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MASTER OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP 26-27

STUDENT HANDBOOK

MIRL 2026-2027



BOSTON ISLAMIC SEMINARY

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About This Handbook

The Boston Islamic Seminary Student Handbook is an official institutional publication for students enrolled in the Master in Islamic Religious Leadership (MIRL). It provides essential information about the Seminary, the MIRL program, student services, academic requirements, community expectations, and institutional policies and procedures. Students are responsible for reading, understanding, and following the policies and requirements contained in this handbook and other official BIS publications. This handbook should be read together with the:

- Academic calendar;
- Approved curriculum and degree plan;
- Course syllabi;
- Graduation requirements;
- Internship and Capstone Writing Project guidelines;
- Policies and forms available through Populi; and
- Official communications sent through BIS email and Populi.

When a course syllabus contains requirements specific to a particular course, students are responsible for following those requirements in addition to the general policies

contained in this handbook. A course syllabus may not override an institutional academic policy unless the policy expressly permits faculty discretion.

Boston Islamic Seminary may revise its policies, procedures, academic requirements, fees, schedules, and services when necessary. Students will be notified of significant changes through official institutional communication channels. Unless otherwise stated, the most recently approved institutional policy will govern.

Students are expected to monitor their BIS email and Populi accounts regularly. Failure to read this handbook or an official institutional notice does not excuse a student from complying with applicable requirements.

I. President's Welcome

Dear Respected Students,

Assalamu ʿAlaykum wa Raḥmatullāhi wa Barakātuh,

It is my honor to welcome you to Boston Islamic Seminary and to the Master in Islamic Religious Leadership program for the 2026–2027 academic year. We praise and thank Allah, Most High, for granting us the opportunity to pursue sacred knowledge and to prepare men and women for principled, compassionate, and professional religious leadership.

Your enrollment in this program represents more than an academic commitment. It is an *amānah* (sacred trust) and an opportunity to cultivate knowledge, spiritual depth, ethical character, professional competence, and readiness for service.

The MIRL program provides rigorous and holistic preparation rooted in the Qur'an, the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and the rich Islamic scholarly tradition. At the same time, it prepares students to understand and respond thoughtfully to the realities, responsibilities, challenges, and opportunities of religious leadership in America.

Throughout your studies, you will be encouraged to bring together sound scholarship, spiritual formation, ethical conduct, critical reflection, practical leadership, and compassionate service. We hope that your learning will deepen your relationship with Allah, refine your character, strengthen your ability to serve others, and prepare you to contribute meaningfully to Muslim communities and broader society.

This Student Handbook is an important resource for your academic journey. It explains the Seminary's academic requirements, policies, student services, institutional expectations, and available channels for support, feedback, complaints, and appeals. We encourage you to read it carefully and consult it throughout the academic year.

As members of the Boston Islamic Seminary community, students are expected to uphold Islamic values, academic integrity, professional conduct, mutual respect, and applicable law. These commitments are essential to maintaining a learning community characterized by sincerity, trust, dignity, mercy, responsibility, and excellence. Our faculty and staff are committed to supporting your academic, spiritual, personal, and professional development.

When questions or concerns arise, we encourage you to communicate openly and use the appropriate channels identified in this handbook.

We pray that Allah blesses your pursuit of knowledge, grants you sincerity and wisdom, strengthens your character, accepts your efforts, and enables you to serve communities and society with compassion, integrity, and excellence.

Sincerely,

Dr. Basyouny Nehela

President

Boston Islamic Seminary

II. About Boston Islamic Seminary

History

Boston Islamic Seminary began as a community vision in 2008 and was formally established as a legal entity in 2015. BIS was founded in response to a critical need within Muslim communities in America: qualified religious leaders who can teach, guide, counsel, build institutions, serve families and communities, and respond effectively to contemporary challenges while remaining firmly rooted in the Islamic tradition.

Since its establishment, BIS has offered educational opportunities for adult learners, including continuing education, professional development, certificate programs, workshops, fellowships, and graduate-level education.

In December 2020, the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education granted Boston Islamic Seminary authority to award a graduate degree in Islamic religious leadership. BIS subsequently launched the Master in Islamic Religious Leadership, its principal graduate program.

The Seminary continues to strengthen its academic programs, faculty, student support, institutional assessment, administrative systems, and public accountability as it develops into a trusted and sustainable Islamic institution of higher education in America.

Institutional Identity

Boston Islamic Seminary is an Islamic institution of higher education committed to preparing religious leaders who are:

- Grounded in the Islamic tradition;
- Formed with spiritual and ethical integrity;
- Attentive to the contemporary American context; and
- Equipped to serve Muslim communities and broader society with wisdom, compassion, and professionalism.

BIS understands religious leadership as an *amānah*—a sacred trust. It requires more than the acquisition of information. It requires sound knowledge, sincerity, worship, character, discipline, wisdom, practical competence, and a deep commitment to serving people for the sake of Allah. The Seminary therefore integrates Islamic scholarship, contemporary understanding, spiritual development, leadership formation, applied learning, and service to society.

Institutional Vision

To shape the future of Muslim religious leadership and Islamic higher education in America.

Institutional Mission

Boston Islamic Seminary provides rigorous, holistic Islamic higher education that prepares exemplary, spiritually grounded, and professional Muslim leaders for compassionate service to communities and society.

MIRL Program Vision

To cultivate the next generation of Muslim religious leaders in America.

MIRL Program Mission

To prepare exemplary and professional Muslim American religious leaders for compassionate service to society.

Core Values

Continuity and Authenticity

Boston Islamic Seminary is committed to upholding the authentic and balanced spiritual and intellectual heritage of Islam, deeply rooted in the compassionate teachings and wisdom of the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. BIS approaches the Islamic tradition with reverence, scholarly responsibility, and a commitment to transmitting its guidance faithfully and meaningfully.

Relevance and Practicality

Boston Islamic Seminary is committed to developing principled and reasoned Islamic responses to the challenges facing Muslims in their personal lives, families, communities, institutions, and broader social environments. BIS prepares students to connect sound Islamic knowledge with thoughtful application and effective service.

Responsiveness and Rightfulness

Boston Islamic Seminary prepares competent Muslim religious leaders with the knowledge, character, judgment, and practical skills needed to help communities navigate new issues and unforeseen circumstances with wisdom, integrity, compassion, and dignity.

Religious and Academic Character

BIS's identity as an Islamic academic institution shapes its curriculum, community life, standards of conduct, and approach to religious-leadership formation. The Seminary is committed to:

- Fidelity to the Qur'an and the Sunnah;
- Respect for the Islamic scholarly tradition;
- Spiritual and ethical formation;
- Rigorous graduate-level academic education;
- Academic freedom exercised responsibly within the Seminary's mission;
- Intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity;
- Principled and respectful disagreement;
- Compassionate service;
- Professional responsibility; and
- Compliance with applicable law.

The Seminary welcomes serious academic inquiry, thoughtful reflection, and respectful discussion. Differences in interpretation or opinion should be approached with knowledge, humility, fairness, wisdom, and proper Islamic etiquette.

Legal Status and Degree-Granting Authority

Boston Islamic Seminary is a nonprofit, tax-exempt educational institution established under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It is authorized by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to award a Master's degree in Islamic Religious Leadership.

III. Master in Islamic Religious Leadership

Program Overview

The Master in Islamic Religious Leadership is a graduate professional degree that prepares students to serve in a range of Muslim religious-leadership roles in the United States. The program combines rigorous study of the Islamic sciences with spiritual and ethical formation, contextual understanding, pastoral care, communication, community service, and institutional leadership.

Students may pursue the program full time or part time. The normal full-time degree plan extends over three academic years. Detailed enrollment requirements appear in Section XII.

Educational Approach

The MIRL curriculum integrates four dimensions of religious-leadership formation:

Sacred Texts and Islamic Sciences

Students study the Qur'an, Hadith, Prophetic biography, Islamic belief, jurisprudence, spirituality, history, and related disciplines as foundational sources of knowledge and guidance.

Contemporary Context

Students examine the philosophical, cultural, historical, social, legal, and institutional realities affecting Muslims in twenty-first-century America and the wider world.

Spiritual and Ethical Development

Students cultivate sincerity, God-consciousness, humility, self-discipline, mercy, trustworthiness, and an ongoing commitment to personal spiritual development.

Practical Application and Leadership

Students learn skills commonly needed by religious leaders in the West, and apply their learning through case studies, simulations, presentations, community-based assignments, supervised internships, institutional projects, and the Capstone Writing Project.

Official Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the MIRL program, students will be able to:

1. Explain Islamic teachings clearly on the basis of normative religious texts and interpretive frameworks.
2. Analyze contemporary reality critically from an Islamic perspective.
3. Synthesize text and context in analyzing and addressing new problems, appropriately considering the needs of different audiences and diverse community members.
4. Follow normative practices in observing and leading Islamic religious rituals and services.
5. Internalize the values of humility, selflessness, and dedication to service and apply the principles of religious leadership in a variety of community and institutional settings.
6. Demonstrate a commitment to Islamic ethics and spirituality in daily behavior and through plans for ongoing personal development.
7. Relate with diverse individuals and groups inside and outside the Muslim community to partner on matters of common concern.
8. Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.
9. Display advanced competence in critical thinking, research and writing, Islamic leadership, and pastoral care.

Program Credit Requirements

The MIRL requires 102 total credit hours:

Required coursework	90
Supervised internships and Capstone Writing Project	12
Total	102

The internships and Capstone Writing Project together constitute 12 credit hours of applied learning.

Students must also satisfy all graduation requirements listed in Section X.

Required Coursework

The 90-credit curriculum includes sacred texts and Islamic sciences, context and contemporary studies, spiritual and ethical formation, and practical and leadership skills. Students must follow the approved curriculum and degree plan for their cohort.

Internships and Capstone Writing Project

Students complete 10 credits of supervised internships and a two-credit Capstone Writing Project. Internship placements must be approved by BIS and may include mosques, educational institutions, chaplaincy settings, nonprofit organizations, youth and family programs, and other approved religious-leadership environments.

The Capstone Writing Project connects academic research with the student's internship and/or applied-leadership experience. Detailed requirements appear in the Internship Guide and Capstone Writing Project guidelines.

Academic Terms and Instructional Modality

BIS operates Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer terms. Courses may be offered online, in person, in hybrid format, or through another approved modality. The course syllabus identifies the instructional format and any required in-person activities.

Language of Instruction

English is the principal language of instruction, assessment, and institutional communication. Arabic is studied and used as a source language for the Qur'an, Hadith, jurisprudence, and other primary Islamic texts.

Graduation with Distinction

Eligible students may complete three to six approved Distinction courses, totaling 9–18 additional credits beyond the 102-credit degree. Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.7 and satisfy all other Distinction requirements. Complete requirements appear in Section X.

IV. Student Affairs and Support Services

Purpose

To support the academic, spiritual, personal, and professional development of its students. Support is shared among faculty, the Academic Advisor, the Student and Academic Affairs Coordinator, the Executive Assistant, and other designated personnel.

Students who are uncertain where to direct a question may contact mirl@bostonislamicseminary.org.

Student Life and Engagement

BIS seeks to cultivate a spiritually uplifting, intellectually engaging, and supportive learning community. Students may participate in orientations, retreats, spiritual programs, workshops, community gatherings, service activities, leadership-development opportunities, and institutional events.

The Student Government Association represents the student body and provides an organized channel for student participation and feedback. Additional information appears in Section XXIII.

Academic Advising

The Academic Advisor helps students develop academic plans, select appropriate course loads, understand course sequencing and prerequisites, monitor progress toward graduation, plan internships and the Capstone Writing Project, and address academic-standing concerns.

Students should seek advice promptly when academic difficulties arise or when considering a significant change in their degree plan. Academic advising supports student decision-making but does not replace the student's responsibility to complete all degree requirements.

Academic Advisor: Dr. Suheil Laher

Faculty and Learning Support

Faculty members are the primary source of support for course content, assignments, assessments, attendance, and academic feedback. BIS may also provide or facilitate support in graduate-level reading and writing, research, study skills, time management, Arabic, Qur'an recitation, memorization, and examination preparation.

Preparatory study, tutoring, or supplementary instruction does not alter the academic standards or graduation requirements of the MIRL program.

Counseling, Wellness, and Referrals

Students experiencing personal, emotional, spiritual, family, or professional difficulty are encouraged to seek support promptly. BIS may provide pastoral or academic support and may refer students to qualified counselors, healthcare providers, chaplains, or community resources. BIS does not represent itself as a licensed mental-health treatment provider.

A student facing an immediate threat to safety or a medical or mental-health emergency should call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department.

Career and Vocational Development

Career and vocational support may include reflection on religious calling, individualized guidance, résumé and application review, interview preparation, professional-development workshops, networking, and internship or field-placement support. BIS does not guarantee employment, appointment, ordination, certification, endorsement, or placement.

Student Feedback

Students may provide feedback through communication with faculty, confidential course evaluations, surveys, student forums, the Student Government Association, or the approved digital suggestion forms on Populi. Matters requiring formal institutional action should be submitted through the complaint or grievance procedure in Section XXI.

V. Disability Access and Academic Adjustments

Equal Access

BIS is committed to providing qualified students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in its programs, services, and activities. Reasonable academic adjustments, auxiliary aids, and modifications are intended to provide access; they do not guarantee a particular result or remove essential academic, professional, ethical, or program requirements.

Request and Review Process

A student seeking a disability-related adjustment should contact the Executive Assistant as early as possible. The request should identify the affected course or activity, describe the access barrier, state the requested adjustment, and include appropriate supporting documentation when requested.

BIS reviews each request individually in light of the student's functional needs, the essential requirements of the course or program, the effectiveness of the requested adjustment, and possible alternatives. BIS may deny an adjustment that would fundamentally alter an essential requirement, compromise academic integrity, create an unmitigated direct threat, or impose an undue burden.

Documentation, Implementation, and Confidentiality

When documentation is required, it should come from a qualified professional and describe the disability, relevant functional limitations, and recommended adjustments. Approved adjustments will be confirmed in writing and shared only with persons who need the information to implement or evaluate them.

Students must use approved adjustments responsibly and notify the Executive Assistant promptly if an adjustment is not implemented, is ineffective, or no longer needed. Faculty should refer questions about approved adjustments to the Executive Assistant rather than altering them independently.

VI. Campus Operations and Safety

Campus Location and Hours

Boston Islamic Seminary is located at 60 Willow Street, Chelsea, Massachusetts 02150. Regular administrative hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., subject to holidays, religious observances, academic schedules, emergencies, and institutional events.

Campus Access, Parking, and Personal Property

Students may use Seminary facilities only during approved hours and for authorized purposes. They must follow building rules, protect keys and access codes, avoid restricted areas, and leave shared spaces orderly.

Parking is limited. Students are responsible for following posted and municipal parking rules and for safeguarding their vehicles and personal property. BIS is not responsible for citations, towing, loss, theft, or damage.

Emergency and Safety Procedures

For any immediate threat to life, safety, or property, call 911 first. When it is safe to do so, notify the Student and Academic Affairs Coordinator or another available BIS representative.

When a fire alarm sounds, or an evacuation is ordered, leave through the nearest safe exit, avoid elevators, move to the designated assembly area, and do not reenter until authorized. Students must also report credible threats, weapons, hazardous conditions, or dangerous conduct promptly.

Emergency Closings and Notifications

BIS may close facilities, delay opening, dismiss early, move activities online, or cancel classes because of weather, building conditions, public-health concerns, transportation disruptions, security concerns, or other emergencies. Notices will ordinarily be sent through BIS email, Populi, text message, the BIS website, or other official channel.

Student Helpdesk

For general student questions and referrals, contact mirl@bostonislamicseminary.org.

VII. Registrar and Academic Records

Registrar Functions

Designated BIS personnel maintain student registration, enrollment status, grades, academic standing, degree-progress records, enrollment verification, transcripts, graduation clearance, and degree-conferral records.

Student Record Responsibilities

Students should review their Populi records regularly and report suspected errors promptly. Students are also responsible for keeping their legal name, address, telephone number, emergency contact, and other required information current on Populi.

Grades, Verification, and Transcripts

Final grades are available through Populi after processing. Students may request official enrollment verification or transcripts through the designated BIS process. Transcript requests generally require two to three business days, although additional time may be needed during holidays, institutional closings, or high-volume periods.

Current students and persons who attended within the preceding year	$10 per transcript
Persons whose attendance ended more than one year earlier	$20 per transcript

Academic and Financial Holds

BIS may place a hold on an account because of unpaid balances, missing documentation, overdue property, unresolved registration issues, or other outstanding obligations. Students will be informed of the reason for the hold and the steps required to resolve it.

Record Security

BIS maintains academic records according to its retention practices and applicable requirements. Students are responsible for protecting their passwords, devices, email accounts, and Populi access.

VIII. Student Privacy and FERPA

Student Education Records

BIS protects student education records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), to the extent applicable. At the post-secondary level, FERPA rights generally belong to the student.

Student Rights under FERPA

Subject to applicable requirements and exceptions, a student has the right to:

- Inspect and review education records;
- Request amendment of records believed to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of privacy rights;
- Provide consent before disclosure of personally identifiable information, except when disclosure is otherwise permitted; and
- File a complaint with the appropriate federal office concerning an alleged FERPA violation.

Access and Amendment Requests

A student seeking access to records or requesting an amendment must submit a written request identifying the records and the requested action. Grade disagreements based on academic judgment must be pursued through the grade-appeal process rather than the FERPA amendment process.

Disclosure of Records

BIS generally obtains written consent before disclosing personally identifiable information. FERPA permits certain disclosures without consent, including disclosures to

school officials with legitimate educational interests, another institution where the student seeks to enroll, authorized government or accrediting organizations, financial-aid officials, courts or law enforcement under lawful process, or appropriate persons during a health or safety emergency.

Directory Information

BIS may designate limited information as directory information, such as a student's name, program, enrollment status, dates of attendance, degrees or distinctions, graduation date, institutional email address, and participation in recognized activities. Students will be notified of the opt-out process and deadline.

Family Members, Emergency Disclosures, and Complaints

BIS does not ordinarily disclose protected records to parents, spouses, family members, employers, donors, or sponsors without the student's written authorization. Payment of a student's tuition by someone does not itself authorize access to the student's records.

A student who believes BIS has not complied with FERPA should first contact the Student and Academic Affairs Coordinator and may also submit a complaint to the appropriate federal office. Retaliation for exercising FERPA rights is prohibited.

IX. Academic Calendar and Registration

Official Academic Calendar

Boston Islamic Seminary operates on four academic terms:

- Fall
- Winter
- Spring
- Summer

The official academic calendar establishes registration periods, add/drop and withdrawal deadlines, class dates, reading days, examination periods, holidays, student breaks, internships, and other important institutional dates. Students are responsible for reviewing the academic calendar and monitoring official communications through BIS email and Populi.

The Seminary may revise calendar dates when necessary because of religious observances, emergencies, instructional needs, or other institutional circumstances.

2026–2027 Academic Calendar

Students must consult the official BIS Academic Calendar webpage for the most current information.

Students are responsible for:

- Reviewing the academic calendar before each term;
- Observing all published registration, add/drop, withdrawal, and examination deadlines;
- Monitoring BIS email and Populi for calendar updates; and
- Confirming dates before making travel, employment, or other commitments.

Registration

Students must register through Populi during the published registration period. Before registering, students should review:

- The approved curriculum and degree plan;
- Course prerequisites;
- Course modality and meeting schedule;
- Their academic progress;
- Internship and Capstone requirements;
- Financial obligations; and
- Any advising recommendations.

Registration is not complete until the student has satisfied applicable academic, administrative, and financial requirements. BIS may limit or cancel registration when:

- Prerequisites have not been satisfied;
- A student account is subject to a hold;
- The proposed course load is academically inappropriate;
- A course has reached capacity;
- A course is canceled; or
- Another institutional requirement has not been met.

Add/Drop Period

A student may add or drop a course during the published add/drop period, subject to course availability, prerequisites, and academic approval. A course dropped by the add/drop deadline ordinarily:

- Does not appear on the academic transcript; and

- Is governed by the applicable tuition and fee-refund policy.

Students should consult the Academic Advisor before making a change that may affect:

- Academic progress;
- Full-time or part-time status;
- Scholarships;
- Graduation timing; or
- Financial obligations.

Course Withdrawal

After the add/drop period, a student may withdraw from a course until the published withdrawal deadline. An approved course withdrawal will ordinarily appear as W on the transcript and will not carry grade-point value. A withdrawal may affect:

- Academic progress;
- Scholarship eligibility;
- Tuition obligations;
- Enrollment status;
- Prerequisite sequencing; and
- Anticipated graduation.

Failure to attend or participate in a course does not constitute official withdrawal. Students must submit the required form through Populi or another designated institutional process. Requests submitted after the published withdrawal deadline are governed by the Late Withdrawal Policy.

Course Cancellation and Schedule Changes

BIS may cancel, combine, reschedule, relocate, or change the instructional modality of a course when necessary. When a course is canceled by the Seminary, BIS will make reasonable efforts to:

- Notify affected students promptly;
- Provide an appropriate registration alternative where available; and
- Adjust the student's account in accordance with institutional policy.

X. Graduation Requirements

General Requirements

To earn the Master in Islamic Religious Leadership, a student must complete all academic, applied-learning, spiritual-formation, and institutional requirements established by Boston Islamic Seminary. Graduation requires:

✔ Completion of 102 total credit hours, consisting of:

- 90 credit hours of required coursework;
- 12 credit hours of supervised internships and the Capstone Writing Project.

✔ A cumulative GPA of at least 3.0.

✔ Successful completion of all required courses and approved transfer-credit requirements.

✔ Completion of all required internships and satisfactory internship evaluations.

✔ Successful completion of the Capstone Writing Project.

✔ Demonstration of general intermediate competency in Classical Arabic.

✔ Successful completion of the Qur'an recitation examination in *tajwīd*.

✔ Memorization of at least three *juzʾ* of the Qur'an.

✔ Memorization of at least forty hadiths in accordance with the approved graduation guidelines.

✔ Successful completion of the comprehensive exit examination and exit interview.

✔ Good standing in character, comportment, personal development, and professional conduct.

✔ Demonstration of religious integrity and readiness for service and leadership.

✔ Satisfaction of all financial, administrative, library, technology, and institutional obligations.

Graduation Audit

Students approaching degree completion must participate in a graduation audit conducted by the Academic Advisor and designated BIS personnel. The audit will review:

- Required coursework;
- Transfer credit;
- GPA;
- Internships;
- Capstone completion;
- Arabic competency;
- Qur'an and Hadith requirements;
- Exit examinations;
- Distinction requirements, where applicable;
- Academic and conduct standing; and
- Outstanding administrative or financial obligations.

Participation in a graduation audit does not transfer responsibility for completing degree requirements from the student to the Seminary.

Exit Examination and Interview

All students must successfully complete the designated exit examination and interview. The exit process assesses the student's:

- Integration of Islamic knowledge;
- Understanding of contemporary contexts;
- Critical thinking;
- Communication;
- Leadership readiness;
- Pastoral awareness;
- Ethical judgment;
- Spiritual and professional development; and
- Readiness for service.

Students are strongly encouraged to complete any designated exit-examination preparation course or review process.

Graduation with Distinction

To graduate with Distinction, a student must:

- Complete all standard MIRL graduation requirements.
- Complete at least three approved Distinction courses;
- Earn a minimum of 9 Distinction credit hours of coursework;
- Maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.7;
- Satisfy the required academic standard in each Distinction course;
- Remain in good academic and institutional standing; and

Distinction coursework is completed in addition to the 102 credit hours required for the degree.

Graduation Clearance Deadline

Students must complete all graduation requirements by the deadlines established by BIS. A student who has not completed required examinations, projects, internships, or other graduation requirements by the announced clearance deadline may:

- Be removed from the graduation list; and
- Have degree conferral postponed; or
- Be permitted to participate in commencement without receiving the degree, when specifically approved.

Participation in commencement does not constitute degree conferral and does not establish that all graduation requirements have been completed.

Late Completion

A student who is permitted to participate in commencement while requirements remain incomplete must complete those requirements within the period approved by BIS. Late examinations, delayed submissions, or incomplete non-course requirements may be subject to the applicable late-completion fee stated in the official fee schedule.

The degree will not be conferred until all requirements and obligations are satisfied.

Degree Conferral

The degree is officially earned only when:

- All academic and nonacademic graduation requirements are completed;
- The student is approved for graduation by the Academic Committee;
- All institutional obligations are satisfied; and
- The degree is formally conferred and entered on the academic record.

XI. Tuition, Fees, Scholarships, and Refunds

2026–2027 Tuition and Fees

Tuition is assessed on a per-credit-hour basis unless otherwise stated.

Direct Charges

Tuition for credit	$600 per credit hour
Audit tuition	$300 per credit hour
Annual institutional fee	$1,200
Institutional fee for a student entering in Spring	$950

The institutional fee supports services that may include:

- Learning-management and technology systems;
- Digital library resources;
- Student services;
- Academic support; and
- Student activities.

Indirect Costs

Students should also plan for expenses that may include:

- Books not available through BIS resources;
- Technology and Internet access;
- Travel;
- Internships;
- Retreats;
- Other personal or educational expenses.

These costs are generally paid directly by the student and are not billed by BIS unless otherwise stated.

Full-Time Student Tuition Credit

A student who completes a qualifying full-time course load of 14–19 credit hours during both the Fall and Spring terms may be eligible for an annual tuition credit of $500. Eligibility is subject to:

- Successful completion of the required enrollment;
- Satisfactory academic standing;

- Compliance with payment obligations; and
- The terms of the current tuition policy.

Billing and Payment

Students are responsible for reviewing their Populi account and paying all tuition, fees, and other charges by the published deadlines. Students must promptly report any apparent billing error. A student remains responsible for charges unless BIS confirms an adjustment in writing. Failure to pay an account balance or maintain an approved payment arrangement may result in:

- A financial hold;
- Inability to register;
- Cancellation of registration;
- Restricted institutional services;
- Withholding of documents to the extent permitted by law; or
- Referral for debt collection.

Payment Plans

BIS may offer approved payment plans allowing students to pay tuition and fees in installments. Participation in a payment plan does not reduce the total amount owed. Students must comply with all payment dates and plan conditions. Failure to make scheduled payments may result in cancellation of the plan and immediate responsibility for the remaining balance.

Financial Assistance and Scholarships

BIS offers limited institutional scholarships to support eligible MIRL students. Scholarships are generally awarded based on a combination of:

- Academic merit;
- Demonstrated financial need;
- Leadership experience;
- Community service;
- Satisfactory academic progress; and
- Available institutional funds.

Scholarship recipients must follow the terms stated in:

- The scholarship policy;
- The scholarship application;
- The award letter; and

- Any renewal notice.

An award for one academic year does not guarantee renewal for a future year.

BIS does not currently participate in federal or state-sponsored student grant or loan programs.

Scholarship Renewal

Scholarship renewal is subject to the approved BIS Scholarship Policy and may depend on:

- Continued enrollment;
- Satisfactory academic progress;
- Required GPA;
- Good institutional standing;
- Demonstrated financial need;
- Timely submission of renewal materials;
- Compliance with the student's payment obligations; and
- Availability of funds.

A scholarship may be reduced, suspended, or discontinued when a student:

- Drops or withdraws from courses;
- Changes enrollment status;
- Fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress;
- Receives another source of funding affecting eligibility;
- Violates scholarship conditions; or
- Is placed on disciplinary or academic status affecting eligibility.

The student's award letter and the current Scholarship Policy control when they contain more specific terms.

Refund Requests

A student seeking a refund must complete the official course-drop, withdrawal, or refund process through Populi or another designated method. Refunds are calculated from the effective date on which the official request is received and recorded by BIS, not from the student's last date of attendance or participation. Simply stopping attendance, ceasing participation, or informing an instructor does not constitute official withdrawal.

Refund Before Classes Begin

A student who officially notifies BIS before the first day of a term that the student will not enroll is eligible for a full refund of tuition paid for that term, excluding any nonrefundable enrollment deposits, application charges, or other expressly nonrefundable fees.

Refund Schedule

After the term begins, tuition refunds are calculated according to the following schedule:

During Week 1 — add/drop period	100%	100%
During Week 2	90%	0%
During Week 3	80%	0%
During Week 4	60%	0%
During Week 5	40%	0%
During Weeks 6–8	20%	0%
After Week 8 or after 50% of the term has elapsed	0%	0%

For a shortened term (i.e. less than 15 weeks), the percentage of the term elapsed may be used instead of the numbered-week schedule.

Refund Calculation and Outstanding Balances

Refunds are calculated from the tuition charged, not merely from the amount already paid. After the refund calculation:

- A credit balance will be refunded or applied according to BIS policy; and
- A remaining balance continues to be owed by the student.

Institutional fees are nonrefundable after the add/drop period unless BIS confirms otherwise in writing.

Effect of Withdrawal on Scholarships

A student who withdraws from all courses in a term ordinarily forfeits BIS scholarship funds awarded for that term. A student who drops or withdraws from one or more courses may receive a proportional reduction in scholarship assistance. If a scholarship adjustment creates an outstanding balance, the student remains responsible for that balance.

Seminary-Canceled Courses

When BIS cancels a course and the student does not enroll in a substitute course, the applicable tuition and course-specific charges will be adjusted. The student remains responsible for unrelated charges and for any other courses in which the student remains enrolled.

XII. Enrollment Status, Leave, and Withdrawal

Matriculated Status

A matriculated student is a student formally admitted to and enrolled in the Master in Islamic Religious Leadership. Matriculation continues while the student is:

- Actively enrolled;
- On an approved leave of absence; or
- In another approved status recognized by BIS.

Full-Time and Part-Time Enrollment

Students may pursue the MIRL on a full-time or part-time basis. A full-time student follows an academically intensive course load consistent with the approved degree plan. A part-time student follows a reduced course load over a longer period. Students must choose a course load that is realistic in light of:

- Employment;
- Family responsibilities;
- Health;
- Community service; and
- Other significant commitments.

BIS may recommend or require a reduced course load when necessary to support academic success or protect the integrity of the program.

Employment During Study

Students are expected to ensure that employment does not materially interfere with attendance, preparation, academic performance, internships, or other program requirements. A student whose full-time employment or other commitments prevent satisfactory progress may be required to change to part-time enrollment or develop an adjusted academic plan with the Academic Advisor.

Auditing Courses

Students may audit a course instead of taking it for academic credit, regardless of whether they have taken the course before or not. Auditors:

- Attend the course for learning purposes;
- Do not ordinarily earn academic credit;
- May have reduced or modified assignment requirements;
- Are subject to the course's attendance and conduct expectations;
- Must pay the applicable audit tuition; and
- Are not ordinarily eligible to use BIS scholarship funds for audited courses.

Self-registration may not be available for auditors. Students should submit an audit request through the designated BIS process.

Audit-to-Credit Change

An auditor may request a change from audit to credit before the final class session when:

- The instructor approves;
- The student has completed the work required of credit students;
- The student is eligible to receive graduate credit;
- All academic requirements are met; and
- The student pays the additional tuition.

No audit-to-credit change will be approved after the course has ended.

Credit-to-Audit Change

A student may request to change a course from credit to audit until two weeks after the published course-withdrawal deadline. Approval is subject to:

- Instructor and institutional review;
- The student's academic standing;

- The effect on enrollment and scholarship status; and
- Payment and refund policies.

A course changed from credit to audit will not count toward degree requirements.

Deferral of Admission

A student who has accepted admission but has not yet completed a BIS course may request a deferral of admission. A deferral:

- Must be requested through the designated process;
- Is subject to approval;
- May normally be granted for up to one academic year; and
- Does not guarantee that the same courses, schedule, scholarship, or program arrangements will remain available.

A student who has already completed a BIS course should ordinarily request a leave of absence rather than a deferral.

Leave of Absence

A student who has completed at least one BIS course may request a leave of absence for:

- Personal reasons;
- Medical reasons;
- Family responsibilities;
- Employment circumstances;
- Financial hardship; or
- Another significant circumstance.

A leave may be requested for one semester or one academic year. The request should ordinarily be submitted before the start of the leave and no later than the add/drop deadline for the first affected term. A student unable to complete a term because of an unforeseen medical or personal emergency should submit the request as soon as reasonably possible and no later than the last day of classes. The tuition-refund policy remains applicable.

Duration of Leave

Students will normally be permitted a total leave of two regular semesters, excluding Winter and Summer terms, during the MIRL program. Under exceptional circumstances,

the student may petition for one additional regular semester of leave. Approval is not automatic and may require:

- An explanation of the circumstances;
- Supporting documentation;
- An updated academic plan; and
- Confirmation of readiness to return.

Return from Leave

A student returning from an approved leave must:

- Notify BIS by the stated deadline;
- Meet with the Academic Advisor when required;
- Resolve outstanding holds;
- Register for approved courses; and
- Comply with any conditions stated in the leave approval.

BIS may require updated documentation when the leave involves a condition affecting the student's ability to participate safely or satisfy essential program requirements.

Inactive Student Status

A student who does not register by the add/drop deadline and who has not received approval for a leave of absence may be classified as inactive. An inactive student:

- Is not enrolled in courses;
- Does not have the privileges of an actively enrolled student except as expressly provided;
- Remains responsible for outstanding obligations; and
- May be charged the applicable inactive-status fee.

The current inactive-status charge is: $100 for each Fall and Spring semester A student may ordinarily maintain inactive status for no more than two years by paying the applicable fees and maintaining communication with BIS.

Withdrawal for Failure to Maintain Status

An inactive student may be administratively withdrawn from the MIRL degree program when the student:

- Fails to pay the inactive-status fee;
- Fails to make an approved payment arrangement;

- Remains inactive beyond the permitted period;
- Does not respond to institutional communications; or
- Fails to satisfy conditions required for continued status.

Before administrative withdrawal, BIS will ordinarily provide written notice and a reasonable opportunity to respond.

Reinstatement

A student who has been withdrawn after leave or inactive status may petition for reinstatement within five years of initial enrollment. The petition may require:

- An explanation of the circumstances;
- An updated academic plan;
- Evidence of readiness to resume study;
- Resolution of outstanding obligations;
- Updated admission or academic information; and
- A reinstatement fee of $100.

Previously earned credit remains subject to review for currency, curriculum changes, and applicability to the student's degree requirements. After five years from initial enrollment, a student may be required to submit a new application for admission.

Voluntary Withdrawal from the MIRL Program

A student who no longer wishes to pursue the degree must submit the official Voluntary and Complete Withdrawal from the MIRL Program form. When withdrawal occurs during a term, the student must also complete the required withdrawal process for each registered course. The student remains responsible for:

- Tuition and fees;
- Scholarship adjustments;
- Returning institutional property;
- Required exit procedures; and
- Other outstanding obligations.

A former student seeking to return after voluntary withdrawal must follow the reinstatement or reapplication process determined by BIS.

Administrative Withdrawal

BIS may administratively withdraw a student for reasons including:

- Failure to register or maintain an approved status;
- Failure to meet conditions of admission or continued enrollment;
- Failure to make satisfactory academic progress;
- Prolonged inactivity;
- Nonpayment;
- Serious or repeated misconduct;
- Failure to complete required institutional processes; or
- Another basis authorized by policy.

Administrative withdrawal will be carried out in accordance with applicable notice and appeal procedures.

Effect of Withdrawal

Withdrawal from the program may affect:

- The academic transcript;
- Tuition and refunds;
- Scholarships;
- Access to BIS systems and services;
- Internship placement;
- Graduation timing; and
- Eligibility for reinstatement.

Withdrawal does not cancel financial or other obligations already incurred.

Inactive Student Status

A student who has not registered for classes by the Add/Drop deadline for the semester will be asked to apply for Leave of Absence (if they are eligible). If they do not apply for Leave of Absence, or are ineligible to apply (because they have exhausted their leave of absence, including the extension, if applicable), then they will automatically be classified as an Inactive Student.

A student in the Inactive status will be charged $100 for each Fall and Spring semester. If an inactive student has not paid the $100 fee by the end of the second regular semester of the Inactive status, nor has contacted BIS - in writing or by email - to make arrangements for a payment plan, then they will be automatically withdrawn from the MIRL program. The annual fee of $200 can maintain inactive student status for up to 2 years.

XIII. Student Rights and Responsibilities

Student Rights

Boston Islamic Seminary is committed to an academic and spiritual environment in which students are treated with dignity, fairness, and respect. Subject to institutional policies and applicable law, students have the right to:

- Participate in the academic and student-life opportunities available through BIS;
- Receive accurate information about academic requirements, policies, tuition, fees, and institutional procedures;
- Be evaluated according to published course requirements and academic standards;
- Receive timely and constructive academic feedback;
- Review and discuss course grades with the instructor;
- Receive reasonable access to academic advising and student support;
- Request reasonable disability-related academic adjustments;
- Have education records protected in accordance with applicable privacy requirements;
- Express questions, concerns, and disagreements respectfully;
- Submit complaints, grievances, and appeals through established procedures;
- Receive notice of alleged misconduct and a reasonable opportunity to respond;
- Be protected from unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation; and
- Participate in institutional processes without retaliation for good-faith reporting or cooperation.

These rights are exercised within the Seminary's Islamic identity, academic mission, community standards, and applicable policies.

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for contributing to a safe, respectful, spiritually grounded, and academically serious learning community. Students are expected to:

- Uphold Islamic ethics and behavior, and the mission and values of BIS;
- Treat students, faculty, staff, guests, and community partners with dignity and respect;
- Comply with applicable federal, state, and local law;
- Read and follow the Student Handbook, course syllabi, and official institutional policies;
- Monitor BIS email and Populi regularly;
- Maintain accurate contact and emergency information;
- Attend and participate in courses and required activities;

- Complete academic work honestly and on time;
- Communicate promptly when circumstances affect academic participation;
- Protect the privacy, property, and intellectual work of others;
- Use BIS technology and institutional resources responsibly;
- Fulfill financial and administrative obligations;
- Follow internship and host-site requirements;
- Cooperate with legitimate institutional reviews and investigations; and
- Accept responsibility for their decisions and conduct.

Failure to read an applicable policy or official notice does not excuse noncompliance.

Professional and Religious-Leadership Expectations

Because the MIRL prepares students for positions of religious trust and public service, students are expected to demonstrate conduct consistent with developing religious leaders. This includes:

- Honesty and trustworthiness;
- Humility and willingness to learn;
- Respect for confidentiality;
- Appropriate personal and professional boundaries;
- Responsible communication;
- Accountability;
- Compassion and sound judgment;
- Respect for diverse individuals and communities;
- Approaching disagreements - whether with professors, fellow students, staff members or others - with respect, politeness, and decorum; and
- Readiness to receive and respond constructively to feedback.

Conduct that raises serious concerns about a student's integrity, professional suitability, safety, or readiness for religious leadership may be reviewed even when it occurs outside a formal classroom setting. Any institutional response will follow the applicable student-conduct procedure.

XIV. Academic Integrity and Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence

Academic Honor Code

Academic integrity is central to the intellectual, spiritual, and professional mission of Boston Islamic Seminary. The Academic Honor Code is rooted in:

- Sincerity (*ikhlāṣ*);
- Trustworthiness (*amānah*);
- Truthfulness;
- Justice;
- Responsibility; and
- Respect for knowledge and the rights of others.

All academic work must honestly represent the student's own knowledge, effort, analysis, and contribution, except where collaboration or assistance is expressly permitted and appropriately acknowledged. By enrolling at BIS, students accept responsibility for understanding and following academic-integrity requirements.

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct includes any act that misrepresents a student's work, gives or receives an unauthorized academic advantage, or undermines the fairness and integrity of the educational process. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism includes:

- Presenting another person's words, ideas, arguments, data, images, translations, or other work as one's own;
- Copying text without quotation marks and proper citation;
- Paraphrasing too closely without attribution;
- Using a source without acknowledging it;
- Citing a source that was not consulted;
- Misrepresenting the content or authorship of a source; and
- Submitting work prepared substantially by another person or service.

Self-Plagiarism and Duplicate Submission

Students may not submit the same or substantially similar work in more than one course without prior approval from all affected instructors. Students must disclose and cite their own previously submitted or published work when it is reused.

Cheating

Cheating includes:

- Using unauthorized materials or assistance during an examination or assessment;

- Obtaining or attempting to obtain test questions, answer keys, or restricted materials;
- Copying another student's work;
- Allowing another person to complete an assessment on one's behalf;
- Communicating with others during an individual assessment without permission;
- Using unauthorized devices, applications, websites, notes, or recordings; and
- Violating assessment instructions mandated by the instructor.

Unauthorized Collaboration

Students may collaborate only when collaboration is permitted by the instructor. When collaboration is allowed, each student must accurately identify the assistance received and independently complete any portion designated as individual work.

Fabrication and Falsification

Fabrication or falsification includes:

- Inventing research data, quotations, sources, interviews, observations, or field experiences;
- Altering data or documentation;
- Submitting false attendance, internship, medical, academic, or administrative information;
- Misrepresenting completion of assigned work; and
- Falsifying signatures, approvals, or institutional records.

Complicity

A student may not knowingly assist another person in academic misconduct. Complicity includes:

- Sharing answers or restricted materials;
- Completing work for another student;
- Allowing one's work to be copied;
- Providing unauthorized access to course materials; and
- Helping another person conceal misconduct.

Interference with Academic Work

Students may not obstruct, damage, alter, delete, or interfere with the academic work, research, digital files, course access, or learning opportunities of others.

Contract Cheating and Third-Party Services

Students may not purchase, commission, exchange, or obtain academic work from:

- Another person;
- An online service;
- A tutoring or editing service that performs substantive authorship;
- A commercial essay provider;
- A translation service that replaces the student's own required work; or
- Any other third party.

Students remain responsible for ensuring that permitted tutoring, editing, or translation assistance does not replace their own authorship or violate assignment instructions.

Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial-intelligence tools may be used only in accordance with:

- The instructor's directions;
- The course syllabus;
- The requirements of the assignment; and
- BIS academic-integrity standards.

An instructor may prohibit, limit, or permit particular uses of AI. Unless expressly authorized, students may not submit AI-generated or AI-rewritten work as their own. When AI use is permitted, students remain responsible for:

- The accuracy and reliability of the work;
- Verifying all quotations, references, citations, and factual claims;
- Protecting confidential and personal information;
- Disclosing the nature and extent of AI assistance when required;
- Preserving their own intellectual contribution;
- Avoiding fabricated sources or data; and
- Complying with copyright, privacy, and academic-integrity requirements.

Permitted uses may include limited assistance with brainstorming, outlining, language review, or source discovery when authorized by the instructor. AI output is not itself a authoritative academic source unless the instructor expressly permits it to be treated as an object of analysis.

Faculty Responsibility

Faculty members are responsible for:

- Communicating course-specific academic-integrity expectations;
- Identifying permitted and prohibited collaboration or AI use;
- Reviewing suspected violations fairly;
- Documenting relevant evidence;
- Providing the student an opportunity to respond; and
- Reporting substantiated violations through the designated BIS process.

A faculty member may address the academic consequence within the course, but more serious institutional sanctions require appropriate administrative review.

Academic-Integrity Procedure

When academic misconduct is suspected, the following process ordinarily applies:

✔ Initial Review
The instructor reviews the work and relevant evidence.

✔ Notice to the Student
The student is informed of the concern and the basis for it.

✔ Opportunity to Respond
The student may provide an explanation and relevant information.

✔ Faculty Determination
The instructor determines whether a course-level violation occurred and identifies the academic consequence.

✔ Written Record
The instructor submits an academic-integrity report to the designated academic administrator.

✔ Administrative Review
Repeated, serious, or disputed violations may be reviewed for additional institutional action. The student should receive written notice of the determination and any sanction.

Academic Sanctions

Depending on the nature, seriousness, and history of the violation, academic sanctions may include:

- Warning and required academic-integrity education;
- Revision or resubmission;
- Reduced credit;
- A grade of zero on the work;
- Failure of the assignment;
- Failure of the course;
- Removal from an internship or applied activity;
- Loss or reduction of merit-based scholarship;
- Academic probation;
- Suspension; or
- Dismissal from the Seminary.

Severe or repeated misconduct may result in dismissal even when the immediate violation occurred in a single course.

Academic-Integrity Appeal

A student may appeal an academic-integrity determination when the student believes that:

- The stated procedure was not followed;
- Material evidence was not reasonably considered;
- The determination was unsupported by the available evidence; or
- The sanction was substantially disproportionate.

The appeal must be submitted in writing within the deadline stated in the decision notice. The appeal should identify the specific basis for review and include relevant supporting information. The appeal decision is final unless a further level of appeal is expressly provided.

XV. Community Life, Code of Ethics, and Student Conduct

Purpose

Boston Islamic Seminary seeks to cultivate a community of scholar-practitioners whose learning is reflected in worship, character, intellectual integrity, professional conduct, and service. The Code of Ethics applies to activities that have a substantial connection to BIS, including:

- Classes;
- Populi and online forums;
- Virtual meetings;

- Campus activities;
- Internships;
- Retreats;
- Student organizations;
- Seminary-sponsored events;
- Institutional travel;
- Electronic communications; and
- Conduct outside BIS that materially affects the safety, integrity, or mission of the Seminary.

Islamic Ethical Commitments

Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with Islamic ethical principles, including:

- Sincerity;
- Truthfulness;
- Modesty;
- Trustworthiness;
- Mercy;
- Justice;
- Respect;
- Patience;
- Humility;
- Responsibility; and
- Care for the rights and dignity of others.

The Code of Ethics is intended to foster a learning environment conducive to academic excellence, spiritual growth, and responsible religious leadership.

Respectful Treatment of Others

Students must treat all persons with courtesy, dignity, and respect. Prohibited conduct includes:

- Verbal, written, physical, or electronic abuse;
- Bullying;
- Intimidation;
- Threatening conduct;
- Humiliation;
- Targeted insults or slurs;
- Stalking;

- Harassment;
- Deliberate disruption; and
- Conduct that creates a serious risk to another person's safety or well-being.

Disagreement does not justify disrespectful or abusive behavior.

Responsible Disagreement

Differences of interpretation, judgment, and opinion are natural within academic and religious study. Students are expected to:

- Listen carefully;
- Distinguish persons from ideas;
- Represent opposing views fairly;
- Avoid ridicule and personal attacks;
- Use appropriate evidence and reasoning;
- Acknowledge legitimate scholarly diversity; and
- Preserve mutual dignity.

Criticism should be expressed with knowledge, wisdom, compassion, and a sincere desire for understanding and improvement.

Direct and Appropriate Conflict Resolution

When safe and appropriate, students are encouraged to address ordinary misunderstandings through respectful and direct communication. Direct resolution is not required when:

- It involves a safety concern;
- Harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation is alleged;
- There is a substantial power imbalance;
- Direct communication may worsen the situation;
- Confidentiality is necessary; or
- Institutional intervention is appropriate.

Students may seek advice from the Academic Advisor or another appropriate BIS representative.

Professional Boundaries and Confidentiality

Students must maintain appropriate boundaries in educational, pastoral, internship, and community settings. Students must not:

- Exploit a position of trust;
- Misuse confidential information;
- Disclose private pastoral, academic, medical, or personal information without authorization;
- Establish inappropriate relationships with persons under their care or supervision;
- Use religious authority to pressure, manipulate, or intimidate others; or
- Act beyond their level of competence, training, or authorization.

Legal or safety obligations may require disclosure in limited circumstances.

Disruptive Conduct

Students may not substantially interfere with:

- Teaching;
- Learning;
- Worship;
- Meetings;
- Institutional operations;
- Internships;
- Student activities; or
- The rights of others to participate.

Faculty or staff may direct a student to stop disruptive behavior or leave an activity temporarily when necessary to restore order or protect safety. A temporary removal does not, by itself, determine responsibility for misconduct.

Property and Institutional Resources

Students may not:

- Damage, misuse, remove, or tamper with institutional property;
- Enter restricted areas without authorization;
- Misuse keys, passwords, access codes, or technology;
- Alter institutional documents or records;
- Impersonate another person;
- Use the BIS name, logo, or identity without authorization; or
- Use Seminary resources for unauthorized commercial, political, or personal purposes.

Compliance with Law and Institutional Policy

Students must comply with applicable law and BIS policy during Seminary-related activities. Conduct that may violate law should be reported to appropriate authorities

when required or necessary. Institutional review may proceed separately from a civil or criminal process.

Student-Conduct Procedure

A student accused of misconduct will ordinarily receive:

- ✔ Notice of the concern;
- ✔ A summary of the relevant allegations;
- ✔ An opportunity to respond;
- ✔ A fair review of available information;
- ✔ Written notice of the outcome; and
- ✔ Information about any available appeal.

The process may be modified when required by a specific policy, including sexual-misconduct, discrimination, disability, or academic-integrity procedures.

Conduct Sanctions

Sanctions may include:

- Educational conversation;
- Written warning;
- Behavioral agreement;
- Restitution;
- Required training, counseling, or reflection;
- Restriction from an activity or facility;
- Loss of student-leadership privileges;
- Probation;
- Suspension;
- Dismissal; or
- Another proportionate corrective measure.

Sanctions should reflect:

- Seriousness;
- Impact;
- Intent;
- Prior history;

- Acceptance of responsibility;
- Risk of recurrence; and
- The student's readiness for religious leadership.

Conduct Appeal

A student may appeal a conduct decision on the basis of:

- Material procedural error;
- New information that was not reasonably available;
- Unsupported findings; or
- A substantially disproportionate sanction.

The appeal must be submitted in writing by the stated deadline.

XVI. Attendance and Participation

General Expectation

Regular attendance and meaningful participation are essential to graduate education and religious-leadership formation. Students are expected to:

- Attend all scheduled class sessions;
- Arrive on time;
- Remain for the full session;
- Prepare assigned materials;
- Participate appropriately;
- Minimize distractions; and
- Comply with course-specific attendance requirements.

Faculty members maintain attendance and participation records.

Attendance Limit

A student should not miss more than 25 percent of scheduled course meetings, including excused and unexcused absences. A student who exceeds this limit may receive a failing grade or be required to withdraw from the course, regardless of performance on other assignments. In extraordinary documented circumstances, the instructor and the academic administration may determine whether another academic remedy is appropriate. An excused absence does not automatically remove the absence from the attendance calculation.

Notification of Absence

A student should notify the instructor as soon as reasonably possible when an absence is expected or has occurred. Notification does not automatically excuse absence. The student remains responsible for:

- Missed material;
- Assignments;
- Announcements;
- Participation requirements; and
- Arranging permitted make-up work.

Excused Absences

An absence may be excused for circumstances such as:

- Illness or injury;
- Family emergency;
- Religious obligation;
- Bereavement;
- Required legal appearance;
- Approved institutional activity; or
- Another serious and documented circumstance.

The instructor determines whether an absence is excused, subject to applicable accommodation and institutional policies. Documentation may be required.

Medical Absences

A student absent because of illness remains responsible for communicating with the instructor and completing permitted missed work. A student experiencing an extended or serious medical condition should contact the Executive Assistant or Student and Academic Affairs Coordinator regarding:

- Temporary adjustments;
- An Incomplete;
- Reduced enrollment;
- Course withdrawal; or
- Medical leave.

Medical documentation will be handled with appropriate privacy.

Partial Attendance

Late arrival, early departure, extended absence during class, or substantial disengagement may be counted as partial or full absence. The instructor will determine how partial attendance affects the attendance record according to the course syllabus and the circumstances.

Online Attendance

For synchronous online courses, attendance ordinarily requires:

- Joining through the designated platform;
- Using the student's official name;
- Maintaining functioning audio and video when required;
- Remaining visibly and meaningfully present;
- Participating in required discussions or activities; and
- Avoiding unrelated work or distractions.

Merely logging into a session does not necessarily constitute attendance. Students with an approved adjustment affecting camera or participation requirements should communicate with the instructor in advance.

Rescheduled Classes

When an instructor reschedules a class, reasonable notice must be provided. Students should not be penalized when they cannot attend a rescheduled session that falls outside the published schedule and no reasonable alternative is offered. The instructor may provide:

- A recording;
- An alternative assignment;
- An additional session; or
- Another equivalent learning opportunity.

Canceled Classes

When a class is canceled, the instructor will provide instructions regarding make-up work, rescheduling, or an alternative learning activity. If a substantial portion of required instructional time is canceled and not replaced, the matter should be referred to Academic Affairs.

Missed Examinations

A student who misses an examination without prior approval or a documented emergency may receive a grade of zero. A make-up examination may be permitted when:

- The absence resulted from a serious and documented circumstance;
- The student communicated promptly;
- Academic integrity can be maintained; and
- The instructor approves an appropriate alternative.

An extended inability to complete an examination may be addressed under the Incomplete Grade Policy.

XVII. Course Assessment, Grading, and Academic Standing

Assessment of Student Learning

Faculty assess student learning through methods appropriate to the course and its approved learning outcomes. Assessments may include:

- Examinations;
- Presentations;
- Projects;
- Case studies;
- Reflections;
- Practical demonstrations;
- Oral assessments;
- Quizzes;
- Reading assignments;
- Discussion;
- Class participation; and
- Field or internship evaluations.
- Research papers;
- Essays;

Course syllabi must identify the principal assessments and their relative weight.

Grading Scale

A+	Superior	95–100	4.50
A	Excellent	90–94	4.00
B+	Very Good	85–89	3.50
B	Good	80–84	3.00
C+	Fair	75–79	2.50
C	Below Fair	70–74	2.00
D+	Poor	65–69	1.50
D	Very Poor	60–64	1.00
F	Failure	Below 60	0.00

A grade of C or higher is required to earn graduate credit for a BIS course. Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 to remain in good academic standing and to graduate.

Assignment Extensions

A student seeking an assignment extension should submit the request as early as possible and ordinarily at least three days before the deadline. The instructor may consider:

- The reason for the request;
- Documentation;
- Prior extensions;
- Fairness to other students;
- Course sequencing; and
- Whether the work can be completed within the term.

An extension beyond the end of the term is governed by the Incomplete Grade Policy.

Incomplete Grade

An Incomplete grade may be granted when serious and unexpected circumstances prevent a student from completing a limited portion of required work by the end of the term. An Incomplete is not intended to:

- Replace a failing grade;
- Provide additional time because of poor planning;

- Permit completion of most of a course after the term;
- Create an opportunity for extra credit; or
- Excuse excessive absence.

Eligibility for an Incomplete

A student may qualify when:

- The student is earning at least a C in the course;
- The student has completed a substantial majority of the work;
- The remaining work can be completed without retaking the course;
- Attendance has remained within the permitted limit unless an exception is approved; and
- The circumstances are documented when appropriate.

Incomplete Request and Completion Plan

The student must submit a written request through the designated process no later than seven days after the end of the term, unless an earlier course or institutional deadline applies. The student and instructor must establish a written completion plan identifying:

- Remaining work;
- Submission deadlines;
- Any revised assessment arrangements; and
- The consequence of missing the deadline.

The Incomplete must be approved and recorded through the designated BIS process.

Incomplete Deadline

Work should be completed as early as reasonably possible. Unless an earlier deadline is established, the absolute deadline is the end of the following regular semester. This deadline applies even when the student:

- Is not registered during the following semester;
- Is studying part time; or
- Is on leave of absence.

Work not completed by the deadline will receive the grade stated in the completion plan or will be assessed as zero, resulting in the appropriate final course grade.

Late Withdrawal

A request to withdraw after the published deadline will be considered only in extraordinary circumstances when continued enrollment or an Incomplete is not appropriate. The student must submit:

- A written petition;
- Supporting documentation;
- The required withdrawal form; and
- Any instructor statement requested by BIS.

The request should be submitted within seven days after the term ends unless the circumstances make that impossible. Approved late withdrawals are recorded as W. A denial may be appealed only as provided in the decision notice.

Grade Changes

A final grade may be changed to correct:

- A calculation error;
- An entry error;
- An omitted assessment;
- The completion of an approved Incomplete; or
- Another documented academic error.

A final grade may not be changed solely to provide additional work or improve a student's GPA after the course has ended. Grade changes require appropriate faculty and administrative approval.

Grade Appeal

A student who believes a final course grade was assigned incorrectly or unfairly should follow these steps:

✔ **Instructor Review**
Contact the instructor in writing within ten business days after the grade is posted.

✔ **Written Academic Appeal**
If unresolved, submit a written appeal to the Academic Advisor or designated academic administrator.

✔ **Academic Review**

The reviewer may consult the student, instructor, syllabus, graded work, and relevant records.

✔ **Final Institutional Review**

When permitted, the student may submit a final appeal to the President or designee.

A grade appeal must be based on one or more of the following:

- Calculation or recording error;
- Failure to follow the published grading method;
- Application of a standard not stated in the syllabus;
- Arbitrary or substantially unequal treatment; or
- Another material academic irregularity.

Disagreement with the instructor's academic judgment is not, by itself, legitimate grounds for changing a grade.

Repeating a Course

A student may be required or permitted to repeat a course when:

- the student did not earn graduate credit;
- the course is required for progression;
- a prerequisite standard was not met; or
- Academic Affairs approves the repeat.

Both attempts may remain on the transcript. The most recent grade may be used in the GPA calculation unless the approved academic policy provides otherwise. A student who fails the same required course twice may be dismissed from the program.

Good Academic Standing

A student is in good academic standing when the student:

- Maintains a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0;
- Makes satisfactory progress;
- Complies with academic requirements;
- Remains within the permitted degree-completion period; and
- Is not subject to academic suspension or dismissal.

Academic Warning

A student may receive an academic warning when performance indicates emerging difficulty but does not yet require probation. A warning may require:

- Advising;
- Reduced course load;
- Tutoring;
- An academic-success plan;
- More frequent progress reviews; or
- Another appropriate support measure.

Academic Probation

A student whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 may be placed on academic probation. The probation notice will state:

- The reason;
- The duration;
- The required improvement;
- Any course-load restriction;
- Required advising or support;
- The consequences of insufficient progress; and
- Any available appeal.

A student on probation may be ineligible for certain scholarships, leadership positions, internships, or Distinction coursework.

Academic Dismissal

Academic dismissal may occur when a student:

- Fails the same required course twice;
- Repeatedly fails to achieve the minimum required GPA of 3.0;
- Does not make sufficient progress while on probation;
- Fails to complete degree requirements within the permitted period;
- Fails to satisfy required academic conditions; or
- Demonstrates academic performance incompatible with successful completion of the program.

The student will receive written notice and an opportunity to appeal.

Academic Dismissal Appeal

An appeal must identify:

- A material procedural error;
- Significant circumstances not previously considered;
- New evidence;
- A demonstrably incorrect academic record; or
- Another substantial reason supporting reconsideration.

The appeal decision is final unless further review is expressly authorized.

Transfer Credit

An enrolled student may request transfer credit for graduate-level coursework completed at another eligible institution. Transfer credit is not automatic.

Transfer-Credit Standards

To be considered, coursework must ordinarily:

- Have been completed at an eligible institution;
- Be graduate level;
- Be relevant and substantially equivalent to a MIRL requirement;
- Have earned a grade of B or higher;
- Be supported by an official transcript;
- Include sufficient syllabus or course information; and
- Satisfy applicable recency and academic-quality standards.

Maximum Transfer Credit

A maximum of 32 credit hours may be considered for transfer. The number accepted may be lower depending on:

- Course equivalency;
- Curriculum requirements;
- Academic quality;
- Recency;
- Residency expectations; and
- The student's demonstrated competence.

Transfer-Credit Documentation

The applicant must provide:

- An official transcript;
- A detailed course syllabus;
- Course descriptions when requested;
- Information concerning contact hours and assessments; and
- A certified translation when documents are not in English or Arabic.

BIS may require an oral or written assessment to verify competency.

Transfer-Credit Limitations

Accepted transfer credit:

- Counts toward applicable degree requirements;
- Does not ordinarily carry the original grade into the BIS GPA;
- Does not guarantee exemption from related competency requirements;
- May not replace internship, Capstone, or formation requirements unless specifically approved; and
- Remains subject to the student's approved degree plan.

Elective transfer credit will be granted only when expressly approved under the current curriculum.

Transfer-Credit Decision

Transfer-credit decisions are made by the appropriate academic authority after review of the submitted materials. The decision will identify:

- Courses accepted;
- BIS requirements satisfied;
- Credits awarded;
- Any required assessment; and
- Any conditions.

The academic decision on transfer equivalency is final.

XVIII. Nondiscrimination, Harassment, and Equal Opportunity

Policy Statement

Boston Islamic Seminary is committed to maintaining an educational and working environment in which all members of the Seminary community are treated with dignity, fairness, and respect. Consistent with applicable federal and Massachusetts law and the Seminary's Islamic identity and religious mission, BIS does not engage in unlawful discrimination in:

- Admissions;
- Academic programs;
- Student services;
- Scholarships;
- Employment;
- Internships;
- Institutional activities; or
- Other Seminary-administered programs.

BIS retains the right, to the extent permitted by law, to uphold its Islamic identity, religious mission, faith-based educational commitments, and religious standards.

Prohibited Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination occurs when a person is subjected to materially adverse treatment because of a characteristic protected by applicable law. Protected characteristics may include:

- Race;
- Color;
- National or ethnic origin;
- Ancestry;
- Age;
- Disability;
- Sex;
- Pregnancy or related medical conditions;
- Genetic information;
- Veteran or military status; and
- Another status protected by applicable law.

This policy does not prevent BIS from applying legitimate academic, professional, conduct, safety, or religious-mission standards consistently and lawfully.

Harassment

Harassment is unwelcome conduct based on a protected characteristic that is sufficiently serious or persistent to interfere unlawfully with a person's access to the Seminary's programs, activities, or employment. Harassment may be:

- Verbal;
- Written;
- Visual;
- Physical;
- Electronic; or
- Communicated through social media or another digital platform.

Academic discussion of difficult, controversial, or sensitive subjects does not, by itself, constitute harassment when conducted for a legitimate educational purpose and in a respectful manner.

Sex Discrimination

BIS prohibits unlawful discrimination based on sex in educational programs and activities to which applicable law applies. Sex discrimination may include:

- Sexual harassment;
- Sexual assault;
- Dating or domestic violence;
- Stalking;
- Discrimination based on pregnancy or related conditions; and
- Other conduct prohibited under applicable sex-discrimination law.

Sexual misconduct is addressed in greater detail in the following section.

Reporting Discrimination or Harassment

A student who believes that discrimination, harassment, or retaliation has occurred should report the concern promptly to one of the following:

- The Executive Assistant;
- The Academic Advisor;
- The Student and Academic Affairs Coordinator;
- The President; or

- Another appropriate BIS representative.

A report should include, when available:

- The conduct at issue;
- Dates and locations;
- Persons involved;
- Witnesses;
- Relevant communications or documents; and
- The remedy or assistance requested.

A report involving sexual misconduct will be handled under the Sexual Misconduct and Title IX Policy.

Informal Resolution

When appropriate and voluntarily agreed upon, BIS may offer an informal resolution process. Informal resolution may include:

- Facilitated communication;
- Clarification of expectations;
- Educational measures;
- Voluntary separation arrangements;
- No-contact agreements;
- Mediation where suitable; or
- Another mutually acceptable resolution.

Informal resolution is not required and may be discontinued at any time before agreement. BIS will not require direct interaction when there is a safety concern, significant power imbalance, allegation of serious misconduct, or other reason that informal resolution would be inappropriate.

Formal Review

A formal review may include:

✔ Written notice of the concern;

✔ An opportunity for the responding person to reply;

✔ Collection of relevant information;

✔ Interviews, when appropriate;

✔ An impartial evaluation;

✔ A written outcome; and

✔ Information concerning any available appeal.

The specific procedure may vary according to the nature of the allegation and applicable law.

Corrective Action

When a violation is committed, BIS may take action reasonably designed to:

- Stop the conduct;
- Prevent recurrence;
- Address its effects;
- Protect affected persons; and
- Preserve the integrity of the Seminary's programs.

Measures may include:

- Education or training;
- Written warning;
- Academic or administrative adjustment;
- No-contact directive;
- Removal from an activity;
- Probation;
- Suspension;
- Dismissal;
- Employment action; or
- Another appropriate remedy.

Retaliation

Retaliation is prohibited against a person who:

- Makes a good-faith report;
- Requests an accommodation;
- Participates in a review;
- Provides information;
- Supports another participant; or
- Exercises a right protected by policy or law.

Retaliation concerns should be reported promptly and may result in separate disciplinary action.

XIX. Sexual Misconduct and Title IX

Policy and Purpose

Boston Islamic Seminary is committed to providing an educational environment free from sexual misconduct, sex discrimination, and retaliation. BIS prohibits sexual misconduct involving students, employees, applicants, visitors, interns, volunteers, or participants in Seminary programs and activities. This section summarizes the Seminary's Sexual Misconduct and Title IX Policy. The complete policy and applicable procedures govern when they contain more detailed requirements.

Scope

This policy may apply to conduct occurring:

- On BIS premises;
- During a BIS course or activity;
- Through Populi, Zoom, email, or another institutional platform;
- At an internship or field placement;
- During a retreat, trip, or institutional event;
- Off campus when the conduct has a substantial connection to BIS; or
- Outside the United States when institutional policy or applicable law permits review.

Some conduct may fall within the formal jurisdictional requirements of Title IX, while other conduct may be addressed under BIS policy or applicable Massachusetts law. BIS will determine the appropriate process based on the reported conduct, location, persons involved, and governing requirements.

Prohibited Conduct

Sexual misconduct includes conduct prohibited by applicable law or BIS policy, including:

Sexual Harassment

Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature or conduct based on sex that satisfies the applicable legal or institutional standard.

Quid Pro Quo Harassment

An employee conditioning an educational benefit, service, decision, or opportunity on a person's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.

Sexual Assault

Any sexual act directed towards another person without legally valid consent, including acts defined as sexual assault under applicable law.

Dating Violence

Violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the affected person.

Domestic Violence

Violence or abusive conduct committed by a current or former spouse, intimate partner, family or household member, or another person covered by applicable law.

Stalking

A course of conduct directed at a person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for safety or suffer substantial emotional distress.

Sexual Exploitation

Taking nonconsensual or abusive sexual advantage of another person for one's own benefit or the benefit of another. Examples may include:

- Nonconsensual recording or distribution of intimate material;
- Voyeurism;
- Exposing another person to sexual activity without consent;
- Misuse of private sexual information; or
- Facilitating sexual misconduct by another person.

Retaliation

Adverse action intended to punish, discourage, intimidate, or interfere with reporting or participation in a sexual-misconduct process.

Consent

Consent is a knowing, voluntary, and mutual agreement to engage in specific sexual activity. Consent:

- Must be communicated through words or actions;
- May be withdrawn at any time;
- Must exist for each activity;
- Cannot be inferred solely from silence, lack of resistance, or a prior relationship; and
- Cannot be given by a person who lacks capacity under applicable law.

A person may lack capacity because of:

- Age;
- Sleep or unconsciousness;
- Substantial impairment;
- Coercion;
- Force;
- Threat;
- Disability; or
- Another circumstance affecting the ability to make a voluntary decision.

Immediate Assistance

A person facing immediate danger or requiring urgent medical assistance should call:

911

A person may also seek assistance from:

- Chelsea Police Department;
- The nearest hospital emergency department;
- A sexual-assault crisis center;
- A domestic-violence program;
- A licensed healthcare provider; or
- Another emergency or community resource.

Seeking medical care does not require a person to file a criminal complaint or institutional complaint.

Reporting to BIS

Sexual misconduct may be reported to the Executive Assistant, who serves as the initial BIS contact for such reports. A report may also be made to:

- The President;
- The Student and Academic Affairs Coordinator;
- The Academic Advisor; or
- Another designated institutional official.

The final handbook will identify the current reporting email and telephone number.

A report may be made by:

- The affected person;
- A witness;
- A friend or family member;
- A faculty or staff member; or
- Another person with relevant information.

BIS encourages prompt reporting but will accept reports made after a delay.

Reporting to Law Enforcement

A person may report sexual misconduct to:

- BIS;
- Law enforcement;
- Both; or
- Neither, subject to any legally required report.

BIS does not control law-enforcement jurisdiction and will not interfere with a person's right to seek police assistance. An institutional process and a criminal investigation are separate processes and may proceed at the same time. BIS will cooperate appropriately with law enforcement while protecting student rights, preserving institutional responsibilities, and avoiding unnecessary interference with a criminal investigation.

Coordination with Chelsea Police Department

BIS seeks to maintain a memorandum of understanding with the Chelsea Police Department concerning the parties' respective roles in preventing and responding to on-campus and off-campus sexual misconduct. The memorandum is intended to address matters such as:

- Emergency response;
- Reporting and referrals;
- Evidence preservation;
- Information sharing consistent with law;
- Coordination of investigations;
- Training;
- Victim support; and
- Communication between the institution and law enforcement.

Until the memorandum is formally executed, BIS and law enforcement retain their independent legal authority and responsibilities.

Privacy and Confidentiality

BIS will protect the privacy of persons involved in a report to the extent reasonably possible. Information will ordinarily be shared only with individuals who need it to:

- Assess safety;
- Provide supportive measures;
- Review the report;
- Conduct a process;
- Comply with law; or
- Carry out institutional responsibilities.

Privacy is not the same as legal confidentiality. BIS cannot guarantee that information reported to a nonconfidential institutional employee will remain confidential. Students seeking confidential assistance may be referred to an appropriate licensed counselor, healthcare provider, attorney, clergy member acting within a confidential role, rape-crisis counselor, or domestic-violence advocate.

Supportive Measures

BIS may offer reasonable supportive measures whether or not a formal complaint, institutional process, or criminal report is pursued. Measures may include:

- No-contact directives;
- Changes to class participation;
- Academic support;
- Deadline adjustments;
- Schedule modifications;
- Changes to internship placement;
- Campus-access arrangements;
- Safety planning;

- Counseling or advocacy referrals;
- Leave options; or
- Another appropriate measure.

Supportive measures are not disciplinary findings.

Amnesty for Good-Faith Reporting

BIS does not want fear of minor conduct consequences to discourage reporting of sexual misconduct or seeking emergency assistance. BIS may provide limited amnesty for minor policy violations disclosed in connection with a good-faith report, particularly when the conduct did not place another person at risk. Amnesty does not prevent action concerning serious misconduct, violence, dishonesty, or conduct creating a substantial safety concern.

Formal Complaint and Grievance Process

When applicable, a formal process may include:

✔ A signed or otherwise valid formal complaint;

✔ Notice to the parties;

✔ An impartial investigation;

✔ Equal opportunity to identify evidence and witnesses;

✔ Review of relevant evidence;

✔ A hearing or other decision process when required;

✔ An impartial determination;

✔ Written notice of outcome; and

✔ An equal opportunity to appeal.

The precise procedure will be governed by the complete policy and the legal framework applicable at the time.

Informal Resolution

Informal resolution may be available when:

- Permitted by applicable law;

- Appropriate to the allegations;
- All participants give voluntary written consent; and
- BIS determines that the process can be conducted fairly and safely.

A participant may withdraw before a final agreement. Informal resolution will not be used when prohibited by law or considered inappropriate by BIS.

Standard of Evidence

Unless a controlling policy requires otherwise, BIS will use the preponderance of the evidence standard, meaning whether it is more likely than not that the alleged conduct occurred. The same standard will apply to all parties in the same type of process.

Appeals

A party may appeal when permitted on grounds such as:

- Material procedural irregularity;
- Newly available evidence;
- Conflict of interest or bias;
- Unsupported determination; or
- Disproportionate sanction.

Appeals must be submitted within the deadline stated in the outcome notice.

Training and Prevention

BIS will provide education or training appropriate to its size, programs, and legal obligations. Topics may include:

- Prohibited conduct;
- Consent;
- Reporting options;
- Supportive measures;
- Bystander responsibility;
- Retaliation;
- Trauma-informed response;
- Law-enforcement coordination; and
- Institutional procedures.

Climate Survey and Institutional Reporting

BIS will participate in sexual-misconduct climate surveys and institutional reporting required by Massachusetts law. Survey and reporting activities may include:

- Student climate assessment;
- Aggregate incident data;
- Prevention and response information;
- Required public reporting; and
- Submission of information to the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education.

Personally identifiable information will be protected as required by law.

XX. Anti-Hazing Policy

Prohibition

Boston Islamic Seminary prohibits hazing in any form. No student, employee, organization, team, group, volunteer, or participant may organize, participate in, permit, encourage, assist, conceal, or fail to report hazing as required by law. This prohibition applies regardless of:

- Location;
- Consent;
- Membership status;
- Whether the conduct is described as tradition, initiation, bonding, discipline, or religious formation; or
- Whether physical injury actually occurs.

Definition

Hazing includes conduct associated with initiation into, admission to, continued membership in, or participation in an organization or group that willfully or recklessly endangers a person's physical or mental health. Hazing may include:

- Forced or coerced physical activity;
- Sleep deprivation;
- Exposure to weather;
- Forced consumption of food, liquid, alcohol, medication, or another substance;
- Physical beating or abuse;
- Humiliation or degradation;
- Threatening or intimidating conduct;

- Forced isolation;
- Dangerous travel or tasks;
- Interference with academic work;
- Conduct creating substantial emotional distress; or
- Another act meeting the applicable legal definition.

Consent is not a defense to hazing.

Scope

The policy applies to:

- Student Government;
- Student organizations;
- Study groups;
- Internships;
- Retreats;
- Graduation activities;
- Volunteer activities;
- Community service projects;
- Institutional trips;
- Online activity;
- Informal student groups; and
- Any activity connected to BIS.

Duty to Report

A person who knows that another person is the victim of hazing and is present at the scene must report the conduct to an appropriate law-enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable when the person can do so without danger or peril. Students should also report suspected hazing promptly to one of the following:

- The Student and Academic Affairs Coordinator;
- The Executive Assistant;
- The Academic Advisor;
- The President; or
- Another available BIS representative.

An emergency should be reported to 911.

Institutional Response

BIS may:

- Take immediate protective measures;
- Suspend an activity;
- Restrict access;
- Notify law enforcement;
- Conduct an institutional review;
- Preserve relevant information;
- Provide support to affected persons; and
- Impose discipline.

Institutional action may proceed separately from a criminal process.

Sanctions

Hazing may result in:

- Warning;
- Removal from an activity;
- Loss of leadership position;
- Probation;
- Suspension;
- Dismissal;
- Termination of organization recognition;
- Referral to law enforcement; or
- Another appropriate sanction.

Failure to report hazing when required may also result in discipline and legal consequences.

Annual Distribution and Acknowledgment

BIS will distribute or make available the Massachusetts anti-hazing law and institutional policy as required. Students and applicable organizations may be required to acknowledge receipt and agree to comply. Recognized student groups must provide BIS with any required certification concerning distribution of the law and adoption of anti-hazing requirements.

XXI. Student Complaints, Grievances, and Appeals

Purpose

BIS encourages students to raise concerns promptly and provides procedures intended to ensure fair, respectful, and timely review. Students should use the procedure that best fits the concern. Specialized matters are governed by the applicable policy, including:

- Grade appeals;
- Academic integrity;
- Disability accommodations;
- Discrimination and harassment;
- Sexual misconduct;
- Student conduct;
- Financial matters; and
- Academic dismissal.

Informal Resolution

When appropriate, a student should first discuss an ordinary concern with the person or office most directly involved. Examples include:

- Discussing a course concern with the instructor;
- Discussing academic planning with the Academic Advisor;
- Discussing registration with the Student and Academic Affairs Coordinator; or
- Discussing billing with the designated finance contact.

Informal resolution should be respectful, direct, and timely. Informal resolution is not required when:

- There is a safety concern;
- Serious misconduct is alleged;
- The student fears retaliation;
- Direct communication would be inappropriate;
- A specialized policy applies; or
- The student seeks a formal institutional determination.

Formal Student Complaint

A formal complaint should be submitted in writing to the Academic Advisor unless another policy identifies a different recipient. The complaint should include:

- The student's name and contact information;

- A clear description of the concern;
- Relevant dates, persons, courses, or offices;
- Steps already taken;
- Supporting documents;
- The requested outcome; and
- Any reason expedited review is needed.

Anonymous complaints can be submitted via Populi, and may be reviewed, but anonymity may limit BIS's ability to investigate or respond.

Conflict of Interest

A complaint involving the Academic Advisor should be submitted to the President or another designated administrator. No person should decide a complaint when that person:

- Is the subject of the complaint;
- Has a material conflict of interest;
- Has demonstrated bias; or
- Cannot review the matter impartially.

Initial Review

BIS will ordinarily:

✔ Acknowledge the complaint;

✔ Determine the applicable procedure;

✔ Identify the reviewer;

✔ Request additional information when needed;

✔ Assess immediate safety or support needs; and

✔ Provide a general description of next steps.

BIS may redirect a complaint to a specialized process.

Investigation and Decision

The reviewer may:

- Interview the student;

- Obtain a response from people involved;
- Review documents and communications;
- Consult relevant policies;
- Speak with witnesses;
- Seek expert or legal guidance; and
- Consider appropriate remedies.

The student will receive a written outcome when a formal determination is made. The outcome may include:

- Findings;
- Corrective action;
- Referral to another process;
- Explanation that no violation was established; or
- Another appropriate response.

Privacy may limit the amount of information BIS can disclose about action involving another person.

Timelines

Students should submit complaints promptly, ordinarily within thirty calendar days after the event or after the student reasonably became aware of the concern. BIS may accept a later complaint for good cause. BIS will seek to resolve complaints reasonably promptly. The time required may depend on:

- Complexity;
- Availability of participants;
- Academic breaks;
- Safety considerations;
- Legal requirements; or
- The need for a specialized process.

The student will be informed when substantial delay is anticipated.

Appeal

A student may appeal a formal complaint decision when an appeal is permitted. An appeal must ordinarily be based on:

- Material procedural error;
- New information not reasonably available earlier;
- Conflict of interest or bias;

- Findings unsupported by the available information; or
- A substantially inappropriate remedy.

The appeal must be submitted within the deadline stated in the decision. The appeal determination is final unless another review level is expressly provided.

Non-Retaliation

BIS prohibits retaliation against a person for:

- Submitting a good-faith complaint;
- Supporting another student;
- Participating in a review;
- Providing evidence; or
- Exercising a protected right.

A retaliation complaint should be reported immediately.

Complaint Records

BIS will maintain records of formal student complaints and their resolution in accordance with institutional record-retention practices and applicable privacy requirements. Complaint records may be reviewed in aggregate for:

- Institutional assessment;
- Policy improvement;
- Student support;
- Legal compliance; and
- Accreditation or state-review purposes.

External Complaints

Students are ordinarily expected to use and complete applicable BIS complaint procedures before seeking external review. After institutional remedies are exhausted, a student may be eligible to submit a complaint to an appropriate governmental or regulatory agency. External complaint information will be maintained on the BIS website or provided upon request. Submitting an external complaint does not automatically extend an internal deadline unless BIS or applicable law provides otherwise.

XXII. Communications, Technology, and Digital Learning

Official Communication

BIS email and Populi are official institutional communication channels. Students are responsible for:

- Checking both regularly;
- Maintaining account access;
- Reading official notices;
- Responding when requested;
- Keeping contact information current; and
- Using BIS email for Seminary-related communication.

A student's failure to read an official communication does not excuse noncompliance with the information provided.

Acceptable Use

BIS technology resources must be used lawfully, ethically, securely, and consistently with institutional policy. Students may not:

- Gain unauthorized access;
- Share passwords;
- Impersonate another person;
- Disrupt systems;
- Introduce malicious software;
- Access or distribute unlawful material;
- Use resources for harassment or misconduct;
- Bypass security controls;
- Misuse confidential information; or
- Use institutional systems for unauthorized commercial activity.

Account Security

Students must:

- Create strong passwords;
- Protect authentication information;
- Use multifactor authentication when available;
- Secure personal devices;
- Report suspected compromise;

- Avoid sharing accounts; and
- Log out of shared devices.

Students are responsible for activity conducted through their accounts unless promptly reported as unauthorized.

Populi

Populi is the primary platform for:

- Course registration;
- Syllabi;
- Assignments;
- Grades;
- Attendance records;
- Course-related discussion;
- Course announcements;
- Academic records;
- Billing; and
- Institutional forms.

Students must use Populi responsibly and follow all course and communication expectations.

Virtual Classroom

BIS may use Zoom or another approved platform for synchronous instruction. Students are expected to:

- Join with their official name;
- Arrive on time;
- Use functioning equipment;
- Participate from an appropriate environment;
- Keep video on;
- Minimize distractions;
- Maintain professional dress and conduct;
- Protect meeting links; and
- Avoid recording or distributing a class without authorization.

An approved accommodation may modify particular participation requirements.

Class Recordings

BIS may record courses or academic events for educational, accessibility, quality-assurance, or institutional purposes. Recordings remain institutional instructional material and may be accessed only by authorized persons. Students may not:

- Download a recording when downloading is not permitted;
- Share a recording;
- Post clips online;
- Reproduce course content;
- Identify or expose classmates;
- Use a recording for commercial purposes; or
- Retain recordings beyond the authorized period.

Course-recording access is not guaranteed permanently. BIS may establish or revise retention and access periods.

Student Recording

A student may not record a class, meeting, advising session, interview, or institutional activity without advance authorization from the instructor or responsible official. An approved disability-related recording accommodation must be used solely for the student's individual educational access and may not be shared. Unauthorized recording may violate privacy, copyright, academic-integrity, or conduct rules.

Digital Library

BIS provides eligible students with access to digital library resources, which may include the Digital Theological Library and other databases. Students must:

- Protect access credentials;
- Comply with license terms;
- Use resources for authorized educational purposes;
- Avoid systematic or excessive downloading;
- Avoid sharing access with unauthorized persons; and
- Comply with copyright law.

Access may end upon withdrawal, graduation, or expiration of institutional eligibility.

Copyright and Fair Use

Students must comply with United States copyright law and applicable license agreements. Copyrighted materials may be used only:

- With permission;
- Under a valid license;
- Within a statutory exception;
- Under fair use; or
- As otherwise authorized by law.

Unauthorized downloading, reproduction, distribution, public display, or file sharing is prohibited.

Course Materials and Intellectual Property

Course syllabi, recordings, slides, assessments, handouts, and other instructional materials may be protected by copyright. Students may use them for personal educational purposes but may not distribute, publish, sell, upload, or adapt them without authorization. Student work remains subject to applicable intellectual-property, privacy, academic, and institutional requirements. BIS may request permission to use exemplary student work for educational or institutional purposes.

Privacy in Digital Learning

Students must respect the privacy of classmates, faculty, staff, internship participants, and community members. Students may not disclose:

- Private classroom discussions;
- Personal information;
- Screenshots;
- Recordings;
- Pastoral or counseling information;
- Internship information;
- Student records; or
- Confidential case material.

Course discussions involving sensitive situations must be handled with particular care.

Social Media

Students using social media in connection with BIS must act responsibly and distinguish personal views from official institutional statements. Students may not:

- Claim to speak for BIS without authorization;
- Misuse the BIS name or logo;
- Disclose confidential information;
- Harass or threaten others;
- Post unauthorized recordings or course content;
- Falsely represent institutional decisions; or
- Engage in conduct materially harming institutional safety or operations.

When appropriate, a student identifying as a BIS student should clarify: “The views expressed are my own and do not necessarily represent Boston Islamic Seminary.”

Media and Press Inquiries

Students may speak in their personal capacity but may not represent themselves as authorized BIS spokespersons. Media inquiries concerning institutional matters should be referred to the President or designated communications representative. Confidential student, personnel, legal, or institutional information must not be disclosed.

Technology Violations

Misuse of technology may result in:

- Warning;
- Restricted access;
- Removal of content;
- Academic sanction;
- Student-conduct action;
- Financial liability;
- Suspension;
- Dismissal; or
- Referral to legal authorities.

XXIII. Student Leadership and Institutional Participation

Student Government

The Student Government Association serves as the representative body of MIRL students. Its work may include:

- Representing student concerns;
- Facilitating communication between students and BIS administration;
- Supporting student activities;
- Organizing service and spiritual programs;
- Fostering development of leadership skills; and
- Participating in institutional consultation.

The Student Government Association operates under its approved constitution and BIS policies.

Student Organizations and Activities

Student-led groups and activities require institutional approval when they:

- Use the BIS name;
- Use BIS facilities or systems;
- Collect funds;
- Represent BIS publicly;
- Involve external organizations;
- Invite speakers; or
- Conduct Seminary-sponsored programming.

Approval may be conditioned on:

- Mission alignment;
- Safety;
- Funding;
- Supervision;
- Scheduling;
- Legal compliance; and
- Institutional capacity.

Use of BIS Name and Logo

The name, logo, seal, branding, and other identifying marks of Boston Islamic Seminary may not be used without authorization. Students may accurately identify themselves as

BIS students but may not imply institutional sponsorship, endorsement, or approval without permission.

Fundraising

Students and student organizations may not solicit funds, conduct fundraising, establish crowdfunding campaigns, or request donations in the name of BIS without prior approval. Approved fundraising must comply with:

- Financial controls;
- Donor restrictions;
- Institutional branding;
- Applicable law; and
- Reporting requirements.

Institutional Committees and Consultation

BIS may invite students to participate in:

- Committees;
- Focus groups;
- Policy consultations;
- Assessment activities;
- Surveys;
- Forums; or
- Institutional planning.

Student participation is advisory unless otherwise stated. Students serving in these roles must protect confidential information and disclose conflicts of interest.

XXIV. Policy Administration and Required Notices

Policy Authority

This handbook contains the principal policies applicable to MIRL students. More detailed institutional policies, procedures, forms, and guidelines may be maintained separately and incorporated by reference. When a separate approved policy contains more specific requirements, that policy governs the subject it addresses.

Policy Changes

BIS may revise policies during the academic year when necessary because of:

- Changes in law;
- Regulatory requirements;
- Academic needs;
- Institutional assessment;
- Safety concerns;
- Operational circumstances; or
- Other legitimate institutional reasons.

Material changes will be communicated through official channels. Unless otherwise stated, the current approved policy applies from its effective date.

Severability

If any provision of the handbook is determined to be unlawful, invalid, or unenforceable, the remaining provisions remain in effect to the extent possible.

No Waiver

A failure by BIS to enforce a policy in one circumstance does not waive the right to enforce it in another circumstance. An exception must be approved by an authorized institutional official.

Contact Directory

General student questions and referrals	mirl@bostonislamicseminary.org
General institutional inquiries	info@bostonislamicseminary.org | (781) 584-0883
Academic Advising	Dr. Suheil Laher academicadvising@bostonislamicseminary.org
Student Government	studgov@bostonislamicseminary.org
Campus or life-safety emergency	911

Disability adjustments and sexual-misconduct reporting	Executive Assistant; use mirl@bostonislamicseminary.org for routing
Registration, records, and student affairs	Use mirl@bostonislamicseminary.org for routing

Students uncertain about the appropriate contact may use: mirl@bostonislamicseminary.org

XXV. Student Handbook Acknowledgment

Each student may be required to acknowledge electronically or in writing that the student:

1. Received or was provided access to the 2026–2027 Student Handbook;
2. Understands that the handbook contains important policies and requirements;
3. Agrees to read and comply with applicable policies;
4. Understands that BIS may revise policies and communicate updates through official channels;
5. Understands that the student is responsible for monitoring BIS email and Populi;
6. Has received or been provided access to the anti-hazing law and policy;
7. Has received or been provided access to the nondiscrimination and sexual-misconduct policies;
8. Understands the available complaint and reporting procedures; and
9. Understands that questions should be directed to the appropriate BIS representative.

A student's failure or refusal to sign an acknowledgment does not exempt the student from institutional policies.

Student Acknowledgment Form

Student Name: _____

BIS Email: _____

Academic Year: 2026–2027

I acknowledge that I have received or been provided with electronic access to the Boston Islamic Seminary Student Handbook for the 2026–2027 academic year. I understand that I am responsible for reading and complying with its policies and with other official institutional policies and communications.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____