



WESTERN SEMINARY



2010-2011 Academic Catalog Gospel-Centered Transformation

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

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Western Seminary offers the Master of Arts (M.A.) (Biblical and Theological Studies) degree for students seeking specialized, graduate, theological education. In addition to the Seminary's general educational goals, the M.A. 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; and
3. Promote growth in Christian maturity demonstrated through effective interpersonal relationships.

The M.A. (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. (BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES) CORE OUTCOMES

In addition to the Seminary's general educational goals, the M.A. (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

The M.A. is a limited enrollment program. 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. Admission is generally provisional and requires that the student complete a year of Greek or Hebrew with a grade average of "B" (3.0) or higher. A recommendation from the applicant's pastor and three personal recommendations regarding the applicant's Christian character and leadership are required.

DEGREE COMPLETION OPTIONS

Class scheduling permits individuals who commute long distances or who are employed in vocations or ministries to make significant academic progress. Courses are offered on different days of the week to accommodate student schedule needs.

TWO-YEAR PROGRAM. The two-year program includes weekend classes as well as classes in Hebrew and Greek one or two evenings per week during all three terms of both years.

FOUR-YEAR PROGRAM. The four-year program begins with one day of weekend classes during each semester of the first year. Hebrew and Greek are taken during evenings of the second and third years. The degree program is completed with weekend classes during the fourth year.

DISTANCE LEARNING. A number of required and elective courses are offered through the Center for Lifelong Learning. Students may enroll in CLL courses with program advisor approval.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The Master of Arts (Biblical and Theological Studies) is conferred upon the attainment of certain personal and academic requirements. In addition to the general seminary requirements outlined on pages 31-32, 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. curriculum with a minimum grade point average of 3.0. Students may complete their studies in six semesters (two years).

SPECIALIZATION TRACKS

The M.A. (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 credits**

MFM 500	Discovering and Developing 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 credits

DBS 506	Learning to Interpret Scripture	(4)
BLS 501X	Interpreting Old Testament I: Genesis - 2 Samuel.....	(2)
BLS 501Y	Interpreting Old Testament II:1 Kings - Song of Solomon (2)	
BLS 502X	Interpreting Old Testament III: Isaiah to Malachi.....	(2)
BLS 502Y	Interpreting New Testament I: Gospels	(2)
BLS 503X	Interpreting New Testament II: Epistles 1	(2)
BLS 503Y	Interpreting New Testament III: Epistles 2	(2)

Biblical language studies: 18 credits

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

Theological studies: 12 credits

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)

Restricted electives: 4 credits

With your advisor's assistance, select from BLS, NTS, OTS, CHS, or THS prefixes. Students may request permission from the program director to write a thesis as part of their electives.

Open electives: 6 credits

(Or secondary concentration studies)

Total: 64 credits

THEOLOGICAL TRACK**Spiritual & personal formation studies: 8 credits**

MFM 500	Discovering and Developing 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 studies: 16 credits

DBS 506	Learning to Interpret Scripture	(4)
BLS 501X	Interpreting Old Testament I: Genesis - 2 Samuel.....	(2)
BLS 501Y	Interpreting Old Testament II:1 Kings - Song of Solomon (2)	
BLS 502X	Interpreting Old Testament III: Isaiah to Malachi.....	(2)
BLS 502Y	Interpreting New Testament I: Gospels	(2)
BLS 503X	Interpreting New Testament II: Epistles 1	(2)
BLS 503Y	Interpreting New Testament III: Epistles 2	(2)

Theological studies: 16 credits

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)

M.A. (Biblical and Theological Studies)**EXEGETICAL TRACK**

Spiritual Formation [8]

Biblical Studies [16]

Biblical Languages [18]

Theological Studies [12]

Thesis or Restricted 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 CREDITS**

CHS 505X	Wisdom from Ancient Church History	(2)
CHS 505Y	Wisdom from Advancing Church History	(2)

Restricted electives: 18 credits

With your advisor's assistance, select courses from BLS, NTS, OTS, 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: 6 credits

(Or secondary concentration studies)

Total: 64 credits