

SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND SOUL CARE, M.A.S.F.S.C.

Mission

The mission of the Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Soul Care (<https://www.biola.edu/degrees/g/spiritual-formation-and-soul-care-ma/>) is to train servant leaders to know themselves honestly and openly before God and one another in Truth, to cultivate intimacy with, growth in and obedience to Christ and to help mend souls by the loving power of the Spirit and Word with believers of various cultural backgrounds.

Program Description

The Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Soul Care is designed as a personal growth, academic and professional program for specialized ministry. It is an intensive, integrative program within the Institute for Spiritual Formation at Talbot School of Theology, developed to equip men and women for the ministry of discipleship, spiritual direction, formation and soul care in the local church and for further academic training in Spiritual Formation.

The program is shaped around promoting growth in the believer's inner life of faith and prayer with God in the context of a shared community and developed knowledge-base in the Word, spiritual formation and soul care. It focuses specifically on ways to deepen one's knowledge and openness to God and His work as well as understanding of one's self and others in order to grow toward conformity of character and inner life in the image of Christ. In turn, it trains leaders in soul care to be spiritual mentors, directors and teachers who will assist others in their journey of growth in Christ and His body. In order to accomplish this, the program has a substantial emphasis on understanding the dynamics of the Indwelling Holy Spirit as they interface human personality and relational dynamics. These integrative endeavors are enhanced by the Institute's diverse University-wide faculty which draws particularly upon Rosemead School of Psychology and Talbot School of Theology, bringing a wide range of expertise and experience to bear upon the process of human spiritual growth and soul care.

Because the program is experiential, theoretical and mentoring in nature, the Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Soul Care is fashioned along the lines of an Apprentice Training Model.

The Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Soul Care is intended to help prepare students for professional and lay ministry as associate pastor and teacher of adult ministries, spiritual director, teacher, mentor, leader in discipleship as well as preparation for further education and training in Spiritual Formation to teach in Christian university and seminary contexts.

Learning Outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation and Soul Care, students will be able to:

1. Explain the major doctrines of Christianity, including their biblical basis, historical development, and contemporary relevance, and

assess non-evangelical doctrines from an evangelical perspective (ULO 1).

2.
 - a. Explain the basic elements of Spiritual Theology, namely, the nature, process, and practices of spiritual growth (ULO 1).
 - b. Demonstrate how knowledge of self integrates with knowledge of God in one's own life (ULO 2).
 - c. Demonstrate relational skills that develop community (ULO 3).
 - d. Articulate how the biblical teaching on vocation shapes one's own understanding of vocation and gainful employment (ULO 1, 2, 3).
3. Demonstrate competence in providing spiritual direction to others (ULO 2, 3).
4. Assess the situations in which one should refer a directee to psychological care (ULO 3).
5. Articulate the cultural and social dynamics involved in the ministry of spiritual direction (ULO 1, 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

Admission Requirements

Applicants must possess a baccalaureate degree. Each should be a graduate from an accredited institution with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale). 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.

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

For special admission deadlines and requirements, contact Graduate Admissions. Due to the unique nature of this program, all applicants will be personally interviewed.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation Requirements

1. Satisfactorily complete 56 semester credits as outlined in the curriculum. This also includes co-curricular requirements.
2. All TTSF courses must be completed in residency at Biola. Advanced Standing and transfer credit are not considered residency credits.
3. Complete the online introduction to theological research methodologies by the end of the second semester.
4. Obtain a 3.0 average with no grade below a C- in all courses to be credited toward graduation.
5. Complete the entire program in no more than five years.
6. Meet with a 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

² Institute for Spiritual Formation (ISF) (<https://www.biola.edu/talbot/academics/isf/>)

Code	Title	Credits
Program Courses		
TTBE 519	Old Testament Survey	3
TTBE 520	New Testament Survey	3
TTSF 517	Hermeneutics and the Word in Spiritual Formation	3
TTSF 521	Introduction to Christian Spirituality and Prayer	3
TTSF 524	History and Theory of Christian Soul Care and Direction	3
TTSF 531	History and Traditions of Christian Spirituality	2
TTSF 532	Developmental Spirituality and Contemplative Prayer	3
TTSF 543	Personal Foundations of Spirituality and Retreat	3
TTSF 544	Personality Development and Psychopathology	3
TTSF 577	Soul Care Pre-practicum I and Professional Ethics	3
TTSF 578	Soul Care Pre-practicum II and Professional Referral	3
TTSF 642	Spiritual Disciplines Seminar	2
TTSF 645	Christian Virtue and the Spiritual Disciplines	3
TTSF 670	Intensive Journey Inward and Retreat ¹	4
TTSF 677	Soul Care Practicum I	2
TTSF 678	Soul Care Practicum II	2
TTSF 701	Spiritual Formation Seminar	2
TTTH 521	Theology I: God, Scripture, Creation	3
TTTH 522	Theology II: Christ, Humanity, Sin, Salvation	3
TTTH 623	Theology III: Spirit, Church, Last Things	3
Co-Curricular Requirements		
Contact the Institute for Spiritual Formation (ISF) for a full description of these requirements. ²		
Didactic Therapy		
Faculty-Student Retreats		
Personal Retreats		
Student Progress Assessment		
TTSF 585	Personal Spiritual Direction (must be taken every term of enrollment)	
Total Credits		56

¹ Must be taken twice for a total of 4 credits to meet program requirements. It may be taken for a minimum of 1 credit and a maximum of 3 credits.