

Academic Programs & Policies

Since there is no higher calling in life than to be a proclaimer of God's Word, there is no more worthy enterprise than training faithful men to carry out that charge. The Master's Seminary seeks to fulfill this charge by offering six degree programs:

Master of Divinity (M.Div.), Bachelor of Theology (B.Th.), Diploma of Theology (Dip.Th.), Master of Theology (Th.M.), Doctor of Theology (Th.D.), and Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.).

THE MASTER OF DIVINITY

Purpose

The Master of Divinity curriculum provides a basic three-year program in graduate theological education for those preparing for church or mission vocations requiring ordination. The program is designed to provide a broad biblical, theological, and practical foundation for those entering pastoral, missionary, or other Christian education ministries. The program may also provide a basis for further graduate study leading to such degrees as Master of Theology (Th.M.), Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.), Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), or Doctor of Theology (Th.D.).

In fulfilling the mission of the seminary, as stated and elaborated earlier in this catalog, the Master of Divinity program focuses on three areas of special emphasis: biblical theological understanding, personal growth, and professional preparation. The emphasis on a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Bible is demonstrated throughout the curriculum, especially in direct Bible study courses, and in the biblical language, hermeneutics, and theology courses. The emphasis on personal growth is demonstrated in the required discipleship labs, chapels, and in significant portions of the field education and pastoral ministries courses. The emphasis on professional development is demonstrated primarily through the pastoral ministries, expository preaching, ordination, and counseling courses.

Included in the three broad areas of emphasis outlined above, the Master of Divinity program also intends to:

- Emphasize the primacy of the local church in commissioning for ministry and as the institutional focus for spiritual accountability
- Cultivate an attitude of devotion and worship
- Instill and nurture a missionary and evangelistic zeal
- Encourage growth in godliness, especially as demonstrated in an attitude of love and ministry as a servant, while developing the appropriate skills for leadership
- Advance ability in independent and constructive thought in areas relating to ministry and contemporary concerns
- Promote growth in self-discipline, reading habits, and methodologies so that independent study may be continued as a pattern of life and ministry

The Highest Calling

“A low view of the functions of the ministry will naturally carry with it a low conception of the training necessary for it. . . . And a high view of the functions of the ministry on evangelical lines inevitably produces a high conception of the training which is needed to prepare men for the exercise of these high functions.”

—B.B. Warfield

Admission Requirements

In addition to the general admission requirements listed later in this catalog, enrollment in the Master of Divinity program requires possession of a baccalaureate degree, or the academic equivalent, from an approved institution, with a cumulative grade point average of 2.75 or above (on a 4.0 scale) for all undergraduate work. Applicants who are graduates of unaccredited institutions or who present grade point averages lower than 2.75 may be considered for probationary admission status if their references include unusually high commendations for potential ministry.

Applicants to the program are also expected to present a full program of beginning Greek from the undergraduate level. Applicants without this prerequisite are required to take Beginning Greek at The Master's Seminary (usually in the summer prior to the first or second year of the program) but these credits are in addition to the hours required for graduation.

Graduates of Bible colleges, Christian liberal arts colleges, and secular colleges and universities are encouraged to apply. The seminary recommends that pre-seminary studies include a broad exposure to general education subjects. Normally this should include a minimum of 60 semester hours of liberal arts subjects. In particular, we recommend that adequate attention should be devoted to English composition, literature, speech, logic, and history—especially ancient and world history. Bible courses are also recommended, providing the student is attending an institution where such courses are competently taught in a context of faith and obedience.

Candidacy Status

All students anticipating graduation must first qualify by admission to candidacy status. Admission to candidacy status is the result of faculty evaluations, described below, and constitutes a faculty recommendation that the student be considered as a candidate for graduation, assuming the satisfactory completion of all graduation requirements.

Candidacy Requirements

Admission to the seminary and satisfactory completion of academic requirements are not a guarantee of graduation. Since the seminary's programs are designed to qualify its graduates for positions of pastoral leadership, the faculty and administration will also evaluate annually each student's personal, spiritual, doctrinal, and professional qualifications, qualifications without which any attempt to serve or fill a role in a ministry of the gospel can result in nothing but personal tragedy. The seminary reserves the right to withdraw the privileges of enrollment from those whom after admission may prove to be lacking in these necessary qualifications.

The character qualities, knowledge, and skills described earlier in this catalog as personalized objectives will also serve as a standard for evaluation of progress and for admission to candidacy. Absolute fulfillment of these objectives is an ideal which will never be accomplished but should always be in process. What is expected is evidence of progress toward these objectives, continuing evidence of potential for such progress, increasing desire for such progress, and a genuine repentance when there is failure in evidencing such progress.

Official admission to candidacy status involves two stages and must receive final approval by June 1 following completion of the second year of seminary studies or, for part-time students, by the same date, following completion of 60 hours of seminary credits. Following each year of seminary, the faculty will assess the appropriateness of the student's vocational and educational goals in light of demonstrated abilities and attitudes. Academic records, field education evaluations, discipleship lab involvement, and evidence of continuing personal growth as demonstrated in chapel attendance,

church ministries, etc., may all be examined in these candidacy evaluations. Following evaluation, the Vice President for Academic Administration, or another assigned faculty member will counsel with any students whose progress toward candidacy is questioned and will, by June 1, advise any students for whom candidacy and/or continued enrollment is denied.

Program Requirements

Residence—Master of Divinity students must complete the prescribed three-year curriculum, comprising a minimum of 98 semester hours of credit, with a cumulative grade point average of not less than 2.5. Students transferring from other seminaries may be granted a maximum of 48 semester hours of credit, providing the work conforms to the academic and theological standards of the seminary. The last 12 hours of credit applied toward the degree must be earned in residence at The Master's Seminary unless the student has completed a total of 80 hours or more at The Master's Seminary.

Master of Divinity Thesis—A thesis is optional for Master of Divinity students; however, those who earn a grade point average of 3.25 or higher during their first two years (60 hours) of seminary studies are encouraged to write an original thesis demonstrating their ability to perform biblical and theological research at a scholarly level. The thesis must involve the exegesis of Scripture, employing the original languages as appropriate, either for the purpose of clarifying the meaning of some term(s) or passage(s) in Scripture; or for the purpose of clarifying the biblical evidence relating to some issue(s) of theological or pastoral significance. The thesis must contain not fewer than 50 nor more than 70 pages of text material, with approval based upon literary quality and theological content. Four hours of academic credit, as a part of the 98 hours required for the Master of Divinity degree, will be granted for the thesis project. The student may select a faculty adviser for his thesis project, dependent upon the faculty member's availability and consent, and upon approval of the Vice President for Academic Administration.

In fulfilling the thesis requirements the following deadlines must be observed: (1) The student must register for "M.Div. Thesis" (in the approved area of study) for the final semester prior to scheduled graduation; (2) Topic approval must be secured by the first Friday in September; (3) A first draft, including an adequate bibliographical listing, must be submitted by the second Friday in January; (4) An approved presentation copy, and a photocopy, must be submitted by the first Friday in April. The Master of Divinity thesis must be prepared in conformity with the most recent editions of the seminary's "Guidelines for Theses and Dissertations" and Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Where these sources differ, the seminary's "Guidelines" takes precedence.

Program Flexibility—Graduates of Bible colleges and Christian liberal arts colleges are encouraged to apply to the Vice President for Academic Administration for a *waiver* of any course considered to be repetitious of previous education. When Old Testament Studies or New Testament Studies courses are waived it is required that they be replaced by advanced (preferably exegesis) elective courses in the same discipline. A waiver does not grant credit; it only allows an otherwise required course to be replaced by an elective course. In no case does The Master's Seminary grant credit for course work taken at the undergraduate level.

English Proficiency—All students are required to take a basic English proficiency exam as a part of orientation procedures for the first semester of their enrollment. Students who fail to demonstrate an adequate understanding of basic grammatical features such as the identification of parts of speech, grammatical inflections, and syntactical structures within sentences, will be required to take

the English Refresher supplementary class during Orientation. The Vice President for Academic Administration must approve any exceptions. Students who pass the English proficiency exam but sense a need for more training in English will also be permitted to take these supplementary classes. No additional credit is given for this supplemental course work and no additional tuition is charged.

Time Limitation—All work credited toward the Master of Divinity degree must be completed within six years from the time of matriculation. Any exceptions will be considered only in cases when the student is involved in a full-time ministry, and must receive the approval of the entire faculty.

Graduation Requirements

In addition to the requirements specified in the preceding paragraphs, which include completion of 98 semester hours of credit with a grade point average of 2.5 or above, and admission to candidacy status, each candidate must submit an official Application for Graduation when registering for their final semester prior to graduation. Transfer students must complete at least 50 semester hours of credit at The Master's Seminary. All graduates must be present at the commencement ceremonies unless excused on the basis of a written appeal to the Vice President for Academic Administration. Graduation in absentia will be permitted only in cases of personal emergency or undue hardship.

Master of Divinity Curriculum

Students entering without Beginning Greek are encouraged to enroll in Hebrew Grammar I and II for the first year, enroll in Beginning Greek during the summer between the first and second year (this is in addition to the required 98 hours), and take Greek Exegesis I and II during the second year. An alternative is to enroll in Beginning Greek during the summer prior to the first year, then take Greek Exegesis I and II during the first year and Hebrew Grammar I and II the second year.

Students enrolling in The Master's Seminary have one opportunity to pass the Greek proficiency exam, that is the time when they first enter the seminary. Anyone not passing the proficiency exam at their first sitting or anyone not taking the exam when offered at the start of their first semester on campus will be required to enroll in and pass NT 401 and 402 as part of his seminary curriculum before enrolling in NT 603. Grades earned will be factored into the student's grade point average. Those who pass the Greek proficiency exam are expected to enroll in Greek Exegesis I and II for the first year and in Hebrew Grammar I and II for the second year.

Students are encouraged to apply for a waiver of any course considered to be repetitious of previous education. This is especially encouraged for BI 501, 502 and BI 601. If approved, a waiver grants no credit but allows the student to take elective credits instead of the required course(s). Successful completion of proficiency exams, given at the beginning of each school year, is necessary for waiving BI 501, 502, and BI 601. As with the Greek proficiency exam, students wishing to waive these courses must sit the exam when they first enter seminary. Taking the exams at a later time is not permitted.

Students are encouraged to participate in a cross-cultural experience, either in another country or in an area ethnic church, during the senior year or the preceding summer.

Standard Three Year Master of Divinity Program

Junior Year

<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>
BI 501 OT Studies I 4.0	BI 502 OT Studies II 4.0
BI 505 Hermeneutics..... 2.0	BI 504 Prayer..... 2.0
OT 503 Hebrew Grammar I 4.0	OT 504 Hebrew Grammar II..... 4.0
TH 507 Historical Theology I 3.0	TH 508 Historical Theology II 3.0
PM 507A Introduction to Preaching 2.0	PM 512A Field Ed: Pastoral Counseling 2.0
PM 511 Field Ed: Church Ministries 1.0	PM 522 Discipleship Lab II <u>0.5</u>
PM 521 Discipleship Lab I <u>0.5</u>	15.5
16.5	
<u>Summer</u>	
NT 400 Beginning Greek I & II..... 4.0	
BI 506 The Pastor's Home..... <u>2.0</u>	
6.0	

Middler Year

<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>
BI 601 NT Studies 4.0	NT 604 Greek Exegesis II 4.0
OT 603 Hebrew Exegesis I..... 2.0	OT 604 Hebrew Exegesis II..... 2.0
NT 603 Greek Exegesis I..... 4.0	TH 606 Theology II 3.0
TH 605 Theology I 3.0	PM 606 Expository Preaching I 3.0
PM 612 Field Ed: Worship & Music..... 1.0	PM 611 Field Ed: Discipleship & Leadership 1.0
PM 621 Discipleship Lab III..... 0.5	PM 622 Discipleship Lab IV 0.5
Elective <u>2.0</u>	Elective..... <u>2.0</u>
16.5	15.5

Senior Year

<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>
BI 701 Ordination Preparation 2.0	OT 796 OT Introduction 3.0
TH 701 Apologetics and Evangelism..... 4.0	NT 796 NT Introduction..... 3.0
TH 705 Theology III 4.0	TH 706 Theology IV..... 4.0
PM 703 Expository Preaching II 3.0	PM 711 Field Ed: Church Administration 1.0
PM 712 Field Ed: Pastoral Ministries 3.0	PM 722 Discipleship Lab VI 0.5
PM 721 Discipleship Lab V..... <u>0.5</u>	Elective..... 2.0
16.5	Elective..... <u>2.0</u>
	15.5

“Three Years in Four” Master of Divinity Program

Because of economic, family, or ministry responsibilities, students often find it necessary to lengthen their time in seminary. Extended seminary programs, however, regularly create their own set of disadvantages, including longer term family and economic pressures, numerous scheduling conflicts, and lessened involvement in chapels and other seminary community activities. In an attempt to alleviate some of the pressures, while at the same time discouraging longer delays, the seminary faculty has designed a “Three Years in Four” curriculum. Students who follow the curriculum below will be able to avoid the schedule conflicts which usually result from random deferrals while completing all degree requirements within four years.

First Year	
<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>
BI 505 Hermeneutics 2.0	BI 504 Prayer 2.0
OT 503 Hebrew Grammar I 4.0	OT 504 Hebrew Grammar II 4.0
BI 501 OT Studies I 4.0	BI 502 OT Studies II 4.0
PM507A Introduction to Preaching 2.0	PM512A Field Ed: Pastoral Counseling 2.0
PM 511 Field Ed: Church Ministries 1.0	PM 522 Discipleship Lab II <u>0.5</u>
PM 521 Discipleship Lab I <u>0.5</u>	12.5
13.5	
<u>Summer</u>	
NT 400 Beginning Greek I and II 4.0	
BI 506 The Pastor’s Home <u>2.0</u>	
6.0	

Second Year	
<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>
TH 507 Historical Theology I 3.0	TH 508 Historical Theology II 3.0
OT 603 Hebrew Exegesis I 2.0	OT 604 Hebrew Exegesis II 2.0
NT 603 Greek Exegesis I 4.0	NT 604 Greek Exegesis II 4.0
TH 605 Theology I 3.0	TH 606 Theology II 3.0
PM 621 Discipleship Lab III <u>0.5</u>	PM 622 Discipleship Lab IV <u>0.5</u>
12.5	
12.5	

Third Year

<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>
BI 601 NT Studies 4.0	TH 706 Theology IV..... 4.0
TH 701 Apologetics/Evangelism 4.0	PM 606 Expository Preaching I 3.0
TH 705 Theology III 4.0	PM 611 Field Ed: Discipleship & Leadership..... 1.0
PM 612 Field Ed: Worship & Music..... <u>1.0</u>	Elective..... <u>2.0</u>
13.0	10.0

Fourth Year

<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>
BI 701 Ordination Preparation..... 2.0	OT 796 OT Introduction 3.0
PM 703 Expository Preaching II 3.0	NT 796 NT Introduction 3.0
PM 712 Field Ed.: Pastoral Ministries..... 3.0	PM 711 Field Ed.: Church Administration 1.0
PM 721 Discipleship Lab V..... 0.5	PM 722 Discipleship Lab VI 0.5
Elective <u>2.0</u>	Elective..... 2.0
10.5	Elective..... <u>2.0</u>
	11.5

