

Preparation Standards for Seminaries of the Anglican Church in North America and Approved Anglican Tracks

Defining an Anglican Education/Formation for Presbyter/Priests and Deacons

Introduction

We are very aware that there are urgent issues around the formation of Anglican clergy. These relate to ongoing Anglican identity in the world and to the mission to which we are called. We deeply desire that godly humility and personal holiness be highly valued among us, and in particular characterize our clergy who as shepherds are to set an example for the flock of God. We envision Anglican clergy whose spirituality is rooted in the Word of God and prayer through the discipline of the Daily Offices. We desire excellence in liturgical practice that ensures our worship is decent, orderly and God honoring. We pray that our Anglican worldview be shaped by Christ rather than culture. We long that our clergy would proclaim the whole Gospel of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, in word and deed, reflecting Jesus Christ in the world, and both hold and be held to biblical standards of morality.

Spiritual formation is a process which is more than an introduction to the faith and practices of the Church. For Anglicans it must set the standard for a personal Rule of Life¹ rooted in Scripture, the Catholic Creeds², the Thirty-nine Articles, and the historic liturgy.

Ordinands must understand and have integrated the key elements of Anglican life and practice and thus be able to model and convey the life of Christ to others.

North American Anglican Churches do not have a uniform Anglican memory; ordinands and lay leaders come from varied traditions. We cannot simply take students training for lay or ordained ministry, who have been immersed in other traditions of theology and worship, give them some Anglican courses and expect them to come out valuing, or even understanding Anglican Spirituality and Worship. These issues present a problem for all Anglican schools and an especially acute problem for non-Anglican schools with an Anglican track. This problem must be addressed through the use of qualified Anglican faculty for courses in the track and a dedicated program of Anglican worship for students enrolled. We must not shy away from making seminary a challenging and sacrificial experience that helps to clarify the call to ministry.

The task force therefore offers the following: That at the heart of Anglican Education and Formation are seven critical components listed in the order in which we need to address them.

¹ A Rule of Life is defined as an intentional commitment to spiritual disciplines and personal discipleship.

²As affirmed in the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of 1571 (Article VIII, see ACNA Constitution Articles I, point 4): The Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed.

We intend to define Anglican Education/Formation in terms of character, competency and content in light of the standards of the world wide Anglican Communion, in particular the Anglican Church in North America's *Theological Statement*.³ Authorized Anglican Seminaries and authorized Anglican Studies programs must be able to demonstrate that throughout their programs there is a commitment to the view of Scripture espoused by the Jerusalem Declaration and the statement of faith of the Anglican Church in North America (as found in Article 1.1 of the Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Church in North America) and that students are exposed to the following seven areas of education and formation as herein defined.

1. Spiritual Formation, including Anglican Spirituality and Christian Ethics.
2. A Theology based upon the Holy Scriptures, the Catholic Creeds, the 39 Articles of Religion, the classic Prayer Books, and Anglican History.
3. A right understanding of Anglican Worship, built around Word, Sacrament, and the Work of the Holy Spirit.
4. The Cure of Souls.
5. Mission.
6. Proper understanding of the Scriptures.
7. Proper understanding of leadership, order, and polity in the Church.

1. Spiritual Formation:

- A. Daily Office: Spiritual Formation requires character development. The daily office is an essential part of the formation of every Anglican Priest and Deacon.

When on campus students will attend daily chapel built around the approved liturgies of the Anglican Church in North America rooted in the historic liturgies, 1549 through 1662. They should also be provided the experience of officiating at the daily office. Students must demonstrate that the daily offices are a rule of life in their spiritual practice.

Rationale: Those are the liturgies upon which we have built the Anglican Church in North America. To train up a body of clergy who are ignorant or disdainful of the foundation of the Anglican Church is to ensure our demise as a church. Those liturgies are carefully rooted in the objective reality of God. The "objective language" of those liturgies conveys a critical component of formation or character development, that is, worship and Anglican ministry are all about the worship and service of a Holy God.

Second, the proper use of the historic liturgies leads the student to a better understanding of self and sin and how those must be dealt with in order to rightly worship God. Regular use of those liturgies also contributes to competency in the sense that those being formed will instinctively know that a properly constructed service includes certain critical elements (confession, absolution, creeds, etc).

³ www.anglicanchurch.net/documents

- B. **Sacramental Practice.** Character, competency and content are further developed when clergy are formed with a right understanding and appreciation of Word and Sacrament. That training is rooted in the parish and must be a critical aspect of Seminary Life. Approved Seminaries and programs must provide students with at least a weekly Eucharistic service and a Biblical understanding of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist (see article XXVIII). All students must be trained in conducting Baptismal and Eucharistic services and provided practical experience of serving in all permitted aspects of these rites. All students must also have regular experience using the Litany as a means to encourage the sanctifying work of the Word and Holy Spirit.

Rationale: Character and competency are furthered by the regular use of the Litany. The Litany teaches us that it is not just our Lord's death that saves us but also His Incarnation, baptism, fasting and temptation, etc. A life framed by the words, "Lord have mercy upon us," "Good Lord deliver us," and "Spare us good Lord," has a deeper understanding of the fact that salvation belongs to the Lord and that even as His children we may not presume upon His grace but are rather totally dependent upon it. Students cannot lead the people of God through the liturgical expression of the life of our Lord if they have not been trained to do so.

C. Spiritual Development and Discipleship for Clergy

There are the other elements of character and competency training that can only take place when students are challenged to grow by trained ministry supervisors.

Approved Seminaries and Tracks must provide at least one year of supervised ministry and leadership training and experience. Students must also be required to worship regularly in the life of an Anglican parish.

Spiritual Discipling will include the development of a sober, righteous and Godly life, avoiding the works of the flesh and demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:19-23). Special attention should also be given to: accountability; manner of speech; social skills; hospitality; healthy relationships in the home; health and fitness; finance and tithing; and sexual fidelity. (see I Timothy, chapters 3-5)

Rationale: Our Lord called the disciples away from family and home and took them into situations that exposed their weaknesses and biases. He modeled the Christian life before them as well as the skills necessary to minister to His people. Such action changes lives. It affords the opportunity to address and begin to inculcate the attributes Paul instructs Timothy and Titus to acquire and practice. Approved Anglican Seminaries and Approved Anglican Tracks must demonstrate a way to provide these developmental opportunities to their Anglican students.

D. Humility in Service

Students will be provided regular supervised work, parish service and community service following the example of our Lord who was willing to wash the feet of His disciples.

Rationale: We may learn more about our students' character and work ethic from the way they clean a bathroom than from the way they write a paper. Those found faithful in a little will be found faithful in more. This type of practical supervision should also look for and address the issue of pride which is the sin that most commonly afflicts those in leadership.

Required Courses:

All students must take at least one course in Spiritual Formation or Ascetical Theology focusing on the classic Christian disciplines and the resources of the Anglican tradition of spirituality. These should include familiarity with representative works from: the Celtic Tradition, Benedictine Spirituality, the Medieval English Mystics, Reformation and Puritan Piety, the Caroline Divines and the Piety of the 18th Century Evangelicals and Methodists.

A course in Moral Theology or Ethics that covers the moral code outlined by Scripture and the Ten Commandments and the further responsibility and hazards for those in ordained ministry is a minimal expectation.

Every student must also take at least one course covering the use of the Book of Common Prayer in evangelism, spiritual formation, and mission.

Anglican Tracks:

Where students are being prepared for ordination in a non-Anglican seminary provision must be made for an ordained Anglican Priest / Chaplain to oversee each student's personal formation.

2. A Theology based upon the Holy Scriptures, the Catholic Creeds, the 39 Articles of Religion and the classic Prayer Books.

Anglican Theology is founded on the Authority of Holy Scripture, under which the Creeds, Articles and the classic prayer books stand.

As above, character, competency, and content must be constantly in view and woven together throughout the entire course of study. Anglican Education/Formation must do more than simply teach facts. The Catholic Creeds, the Articles of Religion and the classic prayer books shape Anglican worldview. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit they identify error, keep the Church centered on Biblical fidelity, and guide mission.

As set forth in the Articles, of particular importance to an Anglican worldview are:

1. The doctrine of the Trinity as set out in the Nicene, Apostles' and Athanasian Creeds (see Articles I and VIII.). 2. The uniqueness and universality of Jesus Christ, His death for the sin of the world and his bodily resurrection from the dead (see Articles II, III,IV,XV,XVIII). 3. The Lordship of the Holy Spirit (see Article V). 4. The Holy Scriptures (see Article VI,VII) 5. The doctrine of sin (see Article IX,X,XVI) 6. Justification by faith alone (see Articles XI,XII,XIII,XIV,XXII) 7. The biblical doctrine of Predestination (see Article XVII). 8. The Church (see Articles XIX,XX,XXI,XXIV,XXXIII,XXXIV) 9. The Ordained Ministry (see Articles XXIII,XXVI,XXXII,XXXVI) 10. The sacraments (see Articles XXV,XXVII,XXVIII,XXIX,XXX,XXXI).

Approved Anglican Seminaries and Approved Anglican Tracks must provide dedicated course work on the Catholic Creeds, the 39 Articles of Religion and an approved Book of Common Prayer. These courses must include their Biblical, historical and theological foundations, and emphasize their ethical and pastoral implications. Students should also be conversant with the main streams of orthodox spirituality in the worldwide Anglican Communion: Evangelical, Anglo-Catholic, Charismatic. In addition students should be acquainted with the main streams of liberal thought and their implications.

Understanding the history of the Church is critical to the life of the Church today.

Contemporary Christianity shows a bias against history and tradition. Anglican education and formation have always valued the history of the Church and Anglican history. They affirm that the Holy Spirit has used those who have gone before us.

Students must be taught a well rounded curriculum of Church history. In Anglican schools Anglican history should be taught throughout the curriculum. Anglican tracks must require students to take a course in Anglican history.

As theology must be taught from a biblical and proper historical perspective, so also Anglican Church History must be taught from an Anglican perspective. The Creeds, Articles and Book of Common Prayer must be kept in view throughout the teaching of Anglican history.

Approved schools providing Anglican tracks must demonstrate the ability to provide necessary theological and historical resources, with tutorial oversight, to supplement other coursework in the main curriculum to provide a well rounded Anglican education adequate to the standards set forth above.

3. A Right Understanding of Anglican Worship, built around Word, Sacrament and the work of the Holy Spirit:

Students need to know the biblical, historical and theological basis of worship in the prayer-book tradition. They should be aware of its evangelistic, catechetical and formational power and understand the importance of corporate and personal prayer and worship. The place of the ministry of the Word and Sacraments with the accompanying

work of the Holy Spirit should be well understood and highly valued. Issues of competency and content are directly addressed under this heading. Instruction shall include supervised practice in the use of the pastoral offices, the Church Calendar, the Lectionary, Collects, seasonal services and special prayers.

The list of things that need to be addressed is long and complex: e.g., appropriate conduct of liturgies, chanting, healing services, the proper choice of hymns, etc. These must be taught and modeled.

Thus, instruction must be offered in the order and practice of all Services of the Book of Common Prayer. Those trained must be able to explain what is happening and why at any point in any service.

Approved Seminaries and Tracks must equip students to preach the Word of God and apply it to all aspects of life and contemporary culture. Instruction in hermeneutics and homiletics must be provided.

Rationale: Students must be able to write and preach sermons that exhibit thorough preparation grounded in knowledge of the biblical text or texts, competent organization of the sermon, appropriate illustrations and applications, language adapted to the comprehension level of the congregation, and appropriate vocal skills.

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4. The Cure of Souls:

The Cure of Souls is the process of taking someone from their bondage to sin into a life that is free to serve Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. Students must be taught that they are to be about the cure of souls through teaching and modeling of a biblical life. This necessarily includes a right understanding of the role of the ordained minister in the formation of a holy people.

Another way of describing the “Cure of Souls” is to use the biblical term, “transformation.” Anglican Education and Formation recognizes that salvation has a beginning in justification, involves a process of sanctification and ends in glorification. Scripture tells us that salvation involves transformation through the power of God’s Word and the Holy Spirit (Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 1:6, 2:12).

Practice must be provided in all the skills necessary to bring unbelievers to put their trust in Christ, to nurture the faith in children, teenagers, adults and seniors, to assist those facing challenges and crises in their lives, and to prepare the dying for their death in Christ.

Training and experience must be provided in catechesis and spiritual counsel.

Students must be taught the value of the Liturgy in the Cure of Souls.

Rationale: Liturgy properly taught and practiced compels us to confront the reality of our spiritual condition. The lectionary leads us to passages we don't want to hear. The Collects cause us to pray things we don't want to say. The Confession and Litany remind us to examine our lives when we want to turn a blind eye.

How our students read the liturgy, how they preach the Word of God, how they conduct themselves on a pastoral visit or in a hospital are all elements of the cure of souls and are directly related to character, competency and content in Anglican Education and Formation. Integrity in the Cure of Souls requires the minister to present Christ, not self, to those in need.

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5. **Mission:**

Character, competency and content are further promoted when the program provides courses that encourage the student to understand that Evangelism, Church Planting and Mission are integral to the fabric of the Anglican life. Mission is central to the life of the Church and should be defined by the Church and Scripture.⁴ Other organizations can support this crucial role, but not define it. Students should be aware of the history of world mission and the contributions made by Anglicans to the spread of the Gospel, as well as the evangelization of Ireland, Celtic mission to Scotland and England, 19th Century Anglican mission societies, and modern Anglican missions to the West from the Global South. They should also be able to apply missionary principles, including cross-cultural effectiveness, to the contemporary context in order to plant, build and grow healthy congregations. They should be aware of the proper connections between the Gospel and social justice. The necessity of serving the poor is a Gospel imperative which must be demonstrated in preaching, leadership, and daily practice.

Students should learn and demonstrate the practical mission skills of Church planting, renewal, and growth. These would include but not be limited to: evangelistic tools; an understanding of demographics; identification of needs and collaborations; and strategies that promote growth both spiritual and numerical. Practical leadership training must be provided including: imparting vision, planning strategy, conducting meetings, fostering team work, building consensus, resolving conflict.

⁴ http://www.gospeltruth.net/allen/spon_expanofch.htm

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6. Proper Understanding of the Scriptures:

Character, competency and content are addressed when our programs teach students to discern the meaning of a passage of Scripture in context, as interpreted by other Scriptures according to literal, grammatical and historical understanding of the text, in accordance with the Catholic Creeds and the 39 Articles (especially Articles VI, VII and XX). This requires a proper understanding of sound exegetical and hermeneutical principles and exposure to the notable biblical scholars of the Anglican tradition.

Historically Anglicans interpret culture in light of Scripture, not Scripture in light of culture. A foundation in the Biblical languages is critical to understanding the language of our vernacular Bibles.

Course work must expose students to the entire Bible as well as Old and New Testament Biblical Theology. An understanding of covenantal and biblical history is essential as is an understanding of the Church Fathers.⁵ An Anglican understanding of the Scriptures sees that salvation is by the grace of God through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and the Church is vital to God's saving purposes. He provided us with the Church, His body on earth indwelt by the Holy Spirit, which leads us to a corporate not a purely individualistic understanding of religious life. A right understanding of Scripture, illumined by the Holy Spirit, helps us see that the Kingdom of God cannot be built apart from the Church.

Proper instruction in the Scriptures must also lead to proper preaching of the same. The Anglican way of faith has declared itself a church committed to Word and Sacrament. Scripture commends preaching as the primary means of proclaiming the Word of God. Preaching is the means God has chosen to convey the Gospel to a lost world. While there are other ways of proclaiming the Gospel, they are not a substitute for preaching. Proper understanding of the Scriptures and proper instruction in homiletics is essential. Preaching is the preeminent means by which God intends the Gospel be conveyed.

Rationale: Cultures and technology have changed. Sinful human nature and the cure God has provided for it have not changed. Therefore, proper Anglican Education/Formation must give our students the tools to understand and communicate the unchanging message of the God of the Bible to their changing cultural context.

Approved schools providing Anglican tracks must demonstrate the ability to provide necessary theological and historical resources, with tutorial oversight, to supplement other coursework in the main curriculum to provide a well rounded Anglican education adequate to the standards set forth above.

⁵ Anglican hermeneutics understands each passage of Scripture in light of the whole in accordance with Article XX of the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion.

7. Proper Understanding of Leadership, Order, and Polity in the Church

The Anglican way places a high value on right order. We believe Anglican polity under Godly Bishops best follows the standard of Scripture and the tradition of the historic Church and is in accord with reason. Anglican education and formation must teach the value of Anglican ecclesiology.

Students must be taught the meaning and value of the three Orders of ordained ministry, Deacons, Presbyters and Bishops. They should also be able to articulate clearly these Orders and what it means to be under authority as specified in the ordinals and canons.⁶

There should be familiarity with the Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Church in North America and the local diocese. Students must be able to articulate and demonstrate skills needed for leading and governing a local parish, the role of the Rector as spiritual leader and servant in the equipping God's people for the work of ministry. Students must also be conversant with the role of the diaconate, the laity, and their relationship to the bishop and diocese. The operative principle among Anglicans is that spiritual leadership is given by bishops and priests who are also servants of Christ and His church, following the example of humility established by Jesus Himself (Matthew 20:25-28) and holding to their diaconal vows.

Matthew 20:25 But Jesus called them to [Himself] and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. 26 "Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. 27 "And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave-- 28 "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."(NKJV)

Rationale: An Anglican Track program should provide a corrective for any differences in culture and ecclesiology. An independent school may provide the intellectual argument for our ecclesiology but the student will still graduate having been immersed in a culture that may see no value in the historical succession of ordained ministry and may even disparage that form of polity. Those immersed in some denominational cultures will value a multi elder form of leadership and others a congregational form. The Anglican approach is different.

Therefore this material should be taught by an Anglican professor. Students must be taught that the Anglican approach to discipline, in obedience to Scripture, is always to be undertaken with the goal of restoration.

Anglican Education/Formation should enable students to meet Anglican bishops in the

⁶ See ACNA Constitution Articles I and Canons Title III and the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral.

classroom and the Chapel. Ecclesiology must not only be taught, it must be modeled. Students should graduate knowing their bishops and the bishops should know the character and gifts of their prospective clergy.

Approved schools providing Anglican tracks must demonstrate the ability to provide necessary theological and historical resources, with tutorial oversight, to supplement other coursework in the main curriculum to provide a well rounded Anglican education adequate to the standards set forth above.

Respectfully submitted

The Anglican Standards Task Force