

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

ISTL

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GENERAL INFORMATION

ISTL Albania

WHO WE ARE

Core Values and Educational Philosophy

ISTL is an innovative and visionary training center for theology, counseling, and leadership. We are committed to the training and promotion of new leaders. Young people are empowered and equipped for full-time service in the Kingdom of God. Theological expertise, personality development, and the fire for evangelism go hand in hand at ISTL.

The holistic endeavor of developing leaders for substantial service is built on the key values of Integrity, Servant Leadership, Theological Foundation, and Learning Christ-Centered Life.

Integrity: Portraying the life of Jesus by demonstrating integrity in Christian ethics.

Servant Leadership: This means taking up the towel and being a servant first. A servant leader focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of the people and communities to which they belong.

Theological Foundation: The primary and final source and guiding authority for our Theology of work is the Bible. This includes an attempt to understand its overall teaching and insights from our close examination of each book of the Bible and proper exegetical interpretation.

Learning Christ-Centered Life: Through our students' academic and personal journeys, it is our ultimate goal that students and staff will know and love God, think Biblically about all subjects, understand that ultimate joy is found in living for the glory of God and that everything needed for life and godliness comes from knowing Christ.

Mission

Our mission is to equip and develop future generations of Christian leaders through strategic innovative Bible education.

Vision

That every church in Albania, region, and beyond will have effective leaders that will impact their churches, cultures, and communities for Christ.

Program Goals

Students who complete this program should:

1. Engage in traditional Christian spiritual disciplines and exhibit the Fruit of the Spirit when they graduate from this program.

Students who work in a church, company, non-profit, or other setting should bring a personal ethic that highlights how Jesus' life and teaching have shaped their own moral principles. Students will be able to design a discipleship program and apply eight traditional spiritual disciplines in both their personal and professional lives as part of this objective.

2. Integrate fundamental ideas and exegetical strategies into the understanding of the Bible.

Students who succeed in achieving this objective will show an aptitude for learning and applying exegetical techniques. They will be able to design and present sermons and teachings that connect historical contexts with modern applications.

3. Exhibit effective servant leadership that is committed to the development of others and to forging relationships based on shared values.

The practice of ministry is found in many diverse settings, and students learn that it is a continual extension of Jesus' mission and service in the modern world. Students who achieve this aim will be able to develop a delegation strategy that encourages others to take the lead and a self-care plan that promotes personal and interpersonal growth.

4. Effectively convey the Christian faith and life within context.

Students learn that it is not only the ministers' responsibility to spread the Christian faith to people outside of their profession. In order to achieve this goal, students will use their oral and written communication abilities to share the Christian message and participate in disciple-making activities that result in disciples who go on to make disciples.

History ([Video](#))

ISTL is now at the beginning of its 15th school year since its start in September 2008. Initially, it was intended as a local church educational programme to equip its own members for leadership and church planting. Yet, soon after its early developing months, several pastors joined in participation as they saw the need for their own church members to be equipped for ministry. At

first, mostly on a voluntary basis, some pastors and missionaries offered to teach, mentor, and consult.

As a result, ISTL has progressively grown beyond denominational and national borders. The school has trained students from over 40 different denominations and independent churches primarily from Albania, but it has also had the privilege to receive students from countries of Kosovo, Macedonia, the Philippines, and Ireland as well as other countries. This way ISTL has truly become an international and interdenominational leadership Bible school, being the largest in Albania and a dynamic voice in reaching and discipling the Balkans.

Many of ISTL students are already pastors and leaders, whereas many of the remaining students have started ministries and planted churches while studying and being mentored at the school. In recent years ISTL has had a part of over 100 churches, and numerous ministries, being planted and facilitated by current students and alumni of the programme.

This year ISTL has around 120 active students in our bachelor programme. It is the students who motivate the hard work of the ISTL staff and professors.

On the other hand, students say that what they have studied at ISTL will remain and benefit them in their ministry.

“ISTL has helped me a lot to grow more in the Word of God. I have got more of this academic year. It has substituted all the pieces of training that I could follow during the year outside of ministry. I have gone deeper in the Word of God because of the studies here and what I have done here will remain and will be given in the ministry.”

Other students add: “This school has opened our eyes. Our hearts were filled with new knowledge. ISTL has taught us how to read the Bible in context.”

By the grace of God and the desire to equip the ministers with deep Biblical knowledge and critical thinking, ISTL has expanded not only the number of students but also the programmes offered. In 2019, ISTL and TCM International Institute made an agreement to offer a master’s degree to ISTL students who completed their Bachelor of Theology studies at the school.

Even with the difficulties of 2019, ISTL has become stronger. In 2019, still trying to recover from the earthquakes, we were challenged by the Pandemic. Our country was forced into immediate lockdown, in which our classes had to be canceled. By refusing to surrender, ISTL began to develop online classes, and to our amazement, the number of student attendance increased from the previous year. Even students who were in distant areas or countries returned to our classes. Online learning is no longer an impossible alternative to in-person classes, but a permanent opportunity for ISTL. Through it, since the summer of 2020, centers have been set up outside the capital (in Korça, Pogradec, and Katjel, targeting other centers in Kosovo and

wherever ISTL discovers a potential need and opportunity to bring Theological education and equipping for ministry.

ISTL, in addition to students graduating in their studies, hopes to continue equipping, networking, resourcing, and enabling them for planting and strengthening churches, and missions, and pioneering in areas where the Gospel has not reached yet.

COMPLETION OF PROGRAM OF STUDIES RECENCY POLICY

ISTL Albania recognizes the concept of “recency” in accredited programs. Recency requirements define the length of time an individual may pursue a degree program. Recency recognizes that knowledge and methods change over time. For example, a course in Leadership will change content as tools and methods change over time. A course in Hermeneutics may even change content as new archeological discoveries shed light on a given technique.

Certificate students have 3 years to complete their program and Bachelor students have 6 years beginning at the time when their first-degree applicable course is taken. If the student has not completed the degree requirements within the stated limit, the student will be required to re-validate those courses that were completed more than ten years from the start of his or her studies. Students who began their degree prior to 2020 will have until May 2026 to complete their degree requirements. After that date, the re-validation condition will apply.

PROGRAM DETAILS

Each year, ISTL will conduct ten courses per level (3 levels) using both formats of online and face-to-face (F2F) class time. Each course is required for the entire cohort of the specific level. Students can commit to the program for a minimum of one year (to achieve the Certificate), and three years (to achieve the Bachelor's Degree) or they can join the Master's Program through the joint venture ISTL has with [TCMI](#).

Financial Information

The cost per course for the year 2023-2024 is 3,000 ALL for students living in Albania; 30 euros for students in the Balkans; 50-euro for students in the rest of Europe and 100-dollar for students in America.

A registration fee of 5000 lek will be required from each student at the beginning of each academic year.

Financial Aid

Student Scholarship Program

Scholarships are applied to all ISTL students. These are made possible through the generosity of ISTL donor churches, individuals, and grant-funding organizations.

ISTL's staff will inform students and prospective students of scholarship opportunities during the application and registration process and assist each with access to potential scholarships.

Explanation of Fees and Reimbursements

Course Fees

As mentioned above:

The cost per course for the year 2023-2024 is 3,000 ALL for students living in Albania; 30 euros for students in the Balkans; 50-euro for students in the rest of Europe and 100-dollar for students in America.

A registration fee of 5000 lek will be required from each student at the beginning of each academic year.

Penalty Fees

In case of retaking a course, the fee of 25\$ is applied.

Reimbursement

Students from certain countries/cities may request reimbursement of accommodation expenses in Tirana by providing receipts to the ISTL office at info@istl.al.

Payment Methods

Payment methods are available through bank transfer. For bank details contact the ISTL office at info@istl.al or +355676968726.

MENTORING CENTER INFORMATION

The office of ISTL is located in Tirana, Albania. Courses are delivered in Tirana (sometimes in extended centers in other cities) but the students can join online from everywhere in the world. Consult the [current schedule](#) for the courses' dates. ISTL offers a structured program of study taught in English and Albanian when the professor is not Albanian and only in Albanian when the professor is Albanian (but if a non-Albanian student is present, translation in English is offered for them). Students come from various denominational backgrounds. They serve in churches, businesses, schools, agencies, organizations, and communities.

EXTENDED CENTER REPRESENTATIVE'S ROLE

Extended Center Representatives have been established to facilitate your learning experience throughout the network of ISTL. The representative is responsible for various items such as ensuring a safe and adequate class facility and communicating with the student regarding the scheduling of those facilities. They may also assist in other administrative activities.

To contact the Extended Center Representative please the ISTL office at info@istl.al or +355676968726.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Every course consists of five days of F2F (06:00 PM – 09:00 PM). Check the [current schedule](#) for the courses' dates.

HOUSING

Students from certain countries/cities can be accommodated in Tirana. They may request reimbursement of accommodation expenses (meals not included) by providing receipts to the ISTL office at info@istl.al. However, students are not required to come to Tirana if they live in another city.

For questions on housing in Tirana, contact the ISTL office at info@istl.al or +355676968726.

ALCOHOL, and DRUGS POLICY

ISTL is an alcohol-free and drug-free institution. ISTL mentoring centers, including all buildings, grounds, and vehicles, are considered alcohol and drug-free. Please abstain from possessing or using alcohol and/or illegal drugs anywhere on the site, including vehicles.

ISTL LIBRARY

The ISTL Library is a theological library that provides access to resources and services that are intentionally based upon the ISTL vision of preparing students for leadership roles in disciple-making movements.

The ISTL Library resources, both electronic and print, are specifically selected to support and enrich the curriculum and assist in meeting the research and information needs of each student. The ISTL Library services strive to help students find the resources needed to complete their course assignments and learn research skills. Not only students but alumni too. Also, local pastors, church leaders, and students at other Bible schools have access to the library if needed.

The required books for Bachelor's and Master's studies are available in English and Albanian. Some of the main subjects of our library are:

- o Systematic Theology
- o Biblical Studies
- o Leadership
- o Christian Counselling
- o Worship
- o Organization Development

On the ISTL Library [website](#), every student can learn about the resources and services of the ISTL Library. Using the TCM Library [website](#) a student can access electronic resources or locate print resources. The team of ISTL is actively searching for new titles that are required for the programs at the school.

The print resources and in-person services of the ISTL Library are available at the ISTL office in Tirana, Albania.

There is provided a physical library collection of more than 6 000 print books in English and Albanian with in-person assistance available. Access to this library location is 09:00 AM – 04:00

PM/5 days a week. Access to this library location is by appointment, contact the ISTL office at info@istl.al or +355676968726.

Students can access the national library, which is only 5 minutes away from ISTL headquarters. Also, new contacts with other libraries are being developed, to share the same system. (The library is numbered by the Dewey number system and there is open access to other libraries, national and international, that use the Dewey system.)

The TCM Library is committed to providing students with quality service and access to resources that support the curriculum regardless of a student's location or learning language. Additional questions may be addressed to library@istl.al.

COMPUTERS AND INTERNET

Internet access is available at the ISTL office, classes, and at all other hubs of our school in Albania. These centers offer computers for student use.

The use of available computers is intended for students to complete their research and assignments. Only those computer programs installed are to be on the computers. No additional programs are to be downloaded or installed.

Assistance

If assistance is needed in using computers or software or to identify problems with the equipment or programs, please contact the ISTL office at info@istl.al or +355676968726 or the Extended Centre Representative at the mentoring center.

COPIES AND COPYRIGHT LAWS

It is unlawful to copy any publication in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy and information storage and retrieval systems, that have been published under the copyright laws, except as allowed for by those laws. This includes any written material or literature, audio cassette, video cassette, CD, DVD, etc.

For written materials, all students of ISTL shall comply with all the requirements of Albania copyright laws. Each person agrees to accept responsibility for reading and understanding the requirements of copyright law. If a person willfully, intentionally, negligently, or without good faith violates the copyright provisions, he or she shall be solely liable for all losses, damages, judgments, and costs of whatever kind or nature that may be incurred.

Plagiarism, defined as stealing and/or passing the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the sources, whether for profit or credit (grades), has no place in a Christian institution of higher learning. Acts of plagiarism will be reported to the Academic Dean for further action.

STUDENT FUNDRAISING

Funding of student scholarships is made possible by individual and church donors.

SECURITY AND SAFETY

ISTL attempts to provide security for all staff, volunteer workers, professors, and guests.

If you observe any actions that violate security, please contact the ISTL office immediately.

GUESTS

No personal guests are allowed at mentoring centers at any time. If you intend to attend a course with a guest contact the ISTL office at info@istl.al or +355676968726 before doing so.

STEWARDSHIP

Please help us to be good stewards of the resources provided by God at all mentoring centers. Switch off any unnecessary lights and close exterior doors and windows when the heat is turned on. Please continue to act like a Christian steward with all the available resources provided by ISTL.

Also please inform the ISTL office or Extended Centre Representative about any damage noticed or caused by you at any of mentoring centers.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

STUDENT IDENTITY VERIFICATION POLICY

ISTL seeks to make certain those who are admitted and enrolled in courses are the person claimed. To ensure the veracity of the student identification the following procedures are established as policy.

Government-Issued Photo Identification: Students submit a government-issued photo identification as part of their application package.

Pastor's and/or Mentor's recommendation: ISTL requires a written recommendation from the Pastor and/or Mentor for each program applicant.

Secure, Individual log in, and Passcode: Students are assigned a secure, individual username and password upon program enrollment at ISTL. These assigned identifiers are used to access MOODLE® Learning Management System where students complete and submit coursework.

Face-to-face: Before completing the coursework online, students attend the face-to-face sessions. A student cannot earn a degree or certificate, without being present in the F2F sessions. This format also allows ISTL to verify that the student who enrolled in the program is the same student who earned the degree. While at the F2F sessions students that join via Zoom are expected to keep the camera open.

People who are found not following this policy will immediately be dismissed. Students who allow someone else to enroll in courses or submit work on their behalf will also be dismissed from ISTL immediately. Unethical behavior is not tolerated at ISTL.

COURSE REGISTRATION

Every student is automatically assigned to the course that is offered for their level of the program (I, II, III). If they have missed a required course, they are assigned to the course of the I or II levels.

NOT YET AN ISTL STUDENT

ISTL offers the opportunity for non-students to attend two trial courses as an audit.

Stay up to date with our [social media](#) to be informed about upcoming courses.

COURSE WORK

In one academic year, we offer 10 courses (one course each month), through an intensive one-week (15 contact hours) per subject. However, since the materials are uploaded on Moodle and the assignment & exams are performed there, the course is done in 30 days (one month), according to the requirements of each course. ISTL offers hybrid courses (online + face-to-face); the face-to-face hours happen online for students living outside Tirana/Albania, and in class for those living in Tirana. Face-to-face includes teaching from the teacher and students interact in class and via Zoom.

As soon as you start your first course, a MOODLE account will be created for you.

MOODLE ORIENTATION COURSE

ISTL provides a F2F course introducing students to the basics of MOODLE the Learning Management System (LMS). When you are enrolled in ISTL and have your login you are offered the course. This course will help you learn about using MOODLE, how to post messages, how to upload papers, how to find grades, etc. Also, [this tutorial](#) will assist you anytime.

Students need to recognize that the online learning portion of the course is different from their Face to Face (F2F) class time.

Online learning recommends you establish a schedule of when you will work online and work offline to complete the assignments; while online courses allow flexibility and convenience, without the self-discipline of setting a schedule students may find the online portion of the class difficult. Be realistic with your time management skills.

Much of the course content online consists of videos, readings, and some sort of presentation (e.g., PowerPoint/slides).

Online coursework requires some basic computer skills. Be realistic about your ability and willingness to develop or improve these skills.

- Typing and using a mouse
- Navigating through various windows and screens
- Connecting with links embedded within the course content

- Uploading assignments
- Ability to search the Internet
- Managing files and folders

BEST PRACTICES

Start now by making a plan of weekly study time based on the number of hours required for the course and the number of weeks you have until your deadline. One month will pass quickly, especially when you're in the midst of work, family, daily life, and ministry.

- Log in weekly to check for due dates for quizzes and assignments.
- Ask for help when you need it. You may ask the teacher's assistant for the specific course.
- Spend time in prayer for your professor, fellow students, and yourself as you prepare for the course.

If you are having difficulty finding the assigned or alternative reading materials contact the library at library@tcmi.edu or your teacher's assistant. You can also submit your questions by using messages on Moodle.

Take personal responsibility for your learning. In online learning, your professor is a guide to assist you, but ultimately you must take personal responsibility for learning.

ACADEMIC WRITING

While a student is at ISTL there will be multiple opportunities to write academic papers and engage in academic research. To assist in learning to write all students are required to take The Academic Writing Course offered at the beginning of the academic year together with the Moodle orientation. This course introduces students to proper essay writing, fundamentals of grammar and punctuation, and other essential writing skills.

PLAGIARISM

All written work must demonstrate the student's best efforts and provide accurate citations for all used materials and ideas. Plagiarism, which is defined as taking and/or using someone else's words or ideas without giving due credit to the author, is prohibited and will not be permitted. Each instance will be submitted to the academic dean, and the progressive discipline model will be put into practice as a result. See chapter "Student Discipline".

ACADEMIC FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Higher education institutions operate for the benefit of society. The open pursuit of truth and its unrestricted presentation is essential to the common good.

Academic freedom refers to a student's complete freedom to do research and publish the results, subject to their academic standing. However, research conducted for financial gain should be supported by an agreement with the institution's management. Students are permitted to talk

about the material being taught in class, but they should be careful not to bring up divisive topics that have no bearing on the lesson.

Freedom of speech and expression is conditioned on communication that is not libelous, slanderous, incites a riot, or unlawfully harassing at ISTL, as it is in society at large. Additionally, academic freedom does not apply to speech that is directed at individuals with the obvious intent to harm them significantly.

Students should keep in mind that anything they say or write may be used by the public to judge their institution. They should always use appropriate restraint, respect other people's views, and try their best to make it clear that they are not speaking on behalf of the institution.

GRADES

The list of completed courses and grades can be accessible to you by contacting the ISTL office at info@istl.al or +355676968726. As soon as the teacher assistant reports the grades as final, these are uploaded into the system (Microsoft Access 2010). Any appeal to alter a grade must be made to the Academic Dean who will review the work and consult with the professor and/or the teacher assistant before making any decision.

ISTL Grade Scale

Albanian Scale	Verbal Explanation	Percentage Scale
10	Excellent	98-100
10-		95-97
9+	Very good	92-94
9		89-91
9-		86-88
8+	Good	83-85
8		80-82
8-		77-79
7+	Average	74-76
7		71-73
7-		68-70
6+	Poor	65-67
6		62-64
6-		59-61
5+	Passing	56-58
5		53-55

5-		50-52
4	Failing	-49

RETAKING COURSES

Any course with a grade below 5- must be repeated as soon as possible so the grade point average can be salvaged. The maximum number of times allowed to retake a course is three.

No reimbursement is available for retaking courses.

ACADEMIC PROBATION AND SUSPENSION

A student failing to pass a minimum of 5 courses during one academic year will be subject to the following actions:

1. The student will receive a written notification from the ISTL office. Copies of this notification will also be sent to the Academic Dean.
2. For the following academic year, the student cannot go further with the second level. They will have to retake the courses they failed with the first-level students and if the first level is taking a course they already passed, the student can join the second level for that month.
3. Failure to pass a minimum of 5 courses during one academic year for the second time means the student will be put on suspension (for a limited time) or dismissed from the program (permanently).
4. A student may reapply to the program after academic suspension by submitting a written appeal to the Academic Dean and ISTL office. The Academic Dean and ISTL office will then act on the appeal submitted.

ACADEMIC LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

Students who wish to defer their studies for a short time (1 to 2 years) due to any one of a number of issues such as illness, raising a family, lack of finances, job relocation, or military active-duty requirement, etc. may request a deferment of their studies (sabbatical) in the following way:

1. A written (or electronic) letter or email is sent to the [ISTL office](#) asking for an academic leave of absence for a period of time, not to exceed 2 years.
2. A decision on the request for academic leave will take all matters into consideration.
3. ISTL office will notify the student of the decision and a copy of the notification will be placed in the student's file.
4. The student will remain on active student status during the academic leave (1 to 2 years). The academic leave will not count against the Recency policy.
5. If a student is on the Academic Leave list and desires to resume active status, then this is possible by registering for classes.

PROGRAM WITHDRAWAL

A student may submit a formal request to the ISTL office (infi@istl.al) at any point during their studies to request their withdrawal from the program. A student who withdrew from the program must ask for reinstatement if they wish to resume their studies.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

All students of ISTL Albania are expected to display Christian character in all aspects of life. ISTL reserves the right to suspend from its academic programs or discipline by administrative or faculty action (see below) any student upon the grounds detailed below.

ACADEMIC

All students are expected to continue to make progress toward completion of their certificate or degree program and to be faithful in class preparation and attendance. Should a student fail to do so, they will be asked to suspend their study at ISTL. The minimum number of courses to be passed in one academic year is five. Failure to do so will result in the probation/suspension policy being applied.

CHARACTER

All students are expected to demonstrate a godly character. The following behaviors are inappropriate conduct for Christians and constitute grounds for suspension:

- Immoral behavior, particularly sexual misconduct (extramarital or homosexual activity) or criminal activity. This includes using ISTL internet access for viewing indecent/inappropriate sites.
- Willful failure to abide by any rule and/or practice of ISTL.
- Conduct that disrupts the fellowship of the ISTL, including but not limited to repeated disruptive outbursts in class, disorderly conduct in and around the mentoring centers, and abusive correspondence or telephone calls.
- Any conduct which may threaten or place students or TCM personnel or property in physical jeopardy.
- Possession, use, or distribution of drugs, or alcohol.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Foreword

This document applies to the entire Institute community—administrators, faculty, students, and staff. Sexual harassment is a violation of Albanian laws. But more importantly, it is contrary to the spiritual and ethical standards by which Christian people are obligated to live.

The Institute will act to prevent, correct, and, if necessary, discipline conduct that violates this policy. Sanctions include warning, probation, suspension (with or without pay for employees), and dismissal.

Definitions

The Institute defines sexual harassment as:

unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors;

verbal or physical conduct directed toward or based upon a person's sex and having the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's study or work performance of creating an offensive environment for that person.

In Albanian Law Sexual harassment is understood as a commitment to actions of a sexual nature that violate the dignity of a person by any form or means, creating a threatening, hostile, degrading, humiliating or insulting environment.¹

Although it might be desirable to define specific behaviors that are understood to constitute sexual harassment, the procedures outlined are designed to allow the Institute to assess each complaint on its own merits, rather than against a predetermined list.

Sexual Harassment Committee

The Sexual Harassment Committee shall be composed of the Academic Dean, a faculty member, a member of the administrative staff appointed by the President, and a student. At least two members of the committee must be of the same sex as the complainant. In the event that one of the persons named above is the person against whom the complaint has been filed, the President shall appoint a replacement member to the committee. The chair of the committee is appointed by the President.

Complaint

A complaint from an aggrieved person constitutes the sole basis for the conduct of an investigation and a hearing. This complaint must specify in detail the circumstances and nature of the alleged harassment. A complaint should be filed promptly after the incident of harassment. Any complaint must be filed in writing with the committee through the President within 120 calendar days of the event, but no later than the respondent ceases to be a member of the Institute community.

Procedure

Procedure without Complaint

Anyone who believes he or she has been sexually harassed is encouraged to discuss the complaint with a member of the administration before filing a complaint. If so requested, this person will attempt a resolution of the matter by a discussion with the parties involved. These

¹ Penal Code of the republic of Albania: Section VI-Sexual Crimes, Article 121/a - Persecution and Article 130/a – Family Violence. Available at: <http://www.euralius.eu/index.php/en/Shqipërian-legislation/send/10-criminal-code/56-criminal-code-en>

discussions will be held in confidence except (1) when the law requires disclosure or (2) where a person's safety or the well-being of the Institute is threatened.

In these cases, any individual with knowledge of the situation should inform the President, who is authorized to take the steps necessary to ensure the well-being of the community. In the case of a procedure without complaint, no written record of the incident is made.

Procedure with Complaint

Informal Complaint Resolution

Even after filing a written complaint with the Committee, the complaint may be resolved informally by the intervention of the chair of the committee. The intervention may occur either without the identity of the complainant being known to the respondent or through a process of mediation agreed to by both parties.

When a complaint is resolved informally, the chair of the Committee shall file with the office of the President a brief written report of the resolution, in which both complainant and respondent are satisfied.

Formal Complaint Resolution

At the time of the filing, the complainant may ask that the complaint be handled under the formal procedure. In addition, either party to an action in progress or concluded under the Informal Procedure may request that it be re-introduced under the Formal Procedure. The steps in the Formal Procedure are:

The chair of the Committee shall give the complainant written notification within 7 calendar days of the day when the complaint was filed or re-introduced, together with a copy of the complaint. The respondent may file a written response with the chair. The chair shall provide a copy of the response to the complainant.

The chair shall notify other members of the Committee of an impending hearing and shall schedule a date, time, and place for the hearing.

The chair shall provide the complainant and the respondent with written notification of the persons serving on the Committee. The chair of the committee also has the discretion of naming substitute members of the Committee at the request of either party, based upon written request to the chair. Notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be delivered to each party at least 7 days prior to the date of the hearing.

The chair shall gather information for use by the Committee, including any statements or material that either party wishes to submit. The chair may interview anyone deemed to have relevant information. If at all possible, this should be completed within 30 days of the request for resolution under the Formal Procedure.

The Committee will hear the matter no later than one month after the chair has submitted his or her report and supporting documents to the committee.

At the hearing, the Committee shall review the complaint, the response, the report of the chair of the Committee, and other pertinent documents. The Committee shall interview both parties and other witnesses in the presence of both parties. The parties shall be given an opportunity to respond to each other's statements, confront those who present evidence, and present witnesses and evidence on their behalf.

When the hearing is completed, the parties and witnesses will be excused, and the Committee will reach a conclusion by majority vote. The determination of a suitable penalty shall be made on a case-by-case basis in light of all relevant facts and circumstances.

The Committee shall prepare a written report of the hearing, including findings of fact and conclusions and a recommended disposition based on the record, policies, regulations, and procedures of the Institute. A record of the hearing and the findings will be kept on file by the President.

The Committee shall provide a copy of the hearing report to the complainant and the respondent. The parties shall have 7 calendar days to give the chair written notice that they do or do not accept the Committee's recommendations.

A report of the responses shall be presented in writing to the President within 15 calendar days from the issuance of the report of the Committee. The President, after consulting with the chair of the Committee, shall render a final and binding decision.

The President shall communicate his or her decision to the complainant, the respondent, and the chair of the Committee. A record of this decision shall be placed in a permanent file in the President's office and in the file of the person against whom the complaint has been sustained.

If the Committee determines that a complaint has been fabricated, this decision shall be communicated to the President who will take appropriate disciplinary action on the one filing the false complaint.

Additional Matters

Legal Considerations

These definitions and procedures are designed to resolve complaints alleging sexual harassment without making use of the remedies of law. There are, therefore, no provisions for the parties to be represented by legal counsel during the process. Should either party not be satisfied with the final decision of the President and wish to resort to legal remedies, the matter passes outside the responsibility of the Sexual Harassment Committee, except insofar as its members may be required to participate in the legal proceedings.

Relation to Other Policies and Rules

If a conflict should arise between the provisions of this policy and other Institute procedures, rules, regulations, or terms of conditions of employment, the provisions of this policy shall

govern and control in cases of sexual harassment unless those other procedures, rules, regulations, or terms or conditions of employment shall specifically provide to the contrary.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE MODEL

Student disciplinary actions fall under the purview of the Dean. Any information regarding a student's actions that warrant disciplinary action ought to be brought to his or her attention. The rules for suspension for behavior and academic reasons were covered above. The progressive discipline model, which includes verbal and written warnings, probation, and program suspension before the suspension, may be implemented. Only after speaking with people whose opinions would matter in the specific circumstance of the individual student will the Dean take action on suspension. Each deed will be recorded permanently in the student's record.

Except in the case of a verbal warning, the student who will be disciplined will get written notification of the decision.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Christian men and women of any race, color, age, and country or ethnic background who uphold ISTL's declaration of faith and code of behavior are admitted to ISTL. It doesn't make distinctions based on age (over 18), race, color, sex, or physical disability.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

If at all possible, students are encouraged to work with staff to resolve their complaints internally. This could involve worries about rules, practices, internet assistance, verdicts, or other worries. The ISTL office (info@istl.al) will respond to formal written complaints from students or other constituencies within 30 days.

DIVERSITY POLICY

In order to promote our vision, values, and principles, ISTL aims to provide a higher learning environment that engages Christian men and women of all ages (over 18), ethnicities, nations, people groups, languages, races, abilities, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

DISABILITY POLICY

ISTL provides assistance for qualified students with disabilities to assist them in gaining equal access to institutional programs and services consistent with their unique needs.

Students who may need reasonable accommodations in class must initiate contact with the [ISTL office](#) identifying the disability and request accommodations(s). A reasonable accommodation is an accommodation that provides the student with equal access to the academic course or program, including all course or program materials, but does not impose an undue burden on the institute or constitute a fundamental alteration to the course or program in question. Only students with documented disabilities that prevent equal access to an academic course or program are entitled to reasonable accommodations.

Once the email is sent, the ISTL office may then ask for official documentation and professional recommendations for accommodations. When the documentation is completed, the student must consent to the ISTL office’s sharing the need for accommodation(s) with the student’s professors. Once identified the accommodations will remain in effect until the student graduates or formally withdraws from ISTL.

GRADUATION

When you approach graduation, the ISTL office will contact you with all the necessary information and instructions.

AFTER GRADUATION: Alumni

After graduation, each graduate becomes a member of ISTL alumni. Learning Lifestyle is a continuing process and a core value of ISTL; therefore, any graduate is invited to continue learning by:

1. Inviting them for free to the conferences that ISTL conducts.
2. Inviting them for free to the extracurricular courses at ISTL.
3. Giving them priority in the invite and registration to the courses that [TCM International Institute](#) offers for Audits (the fee is applied).

COMPLAINTS

Official complaints by students or other constituents may be made in writing to the ISTL office (info@istl.al) and will be addressed within 30 days.

CONTACTS

To contact us, please use +355676968726, info@istl.al, or the addresses listed below.

Academic Dean	avdmaas@gzb.nl
Moodle Consultant	enxhitashi@istl.al
Library	library@istl.al
Student Services	istlalbania@gmail.com
Travel & Fees	erindreca@istl.al

This Handbook is published for the purpose of providing information about ISTL Albania policies and procedures. Announcements contained herein are subject to change without notice and may not be regarded in the nature of binding obligations to the ISTL.

ISTL Albania reserves the right to change prices, schedules, policies, and practices as described in this Handbook as circumstances, efficiency of operations, and fiscal contingencies may require.