

# The Master of Divinity Degree Program

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OFFERED ON THE ONLINE, PORTLAND, SACRAMENTO, AND SAN JOSE CAMPUSES

## Program Objectives & Requirements

The Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree program is designed for those engaged in or preparing for vocational ministry, including the pastorate, intercultural service, Christian education, pastoral counseling, chaplaincy, evangelism, music and worship ministries, and related areas of service. Historically, the M.Div. degree has been the recommended program for those preparing for ordination.

The M.Div. program requires a core of biblical, theological, and applied ministry studies. In addition, students select an elective track consisting either of a ministry Track or a self-designed sequence of electives approved by a faculty mentor. This flexibility of design recognizes that many students come with differing God-given gifts, passions, talents, experiences, and goals.

The M.Div. course of study, designed to assist the local church in the training and nurturing of godly leaders, is guided by five overarching educational values which the Seminary believes are essential to that objective. Those values are:

- Outcome-based instruction
- Spiritual and character formation
- Mentor relationships
- Church relatedness
- Global and cultural awareness

## M.Div. Core Outcomes

The explicit outcomes which the M.Div. seeks to produce encompass multiple dimensions of the graduate's life and work. This means that the M.Div. student's educational experiences are intended to produce growth in knowledge, character, and skills for ministry. Many of these outcomes are best achieved and measured in the field, rather than the classroom. Consequently, many of the educational experiences bring the classroom and the church together in partnership to prepare the student for a life of fruitful ministry.

In addition to the Seminary's general educational goals, the M.Div. program attempts to achieve specific outcomes:

- Applies biblical truth to life and ministry based on a thorough understanding of the biblical canon and solid exegesis
- Employs mature theological thinking to evaluate competing ideas, develop a personally integrated and gospel-centered expression of biblical teachings, communicate theological truths clearly, and apply theological truths to life and ministry
- Demonstrates cultural awareness and discernment in theological thinking and ministerial practice
- Exhibits a Christ-like character worthy of being emulated, and integrity that imparts credibility to his/her ministry
- Demonstrates self-awareness and a commitment to an ongoing process of personal and spiritual formation that is clearly grounded in the gospel
- Implements a gospel-centered philosophy of ministry that is biblical, missional, and transformational
- Communicates God's truth clearly, accurately, and convincingly

- Nurtures and equips people so that God's purposes are effectively accomplished in and through them

## Admission Requirements

In addition to the general requirements for admission to the Seminary, applicants for the M.Div. program are expected to present an accredited baccalaureate degree (or its equivalent) with a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 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.

## Transfer Credit

Upon approval by the Registrar, transfer of up to 41 hours credit is allowed toward the M.Div. program from graduate institutions accredited by the Association of Theological Schools. Students must have earned a grade of B or better for a course to be considered for transfer and coursework must have completed no more than five years prior to matriculation to Western Seminary. Alternatively, students may receive advanced standing of up to 20 credit hours of the 41 credit hours of transfer credit allowed toward their program if they are able to demonstrate current competency in required coursework based on prior study (based on parallel undergraduate work or transfer credit that is ineligible for consideration based on age). Transferability of credits earned at Western and transferred to another institution is at the discretion of the receiving institution. Consult the Registrar's Office for information on eligibility of transfer credit and advanced standing.

## Residence Requirements

### For the Portland, San Jose and Sacramento Campuses:

Of the 82 credit hours required for the Master of Divinity program, a minimum of 41 credit hours must be completed through coursework completed at Western Seminary, with a minimum of 28 credit hours taken in resident study at one of Western Seminary's physical campus locations. All work leading to the Master of Divinity must be completed within six years from the time of matriculation. Permission to extend the six year statute of limitation must be granted through submission of an academic petition. Reinstatement to the program after withdrawal requires Admissions Committee action and may subject the student to additional requirements for the degree. All credits applied toward the degree requirements must be earned within ten years of the awarding of the degree.

### For the Online Campus Only:

Of the 82 credit hours required for the Master of Divinity program, a minimum of 41 credit hours must be completed through coursework at Western Seminary, with a minimum of 10 credit hours taken in resident study through the following specific courses and program orientation:

- During October or June of a student's first academic year, the student must travel to Portland for one week to attend program orientation and two threshold courses, CS501 Learning to Love God and Others (2 credit hours) and MF501 Introduction to Theological Study and Ministry Formation (2 credit hours).
- During the middle of a student's program, the student must travel to Portland to complete at least four credit hours of required (non-elective) courses.

- During February of a student's final academic year, the student must return to Portland to attend the capstone course, TH504 Integrating Ministry and Theology (2 credit hours).

All work leading to the Master of Divinity must be completed within six years from the time of matriculation. Permission to extend the six year statute of limitation must be granted through submission of an academic petition. Reinstatement to the program after withdrawal requires Admissions Committee action and may subject the student to additional requirements for the degree. All credits applied toward the degree requirements must be earned within ten years of the awarding of the degree.

## Degree Requirements

The Master of Divinity degree is conferred upon the attainment of certain personal and academic requirements. In addition to the general seminary requirements, 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.Div. curriculum with a minimum grade point average of 2.5. All credits applied toward degree requirements must be earned within ten years of the awarding of the M.Div. degree.

## Course Requirements

Students may complete their studies in as few as six semesters, including mentored field ministry, with a minimum of 82 credits required for graduation. The program is designed around a common core of 70 credits and an elective track of 12 credits. The elective track involves either the completion of a ministry track (12 credits of prescribed and elective credits) or an open track (12 credits of elective credits and mentored ministry approved by a faculty member).

## Open or Ministry Tracks

The intent of a ministry track is to further equip an individual with the skills, insights, and training experiences necessary for a distinctly defined ministry role. Like the divinity core, the ministry tracks are outcome-driven. Six to eight credits of course work reflect a thoughtful blend of required courses and restricted electives designed to impart the character, knowledge, and skill outcomes deemed essential for each particular role.

### Exegetical Track

The Exegetical Track seeks to develop advanced skills in those whose ministry will focus especially on the teaching and preaching of the Word of God. Hence advanced studies in the biblical languages and exegetical skills are provided, along with additional training in communicating the fruit of one's study.

In addition to the M.Div. core outcomes, the Exegetical Track attempts to achieve specific outcomes:

- Know the full process of exegesis pertinent to biblical Greek and Hebrew
- Be able to apply this full exegetical method to the texts of various Old and New Testament genres

## Global Leadership Track

The Global Leadership Track is designed to prepare students for effective multicultural ministry in the U.S. and abroad. It provides both the foundation and the expertise for service as a bi-vocational or professional worker in a variety of contexts. It also so serves as an excellent degree program for those preparing for doctoral studies in intercultural leadership.

In addition to the M.Div. core outcomes, the Global Leadership Track attempts to achieve specific outcomes:

- Demonstrates self-awareness, social competence, sensitivity to diversity and teamwork in diverse cultural settings
- Displays effective ministry competence and leadership in a global ministry setting

## Pastoral Track

The Pastoral Track is designed as the foundational preparation for those who are called to serve the local church in a pastoral capacity. The specialized courses seek to develop pastors competent to lead a church with integrity, understanding, and skill. Learning is guided by faculty and pastor/mentors in both classroom and church contexts.

In addition to the M.Div. core outcomes, the Pastoral Track attempts to achieve specific outcomes:

- Know the biblical, theological, and ministerial foundations for pastoral ministry including pastoral identity, the nature of pastoral ministry, preaching, soul care, and ministry programs
- Be able to do basic, tool-assisted exegesis of texts from various Old and New Testament genre with a view to preparing expository messages and lessons
- Be able to develop and deliver with advanced proficiency expository sermons and lessons from various biblical genres
- Be able to perform relevant pastoral duties such as administering the ordinances, performing weddings and funerals, doing visitation, dealing with crisis situations, counseling, equipping, and practicing church discipline
- Be able to deal with issues of leadership and management in the church, such as decision making, team building, board dynamics, conflict management, finances, buildings, legal matters, and the like

## Women's Pastoral Leadership Track

## Chaplaincy Track

## Coaching Track

## Open Track

Students may elect to choose up to 12 credits of course work apart from any Track. Electives are chosen with faculty advisor guidance based on student goals, prior experiences, talents, and God-given gifts.

## Biblical Language Options

The Seminary offers Master of Divinity students two options to complete their requirements in the biblical languages: the foundational language track and the functional language track.

The foundational language track equips students with both the foundations of the Greek and Hebrew languages, including the elements of grammar, syntax, and reading, and with the skills of exegesis—the interpretation of the text. Then students will be able to read the Bible as it was written and encounter the depths of meaning that can get lost in translation. Students are introduced to a wide range of language tools, including computer programs. Following this track will lay a foundation for in-depth study in advanced classes. It will give students the strongest foundation as life-long learners to teach and preach the biblical text in an informed manner and/or to pursue advanced studies in which this level of original language competence would be expected. In addition, students in this track will be able to read advanced commentaries with greater understanding, be able to take additional elective courses in the interpretation of various biblical books, and be better equipped to evaluate commentaries, articles and theological books on their own. If the study and the preaching of God's Word is your main focus of ministry, this is the recommended track to take. Students in the exegetical language track for all Tracks except Expository Ministry enroll in NT511-512, OT511-512, and NTS513 or OT513; those in Expository Ministry enroll in NT511-512, OT511-512, NTS513, OT513, and an exegetical elective in either language.

For students who choose not to develop the skill to read and translate the Bible in the original languages, the seminary offers the functional language track. It is designed to give students the practical ability to access the original languages through the Bible Works computer program and other contemporary reference tools. Using these tools, the student will learn the essential grammar and syntax of the biblical languages. Students will use the computer to find word meanings, parsing, etc. By the end of the two-semester sequence, students will be able to use original language commentaries with discernment and do many steps of the exegetical process as they prepare sermons and lessons in ministry. Students in the functional language track enroll in NT501-502, OT501-502, and an additional BL elective.

## Master of Divinity Curriculum Plan

### *Foundational Studies: 10 credits*

BT501	Hermeneutics	2
BT502	Understanding Biblical Theology	2
CS501	Learning to Love God and Others	2
CS502	Growing in Prayer and Other Key Spiritual Disciplines	2
MF501	Introduction to Theological Study and Ministry Formation	2

### *Biblical Studies: 12 credits*

Please note: Biblical studies, theological studies, hermeneutics and church history courses may be offered in 4-credit or 2-credit formats, depending on the campus location.

BL501 -or- BL501X and BL501Y	Interpreting Genesis to Song of Solomon	4
BL502 -or- BL502X and BL502Y	Interpreting Old Testament I: Genesis to 2 Samuel	2
BL503 -or- BL503X and BL503Y	Interpreting the Old Testament II: 1 Kings to Song of Solomon	2
	Interpreting the Prophets and Gospel	4
	Interpreting Old Testament III: The Prophets	2
	Interpreting the New Testament I: Gospels	2
	Interpreting Acts to Revelation	4
	Interpreting the New Testament II: Epistles 1	2
	Interpreting the New Testament III: Epistles 2	2

### *Biblical Language Studies: 14 credits*

Students should select either the Foundational or Functional Language track and complete all of the coursework for each language within the track selected.

#### **Foundational Language Track**

NT511	Greek Grammar	3
NT512	Greek Reading and Syntax	3
OT511	Hebrew Grammar	3
OT512	Hebrew Reading and Syntax	3
Please note: NT/OT513 are not regularly scheduled on all campuses but may be available online or web-conference (registration contingent on approval via academic petition).		
NT513 -or-	Greek Exegesis	2
OT513	Exegetical Methods	2

#### **Functional Language Track**

NT501	Greek Grammar Using Bible Software	3
NT502	Greek Reading And Syntax Using Bible Software	3
OT501	Hebrew Grammar Using Bible Software	3
OT502	Hebrew Reading and Syntax Using Bible Software	3
BL5XX	Biblical Studies elective	2

### *Theological Studies: 18 credits*

TH501 -or-	Knowing the Living God: Theology I	4
TH501X and	Knowing the Living God: Theology I, Part 1	2
TH501Y	Knowing the Living God: Theology I, Part 2	2
TH502 -or-	Glorifying the Word of Life: Theology II	4
TH502X and	Glorifying the Word of Life: Theology II, Part 1	2
TH502Y	Glorifying the Word of Life: Theology II, Part 2	2
TH503 -or-	Living as the Community of the Spirit: Theology III	4
TH503X and	Living as the Community of the Spirit: Theology II, Part 1	2
TH503Y	Living as the Community of the Spirit: Theology II, Part 2	2
TH504	Integrating Ministry and Theology	2
CH501 -or-	Wisdom from Church History	4
CH501X and	Wisdom from Church History, Part 1	2
CH501Y-or-	Wisdom from Church History, Part 2	2

### *Ministerial Studies: 16 credits*

ML501	Theology and Practice of Gospel-Centered Ministry	2
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ML502	Transformational Leadership	2
ML503	Nurturing Faithful Disciples	2
ML504	Taking the Gospel to Diverse Cultures	2
ML505	Applied Pastoral Counseling: Caring for People in a Broken World	2
ML506	Ministerial Ethics	2
ML507	Gospel Responses to Contemporary Challenges	2
ML508	Preaching Gospel-Centered Messages	2

*Ministry Formation: 2+ courses (0 credits)*

MF531	Ministry Formation I	0
MF532	Ministry Formation II	0

Note: MF531-532 are the minimum required for candidacy. MF533-539 will be required for students who must continue ministry formation beyond the initial two semesters.

MF533	Ministry Formation III	0
MF534	Ministry Formation IV	0
MF539	Ministry Formation Continuation	0

## Track: 12 credits (select one)

The 12 credits of coursework in the elective tracks may be taken in one of two ways:

1. A ministry track (minimum of 8 credits in chaplaincy, coaching, exegetical, global leadership, pastoral, or women's pastoral leadership courses)
2. An integrated sequence of electives selected with faculty guidance

The choice among these options is based on student goals, talents, God-given gifts and prior experiences.

## Open Track (Online, Portland, Sacramento, & San Jose campuses)

*Open electives: 12 credits*

## Chaplaincy Track (Portland, Sacramento, & San Jose campuses)

*Chaplaincy required course: 2 credits*

CA501	The Chaplaincy	2
CA530	Chaplaincy Practicum	2

*Restricted electives: 4 credits*

Select from the courses below or related electives with advisor approval:

CA505	Hospital Chaplaincy	2
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CA531	Clinical Pastoral Education	1-4
CNS501	Clinical Foundations: Basic Counseling Skills and Interventions	2
CNS557	Emergency Preparedness: Suicide Prevention and Crisis Intervention	1
CNS558	Emergency Preparedness: Crisis Intervention, Trauma and Loss	1

*Open electives: 4 credits*

## Coaching Track (Portland, Sacramento, & San Jose campuses)

*Coaching required courses: 2 credits*

CO500	Introduction to Coaching	2
CO501	Coaching Change, Transition, and Transformation	2

*Restricted electives: 4 credits*

Select from the courses below with advisor approval:

CO502	Life and Personal Coaching	1
CO503	Coaching Approach to Leading and Managing	1
CO504	Coaching Spiritual Transformation	1
CO505	Coaching as a Brain-Based Approach to Learning	1
CO506	Using Assessments, Inventories, and Tools in Coaching	1
CO507	The Language of Coaching	1
CO508	Growing Your Coaching Practice	1
CO530	Coaching Supervision	1

*Open electives: 6 credits*

## Exegetical Track (Portland, Sacramento, & San Jose campuses)

*Exegetical required courses: 4 credits*

Note: Students must complete both NT513 and OT513 for the Exegetical Track. This track requires students to pursue the Foundational Language track and complete the second exegesis course not completed under Biblical Language Studies: Foundational Language Track requirements listed above.

NT513 -or-	Greek Exegesis	2
OT513	Hebrew Exegesis	2
NT5XX -or-	Exegesis elective	2
OT5XX	Exegesis elective	2

*Open electives: 8 credits*



## Global Leadership Track (Portland campus only)

*Global Leadership required courses: 8 credits*

GL501	Spiritual Formation and Discipleship in the Global Context	2
GL502	Theology in the Global Context	2
GL503	Leadership in the Global Context	2
GL504	Self-Directed Learning for Global Leadership	2

*Open electives: 4 credits*

## Pastoral Track (Portland, Sacramento, & San Jose campuses)

*Pastoral Theology required courses: 8 credits*

PT501	Pastoral Care and Leadership	2
PT502	Theology and Practice of Worship	2
PT503	Maximizing the Church's Redemptive Influence	2
PT511	Advanced Expository Preaching	2

*Open electives: 4 credits*

## Women's Pastoral Leadership Track (Portland, Sacramento, & San Jose campuses)

*Women's Pastoral Leadership required course: 3 credits*

WL501	Pastoral Understanding of Women	2
WL502 -or- WL503	Women in Pain, Part 1 Women in Pain, Part 2	1 1

*Restricted electives: 3 credits*

Select from the courses below with advisor approval:

WL502 -or- WL503	Women in Pain, Part 1 Women in Pain, Part 2	1 1
WL504	Women in Leadership	2
WL505	Building Relational Ministries for Women	1
WL506	Develop and Deliver Life-Changing Bible Messages	2
WL507	Develop Life-Changing Bible Study Curriculum	1
WL508	Develop Your Discipling and Evangelism Potential	1

*Open electives: 4 credits*

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