

Statement of Educational Effectiveness

Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology (SHSST) is a Roman Catholic seminary that offers three masters degrees – a Master of Divinity (MDiv), Master of Arts in theology (MA), and a Master of Arts in Catholic Studies.

The educational effectiveness of these degrees is verified by the data about our graduates.

The MDiv is evaluating in light of the benchmarks in the [United States Conference of Catholic Bishop's Program for Priestly Formation](#). The specific benchmarks for our M.Div. program can be found in the [SHSST Priestly Formation Profile](#).

The [MA in Theology](#) (all three pathways, *Lumen Cordis* for day students, *Cor Unum* for evening students, *Adveniat Regnum Tuum* for SCJ seminarians in India), are assessed using the MA Profile, which can be found [here](#).

Master of Divinity (MDiv) Parishioner Surveys

After graduates of the MDiv program have been in a parish for a year, a survey is sent out that is filled out by 10 parishioners who are active in the life of the parish. The survey has 57 questions that cover the four dimensions of priestly formation—human, intellectual, spiritual, and pastoral ranked on a 1 to 5 Likert scale from “Very Weak” to “Very Strong.” This is a direct measure.

As broken down by the four dimensions of formation, the averages from 2023-2025 for 19 students were:

Human	4.47
Intellectual	4.36
Pastoral	4.39
Spiritual	4.47
Total	4.44

All four dimensions score between “Strong” (4) and “Very strong” (5).

Specific results include the following:

Quality	Average
Steadfast in prayer and solitude	4.71
Enthusiastic about the Sacramental life and vision of the Church	4.56
Embodying a priestly identity in persona Christi	4.56
Appropriate as a public persona	4.54
Approachable in human interaction and relationships	4.50
Faithful to the Word of God and magisterial teaching	4.50
Compassionate	4.48
Available to others appropriately	4.44
Mature emotionally	4.42
Inspiring as a prayer leader and minister of the Sacraments	4.42
Authentic	4.41
Chaste for the kingdom	4.40
Effective in counseling and the practice of helping skills	4.36
Dedicated to the works of social justice	4.33
Skilled in preaching and teaching	4.32
Respectful of ecclesial authority	4.31
Accountable in work habits and professional performance	4.31
Simple in lifestyle	4.29
Caring toward the sick, suffering, and marginalized	4.29
Growing in relationship with Jesus Christ	4.29
Zealous for evangelization	4.26
Collaborative with all in ministry	4.24

Capable in servant leadership	4.20
Open to other viewpoints	4.17
Insightful	4.12
Healthy physically and psychologically	4.00

MDiv Exit Survey

Each spring Sacred Heart administers an exit survey to its graduating seminarians. The students are asked to rank themselves on the eight characteristics from our Priestly Formation Profile. The following table shows the average results for 7 out of 15 seminary graduates in Spring 2025. Our total average was 4.23.

Question	Average
Faithful Chastity: Fashions his desires, thoughts, passions, and behaviors in such a way that he is able to live a healthy, celibate lifestyle that expresses self-gift in fruitful and life-giving love for the kingdom.	4.57
Fervent Discipleship: Orients the whole person (mind, will, affections, body) towards the person of Christ and life in the Spirit.	4.29
Intellectual Insight: Cultivates wisdom through a solid understanding of the Western intellectual heritage traditions and Catholic cultural and theological traditions, and displays openness to non-Western conceptual frameworks.	4.14
Theological Integration: Bridges the gap between theological insight, human excellence, the spiritual life, and pastoral practice.	4.14
Intercultural Engagement: Values cultural diversity in relation to theological expressions, spiritual approaches and devotional practices which enable ministerial adaptability in intercultural contexts.	3.86
Relational Communication: Communicates verbally and non-verbally so as to foster communion among people and with the Triune God.	4.14
Pastoral Charity: Functions as a priestly shepherd who nurtures, guides, encourages, and guards the community of faith in sacramental, pastoral, administrative, and teaching roles, lending help, comfort, and healing to those in need.	4.29
Affective Maturity: Guides his emotional life by the exercise of reason and knowledge of the genuine good for self, others, and the community.	4.43
Average of all questions	4.23

Master of Arts in Theology (MA)

SHSST offers a Master of Arts in Theology. At the end of a student's MA program, the student is assessed by faculty members. If they write a thesis, the assessment form is completed by the thesis advisor and second reader. If they take comprehensive examinations, the assessment form is filled out by the three examiners. If the student does a capstone paper and presentation, they are assessed by the three professors who oversee the project. We have developed an instrument, standards, and goals for the assessment of the M.A. program.

The assessors answer ten questions about the student on a 1 to 5 from a Likert scale covering five topics: foundational understanding, skill in analysis, capacity for insightful research, articulateness, and resourceful application of theological knowledge.

For the 2024-25 academic year the average score on all questions for 14 students was 4.04.

Placement:

- 100 percent of MDiv graduates in 2024 and 2025 have been ordained and employed as priests.
- 100 percent of students who graduated with a MA degree in 2024 and 2025 have been employed in a field related to their degree, use the formation gained in their current line of work,* or entered the next stage of their educational or professional development (e.g., doctoral studies, ministerial formation).

Retention Rate:

Below are the retention rates for SHSST degree programs. This includes those who were enrolled in the Fall of 2024 and Fall of 2025, but did not graduate:

Priestly formation: 88%**

MA: 88%

Graduation Rate:

Below are the graduation rates for students who completed their degree program. The MDiv percentage refers to those MDiv students who started in theology in Fall of 2019. It does not include those who began pre-theology (Discipleship stage) in 2019. The MA percentage refers to those MA students who entered the program in Fall 2021.

MDiv: 70%***

MA: 75%

*This figure includes a significant number of those who discerned out while in the Propaedeutic Stage.

**The Cor Unum Pathway of the MA Program is oriented towards applying the principles of sound theology to the healing and evangelization of a fractured world. Graduates do not necessarily seek a paid Church-related or ministerial position.

*** This number reflects the fact that sometimes a student will discern out of priestly formation, and thus doesn't complete the MDiv. Frequently the student will subsequently complete an MA in Theology.

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