

Leadership Profile

ACADEMIC DEAN

Chief Academic Officer of the Seminary



CONCEPTION
Living the Benedictine Tradition
SEMINARY COLLEGE

THE POSITION

Academic Dean // Chief Academic Officer of the Seminary

Conception Seminary College, a Roman Catholic Seminary in the Benedictine tradition, located in Northwest Missouri, seeks an experienced academic administrator to serve as its next Academic Dean. The Academic Dean will join the Seminary community building an environment that supports excellence across academic departments and pillars of seminary formation for the next generations of students.

We are seeking an applicant to be a visible leader on campus as an administrator and professor. The Academic Dean must be a seasoned administrator with experience in the following areas: (i) resilient leadership and (ii) successful collaboration with faculty and staff pursuant to the legacy and mission of an institution of higher education. Our next Dean will utilize this experience to build upon our legacy while providing vision and leadership in fostering academic distinction and innovation in the Seminary's Catholic mission of forming men for the Roman Catholic priesthood through undergraduate studies in liberal arts with a major in philosophy.

We are committed to developing a solid vision for the future where students, faculty, and staff are involved in an integrated program of education guided by our Benedictine values and strategic plan. The Dean would work alongside a monastic community that has been committed to the Catholic intellectual tradition for well over one hundred years.

Start date: June 1, 2022



PRIMARY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The applicant for the Academic Dean position must be familiar with the teachings of the Church and her Magisterium, conversant with the Catholic intellectual tradition, and committed to a Catholic liberal arts education.

RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO:

- Supervises the teaching faculty in implementing, strengthening and advancing the academic programs and activities of the Seminary College;
- Supervises the implementation of the College's stated policies regarding curricula, courses, methods of instructions, examinations and grading practices;
- Serves as the chief academic officer as well as the accreditation liaison officer (ALO) with the Higher Learning Commission;
- Chairs the Academic Affairs Committee;
- Administers assessment tests and oversees assessment of student learning outcomes across the curriculum;
- Serves on the Board of Deans, the President's Council, and on the Admissions Committee;
- Supervises the work of the department\division chairpersons.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

Minimum Qualifications

- Master's degree in a discipline represented in the Seminary College;
- A record of successful administrative and teaching leadership in a college setting;
- Experience with and understanding of the scholarly, teaching, and service responsibilities of a faculty member of a Catholic undergraduate program.

Preferred Qualifications

- Doctorate degree in a discipline represented in the Seminary College;
- Exceptional communicator, with the ability to bring individuals and groups with diverse perspectives to consensus and common action;
- Innovative leader and strategic thinker.



PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDACY

All applications and inquiries are invited. To assure full consideration please provide:

- Letter of interest that explains how the candidate meets the qualifications and expectations specified
- Current resume/CV which lists educational and employment history
- Contact information of at least three references

Full applications must be submitted online to Dr. John Bloomingdale, the Chair of the Search Committee, at jbloomingdale@conception.edu by January 31, 2022. He may also be reached at **(660) 944-2916** for further inquiry. The initial review of applications will begin February 3, 2022. The first round of interviews will be conducted by video conference. Please visit our website, www.conception.edu.



MISSION

The Mission of Conception Seminary College is the preparation of candidates for the ordained ministry in the Roman Catholic Church, through spiritual, intellectual, pastoral, and human formation in the Benedictine tradition.

In order to fulfill its mission, Conception Seminary College seeks to:

- provide a holistic approach to education, where academic, spiritual, pastoral, and human formation programs complement one another;
- respond to the needs of the Church in preparing its prospective ministers;
- provide the human, financial, and learning resources essential to its formational endeavors; and
- maintain a qualified faculty, a useful and supportive library, and effective administrative practices.



ABOUT CONCEPTION

The Benedictine monks of Conception Abbey established Conception Seminary College, its primary apostolic ministry, in 1886. For more than a century, Conception has thrived by offering young men from the region's dioceses the opportunity to explore the mystery and promise of God's call to the priesthood. Today the monks focus on educating undergraduates with a strong priestly formation program.

Since the college's founding, Conception's monastic community has resided on-campus and the Benedictine monks of Conception Abbey are an integral part of the College and its tradition.

In addition to the vows of conversion of life and obedience, the monks of Conception Abbey also take a vow of stability, which is suited to the deep self-exploration seminarians face in formation. The strong community values between the monastery and seminary nurture these young men to become true men of communion through the work of integrated formation.



THE SETTING

Campus and Northwest Missouri

Conception Seminary College is located on the rural campus of Conception Abbey. Here the monks live in community with one another and are an integral part of the college's daily operations and the seminarians' lives. The serene environment of Conception contributes to peace, removing many distractions from the lives of the monks and seminarians.

Nestled in the rolling farmland of northwest Missouri, Conception Seminary College is centrally located two hours from Kansas City, Omaha, and Des Moines. Locally, the campus is just 20 minutes southeast of Maryville, which is home to more than 10,000 people and Northwest Missouri State University. Maryville offers a small-town atmosphere with locally owned restaurants, shopping, and entertainment, among other amenities.



INTELLECTUAL FORMATION

Academic studies at Conception Seminary College are the key component of Intellectual Formation, one of the four areas of priestly formation. Integrated with human formation, spiritual formation, and pastoral formation, **Conception seeks to form the whole man at the college level prior to further formation and theological studies.**

Essential to Conception Seminary College's philosophy is the desire to integrate for each student the various elements of his formation in such a way as to promote the religious ideals of community, generosity, and spiritual depth. Every aspect of seminarian formation fosters a Christ-like person who, when called, can accept the priesthood honestly and can perform its functions with a notable degree of integrity and success.

This type of learning requires a solid education that is broad in outlook but structured in approach. It serves the seminarian not only to discover whether he is being called to the priesthood but also to develop his abilities for serving the people of God, whether as a priest or as a dedicated Catholic layman. These ideals and goals are rooted in Benedictine tradition and wisdom and are animated by the life, teaching, and presence of Jesus Christ.

Conception's Intellectual Formation program and focus on philosophy helps each seminarian acquire personal knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, assisting him in the development of intellectual skills and curiosity that will sustain him on his lifelong faith journey and equipping him with the tools to share that knowledge in the community of faith.

Through intellectual formation, a seminarian develops:

- **a taste for learning and a desire for excellence;**
- **a respect for truth, honesty in discovering it, and a rational approach in defending it;**
- **the habit of critical thinking;**
- **an inquisitive mind, willing to consider and evaluate different points of view;**
- **skills to communicate ideas clearly, concisely and responsibly;**
- **a deep understanding of the rich history and beliefs of the Catholic faith.**





PROGRAMS OFFERED

Conception's curriculum is a liberal arts curriculum, adapted to the central role of philosophy and to achieving a balance between range and depth. Range of subject matter is found in the general-education curriculum requirements and the free electives; opportunity for study in depth is provided by a major in philosophy, comprised of 30 hours of course work.

BACHELOR OF ARTS UNDERGRADUATE

- Accredited liberal arts curriculum, earning a B.A. in Philosophy
- Preparation for Theology: Through the philosophical search for truth, seminarians come to understand the relationship between faith and reason.
- Discuss the great human questions contained in the arts and sciences

LANGUAGE, CULTURE, AND CHURCH

- Intensive English-language instruction for seminarians whose first language is not English
- Understand and adapt to the culture of the United States and to the Catholic Church in U.S.

PRE-THEOLOGY

- For college graduates
- Philosophical and Theological preparation for graduate level study of theology
- Introduction to priestly formation
- Four semesters for a Pre-Theology Certificate or a second Bachelor's Degree in Philosophical and Theological Studies

DIACONATE FORMATION

- Preparation for ordination to the permanent diaconate through theological formation
- Classes offered one weekend per month for three and a half years

WHO WE SERVE

A seminarian is a man discerning God's call to the priesthood, formed here as a Man of Conception. He is most often sponsored by his home (arch) diocese, to which he will return in service as a diocesan priest. Seminarians may also be sponsored by Conception Abbey or other religious communities. Conception traditionally serves approximately 14 (arch)dioceses, mostly located across the Midwest.

Degree-seeking enrollment is currently low at around 25 students, which mirrors a downward trend in priestly vocations nationwide. Because much of Conception's administration is young in their tenure within the seminary, we are using this time to enhance and restructure certain aspects and programs according to the Church's needs.

Seminarians live in a residence hall on campus, incorporating the Benedictine emphasis on community. Extracurricular activities range widely, including athletics, drama, reflection groups, student organizations, and an honors society. Students are able to engage in work-study programs, volunteer opportunities, and academic tutoring, depending on their interests and needs.

Conception offers a number of scholarships along with institutional financial aid to assist students and their sponsoring dioceses with funding tuition, room and board, and other costs of education.



ACADEMICS, FACULTY, AND ADMINISTRATION

ACCREDITATION: Conception Seminary College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and is authorized to grant the following degrees and certificates: Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, Bachelors in Philosophical and Theological Studies and a certificate in Pre-Theological Studies. Conception is dedicated to providing an enriching and rigorous intellectual formation program for its students in service of dioceses and religious orders.

FORMATION ADMINISTRATION: The formation administration is made up of five faculty members, a president-rector, a vice rector and dean of students, an academic dean, a director of spiritual formation, and a director of pastoral formation. Together the formation team works to make sure seminarians are formed as well-rounded men for the future of the Church.

BOARD OF REGENTS: A highly engaged board of regents counsels and guides the seminary regarding policies and programs, in accordance with Church Law, standard American educational and management practice, and the mission of Conception Seminary College.

FACULTY AND STAFF: Conception's faculty and staff are comprised of monks and laypeople working side-by-side to provide a holistic approach to seminary formation. Support departments that serve the entire campus help build an atmosphere of collaboration and offer a full range of student services.





INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

SEMINARY RESIDENCE HALL: Conception is currently in the final phase of a campaign for a new seminary residence hall, known as Good Shepherd Hall. Construction of the three-story residence hall began in the spring of 2021 and is set to begin housing students in the fall of 2022. The purpose of this endeavor is to put all seminarians under one roof to further strengthen the bonds of community within the seminary as they support one another in their discernment and studies. Conception's leadership has been humbled by the amount of support that our benefactors, alumni, and friends have offered as a sign of investment long into the future.

PATHS OF WISDOM: This initiative launched in the fall of 2021 through a large grant for a pilot program to support intellectual formation and academics. The fundraising effort funds a philosophy professor and provides scholarships to cover tuition, room, and board for four seminarians.

