

Master of Arts in Theology

Overview

It is virtually impossible to understand today's theological landscape apart from a firm grasp of the development of theology throughout history. Understanding where the Church has been serves as both a warning beacon and a guiding light for discourse about where the Church is currently heading theologically.

The MAT program is designed to give the student a broad background in the development of evangelical theology through history as well as a clear understanding of the biblical basis of an evangelical theology. The student is also challenged to apply theological understanding in practical ministry and to develop a theology that is both consistent with orthodoxy and relevant to contemporary society.

Intended audience

This course is designed for ministry professionals who desire a strong understanding of the theological underpinnings of evangelicalism in order to evaluate the current theological landscape. It is also suitable for laypeople who seek a greater understanding of the theological principles taught in Scripture and how those principles have been understood by the Church throughout history.

Core Courses Required (7 courses, 21 credits)

THEO 500	Introduction to Biblical Theology
THEO 501	Historical Theology
THEO 502	Systematic Theology
THEO 503	Systematic Theology II
THEO 504	Theology and Philosophy
THEO 505	Contemporary Theology
THEO 507	Wesleyanism: A Theology of Love

Elective Courses (Select 3 courses, 9 credits)

BIB 504	Hermeneutics
BIB 522	Introduction to Biblical Ethics
THEO 521	Theology of the Church Fathers
THEO 522	Theology of the Reformers
THEO 523	Dispensationalism versus Covenant Theology
THEO 524	Postmodernism and the Emergent Church I
THEO 525	Postmodernism and the Emergent Church II

Thesis (6 credits):

THEO 591	Research / Directed Readings
THEO 592	Thesis

Master of Arts in Systematic Theology

Overview

Much of the theological understanding of Christians today comes from popular books, television personalities, and their own "gut" feelings. We are quickly becoming a society that has no foundation for theological beliefs, where truth is relative and elusive. There is a tremendous need today for scholars who are learned in systematic theology,

people who can collect and synthesize all relevant biblical passages and communicate the truths expressed by the whole of the Word of God.

The MAST program is designed to help students study the Bible topically in a manner that is consistent with good scholarship and that challenges them to relate their teachings to today's Christian church. The program also includes some philosophical theology courses which aim to cultivate critical thinking and to help students realize the dangers of not looking to Scripture itself as the source of our theology. Students who complete this program will be able to logically develop theological positions from a careful and scholarly analysis of relevant Scripture passages.

Intended audience

This course is designed for ministry professionals who desire to use the whole counsel of the Word of God to formulate theological positions, without being overly influenced by the opinions of others or their own predispositions. It is also suitable for laypeople who seek a greater understanding of the theological principles taught in Scripture and how to correctly interpret them.

Core Courses Required (10 courses, 30 credits)

THEO 502	Systematic Theology I
THEO 503	Systematic Theology II
THEO 504	Theology and Philosophy
THEO 601	Advanced Evangelical Systematic Theology I
THEO 602	Advanced Evangelical Systematic Theology II
THEO 507	Wesleyanism: A Theology of Love
THEO 523	Dispensationalism versus Covenant Theology
THEO 621	Protestant Gnosticism
THEO 622	Christian Mysticism
BIB 504	Hermeneutics

Thesis (6 credits)

THEO 591	Research / Directed Readings
THEO 592	Thesis

Master of Arts in Historical Theology

Overview

Historical theology seeks to understand the evolution of theological understanding throughout history. Understanding the process of wrestling with theological positions and their ramifications enables us to approach our own development of theological positions with a view toward the future and the long-term benefits or consequences of our positions. It also makes us acutely aware of errors that have assaulted orthodox Christianity time and again through the centuries and which still threaten it today.

The MAHT program is designed to give the student a broad background in the development of evangelical theology through history as well as a clear understanding of the biblical basis of an evangelical theology. The student is also challenged to evaluate historical trends and developments in order to discern their application for today and to develop a theology that is both consistent with orthodoxy and relevant to contemporary society.

Intended audience

This course is designed for ministry professionals who desire a strong understanding of the theological underpinnings of evangelicalism in order to evaluate the current theological landscape. It is also suitable for laypeople who seek a greater understanding of the theological principles taught in Scripture and how those principles have been understood by the Church throughout history.

Core Courses Required (10 courses, 30 credits)

THEO 501	Historical Theology
THEO 603	Christian History to 950
THEO 604	Christian History, 950-1500
THEO 605	Christian History, 1500-1815
THEO 606	Christian History, 1815 to Present
THEO 620	Arminianism and Calvinism
THEO 623	An Analysis of Historical-Critical Theology
THEO 521	Theology of the Church Fathers
THEO 522	Theology of the Reformers
THEO 523	Dispensationalism versus Covenant Theology

Thesis (6 credits)

THEO 591	Research / Directed Readings
THEO 592	Thesis

Master of Arts in Contemporary Theology

Overview

Navigating the contemporary theological landscape today can be confusing and frustrating. And it can be even more difficult to lead Christians entrusted to our care to biblical theological positions. There is much in contemporary theology that is refreshing, and much that has dangerous ramifications if followed to logical conclusions. It is vital that we understand the general scope of today's varied pop theologies and that we are equipped with the tools to discern truth and error.

The MACT program is designed to give the student an overview of the historical development of contemporary theology as well as a clear understanding of the biblical basis of a truly evangelical theology. The student is challenged to critically assess contemporary theologies and to strategize ways to harness the gold while removing the dross.

Intended audience

This course is designed for ministry professionals who desire a strong understanding of the theological underpinnings of evangelicalism in order to evaluate the current theological landscape. It is valuable for those unfamiliar with contemporary theologies who want to be conversant with the theological language employed by the emergent church. It is also suitable for laypeople who seek a greater understanding of the theological principles taught in Scripture and how those principles have been understood by the Church throughout history.

Core Courses Required (10 Courses, 30 Credits)

THEO 500	Introduction to Biblical Theology
THEO 501	Historical Theology
THEO 505	Contemporary Theology
THEO 523	Dispensationalism versus Covenant Theology
THEO 524	Postmodernism and the Emergent Church I
THEO 525	Postmodernism and the Emergent Church II
THEO 621	Protestant Gnosticism
THEO 622	Christian Mysticism
THEO 507	Wesleyanism: A Theology of Love

BIB 522 Introduction to Biblical Ethics

Thesis (6 credits):

THEO 591	Research / Directed Readings
THEO 592	Thesis

Course Descriptions

BIB 504 Hermeneutics

The purpose of this course is to expose students to the basic principles of hermeneutics, enabling them to interpret Scripture passages with integrity in light of historical, social and literary context. The course also seeks to broaden students' understanding of the complexity of the interpretive process, hopefully inciting them to study more diligently and with humility to take more seriously the task to which they've been called.

BIB 522 Introduction to Biblical Ethics

Ours is an age where moral relativism has become the norm, even in many of our churches. The church today has very little impact on cultural social ethics. Its focus on love and grace can lead to antinomianism without a proper understanding of the use of Old Testament Law in the ethics of the New Testament as well as the necessary role of natural law in ethical decisions. This course seeks to give the student a broader understanding of the role of OT Law in the early church and the implications for public ethics. The course will also examine basic moral systems and how they affect the process of making ethical decisions. Students will be challenged to rethink their own views concerning personal and public ethics.

THEO 500 Introduction to Biblical Theology

This course will help students to understand the importance of developing a biblical theology as differentiated from systematic theology. By examining recent evangelical scholarship along with primary sources from the early church, students will evaluate principles for biblical interpretation that will have profound effects on both their personal formulation of theology and their transmission of theology to others through preaching and teaching.

THEO 501 Historical Theology

This course will guide students in an exploration of the major historical and philosophical trends that contributed to the development of theological positions. A careful study of theological terms and the thoughts of key theologians will give students a basis for evaluating the theological developments of each period in church history.

THEO 502 Systematic Theology I

This course will help expose students to the historical, cultural, philosophical and theological contributions to a biblical systematic theology. Students will be challenged to examine the Scriptures to formulate a theology that is true to the biblical text and relevant to contemporary culture. This course covers doctrines pertaining to God, to humanity and to sin.

THEO 503 Systematic Theology II

This course will help expose students to the historical, cultural, philosophical and theological contributions to a biblical systematic theology. Students will be challenged to examine the Scriptures to formulate a theology that is true to the biblical text and relevant to contemporary culture. This course covers doctrines pertaining to the person and work of Christ, the Holy Spirit, salvation, the church and last things.

THEO 504 Theology and Philosophy

This course will help students to understand how philosophy can “help clarify theological questions, debates, and issues and thereby demonstrate the existence, viability, and fecundity of a distinctively Christian approach to philosophy.” It is designed to challenge students to develop a Christian worldview that is coherent, rational and defensible from a philosophical perspective.

THEO 505 Contemporary Theology

In this course, students will examine the historical background and doctrinal tenets of contemporary theological trends and evaluate them from an evangelical viewpoint.

THEO 507 Wesleyanism: A Theology of Love

This course will take students on a journey into the heart and mind of John Wesley so they not only understand his theological presuppositions and conclusions, but that they also appreciate his genius and thoroughly biblical interpretations of holiness and sanctification. The course will challenge a Christianity that is in theory only and spur students on to a personal relationship with Christ that transforms experientially.

THEO 521 Theology of the Church Fathers

This course will explore “the genesis of Christian thought from the close of the apostolic age to the Council of Chalcedon in the fifth century — a time teeming with fresh and competing ideas.” Students will be exposed to the divergent and often conflicting views of the church fathers on the foundational doctrines of the Christian faith and will be challenged to understand the historical and philosophical influences on the development of orthodox views.

THEO 522 Theology of the Reformers

In this course, students will be exposed to the events of the 16th-century Reformation and Radical Reformation through the four men who had the greatest impact on these movements: Luther, Zwingli, Calvin and Menno Simons. Theological positions will be examined along with their implications for the church of the 16th century and for today.

THEO 523 Dispensationalism versus Covenant Theology

This course is designed to help students develop a sound hermeneutic concerning the relationship of the Old and New Testaments by comparing and contrasting two distinct methods of interpretation: dispensationalism and covenant theology. It will help students not only to look at “Israel” in historical perspective, but also to understand the role of “Israel” today and in the coming kingdom. The course also touches on matters of prophecy and millennialism.

THEO 524 Postmodernism and the Emergent Church I

This course will help students to understand the shifts in thinking and believing in the past few decades that have had broad implications for theology and ministry. Students will be challenged by various alternative responses to postmodernism and will critically evaluate them in order to develop a thoroughly Christian response.

THEO 525 Postmodernism and the Emergent Church II

This course will expose students to what the primary leaders in the emergent movement are saying and challenge them to evaluate their message in light of biblical teaching.

THEO 601 Advanced Evangelical Systematic Theology I

This course is designed to expose students to a variety of detailed theological discussions and to equip them to evaluate, synthesize and clearly communicate complex material to a lay audience. In the process of completing the

assignments for this course, students will create lessons suitable for publication in adult curriculum resources.

THEO 602 Advanced Evangelical Systematic Theology II

This course is a continuation of CBST 801. It is designed to expose students to a variety of detailed theological discussions and to equip them to evaluate, synthesize and clearly communicate complex material to a lay audience. In the process of completing the assignments for this course, students will create lessons suitable for publication in adult curriculum resources.

THEO 621 Protestant Gnosticism

This course seeks to clarify the distinction between gnosticism and historic Christianity and to identify evidence of the infiltration of gnostic teachings into mainstream Christianity today. The student will also explore the effects of Protestant gnosticism on ethical issues and will be challenged to find positive ways to restore health to our endangered Protestant churches.

THEO 622 Christian Mysticism

By tracing the influence and impact of mysticism on the development of John Wesley’s doctrine of holiness, students will be exposed to the teachings of the Roman Catholic mystics of the Counter Reformation and the mystical elements that can still be useful in Protestant Christianity as well as those elements that still pose danger. John Wesley’s grappling with mysticism and his ability to harness the gold and remove the dross serves as a powerful example for Christians today.

THEO 603 Christian History to 950

This course will examine Christian history prior to 950 in the context of human history as a whole. It will expose students to the broad trends and developments of the period and also to the specific events and people who contributed to the significant movements within Christianity. By noting especially the advances and losses in Christianity, the course will help students to evaluate current threats to the spread of Christianity and appropriate responses for today.

THEO 604 Christian History, 950-1500

This course will examine Christian history from 950 to 1500 in the context of human history as a whole. It will expose students to the broad trends and developments of the period and also to the specific events and people who contributed to the significant movements within Christianity. By noting especially the advances and losses in Christianity, the course will help students to evaluate current threats to the spread of Christianity and appropriate responses for today.

THEO 605 Christian History, 1500-1815

This course will examine Christian from 1500 to 1815 in the context of human history as a whole. It will expose students to the broad trends and developments of the period and also to the specific events and people who contributed to the significant movements within Christianity. By noting especially the advances and losses in Christianity, the course will help students to evaluate current threats to the spread of Christianity and appropriate responses for today.

THEO 606 Christian History, 1815-Present

This course will examine Christian from 1815 to the present in the context of human history as a whole. It will expose students to the broad trends and developments of the period and also to the specific events and people who contributed to the significant movements within Christianity. By noting especially the advances and losses in Christianity, the course will help students to evaluate current threats to the spread of Christianity and appropriate responses for today.