

SCIENCE AND RELIGION, M.A.

Mission

The Master of Arts – Science and Religion degree (<https://www.biola.edu/degrees/g/science-and-religion-ma/>) is an academic degree designed to provide individuals with the essential background in theology, history, and philosophy necessary to integrate evangelical Christianity with modern science.

Program Description

The curriculum is designed for students who already have some background in the sciences; consequently, the course work emphasizes the critical tools from other disciplines that are necessary for providing the proper context and foundation for understanding and working comfortably with issues that relate to both Christianity and the sciences. Special seminars focus on current theological issues within specific scientific disciplines so that students will understand the contemporary dynamic and learn to integrate their thinking in a mentored setting. The program fosters in students a mature and informed Christian worldview from which to serve the Lord and to relate to secular colleagues in the sciences.

The entire MA degree can be completed online with no campus visits. However, some, but not all, of the courses in the program can be taken on campus as well. All students are encouraged to attend the one-week “Advanced Science and Religion Lectures in Residence” that takes place on campus during the summer as well as occasional weekend seminars on campus. These opportunities are designed to enhance personal engagement with faculty and fellow graduate students for deeper learning and ministry enhancement.

Some courses taken via distance learning have special course fees. CSSR 699 has a fee of \$100 per credit. Students are limited to 6 credits of independent study and/or arranged coursework in their degree program.

Learning Outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the Master of Arts – Science and Religion, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an intellectual foundation in the historical, philosophical and theological issues that are relevant to the natural sciences, particularly where these disciplines interface with religious worldviews (ULO 1).
2. Communicate arguments in defense of the compatibility of science and religion in a competent, winsome, and gracious manner, both orally and in writing (ULO 2).
3. Identify a discipline-specific topic from the natural sciences and analyze how it interfaces with religion (ULO 3).

Each Program Learning Outcome (PLO) listed above references at least one of the University Learning Outcomes (ULO 1, 2, 3), which may be found in the General Information section (<https://catalog.biola.edu/general-information/#UniversityLearningOutcomes>) of this catalog.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must have completed all bachelor’s degree requirements, with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, prior to the start of the program and must have a bachelor’s degree conferred from a regionally accredited institution prior to the start of the second term. Applicants who do not possess a Bachelor of Arts degree or its academic equivalent from an accredited institution may still apply and may be provisionally admitted at the discretion of Talbot School of Theology.

This degree should normally be in a natural science (physics, chemistry, biology or related field), engineering, mathematics, computer science; or in anthropology, psychology or related fields. Students with a bachelor’s degree in any field will be considered if their career or ministry path involves a strong scientific interest (e.g., science journalism, campus ministry).

Applicants must submit a brief written statement outlining their vocational objectives and how the degree might relate to those objectives.

Graduation Requirements

1. Satisfactorily complete at least 39 semester credits as outlined in the program requirements.
2. Maintain a 2.5 average with no grade below a C in all courses to be credited toward graduation.
3. Students are placed on academic probation if their grade point average for any semester falls below 2.5 and will remain on probation as long as the single semester or cumulative grade point average remains below 2.5. Probation students are granted one semester in which to bring their academic work up to the required level (2.5) for continuance in the program. A student cannot graduate while on probation.
4. Complete a minimum of 24 credits in the degree program at Biola University.
5. All degree components must be completed as graded courses except for CSSR 681 and 699.
6. Up to 15 credits of graduate credits may be transferred into the program for classes deemed comparable. Advanced standing credits may be granted on the basis of comparable undergraduate courses with grades of B or better. Consult admissions counselor for more information.
7. Complete the entire program in no more than seven years.
8. Meet with department academic advisor and graduate academic records and degree specialist in the Office of the Registrar one year prior to graduation to declare intent to graduate. (See the Graduate Graduation Application section (<https://catalog.biola.edu/academic-policies/graduation-and-degree-conferral/graduate/#GraduateGraduationApplication>).

Program Requirements

Curriculum Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
Program Courses		
Science and Religion Core		
CSSR 529	Historical Perspectives in Science and Religion	2
CSSR 530	Darwin, Evolution, and Design	2
CSSR 631	Modern Physics, Cosmology, and Design	2
CSSR 651	Intelligent Design Seminar	2
Religious Studies Core		
CSSR 510	Research Methodologies	1
CSSR 516	Authority of Scriptural Traditions	2
CSSR 519	Old Testament/Hebrew Literature	3
CSSR 520	New Testament Literature	3
CSSR 541	Christian Thought I	2
CSSR 542	Christian Thought II	3
CSSR 638	Psychology of Belief I	2
CSSR 639	Psychology of Belief II	1
Philosophy Overview¹		
CSSR 540	Metaphysics and Epistemology	3
CSSR 547	Philosophy and Theology of Science	3
Elective Courses (see Department for advising and approval of elective courses)		8
Total Credits		39

¹ Students who already have a strong background in philosophy may, with advisor approval, take additional approved electives in place of the required credits.