

**Western Seminary Center for Lifelong Learning
Distance Education Policies and Guidelines
2011 – 2012 Academic Year**

Introduction

Individuals enrolled in credit courses offered through the Western Seminary Center for Lifelong Learning (WSCLL) are, in every respect, Western Seminary students and subject to the same standards, responsibilities, and expectations as students enrolled at any of our campuses.

The policies that follow are designed to serve as a distance-education supplement to the main 2010-2011 Western Seminary catalog. Our desire is to provide additional, WSCLL-specific resources for our students. This document, however, is subordinate to the main seminary catalog, and, if a conflict is found to exist with the published catalog, that document, in every case, governs. The complete seminary catalog can be viewed and downloaded at <http://www.westernseminary.edu>.

1. Program Expenses All Campuses (2011 – 2012)

Application Fee	\$ 50.00
Credit Tuition / Hour	\$ 445.00
Non-Credit Tuition / Hour	\$ 150.00
Language Fee / Course	\$ 60.00 (NTS 508E / 509E, OTS 508E / 509E Only)

Tuition Comparability: Courses offered through the Western Seminary Center for Lifelong Learning are priced at the same tuition rate as campus courses. Distance education students may qualify for scholarships and other tuition assistance offered by the seminary.

2. General Information

a. Non-degree Requirements. Students may take up to 12 credit hours before admission to a degree program of the seminary. Nevertheless, all credit students must complete a degree or non-degree application in which they affirm that they have graduated from an accredited undergraduate institution and in which they provide a statement of Christian experience.

b. Degree Residency Requirements. Accreditation standards and Western Seminary policy currently state that one year of a degree program must be taken in residence. Practically, that means that up to one half of a two-year Master of Arts program, or two thirds of the three-year Master of Divinity degree program, may be taken by distance education, advanced placement or transfer credit. Western Seminary does not currently offer doctoral-level coursework by distance education.

c. International Student Enrollments. Upon receipt of a request from a foreign national residing outside the country, WSCLL forwards the request to the International Students Office (ISO) of the Seminary. Similarly, WSCLL informs the ISO whenever inquiries are received from foreign nationals currently studying at another institution in order to verify student eligibility.

d. American Nationals. To ensure deliverability of coursework, and the avoidance of unforeseen implications, requests from American citizens in service outside the United States will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

3. Credit Course Enrollments

a. Course Duration. Students have 14 - 15 weeks (depending upon the semester of their enrollment) from their course start date to complete a CLL course.

b. Course Drop. Students may drop WSCLL courses during the first 6 weeks following the course start date. The student's transcript will show no indication of having enrolled for the course.

Refund schedule:

100% refund week 1-2

80% refund week 3-4

50% refund week 5-6

c. Change to Non-credit. Students may change from credit status to non-credit status within the first 2 weeks following the course start date.

Refund schedule:

100% refund week 1-2

80% refund week 3-4

50% refund week 5-6

Non-credit tuition is subtracted from the refund.

d. Course Withdrawal. Under special circumstances, students may request by academic petition to withdraw from a WSCLL course after week 6. If granted, the student will receive a "W" on their transcript. All refund requests will be by financial petition only.

e. Course Extensions. In the case of serious illness, family emergency, or other extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control, students may request one course extension of *up to* 4 weeks beyond the course due date. Students must demonstrate they have made progress in the course before an extension will be considered. Extensions must be requested with a CLL extension request form (available from [Mark Baker](#).)

f. Determination of Semester Enrolled. Students may enroll for a WSCLL course at any time during the year by choosing one of our 12 monthly start dates (four start dates for each of our three semesters.) Registrations received after the previous monthly start date will be enrolled for the next start date except by agreement. (See Table 1 below.)

g. Simultaneous Enrollments. Unless approved by the Registrar, students who have not yet taken a course through WSCLL may enroll in one course at a time. After successfully completing an initial course (with a grade of "B" or higher) students may enroll, with advisor approval, in one 4-credit hour or two 2-credit hour courses in one semester, although the Registrar may, at his discretion, increase or waive that limit for individual students who have demonstrated success in the distance education environment.

Note: To satisfy the four-credit hour per semester financial aid requirement exclusively by distance education, any student may enroll in one 4-hour or two 2-hour WSCLL courses in any one semester.

Table 1. Tentative Fall 2011 Start Dates

Semester	Start	Semester Dates
Fall 2011	1	June 6th to September 17th
	2	July 4th to October 15th
	3	August 8th to November 19th
Regular Fall	4	September 5th to December 17th

Tentative Spring 2012 Start Dates

Semester	Start	Semester Dates
Spring 2012	1	October 3rd to January 14th
	2	November 7th to February 18th
	3	December 5th to March 17th
Regular Spring	4	January 9th to April 21st

Tentative Summer 2012 Start Dates

Semester	Start	Semester Dates
Summer 2012	1	February 6th to May 19th
	2	March 5th to June 16th
	3	April 2nd to July 14th
Regular Summer	4	April 30th to August 11th

4. Non-Credit Course Enrollments (Audit & Enrichment)

By their nature, and at risk of being redundant, non-credit courses do not earn graduate credit. As such, non-credit participants register on a course-by-course basis and are not admitted to a program of the seminary.

a. Audit Status. Individuals may register for non-credit audit status if they possess a minimum of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution. Auditors, if they desire, may enroll for on-campus courses through the Registrar's Office.

b. Enrichment Status. Individuals may enroll for enrichment if they have a high school diploma but do not possess an accredited baccalaureate degree. Individuals studying by enrichment may take many, though not all, distance education courses for non-credit. Attendance by enrichment students in on-campus courses must be approved by the Registrar or Enrollment Office. For more information about which distance education courses may be taken for enrichment, please contact the WSCLL offices.

c. Learning Units (LUs). Individuals studying for non-credit (audit or enrichment) may earn one Learning Unit (LU) for each course hour. This is an internal measure of progress and currently may only be applied to Western Seminary Advanced Studies Certificates. A Learning Unit is equivalent to 15 hours of classroom time.

d. Advanced Studies Certificates (ASC). Non-credit courses, taken for either audit or enrichment as part of the 18-LU Advanced Studies Certificates, earn Learning Units to demonstrate progress. During the course of the ASC program, mentors assist participants in the application of course materials to ministry and in the preparation of the final program project. Modest levels of work are required for successful completion of the certificate (the integrative project in particular), but ASC courses do not qualify for graduate credit.

Important Note: Because of the distinctive nature of the program, individuals who are interested in the non-credit Advanced Studies Certificate must be accepted into the program through the Women's Center for Ministry (Pastoral Care to Women certificate), or WSCLL (for all other ASC programs). Please contact the WSCLL offices for more information.

e. Continuing Education Units, or CEUs, are required by some professional organizations to measure ongoing learning performed by their members. The Center for Lifelong Learning offers CEUs to members of these groups; please contact the WSCLL office for details.

5. General Information for Students Enrolled in Credit Courses

a. Student Advising. WSCLL provides academic advising to all credit students not affiliated with any Western Seminary campus. When students are enrolled in a program at a campus, and a faculty advisor has been assigned, WSCLL ensures that each course enrollment through the department has been approved by the student's advisor prior to registration. Further, WSCLL provides advising specific to the differences and challenges of study by distance education.

b. Course Mentor. Upon enrollment in a credit course, students will be assigned a course mentor to guide them through their studies. The mentor will help to monitor each student's progress, provide meaningful interaction including answering questions concerning the course content or requirements, and evaluate student learning. Mentor contact information is included in the course packet sent to the student at the beginning of the course and is critical to the student's success.

c. Student Progress. WSCLL strives to provide significant scheduling flexibility when creating our courses. Still, a measure of structure is required to ensure that students are able to succeed in the program and achieve desired learning outcomes. Students, therefore, are expected to maintain a regular schedule for "class time" and to make consistent progress toward the completion of the course. Each Online Learning Center includes a recommended course completion schedule and a self-reporting progress requirement.

Course mentors also help to make the student aware of the course requirements and pacing. In every case, however, responsibility for progress remains with the student.

d. Student Email Addresses. Western Seminary requires that all students have an active email address by which official seminary communication can be conducted. We recommend that students who do not currently have an address, or who may change services during the course of their studies, obtain a free email address from <http://www.gmail.com>, <http://www.yahoo.com> or another online service. Students are responsible for checking their email box regularly to ensure effective and timely communication.

Students are recommended, too, to have an email address that is uniquely their own. Sharing an address with a spouse or other family members for official seminary or course communication may hinder or complicate efficient messaging...and perhaps create a privacy concern.

e. Community Interaction. WSCLL students are required to participate in our Online Learning Center (OLC) as part of their course and program design unless otherwise advised. The OLC affords an invaluable opportunity to meet other students from widely diverse backgrounds and geographical locations who are in your course or study discipline. For more information about interaction requirements, students are advised to refer to their course syllabus. Learning Centers for the 2011 – 2012 year are located at <http://www.wscll2.net/olc> or by visiting the <http://www.wscll.net> website.

f. Grade Submission. WSCLL strives to grade assignments, and email the grade back to the student, within 7 working days of receipt. Further, course grades are submitted to the Registrar within 3 working days of the grading of the final course assignment or examination. Shortly thereafter, the final course grade will be posted and available to the student in the Student Information System (SIS) of the <http://www.westernseminary.edu> website.

g. Grading Standards. WSCLL ascribes to the same standards for grading employed across the Western Seminary system and which are reflected in the seminary catalog.

6. Financial Aid

Note. The financial aid program of the seminary is administered by the Financial Aid Office under strict state, federal and institutional guidelines that may change frequently. Questions regarding student eligibility should be addressed to the Financial Aid Director. The general policies that follow are intended to be instructive and are subject to review and change by the Financial Aid Office.

a. Campus Students. WSCLL courses qualify for federal financial aid, including VA benefits, for students enrolled at any campus in the Western Seminary system.

b. Distance Students Eligibility for Federal Aid. WSCLL students are eligible to receive federal financial aid if they meet the following criteria:

1. Students must be enrolled as a credit student in a seminary degree or diploma program.
2. Students must be enrolled at least ½ time each semester to qualify. This is defined as a minimum of four credit hours per semester. They must also complete a total of 18 credit hours per year.
3. WSCLL students who desire federal financial aid must conform to the campus academic calendar. To satisfy the four-credit hour per semester financial aid requirement exclusively by distance education, students may enroll in one 4-hour, or two 2-hour WSCLL courses in any semester. Additional hours or courses must be approved by the Registrar.

c. Distance Student Eligibility for Seminary Financial Aid. WSCLL students may qualify for institutional aid on the same basis as Portland campus students, except for Relocation and Christian Service Grants. For more information, please contact the Financial Aid Director.

7. Library Services

WSCLL is committed to the meaningful extension of Western Seminary library services to all of our distance students. We know that many of our students live in areas distant from both Western's Cline-Tunnell library and from other quality theological resources. To make sure that you have the educational resources to succeed in your courses and programs, we are dedicated to:

1. Assisting students in finding and accessing their locally-available library resources.
2. Serving our distance students as possible and appropriate from the Portland Campus Cline-Tunnell Library.
3. Providing comprehensive online library resources, databases and links.

General Library Policies

- a. You are encouraged to find books and articles locally whenever possible. This will expedite your studies and frequently provide much more comprehensive resources that we are able to provide remotely. We recommend that you use our online library catalog at <http://www.westernseminary.edu> as your initial research engine to identify helpful materials. A check of your local library will then determine if they have the book or article for check out.
- b. If your local library does not have the required books or articles in its collection, you may request that your local library initiate an interlibrary loan with Western's Cline-Tunnell Library. Recognizing that few public libraries have significant theological holdings, this will be an oft-used option.
- c. If you are a credit student and you do not have reasonable access to a local library, the Western Seminary library will provide a "direct-to-student" book loan. Enrichment students are not eligible for direct-to-student loans.

d. Books will be mailed when available (as for any student). If a book is not immediately available, the request will be placed in the fulfillment queue. No guarantees are made as to availability or delivery. Note: Book or photocopy requests will only be honored from students within the continental United States.

e. Requests for photocopies will be honored as for any Western student.

f. To provide a trackable system, WSCLL has created a "Book Request Form" on the WSCLL.net website requiring that the student first affirm that he or she has checked locally and that they have no access to an interlibrary loan. Upon submission, the information will be emailed automatically to the Cline-Tunnell the library for fulfillment, to Mark Baker at WSCLL for inclusion in the student's file, and to James Stewart.

g. Students who will be visiting the campus, such as those attending course intensives, will be encouraged to use the time for library research and resourcing. The website will provide a place where students can notify the Library of their visit to campus at least two weeks ahead of their arrival date to make sure materials that need to be ordered by interlibrary loan are available here when they arrive.