

M.A. in Theology Program Handbook



Welcome to the MA in Theology Program

The MA program provides students with a distinctively theological education. The 36 credits of coursework can be pursued through a combination of residential and online courses, through one of two tracks: Hybrid Online Learning or Hybrid Residential Learning. Students graduate from our Program prepared to be effective theological resources for any number of publics, including parishes and schools. This handbook provides information helpful to finding your way through the Program.

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Part 1: Academic Policies

1.1. ENROLLMENT

All students must complete the ND Roll Call process through InsideND each semester. ND Roll Call opens a few days before each semester and ends at midnight on the last day for all class changes.

1.1.1 FULL-TIME / PART-TIME

Students who are enrolled for at least 1 credit during the Summer Term are considered full-time students in the MA in Theology program. During the Fall Term and Spring Term only students who are registered for 9 credits are considered full-time, all students registered for less than 9 credits are considered part-time students.

1.1.2 REQUESTING A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

If a student wishes to take a semester off, the student must contact the program director before the semester in which they would like to take a leave of absence. Leave of Absence Forms must be submitted before the following academic term begins. A student cannot take a Leave of Absence for more than two consecutive semesters. A leave can be granted for the following reasons: Study, Athletic Training, Military, Mission Work, Medical, and Personal. If a student plans to take more than two terms off or is unsure of when they will be returning to the program, they are required to complete a Separation Form located on the Registrar's web-page.

1.1.3 DROPPING A COURSE AND WITHDRAWAL

During the Summer Term there are 2 drop deadlines per course. The first drop deadline is the refund deadline when a student's course is removed at no charge to their student account. This first deadline is on the 2nd day of class during Summer Session. After the second drop deadline the student will have a "W" on their transcript, and no refund will be given. During the Fall and Spring Terms students may register for courses through the 6th class day at the beginning of each semester. If students need to drop a course after the 6th class day during the Academic Year a pro-rated refund will be given until the Monday after Fall/Spring Break. Please contact the Program Director for approval and the Administrative Assistant for procedures. A "W" will appear on the transcript if the course is dropped after the Friday following the Fall or Spring break of that semester.

1.1.4 SEPARATION FROM THE UNIVERSITY

When you drop the last course you are enrolled in during any given term you will need to complete a Separation form. You can later be readmitted when you decide to enroll in a future term.

1.1.5 TRANSFER CREDITS

Transfer of credits works differently for different situations within the MA Program. For each situation, however, there is a uniform set of rules: the course cannot be older than 5 years and the

grade must be above a B-. A student wishing to transfer credit from non-degree status at Notre Dame to degree-seeking status at Notre Dame, may transfer up to 12 credits. This is the only instance in which the grades received affect the student's GPA. A student who has completed another Master's program may transfer as many as 9 credits from that degree program. These do not affect the GPA hours. Finally, 6 credits may be transferred from an incomplete degree program, with the exception of credits that were acquired to meet any pre-requisites.

1.2. EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

1.2.1 GRADES

Good Academic Standing within the Graduate School is a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

With permission Grades of C- and D are awarded in the Graduate School and are used to calculate both semester and cumulative G.P.A.; however, they will not be accepted for completion of graduate degree requirements, specific required coursework, and/or total credit hours for completion of coursework. If a student receives lower than a grade of C in a required course, he or she must either retake the same course or its equivalent as determined by the program.

The grades of S and U (Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory) are used in courses without semester credit hours, as well as in research courses, departmental seminars, colloquia, workshops, directed studies, field education, and skills courses. An S grade factors into a student's earned semester credit hours but does not factor into the computation of the G.P.A. No credit is given for a grade of U.

The grade of V (Auditor) does not have quality-points associated with it. It is the only grade available to the registered auditor.

The grade of W (discontinued with permission) is given for a course that a student is allowed to drop after the last date for course discontinuance. Approval of the grade of W is granted by the associate dean of students in the Graduate School or other authorized officer.

1.2.2 INCOMPLETES

A grade of "Incomplete" (I) should be given only in exceptional circumstances and only for compelling reasons. When a student receives a grade of (I) he or she has up to 30 days from when grades were due (for the semester in which the (I) was given) to complete the coursework. If the coursework is not completed by this date, the grade of I will be changed permanently to a grade of F. Extensions for Incompletes require formal approval from the associate dean of students in the Graduate School.

1.3. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any student who is found in violation of integrity in research and/or scholarship can be dismissed from the University. The appeal procedure for academic integrity can be found at <http://graduateschool.nd.edu>. Plagiarism is a form of misconduct. A person's words and ideas are his or her own; they belong to the individual and should be considered the individual's property. Those who appropriate the words and/or ideas of another, and who attempt to present them as

their own without proper acknowledgement of the source, whether intentional or not, are committing plagiarism or intellectual theft. It is assumed that all work submitted by a student represents the student's own ideas and work. Verbatim copying, paraphrasing, adapting or summarizing the work of another, regardless of the source – whether books, journals, periodicals, websites, or other forms of media – must be properly cited.

1.3.1 GENERATIVE AI

The use of generative AI is not allowed within the MA Program. In rare instances, a faculty member may choose to allow the use of AI in their course. When, and only when this happens, the student will adhere to the particular instructions given by that faculty member for the use of AI in their course, and that course only. Remember, as above, that representing work that you did not produce as your own, including work generated or materially modified by AI, constitutes academic dishonesty. Thus, the use of generative AI in a way that violates a particular instructor's articulated policy, or using it to complete coursework in a way not expressly permitted by the faculty member, will be considered a violation of academic integrity. The process for handling violations can be found in the latest [Graduate Bulletin of Information](#) (pp. 29-30).

Part 2: Degree Requirements

The M.A. degree in Theology requires 36 credits for graduation. Students have up to 5 years to complete the degree.

2.1. COURSEWORK

Coursework is split between required courses and electives. There are 5 required core courses: Theology of Revelation, Trinity & Christology, Catholic Sacraments, Ecclesiology, and Fundamentals of Moral Theology. The only other required course is the Capstone, to be taken as a student's final course in the Program. Beyond these 6 courses, students are welcome to take elective courses. Any student believing they have reason to pass out of a required core course is invited to talk with the Program Director.

2.1.1 SPECIAL STUDIES / DIRECTED READINGS

Students who are interested in a particular topic can talk with a professor about taking a special studies or directed readings course. These count as elective courses. No more than 2 directed readings can be taken during a student's coursework in the program.

2.1.2 CAPSTONE COURSE

The capstone course is the final requirement for the MA degree and is intended to give students the opportunity to show the extent to which they have attained the goals of the degree. A capstone course, then, is the cumulative result of the students' study over the course of the degree program. The capstone course will require students to demonstrate the degree to which

they have mastered the Program's goals. This is done in two stages: one that is on-line, and the second in residence here at Notre Dame.

The student's ability to synthesize and present theological material will be shown through an academic paper. Each paper will give a detailed perspective on the student's chosen topic, approximately twenty pages in length. The Papers are presented in residence on campus in a twenty to twenty-five minute oral presentation, followed by a ten to fifteen minute Q/A period. In addition to the paper and its presentation, the student will develop a fitting practical material.

2.1.3 AUDITS

According to the University Academic Code, only graduate students are allowed to audit a class. Audits are designated by a grade of 'V' on the transcript. (Graduate Academic Code, Section 4.3). The grade of 'V' has neither quality-point or credit-hour value. The audit must be requested before the sixth class day of the Fall/Spring semester, or the 2nd day of class in the summer; the auditor should attend the course throughout the entire semester, and it is made part of his or her permanent record. The grade of 'V' cannot be changed to a credit-earning grade.

Online courses can only be audited with the permission of the instructor.

2.2. RESIDENCY

Residency is defined by the Graduate School as a student's first full summer in the Program. A "full summer" is defined by at least one credit hour of coursework.

A student in the MA's Hybrid Residential track will fulfill this residency requirement during their first summer of study, as they will be on campus for coursework and have at least 3 credit hours.

A student in the MA's Hybrid Online track will also fulfill this residency requirement during their first summer of study, as they will be on campus for a 3-credit Symposium course. Students in the Hybrid Online track are required to take two different Symposia courses during their time in the MA Program. The Capstone is also hybrid.