



GRADUATE PROGRAM GUIDELINES FOR REQUESTING ADVANCED STANDING CREDIT

Up to six “advanced standing” credits may be awarded toward the Master of Arts degree *after the completion of at least one semester as an enrolled student at Hartford Seminary*. The purpose of granting this credit is to acknowledge significant learning outside the context of a traditional graduate degree program. Credit is awarded by the Academic Policy Committee on an application by the student and is applied toward the elective requirement. Advanced standing credit is not available to Doctor of Ministry Students.

Examples

The following Advance Standing categories are not all-inclusive but suggest the kinds of experiences that may be considered for credit.

Community Service, Church-related Service, Vocational or Work Experiences:

1. Public office or leadership position
2. Active membership in social service or social justice organizations
3. Publicly recognized contribution to one’s profession
4. Local church ministry involvement
 - Medicine, law
 - Editorial, journalistic
 - Teaching
5. Creative Arts
 - Publication
 - Performance
 - Composition
 - Exhibition
6. Specialized training skills
7. Other experiences related specifically to MA area of concentration

Overseas Experience

1. Traveling seminars
2. Military, overseas service (international missions)

Educational Experience

1. Professional seminars, workshops
2. Certificate programs (for example Black Ministries Program {BMP}, Programa de Ministerios Hispanos {PMH}, Associates in Christian Education {ACE}, Metropolitan Training Institute)

Procedure for Making a Petition

The student applying for Advanced Standing Credit, in consultation with her/his advisor, must submit to the Academic Policy Committee a petition requesting the credit and making a case for why it should be considered. The petition should be accompanied by supporting documentation. The petition and documentation will be retained as part of the student’s permanent file, unless the student requests that it be returned.

The Academic Policy Committee looks for petitions that present a circumscribed experience or set of experiences that have provided the student with a body of knowledge or skills that:

1. could conceivably have been gained in a course taught within a broadly understood seminary curriculum, or
2. meet a clearly articulated set of objectives that are congruent with the student's program of graduate study at Hartford Seminary.

Successful petitions generally request credit in 3-credit units, the typical number of credits given for a single course.

The petition must include a detailed record of the work or learning experiences for which credit is sought and articulate how these experiences have increased the student's level of understanding and ability to meet a personal, career, or ministry goal. The petition must also indicate how the experience(s) increased the student's development of skills. In evaluating applications the Academic Policy Committee places less emphasis on the experience itself than on the new understanding and skills derived from the experience as articulated by the student.

The petition (2-3 typewritten pages) should include the following elements:

1. **Description:** A description of the experience including a general overview, outline of curriculum (if applicable), job description (if applicable), length of time involved, person to whom the student was responsible, and any other information of relevance to the committee to help them understand the nature and scope of the experience.
2. **Format:** An articulation of what in this experience (or set of experiences) (a) could conceivably have been gained in a course taught within a broadly understood seminary curriculum, or (b) meets a clearly articulated set of objectives that are congruent with the student's program of graduate study at Hartford Seminary.
3. **Summary of learning:** A summary of what was learned and the impact of the new knowledge on the student's self-understanding and educational goals related to the student's course of study at Hartford Seminary.
4. **Evaluation:** An evaluation of how and why this particular learning experience has been educationally effective for the student.

The petition must be accompanied by appropriate documentation that supports the application itself such as a letter of validation from a responsible individual at the student's place of employment or learning, a sample of the work, copies of certificates or awards received in connection with the experience, a brochure describing the program (in the case of a traveling seminar or outreach ministry, for instance), newspaper accounts reporting on the undertaking, transcripts, CEU certificates, syllabi of courses, workshops, seminars, etc. taught or taken, art portfolios, etc., and a statement from the advisor.

BMP/PMH Certificate Recipients: Students who have completed the 8-course curriculum required for Hartford Seminary's BMP or PMH certificates may submit a single petition for 6 credits under the Advanced Standing provision. The petition may omit the description and curriculum elements of the petition, but must include the summary of learning and evaluation elements. Supporting documents should include the final course report and one sample of what the student considers his or her best work from assignments completed as part of the program.