

Western Seminary is designed to train students who have never had any previous theological education. However, you may have recently graduated from a Bible college or transferred from another graduate school. If that's the case, please read carefully.

TRANSFER CREDIT DEFINED

Students who have completed relevant graduate-level studies at another institution may be eligible for transfer credit. Normally, transfer credits are accepted from schools accredited by Association of Theological Schools or regional accrediting associations. For credit to be granted, the student must be admitted to a degree program, and the previous work must be approximately parallel (80% or higher equivalence) to the content of a Western Seminary course.

REQUESTING TRANSFER CREDIT

If you believe you may be eligible for transfer credit, please review the Transfer Credit section of the current catalog and then submit a Transfer Credit Request form (available online under "Forms and Petitions"). Please note, new students must apply for transfer credit prior to or concurrent with their first semester of enrollment. If, during the course of your education, you would like to enroll at another institution with the purpose of transferring credit to Western Seminary, please submit the Transfer Credit Request form prior to enrolling at the other institution. Due to the consultation that may be necessary between Western and other institutions, please note that Transfer Credit Request forms may take eight or more weeks to process.

ADVANCED STANDING/ADVANCED SUBSTITUTES DEFINED

Students who enter seminary with knowledge of the Bible, theology, hermeneutics, etc., may be eligible for advanced standing and/or advanced substitutes. Students will be tested on their current knowledge of the course content, usually in an informal interview. If the evaluator determines that the student has a competent, current understanding of approximately 80% of the course content, then the student would be eligible for advanced standing and/or advanced substitutes.

- **Advanced standing:** Credits are waived from the degree program, reducing the number of credits required for degree completion.
- **Advanced substitutes:** The substitution of advanced divisional courses for required courses (no actual reduction in credits).

REQUESTING ADVANCED STANDING/ADVANCED SUBSTITUTES

If you believe you may be qualified for advanced standing, we encourage you to apply once you have completed your application for seminary. To do so, please submit an Advanced Standing/Advanced Substitutes Request form (available online under "Forms and Petitions"). Please fill out one form for each course in which you would like to be examined. There is an examination fee that accompanies each request – this fee is non-refundable regardless of the outcome of the examination. Please note, students must request advanced standing prior to or concurrent with their first semester of enrollment.

Students are encouraged to take a couple of hours to review the information relevant to the areas in which they believe they are qualified for advanced standing or advanced substitutes. It might prove helpful to review the syllabus in the "Current Students" section of Western's web site. Students may schedule an appointment to meet with Dr. Gerry Breshears by contacting Shanita Gills at (503) 517-1976 or sgills@westernseminary.edu. Dr. Breshears will either administer the examination or refer the student to the proper examining instructor.

ADVANCED STANDING/ADVANCED SUBSTITUTES ASSESSMENT

The assessment is usually conducted orally, interactively and without notes or Bible, though it could be done in writing if the student prefers. Usually, the examining instructor conducts an informal interview by telephone or in person during which the student is asked open-ended questions to determine if he or she can demonstrate competent, current

understanding of course content.

ADVANCED STANDING/ADVANCED SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Biblical literature sample questions:

- Can you discuss the development of “covenant” through the canon?
- What is the big idea and major contribution of the book of Exodus?
- Please share your favorite minor prophet and discuss it with the examining instructor.

Hermeneutics sample questions:

- How would you conduct a word study?
- What are the various pitfalls in word studies?

Theology sample questions:

- What are the varying understandings of sin in Arminian, Wesleyan, Calvinist, Catholic, etc. understandings and which of these do you tend to agree with?
- Can you support your position with key Scripture passages?

Since there are numerous Bible, theology, spiritual formation, etc., courses required in each degree program, students will only be examined in the area(s) that they request.

ADVANCED STANDING/ADVANCED SUBSTITUTES COMPETENCY STATEMENTS

The following are the relevant competencies for the Bible and theology courses. They are exemplary of the type of current competency required in order to receive advanced standing/advanced substitutes.

Be able to interpret and apply biblical texts using sound hermeneutical principles and the biblical languages.

The student:

- is competent in the essential skills of the grammatical-historical approach to interpretation.
- knows the basic vocabulary and structure (grammar and syntax) of Greek and Hebrew.
- is able to translate and to interact theologically with the original text.
- is able to use a wide range of available tools (including electronic).
- is committed to using (and enhancing) language skills in the context of personal growth and future ministry.

Know the major themes and developments of God’s redemptive activity revealed in Scripture.

The student:

- understands the basic framework of biblical history.
- understands the major contribution of each book to the canon.
- understands the basic argument of each book and its relevance for contemporary ministry.

Know the historical tenets and contemporary significance of evangelical theology and practice.

The student:

- is able to articulate and defend biblically a personal understanding of key doctrines.
- understands the primary implications of these doctrines for life and ministry.
- understands how to analyze theologically contemporary issues confronting the church and society, and how to communicate meaningfully the fruit of that analysis.