M.T.S PRACTICUM (MTS 301)

In the second year of the M.T.S. degree program, students are required to participate in a one-semester field placement or "Practicum", a three-hour course described in the catalog as follows:

Required of second-year M.T.S. students, the Practicum involves a field placement for one semester in a setting appropriate to the student's vocational goals, combined with a weekly seminar for the purpose of theological reflection on issues of lay ministry growing out of the field experience. M.T.S. students may elect to do the Practicum for a second semester.

The M.T.S. Practicum is intended to provide each student with an opportunity to serve God and neighbor as a trained lay person and to reflect on that experience with others. In order to enhance the competence of those called to serve God as laity, the M.T.S. Practicum should be connected to the individual's career goals and undertaken in an area of interest to the students. Possibilities include, but are not limited to, the following: volunteering at a shelter, hospital, legal agency, or church advocacy office in Washington, D.C., or other community or service organizations, arranging and facilitating a Bible study or Christian reflection group at a workplace or local parish, or developing workshops for others in a specific field of interest.

To earn the three hours of course credit, the students are expected to commit to the following: 1) a minimum of twelve hours per week of hands-on experience in ministry, including travel time and preparation; 2) a biweekly, one-hour group meeting with a faculty advisor and others enrolled in the course to reflect on that experience; 3) a meeting on a regular basis with a mentor related to the placement site; 4) keeping a journal; and 5) a final reflection paper on the total experience.

In order to insure a potentially meaningful experience in this endeavor, the student shall, at the time of registration, submit for the M.T.S. Advisor's approval, a plan for this Practicum. Normally this planning should occur during the semester prior to registration for the course. The plan should include personal and vocational goals for the student, the identification of a mentor, and show how the practicum experience will enhance both academic study at the seminary and lay ministry in and beyond the Church. Guidance in selecting a site or planning a program may be sought from faculty advisors and the field education department, as well as from the M.T.S. Advisor.

Once a plan is approved, it will be the student's responsibility to obtain the necessary placement and meet any requirements of the site selected. (For example, a student wishing to serve as a Hospice volunteer should follow the procedures necessary to be accepted as a volunteer and undertake whatever training may be required by the organization.)

Successful completion of the Practicum will be determined by the faculty person in charge of the seminar component of the course, who will consult with the mentor and others involved in the Practicum in cases where this is appropriate. The Practicum will be graded on a pass/fail basis.
International students who are seeking the M.T.S. degree, and who are ordained, are exempt from the Practicum (MTS 301) requirement. They should plan to choose a three-hour elective in its place.

March 23, 1995