



Lutheran Brethren
Seminary

**INSTITUTIONAL
ASSESSMENT PLAN
Revised/Updated
2023 – 2024**

*Aligned with the Feb. 2023
TRACS Compliance Manual
5/24/2023*

Introduction

Mission/Purpose of the Seminary	3
Institutional Objectives	3
CLB Mission (Church of the Lutheran Brethren)	4
Academic Philosophy	4
Assessment Philosophy	4
Assessment Guiding Principles	4
Objectives of LBS Assessment Plan	5
Conclusion:	5
Checklist/Flowchart for Assessment Plans & Results	7
 ASSESSMENT PLAN	8
Assessment of the Institutional Assessment Plan	8
Assessment of Policy	8
Assessment of Institutional Publications	8
 ADMINISTRATION.....	9
 ACADEMIC AND STUDENT LEARNING.....	9
Assessment of Program Outcomes	11
Curriculum Review/Assessment: Degree Programs	14
Revisions to Curriculum	17
Distance Education:	16
Capstone Assignments:	17
New Course Design	17
Review/Evaluation Procedure for Faculty—Full-Time, Part-Time, Adjunct	18
 STUDENT SERVICES.....	19
Student Orientation	20
Advising and Spiritual Formation Groups	20
Supervised Ministry Education	21
Student Government	21
Student Financial Assistance	22
Student Health	22
Practical Theology	25
Career Counseling	23
Food Services	23
Textbooks	23
Postal Services	23
Computer Availability	23
Student Records	23
 FINANCES	23
 FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT.....	24

Introduction

Through assessment, each department of the Lutheran Brethren Seminary (LBS) is linked, promoting self-analysis and growth. The assessments are designed to evaluate the effectiveness of programs, courses, faculty, and staff; basically, to evaluate the effectiveness of LBS in achieving its mission. Analysis of the data is not enough; there must be an intentional application of the knowledge gained, in order to facilitate positive change. This lays the foundation for collaborative decision-making within LBS.

In order for assessment to be successful, it is imperative that all constituents understand the purpose and potential impact of assessment on the successful ministry of LBS. The Institutional Assessment Plan incorporates assessment points throughout the learning process. It requires teamwork, must be seen in the context of fulfilling the mission given by the Lord, and implemented at multiple stages of the learning process.

The LBS Institutional Assessment Plan is in written form and is shared with LBS Board, Administration, faculty, and constituents. It can be found in hard copy in the main offices and digitally on the LBS website. Minutes of the RAPT meetings indicate the use of assessment data for revising the IAP, and also to make sure LBS is moving forward in achieving its goals.

Mission/Purpose of the Seminary

Lutheran Brethren Seminary serves the church and the world by preparing servants of Christ for a life of ministry in God's mission and for equipping His people to serve in His mission.

Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20).

Called by the Church of the Lutheran Brethren, the Seminary serves the church and world by living in and preparing others to live in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and His call to participate in His mission of grace to bless all nations.

LBS prepares people to enter the diverse cultural contexts of the world, through particular ministries, as Christ's servants shaped by his words and wounds, speaking His gospel in word and deed. The seminary approaches its ministry in dependence on the Triune God who speaks truth through His inspired scriptures.

Institutional Objectives

Graduates of Lutheran Brethren Seminary will:

- Embrace a Christ-centered understanding of Scripture.
- Exhibit skills for leading God's people in serving His local and global mission.
- Demonstrate gospel-shaped skills that correspond to the doing of ministry.
- Model Christ-like character in life and in ministry.

The Seminary fulfills its mission in partnership with and by the support of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren.

CLB Mission (Church of the Lutheran Brethren)

In response to God's person and grace, we worship Him with everything we are in Christ, serve one another in Christian love and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with all people. This church lives out its passions in the following core values:

- The Bible is central in our congregations and in our households.
- The Gospel is our treasure and our joy.
- We revere God's Law.
- The Word and the Sacraments are God's precious means of grace.
- We cherish the love and fellowship of God's people.
- We long for people to trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, to come to know Him in a personal way.
- We seek to be people of prayer.

Academic Philosophy

The Seminary is committed to the concept that we are spiritual, mental, emotional, social, and physical beings. Therefore, the educational process must include the development of each of these dimensions. The educational process is not limited to the classroom but includes the entire range of interactions within the student's environment.

The Bible holds a primary and central place in the curriculum. It is recognized that the Bible is God's special revelation and that it is the source and norm for our view of God, creation by the word of God, and humanity created in the image of God. The Seminary also reserves the right to pursue its search for truth through diligent study of humanity and other elements of God's creation that constitute general revelation.

The pursuit of truth, in the context suggested above, should be approached with vigor and reverence. The basis of our teaching and learning should be that the source of our truth about God and His relationship with humanity is located in the Scriptures.

Assessment Philosophy

We aim to develop an on-going culture of assessment as we endeavor to prepare pastors and missionaries for the Church of Lutheran Brethren. This assessment of our institutional effectiveness is a reflection of our commitment to Christ and desire to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us.

The Board of LBS evaluates itself each year setting a positive model for assessment in all levels of the seminary. Collected data is analyzed, presented, and then applied with all diligence to promote positive change and growth.

Assessment Guiding Principles

All we do in the pursuit of our established mission will be subjected to the following four questions:

1. Mission & Learning goals: What is the Lutheran Brethren Seminary trying to accomplish through what it provides educationally?
2. Measurement: How do we evaluate whether or not we are attaining our learning goals?
3. Outcomes: What did we find?
4. Closing the loop: How will we use the information we gathered and analyzed in order to improve our regular operations?

As we address these four assessment questions, we will utilize the following principles as guidance for assessment initiatives and activities:

1. Assessment activities should be understood to be a systematic, on-going process that regularly involves the gathering, interpreting and use of the gathered assessment information for continuous improvement.
2. Assessment should be shaped and guided by faculty, students, and staff, with administration and the administrative processes providing support.
3. Assessment should flow from the LBS mission which flows from the mission of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren. The seminary represents the educational arm of the CLBA/CLBC.
4. Assessment tools should provide the flexibility which permits the exercise of professional judgment within the LBS context for effective assessment.
5. Assessment should be based on multiple measures, both quantitative and qualitative, which may include locally developed instruments, surveys, nationally normed exams, external reviews, exit interviews, and performance evaluations.
6. Assessment measurements should be minimally intrusive for faculty, staff, and students.
7. This Assessment Plan and the on-going assessment activities need to be continually monitored and themselves assessed for continuous improvement.

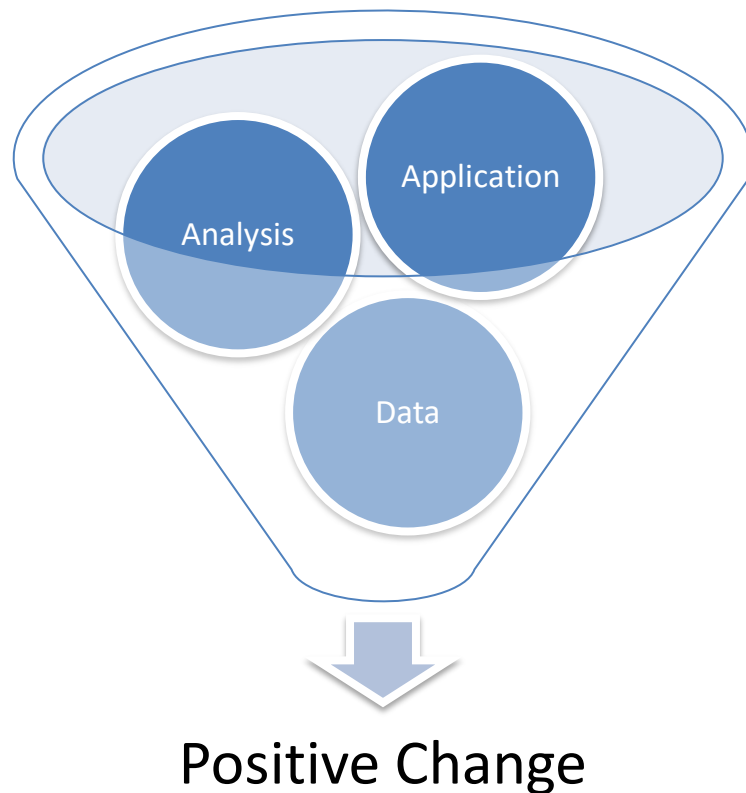
Objectives of LBS Assessment Plan

1. To ensure that our daily LBS experiences for students-faculty-staff are consistent with our stated Mission, Purpose, and Institutional Objectives,
2. To offer our constituents verifiable evidence of the progress and achievement of our mission and goals, by
 - The use of quantitative methods of assessment
 - The use of qualitative methods of assessment
3. To provide the Seminary Administration and Faculty a means of accountability to ensure ongoing assessment
 - Through appropriate organizational accountability processes
 - Through meeting the guidelines of the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools. (TRACS)
 - Through the development of a seminary-wide ethos of assessment
4. To gather, interpret and use assessment data for the institutional decision-making processes of instructional program improvement, strategic planning, and resource allocation under the direction of the Board of LBS, LBS President, Dean, Registrar, and others as deemed necessary.
5. To provide regular reports to the seminary's internal and external constituents
 - Reporting the work of assessment, demonstrating a total commitment to constituent involvement
 - Providing feedback for curricular development
 - Informing logistic and strategic decision-making
 - Developing a seminary-wide ethos of assessment

The goal of assessment at LBS is not to merely collect data for the purpose of analysis but to utilize the generated data to produce change that will strengthen the effectiveness of all areas of the seminary.

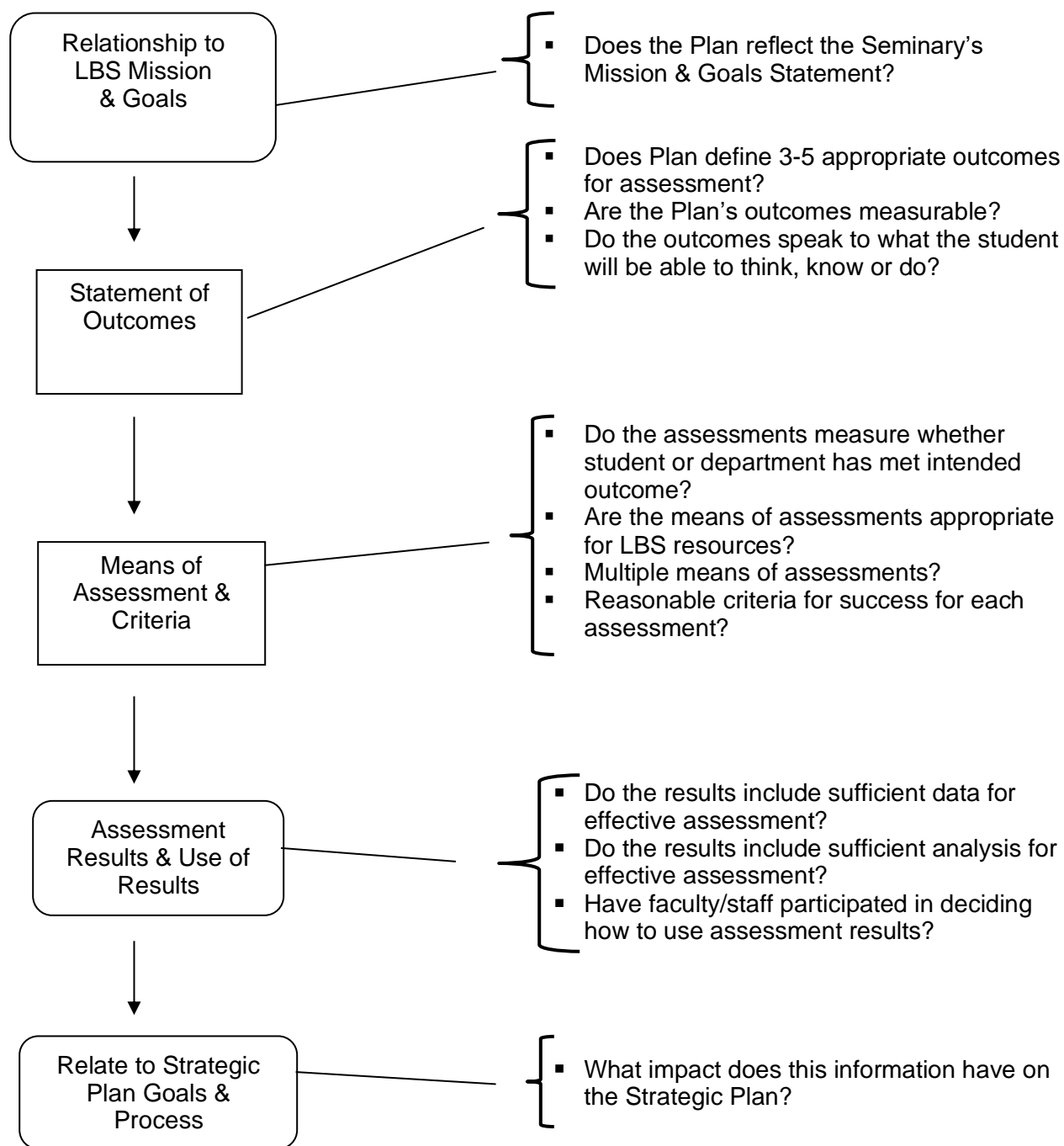
Conclusion:

An assessment plan is an example of good educational practice, making sure an institution is accomplishing what it claims as goals and purposes. Assessment, reflection on generated data, and dissemination/application of the results are major components in measuring the effectiveness of any institution of learning. But, aside from all of the practical reasons for assessment, there is a spiritual side to this as well. As a Christian institution, we are responsible to God to reflect His character, which includes truth and integrity. We are accountable to TRACS and then the DOE. An Institutional Assessment Plan is a tool to make sure that accountability is in place. It is our desire to grow along this journey in our ability to accurately assess LBS, to use the data to implement positive change, and to honor God in all things.



Checklist/Flowchart for Assessment Plans & Results

LUTHERAN BRETHERN SEMINARY



Assessment Plan

Standards and Evaluative Criteria

- 12.1 Institution has developed and implemented a comprehensive *Assessment Plan* which includes all aspects of the institution. (IER)
- 12.2 The institution provides a systematic assessment of whether or not student learning outcomes at the institution, program and course levels are appropriate to its educational mission. (IER)
- 12.3 The institution utilizes multiple approaches (qualitative and quantitative methods and direct and indirect measures) for assessing student learning, including information both internal and external to the institution.

Assessment of the Institutional Assessment Plan

The CAO and DIE annually evaluate the IAP and its effectiveness. Input from faculty and administration help them to judge its efficacy over the past year. The DIE uses a checklist to look at the IAP as a whole and to evaluate its compliance with TRACS standards. The IAP is in writing, shared widely, board-approved, and is posted on the LBS website. Notes from the RAPT workshop in May/June, minutes from Strategic Planning Committee meetings, and minutes from Board meetings show that assessment data is used for revising the *Assessment Plan*.

Forms:

- Institutional Assessment Plan Review
- Strategic Planning Committee Minutes Binder
- Board Minutes Binder
- RAPT Minutes

Assessment of Policy

LBS has developed policies for administrative operations, financial practices, academic procedures, and student development, which are consistent with the seminary's mission. The Policy Manual is thoroughly reviewed every three years by the CAO and faculty followed by approval of the LBS Board. However, if it is discovered in their application that a policy or procedure needs revision it is acted upon in a timely manner. Each year the LBS Board approves any revisions to existing policies or the addition of new policies.

Forms:

- Policy & Procedure Manual Review

Assessment of Institutional Publications

The official publications of LBS are: LBS Academic Catalog, Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook, Board Manual, Policies Manual, and promotional materials. Each publication is reviewed by the appropriate administrative personnel and approved by the LBS Board. The faculty review the Academic Catalog, Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook, and promotional materials, making recommendations as appropriate to the full faculty and then the board. The board reviews the Board Manual, and the faculty/CAO review the Policies and Procedures Manual, making recommendations to the faculty/CAO and Board as appropriate. LBS makes every effort to ensure that information presented in these publications is current, accurate, and consistent.

Forms:

- Institutional Publications Review
- Board Handbook Review

Documentation:

- Copies of all publications

Administration

The administration of LBS is responsible for identifying and bringing together the various resources of the seminary and allocating them effectively, in order to accomplish its mission.

All administrative personnel have job descriptions and performance criteria that are appropriate to their position. Regular evaluations are conducted of all employees against the responsibilities in the approved job description. The ISL is reviewed annually and updated.

Review/Evaluation Procedure for Non-Faculty

Step 1: The Supervisor will meet with non-faculty members at the beginning of the school year to discuss and clarify the procedures and forms.

Step 2: The Dean will provide Non-Faculty members with the Self-Evaluation forms to be completed prior to their face-to-face meeting. (Also, Administrative Role Self-Evaluation forms as applicable.)

Step 3: The Supervisor and Non-Faculty member will schedule their face-to-face annual meeting. Copies of the completed forms are to be submitted one week prior to the scheduled meeting:

- a. Non-Faculty Self-Evaluation Form
- b. Administrative Role Self-Evaluation if applicable

Step 4: The Supervisor and Non-Faculty member meet to discuss the evaluation forms completed by the Non-Faculty member and the job description.

Step 5: The Supervisor will prepare and sign the Supervisor's Evaluation. The report will be given to the Non-Faculty member for signature and then added to the personnel file, along with supporting documents.

Forms

- Non-Faculty Self-Evaluation (NFSE)
- Supervisor's Evaluation (SE)
- Non-Faculty Evaluation Schedule
- Management Personnel Evaluation Schedule
- Job Descriptions Binder
- Non-Faculty Evaluation Agenda

Academic and Student Learning

LBS has the responsibility of ensuring that its students achieve the Institutional Objectives and Program Outcomes as established by the administration, faculty, and board. Multiple measures, direct and indirect, are utilized to assess the strengths and areas needing growth within LBS. The data generated provides evidence to all constituents of student and institutional achievement, and becomes the basis for on-going, data-driven, decision making within the seminary.

The Director of Institutional Effectiveness oversees the implementation of assessments, collects all results, and makes a brief initial analysis. Each year at the RAPT workshops (Review, Analyze, Plan, Transfer) held in May/June, the faculty and administration review all the data generated over the course of the previous school year and conduct a more in-depth analysis. The scheduling of the RAPT workshop in May/June makes it possible to suggest changes/revisions and to get them approved and implemented in time for the next school year.

Academic assessment can occur on various levels and change can be affected at any of these levels.

1. Student Level: At the end of each semester students complete Course Evaluation Surveys for each course they complete. The resulting data provides information on the student, the course, and the professor. Capstone assignments allow LBS to determine if students have achieved each of the Program Outcomes. At the end of each semester the grades of distance students and campus students are compared to ensure that they each have comparable opportunities to succeed at LBS.
2. Faculty Level: Each professor has established learning outcomes for each individual course they teach.
 - a. Course embedded assessments, such as presentations, quizzes, exams, papers, verbatims, and discussion posts evaluate the success of students in achieving the course outcomes. All course assignments are aligned with the Program Outcomes they are intended to measure, making the assignments more targeted and the data obtained more valuable.
 - b. At the end of each semester faculty members receive the results of the student course evaluations and discuss the resulting data and implications (if any) with their supervisor.
3. Administrative Level: Due to the relatively small size of the seminary the faculty often operates as a committee of the whole. Decisions are made with faculty and administration in attendance. All collected data, data analysis, proposed action, and recommended changes go to the Administrative Committee who then forwards the information on to the board and/or other committees as deemed appropriate.
4. Board Level: The Board of Lutheran Brethren Seminary completes an assessment of its activities at its annual fall meeting.

Program and student learning outcomes are evaluated annually by faculty and administration at RAPT workshops in May/June. They decide if the outcomes are appropriate to the educational mission of LBS and evaluate if they are being accomplished by reviewing student work. (Capstone Assignments)

Forms:

What Does the Data Say?
Rubric for Examining Student Work
RAPT Minutes
RAPT Recommendations

The analysis of retention rates, graduation rates, and placement rates takes place during the discussions at RAPT when reviewing Program Outcomes and student learning.

The numbers for the analysis table are determined in the following manner:

- Enrollment: The total number of students enrolled in one course during the Fall or Spring Semester.
- Retention Rate: Percentage of first time, graduate degree-seeking students enrolled in the previous fall who re-enrolled.
- Graduation Rate: The percentage of students who started as first-time, graduate degree-seeking, graduate degree completers who did so within the normal or expected time limits for completion as indicated below. (Policy and Procedures Manual, Policy #5.22)
 - MDiv: 3-8 years
 - DCM: 3-8 years
 - MTS: 2-5 years
 - CTS: 1-3 years
- Job Placement: Percentage of graduates who find field-of-study related employment within 12 months of graduation, excluding graduates that enrolled in additional higher education

Sample Table (Data is found at <http://www.lbs.edu/accreditation> , in RAPT Binders, and in the IAP data documents)

Academic Year	Enrollment	Retention	Graduation	Job Placement
2019-2020				
2020-2021				
2021-2022				
2022-2023				

Program Outcomes are evaluated on a regular basis. They were derived from the Mission Statement and Institutional Objectives of the seminary and so are appropriate to its mission.

Assessment of Program Outcomes

The assessment of Program Outcomes has five components. 1) The Director of Institutional Effectiveness evaluates the outcomes using a matrix with six required descriptors. 2) The D.I.E. evaluates course syllabi on an annual basis to ensure that course content and assessments are aligned to the outcomes. 3) The faculty evaluates the achievement of the program outcomes by creating capstone assignments and setting benchmarks for student achievement of each one. 4) Two faculty readers evaluate completed capstone assignments, using a rubric, to look for evidence of students having achieved the indicated outcomes. 5) Students self-evaluate their achievement of Program Outcomes in various surveys. During RAPT meetings, the CAO, DIE, and faculty review the data derived from surveys, capstone assignment reviews, and course evaluations to determine the institution's success in achieving Program Outcomes. The following provides an overview of how it all comes together in a 5-year program review at the institution.

Program Review

Program review provides LBS with a foundation for planning and continuous institutional improvement. Through the review process, LBS is able to recognize its strengths, past achievements, current challenges, and set goals and plan for the future. Evaluation of the seminary program contributes to the assessment of institutional goals and provides information valuable to strategic planning and the improvement of academic programs. LBS employs multiple measures in its program review to ensure an accurate and complete reporting. The data accumulated will also be included in reporting to its accrediting agency, TRACS. Program review will be completed regularly over a four-year period in order to ensure that LBS is accomplishing its mission and is meeting the needs of seminary students and CLB congregations.

Year 1 Review Program and Institutional Outcomes—Faculty Meetings

- Review Program Outcomes
 - Do they reflect the mission of LBS?
 - Do they reflect the needs of congregations? (See Congregational Needs Survey)
 - Do the sub-points clarify the outcomes?
 - Summarize and make recommendations, submit to CAO for Program Review Report
- Review Institutional Objectives
 - Do they reflect the mission of LBS?
 - Are they clearly written in concise terms?
 - Do they reflect the needs of congregations?
 - Summarize and make recommendations, submit to CAO for Program Review Report
- Achievement of Program Outcomes
 - Review Capstone assignment results for current and two previous years
 - Review mean score for classes and compare to benchmark
 - Determine percentage of students having achieved benchmark
 - Summarize and make recommendations, submit to CAO for Program Review Report

Year 2 Curriculum Review—Faculty Meetings

- How is the first year structured?
 - Are writing and speaking intentional components?
 - Is critical thinking introduced?
 - Are there any issues with sequencing or prerequisites?
- Examine the progression of courses from year to year.
 - Are there any courses which should have a different placement in the sequence?
 - Does the schedule of yearly course offerings adequately provide for the needs of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year students?
- How does the curriculum relate to the mission statement of LBS?
- Can each course be directly linked to a program outcome?
 - Are any program outcomes weakly supported by courses?
 - Are measures in place for measuring the achievement of program outcomes?
- Is there variety in pedagogy across the curriculum?
- Are there sufficient opportunities for field experience?

- How does LBS address the student with weak writing skills?
- Do advising and/or mentoring have an impact on the curriculum?
- What do course evaluations say about current curriculum?
- What do student surveys say about current curriculum?
- Is there enough scope to meet the changing needs of congregations?
- Write summary of discussion/conclusions, submit to CAO for Program Review Report

Year 3: Comparability of Degree Program—Faculty Meetings

- Compare program at LBS with three institutions (form)
- Present to faculty meeting for discussion/evaluation
- Summarize and make recommendations, submit to CAO for Program Review Report

Year 4: Data Review

- Surveys: Student Experience, Graduate Exit Interview, Course Eval's, Alumni Survey
 - Review data related to program
 - Review students' reflections on program
 - Discussion as faculty
 - Summarize and make recommendations, submit to CAO for Program Review Report
- Review retention, graduation and placement rates
 - What does the data say about the effectiveness of the program?
 - Summarize and make recommendations, submit to CAO for Program Review Report
- CAO submits final report to RAPT

Forms:

Assessment Calendar

Measuring Achievement of Program Outcomes Form

Program Outcome Rubric for student work

Assessment of Student Learning

Graduating Student Interview

Alumni/Ministry Survey

Distance Education Review, Student

Course Syllabus Review: see Data Section

RAPT Minutes, see Data Section

Assessment data is collected by the DIE who presents it to the faculty and administration at RAPT Workshops each May/June. All data is forwarded to the Board of LBS and Strategic Planning Committee via a final report sent to the President. A summary statement of educational effectiveness is posted on the LBS website.

Forms:

Statement of Educational Effectiveness

Board Minutes Binder

Strategic Planning Committee Minutes Binder

Curriculum Review/Assessment: Degree Programs

The Lutheran Brethren Seminary presently offers the Master of Divinity and Master of Theological Studies degrees in its program. It also offers a non-degree Diploma in Christian Ministry and a Certificate of Theological Studies. All current programs are conducted on the master's level. (See Lutheran Brethren Seminary Catalog for details of the offerings.)

Master of Divinity Program

Program Outcomes:

- A. Interpret the Bible in its parts and in its whole through use of its original languages and appropriate exegetical and hermeneutical methods
- B. Articulate and apply the doctrinal teachings as set forth in the Scriptures and confessed in the CLB Statement of Faith.
- C. Proclaim God's saving work in Jesus Christ through the public and private ministries of the Word and Sacraments
- D. Demonstrate knowledge and skills for leading congregations
- E. Demonstrate capacity for faithful involvement in God's mission through His church
- F. Demonstrate personal integrity and a love for God, His Church, and the world

Master of Theological Studies

Program Outcomes

- A. Interpret the Bible in its parts and in its whole through use appropriate exegetical and hermeneutical methods.
- B. Articulate and apply the doctrinal teachings as set forth in the Scriptures and confessed in the CLB Statement of Faith
- C. Proclaim God's saving work in Jesus Christ through the public and private ministries of the Word
- D. Demonstrate and apply skills for leadership
- E. Demonstrate capacity for faithful involvement in God's mission through His church
- F. Demonstrate personal love for God, His Church, and the world

Diploma in Christian Ministry

Program Outcomes:

- A. Interpret the Bible in its parts and in its whole through use of its original languages and appropriate exegetical and hermeneutical methods
- B. Articulate and apply the doctrinal teachings as set forth in the Scriptures and confessed in the CLB Statement of Faith.
- C. Proclaim God's saving work in Jesus Christ through the public and private ministries of the Word and Sacraments
- D. Demonstrate knowledge and skills for leading congregations
- E. Demonstrate capacity for faithful involvement in God's mission through His church
- F. Demonstrate personal integrity and a love for God, His Church, and the world

Certificate of Theological Studies

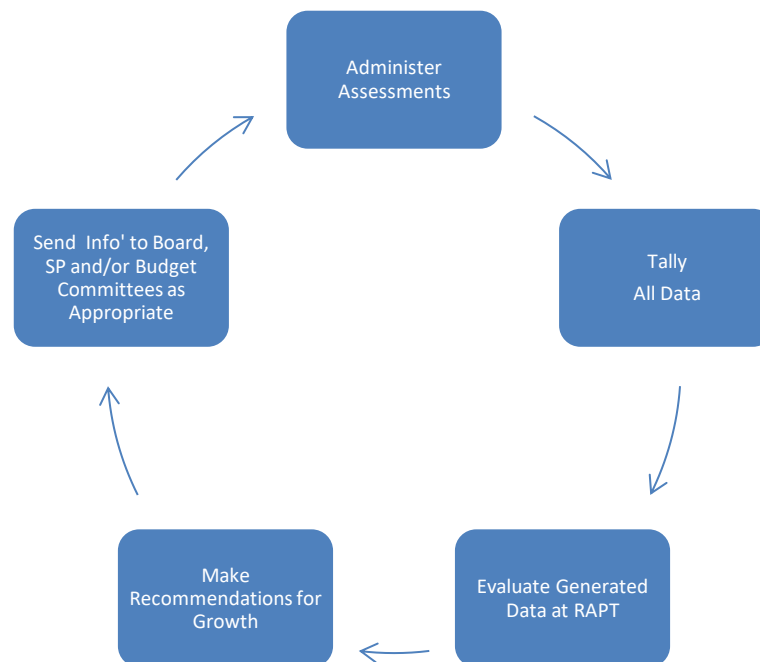
Program Outcomes:

- A. Interpret and apply the Bible with a Christ-centered focus

- B. Demonstrate skills for the doing of ministry in a chosen emphasis (Lay Ministry, Bible & Theology, or Mission)
- C. Exhibit attitudes characteristic of servant leaders in local and global mission

The assessment of Program and Course Outcomes in the Master of Theological Studies and Diploma in Christian Ministry programs will follow the same procedures as for the Master of Divinity program.

The Institutional Objectives, Program Outcomes, Course Outcomes, Courses, and Ministry Skills have all been aligned to make evident the connections between them and to ensure that each outcome is being addressed in the seminary program. This not only assists the faculty and administration in seeing the big picture, but it helps the student to see that there is reason and purpose behind each item. The assessment process can be visualized as follows:



Forms

- Program Outcomes Review
- Master of Divinity Matrix linking each course with specific Program Outcomes
- Four Year Cycle of Review

LBS faculty develop and assess the academic courses for the degrees, diploma, and certificate of the seminary to assure that they conform to the seminary's Mission, Institutional Objectives, Program Outcomes, and Doctrinal Statement of Faith.

Although all of the areas within LBS are important, the classroom is where most instruction takes place as we prepare pastors and missionaries for fruitful ministry in the Church of the Lutheran Brethren churches, thus the importance of continual review of academic courses.

The LBS faculty has primary responsibility for the development of the curriculum, its content, and methods of instruction. For evaluation of the curriculum the LBS faculty will work with the Director of Institutional Effectiveness in accomplishing the following:

The faculty engages in regular review and assessment of seminary courses through student Course Evaluation Surveys, Graduating Student Interviews and faculty discussion. However, if a need for revision of the curriculum arises it is handled in a timely manner.

Forms:

Syllabus Review Form

MDIV Matrix-Alignment of Program Outcomes to Syllabi

Course Evaluation Survey, Student

Review of Syllabi: PO & PLO coverage

Distance Education:

Distance education at LBS provides an opportunity for individuals who are unable to attend classes on campus to receive the same educational offerings and ministry preparation as those who attend classes on campus. Through the use of robust and user-friendly video and instructional management software, LBS offers students the opportunity for regular and substantive interaction with both faculty and fellow students. Distance education students can participate in classes synchronously (i.e., live as the class takes place on campus) or asynchronously (i.e., by watching recorded class sessions) as the student's schedule allows. Distance students at LBS enroll in courses in the same sequence as on campus students and will have the same professors as on campus students attending the same courses.

To meet the demands of distance education, LBS utilizes a distributed learning format which allows instruction and learning to occur independent of time and place. This means that the professor, students, and content can all be located in different, noncentralized locations.

Although the student may pursue any educational programs (e.g., CTS, DCM, MTS, or MDiv) through distance education, it is recommended that the student consider opportunities to come on -campus periodically. Additionally, it will be essential that the distance education student gain access to a high- quality theological library. This could be a combination of the Seminary's own electronic library resources, one's personal resources, a church's library, and/or a local public, private, university, or seminary library. Before the first semester of study starts, distance education students must join all new students on campus to participate in the two-and-a-half-day intensive course called PT900 Introduction to Seminary Education.

To ensure a higher level of success in graduate level work, all new students are required to take PT 900 Introduction to Seminary Education. This course is an overview of skills and aptitudes necessary for effectiveness in seminary. Topics to be covered include seminary program outcomes; managing time effectively; reading, researching, and writing at a master's level; and thinking critically and theologically. Orientation for the technology required for success in the program is accomplished on a one-on-one basis. This orientation will demonstrate how to access the administrative and educational support infrastructure at LBS.

While most residential students are enrolled full-time while working part-time, LBS expects that most distance students will maintain full or almost full-time employment while pursuing their academic program part-time. To complete a part-time distance degree program successfully requires a strong commitment to disciplined time and priority management. Distance students should expect to spend about 2.5 hours outside of class for each hour spent in class. The "in class" time will be either participating in a class using video conferencing technology or watching a recording online of a class that the student is unable to attend.

The courses are supported by Zoom and Populi. These programs make it possible to have regular and substantive interaction between students and instructors.

Instructors can see when synchronous students log on during a class. They are able to see and hear distance students, drawing them into live classroom discussions and providing opportunities to ask questions. When a student cannot attend the live class, he can view a recording of the class and keep up with content and assignments.

Distance Education students regularly interact with each course and instructor through Populi, the institution's learning management system, and through Zoom, the platform for synchronous and asynchronous attendance. In Populi students will find links to class presentations and discussion boards. Quizzes, assignments, and readings are posted on Populi. The Director of Institutional Effectiveness performs an End-of-Course Data Analysis, comparing academic achievement of distance and on-campus students to ensure that distance students can succeed in the program.

Forms:

- Distance Education Program Student Survey
- Distance Education Program Faculty Survey
- Distance Education Program Review, Director DE
- End-of-Course Data Analysis

Capstone Assignments:

The institution has chosen to evaluate the achievement of program outcomes using capstone assignments. Faculty members initially worked as a group to determine the best way to assess each outcome and then to design the assignments accordingly. Benchmarks are set as the assignments are created and then tracked at the end of each school year. The resulting data enables informed decision-making in regards to continuation or revision. Two faculty members will be selected to read each completed assignment. Using a rubric, they will look for evidence of achievement of the selected outcomes in the student work. Their findings are shared with the whole faculty and administration during RAPT meetings.

Forms:

- Achievement of Program Outcomes—blank
- Rubric for Student Work, Program Outcomes
- Program Success, Benchmarks
- Capstone Grid

New Course Design

The procedure for proposing and designing a new course for the seminary will follow a different track than proposing a change.

1. The instructor will complete the *Course Design* template. The questions asked on this template will provide the Dean and other faculty with basic information about the course.
2. Submit the template to the Dean for review and placement on the agenda of the next faculty meeting.
3. Discuss the need for the course at a faculty meeting for peer review. The instructor should be prepared to tie the proposal to assessment data. (What specific assessment data shows the need for this new course?)
4. If approved, the instructor may move ahead with course design. He will set course goals, identifying the desired results. (Knowledge, abilities) Next, he will describe the types of evidence of student learning to show student progress. What types of

assessments will enable students to demonstrate progress towards course goals? Do assessments actually measure the attainment of learning goals?

What learning experiences will provide students with opportunities to engage the material and to apply it? Does it make connections to previous learning?

5. The instructor will submit the completed course to the Dean for review and scheduling for the agenda at the next faculty meeting.
6. The faculty will conduct a peer review, making recommendations.
7. Once approved, the course will be inserted into the proper location in the curriculum cycle and added to the catalog and web site.

Forms:

Course Design Procedure, Template

The results of proposals for change and/or additions to the curriculum of LBS will be discussed at regular faculty meetings and/or RAPT workshops in May/June. Each change or addition should be linked to data demonstrating the need for the change.

Forms:

Achievement of Program Outcomes, Benchmarks

RAPT Recommendations, see data section

Review/Evaluation Procedure for Faculty—Full-Time, Part-Time, Adjunct

Step 1: The Dean will meet with faculty members at the beginning of the school year, preferably at a faculty meeting, to discuss and clarify the procedures and forms.

Step 2: The faculty member will select which course they wish for the formal evaluation, either Fall or Spring semester, at least 2 months prior to the beginning of the review process.

Step 3: The Faculty member will select the type of peer review that best suits their objective, either a general or directed peer review. Then the Faculty member will request that another faculty member, the Director of Distance Education or the Director of Institutional Effectiveness conduct the review for the selected course. The faculty member and reviewer will conference together after the class. The completed form should be submitted to the Dean one week prior to the scheduled annual review meeting.

Step 4: The Student Course Evaluation Survey link (Survey Monkey) will be distributed to the students via Populi. The faculty members will receive copies of the results from the Director of Institutional Effectiveness during RAPT meetings. The summary reports will be sent to the Dean prior to their scheduled meeting.

Step 5: The Dean will provide Faculty members with the Course Self-Evaluation and Performance Self-Evaluation forms to be completed prior to their face-to-face meeting. (Also, Administrative Role Self-Evaluation forms as applicable.)

Step 6: The Dean and faculty member will schedule their face-to-face annual meeting. Copies of the completed forms are to be submitted to the Dean one week prior to the scheduled meeting:

- a. Faculty Course Self-Evaluation
- b. Faculty Performance Self-Evaluation

- c. Peer Review
- d. Administrative Role Self-Evaluation, if applicable

Step 7: The Dean will review the Student Course Evaluation Summary relative to the course selected.

Step 8: The Dean and faculty member meet and discuss the evaluation forms completed by the faculty member, the Peer Review for the course, the Student Course Evaluation Summary for the selected course, and the job description.

Step 9: The Dean will prepare and sign the Supervisor's Review/Report. The report will be given to the faculty member for signature and then added to the personnel file, along with supporting documents.

Forms:

- Course Evaluation Survey (CES)
- Faculty Course Self-Evaluation (FCSE)
- Faculty Performance Self-Evaluation (FPSE)
- Administrative Role Self-Evaluation
- Supervisor's Annual Review and Report of Instructor (SARRI)
- Faculty Evaluation Schedule
- Supervisor's Agenda
- Job Descriptions Binder

Student Services

LBS Faculty and Staff administer services for the students in many ways including, but not limited to, the following: admissions, financial aid, keys to the building, scheduling, spiritual development, employment needs, orientation, testing, advising, regular chapel times and preaching opportunities, assistance with the call/placement process, and other opportunities for ministry. The Director of Student Life assists the students in many ways including, but not limited to, the following: assisting/advising with housing needs, internet access, oversight of the student government, and assisting and encouraging other student body activities. All faculty and staff seek to assist students as they become leaders for mission.

Forms:

- Student Experience Survey
- End of 1st Year Student Interviews
- Student Services Survey

The mission of LBS is to "serve the church and world by preparing servants of Christ for a life of ministry in God's mission and for equipping God's people to serve in God's mission." LBS is committed to providing any and all student services necessary and feasible to support the student body both spiritually and academically. LBS educates and disciples the *whole* student. Students who enroll in seminary come in a variety of age, educational, and economic brackets; some married with families and some single. The result of this mix is a group with very divergent needs. Meeting those needs is both a challenge and a blessing.

LBS administers its services for student development in two ways: through the Administrative Assistant and through the Director of Student Life. The Administrative Assistant administers services in admissions, housing, financial aid, internet access, keys to the building, scheduling and various other student needs. The Director of Student Life is charged with oversight of the student government and spiritual development, housing and employment needs, orientation, testing, advising, chapel, focus groups, opportunities for ministry, and assistance with the call/placement process. All faculty and staff seek to assist students as they become leaders for mission.

The Administrative Assistant and Director of Student Life serve a student body of around 40 students, both men and women, helping them with registration issues, Veterans' information, immigration, etc. Qualified psychologists and counselors are available to consult with students as needed.

The Seminary Catalog and Student Handbook outline a range of student services as do Orientation sessions which occur prior to the beginning of each semester. As new opportunities arise, students are notified via chapel announcements, bulletin boards, email, student information system announcements, and/or campus mail. Efficacy of the program is determined by the Student Experience Survey, the Student Services Evaluation Survey, through personal interviews with students finishing their first year of study and with graduating students. Personal interviews incorporate questions to the student regarding how the seminary might make a student's time at the seminary more productive and applicable to ministry.

Student Orientation

New student orientation is provided online through the course SO101, while PT900 is an Introduction to Seminary Education.

Orientation for the use of technology is accomplished on a one-on-one basis so students will be able to:

- Describe all the administrative and academic support services available to both traditional and distance students at LBS.
- Use Populi as the LBS student information system to access the administrative services available to LBS students.
- Use Populi as the LBS learning management system to access class materials, recorded lectures, chat rooms, and to submit assignments.
- Use Zoom as a distance student, or as a traditional student unable to attend class, to enter virtual classrooms, listen to lectures and interact with their professor and their classmates.
- Use the online LBS library services to find the resources needed for course work.

Advising

Students are assigned to individual faculty members for academic advisement. Students will continue with that faculty advisor through their graduation. Faculty advisors assume the following academic objectives for each student in their advising:

- Assist in orienting students to seminary life and LBS community
- Assist students in developing educational goals
- Assist students in determining the way to reach educational goals through program planning

- Provide accurate information regarding academic programs, procedures and policies
- Provide students with or direct the student to career information
- Be an example to students of a godly, professional educator

Supervised Ministry Education To Be Revised

The LBS Supervised Ministry Education (SME) prepares LBS students for a life of ministry in God's mission via a supervised experience-based approach to their education. Each student seeking the MDiv degree or DCM will complete 280 hours of ministry practice, curriculum, and supervision in practical theology courses PT912 - PT915, PT952, and PT953.

Using an adult-learner model, students' ministry experiences will be assessed with a developmental focus on their spiritual maturity, emotional maturity, leadership, communication, and conflict management. Institutional Objectives (2), (3), and (4) and MDiv/DCM Program Outcomes (D) and (F) will be addressed through the following in the program:

Educational Modules: Educational modules will be didactic in nature with value placed on giving and receiving feedback for personal and professional awareness, care, and development.

Processing Groups: Students will participate in various supervised group settings in which they will demonstrate personal, group, and ministry related leadership and management skills.

Personal Development Plan: The personal development plan identifies a student's specific learning goals as well as strategies for accomplishing them with a focus on pastoral formation, pastoral competence, and pastoral reflection.

Psychological Education: Students and student spouses will complete two series of psychological inventories, have corresponding sessions with a psychologist, and participate in two half-day educational workshops pertaining to the inventory series.

Ministry Site Experience: Students will identify a ministry to serve for a minimum of 100 hours over the course of the program and will reflect on their experience with the director of SME, faculty, and their ministry site mentor.

Ministry Site Mentor: Students will identify a mentor familiar with their ministry setting that meets the SME guidelines and initiate regular meetings throughout the program with this mentor to address their learning and development.

Forms:

Supervised Ministry Education Handbook

Student Government

There is an "organized and functioning student government." Officers: President, Secretary/Treasurer, are elected in the spring of the year at the end of second semester. The student government elects one student to become the Deacon to handle requests for assistance for students facing special circumstances, i.e. financial emergencies.

Student Financial Assistance

The seminary is not under the Title IV, Federal Student Aid requirements. Student financial assistance service is provided at the direction of a Scholarship Committee. This committee oversees the distribution of institutional financial aid and scholarship funds through an application process approved by the Board of LBS.

Congregations and individuals affiliated with the CLB support the seminary by providing two-thirds of the school's operating costs. In this way, the amount of financial responsibility to the student is significantly reduced. The remaining one-third of the seminary cost is covered through student tuition for which the student is responsible. Financial aid is available to assist some students with these tuition costs. No financial aid is available for Open Studies students.

Student Health

The student health and safety programs are detailed in the Student Handbook. The information provided there covers the topics of health, security, safety, emergency procedures, and suspicious behavior. The Office Administrator of the seminary serves as the Security Coordinator during business hours. This staff member is tasked with providing coordination and direction during emergency situations. In addition, an Emergency Plan is posted at strategic locations throughout the seminary building.

Community Resources

In Fergus Falls and in nearby locations there are a number of Christian counseling services available to deal with a variety of relationship and mental health issues. If needed, the seminary will assist with necessary funds to make this possible.

- Lakeland Mental Health Center, Fergus Falls, MN
Nate Larsen, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist
218-736-6987
- Valley Christian Counseling Center, Fargo, ND
(701) 232-6224

Other psychological and psychiatric services:

- Bridgeway Care Unit, Lake Region Health Care (Inpatient Psychiatric Unit)
Fergus Falls, MN
#1-218-736-8000
- Lake Region Health Care (Psychiatry)
(218) 739-2221
- Generations Inc., Fergus Falls, MN
(218) 998-3123
- Lakeland Mental Health Center, Fergus Falls, MN
(218)-736-0740
24-hour crisis line #1-800-223-4512

[Focus on the Family's Christian Counselors Network.](#)

Career Counseling

The Director of Student Life, and the seminary faculty work with seminary students on call and placement. In addition, a number of churches in the area provide students with part-time student-pastor or youth-pastor employment. These positions may involve some or all of the following: pulpit preaching, confirmation instruction, visitation and youth ministry. Arrangements and supervision for this type of part-time ministry are made through the seminary Director of Student Life.

Food Services

While the size and nature of the seminary does not warrant full food service, facilities are provided for students wishing to bring meals and eat on campus. Tables, chairs, vending, a microwave, a toaster, and coffee are all provided in a space designated and appropriate for food consumption.

Textbooks

Obtaining textbooks is the responsibility of the student. Instructors utilize Populi, email, and syllabi to communicate the required textbooks prior to or at the beginning of each semester.

Postal Services

Mail is received by the Office Administrator and is distributed to the students' mailboxes. Each student has his/her own box. Administrative correspondence and graded coursework that is not mailed or e-mailed to the student is placed in the student's box. Any communication or document, whether in a sealed envelope or not, is directed to and meant for the exclusive use of the person to whom the item is addressed. There is a mail basket in the Office Administrator's office where the students and faculty may post their first-class, stamped, outgoing mail.

Computer Availability

Two computers with Internet access are provided in the library for student use. The seminary offers a secure wireless Internet connection so students may use their personal computers for research. At the beginning of each semester IT personnel come and help students establish their wireless connections. The library computers are regularly checked and maintained by a computer technician.

Student Records

Student record/transcript requests are handled promptly by the Seminary Registrar. Official transcripts are issued only upon written authorization by the student. Official transcripts will be sent only to the institution or agency requiring them. Unofficial transcripts will be issued to the students for personal evaluation. Hard copies of student records are stored in a locked file while digital copies are kept in a safe. Students at LBS have continual access to their grades and progress via Populi.

All student service functions, as described in the Seminary Catalog and the Student Handbook, are approved by the governing board.

Form:

Student Experience Survey
Student Services Survey

Finances

The financial resources of LBS are sufficient to support student learning programs and services. Resources are distributed to support the development, maintenance, and growth of programs and services. Finances are managed with integrity in a manner that ensures financial stability. A yearly audit evaluates the financial condition of LBS. The CFO completes a Financial Operations Review form each year to ensure alignment with TRACS standards. The information gained is then utilized in strategic planning.

Form:

- Strategic Plan Review
- Financial Operations Review Form
- External Audit Binder

Facilities and Equipment

Students and faculty can evaluate the equipment and materials available to them at LBS and make suggestions for changes or additions. This information is evaluated at the RAPT workshop in June, where the faculty can make recommendations for action. The CFO completes a Facilities Checklist each year to ensure that facilities are maintained.

Forms:

- Faculty Satisfaction Survey
- Staff Satisfaction Survey
- Student Experience Survey
- Library Survey
- Facilities Checklist

Library

The library staff conducts a survey every other year to determine how effective the library has been in meeting the needs of seminary students and faculty. It asks about frequency of use, resources deemed most valuable to research, and availability of technology.

Form:

- Library Survey (every other year)
- Student Experience Survey