

CLASSIS MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP TEAM
FUNDING POLICY AS OF OCTOBER 2021

The policy below builds on the funding policy adopted by Classis Niagara at its May 21, 2003 meeting, bringing it up to date to recognize that the “Student Fund Committee” is now officially called the “Classical Ministerial Leadership Team,” and by including the new options available through Calvin Seminary of Distance Learning and the Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy.

1. Eligibility will be determined on the basis of need. However, the following maximum limits will be placed on financial assistance depending on the institution and program in which the applicant enrolls:
 - a. Calvin Theological Seminary (in residence) –100% of tuition and 100% of books and resources. Priority for funding will be given to students in this category. Students entering the Calvin Theological Seminary (in residence) program will receive the committed amount for the three or four-year duration of their program.
 - b. Calvin Seminary (distance education) –75% of tuition and 75% of books and resources.
 - c. Ecclesiastical Program for Ministerial Candidacy (EPMC) through Calvin Seminary – 100% of tuition and 100% of books and resources.
 - d. Other qualified seminaries –50% of tuition and 50% of books and resources.
 - e. Students pursuing other graduate level seminary studies for programs other than the M.Div., will be funded along the same pattern, i.e., 50% of tuition and books for students at Calvin Seminary and 25% for students at other seminaries.

2. All financial assistance shall be in the form of forgivable loans.
 - a. For candidates who become ordained and remain in qualified CRCNA ministry:
 - Loans will remain interest free for the duration of their service in an ordained ministry within the CRCNA, RCA or other churches in ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRCNA.
 - They will have 20% of the total amount of the loan received from Classis Niagara forgiven annually.

 - b. For candidates who are called to a part-time position in an established congregation:
 - Loan forgiveness shall be calculated at a pro-rotated basis.
 - If working at 50% or more, the forgiveness formula will follow that of pastors in full-time ministry, i.e., 5 years of ministry at 50% or more.
 - If working below 50% of a full-time position, the length of ministry service required will be set in accordance with the number of hours worked.

 - c. For candidates called to a church plant:
 - Candidates will be interviewed by the CMLT which will assess the level of missional engagement, additional part-time work, life and family circumstances,

financial support, etc., and make a recommendation that is appropriate to each individual situation in terms of the number of years of ministry required to consider the loan forgiven.

- d. For candidates who complete the candidacy program, but who do not receive a call to a qualified ministry for ordained persons within the CRCNA within the time prescribed by synod:
 - Loans will remain interest free until paid in full
 - The total loan amount outstanding with Classis Niagara must be paid in monthly instalments so that the loan is paid in full after ten years.
 - In exceptional cases, loans may be forgiven by the CMLT with the concurrence of Classis Niagara to forgive part or all of the loan.
- e. For candidates who complete the candidacy program, but who enter into a non-ordained ministry position within the CRCNA:
 - Loans will remain interest free for the duration of their service in an ordained ministry within the CRCNA, RCA, or other churches in ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRCNA.
 - They will have 20% of the total amount of the loan received from Classis Niagara forgiven annually.
- f. For candidates who complete the candidacy program, who accept a call for ordained ministry outside of the CRCNA, RCA, or other churches in ecclesiastical fellowship with the CRCNA, referred to as a non-qualified position:
 - Loans remain interest free for six months after accepting a non-qualified position.
 - Repayment of the loan interest-free will commence six months after accepting a non-qualified position.
 - Such loans must be paid in monthly installments and paid in full within five years and six months of withdrawal.
- g. For candidates who complete the program, but enrol in additional graduate theological education:
 - In this case repayment or forgiveness considerations will be deferred until the candidate either completes or withdraws from the graduate program.
 - If such a candidate serves a CRCNA congregation as an ordained minister during the time of graduate study, the 20% forgiveness of the loan will apply for each year of service to such congregation.
- h. For students who withdraw from the candidacy program before completion:
 - Repayment of the loan, interest free, will commence six months after such withdrawal. Such loans must be paid in monthly instalments and paid in full within five years and six month of withdrawal.

This document, approved by Classis Niagara in May 2017, with sections b) & c) approved in October 2021, in conjunction with the 2017 Revised Mandate, supersedes all previously approved mandates and policies.