

6th General Assembly, 1978, p. 214, Appendix G, IV

UNIFORM CURRICULUM FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The purpose of this material is to set before the General Assembly a uniform curriculum which will lead to the better preparation of candidates for the Gospel ministry and provide for suitable means to guarantee that the quality of education is enhanced and advanced, while guarding against infringing upon the powers of presbyteries as touching their responsibilities in regard to selection, training, examination, and ordination of candidates.

The Sub-Committee of 21 has worked on two phases of the program. One area dealt with the curriculum, and the other was concerned with coordination and implementation. The first phase of curriculum is listed below. The integration and coordination are found in recommendation No. 14-d (1-4).

The Committee has worked in depth over a period of time to handle the assignment from the Fifth General Assembly listed in the 1977 Minutes on page 155 No. 8:a-e.

The uniform curriculum deals with three major areas: (1) Scriptural Content; (2) Christian Doctrine; (3) Practical Theology. It was developed in such a manner as to be utilized by any of the approved methods of theological training.

The following is the proposed uniform curriculum for theological education of PCA ministerial candidates.

SCRIPTURE

- I. Bible Content
 - A. English Bible
 1. Required block courses covering the entire Bible.
 2. Including areas such as archaeology, history, geography, emphasizing that which is necessary to support the grammatico-historical method of interpretation
 3. Required reading of the Bible
 4. Scripture memory integrated into course content
 - B. Required comprehensive content examination

GOAL: Knowledge and ability to communicate Bible content as outlined above.
- II. Languages
 - A. Hebrew
 1. Grammatical forms
 2. Syntactical principles
 3. Exegesis
 - B. Greek
 1. Grammatical forms
 2. Syntactical principles
 3. Exegesis

GOAL: Ability to use the tools and work directly with the passages in the original language in preparation of sermons and Bible lessons.

III. Methods and interpretation (should follow language and much of Bible content)

- A. Biblical Theology
- B. Principles of Interpretation
- C. Biblical Criticism (Higher and Textual)
- D. Advanced Principles of Exegesis
 - 1. Old Testament
 - 2. New Testament

GOAL: A comprehension of principles and problems involved in these disciplines as supplementary to materials already taught in relation to English Bible content.

IV. Supervised Practical Opportunities

- A. Advanced exegetical (papers of assigned Old Testament and New Testament passages)
- B. Teach papers during practical year
- C. Required block reading and translation of Hebrew and Greek during fourth year
- D. Teach English Bible courses

GOAL: A practical use of all training skills and gifts in working with God's People

DOCTRINE

I. Church History

- A. Survey of Church History (Including a history of Christian thought)
- B. American Church History
- C. History of the Reformation
- D. Presbyterian Church History

GOAL: The study of Church History should be conceptual (an understanding of the flow of history, the historical development of theology and the influence upon it of secular history and philosophy, and the progress of ecclesiastical development), and with consideration of the relation of the cultural context to the history of the church.

II. Apologetics

- A. Introduction to Apologetic Methodology and Practice (To include a survey of various schools of thought in Reformed apologetics)
- B. Survey of Secular Thought (The history of humanistic thought, its contemporary manifestation in various world views: philosophy, literature, drama, popular arts, scientific methodology, the cults, pagan religions, etc.)
- C. Survey of Contemporary Theology (Liberalism, neo-orthodoxy, etc.)

GOAL: To provide from a Reformed perspective a sound basis for positive presentation of the Christian faith as well as equipping the minister to deal with the anti-Christian systems of thought in their various contemporary manifestations.

III. Theology and Ethics

- A. Systematic Theology. A broad understanding of the whole system of theology as derived from Scripture (Prolegomena, Theology, Anthropology, Christology, Soteriology, Ecclesiology, and

Eschatology), including a specific study of the doctrinal position of PCA as set forth in the Westminster Standards.

- B. Ethics. As exegetical study of Biblical Ethics (the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, etc.)

GOAL: 1) to obtain a knowledge of, commitment to, and proficiency, communicating the Reformed Faith (including such distinctives as the inerrancy of Scripture, the Sovereignty of God, Covenant Theology, Five Points of Calvinism, etc.)

2) A commitment to a Biblical life style in both personal and social ethics.

IV. Polity

- A. Biblical Church Government

(An exegetical study of the Biblical principles of Church Government)

- B. PCA Church Order and Parliamentary Procedure

GOAL: An understanding of the Biblical teaching on the nature and structure of the church, a working knowledge of the PCA Book of Church Order, and Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

I. The Pastor's Personal Life

- A. His Spiritual Life

1. Growth
2. Call to Ministry

- B. Pastor's Communication

1. With the Family
2. With the Church
3. With the Community

GOAL: The area of the Pastor's personal life should deal with the matters of development and expression of his personal relation to God through spiritual growth under Scripture and prayer. Growing out of this, the candidate should be helped and encouraged in determining the genuineness of his call to the Gospel ministry. He should be given counsel in developing his relations with his family, church, and community.

II. Worship

- A. Public Worship (see [*BCO Directory for Worship chapters 48-64*](#))

- B. Preaching

1. Theology of Preaching
2. Principles and Practices of Preaching

GOAL: The goal of this area of training is to develop a comprehensive understanding and application of the regulative principle of public worship, and the basis of the place and practice of preaching within the Biblical Framework of public worship, as well as to equip the Pastor or Candidate to lead the congregation in public worship.

III. Evangelism

- A. Theology of Reformed Evangelism

- B. Role of the Pastor in Evangelism

GOAL: An introduction to Evangelism in light of the doctrinal distinctives of the Reformed Faith, developing methods, practical experience and training of others in this area.

IV. Missiology

A. Reformed Theology of Mission at Home and Abroad

B. Strategy of Missions at Home and Abroad

GOAL: This area should analyze and understand the needs of missions at home and abroad through consideration of cross-cultural communication, relationships with national governments, an anthropological understanding of decision-making patterns, and the indigenization of Christianity, the application of modern linguistic science, and saturation evangelism. The effective use of missionary radio, TV films, correspondence courses, theological education by extension programs, gospel recordings, Bible translation, and Christian literature production and distribution will also be surveyed.

V. Pastoral Care

A. Theology of Pastoral Care

B. Applied Counseling (Gerontology, Pre-Marital, Family, Crisis, Etc.)

GOAL: A study in the understanding and development of the biblical principles of shepherding plus practical experience (e.g., case studies, observing actual counseling sessions, and practical experience in counseling).

PERSONAL THEOLOGY

VI. Christian Education

A. Theology of Christian Education

B. History of Christian Education

C. Practice of Christian Education

GOAL: The goal of this area is to understand the Biblical basis of Christian Education and its historic development, leading to a practical development of a Christian Education curriculum in the home and in the church, the training of Bible teachers for church related ministries, and the developing of spiritual gifts within the church.

VII. Pastoral Administration

A. Theology of Administration

B. Mechanics of Administration

GOAL: The goal of this area is to develop an understanding of the Biblical principles of administration and leadership, understanding the goals, strategy, and oversight (e.g. of time, body life [Ephesians 4:11-16], correspondence, and delegating responsibility.