

Seminars in Christian Scholarship Bylaws

- I **Purpose of the Seminars in Christian Scholarship:** The purpose of the Seminars in Christian Scholarship (SCS) at Calvin College is to promote a strong Christian voice in the academy by addressing issues of current debate within various disciplines from the perspective of a deep Christian commitment and encouraging the production of first-order scholarship. The SCS is an outreach-oriented office which seeks to be a steward of the legacy of Christian scholarship at Calvin College and in the Reformed tradition, advancing this kingdom vocation by supporting scholars from around the globe with opportunities for formation in integral Christian scholarship.
- II **Activities of the Seminars in Christian Scholarship:** The goal of SCS is achieved through several different kinds of activities:
- A. The purpose of SCS is accomplished primarily through a program of multi-week summer seminars, but also through shorter consultations and academic conferences. These seminars bring together a diverse team of scholars, working under the direction of a leading Christian scholar in the field, in order to devote themselves to a program of both collective and individual research, with the goal of producing scholarship which will make contributions to both the academy and Church.
 - B. Ancillary to this primary focus on research seminars, SCS also sponsors and manages academic conferences in various disciplines, in collaboration with Calvin College Centers & Institutes, departments within the college, as well as outside agencies. The primary goal of these conferences is to disseminate the fruits of research.
 - C. Dissemination of Christian scholarship is also supported by sponsoring panels and sessions at meetings of professional societies.
 - D. SCS also periodically oversees dissemination of research by overseeing the editing of books and other publications growing out of SCS ventures.
 - E. SCS and Conferencing: Given the realities of a finite staff, the following function as the parameters of SCS's conference responsibilities:
 - 1. The office's mandate is *scholarship*, so its involvement in conferences should be channeled toward *academic* conferences.
 - 2. The SCS will observe a *quota* or cap for the number of conferences that the office can feasibly organize. This will be determined by the Governing Board and director in consultation with SCS staff.
 - 3. Access to SCS Conferencing Services: Given the parameters of SCS's conferencing capabilities, the following hierarchy of access will determine access to SCS services within a given year. In other words, the "quota" of conference "slots" will be filled in descending order based on the scale of

access below. Such access also presupposes that funding for conferences is provided by the sponsoring body and will be subject to service and management fee payable to SCS.

- a. *Seminar Follow-Up Conferences*: these conferences, growing out of the seminars program and disseminating the fruits of their research, are an important component of formation.
 - b. *Calvin Centers and Institutes*: The SCS will serve a diaconal role vis-à-vis the other Centers and Institutes on campus which are devoted to pushing forward Christian scholarship. These Centers and Institutes also have staff who have built relationships with the SCS staff, facilitating conference management.
 - c. *Calvin Departments and Calvin Seminary*: We also want to serve the work of the academic departments when they are able to secure funding for conferences. However, because departments are not staffed for such ventures, management of these conferences is more labor-intensive for the SCS office.
 - d. *CCCU or other outside agencies*: Given the staff limitations of the SCS office, our ability to serve outside organizations will be limited.
4. Channels of Access: All conference requests and proposals must pass through the SCS Director. Once approved by the Director, access will be granted to utilize SCS staff and services.

III Administration: Director and Staff

- A. The Director: The SCS office is managed by the Director, who oversees SCS staff and reports to the Dean of Research & Scholarship and the SCS Governing Board.
 1. Duties of the director of the Seminars in Christian Scholarship:
 - a. Typically initiate and administer the programs of the center, with the advice and consent of the Board.
 - b. Supervise staff of the Seminars in Christian Scholarship.
 - c. Seek to secure external funding for the Seminars in Christian Scholarship.
 - d. Serve as chief liaison between the Seminars in Christian Scholarship and its Governing Board.
 - e. Serve as budget officer for the Seminars in Christian Scholarship and oversee the budget of all Seminars in Christian Scholarship activities.
 - f. Provide an annual report, to be submitted first to the Governing Board for review, and then to the reporting dean. The director shall submit a summary of the annual report to Faculty Senate for information.
 - g. In consultation with the Board chair, prepare the agenda and necessary materials for meetings of the Governing Board. These materials are to be submitted to the secretary of the Board for distribution.
 - h. Recruiting seminar directors and conference speakers through networking opportunities, and thus maintaining and building such networks.
 2. Status of the Director of the Seminars in Christian Scholarship
 - a. The Director of the Seminars in Christian Scholarship is to be a full-time faculty member of Calvin College whose own record of research indicates her or his commitment to the project of rigorous scholarship that is unapologetically Christian. The Director must affirm the vision of integral

- Christian scholarship which funds the mission of SCS and must be able to articulate a vision for seeing that expressed across the disciplines.
 - b. The Director shall receive a course load reduction consistent with the founding document.
 - c. The director shall not serve as the chair of the Governing Board.
 - d. The director shall not serve as department chair during his or her term as director.
- 3. Selection of the Director of the Seminars in Christian Scholarship
 - a. The provost shall appoint a committee appropriate to the mission of the Seminars in Christian Scholarship. Search committee composition will include at least one member of an academic department and at least one member of the Governing Board. Typically, it will also include the Dean for Research and Scholarship.
 - b. The search committee will make a recommendation to the provost who will make a recommendation to the Professional Status Committee.
 - c. If Departmental approval is necessary, their approval should be part of the recommendation to the Professional Status Committee, so that the PSC decision is final, not pending.
 - d. The director shall be appointed by the Professional Status Committee for a three-year term.
 - e. The director will report to the dean of research and scholarship.
- 4. Evaluation of the Director: By the beginning of the third year of the director's three-year term, the provost shall oversee an evaluation of the director's performance. The evaluation will be conducted by the reporting dean, incorporating input from the board. The reporting dean shall submit a recommendation regarding reappointment to the Professional Status Committee.

- B. Staff: As necessary and possible (as determined by the Director and Governing Board), the SCS will employ staff to carry out the logistics of implementing the purpose of SCS. At minimum, this has involved:
 - 1. Office Coordinator: The Office Coordinator is responsible for the daily oversight of the SCS office, including other office staff. Responsibilities include all logistical matters of seminars and conference planning as well as budgetary oversight.
 - 2. Office Assistant: The Office Assistant works in tandem with the Coordinator, undertaking responsibilities as determined by the Coordinator.

IV Administration: Governing Board and National Advisory Council

- A. Governing Board
 - 1. Composition: The SCS Governing Board shall consist of the Dean of Research & Scholarship; the SCS Director; three of the current Directors of other Calvin College Centers & Institutes, with a view to some disciplinary parity; and three at-large college faculty, with a preference for faculty who are SCS alumni.

2. Selection: Directors of college Centers & Institutes shall be appointed by the Dean of Research & Scholarship. Faculty members shall be appointed by the Committee on Governance.
3. Committee service: Membership on the Seminars in Christian Scholarship Governing Board shall be applied to community service requirements according to governance rules.
4. Administrative Support
 - a. A Board secretary shall be appointed by the Governing Board for a one-year term. Administrative support for the governing board (e.g., a secretary for governing board meetings) can be appointed from existing staff of the Seminars in Christian Scholarship, with any such person(s) holding an ex officio status on the governing board.
 - b. No limit shall be placed on the number of consecutive terms the Board secretary may serve.
 - c. The board secretary shall arrange and distribute materials for meetings and submit minutes to the appropriate college entities.
5. Terms for members other than the director and dean
 - a. Board members shall serve staggered, four-year terms. Terms shall be shortened as necessary to stagger the terms of the initial board.
 - b. Members whose terms have expired typically shall be eligible again after a two year hiatus.
6. Frequency of board meetings
 - a. The director shall convene a meeting of the Board at least once each full semester.
 - b. The chair will convene additional meetings at the request of three or more members of the Board. A quorum must be present at all meetings.
7. The Chair
 - a. The chair of the Governing Board shall be appointed by Committee on Governance for a two-year term.
 - b. The Chair may be reappointed by the Committee on Governance but may not serve for more than two consecutive terms.
8. Powers of the Governing Board
 - a. The Board shall have powers of advice and consent with regard to the operation of the Seminars in Christian Scholarship, holding the director accountable to the founding document and the policies of Calvin College.
 - b. The Board shall offer advice to the director on questions of initiatives, policies, and procedures of the Seminars in Christian Scholarship.
 - c. The Governing Board shall approve a ceiling on the dollar amount of grant awards that can be made by the Director of the Center/Institute without the consent of the Governing Board.
 - d. The Director of the Center/Institute may seek funding from foundations and grant agencies outside Calvin College. Awarded grants, however, require approval of the Governing Board prior to the acceptance of the grant monies. The acceptance of such funding by the Governing Board carries with it the board's approval of the distribution of the funds specified within the parameters of the grant.
 - e. Any reallocation among the various budget lines in excess of 10 percent of the total approved budget for that year requires the approval of the Governing Board.

- f. The board shall approve the next year's budget and expenditures in advance of the fiscal year.
- g. The board shall receive routine financial statements at least once per full semester.
- h. The provost, through the reporting dean, shall oversee external reviews such as reappointments of the director as well as external reviews of the center or institute.
- i. In addition to providing input on vision and planning, the Board shall also provide a dual channel of accountability: on the one hand, keeping the Director accountable to her or his responsibilities and planning; on the other hand, keeping the College accountable to its commitments to the SCS. Finally, the Board approves the appointment of the Director as well as members of the National Advisory Council.

B. National Advisory Council

- 1. **Composition:** A National Advisory Council composed of five members serves the Seminars in Christian Scholarship. Members of the advisory council will be drawn from the pool of past summer seminar directors with a view to parity of representation across the disciplines.
- 2. **Selection:** Members of the National Advisory Council are appointed by the Governing Board upon the recommendation of the Director.
- 3. **Term:** Members of the Council serve terms of two years and are eligible for reappointment.
- 4. **Powers**
 - a. Members of the Council have advisory powers only.
 - b. They may be called upon to provide advice with respect to seminar topics, identifying potential directors, assistance in working with funding agencies, and other matters that may assist the Director.
 - c. Communication will be occasional and will not require meetings unless periodically determined and possible.

V Hiring Policies

- A. All College policies relating to hiring and reviewing of employees shall be followed.
- B. For Seminars in Christian Scholarship employees: Employee position descriptions must be approved by the college's Job Evaluation Committee; title and wages should be consistent with Human Resources policies.

VI Amendment

- A. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the entire Governing Board. The powers of the Governing Board shall be exercised in accord with the Bylaws.
- B. Amendments approved by the Board then go to the Committee on Governance for approval and to Faculty Senate for information. In consultation with the director and

the governing board, the Committee on Governance may recommend substantial changes be sent to Faculty Senate for approval.

Approved by Committee on Governance: October 31, 2006

Approved by Faculty Senate: December 4, 2006

Approved by the Seminars in Christian Scholarship Governing Board:

Received for information by the Board of Trustees:

Revised by the Committee on Governance; October 9, 2009