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**DIVINE WORD COLLEGE**  
**FORMATION DIRECTOR MANUAL**



**December 2007**  
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# FORMATION DIRECTOR MANUAL

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this Manual is to define the role of those who minister as Formation Directors at Divine Word College.
- 1.2 The call to work in formation is both a great challenge and an opportunity. Here at Divine Word College, this challenge is even greater because of the multi-cultural composition of our student body. We must respect, challenge, and assist all students as they continue to develop their own identity and language skills, and skills to adapt to a multi-cultural setting. Our role is to... “accompany those entrusted to us on their way to Christ.” (SVD Constitution # 521)
- 1.3 The official formation document is Divine Word College Religious Formation Program (RFP). It describes the philosophy, areas of development and specific objectives, and methods of formation in use at Divine Word College. This document is based on The Constitutions of the Society of the Divine Word and the Program of Priestly Formation, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (PPF) a document prepared by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.
- 1.4 Information and procedures needed for the practical order of community living and a description of the rights and responsibilities of the students is contained in the Student Handbook. Academic information and procedures are in the College Catalog.

## 2. PHILOSOPHY

- 2.1 The most important and basic Formation Director is God, for God is the one who calls and gives the graces for growth. The next most important individual is the student, because development cannot happen without their cooperation and commitment. At the next level is the Formation Director. The Formation Directors are responsible for assisting the growth and development of the members of their formation group. They do this by counseling, advising, teaching, mentoring, encouraging, challenging, confronting, and above all loving the members of their formation group.
- 2.2 The Formation Directors support the purpose of the Religious Formation Program at Divine Word College to “foster the maturity and growth of the missionary candidate in five facets of development: human, spiritual, intellectual, cross-cultural community, and missionary ministry. The candidate’s growth is demonstrated through observed behaviors and expressed ideas, which form the basis for the candidate’s own deepening understanding and discerning of their call and evaluating the candidate’s readiness for novitiate... “ (RFP)

### **3. ORGANIZATION**

- 3.1 For formation purposes, the student body is divided into several formation groups. A Formation Director is assigned to each formation group by the Vice-President for Formation and will engage in many tasks stemming from the principle found in the SVD Constitutions, namely: “Our formation is total and integral: it seeks to bring about human maturity, professional competence, and committed faith.” (SVD Constitutions #503)
- 3.2 The Formation Directors are appointed by the President upon the recommendation of the Vice-President for Formation. They are responsible to the Vice-President for Formation.
- 3.3 The Formation Director should “provide for group reflection on the seminary experience in order to help the students integrate academic and field experience.” (PPF, p. 343) Under the leadership of the Formation Director each formation group should experience living, working, and worshipping together.
- 3.4 The Formation Directors are immediately responsible for the development of the students in their formation group and are ordinarily the student’s primary formational contact.
- 3.5 The Formation Directors work closely with the Vice-President for Formation and the Dean of Students, who play active roles in the life of the students. The Vice-President for Formation has general responsibility for the implementation of the Religious Formation Program and the Dean of Students for the Student Handbook.
- 3.6 The work of a Formation Director is ordinarily equivalent to 3 credit hours of teaching per formation group.
- 3.7 The Formation Directors are voting members of the Formation and Student Life Committee and the Academic and Formation Advisory Council.
- 3.8 The Formation Team consists of Vice-President for Formation, Dean of Students, Formation Directors, Counselor, Coordinator of Spiritual Life, Coordinator of Missionary Ministries Program, College Chaplain, faculty representative from academics, and three student representatives, at least one of whom is a female student. The Vice-President for Formation is the chair of the Formation Team.

### **4. GUIDELINES**

- 4.1 The Formation Directors are immediately responsible for mentoring the students in their formation group in the development of the following facets:
  - 4.1.1 Human Formation
  - 4.1.2 Spiritual Formation

- 4.1.3 Intellectual Formation
- 4.1.4 Intercultural Community Formation
- 4.1.5 Missionary Ministry Formation
- 4.2 The Formation Directors carry out this responsibility especially in the following ways:
  - 4.2.1 Through formation group activities, such as formation group meetings, liturgies, prayer, Bible sharing, recollections, and retreats.
  - 4.2.2 Through active participation in community events.
  - 4.2.3 Through individual counseling they make themselves especially available to their formation group. They take the initiative to contact the members of their formation group when necessary. They conduct regular interviews with members of their formation group.
  - 4.2.4 Through special help to students when requested or as needed.
  - 4.2.5 Through cooperation with and carrying out the disciplinary policies of the College and with the sanctions imposed by the proper authority.
- 4.3 It is essential that the Formation Directors discuss with those under their jurisdiction problems that are associated with “dual relationship,” which is when the Formation Director holds simultaneously two positions of authority over the student that can potentially be in conflict.

## **5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FORMATION DIRECTOR**

- 5.1 To attend Formation Team meetings
  - 5.1.1 The Formation Team meets at regular times during the school year to discuss related business, concerns, and issues.
  - 5.1.2 Before the school year begins the Formation Team meets to prepare for the arrival of students.
- 5.2 To attend other formation meetings as well, such as staffing meetings, support meetings, joint meetings with other departments, etc.
- 5.3 To attend formation workshops when organized by the Vice-President for Formation or other types of ongoing education related to formation or spirituality.
- 5.4 To participate in formational input sessions as designated by the Vice-President for Formation (e.g., on Spiritual Direction issues, worship, etc.).

- 5.5 To participate and be present at communal worship and at community celebrations or special events, such as beginning and end-of-the year picnics, Family Feast, Come and See Weekends, Mission Sunday, Lunar New Year, Holy Week, Graduation etc.
- 5.6 To schedule the Formation Group Evening Conferences by using the provided topics and to facilitate them. These conferences are scheduled weekly, normally on Wednesdays from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The Formation Director is to be present for all of the meetings. The Formation Directors closely monitor the developmental process of the various members of their group.
- 5.7 To participate in all large community conferences.
- 5.8 To assure the formation group liturgies, night prayer/Bible sharing:
  - 5.8.1 To see to it that these liturgies and night prayer/Bible sharing take place and are properly planned.
  - 5.8.2 Each formation group celebrates mass once a week.
  - 5.8.3 Bible sharing and night prayer alternate – Bible sharing one week and night prayer the next week.
  - 5.8.4 If the Formation Director is a priest, he does not need to always be the presider. A variety of presiders is encouraged.
  - 5.8.5 The students in the formation group take turns preparing for mass such as choosing a date for formation group mass, inviting a presider, setting up for mass, taking care of the readings, songs, etc.
- 5.9 To plan and coordinate the Day(s) of Recollection.
- 5.10 To plan and coordinate the annual weekend retreat. Each formation group makes one weekend retreat. The Formation Directors are responsible for seeing that the retreat is planned. They are expected to be part of the retreat experience. The seniors/associates as part of the novitiate preparation participate in the pre-novitiate retreat over the Thanksgiving break.
- 5.11 To have Goal Setting Interviews (GSI) and periodic interviews.
  - 5.11.1 The purposes for the GSI include: to discuss with each student their goals for the present school year, to learn more about the student's life, background, vocation motivation, etc.; and to monitor the adjustment process and progress of each student while living at DWC.
  - 5.11.2 The Formation Directors must schedule regular interviews with all the members of their formation group.

- 5.11.3 Interviews should be scheduled at least two times per semester – at the beginning and toward the end of the semester. During the interviews the Formation Directors should see into how well the student is fulfilling their goals.
- 5.11.4 The Formation Directors should also be available for extra meetings with the students when requested.
- 5.11.5 The GSI form is to be completed in writing by the student before the first interview. The Formation Director and the student each keep one copy.
- 5.12 To hold end-of-the-year evaluations and to process the Growth and Development Reports (GDR)
  - 5.12.1 All students have an end-of-the-year evaluation.
  - 5.12.2 Each student fills out their own self-evaluation form based on the guidelines on the GDR. This should be done prior to the formation group evaluation meeting.
  - 5.12.3 The members of the formation group evaluate one another using the same evaluation form (also prior to the formation group evaluation meeting) based on the guidelines on the GDR.
  - 5.12.4 At the evaluation meeting, the student being evaluated presents their own self-evaluation first to their formation group, then is given feedback from the other members, and, if appropriate the Formation Director. If the Formation Director participates, their evaluation should be done on each student before the meeting.
  - 5.12.5 Alternatively, the Formation Director can set up a private meeting with each student to go over their own evaluation and peer evaluations.
- 5.13 To have a student file for each student in their formation group. The file includes: Goal Setting Interview form, end-of-the-year evaluations (self-evaluation of each student, summary of peer evaluations, and their own evaluation for the student), and any other relevant documents.
- 5.14 To make two complete copies of a student file (including all the documents mentioned in 5.13) of all members of their formation group and give both copies to the Dean of Students. One copy will be filed in the Dean's Office, the other given to the student's Formation Director for the following year. This should be done at the end of the school year.
- 5.15 To engage in regular spiritual direction and counseling as a means of nurturing their own spiritual and human growth.

## 6. RESOURCES

- 6.1 To assist in the work of formation, Divine Word College provides the following resource personnel: Vice-President for Formation, Dean of Students, Spiritual Directors, Counselor, Chaplain, Coordinator of Liturgical Music, Coordinator of Missionary Ministries Program, VP of Academic Affairs as well as dedicated faculty and staff.
- 6.2 The following resources are available at DWC: Religious Formation Program, The Student Handbook, The Constitutions of the Society of the Divine Word, The Program of Priestly Formation, other valuable magazines, like Human Development, Review for Religious, in the Periodical Reading Room, and books in the library, and a variety of publications of the Society of the Divine Word, such as Arnoldus Nota, Verbum, Word/USA, etc.

## 7. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 7.1 Religious Formation Program states: Outside of the meetings, the members of the formation group do not discuss personal issues of any member without their consent.
- 7.2 Concerning the formation files:
  - 7.2.1 An ongoing formation file of each student currently enrolled is kept in the Dean of Students' office. As official records maintained by the formation program, they are declared to be confidential. There are to be no exceptions.
  - 7.2.2 Formation Directors have open access to the official files of the members of their formation group. Likewise, each student has a right to inspect their cumulative formation file within a reasonable time, not to exceed 45 days, after making such a request. Such inspections are to be done in the presence of the Dean of Students. Unrestricted access is not allowed. As it is, the students already have a copy of all that is contained in their formation file except for their application papers.
  - 7.2.3 When a student leaves Divine Word College, or does not go to the novitiate after graduation, their formation file is normally kept for two years and then all except the application form and other relevant documents are removed. This file is always kept in the Dean of Students' Office.



