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## **Educational Philosophy Statement For the EQF Level 7 Programme in Theology and Culture at EEBC**

### **Theological Foundation**

Theological education engages the whole person (intellectually, spiritually, morally, emotionally, culturally, and physically) and is realized through interaction between people, with the aim of transforming the social (interpersonal) space, whether ecclesial or secular. In this sense, the Eastern European Biblical College (EEBC) takes on the task of designing and implementing educational programs for adults that:

- Promote the message of the Gospel in contemporary society, considering it the fundamental reference point for the life of every human being;
- Facilitate the understanding and knowledge of contemporary culture (and cultural diversity globally) as a support for conveying the evangelical message;
- Train individuals capable of articulating the evangelical message in the terms of their own culture, including the digital one, but not limited to it.

In its educational philosophy, EEBC embodies the values that animate it, namely:

- Living out the Christian faith according to the coordinates of the biblical message;
- Serving others in their own cultural language;
- Academic and professional excellence;
- Cultural responsibility (and thus engagement beyond the ecclesial space);
- Personalized student formation, aiming to replicate the school's values in their professional practice.

The EQF Level 7 Programme in Theology and Culture at EEBC is rooted in the broader Christian theological tradition, seeking to explore points of convergence between Christian teaching and the cultural milieu in which it is lived out. Hence, our educational philosophy is



predicated on the conviction that theology is both an academic discipline and a transformative practice that speaks to the lived practices and realities of our communities. We believe that theological education should be offered in a way that helps students critically engage with their theology, developing a more nuanced and hermeneutical reading of their cultural contexts so that their learning fosters justice, peace, spiritual transformation, and well-being.

### **The Aim of Theological Education**

The aim of our theological education is threefold:

- **Formation:** Our goal is to provide a learning space that encourages students to become reflective practitioners who integrate their faith with their professional and personal lives.
- **Engagement:** We promote and encourage active engagement with contemporary cultural issues from a theological perspective, enabling students to contribute to the public dimensions of theology and promote the Church's mission in the world.
- **Transformation:** We aim to inspire and equip students to be agents of transformation in their communities, promoting a theology that is contextual, liberative, and faithful to an orthodox reading of the Scriptures.

### **Educational Philosophy**

Our educational philosophy is grounded in the following key principles:

- **Theological Reflection and Praxis:** We emphasize the integration of theological reflection with practical engagement. Students are encouraged to bring their experiences into dialogue with theological concepts, fostering a dynamic interaction between faith and practice. In line with our institutional history, we commit to promoting the encounter between Christianity and contemporary culture in various ways, firmly believing that theological education can prepare agents of cultural change who understand and interact with secular culture in its language, thereby promoting Christian values. Consistent with this goal, the EEBC has trained missionaries and clergy capable of expressing the evangelical message in diverse cultural languages.
- **Contextual Theology:** Recognizing the diversity of cultural contexts, our curriculum is designed to respond to the cultural, social, and historical realities in which theology is articulated and practiced. We promote a contextual theology that engages with contemporary issues and challenges.
- **Interdisciplinary Approach:** We value the interdisciplinary nature of theology, encouraging students to draw insights from various fields such as philosophy, history, anthropology, cognitive science, and the arts to enrich their theological understanding.

- **Community of Learners:** Our learning community is built on mutual respect, dialogue, and collaboration. We believe learning is a communal process, where students and faculty engage in meaningful conversations, share diverse perspectives, and learn from one another. We believe our curriculum and its underlying philosophy of education enable us to form specialists in theology at the intersection with secular culture.
- **Critical Engagement and Creativity:** We foster an environment that encourages critical thinking and creativity. Students are challenged to question assumptions, explore new ideas, and develop innovative approaches to theology and ministry. Therefore, the educational philosophy underpinning our programme in theology and culture aims to provide both the current and future generations with the necessary tools to embody the Gospel in cultural languages, including artistic and general cultural expressions.

### Public Access to Educational Philosophy

We believe that our educational philosophy should be publicly accessible on our institution's website, allowing prospective students, educators, and the broader theological community to engage with our approach to theology and theological education.

This document serves as a comprehensive guide to the educational philosophy that informs the EQF Level 7 Programme in Theology and Culture at EEBC (ECTE Standards and Guidelines B.3.1). It reflects our commitment to providing a well-rounded theological education that is contextually relevant, academically rigorous, and evangelical in orientation.

The document was approved by the Academic Dean and the Programme Director on August 19th, 2024, and formally communicated to the faculty involved in the EQF Level 7 Programme in Theology and Culture at EEBC.

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