


WESTERN
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

# ACADEMIC CATALOG

2026-2027

WESTERN
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



## Message from the President

Greetings!

I am so glad you have chosen to be a part of Western Theological Seminary, a Christ-centered community of learning that seeks to form women and men for faithful Christian ministry and participation in the Triune God's ongoing redemptive work in the world. We seek to foster a learning community that facilitates the formation of the whole person, and in doing so fulfill the greatest commandments—to love the Lord our God with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind, and all our strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Western Theological Seminary has equipped students for Christian service since 1866. It is my hope and desire that we will continue to prepare future leaders who will be ready to lead God's church in an increasingly diverse, pluralistic, and secularizing world. It is also my hope that we will continue to produce students who cultivate Christian wisdom.

Thank you for responding to God's call in your life and thank you for choosing Western Theological Seminary to be a significant part of your formation and preparation. May the Lord guide you, lead you, and sustain you during your studies here.

Blessings,

Dr. Felix Theonugraha
President

## Our Mission

By God's grace, Western Theological Seminary forms women and men for faithful Christian ministry and participation in the Triune God's ongoing redemptive work in the world.

### Ecumenical

We welcome students from many Christian traditions, and we offer graduate degree programs as well as continuing education for clergy and lay leaders in the church.

### The Curriculum

We center our curriculum on the Bible—its languages, history, themes, and interpretation. Built upon that foundation are studies in theology, ethics, pastoral care and counseling, preaching, worship, the history and traditions of the church, and more.

### Practical, Hands-on Approach

Throughout our degree programs, we are committed to teaching with attentiveness to the context of ministry. In some of our programs, you can also place your classroom learning in a ministry context as you work concurrently in a semester or summer-long internship.

### Accessible Faculty

Faculty/student ratio of 1:15

# Contents

**Message from the President** ..... 2
Ecumenical ..... 4
The Curriculum ..... 4
Practical, Hands-on Approach ..... 4
Accessible Faculty ..... 4
**Contents** ..... 3
**Statement of Theological Identity** ..... 8
**Statement on Forming Women for Ministry** ..... 9
**Statement on Racial and Ethnic Diversity** ..... 10
**Policy on Non-Harassment and Non-Discrimination (including Title IX)** ..... 13
Notice of Non-discrimination ..... 13
**Housing** ..... 14
Townhouses ..... 14
The Friendship House ..... 14
Applying for Housing ..... 14
Pricing ..... 14
**Financial Information** ..... 15
Financial Aid ..... 15
**2026-2027 Tuition and Fee Schedule** ..... 16
Drop Dates ..... 16
**Academic Policy and Procedures** ..... 17
Statement of Educational Opportunity ..... 17
Academic Requirements for Admission ..... 17
English Proficiency for Applicants Whose First Language is Not English ..... 17
Student Financial Aid ..... 18
Federal Work Study ..... 18
Ordination Procedures ..... 18
Student Orientation ..... 18
Transfer Credit Policies ..... 18

Student Registration ..... 19
Advising ..... 19
Drop/Adds/Withdraws ..... 20
Auditors ..... 20
Criteria for Canceling a Course ..... 20
Relationship Between In-Residence and Distance Learning Courses ..... 20
Required Course Substitutions ..... 21
Biblical Language Requirement, MDiv Program ..... 21
Directed Study ..... 21
Standards for Student Workload ..... 21
Class Attendance and Participation ..... 22
Writing Guidelines ..... 22
Inclusive Language Policy ..... 23
Plagiarism ..... 23
Grading ..... 24
Teaching Assistants ..... 26
Accessibility Policies ..... 26
Academic Probation ..... 26
Course and Material Access at Conclusion of the Semester ..... 28
Ways to Conclude Studies ..... 28
Exit Interviews for Master's Degree Programs ..... 30
Readmission ..... 30
**In-Residence Master of Divinity** ..... 31
Requirements for the Degree ..... 31
The Abbey ..... 31
Practice of Ministry Internships ..... 31
Intercultural Immersion Experience ..... 32
**Distance Learning Master of Divinity** ..... 34
Semester Schedule ..... 34
Technology Requirements ..... 35
The Abbey ..... 35
Practice of Ministry Internship ..... 35
Intercultural Immersion Experience ..... 36

**Dual Track Master of Divinity-Master of Social Work** ..... 38
Program Design ..... 38
Cohort Learning Groups ..... 39
Unique Ministry ..... 39
**Master of Arts in Biblical Studies** ..... 42
Distinctives of the Program ..... 42
Semester Schedule ..... 42
**Master of Arts in Christian Ministry** ..... 44
Distinctives of the Program ..... 44
Semester Schedule ..... 44
**Master of Arts in Christian Studies** ..... 46
Distinctives of the Program ..... 46
Semester Schedule ..... 46
**Master of Arts in Disability and Ministry** ..... 48
Distinctives of the Program ..... 48
Semester Schedule ..... 48
**Master of Arts in Theological Studies** ..... 50
Distinctives of the Program ..... 50
Semester Schedule ..... 50
**Master of Theological Studies** ..... 52
Distinctives of the Program ..... 52
Semester Schedule ..... 52
**Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling** ..... 55
**Master of Divinity-Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Dual Degree** ..... 59
**Master of Theology** ..... 61
**Doctor of Ministry** ..... 62
Expectations of Student Progress ..... 62
**Graduate Certificate in Disability and Ministry** ..... 64
**Graduate Certificate in Pastoral Ministry** ..... 66
GCPM (offered in Spanish or English) ..... 66
GCPM in Soul Care ..... 66
**Graduate Certificate in Restorative Justice** ..... 68
**Non-Degree-Seeking Students** ..... 70

**Partnerships** ..... 71
The Hope-Western Prison Education Program (HWPEP) ..... 71
Young Life (YL) ..... 71
Church Leadership Center (CLC) ..... 71
Soul Care Institute (SCI) ..... 71
Vita Scholars ..... 71
**Resources** ..... 72
Academic Office ..... 72
Writing Studio ..... 72
Student Life ..... 72
Cook Library ..... 73
**Faculty** ..... 74
Biblical Field ..... 74
Christian Ministry Field ..... 74
Clinical Mental Health Counseling Field ..... 74
Theological Field ..... 75
Emeriti and Retired Professors ..... 75
**Board of Trustees** ..... 77
2026-2027 Members ..... 77
**Staff** ..... 78
Office of the President ..... 78
Academic and Student Life ..... 78
Admissions ..... 79
Advancement ..... 79
Marketing/Communications ..... 79
Business ..... 79
Finance ..... 79
Human Resources ..... 80
Building and Grounds ..... 80
Cook Library ..... 80
Churches in Mission Grant ..... 80
Compelling Preaching Initiative ..... 80
Nurturing Children with Disabilities Grant ..... 80

Hope-Western Prison Education Program ..... 80
Eugene Peterson Center ..... 80
**Affiliated Ministries** ..... 81
The Bridge ..... 81
**Courses** ..... 82
**2026-2027 Academic Calendar** ..... 101
**Quick Facts** ..... 102
Appendix A: Seminary Policy Regarding Records (FERPA Title IX) ..... 103
Policy Regarding Use of Social Security Numbers ..... 103
Policy Regarding Student Records ..... 103
Policy Regarding Faculty and Staff Records ..... 106
Appendix B: Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid/Return of Title IV Funds ..... 108
Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid ..... 108
Completion Time ..... 108
Title IV Aid and Institutional Funds ..... 108
Appeal Procedure ..... 108
Return of Title IV Funds Policy ..... 109
Appendix C: Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes ..... 111
MASTER OF DIVINITY ..... 111
MASTER OF ARTS ..... 112
MASTER OF ARTS IN CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING ..... 112
MASTER OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES ..... 113
MASTER OF THEOLOGY ..... 113
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY ..... 113
GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN DISABILITY AND MINISTRY ..... 114
GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN PASTORAL MINISTRY ..... 114
GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ..... 114

# Statement of Theological Identity

## Preamble

Western Theological Seminary, as led by the Board of Trustees, the administration, and the faculty, sincerely confesses the historic Christian faith, approached from within the Reformed tradition. We celebrate our commonality in Christ with Christians of other denominations and of no denomination. As such, we welcome students from a variety of Christian traditions and partnerships from a range of Christian ministries, without requiring them to agree with these faculty commitments. And yet, we also embrace the Reformed tradition as a gift to the larger church. In light of Western Theological Seminary's mission and identity, together with our faculty statement on women in ministry, we present this as a statement of our faculty commitments as we teach, write, and serve Christ's church.

## Commitment to the Historic Christian Faith

Together with the church through the ages, we worship and glorify the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, gladly confessing God as Trinity as expressed in the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. We confess that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully human in one person, the one mediator and Savior of the world. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, living in perfect communion with the Father. He was crucified under Pontius Pilate and arose bodily from the grave. He ascended into heaven from where he reigns over all things as living Lord and serves as our high priest and advocate. In his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, Christ redeems us from our sin and wins victory over the finality of death and the powers of darkness. Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead, and to establish the fullness of his reign in the new creation.

Through the work of the Holy Spirit, we receive forgiveness and new life in Christ to live as adopted children of the Father. Trusting in the Spirit rather than our own strength or righteousness, we seek to live lives that love God supremely and others sacrificially as we participate in the redeeming work that the Spirit is doing in all of creation. We proclaim the gospel with love and boldness, calling people from all nations to repentance, faith, and new life in Jesus Christ by the power of the Spirit. The Spirit joins us to the body of Christ, the church, through which we are nourished by word and sacrament and sent out in mission. We are called to seek reconciliation of the alienated in Christ, to pursue justice for the poor and the oppressed, and to care well for God's good creation. Until Christ returns to make all things new, we hope in God's promise and lament sin and injustice, we sing for joy and cry tears of sorrow, praying for God's kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven.

## Commitment to the Reformed Theological Tradition

We embrace the Reformed theological tradition as our way of confessing the historic Christian faith. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God. The Bible is the supreme authority in faith and life, infallible in what it intends to teach. Illumined by the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures are central to our life, for we encounter the living God as we receive them in myriad ways, including as we hear, read, sing, study, and meditate upon them. We also accept these Reformed confessions—the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dort, and the Belhar Confession—as secondary authorities, and as historic and faithful witnesses to the word of God in Scripture. They exposit the historic Christian faith, expressing distinctive Reformed positions on the sacraments, salvation, the church, and many other points of doctrine. Recognizing that not all of our partners in ministry share a commitment to these Reformed confessions, we seek to act generously toward those who belong to other Christian

traditions, especially as this relates to doctrines in dispute. Nevertheless, we celebrate the wide and spacious scope of Reformed doctrine expressed in the Reformed confessions, and we value them as witnesses to the gospel and to God's word in Scripture. We seek to learn from others, as we also eagerly share the gifts of the Reformed tradition for the larger church.

### Embodying our Faith

We also understand that Christian traditions are not simply things of the past but are lived out in communities of faith empowered by the Holy Spirit to live according to the word of God to the glory of the Father in the present. Therefore, we are also committed to faithfully and creatively embodying the historic treasures we have received in our scholarship, teaching, and life together. We joyfully acknowledge that all that we do flows from worship and returns to worship. WTS is simultaneously an academic community and a worshiping community, committed to soaking in the word alongside our study of it and to celebrating the Lord's Supper every week in chapel. We also seek to be a community that gives and receives gospel hospitality in a variety of ways, such as the Community Kitchen, the Friendship House, and our growing ecumenical, intercultural, and international connections. These commitments flow from our calling to be a deeply formational community, inside and outside the classroom, across and beyond the teaching curriculum. In this way, we seek to foster practices and ways of being that will enable students to be formed as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ and to engage faithfully in a variety of ministries. In these ways and more, we desire to live out our historic Christian and Reformed identity in ways that are faithful, creative, generative, and generous.

## Statement on Forming Women for Ministry

Western Theological Seminary upholds the full participation of women in the life and ministry of the church. Throughout Scripture, we see God calling and appointing women to teach, preach, and lead God's people. We uphold the biblical witness as we prepare women and men to lead the church in mission. As a faculty, we also want to declare clearly our unwavering and unanimous commitment to the education and ordination of women to all forms and offices of ministry and leadership to which they have been called by God—whether inside or outside the church—including the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. In welcoming women students to all of its programs and encouraging women in their vocations, we as an institution have a steadfast commitment to the women we welcome, which includes our commitment to establish an environment in which their education and calling will be properly nurtured and affirmed. We expect all who join our faculty to abide by this commitment.

At the same time, we recognize that the role of women and the status of the leadership and ordination of women is a point of disagreement in many denominations, churches, Christian organizations, and among some of our students. We are dedicated to being a community that upholds academic freedom and the free discussion of ideas inside and outside the classroom when done in the spirit of faith, seeking understanding. We do not believe that differences of opinion on this matter should keep Christians from maintaining fellowship with one another or celebrating the Lord's Supper together. Therefore, we welcome men and women students who hold different views on the matter of the role and ministries of women and seek to support all of our students in their God-given callings. We also want to nurture ties with churches and institutions that hold different views. We do expect, however, that all students, regardless of their personal convictions, will acknowledge the full rights and status of all their fellow students in their degree program.

Maintaining these commitments well requires practical wisdom. May the Triune God pour bountiful wisdom and grace on our entire community as we all—students, staff, Board of Trustees, and

faculty—seek to follow the one who prayed "that they be completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" [(John 17:23) (August 2024)].

## Statement on Racial and Ethnic Diversity

### Summary

From the very beginning, Scripture is clear that all people are created in the image of God without distinction of race or ethnicity (e.g. Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 9:6) and that the blessings of God are for all peoples and nations (e.g. Genesis 12:1-3, Isaiah 2:1-4). Above all, we see that for all who are in Christ, there are no grounds for division based on ethnicity or race. Race is a purely cultural construct, although it exerts tremendous power in the world. Our identity in Christ incorporates and celebrates our social identities such as race and ethnicity. We are united to Christ by the Spirit through faith, such that none may boast over another (Galatians 3:26-29; Ephesians 2:11-22; Colossians 3:11); and yet our oneness in Christ also includes our distinct racial and ethnic identities, which was God's intentional design and will continue to be affirmed and celebrated into the eschaton (e.g. Revelation 7:9-10).

At Western Theological Seminary, we long to embody more fully that to which the Gospel calls us, and of which our standards remind us, regarding racial and ethnic diversity. We affirm the biblical practices of peacemaking and racial reconciliation. God calls us to love our neighbors and to be agents of reconciliation in the world.

We are also committed to the biblical practices of justice. We strive to grow in in racial reconciliation and justice by embodying the biblical value of mutuality. We desire to facilitate true equality among all our members of various ethnic, gender, and racial backgrounds. We commit to relating to one another with honor, fairness, and respect.

Finally, we affirm in Christ-centered unity in diversity. We seek to provide an educational context through which our students will learn to lead and serve in diverse intercultural and international contexts. We strive to become a Christ-centered learning community that is racially and ethnically diverse. We also commit to be a hospitable learning community that provides opportunities for students to learn from and with those who come from different backgrounds.

It is our hope that through these commitments, students will experience formative and transformative experiences that equip them to become more faithful Christians and leaders in this world.

### The Rationale

Our Reformed confessional standards remind us that the church cannot be delimited by any particular place or people (Belgic Confession, Article 27); that [all followers of Christ are] called to proclaim the gospel without differentiation or discrimination to all nations and people (Canons of Dordt, Second Main Point of Doctrine, Article 5); and that it is the gift and the obligation of the church to embody racial-ethnic unity-in-diversity, rejoicing in the variety of gifts that this brings to the body, and resisting whatever leads towards division along racial-ethnic lines (The Belhar Confession).

As a seminary, we confess our struggle to live into this well, individually and as an institution, and the

ways that we have created an environment that has been unwelcoming, frustrating, and discouraging for people who come from outside our predominantly white environment. We confess that we have not done enough to eliminate systems, policies, and practices that have upheld our status quo.

We therefore offer the following summary of what we affirm, what we reject, and what we seek to commit ourselves to, as individuals and as a community. We do this in order that we might live more deeply into this aspect of our calling, as those united to Christ and one another by the Spirit and looking towards the fullness of the coming reign of God.

1) **We affirm** that all human beings are in the image of God, and we uphold the full dignity and worth of all people of all racial and ethnic identities.

   **We therefore reject** any direct or indirect discrimination against, and devaluing or dishonoring of, any person on the grounds of race or ethnicity. In the power and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we commit to eliminating all forms of racial prejudice, individually, and in our institutional culture.

2) **We affirm** that God's people are called to be a channel of God's blessing to all nations, and that God's promises and purposes in Christ are for all people without racial or ethnic distinction.

   **We therefore reject** historic and contemporary ways of articulating and embodying the gospel that reinforce notions of white supremacy, and that privilege aspects of one racial or ethnic identity over another.

**In the power and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we commit to** embodying our identity as a Reformed, evangelical, ecumenical community in ways that are alert to how our predominantly white heritage has shaped us, and we commit to seeking to eliminate ways that this heritage has distorted our presentation of the gospel and our community life.

3) **We affirm** that in the Old Testament, Jesus' ministry, and in the New Testament church as it is empowered by the Spirit after his ascension, God crosses boundaries and welcomes those whom the majority culture regards as "strangers," such that distinctions remain, but walls of hostility and division are broken down. God, therefore, challenges thrones of unjust privilege such that all might have a chance to flourish.

   **We therefore reject** expressions of Christian community that foster insularity rather than engagement and that uphold privilege that excludes rather than embracing all. We also reject notions of oneness in Christ that tend towards the assimilation of diverse cultures within the dominant culture.

   **In the power and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we commit to** encouraging people of all races and ethnicities to join the WTS community, and to becoming a more truly hospitable place, such that people of all races and ethnicities feel genuinely welcomed, their distinctive contributions are valued, and their presence has a transforming influence on the community. We commit to fostering a healthy campus climate by providing intentional support to enable the flourishing of those who come to Western from outside the historically white-dominant culture.

4) **We affirm** that in the fullness of the coming kingdom, multitudes from every race and ethnicity will glorify God together with equal voice.

   **We therefore reject** the marginalizing of non-white voices in the present such that the critical and constructive contributions of people of all races and ethnicities to Christian life, worship, and teaching is sidelined.

   **In the power and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we commit to** a greater eagerness to hear from, learn with, and share the voices of people of diverse races and ethnicities whose contributions have often been absent from or marginalized in our life and teaching at WTS.

## Conclusion

In this, and in all our commitments, we seek to glorify the Triune God, at Western Theological Seminary, in our churches and ministries, and in the wider world, in ways that more closely approximate the communion with the Triune God and one another that we will share in the life to come.

# Policy on Non-Harassment and Non-Discrimination (including Title IX)

**Jon Dockery**
Interim Title IX Coordinator

It is the purpose of Western Theological Seminary to form women and men for faithful Christian ministry and participation in the Triune God's ongoing redemptive work in the world. Toward this end, WTS seeks to foster a community of faith and learning that reflects the Kingdom of God, allowing for the flourishing of all its members in Jesus Christ.

As we strive for this ideal, we acknowledge that because we are sinful individuals, we are also a fallen community, influenced by old habits and hidden prejudices. There are times when we harm others through our words, actions, and even institutional policies and traditions. There are circumstances in which we fail to do justice or love mercy. In such instances, we commit to face our wrongdoing: to listen, to talk, to pray, and when we fall short, to confess our sin and accept God's forgiveness as we seek understanding, justice, healing, and reconciliation.

It is to this end that the WTS Policy on Non-Harassment and Non-Discrimination has been developed in alignment with legal requirements of Title IX and the state of Michigan. We seek not only to fulfill requirements of the law, but also by God's grace and direction, to live and grow as members of a community of faith and learning that seeks to faithfully and fully love God and one other.

## Notice of Non-discrimination

Western Theological Seminary does not discriminate in admissions, employment, and educational programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, marital or family status, disability, height, weight, genetic information, and other prohibited characteristics in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and ordinances.

As a religious institution, the seminary reserves the right to make admissions, employment, and education decisions on the basis of religious criteria, based on the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and various relevant statutes.

For inquiries regarding the policy and complaints of harassment or discrimination, contact:

Jon Dockery, Interim Title IX Coordinator
Western Theological Seminary
101 East 13th Street, Holland, MI 49423
Phone 1-616-372-3619

Inquiries and complaints may also be referred to:

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
www.ed.gov/about/ed-offices/ocr

More info at: www.westernsem.edu/title-ix-resources/

# Housing

Housing options at Western seek to build community among students.

## Townhouses

WTS Red Brick townhouses are designed for single occupancy, co-tenants, and families. They encircle a commons area with picnic tables, a playground, and plenty of room for gatherings. The townhouses are available in 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom units, and each includes air-conditioning, a washer and dryer, as well as major kitchen appliances.

**Housing**

**Jon Dockery**
CFO and Vice President of Finance

**Tamara Buikema**
Finance Associate

**Dr. Carlos Thompson**
Friendship House Director

## The Friendship House

Because more than forty million Americans live with a disability, WTS decided to do more to prepare our students to work with these individuals and their families. In 2007, the Ralph and Cheryl Schregardus Friendship House opened, offering students a unique housing option—the opportunity to live alongside a young adult with a cognitive disability. This was the first residence of its kind among seminaries across the United States.

The Ralph and Cheryl Schregardus Friendship House accommodates seminary students (including a resident director) and people with cognitive impairments. Each special-needs adult shares an apartment with seminary students, engaging in friendships yet functioning independently. By living with people who have cognitive impairments, Western students become more aware of the challenges faced by people with a variety of disabilities. Students who live in the Friendship House take their experiences into the church— influencing congregations and ministries with the care and sensitivity people with special needs deserve.

## Applying for Housing

After being accepted to Western and submitting a $250 confirmation fee, students can apply for housing by completing the housing request form or by contacting the Business Office at 616-372-3619 or jon.dockery@westernsem.edu. Housing is awarded per the Housing Policy on a first-come, first-served basis.

## Pricing

For WTS students, townhouse and rentals range from $920 to $1,125 per month in 2026-2027, depending upon the location and number of bedrooms. Rent in the Friendship House is specific to the unit and the room for WTS students. Utilities may be included in rent as described in the respective rental agreements.

# Financial Information

Western's financial aid program is designed to help students meet their educational expenses as they prepare for Christian ministry.

For a full-time in-residence MDiv or MA student, the total cost of educational and living expenses for nine months ranges from around $34,000 for single students to approximately $37,000 for married students. Full-time distance learning MDiv or MA students can expect educational, traveling, and living expenses around $27,000 per year (single) or $32,000 (with dependents). Living costs are variable for students in this program and depend upon regional factors.

### Financial Aid/Business Office

**Jon Dockery**
CFO and Vice President of Finance
616-372-3619

**Anna La Rosa**
Scholarships
616-372-3649

**Kerry Eshenaur**
Accounting Associate
616-372-3629

## Financial Aid

Upon admission to the WTS, prospective students are considered for institutional aid through various scholarship programs. Award letters are usually available within three weeks of the student being accepted.

### Payment Arrangements

**Degree seeking candidates:**
Students receive a tuition statement after the drop/add date. Changes to your class schedule do not affect your financial award percentage, such as reducing your credit hours.

Payment is due about two weeks after statements are published by one of three ways:

1) Cash, check, credit card
2) A student loan from the U.S. Dept. of Education (studentloans.gov) or through a private banking institution
3) Payment plan. A $25 administrative fee will be charged for each semester the student is on a payment plan of 4 or less monthly payments.

Students cannot begin a new semester with an outstanding balance. WTS will not require an eligible student to borrow additional funds to meet financial obligation due to a delay of a payment by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs including penalty of late fees or denial of access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities.

If a student cannot match expected expenses with equivalent income, savings, and assistance from his or her home congregation or denomination, the next step is to complete the government's FAFSA forms at studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa and contact the Financial Aid Coordinator to apply for a Need Based Award and/or federal student loan. Loans are granted through government programs but may also be procured through private banking institutions.

Financial aid awards, although presented as discounted percentages of tuition, are funded through endowed scholarships established by generous donors. Students are expected to thank their benefactors through written correspondence and may have the opportunity to meet them at annual scholarship gatherings. These awards range from 10% to 100% tuition reduction.

Students in eligible programs may borrow through federal student loan programs; these programs are serviced by AdminWise, on behalf of WTS. They can be reached at federalstudentaid@westernsem.edu.

## 2026-2027 Tuition and Fee Schedule

**Master of Divinity and Dual Track MDiv/MSW**

$625 per credit hour
$150 per credit hour to audit

$50 Application fee (non-refundable)
$250 Acceptance confirmation (applied toward tuition)
$100 Academic resource fee (each semester)
$750-$1500 Intercultural Immersion trip
$100 Graduation fee

**The cost of transportation, meals, and lodging for the on-campus Intensives are the responsibility of the student.*

**Master of Arts/Master of Theological Studies**

$625 per credit hour
$150 per credit hour to audit

$50 Application fee (non-refundable)
$250 Acceptance confirmation (applied toward tuition)
$100 Academic resource fee (each semester)
$100 Graduation fee
*CMHC students incur additional professional development fees (see CMHC Handbook).

**Master of Theology**

$625 per credit hour

$50 Application fee (non-refundable)
$150 Acceptance confirmation (applied toward tuition)
$100 Academic resource fee (each semester)
$100 Graduation fee
*A continuation fee of $100 is charged for each additional year beyond one year in the program.*

**Doctor of Ministry:**

$550 per credit hour (approx. $19,800 over three years)
Students enrolled prior to Fall 2022 will continue to pay the rate under which they were admitted.

$50 Application fee (non-refundable)
$250 Acceptance confirmation (applied toward tuition)
$100 Graduation fee
*A continuation fee of $750 is charged for each additional year beyond three years in the program.*

**Graduate Certificate Programs:**

**$625 per credit hour**

$50 Application fee (non-refundable)
$100 Graduation fee

Tuition and fees are subject to change each year. See current rates at: westernsem.edu/admissions/tuition-financial-aid/.

Graduate Certificate Programs:
Students in these 21-24 credit hour programs may qualify for financial awards, but do not qualify for student loans. See website for details: westernsem.edu/admissions/tuition-financial-aid/

## Drop Dates

Each semester the Registrar's office publishes a drop date for courses. This is usually seven calendar days after the start of the semester. A student will bear no academic or financial penalty for any course dropped prior to that date. In the first three weeks after the drop date, students can receive a 60% refund. Starting week five until the last day to withdraw from a course, students can receive a 30% refund. If the course is dropped after the last day to withdraw from a course all tuition is deemed non-refundable.

# Academic Policy and Procedures

## Statement of Educational Opportunity

Western Theological Seminary does not discriminate in admissions, employment, and educational programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, marital status, disability, height, weight, genetic information, and other prohibited characteristics in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and ordinances.

## Academic Requirements for Admission

Applicants to the MDiv and MA program and all applicants for certificate and non-degree seeking student status should have a Bachelor of Arts degree or its equivalent from an accredited college or university. Applicants to the ThM and DMin programs should have an MDiv degree or its educational equivalent.

Applicants must request that an official transcript of their college work be sent to the Western Theological Seminary admissions office for inclusion in the application file. A cumulative GPA of 2.50 or above is required for admission. In certain instances, an applicant with a cumulative GPA of less than 2.50 may be admitted on academic probation and upon satisfactory completion of the first semester's work, be matriculated. Students admitted on academic probation qualify for financial aid for one semester. A GPA of 2.50 must be achieved during that first semester to qualify for financial aid in subsequent semesters.

In accordance with ATS standards for the MDiv degree, some applicants may be admitted without possession of the baccalaureate degree or its educational equivalent, if such candidates can demonstrate by some objective means that they possess the knowledge, academic skill, and ability generally associated with persons who are capable of graduate level work.

Admission requirements for the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program include additional criteria and a program-specific admissions process, including interviews with program faculty. Admission decisions for that program are made by the CMHC program faculty. See the CMHC Program Handbook.

When considering applications from international students residing in countries outside of North America, the seminary weighs issues of access to theological training, English proficiency (see below, "English Proficiency for Applicants Whose First Language is Not English"), intercultural experience, and foundational preparation for ministry.

## English Proficiency for Applicants Whose First Language is Not English

Applicants to Western Theological Seminary degree programs whose first language is not English may be asked to demonstrate their proficiency in English through the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), TWE (Test of Written English) IELTS (International English Language Testing System), and Duolingo English Test. Such a request is made by the degree program committee to which the student has applied. In such circumstances, scores of 550 on the paper-based TOEFL or 80 on the internet-based TOEFL, 4 on the TWE exam, 6 on the IELTS exam, or 110 on the Duolingo English exam are normally

required for admission.

## Student Financial Aid

The Financial Aid Administrator works with students to procure financial aid. Students will be given a financial aid award at admittance. A request for additional federal aid requires completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Awards and discounts vary by program. Student loans are also available through the U.S. Department of Education Direct Loan Program.

## Federal Work Study

Federal Work Study (FWS) is a federally funded financial aid program administered by Western Theological Seminary. FWS is designed to assist students in meeting the cost of higher education and accessing meaningful work. A work study job allows the student to work a number of hours at a certain wage rate and receive a biweekly paycheck which they may use at their discretion. It is recommended that the funds be used for tuition, books, or living expenses. The federal government may subsidize a percentage of student wages earned in a FWS job. FWS is a need-based financial award. It is not a grant (you must work to earn it), and it is not a loan (you do not have to repay it). Students qualify for FWS by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and demonstrating financial need. Students must also be enrolled for the term in which they will be working. Funds are limited, so not every student who qualifies will receive FWS funds.

## Ordination Procedures

Each denomination has its own procedures for enrolling, supervising, and examining candidates for ordination. MDiv candidates should check with their pastors or denominational officers regarding specific instructions for ordination in their particular denomination. Western Theological Seminary works in close partnership with denominational boards and candidate committees responsible for the formation of men and women for ordained ministry.

## Student Orientation

Online Orientation for new and transfer MDiv and MA students will be available through Canvas three to four weeks prior to the start of classes. In-person orientation is open to all new and transfer MDiv and MA students and will be held the week prior to the start of classes. An additional In-person orientation will be held for MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling students prior to the start of classes. For information about ThM Orientation, see the ThM handbook.

## Transfer Credit Policies

The seminary accepts credits earned at other ATS accredited seminaries or other select fully accredited graduate programs offering courses comparable to those at the seminary. WTS will accept up to 57 transfer credits for the MDiv program, 27 credits for the MA program (not including the MA in CMHC), and 12 credits for a certificate program (ATS Standard 3.12). Transfer credits are not usually available for the DMin program. Additional requirements govern the transfer of credit into the MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program, including limits on which courses may be transferred and required review by the Director of the MA in CMHC Program. See the CMHC Program Handbook.

Courses with grades are eligible for transfer only if they receive a minimum grade of B- or its equivalent.

The seminary will accept up to 6 credits in which the student earned a pass grade instead of a letter grade. Generally, WTS will not accept courses earned more than ten years prior to the start of a program. In most cases, non-theological credits will not be accepted as transfer credits. A student may petition for up to 6 of the total number of elective credits to be filled using transfer courses that lack an explicitly theological dimension (e.g., general counseling or education courses) for the MDiv program. Credits transferred into the MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program must be graduate-level counseling courses; the provision regarding non-theological credits does not apply to that program.

Requests for transfer credit must be accompanied by a copy of the catalog description for each course. In those instances, in which the catalog description is not adequate for determining if a course is transferable, a copy of the course syllabus may be required. Students seeking to take one or more courses at another seminary while enrolled at the seminary should consult with the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA), the Associate Dean, or the Registrar to determine whether the credit(s) will be transferable. The seminary transfers in the credit hours but not the grade earned, therefore, the GPA is not affected by transfer credits.

## Student Registration

The Registrar distributes registration materials to students who are responsible for registering for courses. Registration may be done for an entire academic year or by semester. Change in registration may be made until the drop/add date of each academic term. See "Drops/Add/Withdraws" below for further details.

Students are not permitted to attend classes in which they are not registered.

Any student whose financial account with the seminary is more than 90 days past due will not be permitted to register for courses until the account is brought up to date, or until a mutually acceptable repayment plan is worked out between the student and the VP of Finance.

Non-degree-seeking students are not permitted to register for more than 15 credits without explicit permission from the VPAA, which is only granted under unusual circumstances. They are also not usually permitted to register for Directed studies or Internship courses.

## Advising

- MDiv and MA Advising
    - Academic advising for MA in CMHC students is provided by the Director of the MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program.
    - Academic advising for MDiv and all other MA students is overseen by the Registrar.
- ThM Advising
    - The ThM program director assigns faculty advisors for each ThM candidate, with the consent of the VPAA.
- DMin Advising
    - The focused-track, cohort-based nature of the Doctor of Ministry program allows for the lead faculty of a DMin cohort to serve as the primary faculty mentor to students in the cohort. The director of the DMin program, with the consent of the VPAA, may assign other faculty mentors as deemed necessary.

- Advisors for Additional Programs
    - The Director of the Hispanic Ministries Program serves as the advisor for candidates in the Spanish-language GCPM. The Registrar serves as the advisor for candidates in the English-language GCPM.
    - The director of the GCDM serves as the advisor for candidates in this program.
    - The Registrar serves as the advisor to non-degree seeking students.

## Drop/Adds/Withdraws

Students may withdraw from a course after the drop/add deadline by making a request to the Registrar. Students may receive a 100% tuition refund if a class is dropped during the drop/add period. After the drop/add period, withdrawal will result in a W grade. The exact days of the drop/add period are defined by the academic calendar. Until the Friday of the fourth week of the semester, students can receive a 60% refund if a class is dropped. Starting week five until the last day to withdraw from a course (end of seventh week), students can receive a 30% refund. After the last day to withdraw, no refund will be given, and an F grade will be recorded.

| TIME PERIOD | GRADE | REFUND |
|---|---|---|
| Drop/Add Period | No grade listed | 100% refund |
| End of Drop/Add Period to end of fourth week of the semester | W | 60% refund |
| Start of fifth week to end of seventh week | W | 30% refund |
| Last day to withdraw to end of semester | F | 0% refund |

Exceptions may be made for emergencies or other situations (such as mental health challenges, newly diagnosed learning disabilities, family crises) that are reviewed and approved by the VPAA. For courses that take place outside the normal semester format, refunds will be evaluated by the Academic Office. Course withdrawals may impact eligibility for Title IV financial aid: see *Appendix B: Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid/Return of Title IV Funds* for details.

## Auditors

Auditors must contact the Registrar prior to the drop/add deadline to audit a class and are expected to attend regularly. Auditor status permits class attendance and participation in class activities. Admission to auditor status is granted by the Academic Office. Credit is not granted, and grades are not given for audited courses. Not all courses will accommodate auditors. Course audit fees are not covered by scholarships or financial aid.

## Criteria for Canceling a Course

When there are fewer than ten students registered for a course, the VPAA consults with the professor assigned to teach the course concerning cancellation of the course. The final decision regarding the cancellation of the course rests with the VPAA.

## Relationship Between In-Residence and Distance Learning Courses

In-residence (IR) and distance learning (DL) courses are completely interchangeable for all degree programs, so students may take what works for their needs and schedule. However, some IR MDiv financial aid awards do not allow for more than one DL course per semester. For that reason, MDiv

candidates should seek counsel from the Academic Office to determine financial aid eligibility and confirm course requirements.

## Required Course Substitutions

Under certain conditions, students may petition the Academic Office to substitute a higher-level course for a required course. These conditions include the students' previous educational experience, and the availability of required courses. A required course substitution form can be obtained from the Registrar. The student submits the completed form to the Academic Office for consideration.

## Biblical Language Requirement, MDiv Program

Students who have completed two semesters of a biblical language in their undergraduate coursework and received a "B-" or higher grade may petition the Academic Office to have the biblical language requirement waived.

Students who live with a medically diagnosed learning disability may petition the Academic Office for a language waiver. In addition to the written petition, the student is required to provide documentation of the medically diagnosed disability. The student is responsible for any financial expense attached to procuring appropriate documentation. Upon receiving the request, the Academic Office will consider the petition.

Students who are granted a biblical language requirement waiver will be required to substitute two upper-level biblical electives for biblical language credits.

## Directed Study

Students may take up to six credit hours as Directed study courses. A proposal form for a Directed study may be obtained from the Registrar. The student is to complete and sign the form and secure the signature of the professor who will direct the study. A completed Directed study form must include a proposed plan of study, including readings, assignments, research, and any other project deemed necessary for the integrity of the course. The completed form is returned to the Registrar for final approval by the VPAA. Approval is contingent upon such factors as faculty availability, the student's academic record, and the appropriateness of the study focus to the student's program. Proposals for Directed study must be approved prior to the beginning of the academic term in which the directed study is to be done. The proposal must be completed and submitted for approval two weeks before the first day the term begins.

## Standards for Student Workload

Each credit hour stands for 42 hours of work for an average seminary student. This work need not be evenly allocated throughout the entire semester, but it should not be too intensely concentrated either. The work for a course should be calculated by the following standard.

| | |
|---|---|
| **IR CLASS TIME** | 12 Hours per credit |
| **DL INTENSIVE CLASS TIME** | 3.0 credit course = 13.5 hours |
| **ASSIGNED READING** | 25 pages = 1 hour |
| **RESEARCH PAPERS** | 1 page (400-500 words) = 2 hours |

| | |
|---|---|
| **NON-RESEARCH WRITING (I.E. JOURNALS, REFELCTION, PAPERS, ETC.)** | 1 page = 1 hour |
| **EACH HOUR OF IN-CLASS EXAM TIME REQUIRES** | 3 hours prep time |
| **LISTENING/VIEWING MULTIMEDIA** | 1 minute listening = 1.5 minutes processing |
| **PREPARING ORIGINAL DISCUSSION POST AND REPLIES** | 250 words written = 1 hour |
| **OTHER ASSIGNMENTS** | Based on reasonable expectations of an average seminary student |

Using the calculator above, workload expectations for all courses are to be clearly identified in the course syllabus. Other kinds of work not listed in these calculators (particularly in the biblical languages) are more difficult to quantify. In addition, the amount of time required by different students may vary substantially. However, professors are expected to make a good faith effort to estimate the time commitment for these assignments for the average seminary student.

The margin of variance allowed for any course should be 10% higher or lower than the estimate given. In other words, if a task is estimated to take 120 minutes that should be within the range of 108 to132 minutes. These standards are intended to govern the design of courses.

WTS understands and expects that some students will need to spend more time than this to achieve acceptable academic performance. These standards are in no way to be used to define the maximum amount of time that any individual student needs to work to complete a course's requirements at an acceptable level of academic performance. It is a tool to help students plan their academic, professional, and personal time accordingly.

### Class Attendance and Participation

Participation in a learning community lies at the heart of theological education. Learning is a communal venture; therefore, class participation is required. A residential student should not miss more than a tenth of the class sessions for any one course. If more than a tenth of the class sessions are missed, professors may assign an appropriate academic penalty for the final grade of the course. Students who know in advance that they will miss more than one tenth of a class's sessions should not register for the course without permission from the instructor. Distance learning students must fully participate in all the online and intensive components of the course. When absence becomes necessary, it is common courtesy to inform the professor. When a professor is unable to meet a scheduled class, students are to be notified.

### Writing Guidelines

WTS expects all written submissions to correspond to accepted standards for academic writing at the graduate level. In addition to matters of organization, expression, and grammar, proper methods of citation and documentation are required. The following are expected of students:

- Accurate and precise uses of quotations and other summary representations of published material.
- Use of quotation marks for shorter quotes and indented block paragraphing for longer ones (of four or more lines in length).
- Accurate and complete bibliographic information for all sources, both in notes and in a concluding Bibliography or References Cited page.
- Correct and consistent use of one or the other of the two basic documentation systems, as defined by The Chicago Manual of Style. (Instructors may stipulate which system must be used

for a particular course or assignment, in which case this will be clearly indicated in the course syllabus.)

- Students in MA in CMHC courses must use the latest version of the American Psychological Association (APA) style for all written assignments that require citations.

## Inclusive Language Policy

### Language Referencing Human Beings

Western Theological Seminary is committed to being a community that seeks to extend hospitality to all, including in the use of our language with reference to human beings. In the conduct of courses, fulfillment of course assignments, and patterns of communication in various facets of the work of the seminary, members of the WTS community are expected to avoid "generic" uses of masculine terms for human beings. A few examples are:

- Use "humanity," "persons," or "people" instead of "man" or "mankind."
- Use "brothers and sisters" instead of "brothers" when both are intended.
- Use "desert mothers and fathers of the church" instead of "desert fathers of the church," unless only males are envisioned.

### Language Referencing God

In our language about God, Western Theological Seminary seeks to be faithful to God's self-disclosure in Scripture and to make use of the full range of biblical language and imagery about God. We encourage those in the WTS community to employ a range and variety of imagery for God consistent with Scripture and to respect the practices of various Christian traditions both historic and contemporary.

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when a writer uses another source's words or ideas or any other materials (original or generated) without citation. Thus, it is the misrepresentation of those words, ideas, and/or materials as the writer's own. Plagiarism is a serious breach of ethics in an academic setting, and it is explicitly forbidden at the seminary. When a faculty member finds evidence of plagiarism in a student's work, the faculty member will submit a report to the VPAA and Associate Academic Dean and notify the student.

If plagiarism is determined to have occurred, the faculty member, in consultation with the Academic Office, will decide which of these three pathways will be followed:

a) The student will receive a lower grade for the assignment and be required to resubmit the assignment using proper citation or sources.
b) The student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.
c) The student will receive a failing grade for the course. The report of plagiarism will be placed in the student's file. In addition, the student is required to meet with the Director of the Writing Studio to learn ways to cite sources properly and avoid plagiarism.

A second offense of plagiarism may result in dismissal from Western.

## Grading

A Excellence in comprehension of work submitted
Outstanding evidence of ability to synthesize and utilize course knowledge
Initiative expressed in personal goal setting/preparing and completing assignments
Creativity and originality manifested in assignments
Positive verbal contributions in class
Consistency and thoroughness of work submitted
Responsibility in meeting deadlines
Cooperation with professor and others
Excellence of written English

B Good performance in comprehension of work submitted
Substantial evidence of ability to analyze and utilize course knowledge
Positive verbal contributions in class
Consistency and thoroughness of work submitted
Responsibility in meeting deadlines
Cooperation with professor and others
Adequacy and accuracy of written English

C Fair performance in comprehension and thoroughness of work submitted
Moderate evidence of ability to utilize course knowledge
Adequate verbal contributions in class
Responsibility in meeting deadlines
Cooperation with professor and others
Lack of adequacy and accuracy of written English

D Poor performance in comprehension of work submitted
Meets minimal credit standards of the professor
Inadequate verbal contributions in class

F Inadequacy of work submitted, attitude, or performance and attendance at classes
Performance was a hindrance or damaging to overall preparation for graduation
Withdrawal from a course after the last day to withdraw as listed on the academic calendar

W Withdrawal from course prior to the last day to withdraw from a course (not calculated in GPA)

P In courses without grade points, this grade indicates C work or above

### Western Theological Seminary Grading Scale

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 100-94= A | <84-80= B- | <70-67= D+ |
| <94-90= A- | <80-77= C+ | <67-64= D |
| <90-87= B+ | <77-74= C | <64-60= D- |
| <87-84= B | <74-70= C- | <60 = F |

### Course Repetition

Students who withdraw from or fail a required course must retake the course. Non-completed elective courses do not need to be retaken. The student's transcript will indicate both the initial failing grade and

a subsequent passing grade for the course. Both courses will be included in attempted credits, but only the repeated course will be included in earned courses and in GPA calculations. After the failed course has been passed, the failed course will be marked as F (r) on the student transcript. The student will pay tuition each time the course is taken until it has been successfully passed. Students who fail a required course and do not desire to retake the course may appeal to the VPAA in writing for a waiver of the requirement. However, the student must earn the appropriate credit hours toward the degree. The decision of the VPAA is final.

### Incompletes

Under certain conditions, such as a lengthy absence due to illness or injury, hospitalization, or other unavoidable circumstances, a student may be unable to finish course assignments by the end of the academic term.

Students unable to complete all the requirements of a course may submit an email request to the professor for an incomplete prior to the end of the term. The reasons for the request must be clearly stated. The professor teaching the course determines if the request is approved. A copy of the request, with the professor's approval, is then emailed to the Registrar.

If the request is approved, the remaining work is to be completed within thirty days of the end of the term, or the incomplete shall become an F or the grade determined by the professor based on the work already completed. A grade will be requested by the registrar 30 days after the term has been completed. If an extension is needed, the professor teaching the course, in consultation with the VPAA, determines if an extension is approved. A copy of the request, with the professor's approval, is then emailed to the Registrar.

### Pass/No Credit

Degree seeking students may take elective courses on a pass/no credit basis with the consent of the professor teaching the elective course. The decision must be made within the first week of the course and is irrevocable. In evaluating academic performance for pass/no credit courses, C work or above is pass, and D work or lower receives no credit.

### Grade Reports

The Registrar provides each professor with information on entering grades via the faculty portal at the end of an academic term. Faculty are expected to enter grades via the portal. Adjunct faculty will return grades to the Registrar for recording. Once grades have been entered, students can view final grades via the student portal.

### Grade Issues

In the case of submitting a wrong grade, faculty may change a student's grade for up to one year. After that, changes cannot be made.

Students who wish to contest a grade they have received from a professor which the professor is unwilling to change may request the "Grade Contestation" form from the registrar, which the academic office will process in accordance with the policies outlined on the form.

### Transcripts

Student academic records are confidential and may not be released by the Registrar without the written consent of the student. The copy of an academic record released directly to a student is not considered an official transcript and may be downloaded from the student portal. See *Appendix A: Seminary Policy regarding Records* for additional information.

## Teaching Assistants

If enrollment in a course reaches 25, the course will automatically qualify for a teaching assistant. Ordinarily, the teaching assistant will be an upper-level student. The role of the teaching assistant should be stated in the course syllabus or on the learning management system so that students are informed.

Teaching assistants may assist in a variety of class management tasks and may also assist in grading student work of an objective nature. Research papers or longer essays are to be evaluated and graded by the professor, but the teaching assistant may give an initial evaluation for grammatical and structural issues and make suggestions based on clear rubrics provided by the professor. Teaching assistants are not to read or evaluate student journals.

## Accessibility Policies

WTS is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment and views disability as an aspect of human diversity. We continue to consult with students, faculty, and staff to identify environmental and attitudinal barriers, to improve accessibility on campus, and to improve the accessibility of our online platforms with the goal of ensuring that all students can participate fully in the seminary experience.

**Accessibility**

**Dr. Carlos Thompson**
Student Accessibility Coordinator
616-372-3694

Therefore, if students have a physical, sensory, psychological, or learning disability, we would like to support students' access to course materials through reasonable accommodations. Students are certainly welcome, though not required, to disclose a diagnosis, diagnoses, or include medical documentation as they seek accommodations and learning support while attending WTS.

All requests for reasonable accommodations should be made to the Student Accessibility Coordinator. Upon receiving students' request for accommodations, the Student Accessibility Coordinator will work with students, the Accessibility Team, the Academic Office, and professors to ensure that students receive reasonable course accommodations and support each semester.

## Academic Probation

### Admission on Academic Probation

Students admitted to Western Theological Seminary with a GPA of less than 2.50 are admitted on academic probation. If the student earns a 2.50 or better in the first semester, the student will be taken off academic probation. Students who earn below a 2.50 GPA in the first semester will remain on academic probation and will not be eligible for financial aid until they come off academic probation.

### Indicators of Marginal Performance Leading to Academic Probation

| Completed Credits | Semester GPA | Cumulative GPA | Incomplete Credits |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0-6 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 50% |
| 7-12 | 1.50 | 2.00 | 50% |
| 13 or more | 2.00 | 2.50 | 50% |

Students whose semester or cumulative GPA falls below the thresholds stated above will be placed on academic probation for the next semester. Students who have 50% or more outstanding incomplete credits for the term after the usual thirty-day period will be considered to be performing at a marginal level and placed on academic probation.

### Program-Specific Academic Standards

Some degree programs maintain academic standards above the seminary minimums stated above. Students in the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling must maintain a higher minimum grade point average in counseling coursework and meet minimum grade requirements in designated courses. These standards, and the related procedures for probation, remediation, and dismissal, are stated in the CMHC Program Handbook.

While on academic probation, students are eligible to receive financial aid for one semester. Students on academic probation for more than one semester are ineligible for financial aid until such time as they are removed from academic probation. See *Appendix B: Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid/Return of Title IV Funds* for details.

### Review of Probationary Status

The VPAA and the Associate Dean, with the Registrar, shall review the academic progress of all students on academic probation at the close of each academic semester.

### Responding to Academic Probation for Matriculated Students

Students on academic probation are expected to devote their full attention to studying. When a student is placed on academic probation, the student must submit to the Associate Dean a written plan whereby sufficient attention will be given to study.

### Appeal of Academic Probation

Students who are placed on academic probation may appeal this action to the VPAA within 30 days of receiving notice of academic probation. Students making such an appeal must provide proof of extenuating circumstances beyond their control that led to their poor academic performance (medical reasons, family crises, or other unavoidable circumstances). The VPAA will review the case along with any additional information supplied by the student and respond as findings of the review indicate. The decision of the VPAA is final.

### Regaining Non-Probationary Status

A student who is on academic probation will be taken off academic probation if that student's academic performance is above the indicators of marginal performance or if that student's academic performance for the semester is 3.3 or better even if their cumulative GPA remains below the indicators of marginal

performance. In such circumstances, the student is making satisfactory academic progress towards the completion of a degree.

### Financial Aid and VA Benefits on Probation

In compliance with the United States' Code, any student receiving Federal Student Aid or Veteran's Administration benefits will not be certified to the Department of Education or to the VA as eligible for financial aid if the student remains on academic probation beyond two academic semesters or beyond one academic semester if they have been admitted on academic probation. If students eligible for Federal or VA aid regain non-probationary status in the semester following their probationary status, recertification is possible.

### Academic Probation Dismissal

Students who have already been placed on academic probation for more than two semesters may be asked to terminate their studies at Western Theological Seminary. Non-degree seeking students whose GPA is less than 2.50 for any two semesters will lose their student status and will not be permitted to register for further coursework.

## Course and Material Access at Conclusion of the Semester

Students in programs other than the Doctor of Ministry Program will have access to their current semester courses in the Canvas learning management system for 30 days after the end of the semester. After this date, the course will no longer appear in the student's course list, and students will not have access to the course. In order to honor the incomplete and copyright policies, past courses will conclude 30 days after the end of the semester.

## Ways to Conclude Studies

Students may conclude their study at Western Theological Seminary by graduation, transfer, leave of absence, withdrawal, death, or dismissal.

### Graduation

Students who have completed the requirements for graduation under the provisions of one of the degree programs receive their diploma upon completion of their final coursework. Participation in the commencement ceremony is governed by the following process:

- In the fall semester, students who intend to graduate must notify the Registrar of their intention using a form distributed by the Registrar.
- One month prior to the winter meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Registrar prepares a list of all students who intend to graduate, and who have registered for sufficient coursework to complete all graduation requirements by the end of the second semester.
- Students who intend to graduate but who did not notify the Registrar by the given deadline shall have the right to appeal to the VPAA to be placed on the list of graduating students; the VPAA's decision is final.
- The list of graduating students is reviewed by the faculty and recommended to the Board of Trustees for approval at their winter meeting.
- One month before graduation, the Registrar reviews the graduation list approved by the Trustees and removes the names of any people who, because of course withdrawals or other reasons, will

clearly be unable to complete all graduation requirements by the end of the semester. Such students shall be notified, and the Registrar's decision may be appealed to the VPAA, whose decision is final. This revised list is printed in the commencement program.

- Students who have incompletes remaining at the time of commencement or who are registered for courses that end no later than August 31 of that year but are not yet complete at the time of commencement, may still participate in the commencement ceremony, but will receive their diplomas only upon completion of all requirements.

The MDiv program has a requirement of 87 semester credit hours for graduation which are normally completed in seven years or less.

The MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program has a requirement of 69 credit hours for graduation which are normally completed in 5 years or less.

Other MA programs have a requirement of 42 semester credit hours for graduation which are normally completed in 4.5 years or less.

The ThM program has a requirement of 25 semester credit hours which are normally completed in one year.

The DMin program has a requirement of 36 credit hours, which are normally completed in at least three years but not more than five years and includes the project. Under extenuating circumstances, the candidate may petition the DMin Committee for a one-year extension to the five-year limit.

The Graduate Certificates have requirements of 21-24 semester credit hours for graduation. All accounts must be cleared for a student to receive a diploma from the Western Theological Seminary.

### Leave of Absence (LOA)

Students who do not wish to take courses during a given academic semester must submit their intention in writing to the Registrar. Those approved will be considered on leave of absence for up to one year, after which time the student must either resume taking courses or be classified as withdrawn from studies. If the student is a Title IV loan recipient and does not return from the LOA, the withdrawal date will be the date the LOA began. This may affect loan repayment terms, including expiration of the student's grace period.

### Withdraw

Students who voluntarily withdraw from their studies must submit their intention to withdraw in writing to the Registrar. Students who, for whatever reason, do not register for courses for two terms and have not communicated their intentions in writing to the Registrar are considered to have withdrawn.

### Death

In the case of the death of a student, all tuition charges for classes in progress are waived. All other debts owed to the seminary remain payable from the estate of the deceased student.

### Misconduct Dismissal

In addition to academic probation dismissal, students may face dismissal for these reasons:

- Plagiarism: See policy on page 23.
- Harassment or discrimination: See page 13.
- Criminal Infractions: If a student is indicted and convicted of criminal infractions, that student will be dismissed from the seminary. Opportunity for readmission is possible if the legal penalty to which the student was sentenced has been fulfilled, and the student is able to express self-awareness in remorse and full readiness for seminary studies. Formal notice of the dismissal shall be given in writing by the VPAA and will be a part of the student's official record.
- Conduct: If a student exhibits repeated and persistent actions or words that give evidence of a serious lack of Christian conduct, virtues, or fitness for ministry, the VPAA, in consultation with the Associate Dean and the Director of Student Life, may dismiss the student from the seminary. The student under such consideration will have the right to give evidence of improvement in conduct, virtues, and fitness for ministry, and will have the right to appeal, in writing, a decision for dismissal. The student's appeal will be presented to a Review Panel comprised of the VPAA, the Associate Dean or the Director of Student Life, and another member of the faculty or staff selected by the VPAA to ensure a non-biased review. The Review Panel will seek counsel as is appropriate and will seek to issue a written decision within 14 days of the student's appeal. The Review Panel's decision is final; there is no further right of appeal.

## Exit Interviews for Master's Degree Programs

Graduating MA, MDiv, and ThM students are invited to exit interviews with the VPAA in the spring of the year in which they expect to graduate. Information gathered in the interview process is then summarized for faculty and trustees.

## Readmission

Students who are asked to terminate their studies for academic or other reasons may apply for readmission. There is a waiting period of one year from the date of dismissal before a student may apply for readmission. Application for readmission must be accompanied by evidence of change in the conditions or circumstances that led to the dismissal. Applications for readmission will be presented to the appropriate degree committee. Students who have voluntarily withdrawn must submit a written request for readmission to the appropriate degree committee for consideration.

# In-Residence Master of Divinity

Western Theological Seminary's MDiv degree cultivates an educational community of women and men, forming them for faithful, lifelong participation in the Triune God's ongoing redemptive work in the world as ministers in the local church and through other forms of leadership and service. The In-Residence Master of Divinity is available on campus in Holland, Michigan.

**In-Residence Master of Divinity**

**Dr. Keith Starkenburg**
Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs

**Dr. David Komline**
Associate Academic Dean, and
Director of the Master of Divinity Program

## Requirements for the Degree

The Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree requires 87 credit hours, usually completed in three years of full-time study. All MDiv candidates are required to take introductory courses in the Biblical, Theological, and Christian Ministry Fields, as well as Practice of Ministry courses. Students choose elective courses in areas of their own interest.

In mid-August, new students participate in an online orientation and learn how to use the learning management system (Canvas). New students also attend an in-person orientation held each year for all incoming in-residence MDiv candidates during the week prior to the beginning of the first semester. During this orientation, new students are introduced to the Western community and receive information crucial to seminary life.

## The Abbey

The Abbey invites students into intentional relationships with faculty and fellow students to explore spiritual disciplines, engage in vocational discernment, and integrate their classroom learning with their life of faith. Students will register for the Abbey for three years (six consecutive semesters). As a part of the Abbey, students will meet weekly in Abbey groups made up of five-six students and facilitated by a faculty member. The Abbey includes on-site retreats once per semester together with distance learning students.

**Student Life**

**Dr. Tim Basselin**
Director of Field Education and Student Life

**Kate Bareman**
Director of Student Care and Engagement

## Practice of Ministry Internships

Master of Divinity students take part in supervised internships in ministry settings. This internship component of the curriculum provides a place to practice ministry and a space to reflect on it. Three elements usually guide the internship experience:

1. A **mentor** at the church or organization regularly meets with the student to reflect theologically and personally on the student's ongoing formation for ministry.
2. Students write **learning covenants** to help focus their internship experience.

3. **Coursework** accompanies the internship to provide space for learning, reflection, and integration.

MDiv students are required to complete four semesters/units of supervised internships. These can be done over two academic years or one academic year and one summer.

### Intercultural Immersion Experience

In groups of 10-15 students with at least one professor as a guide, Western's In-Residence and Distance Learning MDiv students travel to encourage their global awareness and cultural engagement and to help them respect, engage, and learn from people and perspectives other than their own. Students also explore key social issues and contextual challenges of the place and culture in which the class is immersed. The trips are taken in May and occur in places throughout the world.

| IN-RESIDENCE MASTER OF DIVINITY CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life | 3.0 |
| | MN350 Worship Foundations | 3.0 |
| | PR401 Abbey 1 | 0.5 |
| | TH300 Church History 1 | 3.0 |
| | Language 2 (BL310 or BL320) or Elective | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | MN336 Christian Interior Life | 3.0 |
| | TH300 Church History 2 | 3.0 |
| | Language 2 (BL310 or BL320) or Elective | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 2 Fall** | Language 1 (BL310 or BL320) | 3.0 |
| | MN412 Christian Life and Mission | 3.0 |
| | PR403 Abbey 3 | 0.5 |
| | PR411 Practice of Ministry: Internship 1 | 1.5 |
| | TH310 Systematic Theology 1 | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course (Upper New Testament) | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | Language 1 (BL311 or BL321) | 3.0 |
| | MN351 Preaching Foundations | 3.0 |
| | PR404 Abbey 4 | 0.5 |
| | PR412 Practice of Ministry: Internship 2 | 1.5 |
| | TH311 Systematic Theology 2 | 3.0 |
| | TH440 Christian Life and Ethics | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | PR450 Intercultural Immersion | 3.0 |
| | PR413 Practice of Ministry 3 (summer optional) | 0.0 |
| | PR414 Practice of Ministry 4 (summer optional) | 0.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 3 Fall** | BL490 Biblical Capstone (DL) (IR in spring) | 3.0 |
| | MN415 Practice of Counsel and Care | 3.0 |
| | PR405 Abbey 5 | 0.5 |
| | PR413 Practice of Ministry: Internship 3 | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course (TH421 RCA Standards and Polity for RCA) | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | MN440 Pastoral Imagination | 3.0 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | PR406 Abbey 6 | 0.5 |
| | PR414 Practice of Ministry: Internship 4 | 1.5 |
| | TH490 Credo | 3.0 |
| | Elective (Upper Old Testament) | 3.0 |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 87 credit hours** | | |

The courses listed are required. The sequencing of the courses is suggested.

Two semesters (A and B) of either Greek or Hebrew are required and are taken in Year 2. Two additional semesters of the other language may be taken in Year 1 or Year 3.

# Distance Learning Master of Divinity


**Distance Learning Master of Divinity**

**Dr. Keith Starkenburg**
Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs

**Dr. David Komline**
Associate Academic Dean, and
Director of the Master of Divinity Program


Western Theological Seminary's MDiv degree cultivates an educational community of women and men, forming them for faithful, lifelong participation in the Triune God's ongoing redemptive work in the world as ministers in the local church and through other forms of leadership and service.

Western Theological Seminary offers its Master of Divinity degree in a five-year blended distance education format. Each year contains two 14-week semesters, with a five-day on-campus intensive that is required for the first three years of study (four years if a student is taking both Hebrew and Greek). Students who follow the recommended sequencing of courses will need to plan on taking three summer term courses as well.

Blended distance learning offers students a community-rich environment with the opportunity to complete an MDiv without moving to campus. The distance learning student receives the benefit of belonging to a community of learners while remaining in his or her ministry context.

The distance learning MDiv program has fully met students' expectations for a high-quality graduate theological program. The program strengths most identified are the close community developed among students, the ability for second career/non-traditional students to answer their call to ministry, and the spiritual and pastoral formation character of the program.

The 87-credit hour program involves Western's entire faculty and offers a similar yet specifically designed curriculum as the in-residence Master of Divinity program. The program incorporates small groups facilitated by faculty, supervised internships in ministry settings, and rich community experiences through worship, community fellowship, and shared meals during on-campus intensives.

Students admitted into the distance MDiv program are expected to maintain regular and consistent participation in order to complete the degree in five years. The on-campus intensives in October and February are required to receive academic credit for each course with a required intensive taken during those semesters. The seven-week summer term is fully online.

## Semester Schedule

- **Orientation:** In August, new students participate in online orientation and learn how to use the learning management system (Canvas). As students work within Canvas, gaining experience with the tools used in courses, they begin to develop an online community within the new student cohort.
- **Fall Semester:** Fourteen weeks, late August-December, with a five-day on-campus intensive in October that is required for the first three years of study (four years if a student is taking both Hebrew and Greek).

- **Spring Semester:** Fourteen weeks, January-April, with a five-day on-campus intensive in February that is required for the first three years of study (four years if a student is taking both Hebrew and Greek).
- **Summer Term:** Seven weeks, early May-late June, fully online courses.

## Technology Requirements

Each student is required to provide his or her own computer according to the standards on westernsem.edu. Wireless connection is available in the library, classrooms, and most of the seminary campus.

### Distance Learning Support Staff

**Sydney Johnson**
Educational Technology Specialist

## The Abbey

The Abbey invites students into intentional relationships with faculty and fellow students to explore spiritual disciplines, engage in vocational discernment, and integrate their classroom learning with their life of faith. Students will register for the Abbey for their first three years (six consecutive semesters). As a part of the Abbey, students will meet in Abbey groups made up of five-six students and facilitated by a faculty member. These groups will meet approximately once a month by Zoom. The Abbey includes on-site retreats once per semester together with in-residence students.

## Practice of Ministry Internship

Master of Divinity students take part in supervised internships in ministry settings. This internship component of the curriculum provides a place to practice ministry and a space to reflect on it.

Three elements usually guide the internship experience:

1. A **mentor** at the church or organization regularly meets with the student to reflect theologically and personally on the student's ongoing formation for ministry.
2. Students write **learning covenants** to help focus their internship experience.
3. **Coursework** accompanies the internship to provide space for learning, reflection, and integration.

### Student Life

**Dr. Tim Basselin**
Director of Student Life

**Kate Bareman**
Director of Student Care and Engagement

MDiv students are required to complete four semesters/units of supervised internships. These can be done over two academic years or one academic year and one summer.

If a student is already working in ministry, it often makes sense for that site to become his or her internship site. However, students are encouraged to gain a broad range of experiences to best prepare for their future ministries.

## Intercultural Immersion Experience

In groups of 10-15 students with at least one professor as a guide, Western's DL and IR MDiv students travel to encourage their global awareness and cultural engagement and to help them respect, engage, and learn from people and perspectives other than their own. Students also explore key social issues and contextual challenges of the place and culture in which the class is immersed. The trips are taken in May and occur in places throughout the world.

| DISTANCE LEARNING MASTER OF DIVINITY CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | *MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life* | 3.0 |
| | *PR401 Abbey 1* | 0.5 |
| **Spring** | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | *MN336 Christian Interior Life* | 3.0 |
| | *PR402 Abbey 2* | 0.5 |
| **Summer** | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 2 Fall** | MN350 Worship Foundations | 3.0 |
| | *PR403 Abbey 3* | 0.5 |
| | PR411 Practice of Ministry: Internship 1 | 1.5 |
| | *Language 1A (BL310 or BL320)* | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | *PR404 Abbey 4* | 0.5 |
| | PR412 Practice of Ministry: Internship 2 | 1.5 |
| | *Language 1B (BL311 or BL321)* | 3.0 |
| | Elective (Upper New Testament) | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | PR413 Practice of Ministry; Internship 3 (summer optional) | 0.0 |
| | PR414 Practice of Ministry; Internship 4 (summer optional) | 0.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 3 Fall** | *MN415 Practice of Counsel and Care* | 3.0 |
| | *PR405 Abbey 5* | 0.5 |
| | PR413 Practice of Ministry: Internship 3 | 1.5 |
| | TH300 Church History 1 | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | *MN351 Preaching Foundations* | 3.0 |
| | *PR406 Abbey 6* | 0.5 |
| | PR414 Practice of Ministry: Internship 4 | 1.5 |
| | TH301 Church History 2 | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 4 Fall** | TH310 Systematic Theology 1 | 3.0 |
| | MN412 Christian Life and Mission | 3.0 |
| | *Language 2 (BL310 or BL320)* or Elective | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | TH311 Systematic Theology 2 | 3.0 |
| | TH440 Christian Life and Ethics | 3.0 |
| | *Language 2 (BL311 or BL321)* or Elective | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | PR450 Intercultural Immersion | 3.0 |
| | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 5 Fall** | BL490 Biblical Capstone (DL) | 3.0 |
| | Elective (Upper Old Testament) | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course (TH421 RCA Standards and Polity) | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | TH490 Credo | 3.0 |
| | MN440 Pastoral Imagination | 3.0 |
| *Italics: course with intensive* | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 87 credit hours** | | |

The courses listed are required. The sequencing of the courses is suggested.

Two semesters (A and B) of either Greek or Hebrew are required and are taken in Year 2. Two additional semesters of the other language may be taken in Year 1 or Year 3.

# Dual Track Master of Divinity-Master of Social Work

**Dual Track MDiv-MSW**

**Dr. David Komline**
Associate Academic Dean,
and Director of the Dual
Track MDiv-MSW Program

The Dual Track Master of Divinity-Master of Social Work program helps students prepare for professional ministry where the depth and breadth of Christian theology and faith meet the pain and struggle of human life.

Students learn to integrate the theory, knowledge, and skills required of pastors and social workers as they seek to be instruments of grace and peace. In turn, they are equipped to help the church more faithfully follow the compassionate Christ into the world.

After four years of intense study accompanied by challenging internships, students are ready to serve in contexts ranging from marriage counseling in a congregation to coordinating programs at a ministry with homeless people.

Typically, 63 out of the 87 hours required for an MDiv are completed through WTS. The remaining 24 hours are transferred from the MSW program back to the seminary as electives. This allows the student to complete both master's degrees in four years instead of five if they choose.

For students with a BSW degree, the MSW portion of the dual track program is typically shortened due to receiving advanced standing. These students can earn both master's degrees in three years.

Students who decide not to pursue an MSW degree after the first two years of MDiv coursework can receive an MDiv degree only after completing all of its degree requirements.

## Program Design

The program is flexible enough to complete in one of four ways:

- Students can spend the first two years of the four-year dual track program In-Residence at Western Theological Seminary taking Master of Divinity coursework. Years three and four are then spent in a Master of Social Work program at another accredited institution of the student's preference.
- Students can also choose our five-year part-time Distance Learning option to complete their MDiv coursework through WTS. When finished, they can pursue a Master of Social Work program at another accredited institution of the student's preference.
- Another option is to start with the MSW degree elsewhere followed by the MDiv at WTS. This path is convenient for undergrad students who have the option of earning the MSW at the same institution. They can stay in a familiar context in the transition into graduate school. After completing the MSW degree, the student moves to WTS for two years of MDiv coursework.

- The last option applies to those who have already earned the MSW degree. If it was earned seven years prior to MDiv matriculation, WTS will accept 24 transfer credits. The balance of 63 credit hours required for the MDiv degree is earned at WTS in two years or more. We will consider applicants who have earned the MSW up to 15 years prior if MSW licensure has been maintained.

### Cohort Learning Groups

Dual track students meet in small cohort groups over the duration of the program. These groups are facilitated by a ministry professional who supports students as they consider how the fields of ministry and social work might be integrated in their respective callings.

### Unique Ministry

Unique ministry opportunities open for those pursuing Western's Dual Track degree. Examples include:

- Counseling
- Coordinating urban youth programs
- Chaplaincy in treatment programs
- Restorative justice in the criminal justice system
- Community development here or abroad
- Children and family support and education
- Outreach pastor
- Social justice research and advocacy
- Staring a nonprofit ministry

The courses listed are required. The sequencing of the courses is suggested.

| IN-RESIDENCE DUAL TRACK (MDiv/MSW) CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life | 3.0 |
| | MN350 Worship Foundations (or MN351 option) | 3.0 |
| | PR401 Abbey 1 | 0.5 |
| | PR341 Dual Track Cohort Group 1 | 0.5 |
| | TH300 Church History 1 | 3.0 |
| | TH310 Systematic Theology 1 | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | MN336 Christian Interior Life | 3.0 |
| | MN351 Preaching Foundations (or MN350 option) | 3.0 |
| | PR402 Abbey 2 | 0.5 |
| | PR342 Dual Track Cohort Group 2 | 0.5 |
| | TH300 Church History 2 | 3.0 |
| | TH311 Systematic Theology 2 | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 2 Fall** | Language 1A (BL310 or BL320) | 3.0 |
| | BL490 Biblical Capstone (DL) (IR in spring) | 3.0 |
| | MN412 Christian Life and Mission | 3.0 |
| | MN415 Practice of Counsel and Care | 3.0 |
| | PR403 Abbey 3 | 0.5 |
| | PR343 Dual Track Cohort Group 3 | 0.5 |
| | PR411 Practice of Ministry: Internship 1 | 1.5 |
| **Spring** | Language 1B (BL311 or BL321) | 3.0 |
| | MN440 Pastoral Imagination | 3.0 |
| | PR343 Dual Track Cohort Group 4 | 0.5 |
| | PR404 Abbey 4 | 0.5 |
| | PR412 Practice of Ministry: Internship 2 | 1.5 |
| | TH440 Christian Life and Ethics | 3.0 |
| | TH490 Credo | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | PR450 Intercultural Immersion | 3.0 |
| | | |
| | **MSW YEARS** | |
| **Fall** | PR345 Dual Track Cohort Group 5 | 0.5 |
| | PR346 Dual Track Cohort Group 6 | 0.5 |
| **Spring** | PR347 Dual Track Cohort Group 7 | 0.5 |
| | PR348 Dual Track Cohort Group 8 | 0.5 |
| *Italics: course with intensive* | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 63 WTS credit hours + 24 MSW credit hours** | | |

| DISTANCE LEARNING DUAL TRACK (MDiv/MSW) CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | *MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life* | 3.0 |
| | *PR401 Abbey 1* | 0.5 |
| **Spring** | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | *MN336 Christian Interior Life* | 3.0 |
| | *PR402 Abbey 2* | 0.5 |
| | | |
| **Year 2 Fall** | TH300 Church History 1 | 3.0 |
| | *PR403 Abbey 3* | 0.5 |
| | PR411 Practice of Ministry: Internship 1 | 1.5 |
| | *Language 1A (BL310 or BL320)* | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | TH301 Church History 2 | 3.0 |
| | *PR404 Abbey 4* | 0.5 |
| | PR412 Practice of Ministry: Internship 2 | 1.5 |
| | *Language 1B (BL311 or BL321)* | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 3 Fall** | *MN415 Practice of Counsel and Care* | 3.0 |
| | TH310 Systematic Theology 1 | 3.0 |
| | PR341 Dual Track Cohort Group 1 | 0.5 |
| | MN350 Worship Foundations (or MN351 option) | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | TH440 Christian Life and Ethics | 3.0 |
| | TH311 Systematic Theology 2 | 3.0 |
| | PR341 Dual Track Cohort Group 2 | 0.5 |
| | MN351 Preaching Foundations (or MN350 option) | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 4 Fall** | BL490 Biblical Capstone (DL) | 3.0 |
| | MN412 Christian Life and Mission | 3.0 |
| | PR343 Dual Track Cohort Group 3 | 0.5 |
| **Spring** | MN440 Pastoral Imagination | 3.0 |
| | TH490 Credo | 3.0 |
| | PR344 Dual Track Cohort Group 4 | 0.5 |
| **Summer** | PR450 Intercultural Immersion | 3.0 |
| | | |
| | **MSW YEARS** | |
| **Fall** | PR345 Dual Track Cohort Group 5 | 0.5 |
| | PR346 Dual Track Cohort Group 6 | 0.5 |
| **Spring** | PR347 Dual Track Cohort Group 7 | 0.5 |
| | PR348 Dual Track Cohort Group 8 | 0.5 |
| *Italics: course with intensive* | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 63 WTS credit hours + 24 MSW credit hours** | | |

# Master of Arts in Biblical Studies

Western Theological Seminary's Master of Arts in Biblical Studies is designed as a theological degree in biblical studies. This degree will support men and women who want to go deeper into Scripture for leadership in a broad range of ministry settings and further studies.

**Master of Arts in Biblical Studies**

**Dr. David Komline**
Associate Academic Dean, and
Director of the Master of Arts Program

## Distinctives of the Program

- Required courses in Biblical Greek and Hebrew and Biblical exegesis. Learning the original Biblical languages allows you to study, interpret, and apply Biblical texts at a deeper level.
- Students may select courses in a residential format, a purely online format, or a blended format with both online and face-to-face interaction.
- Theological and ministry course requirements will help you to understand and articulate Christian traditions and convictions.

Western Theological Seminary's highly effective and community-rich distance learning environment offers courses wherever you are. Some courses are delivered completely online while others use a hybrid design, blending online learning with face-to-face instruction on the WTS campus. For those who prefer to take most courses on campus, in-residence options are also available.

WTS welcomes transfer students and transferred coursework. Up to 27 credits of the coursework required to complete the MA may be transferred from another ATS accredited seminary for degree completion at Western Theological Seminary.

Students have the option of selecting an "Academic" track or a "Professional" track. By selecting the "Academic" track, students will take elective courses that lead to writing a thesis in the Master of Arts Capstone course. By selecting the "Professional" track, students will substitute two semesters of mentored practicum (1.5 credits each semester) for one 3-credit elective course. Students will then complete a ministry project in the Master of Arts Capstone course.

## Semester Schedule

- **Orientation:** In August, new students participate in online orientation and learn how to use the learning management system (Canvas). As students work within Canvas, gaining experience with the tools used in courses, they begin to develop an online community within the new student cohort.
- **Fall Semester:** Fourteen weeks, late August-December, with a three-day on-campus intensive in October that is required if a student is taking Hebrew or Greek.

- **Spring Semester:** Fourteen weeks, January-April, with a three-day on-campus intensive in February that is required if a student is taking Hebrew or Greek.
- **Summer Term:** Seven weeks, early May-late June, fully online courses.

| MASTER OF ARTS IN BIBLICAL STUDIES CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | BL310 Biblical Hebrew **or** BL320 New Testament Greek 1 | 3.0 |
| | MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | BL311 Hebrew Translation and Interpretation **or** BL321 New Testament Greek 2 and Interpretation | 3.0 |
| | Biblical Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | Biblical Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 2 Fall** | BL320 New Testament Greek 1 **or** BL310 Biblical Hebrew | 3.0 |
| | BL490 Biblical Capstone (DL) (IR in spring) | 3.0 |
| | TH300 Church History 1 **or** TH310 Systematic Theology 1 | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | BL321 New Testament Greek 2 and Interpretation **or** BL311 Hebrew Translation and Interpretation | 3.0 |
| | MA490 MA Capstone | 3.0 |
| | Biblical Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 42 credit hours** | | |

# Master of Arts in Christian Ministry

Western Theological Seminary's Master of Arts in Christian Ministry is designed as a theological degree in ministry studies. This degree will support men and women who want to develop leadership capacity in a broad range of ministry and worship settings.

**Master of Arts in Christian Ministry**

**Dr. David Komline**
Associate Academic Dean, and
Director of the Master of Arts Program

## Distinctives of the Program

- Required ministry courses to help you develop skills to apply to various ministry settings.
- You may select courses in a residential format, a purely online format, or a blended format with both online and face-to-face interaction.
- Theological and biblical course requirements will help you to understand and articulate Christian traditions and convictions.

Western Theological Seminary's highly effective and community-rich distance learning environment offers courses wherever you are. Some courses are delivered completely online while others use a hybrid design, blending online learning with face-to-face instruction on the WTS campus. For those who prefer to take most courses on campus, in-residence options are also available.

WTS welcomes transfer students and transferred coursework. Up to 27 credits of the coursework required to complete the MA may be transferred from another ATS accredited seminary for degree completion at Western Theological Seminary.

Students have the option of selecting an "Academic" track or a "Professional" track. By selecting the "Academic" track, students will take elective courses that lead to writing a thesis in the Master of Arts Capstone course. By selecting the "Professional" track, students will substitute two semesters of mentored practicum (1.5 credits each semester) for one 3-credit elective course. Students will then complete a ministry project in the Master of Arts Capstone course.

## Semester Schedule

- **Orientation:** In August, new students participate in online orientation and learn how to use the learning management system (Canvas). As students work within Canvas, gaining experience with the tools used in courses, they begin to develop an online community within the new student cohort.
- **Fall Semester:** Fourteen weeks, late August-December. If students select hybrid courses, they may need to be on campus for an intensive in October.
- **Spring Semester:** Fourteen weeks, January-April. If students select hybrid courses, they may need to be on campus for an intensive in February.

- **Summer Term:** Seven weeks, early May-late June, fully online courses.

| MASTER OF ARTS IN CHRISTIAN MINISTRY CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life | 3.0 |
| | Ministry Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | Ministry Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | Ministry Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 2 Fall** | TH300 Church History 1 **or** 2 **or** TH310 Systematic Theo. 1 | 3.0 |
| | Ministry Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | Ministry Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | MA490 MA Capstone | 3.0 |
| | Ministry Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | Ministry Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 42 credit hours** | | |

# Master of Arts in Christian Studies

Western Theological Seminary's most flexible degree program, the Master of Arts in Christian Studies, is designed as a general theological degree in biblical and theological studies. This degree will support men and women with resources for thoughtful and competent Christian leadership in a broad range of ministry settings.

**Master of Arts in Christian Studies**

**Dr. David Komline**
Associate Academic Dean, and
Director of the Master of Arts Program

## Distinctives of the Program

About half of the 42 credits needed to earn this degree are electives. This means you have flexibility to focus your learning in areas most meaningful to you.

- Students may select courses in a residential format, a purely online format, or a blended format with both online and face-to-face interaction.
- Theological and biblical course requirements will help you to understand and articulate Christian traditions and convictions.

Western Theological Seminary's highly effective and community-rich distance learning environment offers courses wherever you are. Some courses are delivered completely online while others use a hybrid design, blending online learning with face-to-face instruction on the WTS campus. For those who prefer to take most courses on campus, in-residence options are also available.

WTS welcomes transfer students and transferred coursework. Up to 27 credits of the coursework required to complete the MA may be transferred from another ATS accredited seminary for degree completion at Western Theological Seminary.

Students have the option of selecting an "Academic" track or a "Professional" track. By selecting the "Academic" track, students will take elective courses that lead to writing a thesis in the Master of Arts Capstone course. By selecting the "Professional" track, students will substitute two semesters of mentored practicum (1.5 credits each semester) for one 3-credit elective course. Students will then complete a ministry project in the Master of Arts Capstone course.

## Semester Schedule

- **Orientation:** In August, new students participate in online orientation and learn how to use the learning management system (Canvas). As students work within Canvas, gaining experience with the tools used in courses, they begin to develop an online community within the new student cohort.
- **Fall Semester:** Fourteen weeks, late August-December. If students select hybrid courses, they may need to be on campus for an intensive in October.
- **Spring Semester:** Fourteen weeks, January-April. If students select hybrid courses, they may need to be on campus for an intensive in February.

- **Summer Term:** Seven weeks, early May-late June, fully online courses.

| MASTER OF ARTS IN CHRISTIAN STUDIES CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life | 3.0 |
| | TH300 Church History 1 **or** TH301 Church History 2 | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 2 Fall** | MN412 Christian Life and Mission | 3.0 |
| | TH310 Systematic Theology 1 | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | MA490 MA Capstone | 3.0 |
| | TH311 Systematic Theology 2 | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 42 credit hours** | | |

# Master of Arts in Disability and Ministry

Western Theological Seminary's continuation of the Graduate Certificate in Disability and Ministry, the Master of Arts in Disability and Ministry, is designed as a general theological degree to help church and lay leaders incorporate the gifts of people with disabilities in a variety of ministry settings.

**Master of Arts in Disability and Ministry**

**Dr. Ben Conner**
Professor of Practical Theology, and Director of the Center for Disability and Ministry

## Distinctives of the Program

- More than half of the courses are specific to ministering to and alongside people with disabilities. This means you gain skills to empower all people in ministry and witness.
- Students may select courses in a residential format, a purely online format, or a blended format with both online and face-to-face interaction.
- Theological and biblical course requirements will help you to understand and articulate Christian traditions and convictions.

Western Theological Seminary's highly effective and community-rich distance learning environment offers courses wherever you are. Some courses are delivered completely online while others use a hybrid design, blending online learning with face-to-face instruction on the WTS campus. For those who prefer to take most courses on campus, in-residence options are also available.

WTS welcomes transfer students and transferred coursework. Up to 27 credits of the coursework required to complete the MA may be transferred from another ATS accredited seminary for degree completion at Western Theological Seminary.

Students have the option of selecting an "Academic" track or a "Professional" track. By selecting the "Academic" track, students will take elective courses that lead to writing a thesis in the Master of Arts Capstone course. By selecting the "Professional" track, students will substitute two semesters of mentored practicum (1.5 credits each semester) for one 3-credit elective course. Students will then complete a ministry project in the Master of Arts Capstone course.

## Semester Schedule

- **Orientation:** In August, new students participate in online orientation and learn how to use the learning management system (Canvas). As students work within Canvas, gaining experience with the tools used in courses, they begin to develop an online community within the new student cohort.
- **Fall Semester:** Fourteen weeks. If students select hybrid courses, they may need to be on campus for an intensive in October.

- **Spring Semester:** Fourteen weeks, January-April. If students select hybrid courses, they may need to be on campus for an intensive in February.
- **Summer Term:** Seven weeks, early May-late June, fully online courses.

| MASTER OF ARTS IN DISABILITY AND MINISTRY CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life | 3.0 |
| | MN361 Intro to Disability and the Church | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | MN336 Christian Interior Life | 3.0 |
| | Disability and Ministry Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | Disability and Ministry Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 2 Fall** | MN412 Christian Life and Mission | 3.0 |
| | TH310 Systematic Theology 1 | 3.0 |
| | Disability and Ministry Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | MA490 MA Capstone | 3.0 |
| | TH311 Systematic Theology 2 | 3.0 |
| | Disability and Ministry Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | Disability and Ministry Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 42 credit hours** | | |

# Master of Arts in Theological Studies

Western Theological Seminary's Master of Arts in Theological Studies is designed to provide resources for you to be formed throughout Christian leadership and service as you deepen your theological knowledge.

**Master of Arts in Theological Studies**

**Dr. David Komline**
Associate Academic Dean, and Director
of the Master of Arts Program

## Distinctives of the Program

- Half of the 42 credits needed to earn this degree are theological courses which will help you articulate convictions through Scripture and practice.
- You may select courses in a residential format, a purely online format, or a blended format with both online and face-to-face interaction.
- Ministry and biblical course requirements will help you to understand and articulate Christian Scripture, traditions, and practice.

Western Theological Seminary's highly effective and community-rich distance learning environment offers courses wherever you are. Some courses are delivered completely online while others use a hybrid design, blending online learning with face-to-face instruction on the WTS campus. For those who prefer to take most courses on campus, in-residence options are also available.

WTS welcomes transfer students and transferred coursework. Up to 27 credits of the coursework required to complete the MA may be transferred from another ATS accredited seminary for degree completion at Western Theological Seminary.

Students have the option of selecting an "Academic" track or a "Professional" track. By selecting the "Academic" track, students will take elective courses that lead to writing a thesis in the Master of Arts Capstone course. By selecting the "Professional" track, students will substitute two semesters of mentored practicum (1.5 credits each semester) for one 3-credit elective course. Students will then complete a ministry project in the Master of Arts Capstone course.

## Semester Schedule

- **Orientation:** In August, new students participate in online orientation and learn how to use the learning management system (Canvas). As students work within Canvas, gaining experience with the tools used in courses, they begin to develop an online community within the new student cohort.
- **Fall Semester:** Fourteen weeks, late August-December. If students select hybrid courses, they may need to be on campus for an intensive in October.
- **Spring Semester:** Fourteen weeks, January-April. If students select hybrid courses, they may need to be on campus for an intensive in February.

- **Summer Term:** Seven weeks, early May-late June, fully online courses.

| MASTER OF ARTS IN THEOLOGICAL STUDIES CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life | 3.0 |
| | TH300 Church History 1 | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | TH301 Church History 2 | 3.0 |
| | Theology Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 2 Fall** | MN412 Christian Life and Mission | 3.0 |
| | TH310 Systematic Theology 1 | 3.0 |
| | Theology Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | MA490 MA Capstone | 3.0 |
| | TH311 Systematic Theology 2 | 3.0 |
| | TH440 Christian Life and Ethics | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 42 credit hours** | | |

# Master of Theological Studies

Western Theological Seminary's new program, the Master of Theological Studies (MTS) gives students thorough training in the academic disciplines of theology and biblical studies in the context of WTS's distinctive approach to whole person formation. Graduates with this degree often work in the church or in educational settings, bringing to those contexts a rich preparation in the academic disciplines of the Bible and theology.

**Master of Theological Studies**

**Dr. David Komline**
Associate Academic Dean, and Director of the Master of Theological Studies Program

## Distinctives of the Program

- The MTS has three concentrations to choose from: a General Concentration, a Biblical Concentration, and a Theological Concentration.
- This degree can be taken in-residence, hybrid (biblical concentration), or distance learning.
- Depending on the concentration you choose, 21-24 of the 48 credits will be core, with the remaining electives depending on your concentration.
- While you can go at your own pace, you could easily finish in two to three years.

## Semester Schedule

- **Orientation:** In August, new students participate in online orientation and learn how to use the learning management system (Canvas). As students work within Canvas, gaining experience with the tools used in courses, they begin to develop an online community within the new student cohort.
- **Fall Semester:** Fourteen weeks, late August-December. If students select hybrid courses, they may need to be on campus for an intensive in October.
- **Spring Semester:** Fourteen weeks, January-April. If students select hybrid courses, they may need to be on campus for an intensive in February.
- **Summer Term:** Seven weeks, early May-late June, fully online courses.

| MASTER OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES CURRICULUM—General Concentration | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | TH300 Church History 1 | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | TH301 Church History 2 | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 2 Fall** | TH310 Systematic Theology 1 | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | MA490 MA Capstone | 3.0 |
| | TH311 Systematic Theology 2 | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 48 credit hours** | | |

| MASTER OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES CURRICULUM—Biblical Concentration | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | TH300 Church History 1 | 3.0 |
| | BL310 Biblical Hebrew | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | TH301 Church History 2 | 3.0 |
| | BL311 Hebrew Translation and Interpretation | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 2 Fall** | TH310 Systematic Theology 1 | 3.0 |
| | BL320 New Testament Greek 1 | 3.0 |
| | BL490 Biblical Capstone | 3.0 |
| | OT Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | MA490 MA Capstone | 3.0 |
| | TH311 Systematic Theology 2 | 3.0 |
| | BL321 New Testament Greek 2 and Interpretation | 3.0 |
| | NT Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 48 credit hours** | | |

| MASTER OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES CURRICULUM—<br>Theological Concentration | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | TH300 Church History 1 | 3.0 |
| | Theological Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | Theological Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | TH301 Church History 2 | 3.0 |
| | Theological Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | Theological Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 2 Fall** | TH310 Systematic Theology 1 | 3.0 |
| | BL490 Biblical Capstone | 3.0 |
| | Theological Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | MA490 MA Capstone | 3.0 |
| | TH311 Systematic Theology 2 | 3.0 |
| | Theological Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 48 credit hours** | | |

# Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Western Theological Seminary's Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) equips women and men to become professional clinical mental health counselors, as well as for leadership and work in a broad range of ministry, mental health, and community settings. This relationally oriented and trauma-informed program offers contemporary, research-based training while remaining deeply rooted in a Christian soul care tradition.
The MA in CMHC is available on campus in Holland, Michigan.

### Requirements for the Degree

The MA in CMHC requires 69 credit hours which can be completed either in three years of full-time study or five years of part-time study.

- The MA in CMHC is a professional degree in clinical mental health counseling. Its curriculum meets the academic standards established for the licensed counseling profession and prepares graduates to practice in clinical settings including community mental health agencies, private practice, hospitals, and integrated care settings.
- Sixty-one credit hours of counseling-specific coursework form the professional counseling core of the degree and are structured to meet Michigan's educational requirements for licensure (see Preparation for Licensure below).
- An additional eight credit hours in ministry-related courses are required and expose students to the breadth of theological and biblical training available at Western Theological Seminary.
- The clinical experience portion of the degree includes a 100-hour counseling practicum followed by a 600-hour counseling internship, completed during the final 12 months of a student's enrollment. Clinical experience placements are implemented through partnerships with mental health providers and agencies in west Michigan.

In mid-August, new students participate in an online orientation and learn how to use the learning management system (Canvas). New students also attend two in-person orientation days (one specific to the CMHC program and one for all new residential students) held during the week prior to the beginning of the first semester.

The Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling students also participate in the Abbey, a Western Theological Seminary program that invites students into intentional relationships with faculty and fellow students to explore spiritual disciplines, engage in vocational discernment, and integrate their classroom learning with their life of faith. Students will register for the Abbey for four semesters across their first two years of study. As a part of the Abbey, students will meet weekly in Abbey groups made up of five-six students and facilitated by a faculty member. The Abbey includes on-site retreats once per semester.

CMHC students later take CC403 and CC404 Issues in Professional Practice concurrently with their counseling internship. These seminar courses continue the formational work of the Abbey, giving


**Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

**Dr. Chuck DeGroat**
Professor of Pastoral Care and Christian Spirituality, Executive Director of MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

**Dr. Elizabeth Pennock**
Associate Professor of Counseling, Director of MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

**Kathie Earll**
Accreditation Specialist, and Program Administrator for MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

**Jonathan Geidel**
Clinical Training Coordinator

attention to self-care, self-awareness, and the integration of faith and clinical practice as students enter the clinical environment.

Three of the required counseling courses are electives, which may be satisfied by any counseling course (CC prefix) not otherwise required for the degree. Elective offerings vary by year.

### CMHC Program Accreditation

The MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling is designed to meet all requirements of the 2024 Standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), and the program is currently preparing its initial Self-Study Report. The program is not yet CACREP-accredited, and initial accreditation is a multi-year process for new programs. Because some states give preference to or require graduation from a CACREP-accredited program, students are encouraged to review the licensure requirements of the state in which they intend to practice.

### CMHC Program Delivery and Completion Options

The MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling is a residential, cohort-based program. Students attend classes on the Western Theological Seminary campus in Holland, Michigan, and the substantial majority of courses are offered in a face-to-face, synchronous format. A small number of courses are offered in whole or in part through online, asynchronous delivery. Regardless of delivery format, all courses meet the same learning outcomes and are held to the same academic standards. The program's course delivery structure may evolve over time, and any changes will be communicated to students in advance.

The degree may be completed through three options: the three-year full-time plan, the five-year part-time plan (both shown below), and the Master of Divinity-MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling dual degree (described in the following section). All three require the same 69 credit hours, the same required counseling courses, and the same clinical training sequence, and all are taught by the same faculty and held to the same academic and clinical standards. The plans differ only in the pace and sequence of coursework.

### Preparation for Licensure

The MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling is designed to prepare graduates for professional counselor licensure. The program's 69 credit hours, including 61 credit hours of counseling coursework and a 100-hour practicum followed by a 600-hour internship, are structured to meet the educational and clinical experience requirements of Michigan's Board of Counseling. Graduates are eligible to apply for the Limited Licensed Professional Counselor (LLPC) credential upon degree completion, the first step in Michigan's two-tier licensure pathway, which allows them to practice under supervision while accumulating the post-degree hours required for full licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). Students who plan to practice in a state other than Michigan are encouraged to consult that state's requirements early in their program, as requirements vary. Information about state-specific requirements is available through the National Board for Certified Counselors at www.nbcc.org/Licensure.

| MASTER OF ARTS IN CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING 3-YEAR CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life | 3.0 |
| | CC300 Foundations for Counseling | 3.0 |
| | CC350 Helping Relationships: Skills and Practice | 3.0 |
| | PR401 Abbey 1 | 0.5 |
| **Spring** | MN336 Christian Interior Life | 3.0 |
| | CC305 Professional and Ethical Issues in CMHC | 3.0 |
| | CC320 Counseling Theories and Practice | 3.0 |
| | PR402 Abbey 2 | 0.5 |
| **Summer** | CC360 Research and Program Evaluation in CMHC | 3.0 |
| | Counseling Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 2 Fall** | CC370 Psychopathology | 3.0 |
| | CC340 Counseling Throughout the Lifespan | 3.0 |
| | CC335 Group Dynamics and Counseling | 3.0 |
| | PR403 Abbey 3 | 0.5 |
| **Spring** | CC355 Trauma and Crisis Counseling | 3.0 |
| | CC371 Advanced Diagnosis and Treatment | 3.0 |
| | CC330 Multicultural and Social Justice Issues in CMHC | 3.0 |
| | PR404 Abbey 4 | 0.5 |
| **Summer** | CC372 Testing and Assessment | 3.0 |
| | CC410 Counseling Practicum | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 3 Fall** | CC345 Lifestyle and Career Development | 3.0 |
| | Counseling Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | CC411 Counseling Internship 1 | 3.0 |
| | CC403 Issues in Professional Practice 1 | 0.5 |
| **Spring** | CC490 CMHC Capstone | 3.0 |
| | Counseling Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | CC412 Counseling Internship 2 | 3.0 |
| | CC404 Issues in Professional Practice 2 | 0.5 |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 69 credit hours** | | |

| MASTER OF ARTS IN CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING 5-YEAR CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life | 3.0 |
| | CC300 Foundations for Counseling | 3.0 |
| | PR401 Abbey 1 | 0.5 |
| **Spring** | MN336 Christian Interior Life | 3.0 |
| | CC305 Professional and Ethical Issues in CMHC | 3.0 |
| | PR402 Abbey 2 | 0.5 |
| **Summer** | CC360 Research and Program Evaluation in CMHC | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 2 Fall** | CC350 Helping Relationships: Skills and Practice | 3.0 |
| | CC370 Psychopathology | 3.0 |
| | PR403 Abbey 3 | 0.5 |
| **Spring** | CC320 Counseling Theories and Practice | 3.0 |
| | CC330 Multicultural and Social Justice Issues in CMHC | 3.0 |
| | PR404 Abbey 4 | 0.5 |
| **Summer** | Counseling Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 3 Fall** | CC335 Group Dynamics and Counseling | 3.0 |
| | CC340 Counseling Throughout the Lifespan | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | CC355 Trauma and Crisis Counseling | 3.0 |
| | CC371 Advanced Diagnosis and Treatment | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | CC372 Testing and Assessment | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 4 Fall** | CC345 Lifestyle and Career Development | 3.0 |
| | Counseling Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | Counseling Elective Course | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | CC410 Counseling Practicum | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 5 Fall** | CC411 Counseling Internship 1 | 3.0 |
| | CC403 Issues in Professional Practice 1 | 0.5 |
| **Spring** | CC412 Counseling Internship 2 | 3.0 |
| | CC404 Issues in Professional Practice 2 | 0.5 |
| | CC490 CMHC Capstone | 3.0 |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 69 credit hours** | | |

## Master of Divinity-Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Dual Degree

### Master of Divinity-Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

**Dr. Chuck DeGroat**
Professor of Pastoral Care and Christian Spirituality, Executive Director of MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

**Dr. David Komline**
Director of the Master of Divinity Program

**Dr. Elizabeth Pennock**
Associate Professor of Counseling, Director of MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

**Kathie Earll**
Accreditation Specialist, and Program Administrator for MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

**Jonathan Geidel**
Clinical Training Coordinator

The Master of Divinity-Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Dual Degree (MDiv-CMHC) is designed to enable students to complete both degrees in four years of full-time enrollment. Some courses taken in the CMHC degree count toward elective and required courses in the MDiv, allowing students to finish both degrees in a shortened time period.

The MDiv-CMHC curriculum meets the goals and outcomes of both programs. It requires 123 total credits: 54 MDiv-specific, 36 CMHC-specific, and 33 shared credits.

Information about counseling program accreditation, licensure preparation, and program delivery for the MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling appears in the preceding section.

In mid-August, new students participate in an online orientation and learn how to use the learning management system (Canvas). New students also attend two in-person orientation days (one specific to the CMHC program and one for all new residential students) held during the week prior to the beginning of the first semester.

*Taking two Biblical languages is not required for the MDiv or CMHC degree but it may be required by some denominations for ordination. Adding a second language or extra electives would bring the total credits to 129.

| DUAL DEGREE (MDiv/MACMHC) CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 1 Fall** | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life | 3.0 |
| | MN350 Worship Foundations | 3.0 |
| | TH300 Church History 1 | 3.0 |
| | TH310 Systematic Theology 1 | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | MN336 Christian Interior Life | 3.0 |
| | MN351 Preaching Foundations | 3.0 |
| | TH301 Church History 2 | 3.0 |
| | TH311 Systematic Theology 2 | 3.0 |
| **Summer** | PR450 Intercultural Immersion | 3.0 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Year 2 Fall** | Language 1 (BL310 or BL320) | 3.0 |
| | MN412 Christian Life and Mission | 3.0 |
| | PR411 Practice of Ministry: Internship 1 | 1.5 |
| | CC300 Foundations for Counseling | 3.0 |
| | CC350 Helping Relationships: Skills and Practice | 3.0 |
| | PR401 Abbey 1 | 0.5 |
| **Spring** | Language 1 (BL311 or BL321) | 3.0 |
| | MN440 Pastoral Imagination OR MN490 Leading Christian Communities | 3.0 |
| | PR412 Practice of Ministry: Internship 2 | 1.5 |
| | CC305 Professional and Ethical Issues in CMHC | 3.0 |
| | CC320 Counseling Theories and Practice | 3.0 |
| | PR402 Abbey 2 | 0.5 |
| **Summer** | Counseling Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | CC360 Research and Program Evaluation in CMHC | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 3 Fall** | MN415 Practice of Counsel and Care | 3.0 |
| | *Optional MDiv elective, Language 2 (BL310 or BL320)* or advanced coursework in biblical and theological studies* | *3** |
| | CC370 Psychopathology | 3.0 |
| | CC330 Multicultural and Social Justice Issues in CMHC | 3.0 |
| | CC335 Group Dynamics and Counseling | 3.0 |
| | PR403 Abbey 3 | 0.5 |
| **Spring** | TH440 Christian Life and Ethics | 3.0 |
| | *Optional MDiv elective, Language 2 (BL311 or BL321)* or advanced coursework in biblical and theological studies* | *3** |
| | CC355 Trauma and Crisis Counseling | 3.0 |
| | CC371 Advanced Diagnosis and Treatment | 3.0 |
| | CC340 Counseling Throughout the Lifespan | 3.0 |
| | PR404 Abbey 4 | 0.5 |
| **Summer** | CC372 Testing and Assessment | 3.0 |
| | CC410 Counseling Practicum | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Year 4 Fall** | BL490 Biblical Capstone | 3.0 |
| | CC345 Lifestyle and Career Development | 3.0 |
| | Counseling Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | CC411 Counseling Internship 1 | 3.0 |
| | CC403 Issues in Professional Practice 1 | 0.5 |
| **Spring** | TH490 Credo | 3.0 |
| | CC490 CMHC Capstone | 3.0 |
| | Counseling Elective Course | 3.0 |
| | CC412 Counseling Internship 2 | 3.0 |
| | CC404 Issues in Professional Practice 2 | 0.5 |
| | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 54 MDiv-specific credits, 33 shared credits, 36 CMHC credits= 123 credit hours** | | |

## Master of Theology

The Master of Theology (ThM) program is designed to enable qualified graduates of post-baccalaureate degree programs in theology (i.e., the MDiv degree or its equivalent) to broaden and deepen their theological knowledge. Students will do this by participating in core seminars, taking electives, and pursuing research in a specialized area within the Biblical, Theological, or Christian Ministry fields.

### Master of Theology

**Dr. David Komline**
Professor of Church History, and
Director of ThM Program

**Jonathan Dockery**
Primary Designated School Official

**Dr. Gretchen Avila-Torres**
ThM Program Administrator

This program has two further distinctive characteristics:

1. The ThM program highlights the theological and cultural underpinnings of how Christian faith and practice are and might be embodied in various cultures and contexts. With this in mind, we aim for a student body that is approximately two-thirds international students and one-third domestic students. The diverse cultural background of our students enriches the discussions both in our core ThM seminars and in the wider Western Theological Seminary community.
2. As with all our degree programs, our pursuit of knowledge is done in the spirit of "faith seeking understanding." We invite all students to participate fully in our lively, Reformed, evangelical, and ecumenically open community of faith as they seek to deepen and sharpen their theological understanding.

The ThM degree is intended for students preparing for further PhD studies, pastors who wish to deepen their education, and Christian leaders who will serve and teach in ecclesiastical and educational institutions. Applicants must have the ability to relate theological study to the social, cultural, and historical contexts of their ministries. International applicants must verify their English proficiency by achieving one of the following test scores or higher:

- Paper based TOEFL: 550, TWE 4
- Internet based TOEFL: 80
- IELTS: overall 6.0
- Duo Lingo: 110

| MASTER OF THEOLOGY CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **August** | TH700 Orientation Seminar | 1.0 |
| **Year 1 Fall** | TH720 State of the Field | 3.0 |
| | TH735 Seminar in Theological Method | 3.0 |
| | Two 3-credit Electives | 3.0 |
| **Spring** | Non-thesis option: Three 3-credit Electives | 9.0 |
| | TH790 Research Paper | 3.0 |
| | Thesis option: Two 3-credit Electives | 6.0 |
| | TH795 Thesis | 6.0 |
| | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 25 credit hours** | | |

# Doctor of Ministry

The Doctor of Ministry (DMin) degree program is offered to those who hold a master's degree or its equivalent in an area related to one's ministry setting or vocational calling who have at least three years of vocational experience in one's area of study and a clear alignment with the focus of the DMin cohort and a capacity for theological and cultural reflection, strong self-awareness, and a commitment to one's own continued spiritual formation.

### Doctor of Ministry

**Dr. Chuck DeGroat**
Professor of Pastoral Care and Christian Spirituality, Interim Director of DMin Program

**Yoli Vega**
DMin Program Administrator

The DMin at Western Theological Seminary is unique—a formational process with an intellectual product. Three-year cohorts are designed around important themes such as pastoral imagination, disability and ministry, pastoral leadership, ministry concerns in particular cultures, etc. (See website for current cohort offerings at westernsem.edu/programs/doctor-of-ministry-degree.)

Each participant researches a topic born out of passion and interest as well as his/her unique context or ecclesial concern. Students identify a barrier in their ministry and read broadly within the research area of their cohort theme. Along the way, the student is encouraged to grow on four levels:

1. Who you are as a person (emotional and psychological formation).
2. Who you are as a child of God (spiritual formation).
3. What you do (skills for ecclesial formation).
4. What you know (intellectual formation).

Over the course of three years, participants gather with peers and faculty for cohort seminars. The gatherings are unique to each cohort theme and may be in Holland, Michigan, or another location.

In between face-to-face cohort seminars, participants engage with each other virtually and maintain regular contact with the faculty mentor and with each other. Mutual encouragement and regular engagement are crucial for growth, motivation, and shared learning. As cohort members discuss the challenges and opportunities within their own ministries, they learn from each other and serve as "research assistants" when they discover helpful content for a fellow student. The model also works well cross-culturally where a strong group dynamic is valued.

The program concludes with successful completion of a thesis project, presented and defended before the faculty advisor as well as select readers. The project is shaped by the various components of the three-year program and should demonstrate competencies in personal and spiritual maturity, contextual discernment, advanced theological integration, and leadership capacity.

## Expectations of Student Progress

Each cohort begins at a different time in the calendar year. Candidates are expected to complete six seminar courses. Each course includes a one-week seminar meeting face-to-face either in Holland,

Michigan, or another location. Students are expected to complete the courses in three years along with their cohort. One additional year is given for completion of their thesis project. The degree is granted when a student has successfully completed the core curriculum of 36 credits plus the thesis project.

All DMin courses are online with a required face-to-face seminar. Each year of the program includes two semesters. At the discretion of the professor, the seminar can be either two consecutive weeks or two one-week gatherings each year.

| DOCTOR OF MINISTRY CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Semester 1** | DM850 Orientation Seminar 1 | 6.0 |
| **Semester 2** | DM851 Orientation Seminar 2 | 6.0 |
| **Semester 3** | DM860 Research Seminar 3 | 6.0 |
| **Semester 4** | DM861 Research Seminar 4 | 6.0 |
| **Semester 5** | DM870 Thesis Seminar 5 | 6.0 |
| **Semester 6** | DM871 Thesis Seminar 6 | 6.0 |
| | DM940 Thesis Project | 0.0 |
| | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 36 credit hours** | | |

## Graduate Certificate in Disability and Ministry

**GCDM**

**Dr. Ben Conner**
Professor of Practical Theology, and Director of the Center for Disability and Ministry

The Graduate Certificate in Disability and Ministry (GCDM) is tailored to help church leaders and lay leaders recognize, appreciate, and incorporate the gifts and perspectives of people with disabilities in a variety of ministry settings. Western Theological Seminary offers:

- Strength in the art and practice of ministering to and with those with disabilities.
- Deeper biblical and theological knowledge.
- Increased ability to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Insights for developing cultural competency.
- Community of peers to challenge and support you.
- Momentum toward a Master of Divinity or Master of Arts degree.

Graduate Certificate students take three core curriculum courses and four elective courses, a total of 21 credit hours, to deepen their awareness of issues particular to disabilities and to increase their competency in ministering to and with the entire body of Christ. Students can take a core course and at least a three-credit elective each semester, completing the program in two years if they wish. Not all courses are offered every year or in any two-year period.

Our courses always include the voices of people with disabilities, and some of the professors who teach in the program also have disabilities.

Topics explored in disability courses:

- Conceptions, definitions, and expressions of disability.
- The history of disability in the United States.
- Innovative practitioners who paved the way in reimagining disability.
- Service systems and advocacy groups.
- How Jesus redefined the margin and the center with a Kingdom perspective.
- Theological understanding of disability.
- Pastoral issues related to the experience of disability.
- Biblical interpretation from disability perspectives.
- Aging and dementia.
- Worship.
- Deaf theology and ministry.
- Strategies for becoming an inclusive church.

Existing MDiv or MA students at WTS may apply for and earn the GCDM by completing *MN116 Introduction to Disability and the Church* and four (4) of the disability-related electives. The courses may

be taken as electives while enrolled, in which case the GCDM will be presented to the student upon graduation. If the work for the GCDM is incomplete upon graduation, the necessary additional courses may be taken after graduation, and the GCDM will be conferred upon completion of requirements.

Students with an earned MA or MDiv from any ATS approved institution will be required to complete *Introduction to Disability and the Church* and four of the disability-related electives.

| GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN DISABILITY AND MINISTRY CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Required** | **Courses** | **9** |
| | MN361 Introduction to Disability and the Church | 3.0 |
| | BL551 Disability, Bible, and Pastoral Imagination **or** BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | TH565 Disability and Theology in Christian Tradition **or** TH311 Systematic Theology 2 | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Electives:** | **Choose four classes (not available all years)** | **12** |
| | BL551 Disability, Bible, and the Pastoral Imagination | 3.0 |
| | MN580 Healing Ministry of the Church | 3.0 |
| | MN581 Ministry and the Margins | 3.0 |
| | MN582 Ministry, Aging, and Dementia | 3.0 |
| | MN583 We All Worship | 3.0 |
| | MN587 Living into Community: Friendship House | 3.0 |
| | MN588 Summer Institute on Theology and Disability | 3.0 |
| | MN590 Deaf Theology and Ministry | 3.0 |
| | MN591 Strategies for an Inclusive Church | 3.0 |
| | MN592 Practicing the Presence of People | 3.0 |
| | MN595 Intellectual Disability and the Church | 3.0 |
| | TH565 Disability/Theology in Christian Tradition | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 21 credit hours** | | |

# Graduate Certificate in Pastoral Ministry

The Graduate Certificate in Pastoral Ministry (GCPM) is offered to give church leaders and lay leaders practical training for their context. Students may select the GCPM or the GCPM in Soul Care. The certificate creates momentum toward an MDiv or MA degree.

**GCPM**

**Dr. Alberto La Rosa Rojas**
Director of the Hispanic Ministries Program

**Johnny Vega**
Assistant Director of the Hispanic Ministries Program

**Dr. Gretchen Avila-Torres**
Assistant Director of the Hispanic Ministries Program

**Dr. Keith Starkenburg**
Director of the English GCPM Program

## GCPM (offered in Spanish or English)

This certificate prepares pastors, elders, ministers, and church leaders for ministry today. It provides:

- Strengthened skills for pastoral ministry for the next generation.
- Classes taught by both WTS faculty and bilingual (Spanish and English) professors from multicultural backgrounds.
- Deeper biblical and theological knowledge.
- Increased ability to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- A community of peers to challenge and support you.
- Insight into relating across cultures.
- A pathway for RCA Commissioned Pastors to complete their required training criteria.

## GCPM in Soul Care

This certificate is a unique collaboration between WTS and The Soul Care Institute. This certificate prepares pastors, elders, ministers, and church leaders to gain tools in the art and practice of soul care and ministry. It provides:

- Strengthened skills for pastoral ministry with an emphasis on soul care.
- Classes taught by both WTS faculty and Soul Care Institute professors.
- Deeper biblical and theological knowledge.
- Increased ability to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- A community of peers to challenge and support you.
- Insight into relating across cultures.

Eight courses totaling 24 credit hours are required to complete the program, which can be completed in four semesters. The schedule for courses varies by geographic location around the country, some purely online and some a combination of online, online with an intensive, and classroom.

Upon successful completion of the Graduate Certificate, students can apply for entrance to Western Theological Seminary's Master of Divinity or Master of Arts program through a separate application process. All Graduate Certificate in Pastoral Ministry courses can be applied to Master of Divinity or Master of Arts programs at Western or at other ATS accredited seminaries.

| GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN PASTORAL MINISTRY CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Required** | **Courses** | **12** |
| | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | TH301 Church History 2 | 3.0 |
| | TH110 Theology for Ministry **or** TH310 Systematic Theology 1 | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Electives:** | **Choose four classes (not available all years)** | **12** |
| | MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life | 3.0 |
| | MN350 Worship Foundations | 3.0 |
| | MN351 Preaching Foundations | 3.0 |
| | MN336 Christian Interior Life | 3.0 |
| | MN412 Christian Life and Mission | 3.0 |
| | MN415 Practice of Counsel and Care | 3.0 |
| | MN440 Pastoral Imagination | 3.0 |
| | TH421 RCA Standards and Polity | 3.0 |
| | TH102 Introduction to Theological Research | 3.0 |
| | Approved Elective(s) | 3.0 |
| | | |
| | **Soul Care Concentration** | |
| | MN415 Practice of Counsel and Care | 3.0 |
| | Completed courses from the Soul Care Institute | 9.0 |
| | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 24 credit hours** | | |

## Graduate Certificate in Restorative Justice

GCRJ

**Dr. David Stubbs**
Professor of Ethics and Theology, Director of the Graduate Certificate in Restorative Justice

The Graduate Certificate in Restorative Justice (GCRJ) is a graduate level program that lays a foundation for restorative justice ministries and restorative practices in the context of the Christian faith. Courses are offered in conjunction with the Hope-Western Prison Education Program (HWPEP).

The Certificate Program includes taking three integrated "inside-outside" classes at the Muskegon Correctional Facility, where students will learn in a classroom integrated with both "inside" students (incarcerated students in the HWPEP) and "outside" students (WTS students).

Students will deepen their knowledge of biblical and theological dimensions of restorative justice, restorative practices, and practical aspects of putting the gospel into action. This program is especially intended for those whose vocation has prophetic and social dimensions or whose vocation may involve work in prison systems.

The Graduate Certificate in Restorative Justice offers the opportunity to:

- Deepen one's faith and knowledge of Scripture and the Christian tradition, especially ways in which the message of Scripture propels us to healing and reparative work in communities.
- Learn "the things that make for peace." Develop knowledge of and skills for actively and effectively addressing social injustices, wrong-doing, and ruptures in communities to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Become pastorally and socially aware of the complexity of systems of power and of one's own place within social systems.
- Gain skills and knowledge for working with incarcerated populations, people with criminal justice events in their history, or other under-served populations.

Seven courses totaling 21 credits are required to complete the certificate, which can be completed in four semesters (depending on course availability). Four foundational courses can be taken in in-residence or distance learning formats. Three elective courses must be taken in person at Muskegon Correctional Facility.

Existing MDiv or MA students at WTS may apply for and earn the GCRJ by completing the four foundational courses and the three integrated classroom courses. The courses may be taken as electives while enrolled, in which case the GCRJ will be presented to the student upon graduation. If the work for the GCRJ is incomplete upon graduation, the necessary additional courses may be taken after graduation, and the GCRJ will be conferred upon completion of requirements.

| GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN RESTORATIVE JUSTICE CURRICULUM | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Required** | **Courses** | **12** |
| | BL300 Old Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | BL301 New Testament Foundations | 3.0 |
| | MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life | 3.0 |
| | TH440 Christian Life and Ethics | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **Electives:** | **Integrated Classroom Courses** | **9** |
| | MN366 Leading with Courage and Compassion | 3.0 |
| | TH365 Restorative Justice | 3.0 |
| | XX000 Restorative Arts Elective | 3.0 |
| | | |
| **PROGRAM TOTAL: 21 credit hours** | | |

## Non-Degree-Seeking Students

Western Seminary allows those who wish to register for seminary courses without enrolling in one of our degree programs to apply for non-degree-seeking status. Those admitted as non-degree-seeking students may audit courses or take courses for credit. Those wanting academic credit for a course are subject to all regular academic requirements.

Non-degree-seeking students may not register for more than 15 credit hours without receiving permission from the academic dean. Internship courses and directed-study courses are usually not available to non-degree-seeking students.

## Partnerships

### The Hope-Western Prison Education Program (HWPEP)

The Hope-Western Prison Education Program provides a Christian liberal arts education to incarcerated men with long-term sentences at Muskegon Correctional Facility (MCF). Men at MCF can earn a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Faith, Leadership, and Service. Classes are taught by professors from Hope College and Western Theological Seminary, and Hope and Western students have the opportunity to be teaching assistants. As a covenant partnership between the college and seminary, the program strives to form thoughtful and wise citizens dedicated to improving their communities—whether inside or outside of prison.

### Young Life (YL)

Young Life staff can turn their training into a seminary certificate or degree. Courses from Young Life Core Training can be transcripted into academic credits at WTS. Students who wish to complete a Master of Arts in Christian Studies transcript nine YL courses (27 credits). They then complete another five courses (15 credits) at WTS, all of which can be done in the distance-learning format, to reach the 42 credits required for the degree. Students wishing to earn the Graduate Certificate in Disability and Ministry can transcript two YL courses (6 credits) and then take five courses (15 credits) at WTS for a total of 21 credits.

### Church Leadership Center (CLC)

Those who have completed training with the Church Leadership Center yet still want to grow in biblical and theological depth can turn their CLC learning into seminary program credits. CLC courses can be transcripted into seminary credit hours toward these programs at WTS:

- Graduate Certificate in Pastoral Ministry (9 credits): Five additional WTS classes (15 credits) needed for certificate.
- Master of Arts in Christian Studies (15 credits): Nine additional WTS classes (27 credits) needed for degree.
- Master of Divinity (15 credits): Twenty-four additional WTS classes (72 credits) needed for degree.

### Soul Care Institute (SCI)

WTS students have the opportunity to engage in true retreat designed to refill their souls. Through our partnership with Soul Care Institute, students embark on a journey with a group of peers meeting six times over two years. Each retreat is filled with wisdom from experienced teachers, time to recover stillness, and encouragement from spiritual directors and peers. After completing the full program, WTS students can receive 9 credit hours for their work at SCI to apply toward the 24 credits needed for a Graduate Certificate in Pastoral Ministry (GCPM) with a concentration in Soul Care. By the same token, Soul Care graduates can apply to WTS and transcript 9 credits toward a GCPM at WTS.

### Vita Scholars

Vita Scholars is program offered in partnership with Hope College, Northwestern College, and Dordt University, in which students can earn an accelerated Master of Divinity.

# Resources

## Academic Office

The Academic Office provides:

- Degree program administration
- Academic calendar
- Advisor assignments
- Class and exam schedules
- Grades and transcripts
- Class enrollment
- Drop/add, and withdrawal
- Financial aid applications
- Current enrollment data

### Academic Office

**Dr. Keith Starkenburg**
Dean, and Vice President of Academic Affairs

**Dr. David Komline**
Associate Academic Dean, and
Director of ThM, MA, and MDiv Programs

**Theresa Hamm**
Executive Assistant to the
Dean, and Assessment Coordinator

**Katlyn DeVries**
Writing Specialist, and
Director of Accelerated MDiv Partnerships

**Sydney Johnson**
ED Tech Specialist

Jennifer Knott
Registrar

## Writing Studio

The Writing Studio is a free service for enrolled students. Students who would like to improve their writing skills, and learn how to conceive, develop, organize, and clarify their writing efforts can set up an appointment with the Writing Studio's Writing Specialist in person or virtually.

## Student Life

**Student Assistance Program (SAP)**

Through the Student Assistance Program (SAP), enrolled students may access resource assistance and limited financial support for professional counseling, therapy, or spiritual direction. For more information about SAP or referral sources, please contact studentlife@westernsem.edu.

### Student Life

**Dr. Tim Basselin**
Director of Field Education and Student Life

**Kate Bareman**
Director of Student Care and Engagement

**Student Council**

Student Council advocates for student concerns and provides programming that engages the entire student body. Each class has representation along with elected leaders, both for in-residence and distance learning students.

**Placement Services**

While the seminary does not "place" its graduates, we offer support in the placement process. WTS hosts churches and other ministries that wish to make our graduates aware of openings. Many open ministry positions are listed on Western's website at westernsem.edu/about/employment/.

## Cook Library

The Cook Library, housed in the DeWitt Learning Center, is the seminary's center for access to information resources, supporting student studies, faculty research, and area ministries. Cook Library is a member of the American Theological Library Association, the Chicago Area Theological Library Association, and the Michigan Library Consortium.

### Cook Library

**Stephen E. Michaels**
Co-Director of Cook Library: Library Technology and Systems

**Margaret Wade**
Co-Director of Cook Library: Public Services and Resource Management

Cook Library's resources include a combination of over 500,000 print and e-books with particular strengths in the Reformed tradition. Premium electronic resources for theological study, including databases and scholarly e-journals, are available to our patrons worldwide 24/7.

Reference services are available in person and online via chat. Alumni of Western Theological Seminary may also enjoy access to ministry research resources via ATLAS for Alum.

Library users find information on the collection through the Western Theological Seminary Catalog. Seminary students and faculty may request materials from other libraries through interlibrary loan.

### Special Collections

Several special collections complement Cook Library's core collection. A Japanese collection includes Japanese translations of significant theological works. The library also houses religious education curricula from a wide range of publishers. Historical denominational materials and faculty publications are also available. The Hope College Archive and Special Collections, housed in Hope College's Van Wylen Library, contains papers documenting the history of Western Theological Seminary and the Reformed Church in West Michigan.

### Study Environment

The DeWitt Learning Center provides an environment conducive for study, offering study carrels, lounge chairs, collaborative workspaces, group workrooms, catalog access on each floor, copying, printing and scanning services, and wireless internet access throughout the building. A sight reader is available for the visually impaired.

# Faculty

## Biblical Field

**Pauline Buisch**
Assistant Professor of Old Testament

**Dana Harris**
Professor of New Testament

**Travis West**
Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament

## Christian Ministry Field

**Tim Basselin**
Director of Field Education and Student Life
Associate Professor of Ministry, Theology, and Culture

**Winn Collier**
Director of the Eugene Peterson Center for Christian Imagination
Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology and Christian Imagination

**Benjamin T. Conner**
Director of the Graduate Certificate and Master of Arts in Disability and Ministry
Professor of Practical Theology

**Ruth Padilla DeBorst**
Richard C. Oudersluys Professor of World Christianity

**Ron Rienstra**
Professor of Preaching and Worship Arts

**Sue A. Rozeboom**
Professor of Liturgical Theology
Rector of Seminary Worship Life

**L.S. Carlos Thompson**
Director of the Friendship House
Student Accessibility Coordinator
Assistant Professor of Christian Ministry and Disability Theology

## Clinical Mental Health Counseling Field

**Chuck DeGroat**
Professor of Pastoral Care and Christian Spirituality
Interim Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program
Executive Director of the MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

**Elizabeth Pennock**
Associate Professor of Counseling
Director of the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

**Jessica Stovall**
Assistant Professor-in-Residence of Counseling

## Theological Field

**J. Todd Billings**
Gordon H. Girod Research Professor of Reformed Theology

**David Komline**
Professor of Church History
Coordinator for Strategic International Initiatives
Director of ThM Program
Associate Academic Dean

**Han-luen Kantzer Komline**
Marvin and Jerene DeWitt Professor of Theology and Church History

**Alberto La Rosa Rojas**
Assistant Professor of Theology and Ethics
Director of the Hispanic Ministries Program

**Suzanne McDonald**
Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology

**Keith Starkenburg**
Associate Professor of Theology
Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs

**David L. Stubbs**
Professor of Ethics and Theology
Director of the Graduate Certificate in Restorative Justice

## Emeriti and Retired Professors

**Carol Bechtel**
Professor Emeritus of Old Testament

**Dawn Boelkins**
Associate Professor of Biblical Languages

**Tom Boogaart**
Dennis & Betty Voskuil Professor Emeritus of Old Testament

**John Brogan**
Professor Emeritus of New Testament

**Timothy Brown**
President Emeritus and Henry Bast-Timothy Brown Professor Emeritus of New Testament

**Robert A. Coughenour**
Cornelius Van der Meulen Professor Emeritus of Old Testament

**George R. Hunsberger**
Professor Emeritus of Missiology

**Christopher B. Kaiser**
Professor Emeritus of Historical and Systematic Theology

**Paul M. Smith**
Associate Professor of Theological Bibliography

**Robert Van Voorst**
Professor Emeritus of New Testament

**Dennis Voskuil**
President Emeritus and Marvin & Jerene DeWitt Professor Emeritus of Church History

## Board of Trustees

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# Staff

## Office of the President

**Felix Theonugraha**
President
Professor of Educational Leadership

**Lindsay Porter**
Executive Assistant

**Keith Reynolds**
Associate Director of Church Connections

**Kaylee Vroon**
Event and Hospitality Coordinator

## Academic and Student Life

**Keith Starkenburg**
Academic Dean
Vice President of Academic Affairs

**Gretchen Avila-Torres**
Assistant Director of the Hispanic Ministries Program
ThM Program Administrator
Writing Specialist

**Kate Bareman**
Director of Student Care and Engagement

**Tim Basselin**
Director of Field Education and Student Life

**Katlyn DeVries**
Director of Accelerated MDiv Partnerships
Writing Specialist
Girod Program Associate

**Kathie Earll**
Accreditation Specialist
Program Administrator for the MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

**Jonathan Geidel**
Clinical Training Coordinator

**Theresa Hamm**
Executive Assistant to the Dean
Assessment Coordinator
Technology Coordinator

**Sydney Johnson**
Educational Design and Technology Specialist

**Jennifer Knott**
Registrar

**David Komline**
Associate Academic Dean

**L.S. Carlos Thompson**
Friendship House Director
Student Accessibility Coordinator

**Johnny Vega**
Assistant Director of the Hispanic Ministries Program

**Yolanda Vega**
Doctor of Ministry Program Coordinator

## Admissions

**Drew Brown**
Director of Admissions

**Anna La Rosa**
Admissions Administrator

## Advancement

**Brent Lavigne**
Vice President of Development

**Syndi Copeland**
Administrative Assistant

**Richard Capotosto**
Associate Director of Development

**Brenda Dieffenbach**
Associate Director of Development

**Rachel Dober**
Associate Development Officer

**Evonne Wernlund**
Administrative Assistant

## Marketing/Communications

**Sydney Huizenga**
Creative Specialist: Social Media, Admissions Marketing

**Betsy Maxwell**
Creative Specialist: Web, Video, and Brand Coordination

## Business

### Finance

**Jonathan Dockery**
Chief Financial Officer
Vice President of Finance

**Tamara Buikema**
Finance Associate

**Kerry Eshenaur**
Accounting Associate

### Human Resources

**Yajaira Ruiz**
Human Resources Generalist

### Building and Grounds

**David Becker**
Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds

**Muhammad Ilyas Zadran**
Custodian and Maintenance Assistant

## Cook Library

**Stephen E. Michaels**
Co-Director of Cook Library: Library Technology and Systems

**Margaret Wade**
Co-Director of Cook Library: Public Services and Resource Management

## Churches in Mission Grant

**Hannah Stevens**
Director of Lifelong Formation

## Compelling Preaching Initiative

**Ron Rienstra**
Professor of Preaching and Director of Worship Life

## Nurturing Children with Disabilities Grant

**Benjamin Conner**
Director

**Luke Soderstrom**
Grant Administrator

## Hope-Western Prison Education Program

**Pam Bush**
Associate Director of Learning and Formation

**Amy Uredi**
Program Operations Coordinator

## Eugene Peterson Center

**Winn Collier**
Director

**Sam Gutierrez**
Associate Director

# Affiliated Ministries

## The Bridge

A few short blocks from campus, Holland's downtown thrives with specialty shops and galleries. One of the shops, The Bridge, is an unusual type of "specialty" store—a developing-world store staffed entirely by volunteers. The merchandise is purchased from cooperatives of artisans around the world who depend upon their work for economic survival.

**The Bridge**
thebridge@westernsem.edu

**Darcy Cunningham**
Store Manager

**Amy Kornelis**
Assistant Manager

Because The Bridge bypasses expensive importers and operates with minimal overhead, it can offer reasonably priced handmade goods to shoppers and ensure a fair return to the artisans who produce them.

The Bridge is owned and operated by Western Theological Seminary. Profits from The Bridge help to bring scholars from around the world to our Master of Theology program.

*Bridging...Equality*
*Bridging...Sustainability*
*Bridging...Fair Trade*
*Bridging...Cultures*

## Courses

**Unless otherwise noted, all courses are three credits. Some courses have prerequisites that are not listed here.**

**BL300 Old Testament Foundations** An introduction to the content, history, and theological dynamism of the writings of the Old Testament, with a view to appropriating the message of the Old Testament for today.

**BL301 New Testament Foundations** An introduction to the content, history, and theological dynamism of the writings of the New Testament, with a view to appropriating the message of the New Testament for today.

**BL310 Biblical Hebrew**
An introduction to biblical Hebrew in its cultural context for those who seek to interpret the Bible faithfully and fully. Using multi-sensory and interactive approaches, students will learn the basic vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and world view of the Old Testament.

**BL311 Hebrew Translation and Interpretation**
A continuation of BL310 which more fully engages interpretive and devotional approaches to Old Testament texts. Using multi-sensory and interactive approaches, students will learn the basic vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and world view of the Old Testament. Prerequisite: BL310

**BL320 New Testament Greek I**
An introduction to New Testament Greek vocabulary, grammatical forms, and sentence structure with a view to New Testament Greek as a resource for ministry.

**BL321 New Testament Greek II and Interpretation**
Continues BL320, with special emphasis upon syntax and translation. Greek Interpretation introduces the tools and principles required for the exegesis of the New Testament in its own linguistic, historical, and canonical context, as a foundation for interpreting the New Testament in a contemporary context. Prerequisite: BL320

**BL330 Biblical Interpretation for Ministry**
This course explores biblical interpretive methods and online study tools and their application towards ministry settings. No language prerequisite.

**BL331 Hebrew Tools for Ministry**
Covers basic elements of biblical Hebrew (alphabet, parts of speech, introductory syntax) towards utilizing Hebrew in lexicons, commentaries, and online tools. Students are introduced to diverse interpretive methods and applications. This course does not fulfill the two-semester language requirement for the MDiv degree.

**BL332 Greek Tools for Ministry**
Covers basic elements of biblical Greek (alphabet, parts of speech, introductory syntax) towards utilizing Greek in lexicons, commentaries, and online tools. Students are introduced to diverse interpretive methods and applications. This course does not fulfill the two-semester language requirement for the MDiv degree.

**BL490 Biblical Capstone**
This capstone course explores how our biblical hermeneutic, i.e. the approaches we bring to interpreting Scripture, affects the way we engage our Christian life and ministry.

**BL501 Exodus: Explorations in Liberation**
The Book of Exodus includes some of the most iconic and theologically significant moments in the life of the people of Israel, from the burning bush to the Exodus, from the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai to the construction of the Tabernacle—stories and themes that reverberate throughout the entire Bible. It includes narrative and law codes, poetry and history. This exegetical course will explore these moments and themes from multiple perspectives, with particular emphasis given to the theme of liberation—both as the book's essential content and as an interpretive lens.

**BL502 Hebrew Reading and Exegesis: Deuteronomy**
The goal of this course is for students to gain a level of reading fluency in Classical Biblical Hebrew prose. Two semesters of Hebrew are required. Students will expand their vocabulary, review morphology, and deepen their knowledge of Hebrew syntax in the context of reading the early chapters of Deuteronomy. As students encounter the story of Israel's wilderness journey in the original language, they will also experience a new depth of exegesis that comes from attending closely to the Hebrew text. *Prerequisite: two semesters of Hebrew*

**BL505 Ecological Hermeneutics and Ministry**
This course explores the field of ecological hermeneutics and the application of ecological interpretive approaches in ministry settings. Biblical scholars interpret the Bible's teachings concerning the relationship between humans and creation in a variety of ways. Different interpretive approaches result in different applications. Students will be challenged to develop their own ecological hermeneutical approach to Scripture and to seek ways to apply their interpretations in their own ministry and life settings.

**BL506 Prophetic Narratives**
This course will explore the artistry, drama, and theology of Israelite storytelling within the prophetic tradition, with particular emphasis on the ministries of Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha in the books of Samuel and Kings. We will consider the cultural, historical, and theological context out of which these dramatic stories arose. We will explore the power of story in shaping belief and practice and consider how it shows (as opposed to tells) us how to embody Kingdom values in the face of corruption, apathy, violence, and lust for power.

**BL508 Revelation**
This course studies the book of Revelation within its historical, political, and literary contexts. Particular emphasis is placed on the apocalyptic nature of the work within the first century C.E. Additionally, it studies the impact this book has had on contemporary views on eschatology. Students will examine the variety of ways Revelation can be used in the church, including preaching, liturgy, and pastoral care.

**BL510 Old Testament in the New**
Many Christians, though at home in much of the New Testament, feel out of their depth in the Old. Yet, the New Testament is largely unintelligible outside of knowing the narratives, poems, apocalypses, wisdom sayings, and laws of the Old Testament. This course bridges the canonical gap by exploring the Old Testament as it is used in the New. By canvassing how Paul, James, the Evangelists, and ultimately Jesus imaginatively use the Old Testament, we will discover fresh and faithful ways in which the Spirit is speaking to the Church through Scripture. *Prerequisite: BL301 New Testament Foundations. Fulfills Upper NT elective requirement.*

**BL511 Isaiah**
Isaiah's prophecies speak just as well about judgment and justice as they do about hope and comfort. That range makes this book extremely relevant for our day. These ancient words speak to us as individuals, congregations, and as human beings on a fragile planet. In this course we will pay careful attention to the original contexts of these words so that we can better understand what they meant to their original audience. But we will also look at how they have been recontextualized for different times— including the early church as they tried to understand their experience in Jesus Christ.

**BL512 Scripture's Use of Scripture**
Authors of Scripture often utilized other authoritative writings, or "scripture," when writing their own works. This course will explore places where later texts draw upon earlier texts to say something about God and God's work in the world. The course will (1) provide an introduction to the "uses" of biblical texts in other biblical texts through definitions and a survey of common challenges (e.g., variation between Greek and Hebrew traditions); (2) discuss how our own interpretive approaches influence our understanding of ancient "uses"; and (3) provide frameworks for our own "uses" of Scripture in our ministry and devotional lives.

**BL513 Studies in Prophets**
This course will explore the role of prophets in Israelite society, their theology, and their impact on Western culture.

**BL514 The Minor Prophets**
This course examines the twelve Minor Prophets in their historical, literary, and canonical contexts with the ultimate goal of reading the texts as Christian Scripture. Attention will be paid to the message of each individual book as well as the shape of the larger collection, often called the Book of the Twelve. We will attend to the prophetic message as it comforts, confronts, and convicts and explore how the Church might respond to the message of the Twelve today.

**BL515 Trinity in the New Testament**
The New Testament is fundamental to the development of Nicene Trinitarian doctrine. This course will focus on that forward

movement—how the NT texts helped shape later conciliar Trinitarian theology—as well as on the corresponding backward movement and how later Trinitarian doctrine can help us to reread the New Testament in the Church today.

**BL516 Days of Elijah and Elisha**
We will take a deep dive into the Elijah and Elisha cycles in I and II Kings and will consider them in the light of the larger historical context of the Israelite monarchy into which these early prophets enacted, embodied, and articulated the Word of the Lord. The course will explore the artistry, drama, and theology of Israelite storytelling generally but with focused attention on these prophetic narratives. We will consider the cultural, historical, and theological context out of which these dramatic stories arose and will discover their transforming power through performance.

**BL521 Ruth and Esther**
This course offers a literary and theological exposition of Ruth and Esther—two small books that offer large insights for today. Emphasis is on becoming more careful and responsible readers of Scripture. This course offers examples of how to engage an Old Testament book via in-depth exegesis, using a variety of critical tools.

**BL523 Joshua and the Paradox of Grace**
Explore the book of Joshua as an entryway into the historical and theological issues surrounding Israel's struggle to claim its God-given inheritance in the Land of Canaan. We'll seek distinctive ways to read this book as the Church and discover ways to live into this biblical story of incorporation and exclusion, hopelessness and salvation, apostasy and grace.

**BL525 Art of the Sabbath**
In this course, we will explore the biblical and theological context of the Sabbath and its historical development throughout the Old and New Testaments as well as in Jewish and Christian practice up until today, with a view toward how Sabbath practice can inform and shape Christian living and ministry. Topics will include Sabbath time, Sabbath practices and spiritual formation, Sabbath keeping and Christian identity, the social, economic, and ecological dimensions of the Sabbath, Sabbath and Sunday, and more.

**BL526 Psalms and Wisdom Literature**
An exegetical study of selected psalms in the context of both the Old Testament and the larger canon of Scripture. Attention is given to the role of the psalms in the liturgical, devotional, and theological life of the church. The Wisdom Literature of the Bible explores the forms, vocabulary, and concepts of wisdom in the Bible, emphasizing Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes.

**BL529 Gospel According to Matthew**
An overview of the theology and narrative shaping of the first gospel, using close readings of selected texts. Particular attention is paid to Matthew's vision for discipleship, the church, and Christian life and witness.

**BL530 Letter to the Romans**
Introduction and overview of the letter, together with exegetical study of selected portions in Greek.

**BL531 New Testament Theology: Issues and Themes**
The course first introduces the student to the history, issues, and most significant practitioners and methodological models of the discipline of New Testament theology. It then explores the theological presuppositions of the New Testament authors before introducing the student to a method of doing New Testament theology that understands Christian Scripture as an epic story that runs from creation to new creation. *Prerequisite: BL301 New Testament Foundations. Fulfills Upper NT elective requirement.*

**BL532 Gospel of John**
An overview of the theological and narrative shaping of the fourth gospel, using close readings of selected texts. Particular attention is paid to John's literary design and theological distinctiveness.

**BL533 Gospel of Mark**
An exegetical exploration of the gospel of Mark which examines the structure of the gospel; the main lines of the story, places, and times; the relationship of the characters; the function of the questions; and what the narrator really wants to say through his story. Key passages will be translated.

**BL534 Jesus and the Gospels: Historical, Literary, and Narrative-Theological Investigations**
This course probes the historical, theological, and pastoral significance of the most important question in the world: Who is Jesus, and how do we know? Through interaction with the history of Jesus research, careful investigation of the most important sources (the four Gospels) and their literary relationships, consideration of theological interpretations of Jesus, perception of Jesus'

significance in the American context, and, finally, close reading of the Gospel of Luke's theological portrait of Jesus, this course will explore how Jesus has been and is interpreted today and which accounts, if any, should govern these interpretations. In a world where Jesus is many things to many people, students training to be theologically sophisticated pastors with scriptural imaginations and cultural awareness will be encouraged to take seriously the many images of Jesus in the American context but allow these images to be governed by the biblical portraits and theological reflections which the ecumenical church has made normative in its canon and creeds.

**BL535 Interpreting the Parables**

A survey of recent approaches to interpreting the parables of Jesus provides the context for considering hermeneutical issues in preaching and teaching the parables.

**BL536 Spirit and Letter: Translation and Exegesis of the OT**

This seminar-style course will focus on the practice of OT exegesis, rooted in the practice of Scripture translation. The title, *Ruach ve'Ot*, means roughly "spirit and letter." In this course we will attend carefully, creatively, and with curiosity to the letter and the spirit of various texts in the Hebrew Bible. During the first week of the semester, we will decide which passages to engage together throughout the semester. This DL course will include required synchronous Zoom calls to discuss the texts, share our exegetical discoveries, and deepen our understanding while exploring how these texts are speaking to the urgent questions of today. Knowledge of Biblical Hebrew is essential.

**BL538 Exegesis of 1 and 2 Corinthians**

In this course, the epistles of 1 and 2 Corinthians will be carefully analyzed, focusing on their application in local congregations, their structure, and their guidelines for the Christian service, worship, and discipline. Moreover, we will explore the ethical lessons in these epistles relevant to the conduct of believers in the Christian community today, while taking into account the cultural and religious context in which they were written. *Prerequisite: BL301 New Testament Foundations. Fulfills Upper NT elective requirement.*

**BL540 Corinthian Correspondence**

An exploration of Paul's First and Second letters to the Corinthians, with particular attention to the interaction between pastoral engagement and theological reflection.

**BL544 Hebrews**

The Epistle to the Hebrews has been labeled the "riddle of the New Testament." The author, date, and occasion are unknown, and yet Hebrews has captivated Christians through the centuries. The author—whoever they may be—draws upon Jewish Scripture and history in order to encourage his audience to recognize the work of God in their midst. This course will engage with modern Hebrews scholarship and offer an overview of the Epistle to the Hebrews with a particular focus on its theology, use of Scripture, and usefulness for the Church today.

**BL545 Galatians**

In a white heat of passion, Paul wrote to the churches he founded in Galatia to defend what he called "the truth of the gospel" against a particularly insidious imposter. This course will explore Paul's defense of his gospel with a view to what it entails for today's church, as we face our own challenges of fidelity to the truth and the rejection of counterfeits.

**BL549 Ephesians**

The letter to the Ephesians has been called "the crown of St. Paul's writings," in as much as it "sums up the leading themes of the Pauline letters." This course will explore Paul's celebration of Christ's majesty and lordship in Ephesians with a view to what it entails for today's church. We will focus on many themes and various historical and theological particularities along the way as we "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest" this letter, but the overarching aim is to learn to engage with Paul as a prime apostolic witness of Jesus Christ and thereby deepen our grasp of the gospel**.**

**BL550 Living and Active: Doctrine of Scripture**

In this course, we will be asking a cluster of interrelated questions: What is the Bible? How was the biblical canon formed? What led to these particular books being chosen over others? Can God speak through multiple translations; are all the Word of God? How have technological innovations—the scroll, codex, printing press, digital media—changed how we interact with God's Word? In arriving at answers, students will also refine statements on Scripture for their senior Credo.

**BL551 Disability, Bible, and the Pastoral Imagination**

What do people with disabilities find when they try to find themselves in our biblical texts? This course addresses some of the issues, hermeneutical and pastoral, that people with disabilities encounter when reading the Bible. The class will read interpretative texts written by people with a variety of disabilities and consider how their insights can support our pastoral imagination.

**BL552 Scripture and Human Sexuality**
This course explores a variety of ways of reading the biblical text, particularly with a view to interpreting how Scripture speaks to the role and responsibilities of Christians with different sexual attractions in relation to the Church. Contrasting perspectives will be presented in the class (some via guest speakers), and students will be invited to deepen their capacity for constructive dialogue, discerning common ground amidst difference, and integrative thinking on these challenging questions.

**BL553 Ancestry.gen: Finding Our Roots in Genesis 12-50**
This course is a deep dive into the characters that populate Genesis 12-50. While some attention will be given to the story behind their stories, primary emphasis will be on the final canonical form of the text and its power to form individual and collective faith identity. *Prerequisite: BL300 Old Testament Foundations. Fulfills Upper OT elective requirement.*

**BL554 Paul the Cruciform Pastor**
The apostle Paul famously writes that when he came to the Corinthians, he "decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor 2:2). "Christ crucified," then, was not only the heart of Paul's apostolic proclamation (1 Cor 1:18-31) but described the very character of his own ministry as well (2 Cor 4:7-12). Through close exegetical analyses of key texts in Paul's corpus, this course will explore how the cross—with its attendant themes of weakness, foolishness, and suffering—came to shape Paul as a pastor and then apply these insights to the task of pastoral formation today. In a day and age where so much pastoral ministry is subtly self-aggrandizing, this course argues for the cruciform nature of the pastoral vocation, as learned from the witness of Paul, the cruciform pastor. *Prerequisite: BL301 New Testament Foundations. Fulfills Upper NT elective requirement.*

**BL614 Hebrew Reading and Performance**
Using memorization and movement as the primary tools of exegesis, students engage with one Old Testament narrative deeply for 14 weeks. This course builds on BL310 and BL311, deepening students' engagement with the oral nature of the Hebrew Bible. Pass/fail 1.5 credits

**BL616 Christianity and Literature**
A study of the biblical and theological motifs in selected literature by both classical and contemporary authors. Emphasis is on the use/study of such works in ministry settings, as well as their relevance for those involved in leadership roles in the church.

**BL618 Advanced Biblical Hebrew**
Advanced interactive learning in the language and theology of the Old Testament. Students develop a deeper understanding of grammar, syntax, and interpretation through hearing, speaking, and reading Hebrew, as well as memorizing and enacting biblical stories. This course is held off-site as a 10 ½ day overnight retreat experience. Pre-work includes grammar review, translation, and creative exegetical project. Post-work involves a dramatic analysis paper. Prerequisite: BL310 and BL311.

**CC300 Foundations for Counseling**
An introductory course for MA in CMHC students. Introduces 1) historical and theological views of Soul Care in the Christian tradition and 2) the modern practice of Clinical Mental Health Counseling from a relationally oriented and trauma-informed perspective. Students will explore models of theological integration and will be invited into a personal formational process as counselors-in-training.

**CC305 Professional and Ethical Issues in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**
This course provides an introduction to the counseling profession including its history, the roles and responsibilities of the counselor, and professional organizations. Legal and ethical issues related to the practice of clinical mental health counseling will also be considered, including licensure-related laws, current issues in the field, and an emphasis on lifelong personal and professional development.

**CC320 Counseling Theories and Practice**
Presents the core theoretical and applied aspects of clinical mental health counseling in contemporary practice. Models of counseling will be considered historically, theologically, and through the lens of modern clinical research, with consideration of the multicultural applications and limitations of each approach. Students begin to develop their personal model of counseling and have opportunities to practice essential counseling skills and techniques.

**CC330 Multicultural and Social Justice Issues in CMHC**
Examines theories and research pertaining to multicultural counseling and social justice issues. Topics covered include multicultural counseling competencies, the counselor's development of cultural self-awareness, and strategies for working with and advocating for diverse populations.

**CC335 Group Dynamics and Counseling**
A theoretical and experiential course that introduces students to group counseling theory, techniques, and models. With a focus on the therapeutic factors of group work, this course also requires participation in a small group experience that is designed to promote personal and professional growth.

**CC340 Counseling Throughout the Lifespan**
An overview of human growth and development across the lifespan and within the context of mental health counseling. While introducing students to theories of learning, personality, and psychological development, this course explores contextual and personal factors that affect human behavior, functioning, and overall wellness.

**CC345 Lifestyle and Career Development**
This course provides an understanding of career development through examination of the world of work, sources of career information, and the concepts of vocational development. Emphasis is placed on in-depth exploration of the theories and practice of career counseling with the primary goal of the clinical application to real-world situations. Tools for assessment and strategies for facilitating client career development are introduced.

**CC350 Helping Relationships: Skills and Practice**
Focuses on the development of core counseling skills and techniques, along with a theoretical framework for the relational factors that facilitate therapeutic change. This course includes an experiential component that provides time for practice of core skills, along with developmental supervision and feedback.

**CC355 Trauma and Crisis Counseling**
An overview of the effects of crisis and trauma on diverse individuals across the lifespan, focusing on trauma-specific counseling interventions and trauma-informed counseling strategies. Neurobiological, developmental, psychological, and spiritual impacts of trauma are considered. The course also includes strategies for crisis assessment and intervention.

**CC360 Research and Program Evaluation in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**
This course is designed to help counselors develop the ability to assess clinical research and make use of research literature in the practice of clinical mental health counseling. Provides an overview of research methodologies in the social sciences and an introduction to descriptive and inferential statistics. Approaches to needs assessment and program evaluation are also considered.

**CC370 Psychopathology**
A comprehensive survey of the major mental health, behavioral, and neurodevelopmental disorders as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual. This course examines the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of these disorders, along with the impact of culture, neurobiology, and interpersonal conditions on the development of mental health disorders.

**CC371 Advanced Diagnosis and Treatment**
Helps students develop their skills in diagnosis, case conceptualization, treatment planning, and documentation in clinical mental health settings. Building on earlier coursework, evidence-based counseling strategies and techniques are practiced and developed. Consultation models, tele-mental health practices, and basic psychopharmacology are also introduced.

**CC372 Testing and Assessment**
A clinical skills course focusing on the principles of measurement and assessment, as well as the counseling use of various assessment instruments: achievement, aptitude, intelligence, interest, and personality.

**CC403 Issues in Professional Practice 1**
Taken concurrently with Counseling Internship 1, this seminar supports students' professional development as they enter the clinical environment. Particular attention is given to whole-person formation, including the development of self-care, self-awareness, and self-evaluation strategies, and to the integration of faith and clinical practice as students begin working with clients. 0.5 credits. Pass/Fail

**CC404 Issues in Professional Practice 2**
Taken concurrently with Counseling Internship 2, this seminar continues the work of CC403 as students move toward the conclusion of clinical training. Emphasis shifts toward the consolidation of professional counselor identity, sustainable practices of self-care, and the articulation of a clinical approach that integrates faith and professional counseling competency in preparation for licensure and practice. 0.5 credits. Pass/Fail

**CC410 Counseling Practicum**
Designed to provide students in counseling with their first client contact in a closely supervised setting, in order to help students begin to translate their academic understanding into actual counseling practice. Students complete 100 clock hours of supervised experience, including 40 hours of direct service with clients. Weekly supervision includes individual or triadic supervision averaging one hour per week from a site supervisor and group supervision averaging one and one-half hours per week led by program faculty. Practicum entry requirements are described in the CMHC Program Handbook and the WTS Clinical Training Handbook. *Prerequisite: CC371 Advanced Diagnosis and Treatment*

**CC411 Counseling Internship 1**
The first semester of a two-semester internship sequence in which students complete a total of 600 clock hours of supervised counseling experience, including 240 hours of direct service with clients, in roles and settings relevant to clinical mental health counseling. Throughout the sequence, students receive individual or triadic supervision averaging one hour per week from their site supervisor, along with group supervision averaging one and one-half hours per week led by program faculty.. *Prerequisite: CC410 Counseling Practicum*

**CC412 Counseling Internship 2**
The concluding semester of the internship sequence begun in CC411, in which students complete the balance of the 600-hour requirement while assuming a more sustained caseload and practicing with increased independence. Supervision continues at the same weekly ratios, with attention to the consolidation of professional counselor identity and preparation for post-degree supervised practice. *Prerequisite: CC411 Counseling Internship 1*

**CC490 CMHC Capstone**
This capstone course serves as an integrative culmination of graduate training in clinical mental health counseling. The course emphasizes integration of faith and practice, preparation for licensure, and the formation of a coherent, sustainable clinical identity rooted in both professional excellence and personal vocation. *Corequisite: CC412 Counseling Internship 2*

**CC517 Substance Abuse and Addiction Counseling**
This course provides students with a comprehensive foundation in the etiology, assessment, and treatment of substance use disorders and other addictions. Students will examine evidence-based counseling approaches while exploring the neurobiological, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions of addiction.

**CC519 Counseling Couples and Families**
This course reviews foundational models, theories, and research related to couples, marriage, and family counseling. Students will survey topics such as systems theory, verbal and nonverbal interaction patterns, and an introduction to multiple approaches to therapeutic intervention with couples and families.

**CC520 Trauma Informed Care in Ministry**
This course will equip Christian leaders to approach ministry from a trauma-informed perspective. Students will explore theological topics related to trauma and suffering, understand the broad-reaching impact of psychological trauma on individuals and communities, and examine models for trauma-informed ministry. The impact of vicarious trauma on Christian leaders will also be addressed.

**CC521 Leading with Courage and Compassion**
***Meets in person at Muskegon Correctional Facility. Students must complete additional forms and orientation prior to semester start.*** Intended to equip students to become aware of and courageously take responsibility for their own feelings, needs, thoughts, behaviors, choices, responses, and reactions as they communicate with others. It invites students to experience compassion for themselves and others as different needs, strategies, and motivations of the communication process are examined. Nonviolent Communication, Enneagram, and Circle Processes are typical tools that are explored and practiced.

**CC522 Counseling Children and Adolescents**
This course prepares students to provide effective, developmentally informed counseling to children and adolescents across a range of presenting concerns. Drawing on current research in child development, trauma, and neurobiology, students will examine and practice evidence-based interventions suited to younger clients. Emphasis is placed on building clinical skills in assessment, case conceptualization, and therapeutic engagement with children, teens, and their families.

**DM850 Orientation Seminar 1**
Gives an introduction to the major administrative and academic components of the program, as well as to the specialized track (theme) that identifies the particular focus of the cohort. Course descriptions vary depending on the faculty and cohort topic. The

course description will be available in the syllabus. Includes a one-week in-person seminar (some professors may choose to combine the seminars into two consecutive weeks per year). 6 credits.

**DM851 Orientation Seminar 2**
A continuation of DM850. Students identify a challenge, opportunity, or topic that needs to be addressed in their ministry setting. Includes a one-week in-person seminar (some professors may choose to combine the seminars into two consecutive weeks per year). 6 credits.

**DM860 Research Seminar 3**
Provides tools and skills to develop and strengthen academic research and writing. Students learn to structure and format an academic professional paper, providing a model for their project proposal and guidance for their practicum. Students will critically reflect on the practices of ministry and learn to interpret those practices within an academic theological framework. Course descriptions vary depending on the faculty and cohort topic. The course description will be available in the syllabus. Includes a one-week in-person seminar (some professors may choose to combine the seminars into two consecutive weeks per year). 6 credits.

**DM861 Research Seminar 4**
A continuation of DM860. Students determine what needs to be changed or achieved in their ministry to address the challenge, opportunity, or topic they have identified. Students design a thesis project proposal. Includes a one-week in-person seminar (some professors may choose to combine the seminars into two consecutive weeks per year). 6 credits.

**DM870 Thesis Seminar 5**
Equips students with tools required for the completion of their DMin thesis. Course descriptions vary depending on the faculty and topic. The course description will be available in the syllabus. Includes a one-week in-person seminar (some professors may choose to combine the seminars into two consecutive weeks per year). 6 credits.

**DM871 Thesis Seminar 6**
A continuation of DM860. Includes a one-week in-person seminar (some professors may choose to combine the seminars into two consecutive weeks per year). 6 credits.

**DM940 Thesis Project**
The student demonstrates his or her ability to design and conduct a project that is biblically and theologically grounded, supported by literature, and relevant to the practice of ministry. Students write a five-chapter scholarly paper that introduces, develops, and assesses the effectiveness of the project. The various chapters focus on the need and rationale for the project, the biblical and theological texts/theories that undergird the project, the issue the project addresses, and the results of what they learned following completion of the project. The doctoral project phase of the DMin program takes an additional year to complete and concludes with the presentation and defense of the thesis project before the faculty advisor and project readers. 0 credits.

**MA490 MA Capstone**
A culmination course for the Master of Arts program. The class requires a culminating final project that addresses a contemporary issue deeply and competently in a way that demonstrates integrated reflection on Scripture, theology, and Christian practice.

**MN335 Foundations of the Christian Life**
An introductory course for all MDiv and MA students, this course invites students to explore 1) God's story through an introduction to the story of Scripture, 2) our stories through an exploration of our callings to be disciples with particular vocations in the world, and 3) cultural stories through acknowledging the cultural contexts in which we live out these callings and exploring specific contemporary cultural dynamics and realities.

**MN336 Christian Interior Life**
This course explores the ways in which a person's life history, spiritual growth, and vocation intersect and shape his/her personal and professional identity. Students will reflect on their own psychological and spiritual development and their opportunities for personal growth. They will develop their own particular plans for self-care.

**MN350 Worship Foundations**
This course is an exploration of the biblical and theological foundations of Christian worship. These foundations are explored with an eye, an ear, and especially a heart for planning and leading worship richly pastorally. Occasions of worship explored include weekly communal worship, sacraments, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, communal daily prayer, weddings, and funerals.

**MN351 Preaching Foundations**
This course explores and grasps a biblical and Reformed vision of preaching. Includes a sermon preparation workshop and a "lab" in which written and preached sermons are carefully analyzed by faculty and peers. Significant homiletical concerns are presented, discussed, clarified, and applied to the task of preaching.

**MN355 Missional Preaching**
This is a course exploring the theology and practice of preaching from the framework of a missional ecclesiology. Students will engage biblical, theological, and practical aspects of preaching with a view towards inspiring congregations to missional witness as well as towards gaining confidence for preaching in contexts beyond the local congregation. Students will also have the opportunity to enhance specific skills and practices essential to preaching including cultural exegesis, contextualization, and content development. Students will be given opportunities to write, deliver, and receive feedback on a sermon crafted towards a specific context. This course will focus on sending congregations into mission and preaching in pre-churched, de-churched, and post-Christian contexts.

**MN361 Introduction to Disability and the Church**
Introduces different conceptions, definitions, and expressions of disability in the United States. Gives general overview of the history of disability in the U.S. and introduces students to innovative practitioners who paved the way for today's disability theology. Covers service systems and advocacy groups that support people with disabilities. *Required for GCDM, elective for other programs.*

**MN366 Leading with Courage and Compassion**
***Meets in person at Muskegon Correctional Facility. Students must complete additional forms and orientation prior to semester start.*** Intended to equip students to become aware of and courageously take responsibility for their own feelings, needs, thoughts, behaviors, choices, responses, and reactions as they communicate with others. It invites students to experience compassion for themselves and others as different needs, strategies, and motivations of the communication process are examined. Nonviolent Communication, Enneagram, and Circle Processes are typical tools that are explored and practiced.

**MN390 Worship Practicum I: Stewardship of Daily Chapel**
Students taking this course will be part of a team that assists other students, staff, faculty, and guests in planning and leading daily worship. Course meets each week for 1.5 hours to plan and reflect on past services. Course 1 of 2. 1.5 credits. Pass/Fail.

**MN391 Worship Practicum II: Stewardship of Daily Chapel**
Students taking this course will be part of a team that assists other students, staff, faculty, and guests in planning and leading daily worship. Course meets each week for 1.5 hours to plan and reflect on past services. Course 2 of 2. 1.5 credits. Pass/Fail.

**MN412 Christian Life and Mission**
An introduction to the church's self-understanding as a missional and eschatological community formed by the good news of Jesus Christ and made to be its living witness. The course seeks to cultivate a biblical-theological rationale for the existence of the church and for its mission, an appreciation for the historical, cultural, and contextual rootedness of the church, an understanding of the dynamic interaction between the gospel and human cultures, and a vision for what missional faithfulness requires of any church in its own time and place.

**MN415 Practice of Counsel and Care**
In this introductory course, students explore giving counsel and offering care as ministers of Word and Sacrament. They develop an understanding of the fundamental principles of pastoral care and acquire basic skills required for giving counsel and offering care. Numerous pastoral themes are addressed in lectures, learning labs, and small group interaction. Students will be encouraged to develop their own pastoral presence in offering counsel and care.

**MN440 Pastoral Imagination**
What is this strange and beautiful, grace-riddled, and often distorted work of being a pastor? What is so peculiar about this vocation? And why do we take on the stole with joy, but also with fear and trembling? Together, we'll ponder Scripture and voices both ancient and new to rekindle our pastoral imagination.

**MN513 Basic Clinical Pastoral Education**
A pastoral ministry practicum that integrates the theory and practice of ministry in a clinical setting with special attention given to the person in ministry. A basic practicum accredited by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education. Must be taken with PR413 and PR414. Pass/Fail.

**MN520 The Faithful Witness of the Home**

The secular gospel of our context is characterized by image and status, hyper-consumption, instant gratification, individualism, convenience at any cost, and apathy or nihilism about our entanglement in webs of injustice and exploitation of creation. Recognizing that the seeds of an alternative, Gospel grounded, imaginary are sown and nurtured in the home and embodied in quotidian practices in that realm, this course seeks to address the question: In light of Christ's call to whole life discipleship, how ought we to live within the sphere of home? Topics explored include food, finances, consumption and stewardship, family patterns and parenting, neighboring, and entertainment, among others.

**MN524 Faith, Forgiveness, and Healing**

In this course, students study the theory and methods relevant to integrating health and wellness, forgiveness and reconciliation into the life of the Christian public leader, the congregation, and the larger community. Physical, emotional, social, intellectual, vocational, and spiritual issues related to forgiveness and healing are explored. Special attention is given to how biblical, theological, and pastoral perspectives on forgiveness and healing inform the task of interpreting and confessing the gospel in situations of conflict and suffering.

**MN526 Ministering to the Toughest People to Love**

The church is not immune to trauma, abuse, narcissism, conflict, and addictions of all kinds. Ministering to the so-called "difficult" people can be exhausting, confusing, and lead to burnout or an early exit from ministry. This course will explore stories and symptoms commonly seen across a range of ecclesial traditions. We will explore a theology that views every human, even difficult people, as image-bearers, yet elaborate on troubling relational and systemic dynamics of sin that lead to chaos and confusion in the church. We will discuss what pastors need to do for their own self-care, trauma resilience, and continued resourcing beyond their seminary education.

**MN529 From Baptism to Burial: Pastoral Essentials**

From baptism to burials, pastoral work is filled with opportunities to minister amidst the most glorious and difficult moments of congregational life. In this course, major pastoral responsibilities are covered in both content and practice, including baptism, pre-marital counseling, rehearsals and weddings, and funeral services/burials. Theological, biblical, psychological, and ethical foundations and frameworks will be explored. Best practices for issues such as policies, fees, and boundaries will also be covered. Special attention will be given to how these unique opportunities serve the mission of God.

**MN533 Justice, Discipleship, and the Church**

This course explores how the church can form disciples with a vision of justice. It engages the biblical and theological roots of Christian commitments to justice and places contemporary interest in social justice within a larger biblical, theological, and historical context. Students will have the opportunity to articulate a biblical theology of justice and explore how the church can shape disciples with a life-long commitment to justice.

**MN534 Preaching as Pastoral Care**

This course is designed to provide the opportunity to think deeply, practically, and with complexity about the mysterious relationship between preaching and pastoral care. In this course, we'll lean on the wisdom of preacher/pastor Eugene Peterson. In his book, *Five Smooth Stones of Pastoral Work*, he says, "Pastoral work begins at Pulpit, the Font, the Table; it continues in the hospital room, the family room, the counseling room, the committee room. The pastor who leads people in worship is companion to those same people between acts of worship."

**MN538 Transforming Conflict from the Inside Out**

This course explores multiple layers of conflict—intrapersonal, interpersonal, and communal—as opportunities for transformation. Students will develop a theology of compassion and learn the skills of compassionate communication as a means of connecting to God, self, and others in the midst of difference, disagreement, and conflict. The course seeks to enhance specific competencies in speaking honestly, listening empathetically, responding to criticism, staying in dialogue, dealing with guilt and grief, and using restorative circles for community-wide crises. Experientially based; includes case studies, role plays, journaling, and small group work.

**MN540 The Mindful Life**

Recent developments in interpersonal neurobiology reveal more clearly than ever the relational nature of human beings. This conversation intersects with growing interest in Eastern forms of meditation, research on shame and wholeness, new therapeutic models for growth and change, and renewed Christian interest in contemplative practices. This course employs a biblical/theological lens as it explores current developments theoretically and practically for Christians and skeptics alike who long to flourish in a broken world.

**MN544 Human Sexuality**

This course will deepen student understanding of human sexuality. Students will be invited to reflect on their personal narrative as it relates to sex and sexuality. Course topics will include sexuality and gender identity, sexual function, sexual compulsion, and sexual abuse. The role of desire and shame will be explored as they relate to human sexuality. Students will be encouraged reflect on internal responses in order to engage this vulnerable topic with empathy and curiosity.

**MN546 Interiorization and Orality in Preaching**

How do preachers not just *read* the Word, but let it live in them—and then proclaim it in ways that live in others? This seven-week summer course explores the twin practices of *interiorization* (allowing Scripture to shape the preacher's inner world) and *orality* (proclaiming that Word with embodied, communal, Spirit-filled voice). Through guided exercises, storytelling practice, and biblical reflection, students will learn to internalize texts so deeply that their sermons flow from memory, imagination, and prayer rather than manuscript dependency. The course is taught by a deep bench of homileticians—Ron Rienstra, Jon Brown, Nathan Hart, Hannah Barker-Nickolay, Lindsay Small, and Denise Kingdom—each bringing a distinct perspective on how interiorization and orality function in the craft of proclamation. *(Distance Learning — some synchronous sessions required.)*

**MN548 Preaching/Missional Imagination**

In recent years there has been an avalanche of literature about what it means to be a missional church. Curiously, so much of this literature is silent on the task of preaching. In many cases, preaching is even seen as a barrier to "going missional." This course will explore the central but often neglected role of Word and Sacrament in leading a church that is seeking to be both missional and Reformed.

**MN549 Preaching in the Dark**

We will consider a range of ways of thinking about the relationship between the gospel and our culture(s) and will practice ways of faithful and fruitful preaching from the Word on the cultural issues confronting the church in the early part of the 21st century. Special attention will be paid the growing number of "Millennials" who self-identify as "NONES" —whatever they believe and however they practice it, the local church is not necessary to them.

**MN550 Keeping and Talking the Word**

A course designed to provide each person with the time and space to explore and exercise certain primal spiritual disciplines of the people of God, namely Scripture contemplation/memorization/interiorization, spiritual reading, silence and mutual encouragement and pastoral performance. In alternating rhythms of the same, we will listen carefully to the witness of faithful brothers and sisters who have gone before us and to one another, as well, in an attempt to ready ourselves for "a long obedience in the same direction."

**MN556 Psychology and Christian Spirituality**

There is a strong tradition of psychological wisdom with the contemplative Christian tradition. In fact, the contemplative tradition provides a kind of framework for self-reflection, for healthy intimacy, and for genuine spirituality. Looking at resources from Augustine and Calvin, Evagrius and Theresa, we'll see that contemporary ministry, pastoral care, and mission can all be aided by a rich and deep understanding of Christian spirituality.

**MN560 Ecologies of Education/Ecologias de Educacion Daciendo Investigacion Participativa**

This course will use different qualitative methods to do an investigation about the educational entities of Rio Grande with the purpose of helping to create an educational ecology and to give greater definition to the role that the church will play within that ecology. Theological reflection and intercession will be an integral part of the course to create a paradigm of discernment of the mission of the church and an educational vision with a biblical/theological and collaborative basis.

**MN561 21st Century Spirituality for a Secular Age**

This course explores spiritual resources for sustainable ministry in a secular age, including resources for both personal transformation and creative ways of engaging spiritual formation in the church amidst changing ecclesial realities. We'll explore significant voices for contemporary spirituality in a secular age include Thomas Merton, Charles Taylor, Etty Hillesum, Elizabeth O'Connor, Richard Rohr, David Whyte, Henri Nouwen, Mary Oliver, Paulo Coelho, Thomas Keating, James Finley, Ilia Delio and more. Insights for wise and faithful Christian engagement in a re-enchanted secular world will be explored, and the practice of daily contemplative prayer encouraged.

**MN562 Liturgical Shenanigans: Ritual Theory and Christian Formation**

Rituals are enacted everyday by humans in all cultures—at theaters and stadiums, libraries and marketplaces, bathrooms and fire pits, as well as places of worship. They are one of the most important ways we both express and shape our understanding of the meaning of life. The course will have three primary learning modes: 1) we will observe ritual activity in culture (our own and others) that either fits or fights the gospel; 2) we will engage readings at the intersection of cultural anthropology and practical theology; and 3) we'll

experiment with liturgical shenanigans—attending to the work of the Spirit in and through our holy play in the neighborhood of symbol, performance, embodiment, and transcendence.

**MN563 Listening for Preaching: Pastoral Attentiveness**

Drawing from the witness of Scripture, the early church, and especially the pastoral wisdom of Eugene Peterson—and those whom he listened to for a lifetime—this course will probe the necessary practices of listening deeply to Scripture, to yourself, to the congregation, and to the cultural context in which you live in order to preach wisely and with authority. All who participate in this course will enter into the wisdom of Isaiah 50:4; namely, "The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens-wakens my ear to listen as those who are thought."

**MN564 Practice of Evangelism**

The term "evangelism" is often perceived as a four-letter word, freighted with negative connotations in our society and even in church. In this course students will overview the biblical foundations of evangelism, consider different theologies and practices of evangelism across time periods, cultures, and Christian traditions. Students will also explore and evaluate theologies of conversion. Students will develop and articulate a context-dependent theology of evangelism and will participate in the practice of evangelism.

**MN570 Worldview and Life View**

We and our congregations are experience-oriented people. Because of this, we often relegate "vision" and "worldview" into the unused part of our leadership tool kits, marginalized by the active stuff of hands-on ministry and the consuming demands of Sundays that show up with amazing and unforgiving regularity. But, as Kouzes and Posner have brilliantly shown through four decades of research, two of the five things that good leaders do are "challenging the process" and "inspiring a shared vision." These prophetic and kingly pastoral leadership tasks require a thoughtful worldview that rises above the experiences to see the meaning. We will read three books (an autobiography, a biblical worldview primer, and a social worldview critique) that will help us build and clarify the contours of our Christian vision and carry on conversations that will hone our congregational leadership skills.

**MN573 The Practice of Youth Ministry**

Students will be introduced to various models of youth ministry and will become familiar with the theological and social scientific resources that will aid them in evaluating and reforming the practice of congregational and para-church ministry. Students will consider theories of development, articulate a theological foundation for youth ministry, and develop an appreciation for the potential impact of peer-to-peer ministry. They will also explore some of the challenges faced by youth ministers and consider how technology factors into discipling networked youth.

**MN580 Healing Ministry of the Church**

What is healing? What does it mean to be healthy? What does Jesus' life and ministry model for us about how God defines health and offers healing? How does one's definition of health and healing influence one's understanding of faithful ministry on the whole? Through dialogue around questions like these, students will be invited to: (1) gain an overview of how the Church has historically understood what it means to heal and be healed; (2) critically engage existing understandings of health and healing alongside a close reading of key biblical texts (with particular attention paid to the healing ministry of Jesus); and(3) construct their own practically actionable theology of healing.

**MN581 Ministry and Margins**

Explores the boundary-crossing ministry of Jesus, in particular how he redefined the margin and the center with a kingdom perspective. The class will consider ways in which ministry to and with those who are often marginalized in our society can amplify the witness of our congregations. People groups that are underserved include, but are not limited to, the elderly or homebound, people suffering from dementia, people in group homes, people struggling with literacy, people with disabilities, people living in poverty, immigrant communities, and people without homes.

**MN582 Ministry, Aging and Dementia**

Aging presents us with both pastoral challenges and important gifts for individuals and the body of Christ. How do we walk well with and learn from those who are in the final stage of their earthly journeys? One increasingly common aspect of aging that acutely challenges the faith, hope, and love of all of us is dementia. Together we will explore theological and pastoral resources for dealing faithfully with those who suffer from dementia, and those who care for them.

**MN583 We All Worship: Disability and Worship**

Many people with disabilities have spiritual needs that are not being met and gifts that are not being exercised in the context of congregational worship. This course explores worship as the focal point of our shared Christian identity, the power center of our myriad gifts for building up the body of Christ, and the launching pad for our multifaceted witness in the world.

**MN586 Disability and Community Supports**

Inclusive faith communities have the power to touch the lives of people with disabilities and their families in multiple ways but often have a difficult time talking and working with "secular" agencies, providers, and advocacy groups. This course explores the spiritual foundations in current issues in disability services and supports the potential roles of faith communities to address them, resources from other perspectives that congregations can use, and effective strategies for dialogue and partnership with non-faith-based agencies and organizations.

**MN587 Living into Community: Friendship House**

In this course students will spend time critically reflecting upon what it means to live into community as an act of mutual discipleship. Students will engage questions such as: What is discipleship? What is a Christian community? What is the difference between a Christian community and a social group? And, what does it mean to belong to, rather than simply be included in, a Christian community? Intended for residents of Friendship House but is open to other interested students. In Residence only.

**MN588 Summer Institute on Theology and Disability Travel Seminar**

The vision of the Summer Institute on Theology and Disability is to expand the depth and breadth of theological inquiry and resources that address and include the gifts, needs, and contributions of people with disabilities and their families to theological learning and religious practice. Attend this unique week-long gathering of theologians, academics, ministry leaders, people with disabilities, and others to explore the intersection of faith and disability. Event has included presenters such as Stanley Hauerwas, Hans Reinders, John Swinton, Amos Yong, and Candida Moss. Erik Carter, Bill Gaventa, and Ben Conner, who have taught in the Graduate Certificate in Disability and Ministry, are on the faculty of the SITD.

**MN590 Deaf Theology and Ministry**

We will explore biblical narratives through Deaf perspectives to develop a Christian theology of ministry that is with, of, by and for the Deaf. Students will discern how to model a Deaf ministry that is focused not on the difference from being hearing, but upon being Deaf in the image of God.

**MN591 Strategies for an Inclusive Church**

This course addresses practical strategies and promising pathways for moving beyond proclamations of inclusiveness and toward practices of invitation, hospitality, and belonging. Students will learn about effective starting points, supports, and strategies for enabling people with disabilities and their families to participate deeply in congregational life and experience belonging within a church community.

**MN592 Practicing the Presence of People**

This course explores the unique vocation of practicing presence. Christians are called to the practice of God's presence, but we in turn become that very presence to the other—the spouse and the stranger, persons with disabilities and the disenfranchised—whoever the "other" may be. In this course, we will explore the unique ministry of presence through Henri Nouwen and L'Arche, communities of people with disabilities around the world. We will come to understand what "presence" means, how to identify obstacles to presence (in ourselves and in communities), and how to nurture a loving attentiveness to the other.

**MN593 These Shimmering Truths**

Through theological essays, iconography, music, visual art, fiction, poetry, architecture, and more, we will ponder and experience what C.S. Lewis referred to as the "baptized imagination." Together, we will contemplate a myriad of questions: What do we mean by "Christian Imagination"? Why is it essential? And how do we nurture this sacred gift?

**MN595 Intellectual Disability and the Church**

This course focuses on ministry in the context of what is commonly, but not exclusively, termed 'intellectual disability'—although it is imperative that we acknowledge the broader, multifaceted human experience of disability within which the experience associated with intellectual disability and the secular and theological scholarship that attaches to it to find expression. The course explores both the complexities of theological perceptions and practices in relation to intellectual disability, and the ensuing challenges for persons with intellectual disabilities and those who live in close relationship with them, within the contemporary Church. Theological assumptions about the nature of faith, participation, and ministry will be examined in light of the lived experience of intellectual disability and of our understanding of God, His mission, and engagement with human beings, leading to potential transformation of practice.

**MN596 Trauma and Disability**

This course provides a biblical, theological, and pastoral introduction to trauma and care of trauma survivors. We will particularly focus on contemporary intersections between the experiences of disability and trauma. Acknowledging the extensive experience of trauma across our society, we will also attend to practices of "trauma stewardship" in this course—navigating secondary

traumatization in our vocational callings as well as negotiating any of our own trauma backgrounds as we are formed as pastors, teachers, and caregivers.

**MN597 Mental Health and Ministry**
This course will explore the interface between theology and mental health with a particular focus on what it is that Christian ministry brings to the conversation that other disciplines do not. This course will focus on the experience of people with mental health challenges and the ways in which their insights can shape and transform our practices.

**MN598 Friendship and Disability**
This course will explore a theology of friendship grounded in God's covenant with human beings. Such an account of friendship exposes and resists false social hierarchies and thus the socially embedded ways we objectify and dehumanize one another. Friendship raises salient questions for the ministry of the Church about what it means to gather in worship and live according to the ethos of the meal Jesus left us with.

**MTS490 Master of Theological Studies Capstone**
A culmination course for the Master of Theological Studies program. In this class students demonstrate proficiency in the art of scholarly writing by producing an MTS thesis in a field of theological inquiry.

**PR341 Dual Track Cohort Group 1**
**PR342 Dual Track Cohort Group 2**
**PR343 Dual Track Cohort Group 3**
**PR344 Dual Track Cohort Group 4**
**PR345 Dual Track Cohort Group 5**
**PR346 Dual Track Cohort Group 6**
**PR347 Dual Track Cohort Group 7**
**PR348 Dual Track Cohort Group 8**
Students in the MDiv-MSW Dual Track program meet bi-weekly during all the years of the Dual Track program, except years one and two of the MDiv distance learning format. 0.5 credit each. Pass/Fail.

**PR401 Abbey 1**
**PR402 Abbey 2**
**PR403 Abbey 3**
**PR404 Abbey 4**
**PR405 Abbey 5**
**PR406 Abbey 6**
The Abbey, a 0.5 credit course held for six semesters for MDiv students and four semesters for CMHC students, invites students into intentional relationships with faculty and fellow students to explore spiritual disciplines, engage in vocational discernment, and integrate their classroom learning with their life of faith. Pass/Fail.

**PR411 Practice of Ministry: Internship 1**
**PR412 Practice of Ministry: Internship 2**
**PR413 Practice of Ministry: Internship 3**
**PR414 Practice of Ministry: Internship 4**
This 4-course sequence in the MDiv program provides a place for students to practice ministry and engage in theological reflection on their experiences. Through contextual learning, it offers students the opportunity to integrate theory and practice while they engage in vocational discernment and grow in ministerial identity. Students enter a ministry setting under the guidance of a supervisor-mentor and with the support of a mentoring team who will do their best to foster a nurturing, yet challenging learning environment. WTS course work complements and enriches the student formation and learning taking place in students' ministry sites. Ministry settings for each student are identified through a careful process that involves vocational discernment and reflection in conversation with the director of student life. 1.5 credits each. Pass/Fail.

**PR450 Intercultural Immersion**
This course seeks to foster the global awareness and cultural engagement of students, helping them respect, engage, and learn from people and perspectives other than their own, understand more deeply the impact of different cultures on the church and Christian Faith, and be more sensitive to power dynamics and social issues that face and shape Christians and the church.
It does this by introducing students to three primary frameworks-cultural intelligence, critical contextualization, and postcolonial theory-and then using those frameworks as key postures throughout the class and their experience. Students will also explore key

social issues and contextual challenges of the particular place and culture in which the class is immersed. Finally, given the multifaith and multicultural nature of the societies in which students will serve, students will reflect on ways in which their experience might shape their lives and ministries in their home context. Pass/Fail.

**TH102 Introduction to Theological Research**

A study of research methodology, library use, and basic reference works for theological research. Required of all students who do not have a bachelor's degree or its equivalent or are admitted on academic probation.

**TH110 Theology for Ministry**

Every believer is doing theology. We all reflect on who the Triune God is, how God relates to us and all that God has made, and how we relate to God and others in response. This course offers an overview of key Christian doctrines to deepen our thinking and help us to make richer connections between what we believe and how we go about out callings.

**TH300 Church History I**

The first course is a two-part sequence; this course explores the life and witness of the church from the New Testament era to the Protestant Reformation.

**TH301 Church History II**

The second course in a two-part sequence; this course explores the life and witness of the church from the Protestant Reformation to the present.

**TH310 Systematic Theology I**

The first course in a two-part sequence, this course explores four major Christian doctrines: the doctrines of God, creation, humanity, and Christ. Exploring these expansive topics will include an examination of the doctrine of the Trinity, the divine attributes, creation, humanity, the image of God, sin, providence, and the significance of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. Students will be exposed to both current and historical perspectives on these themes.

**TH311 Systematic Theology II**

The second course in a two-part sequence, this course explores the doctrines of the Holy Spirit, salvation, church and sacraments, and eschatology. Exploring these expansive topics will include an examination of the work of the Spirit in the believing community, Scripture, and divine revelation, justification, sanctification, and the final judgment, as well as the theology of Word and Sacraments in the church. Readings will range from early church to contemporary sources.

**TH365 Restorative Justice**

"Restorative Justice" names an approach to crime, conflict, and other disturbances to a community that differs from conventional criminal justice responses and from typical ways conflict is handled in our society. We will examine the ideas and practices of restorative justice, trace its implications for conflict transformation from international peacebuilding to interpersonal relationships, highlight its religious roots, and examine its implications for contemporary Christian thought and perspective. *Meets in person at Muskegon Correctional Facility.*

**TH421 RCA Standards and Polity**

*(recommended for RCA candidates)* This course introduces students to the standards and polity of the Reformed Church in America. Students learn about the history and content of the Book of Church Order and the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dort, and the Belhar Confession, and apply these documents to life in the church today.

**TH425 Presbyterian Confessions and Polity**

Study of the Confessions and Book of Order of the PC(USA) is intended to give students good knowledge of the confessional tradition, directory of worship, and form of government of the PC(USA). This course will help students to prepare for ordination exams. *Prerequisites: TH310 Systematic Theology 1 -or- TH311 Systematic Theology 2.*

**TH440 Christian Life and Ethics**

This course explores how the theological vision of the Christian community expresses itself in specific intentions, practices, virtues, and actions and how Christian communities can grow in moral discernment. Both ethical theory and contemporary ethical issues will be examined.

**TH490 Credo**

In this senior seminar, students will write a paper of approximately 25-35 pages in which they will give an account of their personal

theology by articulating their beliefs concerning the central *loci* of Christian teaching, in conversation with their respective denominational traditions, and in language that can be understood by an educated church layperson. Prerequisite: MN412, TH310, TH311.

**TH505 Creation Calling**

Creation is loved into being and sustained by the Triune God, who also has a glorious eschatological future for it. Human beings are called to keep it in ways that are consonant with God's purposes, but instead, creation calls out in protest at having to bear the consequences of our alienation from God. Through readings, film, guest speakers, and field trips, this course will help us to think with scriptural and theological wisdom about the doctrine of creation and 'creation care' issues and will also help us to discover ways to act well towards the rest of creation in our various ministry settings.

**TH518 Eschatology: Christian Hope and the Last Things**

Eschatology (the study of the "last things") concerns Christian hope for the future consummation of all of God's promises and purposes and what this means for Christian living today. Drawing on biblical scholars and theologians past and present, as well as art, music, and literature, this course will explore scripturally founded contours for thinking wisely about the "last things," and help us to recognize the impact of our eschatological views on our discipleship now.

**TH519 American Evangelicalism**

Since Newsweek magazine declared 1976 the "year of the evangelical," evangelicals have seemingly infiltrated all aspects of American culture, from politics to popular entertainment. This course surveys the history of the evangelical movement from its origins in the Great Awakening to its place in the contemporary church. Along the way we will examine issues including theology, race, gender, and social reform.

**TH524 Theologies of Prayer: Petition, Contemplation, and Triune**

How does the work of the Triune God relate to the praying life of Christians? This course explores two biblical and theological traditions of Christian prayer with an eye toward discerning how God is active in and through them: petitionary prayer and contemplative prayer. After a section focusing upon the New Testament and petitionary prayer (especially prayers for healing), the course explores the writings of two major theologians: Karl Barth on petitionary prayer, and Sarah Coakley on contemplative and charismatic approaches to prayer.

**TH526 Seminar in Contemporary Theology**

In this seminar we will read, discuss, present on, and write about an important work or works in contemporary theology. It is an opportunity to go deeper into important theological issues and tests in a small seminar setting. Prerequisite: TH311

**TH532 Augustine of Hippo: His Life and Thought**

This course explores the life and thought of Augustine. Students will engage this North African Christian living on the margins of the crumbling Roman Empire in his own words, reading both selections from classics like *Confessions* and *On the Trinity* and lesser-known texts stemming more directly from Augustine's pastoral ministry. We will consider some major streams of thought important for understanding Augustine's work (Manicheism, Platonism, Donatism, Pelagianism) as well as exploring the key features of his theology.

**TH533 From Africa to Anatolia: Mothers and Fathers of the Church**

This course introduces students to early Christian theology. Parents and place of origin shape a person. This seminar engages our mothers and fathers in the faith, whose perspectives, developing in diverse contexts from urban hubs such as Carthage and Alexandria to the high plain of Cappadocia, have so profoundly shaped our own.

**TH536 What Does It Mean to be Human? Help from the Early Church**

In this course, we will explore early Christian conceptions of the human being, covering the topics of the nature of the soul, divisions of the human person, willing and thinking, gender, the nature and role of the passions, and death. We will focus on the fourth and fifth centuries and discuss how different models of ascetic life in this period involve anthropological assumptions.

**TH537 Christ in the Early Church**

In this course we will explore early Christian understandings of Christ. Our focus will be intensive reading and discussion of primary sources, which will demonstrate the breadth and richness of early Christian treatments of this theme. To complement and inform this close reading, we will also engage significant secondary sources on the topic and observe how various perspectives are situated, both in relation to differing perspectives of the time, and in the larger story of the development of the church's understandings of Christ's person and work.

**TH544 20th Century Theology: Figures and Theological Currents**
Close readings of some of the "classic" works of 20th century theology by theologians such as Barth, Bonhoeffer, Cone, Gutiérrez, Lindbeck, Jones, deLubac, von Balthasar, Zizioulas, and Hauerwas. We will highlight the place of these works in larger theological and cultural currents that shaped Christian thought in this tumultuous century.

**TH546 War, Peace, and Peacemaking**
"Peace" is a central goal of God's plan for all of creation, and yet throughout the history of the Church, there has been much disagreement concerning how best to understand the full witness of Scripture regarding war and peace, how to integrate Scripture's vision of peace with justice, and what the implications of this vision are for Christian discipleship and practice. In this course those questions of war, peace, and peacemaking are explored in three movements: (1) Biblical/Theological Foundations; (2) Peacemaking within and outside the Church; and (3) Restorative justice.

**TH547 Christ, Calamity, and the Work of the Spirit**
What is the character of Christian hope when God's presence seems distant? How does the cross-shaped path of our risen Savior relate to our own suffering as Christians? This course does not seek to "answer" the problem of evil, but it does explore how our theologies of Christ, the Spirit, and union with Christ are operative in the face of disease, mortal limits, and loss. Drawing upon biblical, historical, and contemporary scholarship, we will examine how these core Christian doctrines relate to our aches and joys on our pilgrimage in Christ. Through theological exploration we will seek Christian wisdom for bearing witness to authentic Christian hope in our world that is loved by God and yet aching for final redemption.

**TH548 Trinitarian Theology and the Christian Life**
The doctrine of the Trinity is the central mystery of the Christian life. This course examines the biblical and theological foundations, historical development, and classical and contemporary perspectives. Special attention is paid to the implications of Trinitarian faith for the life and health of the Church.

**TH549 Martin Luther: Gospel and the Christian Life**
Martin Luther's writings have been extraordinarily influential as well as controversial for pastors and theologians since the sixteenth century. After setting the context of Luther's life and times, this course will focus upon two areas of his work which continue to be particularly provocative and potent today: the meaning of the gospel, and the nature of the Christian life, including Christian freedom, prayer and worship, the suffering of Christians, and union with Christ. Throughout the course, we will seek to both assess Luther's theology and retrieve insights that edify the church's life and ministry in today's context.

**TH551 John Calvin as Biblical Interpreter, Pastor, and Theologian in Exile**
This course explores the theology of John Calvin with particular attention to his work as a biblical interpreter, pastor, and theologian shaped by exile. Alongside selections from the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, students will engage Calvin's commentaries and sermons as central sites of his theological reflection, especially in relation to key biblical themes such as union with Christ, mortification and vivification, and suffering in the Christian life. These themes will be considered in light of displacement and pilgrimage, as God's people live in hope of their final home in God's presence. Attention will be given to the integration of biblical exegesis, pastoral concern, and theological vision in Calvin's work. The course will also engage Calvin's contemporaries and later Reformed authors in order to assess the ongoing global, contextual, and pastoral significance of his theology for the church today.

**TH552 Karl Barth: Life and Theology**
It is difficult to overestimate the importance of Barth's theology for contemporary Christian thought. Our course will include an overview of Barth's life and the forces that shaped it and his theology, and close readings of selections from his theological works. The student will gain a good overview of Barth's theological vision, his major contributions to theology and typical critiques of his thought.

**TH557 Church and State in America**
This course examines the relationship between church and state in America from the colonial era to the present. Along the way we will treat such topics as marriage, medicine, education, and civil religion.

**TH559 Contemporary Theological Views of Humanity**
What does it mean to be a human being? Students will explore this question through a deep engagement with David Kelsey's *Eccentric Existence: A Theological Anthropology*. Kelsey's groundbreaking work places a Barth-inspired and post-liberal theology in conversation with the best of recent biblical scholarship and contemporary research about humanity from the social sciences. Wrestling with what it means to be a human in this day and age and tracing out the implications of that for both faith and practice are crucial and exciting theological tasks.

**TH561 History of the Black Church**
Galatians 3:28 beautifully asserts "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ." Even so, early in the history of the United States, African Americans found it necessary to establish the Black Church. This course examines the events and conditions necessitating that development and how the legacies of slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and persistent racism have impacted the theology and worship of the Black Church into the 21st century.

**TH565 Disability and Theology in the Christian Tradition**
What is disability? How has disability been understood theologically in the Christian tradition? This course examines theologies of disability with the aim of helping students to comprehend and articulate their own working theology of disability.

**TH568 Calvin's Theology and Its Reception**
Calvin's theology is not only central to the Reformed tradition but continues to be the subject of vigorous theological discussion for theologians and pastors of many Christian traditions around the globe today. After discussing Calvin's life and 16th-century context, this course will examine select key theological ideas as found in portions of the *Institutes*, sermons, commentaries, and *The Bondage and Liberation of the Will*. The exploration of these themes will be set in a dialectic with prominent criticisms of Calvin's theology: e.g., whether Calvin's God is "coercive," whether Calvin is a "legalist," whether Calvin opposes the divine and human, and whether Calvin political theology carries promise or peril for today.

**TH585 Christianity in China**
*Time* magazine reporter David Aikman's book *Jesus in Beijing* points to the importance of this topic in its subtitle: "How Christianity is transforming China and changing the global balance of power." We will study Chinese Christianity from its earliest appearance to its contemporary expressions, learning about its history, theology, and impact. Along the way we will deal with issues such as enculturation, missions, politics, and gender.

**TH590 Reading the Bible with the Dead: Retrieving Pre-modern Biblical Interpretation**
This course explores the way in which reading the Bible in the company of interpreters from earlier eras can benefit the life and ministry of the church today. After examining the basic features of pre-modern approaches to Scripture, the course explores key and controversial biblical texts (*e.g.,* creation, Hagar, Psalms of cursing, slavery), in conversation with patristic, Reformation-era, and American antebellum sources, toward the end of helping us proclaim all of Scripture as God's Word.

**TH592 Christian Perspective on Problem of Evil and Suffering**
From its inception, Christianity has struggled with the tension between God's love and the persistent and immense presence of evil and suffering in the world. This course will examine various approaches to evil/suffering adopted by Christian thinkers.

**TH593 God of the Gospel**
Some of the most basic questions about God probe deeply into contemporary issues in the Christian life and ministry: Who is God? What are God's attributes? How do we come to know God? Is the Triune God made known in Jesus Christ the same as the God known through creation and through the religious practices and cultures of non-Christians? This course explores how the biblical witness to God's work in Israel and in Jesus Christ relates to these complex questions. Through the works of Herman Bavinck (1854-1921), Kwame Bediako (1945-2008) and Kate Sonderegger (1950-) we will explore contrasting, yet overlapping, responses to these questions raised by the doctrine of God.

**TH595 Theologies of Migration and Home: Journeying, Dwelling, and the Christian Life**
This course examines migration and the human longing for home from a theological perspective to arrive at a pastoral and moral response to our contemporary debates about immigration. Some of the questions we will address include: What does a truly flourishing human life look like in view of the realities of migration and home? Are humans fundamentally migrant creatures, or are we rooted creatures? How are migration and home aspects of God's created order deformed by human sinfulness yet still caught up in the eschatological renewal of all things?

**TH617 Theological German**
Modern theological German for reading and research. This course includes inductive study of basic German grammar and syntax and of selected texts in contemporary German theology.

**TH622 Perspectives**
Perspectives is a fifteen-lesson education course exploring different aspects of God's global purpose in a multi-faceted learning experience. The course examines the story of God fulfilling His promises from four vantage points or "perspectives" — Biblical, Historical, Cultural, and Strategic. Perspectives is an awe-inspiring comprehensive course that has profoundly impacted hundreds of thousands of students during the past 45+ years. From Genesis to the prophets, Jesus to the early Church, and St. Augustine to the

present, students learn how God moves, how the global Church responds, and the remaining task of world evangelization. Perspectives isn't a course solely about world missions. It's a study program rooted in Scripture clarifying each believer's remarkable opportunity to co-labor with God in His global purpose.

**TH632 Introduction to the World's Religions**

An introduction to the origins, beliefs, and practices of the major religions of the world. Students will be invited to develop a deeper understanding of how the world's other major religions relate to the Christian faith, how various religious texts inform religious practices, and develop tools for engaging in fruitful interreligious dialogue as Christians called to make disciples. Students will begin with the oldest known monotheistic religion (Zoroastrianism) and trace religious history into post modernity (considering New religious movements such as Baha'i, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints ("Mormons").

**TH700 Orientation Seminar**

This seminar orients incoming students to the ThM program, to life at Western Theological Seminary, and to the larger academic world of the theological disciplines. Forms a "community of scholars" in which scholarly reflection on intercultural issues is engaged. Creates new configurations of self-understanding for theological reflection in community and introduces the philosophy, format, and thesis requirements of the ThM program. Meets annually during the last two weeks in August. 1 credit.

**TH720 State of the Field**

Assists the ThM students in the preparation of a thesis proposal by introducing the basics of academic research and writing. By the end of the course the student 1) will be able to construct a well-designed research proposal; 2) will be familiar with basic strategies and tools for research and academic writing; and 3) will plan a research strategy for writing a ThM research paper or thesis.

**TH735 Seminar in Theological Method**

What makes one statement, opinion, or argument better or wiser than another in the fields of theology, biblical studies, ethics, or practical theology? How does one best understand how Scripture, tradition, reason, experience, context, and future function as authorities or factor into our understandings? We take up these difficult methodological questions and come to provisional answers, drawing from both trusted traditional understandings and contemporary discussions.

**TH790 Research Paper**

A major research paper, which builds upon and extends in a focused area the knowledge and critical ability gained in the basic divinity degree and includes the ThM coursework. The topic and plan are subject to the approval of the ThM Committee. The candidate's Faculty Advisor, in conjunction with a Second Reader, provides guidance for the research. 3 credits.

**TH795 Thesis**

A major research paper, which builds upon and extends in a focused area the knowledge and critical ability gained in the basic divinity degree and includes the ThM coursework. The topic and plan are subject to the approval of the ThM Committee. The candidate's Faculty Advisor, in conjunction with a Second Reader, provides guidance for the research. 6 credits.

## 2026-2027 Academic Calendar

| | |
|---|---|
| Fall semester 2026 registration due date | August 1, 2026 |
| Online orientation (all new students) | August 3-14 |
| ThM program begins | August 24 |
| New CMHC student orientation | August 25 |
| In-Residence orientation (new students including CMHC) | August 28 |
| Fall semester begins | August 31 |
| Labor Day—Seminary closed | September 7 |
| Drop/Add deadline (last day to drop w/ 100% refund) | September 8 |
| Monday classes meet | September 9 |
| Last day to drop a class with a W and 60% refund | September 25 |
| Last day to drop a class with a W and 30% refund | October 16 |
| On Campus Abbey Retreat and Intensive | October 19-23 |
| Abbey Retreat | October 19-20 |
| Distance Learning Course Intensive | October 21-23 |
| In-Residence course break | October 21-23 |
| Distance Learning course break | October 26-30 |
| Thanksgiving Break | November 23-27 |
| Spring semester registration due date | December 1 |
| Fall semester ends | December 18 |
| Christmas Break | December 21-January 8, 2027 |
| Fall semester grades due | January 4 |
| Online orientation (new students spring semester) | January 4-15 |
| Spring semester begins | January 11 |
| Martin Luther King Jr. Day—Seminary closed | January 18 |
| Drop/Add deadline (last day to drop with 100% refund) | January 19 |
| Monday classes meet | January 20 |
| Last day to drop a class with a W and 60% refund | February 5 |
| Last day to drop a class with a W and 30% refund | February 26 |
| On Campus Abbey Retreat and Intensive | February 22-26 |
| Abbey Retreat | February 22-23 |
| Distance Learning Course Intensive | February 24-26 |
| In-Residence course break | February 24-26 |
| Distance Learning course break | March 1-5 |
| Spring Break | April 5-9 |
| Summer semester registration due date | April 19 |
| Spring semester ends | April 30 |
| Graduation | May 1 |
| Summer term begins | May 10 |
| Spring semester grades due | May 14 |
| Drop/Add deadline Summer | May 17 |
| Last day to drop a class with a W | June 4 |
| Summer term ends | June 25 |
| ThM program ends (see handbook for details) | June 30 |
| Summer term grades due | July 2 |
| Fall semester 2027 registration due date | August 1, 2027 |

WESTERN
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## Quick Facts

### Accreditation

Western Theological Seminary is officially related to the Reformed Church in America and an accredited member of the Association of Theological Schools. Its degree programs are authorized by the Department of Education of the State of Michigan. Programs of the seminary are approved for the use of VA educational benefits under the provisions of the Veterans Administration.

Western Theological Seminary is accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada. The MDiv, DMin, MA, MTS, and ThM degrees are approved by the ATS. WTS is approved for a Comprehensive Distance Education Program.

The Commission contact information is:

The Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada
10 Summit Park Dr, Pittsburgh, PA 15275
ph: 412-788-6505, fax: 412-788-6510,
www.ats.edu

Copies of the Association of Theological Schools standards for theological schools and the accreditation process are available for review at the registrar's office. A copy of Western's current accreditation certification is also available for review at the Registrar's office.

Western Theological Seminary is a mid-sized seminary located in Holland, Michigan and affiliated with the Reformed Church in America. We are fully accredited by the Association of Theological Schools.

**Location**
Holland, Michigan - Population 35,000

**Programs Offered**
In-Residence Master of Divinity
Distance Learning Master of Divinity
Dual Degree Master of Divinity – MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling
Dual Track Master of Divinity - Master of Social Work
Master of Arts
Master of Theological Studies
Master of Theology
Doctor of Ministry
Graduate Certificate in Pastoral Ministry
Graduate Certificate in Disability and Ministry
Graduate Certificate in Restorative Justice

**Faculty**
25 faculty members
15:1 student/faculty ratio

**Financial Aid Available**
Grants, awards, tuition reductions, loans, and work study programs

**Affiliation**
Reformed Church in America

# Appendix A: Seminary Policy Regarding Records (FERPA Title IX)

## Policy Regarding Use of Social Security Numbers

The seminary obtains and uses a variety of confidential information in the conduct of its business. This includes documents and other records containing Social Security Numbers. Any and all documents and records containing Social Security Numbers must be obtained, used, and disclosed only for legitimate seminary purposes. Such documents and records must also be treated as confidential, which means they must be retained in secured areas or files, password protected when stored on computers, disclosed only to authorized people, and destroyed at an appropriate time and in an appropriate manner consistent with the seminary's policies and procedures and other legal requirements. Employees who obtain, use, or disclose confidential information for unauthorized or illegal reasons are subject to discipline or discharge, as well as potential criminal or civil prosecution. For additional information, please see your supervisor, the Vice President of Finance, or the seminary's Policy and Procedure Regarding the Use and Disclosure of Social Security Numbers.

## Policy Regarding Student Records

**1.0. General Guidelines Governing Keeping of Student Records**

Student records are kept in the various offices of the seminary in the interest of its students and alumni, to enable the seminary effectively to fulfill its mission. Western Theological Seminary determines to reflect this purpose in its records-keeping policies and consequently has adopted the following guidelines for creating and maintaining student records in its offices:

**1.1** The seminary supports the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, and this statement of policy incorporates the rights accorded and the privacy guaranteed the student by this Act.

**1.2** Student records information is classified in two categories, public and confidential. Public or Directory information may include the following data: name, date and place of birth, course of study, dates of attendance, high school attended, previous college attended, degrees and dates of degrees, awards and honors received, denominational affiliation, home address at time of admission, current home address, current telephone number, and email address. Unless the student requests in writing that such information be withheld, public/directory information is available to anyone. It should be noted, however, that the seminary does try to exercise some restraint in the release of public information. All other information is considered to be confidential. This information will be released only upon written consent of the student, except as provided for in section 3.2 below.

**2.0 Content of Academic Records**

The seminary keeps a variety of records in paper and/or digital form.

- Paper-based records:
    - Public Information, as identified in 1.2
    - Confidential Information:
        - Grades.
        - Semester and cumulative grade point average.
- Pertinent data regarding admissions:
    - Application.
    - Letters of reference.
    - If a transfer student, recommendation from previous institution attended.
    - College and other seminary transcripts.

    - Letter of acceptance, any pertinent correspondence or other documents which the admissions office personnel deem worthy to be kept in the file.
    - Any relevant learning assessment testing results.
    - Student's discipline record and related correspondence:
        - Placed at the request of a faculty member or administrator.
        - Placed at the request of the student.
    - Other official correspondence between the seminary and the student.
    - Documentation concerning students' field education assignments.
- Digital Records:
    - Information regarding students and documents in connection with student learning assessment are stored digitally on our academic management system, Blackbaud, our course management system, Canvas, or in Google Drive.

**2.1** Access to Academic Records:

- Access to student academic records is given to the faculty of students who are registered in their classes, to program directors, to the mid-program assessment committee, and to appropriate administrative staff to assist them in the discharge of their responsibilities.
- Access is given to the student to their own records in both paper and digital form. Access digitally is through password or portal entry.
- Access is given to certain governmental agencies as specified in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.
- Access is given to others, whether this access is in person or transcript form, only upon the written consent of the student.
- A record of access to a student's printed academic record will be kept by the office of the VPAA and will be filed in the student's personal file. A record of access to digital academic or assessment records is logged by the respective management systems.

**2.2** Release of Academic Records Information:

Unless a written request to the office of the VPAA is received that public information as indicated in 1.2 not be released, such information is available upon request.

- Confidential information is released only upon the written authorization of the student, except as provided for in Section 2.1.
- When a student is under pastoral supervision of a classis or other ecclesiastical body, the seminary will request from the student written permission to release information to that ecclesiastical body. It may also inform that body of the student's progress and of any disciplinary actions.
- Transcripts of a student's academic record are released only to the student and to those whom the student authorizes. The following policies apply to the issuance of transcripts:
    - If possible, transcripts are issued the same day or the day following the receipt of the request.
    - Transcripts are withheld if a student has not met his/her financial obligations to the seminary.
    - If a student requests the sending of a transcript to an institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools, the VPAA may communicate any disciplinary actions taken against the student.

**2.3** Storage of Records:

The complete academic record of each student will be permanently stored by the seminary in secured facilities.

**3.0 Student Financial Aid Records**

**3.1** A financial aid file is created for each applicant and contains the following:

- Award letter (each student receives a copy) which indicates the apportionment of aid which is available through work scholarship or loans or a combination of both.
- All legal documents and promissory notes signed by the student that are necessary for the disbursement of loan funds.

**3.2** Access to the Student Financial Aid file is limited to the following:

- The student.
- The VP of Finance, Accounting Associate, and Registrar.
- The Financial Aid Committee.
- The auditors who perform the annual audit of all the financial books and records of the seminary.
- Anyone whom the student allows by written consent.

**3.3** Storage and disposal of financial records:

This file will be retained for seven years after graduation, after which the file will be destroyed. The file will be retained for seven years if a student has not graduated, after which the file will be destroyed.

**4.0 Field Education**

Definition: Field education files are maintained by the Office of Student Life and contain those documents related to the field educations experiences of the student. Materials in the student's file include:

- Biographical data submitted on profile file form by the student.
- Contracts between the student and the field placement.
- Correspondence related to such placement.
- Evaluation statements regarding the students' learning and ministry.
- Student waiver form allowing the sharing of information with appropriate church contacts.
- Preaching assignment evaluations.

The field education files are the property of the seminary and are treated as confidential.

**4.1** Access to the field education file is given to:

- The office of Student Life.
- The student may review the original file and request copies.
- The VPAA.
- The mid-program assessment committee.

**4.2** Release of field education file information:

The student has the right to have information from his/her field education released to potential placements, or those designated by the student, only after an authorization for the release of information form has been submitted to the office of student life. On this form the student will indicate what he/she wants released and to whom.

**4.3** Storage and disposal of field education records:

The field education files will be destroyed three years after graduation. If students do not graduate, the records will be destroyed five years after leaving the degree program.

**5.0 Appeals concerning the content of records:**

If a student contests the contents of their academic file, their field education file, or their psychological testing file, that student may appeal to the VPAA to remove an item or qualify it. The VPAA will convene a panel to consider the case. The panel will include the Director of Student

Life, the Associate Dean, and one faculty member invited by the student. The panel will determine whether or not to grant the student's appeal.

*Revised August 2023*

## Policy Regarding Faculty and Staff Records

Western Theological Seminary maintains a personnel record for each of its employees. These records are the sole property of the seminary, which recognizes, under certain circumstances, the rights of access to and release of information from these personnel records. Faculty personnel records are maintained in a secure location in the office of the VPAA; all other personnel records, and all salary, benefit, and social security information, are maintained in a secure location in the Human Resources office.

**1.0 Content of Personnel Records.**

**1.1** Public information:

- Name of the employee.
- Home address.
- Date of birth.
- Date of beginning of service at the seminary.
- Employee status at seminary (such as full-time, part-time, tenured, adjunct professor, etc.).
- Any other information the employee has submitted for public access (such as a curriculum vitae or resume).

**1.2.** Confidential information:

- Salary and benefits.
- Social security number.
- Employee evaluations and growth covenants.
- Disciplinary record.
- References.
- Other official correspondence between the seminary and the employee.

**2.0 Access to Personnel Records.**

**2.1** Upon reasonable prior written notice, employees have access to personnel records regarding themselves except those documents to which the employee has explicitly waived access in writing (such as letters of reference, etc.).

**2.2** Administrative staff and their designated agents (e.g., attorneys, consultants, etc.) have access to personnel records only to assist them in the discharge of their seminary responsibilities.

**2.3** Upon majority vote of the Board of Trustees, the Board has access, in executive session, to all personnel records.

**2.4** Upon explicit written authorization from the individual regarding whom personnel records are requested, other persons may have access in person or by correspondence.

**2.5** The HR Office and the VPAA are responsible for access to and release of confidential personnel records. They are authorized to interpret and enforce these guidelines, and they shall maintain in each personnel record written documentation of such access.

**3.0 Release of Personnel Records and Personnel Records information**

**3.1** Public information is normally released except when the person about whom the records pertain provides an explicit written request to the HR Office or the VPAA not to release the information.

**3.2** Confidential information is normally released (a) upon the explicit written authorization for release by the person about whom the records pertain, or (b) upon service of a lawful subpoena.

In the event of any question relating to whether an authorization or a subpoena is proper, the seminary may, in its sole discretion, consult with legal counsel prior to releasing such information.

**4.0 Storage of Records**

The complete record of each employee is stored by the seminary in secured facilities. Confidential information is normally destroyed seven years after the employee leaves the seminary; provided, however, that, in the discretion of the VPAA and/or the HR Office, or at the specific direction of the Board of Trustees in executive session, such confidential information may be kept indefinitely when it is deemed to be unusually sensitive or significant.

# Appendix B: Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid/Return of Title IV Funds

## Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid

Western Theological Seminary is required to establish satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standards for its federal and state financial aid recipients in accordance with the U.S. Department of Education regulations. These standards ensure that only those recipients demonstrating satisfactory progress toward the completion of their educational programs continue to receive financial aid. This policy is also in effect for students receiving institutional funds. Evaluation of a student's academic standing and progress for financial aid eligibility will be made at the end of each semester according to the following standards.

## Completion Time

- The In-Residence Master of Divinity degree program is a six-semester program. Students will be allowed to receive up to nine semesters of financial aid. Students must take a minimum of 4.5 credits per semester to qualify for financial aid.
- The Distance Learning Master of Divinity degree program is a ten-semester program. Students will be allowed to receive up to 15 semesters of financial aid. Students must take a minimum of 4.5 credits per semester to quality for financial aid.
- The Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree program is an eight-semester program. Students will be allowed to receive up to 12 semesters of financial aid. Students must take a minimum of 4.5 credits per semester to qualify for financial aid.
- The Master of Arts degree program is a six-semester program. Students will be allowed to receive up to nine semesters of financial aid. Students must take a minimum of 4.5 credits per semester to qualify for financial aid.
- The Doctor of Ministry degree program is a six-semester program. Doctor of Ministry degree program students will be allowed to receive nine semesters of financial aid. Students must complete at least 67% of the credits they attempt in order to qualify. Withdrawals, incompletes, audits, and failures are not earned hours. Transfer credits will be included in the number of completed hours.
- Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.50 to qualify for financial aid (see Academic Probation).

## Title IV Aid and Institutional Funds

If a student does not meet the requirements for SAP, they will be placed on probation for one semester. During this time a student is eligible to receive Title IV aid and institutional funds. The Associate Dean will send a letter indicating the status and asking them to provide the office with a written plan to correct the status. This plan may include a reduced course load or enrolling in specific courses. If the student completes the semester and meets the school's SAP standards or the requirements of the academic plan, Title IV program funds and institutional aid will be continued. If not, aid will be terminated until such time as standards are met. If a student is determined ineligible for aid because they fail to meet the requirements after the warning semester, they may appeal following the procedure below.

## Appeal Procedure

Students denied assistance due to the policy may appeal their case to the VPAA. The appeal should be made in written form explaining the reason for failing to meet academic standards outlined in the policy. The basis on which a student may appeal are the death of a relative, an injury or illness of the student, or other special circumstances. This appeal must be received by the VPAA in written form. In the case of an

illness, a student may be required to submit a doctor's statement. Students will receive written notification of the VP's decision. Students who successfully appeal may be granted aid for one additional semester.
*REVISED August 2023*

## Return of Title IV Funds Policy

This policy applies only to eligible U.S. and eligible non-U.S. citizens receiving Title IV funds, specifically the Federal Direct Student Loan. Title IV funds are awarded to a student under the assumption that he/she will attend school for the entire period for which the assistance is awarded. When a student withdraws from all his/her courses, for any reason including medical withdrawals, he/she may no longer be eligible for the full amount of Title IV funds that he/she was originally scheduled to receive. If the student withdraws from all his/her courses prior to completing over 60% of a semester, he/she may be required to repay a portion of the federal financial aid that he/she received for that term. A pro rata schedule is used to determine the amount of federal student aid funds he/she will have earned at the time of the withdrawal. Federal aid includes Federal Stafford Loan and Direct Student Loans.

The return of funds is based upon the concept that students earn their financial aid in proportion to the amount of time in which they are enrolled. Under this reasoning, a student who withdraws in the second week of classes has earned less of his/her financial aid than a student who withdraws in the seventh week. Once 60% of the semester is completed, a student is considered to have earned all of their financial aid and will not be required to return any funds.

A student's withdrawal date is:

- The date he/she officially withdrew with the office of the Registrar during the Registrar's withdrawal period.
- The date the student submitted his petition to withdraw to the office of the Registrar if the office of the Registrar's withdrawal period has ended, and the student successfully petitioned to withdraw.
- The start date of the student's leave of absence, in the case of a graduate student.
- The date the student was expelled/dismissed from the seminary.
- The date the student died, if the student passed away during the semester.

The student must inform the Financial Aid Office (FAO) of any withdrawal occurring during a semester. The Financial Aid Office determines the return of Title IV funds percentage. Institutions are required to determine the percentage of Title IV aid "earned" by the student and to return the unearned portion to the appropriate aid program. Regulations require schools to perform calculations within 30 days from the date the school determines a student's complete withdrawal. The school must return the funds within 45 days of the calculation.

<u>The return of Title IV funds policy follows these steps:</u>
*Step 1: Student's Title IV information*

The FAO will determine:

- The total amount of Title IV aid disbursed (Not aid that could have been disbursed) for the semester in which the student withdrew. A student's Title IV aid is counted as aid disbursed in the calculation if it has been applied to the student's account on or before the date the student withdrew.
- The total amount of Title IV aid disbursed plus the Title IV aid that could have been disbursed for the semester in which the student withdrew.

*Step 2: Percentage of Title IV Aid Earned:*

The FAO will calculate the percentage of Title IV aid earned as follows:

- The number of calendar days completed by the student is divided by the total number of calendar days in the semester in which the student withdrew. The total number of calendar days in a semester shall exclude any scheduled breaks of five or more days.
- Days Attended ÷ Days in Enrollment Period = Percentage Completed
- If the calculated percentage exceeds 60%, then the student has "earned" all the Title IV aid for the enrollment period.

*Step 3: Amount of Title IV Earned by the Student*

The FAO will calculate the amount of Title IV earned as follows:

- The percentage of title IV aid earned (Step 2) multiplied by the total amount of Title IV aid disbursed or that could have been disbursed for the term in which the student withdrew.
- Total Aid Disbursed x Percentage Completed = Earned Aid

*Step 4: Amount of Title IV Aid to be Disbursed or Returned:*

- If the aid already disbursed equals the earned aid, no further action is required.
- If the aid already disbursed is greater than the earned aid, the difference must be returned to the appropriate Title IV aid program.
- Total Disbursed Aid – Earned Aid = Unearned Aid to be Returned
- If the aid already disbursed is less than the earned aid, the FAO will calculate a Post Withdrawal Disbursement.

Return of the Title IV Aid is based on the type of aid disbursed, in the following order:

- Federal Direct Student Loan:
    - Loans must be repaid by the loan borrower as outlined in the terms of the borrower's promissory note.
    - The student's grace period for loan repayments for Federal Unsubsidized and Subsidized Stafford Loans will begin on the day of the withdrawal from the seminary.
    - The student should contact the lender if he/she has questions regarding their grace period or repayment status.

Institutional and student responsibility in regard to the Federal Return of Title IV Funds policy:

- The FAO's responsibilities in regard to the Return of Title IV funds policy include:
    - Providing each student with the information given in this policy.
    - Identifying students affected by this policy and completing the Return of Title IV funds calculation.
    - Informing the student of the result of the Return of Title IV Funds calculation and any balance owed to the seminary as a result of a required return of funds.
    - Returning any unearned Title IV aid that is due to the Title IV programs and, if applicable, notifying the borrower's holder of federal loan funds of the student's withdrawal date.
    - Notifying students of eligibility for a Post-Withdraw Disbursement, if applicable.

- The students' responsibilities in regard to the Return of Title IV Funds policy include:
    - Becoming familiar with the Return of Title IV Funds policy and how withdrawing from all their courses effects eligibility for Title IV aid.
    - Resolving any outstanding balance owed to the seminary resulting from a required return of unearned Title IV aid.

The procedures and policies listed above are subject to change without advance notice.

# Appendix C: Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

## MASTER OF DIVINITY

Master of Divinity Purpose:

Western Theological Seminary's MDiv degree cultivates an educational community of women and men, forming them for faithful, lifelong participation in the Triune God's ongoing redemptive work in the world as ministers in the local church and through other forms of leadership and service.

Master of Divinity Program Goals:

Graduating students will have a rich theological and pastoral framework by which to see the world and to discern how to serve the world in the name of Christ. This framework will be biblically grounded, historically informed, contextually alert, and developed in conversation with the Reformed tradition and a diversity of voices, past and present, here and around the world. By the end of their degree, students will be formed and equipped to:

- Know, love and worship the Triune God more deeply.
- Share their love of God in winsome ways.
- Love the Scriptures as the living word of God.
- Engage the world through the lens of the biblical narrative of redemption.
- Develop a hermeneutic that engages the biblical languages and enables them to interpret and be interpreted by the Bible thoughtfully and faithfully.
- Appreciate the sacraments as the signs and seals of God's grace.
- Preach God's word, administer the sacraments, build up the church, and shepherd God's people with biblical and theological insight and pastoral imagination.
- Live in healthy relationships.
- Demonstrate a resilient faith undergirded by the practice of wisdom and an awareness of God's presence.
- Attend to their own spiritual, vocational, and theological formation throughout their lives and ministries.
- Discern what it means to love God and neighbor in whatever context they are called to serve.

Master of Divinity Student Learning Outcomes:

*Biblical Field Student Learning Outcomes:*

- Students will be able to use at least one biblical language to interpret Scripture.
- Students will be able to utilize basic historical-grammatical methods to interpret Scripture.
- Students will be able to synthesize interpretive methods, interpreter's voices, and contemporary application(s) in their lives and the lives of those they serve.
- Students will be able to articulate and demonstrate the value of spiritual disciplines that utilize Scripture for spiritual transformation.

*Christian Ministry Field Student Learning Outcomes:*

- Graduates will be able to recognize the strengths and limitations of their personalities and navigate those strengths and weaknesses with self-confidence and humility as they engage others in ministry.
- Graduates will be able to analyze the socioeconomic, cultural, and racial dimensions of their ministry settings and engage them competently.
- Graduates will be able to reflect theologically on their ministerial activities, integrating their biblical and theological knowledge.

- Graduates will be able to assess and improve their ministerial skills and actions.
- Graduates will be able to write their ideas clearly, concisely, creatively, and correctly.

*Theology Field Student Learning Outcomes:*

- Graduates will be able to articulate their understanding of the Christian faith with theological coherence and breadth in their writing.
- Graduates will demonstrate personal appropriation in the connections between theological affirmations and their own personal life and witness.
- Graduates will critically and creatively engage with their own theological tradition.
- Graduates will exhibit clarity of communication in articulating their understanding of the Christian faith to specified audiences.
- Graduates will be able to express integration of theological vision with the church's life and witness.

## MASTER OF ARTS

Master of Arts Program Goal:

Graduating students will have deepened and broadened their biblical and theological knowledge and will be able to analyze specific academic and/or ministerial questions using that knowledge.

Master of Arts Student Learning Outcomes:

- Graduates will demonstrate proficiency in the art of scholarly writing by constructing credible claims, developing compelling arguments, and persuasively interpreting sources in their chosen field of study.
- Graduates will competently engage and utilize critical methodologies and diverse theological perspectives in their analysis of specific academic and/or ministerial questions.
- Graduates will recognize and articulate how their interpretation of sources and construction of arguments are shaped by their own social and theological contexts.

## MASTER OF ARTS IN CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Goal:

The goal of the MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at Western Theological Seminary is to equip students (1) with the knowledge and skills to provide clinical mental health counseling that is research-based, relationally oriented, trauma-informed, and rooted in the Christian soul care tradition, and (2) to provide professional clinical mental health counseling for diverse client populations.

Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Student Learning Outcomes:

- Graduates will demonstrate proficiency in facilitating client growth through the effective application of evidence-based, trauma-informed counseling theories and techniques in ways that foster holistic client development in the context of a strong therapeutic relationship.
- Graduates will be able to effectively apply ethical decision-making models to counseling situations, perceptively analyzing clinical situations in a holistic manner for the sake of providing ethical care.
- Graduates will have the ability to select and implement culturally sensitive counseling interventions and effectively engage with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds in ways that demonstrate sensitivity to the client's unique beliefs, practices, and experiences.
- Graduates will recognize their strengths and limitations with humility and wisdom, demonstrating the ability to effectively evaluate their personal development and counseling practice in order to make appropriate adaptations for future professional situations.

- Graduates will be able to articulate how the Christian soul care tradition informs the modern practice of clinical mental health counseling and will demonstrate the ability to provide counseling services from a theoretical framework that integrates the priorities of Christian care with professional counseling competency.

## MASTER OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

Master of Theological Studies Program Goals:

- Students graduating from this primarily academic degree will have deepened and broadened their biblical and theological knowledge and will be able to analyze specific academic questions using that knowledge.

Master of Theological Studies Student Learning Outcomes:

- Graduates will demonstrate proficiency in the art of scholarly writing by constructing credible claims, developing compelling arguments, and persuasively interpreting sources in their chosen field of study.
- Graduates will competently engage and utilize critical methodologies and diverse theological perspectives in their analysis of specific academic questions.
- Graduates will recognize and articulate how their interpretation of sources and construction of arguments are shaped by their own social and theological contexts.

## MASTER OF THEOLOGY

Master of Theology Program Goals:

- Graduates will be proficient at researching and writing at an upper academic level in a specific theological discipline.
- Graduates will research, write, and speak in a way that is attentive to contextual, cross-cultural, and/or tradition-specific issues.
- Graduates will be prepared to pursue more advanced theological research and/or to take on greater leadership within the church, theological institution, or ministry to which they are called.

Master of Theology Student Learning Outcomes:

- Graduates will demonstrate proficiency in the art of scholarly writing.
- Graduates will be able to identify, understand, and competently use important sources in their chosen field of study.
- Graduates will be able to construct claims, create compelling arguments, and persuasively interpret sources in their chosen field of study.
- Graduates will understand and be able to identify how their sources and arguments are shaped by, have shaped, and/or might shape their own context, culture, and/or theological tradition.
- Those graduates of the WTS ThM program who write a thesis will understand and be able to identify the significant interactions between, on the one hand, their sources and arguments, and on the other hand, the history of and contemporary state of their field.

## DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Doctor of Ministry Goals:

- Graduates will be discerning of personal, cultural, and ecclesial contexts.
- Graduates will innovate ministry through their discernment of contexts in relationship to the integration of theological and social scientific understandings of the church and its ministries.

Doctor of Ministry Student Learning Outcomes:

- Personal and Spiritual Maturity—graduates will reflect on and articulate their personal journey of transformation while reinvigorating and deepening their vocational calling.
- Contextual Discernment—graduates will cultivate cultural agility and be able to describe and critically assess their vocational setting.
- Advanced Theological Integration—graduates will be able to integrate new knowledge, contextual analysis, and an understanding of their ecclesial tradition into a theologically reflexive praxis.
- Leadership Capacity—graduates will develop the self-knowledge and skills necessary to enhance their effectiveness as leaders with discernible capacities in character, innovation, and coherent expression.

## GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN DISABILITY AND MINISTRY

Graduate Certificate in Disability and Ministry Goal:

Graduating students will recognize, appreciate, and incorporate the gifts and perspectives of people with disabilities in a variety of ministry settings.

Graduate Certificate in Disability and Ministry Student Learning Outcomes:

- Graduates will understand and be able to identify the issues faced by people with disabilities and their families through research and personal encounter.
- Graduates will be able to articulate their own theology of disability in conversation with various models of disability.
- Graduates will be able to drawn on the resources of the Christian tradition to construct claims, create compelling arguments, and persuasively argue for inclusive ministry.
- Graduates will demonstrate proficiency in evaluating, adopting and adapting practices of inclusion.

## GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN PASTORAL MINISTRY

Graduate Certificate in Pastoral Ministry Program Goal:

Graduating students will develop deeper biblical, theological, doctrinal, and practical knowledge to better serve their local church, ministry or marketplace context and to better engage a growing cross-cultural community as church leaders, elders, ministers, and pastors for the next generation.

Graduate Certificate in Pastoral Ministry Student Learning Outcomes:

- Graduates will be able to identify and demonstrate basic biblical and theological knowledge.
- Graduates will be prepared to communicate the gospel cross culturally while serving in a local ministry, church, or marketplace context.
- Graduates will demonstrate master level research and writing skills.

## GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Graduate Certificate in Restorative Justice Program Goal:

Graduating students lay a foundation for restorative justice ministries and restorative practices in the context of the Christian faith. Students will deepen their knowledge of biblical and theological dimensions of restorative justice, restorative practices, and practical aspects of putting the gospel into action. This program is especially intended for those whose vocation has prophetic and social dimensions or whose vocation may involve work in prison systems.

Graduate Certificate in Restorative Justice Student Learning Outcomes:

- Graduates will deepen their faith and knowledge of Scripture and the Christian tradition, especially ways in which the message of Scripture propels us to healing and reparative work in communities.
- Graduates will learn "the things that make for peace" and develop knowledge of and skills for actively and effectively addressing social injustices, wrong-doing, and ruptures in communities in order to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Graduates will become pastorally and socially aware of the complexity of systems of power and of their own place within social systems.
- Graduates will gain skills and knowledge for working with incarcerated populations, persons with criminal justice events in their history, or other underserved populations.

WESTERN
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