

Amended by the Institute of Theology of the EELC
Council of the Faculty of Theology
24.11.2015
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8.12.2015

The Institute of Theology of the EELC STATUTE OF CURRICULUM

Approved according to the Statutes of the Institute of Theology of the EELC § 16 section 24.

I. General Principles

1. The Statute of Curriculum (hereinafter: the Statute) establishes requirements for the structure, content and quality of degree studies curricula and procedures for opening, managing and closing the curricula in the Institute of Theology of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church (hereinafter: the Institute).
2. The Statute has to ensure that curricula of the Institute are in accordance with the objectives of the Institute and requirements provided by Estonian legislation.

II. Curriculum

3. In the Faculty of Theology of the Institute the studies take place according to the Curricula.
4. The curriculum is the basic document that defines the general objectives, learning outcomes, nominal duration and volume of the curriculum, study language, conditions for starting studies, list of subjects, their volume, options and conditions, specialization, completion of studies, academic degree awarded and documents issued.
5. Joint Curriculum is a curriculum developed and managed together by two or more educational institutions. Educational institutions participating in the Joint Curriculum must be recognized by national competent authority. The structure of the Joint Curriculum may be different from the structure of the Curriculum established by the Statute.
6. Curricula consist of the Curriculum of higher professional education and Curriculum of Master's Studies.
7. The learning outcomes of the curriculum and its parts are defined as described in the learning outcomes for the relevant study cycle on the basis of Standard of Higher Education. Learning outcomes describe the knowledge, skills and competences that student has acquired on completion of a curriculum or part(s) of it.
8. The curriculum consists of subjects. Subject consists of a number of systematized knowledge and skills in a specific field of research or part of it; their

acquisition is assessed. Specific forms of the Subject are practice, final paper and final exam.

9. Subjects are divided into compulsory, elective and optional subjects.
 - 9.1. Compulsory subject is a subject that must necessarily be passed to complete the curriculum.
 - 9.2. Elective subject is a subject student selects from the subjects determined by the curriculum for completing the curriculum.
 - 9.3. The optional subject is freely selected by student from the curriculum of his/her current study institution or any other establishment of higher education in order to complete the curriculum. Optional subjects allow students to broaden their horizons and perfection their professional knowledge and skills.
10. Subjects in the curricula are grouped as modules. A module is a unit of structuring the content of the curriculum, which brings subjects together into targeted subject block or consists of one subject.
11. Elective module is a targeted block of subjects to fully complete the major or minor subject. An elective module can be a list of elective subjects, among which student has to select as many subjects as required by the curriculum.
12. The volume of the curriculum, module and subject is calculated in the units of credit points: the European credit point system of credits (hereinafter: ECP). One credit point corresponds to 26 hours of study time spent by student on the studies, including contact hours (also including e-learning), practical work (including the practice), independent work and assessment of learning outcomes. One academic year consists of 60 credit points.
13. The student will obtain the credit points as a result of final assessment of the achieved outcomes as defined in the syllabus.
14. The nominal study period is the time spent for studies as established by the curriculum.

II.1. Professional Higher Education Curriculum

15. The nominal period for professional higher education curriculum is three years and its volume 180 ECP.
16. Professional higher education curriculum is structured in modules and consists of
 - 16.1. general study modules;
 - 16.2. professional study modules;
 - 16.3. at least 10 ECP for elective and optional subjects;
 - 16.4. final exam or paper of volume 6–10 ECP.
17. In order to achieve learning outcomes of professional higher education the curriculum of a professional higher education includes, among other subjects,
 - 17.1. subject or subjects to develop oral and written expression in the

- Estonian language, at least for 3 ECP;
- 17.2. subject or subjects teaching the principles of academic writing, at least for 3 ECP;
 - 17.3. practice which makes at least 15 percent of the curriculum.
18. General Studies is a targeted set of modules, which consists of introductory subjects into theology in the frames of the following theological disciplines: 1) Biblical Studies; 2) Systematic Theology; 3) Church History; 4) Comparative History of Religions; 5) Practical Theology.
19. Professional study is a targeted set of subjects, on its completion the minimum of the knowledge, skills and competencies is acquired to work at that specialty and continue the studies at master level.
20. The major specialty is a set of the acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences, which is a prerequisite to start working at the respective specialty and on the basis of which it is possible to continue studies in the same field on the MA level. The volume of major specialty is 90 ECP. The major specialty consists of general study modules and final exam or paper.
21. Minor specialisation is an acquired set of specialized basic knowledge and skills which enables to carrying out simpler tasks at corresponding the specialty, and on the basis of which it is possible to continue studies in the same field on the MA level. The volume of minor specialisation is at least 60 ECP.

II.2. Master Study Curriculum

22. The nominal period for Master Study curriculum is two years and its volume 120 ECP.
23. Master Study curriculum is structured in modules and consists of
- 23.1. general module of 30–35 ECP;
 - 23.2. professional module of 45–50 ECP;
 - 23.3. at least 10 ECP for elective and optional subjects;
 - 23.4. final paper of volume 30 ECP.
24. Conditions for entering Master Studies can be established by requiring to have passed the prerequisite subjects up to 60 ECP and one year work experience at the relevant specialty. The Council of the Faculty of Theology may establish a higher volume of prerequisite subjects.
25. Professional study is a set of targeted subjects, on completion of which the student has passed the vocational and professional specialty training.
26. Major specialisation is of volume of 60 ECP. The major specialisation consists of compulsory general modules and Master exam or paper.
27. Minor specialisation is of volume at least for 45 ECP.

III. Opening, managing and closing of a curriculum

III.1. Opening of a curriculum

28. Prerequisites for the opening of a curriculum, including joint curriculum, are sufficient academic and material resources and a clearly defined reason by the Institute.
29. For opening a curriculum, including joint curriculum, the Council of the Institute of Theology submits a fully justified preliminary application to the Council of the Institute.
30. The Council of the Institute evaluates the preliminary application for opening a curriculum, including the need and sustainability of the curriculum, and makes one of the following decisions:
 - 30.1. the preliminary application for opening the curriculum meets the requirements;
 - 30.2. the preliminary application for opening the curriculum does not meet the requirements and the Council of the Faculty of Theology is recommended to improve or amend it;
31. On the basis of acceptable preliminary application for opening a curriculum the Faculty of Theology is composing a plan for the curriculum. To open the joint curriculum the Council of the Faculty of Theology provides an application with the consent of participating educational institution(s).
32. The application for opening a curriculum comprises:
 - 32.1. a proper draft of the curriculum;
 - 32.2. curriculum assessments of potential target groups and stakeholders;
 - 32.3. the calculation of the profitability of the curriculum including the sum of study fees;
 - 32.4. in case of a joint curriculum the corresponding draft of the cooperation agreement as stipulated in the law of higher education institution and university;
 - 32.5. a comparison of curriculum study outcomes of Standard of Higher Education formulated in Annex 1 with the cycle of higher education study outcomes and if there is a professional standard, the study outcomes should be compared with the professional standard.
33. At the first cycle higher education a curriculum in a foreign language can be opened only if there exists a curriculum in the Estonian language in same study flow. A pre-application and application for opening a curriculum in a foreign language may be submitted in English. The curriculum must also be in Estonian.
34. In the joint curriculum the volume of ECP provided by the subjects taught in the Institute must constitute at least 20 percent of the curriculum as a whole.
35. The application for opening a curriculum must be submitted to the Council of the Institute at least two weeks before the Council meeting. The Council will make one of the following decisions, which must be approved by the EELC Consistory::
 - 35.1. approve the curriculum;
 - 35.2. improve or amend the curriculum;
 - 35.3. not to open the curriculum.

36. The right to conduct studies is specified by the professional higher education law §16¹.

III.2. Managing a curriculum

37. The tasks for curriculum management are divided between the staff of the Faculty of Theology. The division of tasks is defined by job descriptions.

38. Degree studies are coordinated by the Dean of the Faculty of Theology.

39. The Dean shall convene the Expert Council consisting of representatives of employers, study programs offered, students, alumni, and other interest groups. The task of the Expert Council is to assess the effectiveness and relevance of curricula, and to provide recommendations for the development of curricula.

III.2.2. Quality assurance

III.2.2.1. Assuring the quality of studies

40. Teaching quality assurance in higher education is guided by the application of the professional higher educational institution law, the university law, the Institute's development program, and the legislation.

41. Means to ensure the quality of teaching are the following:

- 41.1. creating the necessary prerequisites and conditions for study process and updating the learning environment and materials;
- 41.2. improvement of teaching and assessment methods, including taking into account the previous study and work experience;
- 41.3. using highly qualified teaching and research staff, as well as practising professionals in the study process and fostering continuous training of teaching staff;
- 41.4. systematic and continuous development of curricula;
- 41.5. improvement of academic support services (including educational information system, student counselling, practice management, etc.);
- 41.6. supporting, fostering, counselling, monitoring, and following the development of study process and curricula via structure;
- 41.7. regular internal assessment and taking into account evaluation in curriculum development;
- 41.8. regular feedback inquiries from students, graduates, employers, and other target groups and stakeholders, analysis, and taking the results into account in curriculum development;
- 41.9. development of the international dimension of education.

III. 2.2.2. Assessment of the quality of studies

42. The quality of teaching is assessed through regular internal and external evaluations.

43. Internal evaluation is a systematic and regular process of monitoring and analysing study process and its outcomes, allowing to clearly identify the strengths of study process and areas for improvement and development, culminating in the planning, implementation and monitoring of development.

44. Internal evaluation takes place by curricula.
45. The results of internal evaluation are the basis for curriculum development planning activities.
46. The external evaluation is the assessment of the quality of curricular groups by the quality agency of higher education or with its approval by a foreign competent quality agency.
47. The quality of a curriculum group is assessed according to the requirements and procedures established by the Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency.
48. If the Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency estimates that there are deficiencies in the quality of the curriculum group, the Dean of the Faculty of Theology must submit to Rector within 30 days of receiving the decision of the Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency an action program for eliminating the deficiencies.

III.2.3. Changing of a curriculum

49. Any change in the curriculum must be approved by the Council of the Faculty of Theology and confirmed by the Council of the Institute.
50. Changes can be made for each academic year. The curriculum with changes is a version of the respective curriculum. The new version of a curriculum comes into force for the new students, if the curriculum changes have been confirmed by the Council of the Institute and registered in the Estonian Education Information System by 30 June.
51. The following changes will come into force immediately for students who study according to the curriculum, unless the decision to change the curriculum stipulates it differently:
 - 51.1. adding or closing a specialty;
 - 51.2. changing the name of a curriculum or specialty;
 - 51.3. changing the name of the awarded degree.
52. If the curriculum is changed significantly: language, nominal study period, volume, curriculum objectives and learning outcomes; then a new curriculum will be opened.
53. Making the changes in the curriculum in the Estonian Education Information System takes place in accordance with the statutes of the Estonian Education Information System.

IV. Closing of a curriculum

54. Closing of a curriculum means to finish admission and teaching of the students on the basis of that curriculum. After having decided to close a curriculum there will be no more admission of students to that curriculum.

55. A curriculum will be closed by decision of the Council the Institute, being confirmed by the EELC Consistory.
56. In case of closure of the curriculum the Institute, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science, ensures, if necessary, that student has a possibility to continue the studies in the same or another institution of higher education in the same or a similar field of study.