



First Lutheran Seminary Applicants – Initial Interview Guide

First Lutheran members attending seminary and seeking tuition assistance from First Lutheran Foundation, and/or registration for ELCA rostered candidacy from First Lutheran Church will go through an initial interview process. This interview will take place after the student makes contact with the congregation (or pastor) and with consideration for meeting any candidacy or seminary deadlines the student has. Coordination of the interview time and date will take place between the interview panel and the student.

The interview will be conducted by a panel consisting of the following:

- First Lutheran Church pastor
- First Lutheran Council member
- First Lutheran Foundation board member

This interview will accomplish a dual purpose:

- Determine the congregation's full backing of the student for ministry/seminary, resulting in the congregation's registration of the student for rostered candidacy in the ELCA (if applicable)
- Begin First Lutheran Foundation-funded tuition assistance (annually renewable)

When the student makes initial contact, he or she will be provided with the "Seminary Tuition Funding Request" form, the "Seminary Tuition Funding Policy", and "Covenant of Support". The student will submit the completed "Seminary Tuition Funding Request" at the time of the interview. The panel will interview the candidate, review the funding request, and make a decision whether to fund (and register, if seeking rostered candidacy) the student. Upon decision to fund (and register) the student, the student and panel representatives will sign the "Covenant of Support" for the duration of the student's seminary education. The panel will also review and clarify all requirements for continued funding with the student. Upon a positive registration and funding decision, the panel will recommend funding to the Foundation and rostered candidacy registration (if applicable) to the council. The panel will complete and submit the "Congregational Registration for a Candidacy Applicant" form to the synod for students in the rostered candidacy process. The council will forward this recommendation to the congregation at the annual meeting for official congregational approval and support of the candidate.

The initial interview panel will meet with the student to discern his or her suitability for ministry and the congregation's full backing of this student. Ultimately, the panel should ask themselves, "Would I want this person as my pastor/ministry staff?" When a congregation registers a candidate, they are providing their full backing in sending this candidate to the greater church for leadership. To help in this process, the panel may be guided in the initial interview by the following questions:

- What are your goals for ministry/why are you attending seminary?
- Describe your involvement in the life of this congregation, including specific areas of responsibility or service. (including how long you have been an active member of First Lutheran, and in what capacity)
- Describe your discernment process and sense of call. How has First Lutheran shaped your sense of call or guided you in your discernment process?
- How do you plan to continue your relationship with this congregation as you progress through seminary?
- Describe your sense of your strengths and growth areas for ministry. What are your goals for your first year of seminary?