 from the Board Manual, and place it as a separate document within the Board portal; the motion was seconded and carried [25-28].

Governance Committee. Chairman Mons reported that personnel materials will not be included in future board packets, but will hereafter be distributed only to the Board. Mr. Paradis moved that any PIFs and SETs for previous faculty candidates be removed from accessible files in the Board portal; after discussion the motion was seconded and carried [25-29]. Mr. Stern requested that the topic of approval of honorary degrees and awards be added to the academic committee agenda.

Faculty Presentation. The Board welcomed Dr. Gerhard Bode, chairman of the Department of Historical Theology, to the meeting. Dr. Bode discussed the history of the Synod’s process for endorsing ministerial candidates for first calls. The practice of the Saxon Lutheran churches had originated in Wittenberg in the sixteenth century: training, examination, call, sending, and ordination. When Synod was founded in 1847, Article V of the Constitution created an examining committee for pastoral candidates, with three members: two theologians (seminary professors) and the Synod president chairing the commission. Examination occurred annually after Synod conventions. In 1850, Synod established a supervisory authority for both seminaries (Board of Control), and added one pastor and one layman to the Board. The Boards were to ensure that the institution was teaching in accordance with Scripture and the Confessions, and business affairs were properly managed. The examining committees were later revised in 1853 to include the Seminary presidents and the local district president, and to separate the examinations from the Synod convention.

Examinations included both written and oral components. Students also needed to provide a third-party character reference. Examinations were conducted in a public open meeting. The examinations differed between the “practical” (examined in German) and “theoretical” (examined mostly in Latin) seminaries. There was also some examination in Biblical languages. Candidates coming directly from Germany would have a similar exam. The chairman of the examining committee gave the equivalent of a theological diploma, and the district president was responsible for ordination.

The process continued largely intact until the 1940s, when the constitution was revised in 1947. At that point, the examining committees were eliminated, and the responsibility was given to the seminary

faculties, and the local district president no longer played a direct role in examination (however, by the mid-1940s seminary faculties were already recommending candidates to the Council of Presidents). Candidates had to be declared qualified “in every respect” by the faculties; that requirement remains in the current Synod Handbook. Dr. Bode stated that it is not entirely clear why the change from committee certification to faculty certification was made. He thinks that it may have been more time consuming to conduct the more detailed examinations due to the increased number of candidates. Vicarage was formalized in the 1930s, providing additional evaluations from vicarage supervisors as a resource.

Concordia Seminary currently certifies candidates en masse by vote of the faculty at a faculty meeting prior to Call Day. Dr. Bode reported that individual certification interviews are held with each graduating student by the faculty mentor for the student, for about an hour and half, prior to certification.

The Board thanked Dr. Bode for his extensively researched presentation.

The Board recessed at 9:26 a.m. for chapel.

The Board reconvened at 10:30 a.m.

President’s Report. President Egger directed the Board to his written report and discussed various activities since the last board meeting. He reported that he and Concordia Theological Seminary President Bruss object to Commission on Constitutional Matters Opinion 24-3031 and have asked the CCM to reconsider it. He also reported the receipt of a CTCR Opinion on Admission to Seminary for Divorced Men, in response to the request from the joint seminary boards for guidance on this topic.

Dr. Egger also reported that discussions continue regarding a new protocol with the American Association of Lutheran Churches (AALC) (a partner church of the LCMS) regarding attempts to use the AALC’s online seminary, the American Lutheran Theological Seminary (ALTS), as a means to train pastors with the intention of serving in the LCMS. The new protocol attempts to limit the use of the ALTS for that purpose.

Dr. Egger thanked Provost Mudge for Dr. Mudge’s work on improving the learning outcomes evaluation process in response to Association of Theological Schools (ATS) accreditation reports. Additionally, a new communications director has been added to seminary staff.

Discussion followed regarding the Center for Missional and Pastoral Leadership rogue seminary, and the recent public statements by the two seminary presidents and the Council of Presidents in response. Dr. Edmon moved that the Board enter executive session with Dr. Egger and guest present; the motion was seconded and **carried**.

The Board entered executive session at 11 a.m.

[EXECUTIVE SESSION, including adoption of action item **25-30**]

Dr. Staub reported that in accordance with the process outline in Synod Bylaw 3.10.5.6.1c, the Board voted to reappoint Dr. Thomas Egger as President for a five-year term.

The Board exited executive session at 11:48 a.m. and recessed for lunch.

The Board recessed for lunch at 12 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 1 p.m.

Synod and COP Update. Rev. Mohr reported that district convention season is ongoing; the majority of conventions (22) will occur in June. There has been some turnover on the COP. The COP has also issued a statement on the Center for Missional and Pastoral Leadership. Rev. Lange reported that 110 assignments were made between the two seminaries. Of those, 76 were MDiv, 15 SMP, and 19 were other general roster calls including alternate routes and two graduates from St. Catherine's in Ontario. 54 calls were unfilled; analysis has not yet been done on the viability of the unfilled calls. Rev. Lange updated the Board on the Concordia Texas litigation, and directed the Board to a recent article by Mr. Tom Halvorson for a summary of publicly available information. Discussion followed.

Academic Committee and Provost's Report. Dr. Edmon summarized items recently reviewed by the Academic Committee. Dr. Mudge directed the Board to his written report. He reported that he has updated credit hour figures; there was a significant discrepancy due to the inclusion for the first time of summer credit hours. The issue has now been corrected. The faculty has approved the newly simplified (simple, systematic, sustainable) outcomes for the M.Div. and RAR programs (reduced from the prior 19 outcomes). This responds to the Association of Theological Schools accreditation recommendation to simplify assessment. The five newly-defined outcomes are Christian Maturity, Biblical Fidelity, Confessional Integrity, Historical Knowledge, and Pastoral Aptitude. Dr. Mudge also reported that we have an ongoing search for an ordained admissions officer and a non-ordained admissions officer.

Dr. Mudge reported that use of full-time faculty costs the Seminary about \$8,000 per credit hour taught; if the assignment is an overload of existing full-time faculty or a guest instructor, that is reduced to about \$1,600 per credit hour.

Dr. Mudge discussed the possibility of applying for a larger scale grant from the Lilly Foundation. It was noted that if the grant were received, we would not want to create continuing unfunded obligations after funding is exhausted.

CCM Opinions 24-3031 and 24-3039. Dr. Egger outlined the role of the Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) and summarized recent opinions 24-3031 (regarding the approval process for adjunct/

guest instructions faculty) and 24-3039 (regarding the role of the Pastoral Formation Committee with respect to changes to alternate routes). He stated his opposition to opinion 24-3031 in particular, and that he and Dr. Bruss have requested that the CCM reconsider its opinion. Dr. Mudge noted that currently, Concordia Theological Seminary appoints adjunct faculty through the president with no board participation. Extensive discussion followed. It was noted that the opinion is binding and has not been stayed or withdrawn, and that the Board will need to formulate an appropriate policy in response. Dr. Egger was asked to provide his suggestions to the Academic Committee on what role, if any, he thinks that the Board should have in reviewing guest instructor appointments.

Rev. Lange moved that the governance committee provide one or more action items for the August 2025 board regarding the manner in which board members should request CCM opinions on matters relating to the seminary. The motion was seconded and carried [25-31].

Cross-Cultural Ministry Center. By action of the Board at the November 2024 meeting, consideration of an action item relating to the Cross-Cultural Ministry Center was postponed to this meeting and is again before the Board. The original motion, which originated from the Academic Committee, was that Concordia Seminary pursue updating and renewal of the Cross-Cultural Ministry Center Memorandum of Understanding with Concordia University Irvine for a term of 3 years to be presented to the Board of Regents at its November 2025 meeting, keeping the Pastoral Formation Committee informed of the status of the program and any revisions under the new Memorandum of Understanding. Dr. Edmon noted that the motion has no further applicability due to timing issues, and recommend that the Board reject the motion. It was noted that the potential renewal of the current memorandum of understanding is on the agenda for the November 2025 board meeting. After discussion, Dr. Edmon moved the previous question, which was seconded and **carried**. The main motion [25-32] failed.

Academic Committee, continued. Dr. Mudge presented an overview of faculty utilization figures in response to the Board's previous directive. He reported that we normally schedule classes in November for the summer and in January for the following academic year. Dr. Mudge has been working with the Department Chairmen, the registrar, and Kathy Daniels to make the process of scheduling classes more efficient and to help us avoid low enrollment classes. Other than homiletics, standard maximum class size is 24, and generally we will go over by a few students rather than run a second section. But, overall, average enrollment is 11.5 students per section. The most economical teaching option is use of guest instructors (adjuncts) and overload of full-time faculty, each of which costs about \$1600 per credit hour versus \$8000 for full time faculty. For 2023-2024, 30% of credits were taught by guest instructors, and for 2024-2025, 28% of credits.

Extensive discussion followed. It was noted that deaconess programs and post-graduate programs have the greatest number of low enrollment sections. Dr. Staub moved that the Academic Committee bring a recommendation for minimum cohort sizes to the August 2025 Board meeting; the motion was seconded. After discussion, the motion carried [25-33].

Recruitment. Rev. Jesse Kueker joined the meeting and directed the Board to his written report. He discussed the progress of the recruitment team. We are projecting 55.6 M.Div. students for next fall; CTS expects 40-45. Enrollment has stabilized and is growing slightly versus the 10-year trend. Admissions Officers are on the road with a Called to Serve event presentation on the church's need for pastors, vocational discernment, and an update on seminary enrollment. These events are advertised to all prospective students, LCMS church workers, and LCMS laity within 100 miles of the event location. Events have been completed in Tallahassee and Chicago, and we have three more already scheduled for Wisconsin, South Dakota, and Massachusetts. The Board thanked Rev. Kueker for his diligent efforts, and he was excused from the meeting.

Rev. Mohr moved that the Board enter executive session with Dr. Egger and staff present; the motion was seconded and **carried**.

The Board entered executive session at 4:55 p.m.

[EXECUTIVE SESSION, including adoption of action item 25-34]

The Board exited executive session at 4:56 p.m. and recessed.

Friday, May 16, 2025

Board Members present: Rev. Joel Brondos, Dr. Paul Edmon, Mr. Matthew Kenitzer, Rev. Bruce Keseman, Rev. Dr. Adam Koontz, Dr. John Lang, Rev. Peter Lange, Rev. Michael Mohr, Rev. W. Maximillian Mons, Mr. Bruce Paradis, Dr. Michael Staub, Mr. Mark Stern, Mr. Timothy Wood.

Board Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: President Thomas Egger, Provost Ronald Mudge, Mr. Michael Louis, Mr. Chad Cattoor.

Guest Present: Rev. Dr. Lee Hagan.

Chairman Mons called the meeting to order at 8 a.m.

Devotion. The meeting opened with a hymn, devotion, and prayer.

Advancement. Mr. Cattoor directed the Board to the Advancement Report, in the absence of Mrs. Vicki Biggs who is attending the CNH District Convention in California. Mr. Paradis noted that he and his wife are co-chairing the campaign, and are in the process of completing the campaign cabinet.

Finance Committee. Mr. Cattoor directed the Board to the March 31, 2025 financial statements, and directed the Board to the statements and to his written report. He discussed highlights of the financial performance year to date, which has been positive.

Mr. Cattoor presented the proposed budget for the next fiscal year. He noted that the goal is to limit spending increases to the rate of inflation, roughly 3%. We slightly exceeded this due to some grant income and corresponding expense items. After discussion, Mr. Paradis moved adoption of the budget on behalf of the finance committee. The motion carried [25-35].

Dr. Staub moved that the Board enter executive session with Dr. Egger present; the motion was seconded and **carried**.

The Board entered executive session at 8:25 a.m.

[EXECUTIVE SESSION, including adoption of action items 25-36 and 25-37]

The Board exited executive session at 9:24 a.m. and recessed for the Theological Diploma Service.

The Board reconvened at 2 p.m. Dr. Hagan was not present for this session.

Dr. Edmon moved that the Board enter executive session with staff present; the motion was seconded and **carried**.

The Board entered executive session with staff present at 2 p.m.

[EXECUTIVE SESSION, including adoption of action item 25-38]

The Board exited executive session at 4:37 p.m.

Dr. Edmon moved to adjourn; the motion was seconded and carried, and the Board adjourned with prayer at 4:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark O. Stern, Board Secretary