

Classis Hamilton Candidacy Committee

Policies and Procedures Document

Last Revised: April 2, 2014

Policies:

1. Normally applicants who have been members of a local congregation within Classis Hamilton for at least three years and who intend to enter the ordained ministry in the CRCNA will be eligible for the standard financial assistance.
 - a. An applicant who has not been a member of a local congregation within Classis Hamilton for at least six years will be asked to contact the CRC classis of their prior congregation, if applicable, for financial assistance.
 - b. An applicant who has not been a member of a CRC congregation for at least three years will be considered for financial assistance on a case by case basis.
2. To be eligible for financial assistance from Classis Hamilton, the applicant will have completed an undergraduate degree fitting within the CRCNA Candidacy Committee guidelines.
3. Applicants must submit a copy of their undergraduate academic transcript as well as provide three names and addresses for references: one should be a pastor of the church attended; one should be a faculty member of the undergraduate program attended; and one should be a person who can provide personal information (this person should not be a family member).
4. All applicants approved for assistance who are enrolled in a seminary other than Calvin Theological Seminary are required to enrol in the CRCNA candidacy process as a condition of receiving any funds.
5. Eligible seminary degree programs are Masters of Divinity (M.Div.) and Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy (EPMC). These programs may include both residence and distance learning.
6. Qualified Seminaries include: Calvin Seminary; McMaster Divinity School; Tyndale Seminary; ACTS at Trinity Western University. Other seminaries will be considered on a case by case basis with regard to their appropriateness in preparing students for ministry in the CRCNA.
7. Eligibility will be determined on the basis of need. However, the following maximum limits will be placed on financial assistance depending on the institution and program in which the applicant enrolls:
 - a. Calvin Seminary (in residence) – the lesser of 100% of tuition and 100% of financial need. Priority for funding will be given to students in this category.
 - b. Calvin Seminary (distance education) – the lesser of 75% of tuition and 75% of financial need.
 - c. EPMC through Calvin Seminary – the lesser of 50% of tuition and 50% of financial need.
 - d. Other qualified seminaries – the lesser of 50% of tuition and 50% of financial need.
 - e. Students entering the Calvin Seminary (in residence) program will receive the committed amount for the four-year duration of their program. Financial commitments for all other programs will be determined upon each annual renewal application.
8. All financial assistance shall be in the form of forgivable loans.
 - a. For candidates who become ordained and remain in qualified CRCNA ministry:

- Loans will remain interest free for the duration of their service in an ordained ministry within the CRCNA or the RCA.
 - They will have 20% of the total amount of the loan received from Classis Hamilton forgiven annually.
- b. For candidates who complete the candidacy program, but who do not receive a call to a qualified ministry for ordained persons within the CRCNA within the time prescribed by synod from time to time:
- Loans remain interest free until paid in full
 - The total loan amount outstanding with Classis Hamilton must be paid in monthly instalments so that the loan is paid in full after ten years.
- c. For candidates who complete the candidacy program but who enter into a position not qualified for ordained ministry within the CRCNA, or who accept a call for ordained ministry outside of the CRCNA or the RCA (“unqualified position”):
- Loans remain interest free for six months after accepting a non-qualified position.
 - Repayment of the loan with interest will commence six months after accepting an unqualified position.
 - Such loans, together with the interest accrued thereon, must be paid in monthly installments and paid in full within five years and six months of withdrawal.
- d. For candidates who complete the program, but enrol in additional graduate theological education.
- In this case repayment or forgiveness considerations will be deferred until the candidate either completes or withdraws from the graduate program.
 - If such a candidate serves a CRCNA congregation and an ordained minister during the time of graduate study, the 20% forgiveness of the loan will apply for each year of service to such congregation.
- e. For students who withdraw from the candidacy program before completion:
- Loans remain interest free until six months after a student withdraws, after which date the interest rate will be 1% above the prime lending rate charged by the CIBC.
 - Repayment of the loan with interest will commence six months after such withdrawal. Such loans together with the interest accrued thereon must be paid in monthly instalments and paid in full within five years and six month of withdrawal.

Procedures:

January

- Place announcements inviting applications for the upcoming academic year
- Check in with current students

February

- Review new applications and schedule interviews
- Remind current students to reapply

March

- Interview new applicants
- Review terms of CHCC members and solicit nominees when vacancies are to be filled at the May classis meeting.

April

- Submit recommended disbursement amounts for the upcoming academic year along with any other relevant materials to Classis Clerk for inclusion in the May Classis meeting agenda

May

- Present recommended disbursement amounts and other relevant materials to Classis
- Inform applicants of the decisions of Classis
- Send letters to CTS forgivable loan recipients for VISA purposes

June

- Welcome new CHCC members
- Review CHCC mandate and guidelines
- Review CHCC member roles
- Communicate with current students and conduct student interviews as necessary
- Assign students to individual members of the CHCC
- Prepare budget recommendation for the upcoming Classis fiscal year

July**August**

- Ascertain final tuition levels for the upcoming academic year for each applicant
- Inform Classis Treasurer regarding approved forgivable loan disbursement amounts and student's current addresses
- Submit recommended budget requests for the upcoming academic year along with any other relevant materials to the Classis Clerk for inclusion in the October Classis agenda

September

- Receive confirmation of enrolment from all new and renewing students, signed by their respective seminary's registrar

October

- Present relevant reports and motions to Classis as required

November**December**