

Communicators of the Faith in the 21st Century

Quality Enhancement Plan for
Notre Dame Seminary Graduate School of Theology
New Orleans, LA

Executive Summary

The mission statement of Notre Dame Seminary (NDS) states that the institution is to prepare men for the ministerial priesthood of the Catholic Church in the image of Christ the Good Shepherd. The end or telos of this preparation is to produce priests who will be able to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in a way that communicates the faith in fidelity to the Church, with clarity and conviction.

In designing a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for Notre Dame Seminary, the QEP committee surveyed various constituents of the NDS community and determined that a plan that addressed the need for seminarians to assimilate and integrate what they learn in a way that makes them articulate communicators of the faith would greatly add to the effectiveness of the seminary's mission and focus. The mission of forming priests in the image of the Good Shepherd requires that our graduates have the ability to articulate theological ideas in an effective manner. As the main method of communication by priests in the parish is oral communication, the seminary must address this critical area of formation. And, it was determined that a QEP that could be part of the effort to assess the quality and effectiveness of the formation program, especially with regard to the integration and assimilation of the seminarians' intellectual and academic formation, would be a great enhancement to the overall assessment needs of the seminary. It is for this reason that Notre Dame Seminary has chosen to implement the Quality Enhancement Plan, "Communicators of the Faith in the 21st Century."

The overarching goal of the QEP is that graduates will be able to communicate the Faith in an articulate manner.

Three Envisioned Outcomes of the QEP are:

- Graduates will be able to develop their rhetorical skills while at NDS.
- Graduates will be able to communicate theological ideas and concepts with clarity, cogency, conviction, and concision.
- Graduates will be able to accurately support main ideas on a given topic in a way that integrates their theological education at NDS

Strategies developed to meet the goal and outcomes of the QEP are:

- Emphasize oral presentations in all classes within the principle of 'gradualism'.
- Develop an environment and community of communicators of the faith at NDS
- Utilize formats, such as the Third Theology Theological Reflection, to enhance student ability to integrate and present information on a theological topic.
- Expose the students to articulate and accomplished communicators.

A variety of assessments will be used to determine if the strategies implemented over the life of this QEP have an impact on student learning in the area of communication skills and serve to form priests who are articulate communicators of the Faith.

For more information, please contact
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