

Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies (M.A.) Program

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Western Seminary offers the Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies degree for students seeking specialized, graduate, theological education. In addition to the Seminary's general educational goals, the M.A. in Biblical and Theological Studies program endeavors to achieve the following objectives:

1. Cultivate skills in the efficient study and interpretation of Scripture.
2. Provide theoretical and practical skills in one area of focused specialization.
3. Promote growth in Christian maturity demonstrated through effective interpersonal relationships.

The M.A. in Biblical and Theological Studies program focuses upon graduate level education in the biblical and theological disciplines. It is ideal for students with various academic goals including individuals with a Bible school background who have been in full-time ministry for five years or more and realize the need for graduate study in theological and biblical disciplines; persons seeking a solid theological education to enhance their chosen professions and prepare them to fill a vital lay ministry role; students building a solid academic foundation for doctoral studies; and for men and women serving with parachurch organizations or other specialized ministries who desire advanced biblical/theological competency.

The program is not recommended for those preparing for a ministry where ordination is expected or required (e.g., the pastorate, chaplaincy, evangelism, and church planting) or for those who anticipate subsequent Doctor of Ministry studies.

M.A. IN BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES CORE OUTCOMES

In addition to the Seminary's general educational goals, the M.A. in Biblical and Theological Studies program attempts to achieve specific outcomes:

1. Be a person whose Christ-like character and dependence upon the Holy Spirit are worthy of being emulated, and whose integrity imparts credibility to his/her ministry.
2. Be a person who understands his/her role in the furthering of God's purposes.
3. Be a person who experiences interdependency with other believers
4. Be a person with a global vision who thinks, acts and prays strategically.
5. Be able to engage in research in exegetical theological areas at an advanced level.
6. Be able to interpret and apply biblical texts using sound hermeneutical principles and the biblical languages.
7. Know the major themes and developments of God's redemptive activity revealed in Scripture.
8. Know the historical tenets and contemporary significance of evangelical theology and practice.
9. Be able to think biblically and critically so that various truth claims can be effectively evaluated.
10. Be able to communicate God's truth clearly, accurately, and

convincingly.

11. Be a true life-long learner, building upon his/her seminary training.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the general requirements for admission to the Seminary given on pages 18-19, applicants for the M.A. program are expected to present an accredited baccalaureate degree (or its equivalent) with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher (on a 4.0 scale), including a breadth of liberal arts. Applicants who do not meet these general academic requirements may petition the Admissions Committee for consideration. A recommendation from the applicant's pastor and three personal recommendations regarding the applicant's Christian character and leadership potential also are required.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The M.A. in Biblical and Theological Studies degree is conferred upon the attainment of certain personal and academic requirements. In addition to the general seminary requirements outlined on pages 30-31, degree candidates must (1) give evidence of a genuine Christian character, orthodox belief, and conduct consistent with a God-given call to a position of leadership; (2) complete all courses in the prescribed M.A. in Biblical and Theological Studies curriculum with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 overall. By careful planning, students may complete their studies in four semesters.

SPECIALIZATION TRACKS

The M.A. in Biblical and Theological Studies degree is offered in two tracks: Exegetical Track and Theological Track. Both tracks require at least 64 semester hours of coursework:

EXEGETICAL TRACK

Spiritual & personal formation studies: 8 hours

MFM 500	Discovering/Developing Your Ministry Potential	(2)
SFS 501	Learning to Love God and Others	(2)
SFS 502	Practicing Prayer and Other Key Disciplines	(2)
SFS 504	Growing into Ethical Maturity	(2)

Biblical interpretation studies: 16 hours

DBS 506	Learning to Interpret Scripture	(4)
BLS 501	Interpreting Genesis to Song of Solomon	(4)
BLS 502	Interpreting the Prophets to Gospels	(4)
BLS 503	Interpreting Acts to Revelation	(4)

Biblical language studies: 18 hours

NTS 508	Introducing Foundation for Greek Exegesis	(3)
NTS 509	Greek Reading and Syntax	(3)
NTS 510	Greek Exegesis: Acquiring Interpretative Skills	(3)
OTS 508	Introducing Foundation for Hebrew Exegesis	(3)
OTS 509	Hebrew Reading and Syntax	(3)
OTS 510	Hebrew Exegesis: Acquiring Interpretative Skills	(3)



M.A. Biblical and Theological Studies

EXEGETICAL TRACK

- Spiritual Formation [8]
- Biblical Studies [16]
- Biblical Languages [18]
- Theological Studies [12]
- Thesis or Exegetical Theology Electives [4]
- Open Electives [6]

THEOLOGICAL TRACK

- Spiritual Formation [8]
- Biblical Studies [16]
- Theological Studies [16]
- Biblical - Theological Electives [18]
- Open Electives [6]

**DEGREE TOTAL
= 64 CREDIT HOURS**

“The MABTS degree is ideal for people who have significant pastoral training and wish to enhance their academic and theological skills. The course work will challenge students to integrate their pastoral skills and training with their growing theological convictions and insights.”

Dr. Gerry Breshears, Professor of Theology

Theological studies: 12 hours

- THS 501 Knowing the Triune God: Theology I (4)
- THS 502 Glorifying the God of our Salvation: Theology II (4)
- THS 503 Living as the Community of the Spirit: Theology III (2)
- THS 508 Integrating Ministry and Theology (2)

Thesis or exegetical theological electives: 4 hours

(Students complete either a thesis—RES 500 and RES 502—or four hours of exegetical theology electives chosen in consultation with their advisor.)

Open electives

(or secondary concentration studies): **6 hours**

Total: 64 hours

THEOLOGICAL TRACK

Spiritual & personal formation studies: 8 hours

- MFM 500 Discovering/Developing Your Ministry Potential (2)
- SFS 501 Learning to Love God and Others (2)
- SFS 502 Practicing Prayer and Other Key Disciplines (2)
- SFS 504 Growing into Ethical Maturity (2)

Biblical interpretation studies: 16 hours

- DBS 506 Learning to Interpret Scripture (4)
- BLS 501 Interpreting Genesis to Song of Solomon (4)
- BLS 502 Interpreting the Prophets to Gospels (4)
- BLS 503 Interpreting Acts to Revelation (4)

Theological studies: 16 hours

- THS 501 Knowing the Triune God: Theology I (4)
- THS 502 Glorifying the God of our Salvation: Theology II (4)
- THS 503 Living as the Community of the Spirit: Theology III (2)
- THS 508 Integrating Ministry and Theology (2)
- CHS 505 Wisdom from Church History (4)

or

- CHS506 Insight and Inspiration from Church History (2)
- CHS5xx Church history elective (2)

(Students complete either CHS505 or CHS506 + CHS elective.)

Biblical and theological electives: 18 hours

With advisor’s consent, select courses from BLS, NTS, OTS, SFS, CHS, or THS prefixes. Students are encouraged to consider using part of these electives for study in the biblical languages. Students may request permission from the program director to write a thesis as part of their electives.

Open electives

(or secondary concentration studies): **6 hours**

Total: 64 hours