

Master of Theological Studies (MTS)

The general MTS program is designed for persons interested in studying the Christian faith primarily from an academic perspective. It is not the recommended degree for persons pursuing ordained ministry or chaplaincy but is appropriate for persons preparing for various kinds of teaching ministries.

The degree program grounds students in the content and major interpretive issues of the biblical texts and equips them with the knowledge and skills necessary to analyze the ways in which Christian history, Christian theology, and the wider culture interact with and influence one another. A total of 60 earned credit hours is required for the degree.

After completing the MTS, students should be able to:

- Summarize the historical and theological content of the various biblical books.
- Analyze a biblical text within its literary, historical, and cultural contexts.
- Discuss influential movements, persons, and events in the history of both Christian theology and the church accurately, insightfully, and critically.
- Explain the way history, culture, and Christian theology influence and shape one another.
- Evaluate scholarly proposals and interpretations critically.

Required Courses (27 hours)

- BST 103-104 Introduction to OT I and II (6 hours)
- BST 112-113 Introduction to NT I and II (6 hours)
- Exegesis Requirement*
- CHT 115 History of Christianity in a Global Context (3 hours)
- CHT 200 History of Christianity in the United States (3 hours)
- TSE 110-111 Systematic Theology I and II (6 hours)
- TSE 120 Christian Ethics (3 hours)

Besides the required courses listed above, students must also complete 33 hours of elective courses. MTS students are limited to 9 total elective course hours in Area IV with the exception of students seeking ordination as a Deacon in The United Methodist Church, who are permitted to take the Area IV courses that fulfill ordination course requirements. United Methodist students pursuing ordination as a Deacon should be sure to take the following courses, along with any others required by their conferences:

- TSE 101 Mission of the Church in the World (3 hrs)
- PTH 103 Worship/Preaching I (3 hrs.)
- PTH 150 History and Foundation of Christian Evangelism (3 hrs.)
- PTH 232: United Methodist History and Doctrine (3 hrs.)
- PTH 233: United Methodist History and Polity (3 hrs.)

* In addition to passing the four introductory classes, students must also fulfill an Exegesis requirement. Students may fulfill this requirement 1) by passing an OT or NT Exegesis Seminar with a grade of "C" or higher or 2) by writing an Exegesis Paper that meets certain minimum standards on a rubric developed by Biblical Studies faculty. Students will have the opportunity to fulfill this exegesis requirement in the required NT introductory sequence and in every OT class except BST 103 and BST 104.