

MASTER OF DIVINITY (SPIRITUAL FORMATION)

Mission

The mission of the Master of Divinity degree program is to equip servant leaders for making disciples worldwide by developing in them an accurate knowledge of the Word of God, the skills necessary to communicate the Gospel effectively, and character worthy of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ for the leading of the church.

Spiritual Formation (<https://www.biola.edu/degrees/g/spiritual-formation-mdiv/>) Specialization Mission

Provides preparation for ministries of spiritual formation, soul care, spiritual direction, and preaching to churches and parachurch organizations.

Program Description

The Master of Divinity curriculum at Talbot School of Theology is designed to foster the purpose for which the seminary was established — education for the propagation of the faith. This purpose entails an accurate knowledge of the Word of God — the source of faith and the effective means of its communication. The course of study is therefore designed around these two basic foci.

Believing firmly that God in love and grace has provided an answer for the needs of the world in Jesus Christ, and that this Jesus is the Christ of the Scriptures, Talbot emphasizes a knowledge of the content of the Word of God. In order that the Word may be known and expounded accurately and authoritatively, matters of biblical background, including the languages of the Old and New Testaments, are studied. Sound principles of literary interpretation are also explored as a basis for the interpretation of the Scriptures. On the basis of such interpretation there comes systematic study so as to organize various parts of the Word into theological categories.

Since the faith of today does not stand alone but is rooted in past centuries during which God has preserved and instructed His people, cognizance of this heritage is taken in a study of the history of the Church and its doctrine. Previous interaction between faith and the world provides a basis for understanding modern times.

It is the seminary's aim that this knowledge of the faith first grip the life of the student and then motivate the student to share it with the world. In accord with this latter aim instruction is given in vital areas of ministry and communication. From the preparation and delivery of sermons to individual involvement in counseling, the curriculum is designed to provide instruction that will facilitate propagation of the faith in the various fields of God's call. Opportunity is also given for the development of ministry skills as principles are applied in the context of ministry in the Church.

With recognition that the Great Commission commands the Church to go into the world to minister to all peoples, the cross-currents of modern thought are considered relevant to the preparation of God's minister. Throughout the course of instruction, interaction is provided with various perspectives for the purpose of inculcating their contributions and understanding their divergences. All the while they are measured by the pattern of the Word.

Talbot's program focuses on the entire person and is meant to contribute to personal spiritual formation as well as cognitive awareness and the development of ministry skills. The curriculum is structured to develop sustainable habits that can be continued in life and ministry after graduation. The various components of the curriculum are designed to complement one another and to reinforce basic principles to which students have been exposed in other parts of their seminary program. A goal of the program is to equip students to think biblically and to respond appropriately to the variety of challenges of life and ministry.

Learning Outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the Master of Divinity, students will be able to:

1. Identify the basic contents of all books of the Old and New Testaments and the broad historical and cultural background information relevant to the study of the Old and New Testaments (ULO 1).
2. Exegete and apply a biblical text properly through application of historical-grammatical hermeneutics (ULO 3).
3. Explain the major doctrines of Christianity, including their biblical basis, historical development, and contemporary relevance (ULO 1).
4.
 - 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).
5. Prepare and present sermons demonstrating biblical accuracy, oral clarity and contemporary relevance (ULO 3).
6. Students will demonstrate ministry skills in areas such as evangelism, administration, teaching, counseling, and worship (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.

Spiritual Formation Specialization Learning Outcomes

Provides preparation for ministries of spiritual formation, soul care, spiritual direction, and preaching to churches and parachurch organizations.

As a result of this program, the student will:

1. Demonstrate competence in providing spiritual direction to others (ULO 2, 3).
2. Demonstrate understanding of how to integrate spiritual formation into preaching (ULO 1, 3).

In the M.Div. Spiritual Formation specialization, students will develop the PLO having to do with spiritual formation (M.Div. PLO #4) to a higher level of mastery.

Admission Requirements

Admission Requirements

All applicants must hold the Bachelor of Arts degree, or its academic equivalent, with a 2.6 (on a 4.0 scale) grade point average. 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. Additionally, applicants should have completed an accredited course in Old Testament survey and in New Testament survey prior to matriculation. To meet the prerequisite, students must have received a C or higher in approved undergraduate or graduate survey courses from a regionally accredited institution. If the prerequisite courses are not completed prior to matriculation, the student is required to take TTBE 519 and TTBE 520 during their program.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation Requirements

1. Satisfactorily complete 79 semester credits.
2. Take the courses prescribed in the Master of Divinity curriculum.
3. Complete the requirements in the specialization below, including co-curricular requirements.
4. Students without previous courses in Old Testament Survey and New Testament Survey must take TTBE 519 and TTBE 520 in addition to the standard curriculum.
5. Complete the online introduction to theological research and writing by the end of the second semester.
6. At least 50% of the total credits required for the degree program must be completed at this seminary, calculated prior to applying any advanced standing or transfer credit.
7. The M.Div. program can be completed in three years, and should be completed in no more than eight years.
8. Obtain a 2.5 average with no grade below a D- in all courses to be credited toward graduation.
9. Meet with 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

Specialization Requirements

Changes of specialization may be authorized under certain circumstances prior to the completion of 40 credits, but are discouraged after that point.

Advanced Standing

Applicants who have taken undergraduate courses in biblical or theological studies may request advanced standing based on collegiate work. See Talbot Admissions Requirements for details.

Biblical Languages Requirement

Two biblical languages are required: Greek and Hebrew.

Greek

The courses listed below are required. Qualifying examinations to test out of TTNT 501 or TTNT 502 are available to all interested students. Depending on exam results, a student may enroll directly into TTNT 502 or TTNT 503. For any language courses waived by a qualifying examination, the student should take an equal number of credits in the New Testament department (3 or 6).

Code	Title	Credits
TTNT 501	Beginning Greek I	3
TTNT 502	Beginning Greek II	3
TTNT 503	Introduction to Exegesis	3
TTNT 604 or TTNT 605	Exegesis in the Gospels Exegesis in the Epistles	3

Hebrew

The courses listed below are required. Qualifying examinations to test out of TTOT 603 or TTOT 604 are available to all interested students. Depending on exam results, a student may enroll directly into TTOT 604 or TTOT 703. For any language courses waived by the qualifying examination, the student should take an equal number of credits in the Old Testament department (3 or 6).

Code	Title	Credits
TTOT 603	Elements of Hebrew I	3
TTOT 604	Elements of Hebrew II	3
TTOT 703	Introduction to Hebrew Exegesis	3
TTOT 722	Hebrew Exegesis	2

Curriculum Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
Prerequisite Courses		
TTBE 519	Old Testament Survey	
TTBE 520	New Testament Survey	
Program Courses		
Students enrolling in the Spiritual Formation specialization will take the following program courses and co-curricular requirements. All TTSF courses must be taken in-residence.		
TTSF 517 or TTBE 517	Hermeneutics and the Word in Spiritual Formation Hermeneutics and Bible Study Methods	3
TTHT 505 or TTHT 506 or TTHT 514	Patristic and Medieval Theology Reformation and Modern Theology Historical Theology Survey	3
TTNT 501	Beginning Greek I	3
TTNT 502	Beginning Greek II	3
TTNT 503	Introduction to Exegesis	3
TTNT 604 or TTNT 605	Exegesis in the Gospels Exegesis in the Epistles	3
TTOT 603	Elements of Hebrew I	3
TTOT 604	Elements of Hebrew II	3
TTOT 703	Introduction to Hebrew Exegesis	3
TTOT 722	Hebrew Exegesis	2
TTPT 609	Expository Preaching ¹	3

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

¹ TTSF 602 to be taken with TTPT 609.

² TTSF 670 to be taken twice for 1 credit each time.

³ A 2-credit TTPT elective may be taken in place of TTSF 678.

⁴ Institute for Spiritual Formation (ISF) (<https://www.biola.edu/talbot/academics/isf/>).

Spiritual Formation Specialization Courses

TTPT 602	Pastoral Ministry	3
TTSF 521	Introduction to Christian Spirituality and Prayer	2
TTSF 524	History and Theory of Christian Soul Care and Direction	2
TTSF 531	History and Traditions of Christian Spirituality (or TTSF elective course)	2
TTSF 532	Developmental Spirituality and Contemplative Prayer	2
TTSF 543	Personal Foundations of Spirituality and Retreat	2
TTSF 544	Personality Development and Psychopathology	3
TTSF 577	Soul Care Pre-practicum I and Professional Ethics	2
TTSF 578	Soul Care Pre-practicum II and Professional Referral	3
TTSF 602	Prayer and Formation in Expository Preaching ¹	1
TTSF 645	Christian Virtue and the Spiritual Disciplines	2
TTSF 670	Intensive Journey Inward and Retreat ²	2
TTSF 677 or TTPT 791	Soul Care Practicum I Field Apprenticeship IV	2
TTSF 678	Soul Care Practicum II ³	2

Select two of the following: 6

ISCL 555	Introduction to World Missions	
TTPH 602	Apologetics	
TTPT 510	Evangelism and Disciple-Making Strategies	
TTPT 608	Developing Strategic Church Ministries	
TTPT 703	The Church and Society	

Elective Courses

TTSF elective courses	2
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Co-Curricular Requirements

Contact the Institute for Spiritual Formation (ISF) for a full description of these requirements. ⁴

Didactic Therapy

Faculty-Student Retreats

Personal Retreats

Student Progress Assessment

TTSF 585 Personal Spiritual Direction (must be taken every term of enrollment)

Total Credits 79