MASTER OF ARTS IN THEOLOGICAL STUDIES (MATS)

The sixty credit hour MATS (plus two credit hours of field education) is designed for those whose primary focus is graduate theological studies rather than ministerial studies. Both thesis and non-thesis options are available. Two one credit field education modules are required—the Cultural Competency Module and Vocational Excellence. Learning outcomes for the MATS include the following:

- Interpret Scripture with historical and theological integrity for diverse communities and contexts.
- Interpret the Christian historical and theological tradition for appropriation in the life and mission of the church.
- Demonstrate research competency including analyzing sources, building bibliographies, constructing arguments, and other skills appropriate to area of concentration.
- Embody a vocational identity that incorporates one's gifts in scholarship.
- Demonstrate master's level expertise within an area of major concentration.
- Communicate effectively through spoken and written media, engaging in critical, respectful dialogue with others.
- Engage diversity and exhibit growth towards inter-cultural competence reflective of God's global redemptive work.

Degree Requirements

The Master of Arts in Theological Studies degree is awarded to students meeting the following requirements:

- 1. Completion of a Bible exam and a psychological evaluation; successful completion of End of Studies evaluation.
- 2. The completion of 60 semester hours of academic course work, plus 2 field education credit hours.
- 3. A grade point average of 2.5 must be maintained. No grade under C- shall be counted toward the degree.
- 4. The completion of a declared area of concentration with a minimum of nine semester hours beyond the core requirement.
- 5. The successful completion of comprehensive exams or, a thesis with an oral defense completed in the final semester of studies.
- 6. No outstanding incomplete grades later than week seven of the term in which they plan to graduate.
- 7. Complete payment of all accounts and fees to the Seminary.
- 8. Completion of the degree within seven (7) years from the time of matriculation.

Field of Concentration

MATS students declare a field of major concentration by the beginning of the second semester. Fields of concentration include Old Testament, New Testament, Church History, Theology/Ethics, and Cross-Cultural Ministry. Students may petition the Academic Cabinet for permission to declare a field of concentration not listed. The student fulfills the concentration requirement by taking nine hours in the chosen field. Required core classes may not count toward the nine-hour concentration.

Concentration in Old Testament Language Requirement

This field of concentration requires working knowledge of biblical Hebrew. Students may demonstrate adequate proficiency in Hebrew by completing six semester hours of Hebrew at NPTS, or by passing a language proficiency exam administered by the biblical faculty. Language

requirements are prerequisite to the 60-hour MATS. A student needing Hebrew is strongly encouraged to take the summer Hebrew intensive.

Concentration in New Testament Language Requirement

This field of concentration requires working knowledge of biblical Greek. Students may demonstrate adequate proficiency in Greek by completing 6 semester hours of Greek at NPTS, or by passing a language proficiency exam administered by the biblical faculty. Language requirements are prerequisite to the 60-hour MATS. A student needing Greek is strongly encouraged to take the summer Greek intensive. All MATS students concentrating in New Testament must also complete New Testament Greek Exegesis.

MATS with Thesis

Students typically choose to complete the MATS degree by writing a major thesis. During the second year of studies, students register for three credit hours of thesis research each semester through the Seminary Academic Services Office. Students are charged the Thesis/ Comprehensive Exam Fee at registration. The topic of the thesis must relate to the student's field of major concentration. The topic is chosen in consultation with the director of the MATS degree program, who then assigns a thesis advisor to the MATS student. The thesis must be submitted by the beginning of the eighth week of the final semester. An oral defense of the thesis before a faculty committee must occur no later than week twelve of the final semester. Full thesis guidelines will be distributed by the director of the MATS degree program. Successful defense of the thesis is required for completion of the MATS with thesis option. The grading scale for theses is high pass, pass, or fail. Students are invited, though not required, to participate in a campus-wide event in which they may present their thesis work to the community.

MATS without Thesis

Students may choose to complete the MATS degree without a thesis. In this case, a comprehensive examination in four parts will be given no later than week eight of the final semester of study. Students will register for THEO 7495 and will be charged the Thesis/Comprehensive Exam Fee.

Bible 12 credit hours

BIBL 5150 Interpreting the New Testament I BIBL 5151 Interpreting the New Testament II

BIBL 6120 Interpreting the Old Testament I

BIBL 6121 Interpreting the Old Testament II

History 6 credit hours HSTY 5200 Christian Heritage I: The Early and Medieval Church HSTY 5201 Christian Heritage II: The Reformation and Modern Church

Theology 15 credit hours

THEO 5102 Research Methods THEO 6330 Christian Theology

THEO 7203 Christian Worship

THEO 7220 Christian Ethics THEO 7350 Doctrinal Topic

Spiritual Formation 3 credit hours

SPFM 5201 Spiritual Journey SPFM 5202 Spiritual Practices SPFM Elective

Communication Skills Area

3 credit hours

Student selects one course from the following:

BIBL 6220 Biblical Preaching

MNST 5212 Introduction to Preaching

MNST 6264 Communicating the Faith in the Contemporary World

MNST 7316 Advanced Preaching

On occasion, a 7190 Topics course which is not offered on a regular basis will fulfill an area requirement.

Church and World Area

3 credit hours

Student selects one course from the following:

BIBL 6290 Ethnic American Biblical Interpretation

MNST 5156 Mission and Ministry in Latin America

MNST 5157 Mission and Ministry in Asia

MNST 5158 Mission and Ministry in Africa

MNST 5175 Global Partnership: Practicing Biblical Koinonia

MNST 6127 Pastoral Care and Counseling in Urban Contexts

MNST 6150 Pastoring the Missional Church

MNST 6151 Cultural Dimensions of Mission

MNST 6224 Pastoral Care and Community Justice

MNST 6264 Communicating the Faith in the Contemporary World

MNST 6277 Religions and Cultures

MNST 6401 Sankofa: Racial Righteousness and Reconciliation

MNST 7140 God's Global Vision: Biblical Foundations of Mission

On occasion, a 7190 Topics course which is not offered on a regular basis will fulfill an area requirement.

Interdisciplinary Core Elective 3 credit hours Students may select any three credit elective course which satisfies one of the following requirements: (i) is jointly taught by at least two professors in separate fields of study, OR (ii) has at least 30% of the teaching provided by a professor from a separate field of study from that of the instructor of record, OR (iii) has more than 30% of required reading from a separate field of study from that of the instructor of record. Enrollment in BIBL 6262 in conjunction with the North Park Symposium on the Theological Interpretation of Scripture may fulfill this requirement. Students may also select from:

BIBL 6263 Biblical Perspectives on Health and Healing

BIBL 6280 Women, the Bible, and the Church

BIBL 6290 Ethnic American Biblical Interpretation

BIBL 7190 The Gospel: Its Understanding, Appropriation, & Application

BIBL/MNST 6220 Biblical Preaching

CEDF 7190 Incorporating Children in Worship

HSTY 7310 Wilderness and Faith

MNST 5131 Spiritual Issues in Chronic Illness and Disability

MNST 6301 Religion, Spirituality, and Health

MNST 7140 God's Global Vision: Biblical Foundations of Mission

THEO 6332 Thought of Wendell Berry

Concentration Electives 9 credit hours

Thesis or Electives 6 credit hours

Students who chose not to complete a thesis must register for and pass a comprehensive exam in addition to elective credit.

Total Credit Hours for the Degree

60 credit hours

Students are recommended for graduation when all requirements are fulfilled for the degree.

Field Education

The experiences designated as field education will be awarded two (2) credit hours in addition to the sixty (60) credit hours required for the MATS degree.

FLDC 5300 Vocational Excellence

1 credit hour toward field education requirements

FLDC 7315 Cultural Competency Module

1 credit hour toward field education requirements

The following is a recommended sequence of courses:

	Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
Year One: Fall Semester			
	BIBL 5150	Interpreting the New Testament I	3
	THEO 5102	Research Methods	3
	HSTY 5200	Christian Heritage I	3
	SPFM 5201	Spiritual Journey	1
	MNST ****	Church and World Area	3
		Total	13
Year One: Spring Semester			
	BIBL 6120	Interpreting the Old Testament I	3
	HSTY 5201	Christian Heritage II	3
	SPFM 5202	Spiritual Practices	1
		Interdisciplinary Core Elective	3
		Concentration Elective	3
		Communication Skills Area	3
		Total	16
Year Two: Fall Semester			
	BIBL 6121	Interpreting the Old Testament II	3
	THEO 6330	Christian Theology	3
	THEO 7203	Christian Worship	3
	SPFM ****	Spiritual Formation Elective	1
		Elective or Thesis I	3
		Concentration Elective	3
		Total	16
Year Two: Spring Semester			
	BIBL 5151	Interpreting the New Testament II	3
	THEO 7220	Christian Ethics	3
	THEO 7350	Doctrinal Topic	3
		Concentration Elective	3
		Elective or Thesis II	
		Total	15
		Total Academic Credit Hours	60
		Plus Field Education: 2 Credit Hours	