

SOUTH CAROLINA LAY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

The Two-Track Approach

The S.C. Lay School of Theology offers a two-track approach to receiving either a certificate or a diploma. Ordained or non-ordained participants may enroll in the Lay Enrichment (LE) Track. The Lay Pastor Track (LP) is provided for **ruling elders** who want to become eligible as Commissioned Ruling Elder candidates. They must receive endorsement from their Session Council and from the Committee on Ministry of presbytery. Once the endorsement is complete, a copy of the form will be sent to the registrar of the school.

LE and LP Track participants will enroll in and attend the same classes. Participants in the LP Track will be assigned extra reading and will complete an examination or paper to be graded by the Lay School faculty who teach the course. Faculty who teach LP track participants will receive extra compensation for the extra responsibilities. This additional cost will be covered by a \$20 academic fee paid by the participant for each course taken. A participant in the Lay Pastor Track (LP) will have a deadline for submitting work to be graded. If the work is not submitted by the deadline date, then the professor will report “no work submitted” for the record, and the participant will have to re-take the course. **February 15** is the deadline for receipt of work for the fall session; **July 1** is the deadline for receipt of work for the spring session.

Certificate or Diploma graduates of the school will be able to continue taking courses through Continuing Education (CE) coursework. Those who receive a diploma in the Lay Pastor Track will be required to take one refresher course per year in Continuing Education (CE) in order to keep the diploma validated.

Core Courses: LAY ENRICHMENT TRACK:

1. Old Testament Survey (Spring)
2. New Testament Survey (Fall)
3. Reformed Theology (Fall)
4. Polity (Spring)
5. Church History (Spring)
6. Pastoral Care (Fall)
7. Worship & Sacraments (Spring)
- OR Preaching (Fall)

Core Courses: LAY PASTOR TRACK

1. Old Testament Survey (Spring)
2. New Testament Survey (Fall)
3. Reformed Theology (Fall)
4. Polity (Spring)
5. Church History (Spring)
6. Pastoral Care (Fall)
7. Worship and Sacraments (Spring)
8. Preaching (Fall)

In each presbytery, the Committee on Ministry (COM) has supervision over Commissioned Ruling Elders. In order to enter the LP track at the Lay School, a participant must be a ruling elder who is endorsed for the LP Track by the Session Council of the participant’s church and by the Committee on Ministry of the presbytery. A participant may enroll in the LP Track pending endorsement; however, all endorsements must be received by the registrar prior to the next session of Lay School in order for the participant to continue in the LP Track. If courses have been taken prior to 2002 (when the two-track system was adopted) in the Lay School, it is up to the COM to determine whether or not those courses count toward commissioning as a Commissioned Ruling Elder.

If a participant is enrolled in the Lay School and completes the required core course work (seven courses), then a Lay School of Theology *certificate* in the Lay Enrichment Track will be awarded. If a ruling elder completes the course work (eight courses) with satisfactory grades, then the ruling elder will receive the Lay School of Theology *diploma* in the Lay Pastor Track. Receiving a diploma in the Lay Pastor Track only certifies the ruling elder’s **eligibility** for commissioning if a presbytery issues a call. If called, the ruling elder must be examined and approved by presbytery in order to be commissioned for a specific