

# Admissions

## Standards

Eastern Mennonite Seminary seeks to provide a setting for a study-fellowship-service experience which will prepare persons for pastoral, mission and related ministries under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Anyone who is academically, personally, and spiritually prepared for serious and diligent graduate study of the Bible and theology is invited to seek admission.

A baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution (or its educational equivalent) and a minimum grade point average of 2.5 are required for admission to a degree program. Students who apply with a baccalaureate degree from a non-accredited college or university will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Persons without the baccalaureate degree or its educational equivalent may be admitted into the Certificate Program provided they show by maturity of age and experience in Christian ministry that they can benefit from graduate-level studies. All persons seeking admission must have a high school diploma or its equivalent. Up to 10% of the students in a given degree program (except the MAR degree program) may be non-baccalaureate students who are admitted after completion of the Certificate Program.

A student admitted from a non-accredited school or on an exceptional basis with a grade point average below 2.5 will be conditionally admitted for the first semester. If the required GPA is achieved, the conditional status will be removed. If the desired GPA is not achieved, continuation at seminary will be reviewed. All students, including those with a conditional admittance, are evaluated after the completion of 20 SH for degree candidacy. The faculty together decide whether or not a student appears qualified to successfully complete a given degree program and makes a decision about degree candidacy.

## Pre-Seminary Curriculum

Eastern Mennonite Seminary recognizes the importance of carefully planned pre-seminary studies. While it is highly desirable that all who pursue theological training shall have been exposed to certain basic disciplines, it is understood that not all will have chosen that option. In cases where deficiencies exist, the seminary reserves the right to request that such be met.

Differing ministries demand a variety of patterns of pre-theological preparation; therefore it is unnecessary to insist upon specific requirements for all students. In general, however, there are certain basic educational exposures that are considered highly significant for one entering theological education.

The general areas of concern are that the undergraduate studies of a pre-seminary student should prepare one to: (1) use the tools of the educated person; (2) grow in increased understanding of and insight into the world in which one lives; and (3) develop a sense of achievement and mastery in selected areas of concentration.

**Specific Areas:**

Elementary Greek is recommended for all students in the Master of Divinity program. This requirement of the Primary Track of the Master of Divinity program may be met by taking Elementary Greek in college or taking it for credit as part of the seminary program.

A degree in Bible and religion is not required for seminary admission. However, a student would benefit much if courses in these fields and in philosophy would be pursued.

**General Areas:**

A broad-based liberal arts program with introductory courses in Bible and religion will prove most beneficial to an entering student. It is important to include at least introductory study in the following fields:

1. Bible and philosophy
2. Education
3. Fine arts
4. History
5. Social sciences, including cross-cultural studies

A rule of thumb would be to utilize two-thirds to three-fourths of the undergraduate hours in these areas of concentration.

Electives should be chosen to provide a broad background of educational experience in areas related to the development of the helping skills.

## Spiritual Commitment

Each student is asked to subscribe to the following pledge: *“With an awareness of my calling to be a follower and servant of Jesus Christ and to make my seminary experience a time of further growth toward Christian maturity, I desire to become a cooperative and contributing member of the seminary community, faithfully supporting its expectations and standards and respecting its counsel.”*

## Procedure

Selecting a seminary is an important decision. Prospective students are encouraged to visit the campus and confer with the director of seminary admissions.

Application should be made at least two months before the anticipated time of entrance. Deadlines for financial assistance may be earlier.

An application is complete when the following documents are received:

- application with autobiography and photo
- official transcript(s) of credit
- non-refundable application fee
- character references from three persons named by the applicant

A shorter form will be provided to applicants who are not pursuing a degree and who wish to take only part-time studies (8 hours or less). After completing four courses or 12SH, a student will be asked to complete the full application process before continuing studies.

The Committee on Admissions reviews each application and notifies the applicant of the action taken.

*For interview, campus visit or admission application, write to:*

Director of Seminary Admissions  
Eastern Mennonite Seminary  
Harrisonburg, VA 22802-2462  
Or call toll-free: (800) 710-7871  
e-mail: semadmiss@emu.edu  
fax: (540) 432-4598

## Transfer Credit

Transfer applicants who plan to complete degree requirements at EMS shall communicate with the admissions office as soon as possible. A personal interview is desirable in order to clarify the transfer process and the amount of credit needed to complete the program. Any credit from an accredited seminary or other accredited graduate school will be considered for transfer.

The Associate Dean determines which credit meets our degree requirements and which is appropriate as elective credit. Any graduate level credit from a non-accredited institution is judged on a case-by-case basis by reviewing course descriptions, faculty credentials, and if needed, course syllabi to determine the academic strength of the school. Credit from a university is judged on the basis of its similarity to seminary studies. No grade below C- will be accepted as transfer credit. Residency requirements for transfer students are defined under academic programs.

### **Time Limit on EMS and Transfer Credit**

Transfer credit taken more than ten years before the date at which the student is admitted will be accepted only on the basis of substantial documentation of prior work and evidence of continued and current competence.

EMS credit taken more than ten years before the date at which the student is re-admitted will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## International Students

Completion of the International Student Application Form constitutes the first step in the application process for the international student. Applicants whose native language is other than English must demonstrate competency in the English language by achieving a score of 550 (computer score of 213) or higher on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The institutional code for having scores sent directly to EMS is 5181. In addition to the above requirements, an international student must demonstrate “ability to pay” before a letter of admission or an I-20 form can be issued.

## Application for Readmission

EMS students not enrolled full-time at the seminary for one semester (fall or spring) or more must complete an application for readmission prior to re-enrollment. Applications for readmission may be obtained from the receptionist. Students who were not on conditional status in their previous period of study

at EMS may be granted unconditional readmission. Conditional readmission on a semester-by-semester basis may be granted to students who were on conditional status at the point of termination from their previous period of study at EMS.

## **Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act**

Eastern Mennonite Seminary annually informs students of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. This act, with which the institution intends to comply fully, was designated to protect the privacy of educational records, to establish the right of students to inspect and review their educational records, and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through informal and formal hearings. Students also have the right to file complaints with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office concerning alleged failures by the institution to comply with the act. This policy is printed in the university student handbook. Questions concerning the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act may be referred to the university Registrar's Office.

## **Nondiscriminatory Policy as to Students**

Eastern Mennonite Seminary admits students of any sex, race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the university, regardless of handicap. It does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, handicap, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic or other university-administered programs.

## **Inclusive Language Statement of Commitment**

As people who confess God as Creator, Jesus Christ as Redeemer and the Holy Spirit as Sustainer of all humanity, we recognize that all human beings—men and women alike—are persons of infinite worth created equally in the image of God. Accordingly, we recognize that the language which we use to speak about each other is no negligible matter but one of crucial importance. The words by which we name and address each other are no less than the means by which we can recognize each other mutually as persons created in God's image, and the

means by which we can empower each other mutually to live out the potential God has given each of us.

Eastern Mennonite Seminary is an institution dedicated to the task of “equipping persons for ministries in the service of the kingdom of God.” As teaching faculty we recognize the centrality of language to our task. We are equipping persons to communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ to the church and unchurched alike in our communities and around the world. And because our task is that of equipping communicators, we recognize the crucial importance of language, the words which we use, to proclaim the Good News which we wish to communicate.

We therefore commit ourselves:

1. To work together and encourage our students toward greater inclusiveness in our language within the classroom setting:
  - in our syllabi
  - in our lectures
  - in our class discussions and student presentations
  - in the papers which we write and the sermons which we prepare
2. To work together and encourage our students toward greater inclusiveness in our language within the worship setting:
  - in our public address to each other and in our prayers
  - in our creation of litanies, worship responses, etc.
  - in our reading of Scripture
  - in our choice and in our use of hymns and other worship materials
3. To work together and encourage our students toward greater inclusiveness in our language within the administrative setting:
  - in our literature introducing and publicizing the seminary
  - in our in-house communications to each other
  - in our personal contacts with potential students
4. To work together and encourage our students toward greater inclusiveness in our language within the community setting:
  - in our personal contacts with each other in the EMS community
  - in the public context of our social gatherings