
Master of Theology

Director:.....Moyer Hubbard, D.Phil.

Mission & Learning Outcomes

The Master of Theology curriculum is a challenging post-graduate degree program designed to equip students with specialized academic knowledge and advanced professional skills in one of the theological disciplines. The program is of special interest to students who aspire to teach—whether in the church, a Bible college or seminary, an extension center, or in a cross-cultural setting. This is in accord with both A.T.S. (Association of Theological Schools) and A.A.B.C. (American Association of Bible Colleges) which consider the Th.M. degree the minimum educational credential for teaching biblical and theological subjects at accredited seminaries and Bible schools. The program also provides an excellent preparation for those who anticipate further study at the Ph.D. and Th.D. level.

Qualified students aspiring to excellence and leadership in many areas of ministry and service for Christ find the Th.M. program personally enriching and academically stimulating.

The mission of the Master of Theology program is to equip students with specialized academic knowledge and advanced professional skills in one of the theological disciplines in order to advance the cause of Christ in theological higher education and the Christian community.

As a result of this program, the student will:

- A. Research and Scholarship**
 1. Understand what constitutes, and be able to formulate, a productive research question.
 2. Be committed to the value of, and competently conduct, advanced theological research and writing.
- B. Discipline Competence**
 1. Appreciate the importance of, and be able to use the biblical languages in advanced theological research.
 2. Demonstrate a basic level of expertise in discipline-specific primary source literature, as well as a commitment to its use in scholarly research.
 3. Attain a survey knowledge of the historical development of the student's discipline, especially focusing on significant individuals and contributions of the modern era.
- C. Teaching Knowledge and Skills**
 1. Understand and apply the major theories of learning and the essential components of effective teaching and assessment.

2. Demonstrate a commitment to, and ability to carry out, sound pedagogical practices for teaching in formal and non-formal educational settings.
3. Demonstrate ability and be committed to relating acquired academic expertise to a multicultural and postmodern context.

Admission Requirements

The student must present an accredited Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor or Master of Divinity degree or educationally equivalent M.A. Specifically, they must have maintained at least a 3.25 average in their Divinity program and have completed at least nine semester hours of Greek beyond beginning Greek and nine semester hours of Hebrew. Applicants deficient in the biblical languages may take the prerequisite units at Talbot while taking other Th.M. courses, but such deficiencies must be made up before more than 16 units in other subjects may be taken. Divinity degrees presented from non-accredited seminaries and theological schools are individually evaluated. Deficiencies discerned in such cases may be made up by coursework at Talbot or other specified accredited institutions. Students must also have the personal qualifications necessary for a minister of Christ, including promise of future usefulness. They must be spiritually qualified by providing evidence of a born-again experience and a consistent Christian manner of life.

Note: The minimum TOEFL score for admission to the Th.M. program is a total of 575 paper / 231 computer / 88 internet.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

All applicants are required to submit a personal statement of one to two double-spaced typewritten pages expressing their career goals and personal objectives in seeking the Th.M. degree.

Graduates of other seminaries must file a full application with the Office of Graduate Admissions.

Master of Divinity students currently enrolled at Talbot may file for admission by submitting a written request to the Graduate Committee in care of the Office of Graduate Admissions. This request should indicate any changes in marital status or doctrinal convictions since enrollment in the Master of Divinity degree. In addition, applicants should signify their intention to abide by the Standards of Conduct of Biola University.

Talbot Master of Divinity students who have completed 80 or more units, and whose current cumulative GPA is 3.25 or above may be granted a concurrent enrollment option but may not enroll in Th.M. courses until a maximum of 8 units remain in their M.Div. program. Since the first academic responsibility is to complete the M.Div., all M.Div. requirements must be completed within two semesters after concurrent enrollment has begun. (See

Concurrent Enrollment Option). Interested seniors should contact the Office of Graduate Admissions for detailed information.

Applicants who have graduated from Talbot with a Master of Divinity degree may file for admission according to the following guidelines:

Less than two years since graduation from Talbot:

- Re-admit Application
- Personal Statement

Between two and five years since graduation:

- Re-admit Application
- Pastor Reference on form provided by the Admissions Office
- Personal Statement

Over five years since graduation:

- Full application
- Personal Statement

Talbot graduates should include in the personal statement any changes in marital status or doctrinal convictions since graduation with the Master of Divinity degree. In addition, they should signify their intention to abide by the Standards of Conduct of Biola University.

Note: Official documents presented for admission or evaluation become part of the student's academic file and normally cannot be returned or copied for distribution.

Graduation Requirements

Degrees are awarded to qualified candidates at the university's winter and spring commencements. Students are required to be present for graduation unless advance permission to graduate in absentia has been secured. To qualify for graduation, candidates must have completed all required coursework (26 units) with a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.25 and satisfactorily passed their comprehensive examinations. No grade less than a C (2.0) will be credited toward the Th.M. degree units. Students who repeat courses for the purpose of raising their GPA must adhere to the University's general policy for grades, as spelled out in the graduate program catalog. Candidates for the Th.M. degree should also manifest promise of usefulness in Christian ministry, exhibit exemplary and consistent Christian character and evidence sound theological beliefs in accordance with the university's doctrinal statement. Additional requirements are as follows:

RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

A minimum of two semesters in residence at Talbot is required for the Th.M. degree.

TRANSFER CREDIT

Up to four units of Th.M.-level credit from another accredited seminary or theological school may be accepted toward fulfillment of Th.M. course requirements.

TIME LIMIT FOR DEGREE

All course, examination and thesis requirements must be completed within five years, beginning on the date of the student's first registration for Th.M. courses at Talbot.

Major Areas of Academic Study

Majors in the Th.M. program are offered in the following areas:

BIBLE EXPOSITION

For students who want advanced training in English Bible as preparation for teaching or preaching the Scriptures. Courses emphasize the historical and cultural background, hermeneutical issues, synthesis, analysis and unique theological contributions of Old and New Testament books, providing examples of a sound expositional approach to Scripture. For those students who wish to emphasize preaching and communication techniques, elective courses may also be taken in the area of Christian Ministry & Leadership.

NEW TESTAMENT

For students wanting to do advanced work in the history, language, theology and exegesis of the New Testament. TTNT 812 The World of the New Testament is required.

OLD TESTAMENT & SEMITICS

For students wanting to do advanced work in the history, archaeology, language, theology and exegesis of the Old Testament.

MISSIONS & INTERCULTURAL STUDIES

For students who want to emphasize the biblical theology of missions and take advanced coursework in Missions and Intercultural Studies.

THEOLOGY (EMPHASIS IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY)

For students who want to take advanced coursework in Systematic Theology. TTTH 709 Contemporary Theology is required.

THEOLOGY (EMPHASIS IN HISTORICAL THEOLOGY)

For students who want to take advanced coursework in Systematic Theology but with some emphasis on the historical development of doctrine. TTTH 709 Contemporary Theology is required.

THEOLOGY (EMPHASIS IN PHILOSOPHICAL & MORAL THEOLOGY)

For students wanting to do advanced coursework at the interface of philosophy and theology. The emphasis will prepare students to engage in integrated philosophical, theological and biblical re-

lection on the doctrinal and ethical components of the Christian worldview. TTPM 823, Metaphysics, TTPM 843, Epistemology, and TTPM 866, History & Normative Systems of Ethics, are required.

Program Options

The Th.M. is a 26 semester-hour program with two options for program structure: a thesis track and a non-thesis track. Students choosing the thesis track will complete 20 units of coursework and write a thesis for which they will be awarded 6 semester-units of credit. Students opting for the non-thesis track will be required to complete 26 units of coursework. They will also be asked to submit two papers to the major department which give evidence of their ability to research and write on a high academic level. The papers submitted may be the product of coursework.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The Th.M. 891 Research Seminar (3 units) and TTCE 724 Advanced Methods of Educational Instruction (2 units) are required of all students, regardless of major. See the description of the major areas for other courses that may be required by a specific department. The program requirements for both tracks will be distributed as follows:

Thesis Track

- 5 units:** prescribed
- 12 units:** major area
- 3 units:** elective
- 6 units:** thesis
comprehensive examination

Non-Thesis Track

- 5 units:** prescribed
- 15 units:** major area
- 6 units:** elective
comprehensive examination

Students are required to take a minimum of 14 units in Th.M. courses numbered in the 800 series, with the remainder at the 600 and 700 levels. Up to two courses from a different department may be taken in the major area with the approval of the student's program advisor.

A Th.M. student must carry nine (9) or more units to be considered a full-time student. Those carrying less than nine units are considered part-time students. A maximum of six (6) units may be taken by Th.M. students in independent study courses. It is recommended that this be done in the middle or latter portion of the program, and in any case the advance approval of the major departmental advisor and faculty member concerned is required.

RESEARCH SEMINAR

All Th.M. students are required to take the 890 level Research Seminar. The seminar is designed to introduce the student to research methodology employed in the various biblical and theo-

logical disciplines. The seminar is led by faculty representatives from each of the departments in biblical and theological studies. The seminar is a foundational part of the Th.M. program and is reserved for Th.M. students only. Students majoring in Missions & Intercultural Studies will be required to take ISCL 897 Research Seminar, ISCL 879 Research Design, or one of the 891 Biblical research seminars in consultation with their advisor. A \$50 mentor fee will be required of all students participating in the Th.M. research seminar.

CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT OPTION

Senior Talbot M.Div. students who have completed 80 or more units and are accepted in the Th.M. program are permitted to take up to four units of Th.M. coursework in the last semester of the Master of Divinity program (additional Th.M. courses may be taken in interterm or summer session). These courses may not be credited toward the M.Div. degree and must meet all normal Th.M. standards. This option allows students who have only one or two courses remaining in their M.Div. program to start on their Th.M. program while finishing their M.Div.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

All candidates for the Th.M. degree must pass a written comprehensive examination over the major field of study. These examinations serve as a major means of evaluating the student's academic competency in the major area. Comprehensive examinations may be taken any time after completion of 18 units of Th.M. coursework. Only two retakes of the examination are permitted.

THESIS OPTION

Students who opt to write a thesis must produce an acceptable piece of research evidencing a high degree of scholarly competence in the student's major. Information regarding thesis form and submission deadlines is provided in the Th.M. Program Handbook and the "Thesis Information" section of the Talbot graduate student handbook. The original and two copies are to be presented to the library for binding.

Students who complete the thesis registration sequence (i.e. Thesis First Draft and Thesis Final Draft) without finishing the thesis must register for TTHE 899 Thesis Continuous Registration each semester until the thesis is completed in order to maintain degree status. Only one year following the completion of coursework is normally allowed for completion of a thesis. A student may go beyond this one year period only by advance permission of the Graduate Committee. Such permission is usually granted only in extreme circumstances.