

# Counseling at Princeton Theological Seminary

## Overview

Princeton Theological Seminary's Student Counseling (Log in to our.ptsem.edu and click "Student Services") recognizes that seminary is a place of crossroads, and of deepening and formation in every dimension, including the theological, the vocational, the relational, and the psychological. The opportunities and challenges that are part of seminary training encourage students and spouses to stretch and grow. Preparation for ministry includes good self-care and relationship care. Indeed, effective ministry is not just a function of knowledge and skills, but interpersonal capability and emotional and spiritual health. Strengths such as self-knowledge, self-acceptance, self-responsibility, internalization of grace, empathy, ability to deal with anger and pain, clear communication, and confidence can be developed in the safety of counseling and support group settings.

## Options

There are three levels of counseling provided by the Seminary: (1) on-campus services, (2) ten subsidized counseling sessions at Trinity Counseling Service during the student's enrollment at PTS, and (3) mental health and counseling benefits provided to students covered by the Student Health Benefits Plan.

## On-Campus Counseling

### Eligibility and Fees

On-campus counseling at the Seminary is available for students, couples, or the spouse of the eligible student. These services are partially funded by the comprehensive fee. There is no charge for the first two sessions. A fee of \$10 per session is required for up to ten subsequent sessions and is billed to student accounts. This charge will not be made with diagnostic and procedure codes. Accordingly, it is not an eligible expense under any insurance plan.

Because of the high demand for counseling, the director of student counseling will often meet for an initial session and help make an appropriate referral. Students and spouses may be referred to one of the two part-time, on-campus therapists, Laura Benton or Whitney Ross. Referrals are also made to Trinity Counseling Service, or to a therapist in the Specialty Counseling Network (accessible through the SHBP). It is not a given that more than ten sessions will be available on campus. When counseling does go beyond ten sessions, the fee increases to \$15, then \$20, and caps at \$25. Students will not be charged for missed sessions in emergencies or when twenty-four-hour notice of cancellation is given. No one will be denied services for lack of ability to pay. Students covered by the SHBP should refer to the Schedule of Benefits in this brochure for outpatient mental healthcare benefits.

## Fees for Other Services

The copayment schedule for services provided or arranged by Student Counseling at PTS is as follows.

- **Spiritual Direction**  
Individual spiritual direction (student not covered by SHBP): \$20 to \$45  
Spiritual direction (student covered by SHBP): \$10 to \$15
- **Groups Arranged by PTS**  
Spiritual direction or psychotherapy groups (student not covered by SHBP): \$7  
Spiritual direction or psychotherapy groups (student covered by SHBP): \$5

## Location and Accessibility

On-campus counseling takes place in Scheide Hall or in Miller Chapel, which are handicapped-accessible buildings.

## Hours of Service, Appointments, and Contact Information

Counseling is available between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, with limited evening hours. Sessions are 50 minutes. To schedule a first appointment, fill out an intake sheet on the table next to the reception window in Scheide Hall, and leave it with the office assistant. The director of student counseling will email you with an appointment time. If you need an emergency appointment, come to Scheide Hall or call 609.497.7844 or 609.497.7890. Please send an email to [nancy.schongalla@ptsem.edu](mailto:nancy.schongalla@ptsem.edu) if you have questions about counseling options or need to reschedule an appointment.

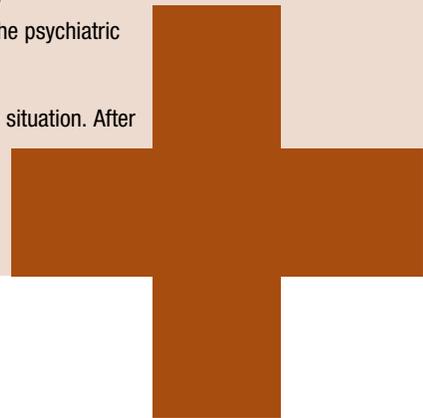


The Reverend Nancy Schongalla-Bowman, Director

## PSYCHOLOGICAL CRISIS

For life-threatening emergencies students should call 911 or, if appropriate, proceed directly to the nearest emergency room. The University Medical Center at Princeton is located at 253 Witherspoon Street in Princeton. Princeton House, the psychiatric branch of the University Medical Center, can be reached at 609.497.3355.

During on-campus business hours, call or come to Scheide Hall and let Teresa Heyer know that there is an emergency situation. After hours, you may call 609.273.9727 or 609.273.9726. Security staff will come to the individual in crisis and contact the director of student counseling or one of the members of the Psychological Crisis Response Team. Community crisis hotlines are 609.896.2120 and 609.585.2244.



### The Reverend Nancy Schongalla-Bowman, Director of Student Counseling

On-campus counseling and support groups are available through Nancy Schongalla-Bowman, director of student counseling. The Reverend Schongalla-Bowman has provided pastoral counseling at Princeton Seminary since 1995, is a PTS alumna (Class of 1979), is licensed in New Jersey, and is also a supervisor in the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. She is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, a parent, a stepparent, a grandmother, and is part of a clergy couple.

Her approach to counseling is holistic and eclectic with a family-systems base. She has training in marital and sex therapy, Gestalt and Christian healing approaches, Hakomi therapy and inner-child work, and many other traditional and nontraditional modalities.

### Confidentiality and Informed Consent

Information discussed in counseling is confidential and can only be shared with explicit, written permission from the client. However, in certain extreme instances, confidentiality becomes secondary to a concern for life. In the rare event that injury to self or to others is an imminent danger, a breach of confidentiality is required to take the appropriate steps to ensure safety.

### Common Counseling Issues

Students and spouses often address a wide range of issues in counseling. These include:

stress	compulsive behaviors
anxiety	low self-esteem
depression	boundary-setting
academic and vocational concerns	health problems
dating and relationships	perfectionism/procrastination
premarital, marital, and parenting challenges	eating disorders
sexuality	abuse and trauma
faith issues	grief and loss
family of origin problems	time management
	ADD and learning differences

### Faith Formation and Spiritual Direction

Some people come to counseling for guidance in faith development, spiritual disciplines, or discernment of call. While students are encouraged to talk about their faith in counseling, individual and group spiritual direction also provide a unique setting for faith formation and integration. Local spiritual directors are available to help students and spouses deepen their capacity to “listen for God” in and out of the classroom, and in all of life’s experiences. Information about spiritual direction at PTS is available through the Office of Student Counseling, the Chapel Office, the Office of Student Relations and Senior Placement, the Office of Field Education, and the Office of Multicultural Relations. Group direction is arranged through the Chapel Office. Please refer to the SHBP in-network coverage for individual and group spiritual direction benefits (page 10).

### Support Groups, Seminars, and Speakers

As needs arise, the director of student counseling arranges speakers, seminars, mini-retreats or support and psychotherapy groups to address particular issues such as eating disorders, depression, self-integration, compulsive sexuality, mindfulness training, family of origin, procrastination and ADD, stress management, holistic health, and pre-marriage and marriage enrichment. Please refer to the SHBP in-network benefits for psychotherapy, support, and spiritual direction groups (page 10).

Many drawn to the helping professions have experienced significant personal pain. What makes an effective wounded healer is not the wound, but the healing and growth that have been gained.

## Counseling and Spiritual Direction Benefits in the SHBP

**Specialty Counseling In-Network Providers:** A specialty counseling network has been developed by the Office of Student Counseling at PTS. This network of providers offers diagnostic and therapeutic services that may not be readily available at Trinity Counseling Service or other mental health services in the Princeton area. Access to this benefit requires a referral from the Office of Student Counseling (no other PTS office may provide referrals for this benefit). No SHBP benefits are payable under the Specialty Counseling Network without a referral. The student has a \$25 copayment per session for up to twenty-four visits for the treatment of a nonbiologically based condition. If the student is being treated for a biologically based condition, the copayment is \$25 and there is no limit to the number of sessions. The SHBP provides 100 percent coverage after the applicable per visit copayment. The twenty-four combined plan year visits maximum for non-biologically based outpatient mental healthcare and alcohol/substance abuse care is applicable to this benefit. Any visits to Specialty Counseling Network providers reduce the visits available under the twenty-four visit plan year maximum. Also, visits to Trinity Counseling Service (after the first ten subsidized sessions), or other mental healthcare providers, will count toward the twenty-four visits under the Specialty Counseling Network.

**Individual Spiritual Direction:** There is no deductible for this benefit. Students and spouses enrolled in the SHBP will pay a per visit copay of \$10 to the provider for services at the provider's office. The copay is \$15 per visit if the provider arranges to provide services to the student on campus. Individual direction sessions are usually monthly and the benefit covers up to twelve sessions per year. The SHBP provides 100 percent coverage following the applicable copayments. Any sessions provided under this individual benefit will not reduce the twenty-four-session plan year limit for outpatient mental health and alcohol/substance abuse care. The student or spouse is required to obtain a referral from the Office of Student Counseling, the Minister of the Chapel, the Field Education Office, or the Office of Student Relations and Senior Placement. No benefits are payable under the Spiritual Direction Benefit without a referral.

**Psychotherapy Groups, Support Groups, and Covenant Groups for Faith Formation:** Personal growth and spiritual direction groups offer a unique formation experience for students and spouses. Organized through the Chapel Office at 609.497.7890, covenant groups for faith formation meet every other week for six to eight sessions, and are facilitated by trained spiritual directors. The Office of Student Counseling at 609.497.7844 offers support, relationship enrichment, mindfulness training, and various psychotherapy groups as needs arise. SHBP-covered students will pay a copay of \$5 per session for groups with outside facilitators (e.g., \$30 for a six-session faith covenant group). Any sessions provided under this group benefit will not reduce the twenty-four-session plan year limit for Other Mental Health and Alcohol/Substance Abuse Care. Check the student counseling web site or come to Scheide Hall for descriptions of groups being offered. Contact the director of student counseling if there is a group you would like to see offered.

## SHBP Prescription Drug Coverage

The SHBP uses MEDCO ([www.medco.com](http://www.medco.com)), a prescription benefit management program for prescription drug coverage. Prescription drug benefits are payable for the expense of covered prescriptions and refills dispensed by a licensed pharmacist. You may locate participating pharmacies across the United States at the MEDCO web site or by calling toll-free 800.711.0917 to determine if a pharmacy is a member of the Medco network. Numerous Princeton area pharmacies (e.g., CVS Pharmacy, The Forer Pharmacy, Target, Eckerd, Wegmans, and Wal-mart) participate with MEDCO.

### Copayment per Covered Prescription or Refill

(retail pharmacy—thirty-day supply)

Generic.....	\$15
Preferred Brand Name.....	\$25
Non-Preferred Brand Name.....	\$40

### Mail Service Copayment per Covered Prescription or Refill

(ninety-day supply for maintenance medications\*)

Generic.....	\$30
Preferred Brand Name.....	\$50
Non-Preferred Brand Name.....	\$80

\*Maintenance medications are those which are prescribed for chronic conditions and are available to Covered Persons in up to ninety-day quantities through the mail service benefit. The Mail Service Prescription Drug Program should be your first selection when filing a claim for Outpatient drugs that are maintenance medications. Information needed for claim filing under the Mail Service can be obtained from [www.medco.com](http://www.medco.com) or [www.klais.com](http://www.klais.com) (Klais & Company, Inc.).

**Benefit Percentage after Copayment.....** 100%



### Specialty Counseling Providers

Left to right: Dorothy Borresen, Linda Gilbert McDonald, Brian McDonald, Maggie Clune, Diane Vanucci