

Master of Arts in Christian Studies

Akamai University

Approved: 17 January 2020



This graduate program in Christian Studies is intended to build up clergy, potential clerical candidates, laypersons for service and all others. Our Lord Jesus said, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few...” so we offer this program to further the capability to serve our Lord and Savior. This program will build the necessary basis for development as a person in church service, lay ministry, education, non-profit ministry or anyone desiring a deeper knowledge of Christianity.

This program supports the concept of a life-long learner possessing a deep interest to understand the Bible, theology and Christianity. This program requires completion of a bachelor’s degree in any discipline to receive admission to the program.

Remember, whether you’re a full-time minister, bi-vocational minister, chaplain, missionary, involved in a non-profit, lay person or just desire further biblical study we welcome you to this program. As Christians, we follow the scriptures stated in 2 Timothy 2:15 “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” Come join us on your journey!

Program Audience

The program is designed for individuals concerned with the public interest with an international perspective. Our students may include a full-time minister, bi-vocational minister, chaplain, missionary, involved in a non-profit, lay person, human service workers, educators, public administrators, governmental representatives, military officers and those who will serve the international community. It is also appropriate for peace activists, diplomats and community organizers for peace initiatives, economic development, literacy and wellness. diplomacy, and international relations.

Entry Requirements

As prerequisites for acceptance to the Master of Arts in Christian Studies, participants should have completed the equivalent of a recognized baccalaureate degree in an appropriate field of study and several years of meaningful experience with fields that inform studies in Christian studies, ministry or Christian missions. Participants are expected to be proficient in collegiate English language skills. Those that are second language English applicants should submit records of TOEFL examination with scores of 550 minimum or proof of prior college study in

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the English language. Participants must have access to a computer, email and the Internet and library resources for the full extent of their program.

Degree Requirements

Participants in the Master of Science program in Christian Studies complete a minimum of 40 credits above the baccalaureate degree, including a thesis and final review. The coursework requirements include the academic major, academic minor and research preparation coursework, and additional electives, as needed, to satisfy the minimum credit requirements. Participants also complete a comprehensive examination at the conclusion of the academic coursework, prepare a formal thesis proposal, complete the thesis project, and prepare the manuscript for faculty review. They then complete an oral review of thesis at the conclusion of the research review.

- Core Academic Requirements (Required: 27 credits minimum)
- Research Preparation (Required: 3 credits minimum)
- Comprehensive Examination (Required: 2 credits)
- Thesis Proposal (Required: 2 credits)
- Thesis Project (Required: 4 credits)
- Oral Review of Thesis (Required: 2 credits)

Core Academic Requirements Participants (27 credits minimum)

MCS 501: Old Testament Survey* (3 credits)

MCS 502: New Testament Survey* (3 credits)

MCS 503: Study of the Early Church* (3 credits)

MCS 504: Evangelical Doctrine* (3 credits)

MCS 505: Spiritual Formulation* (3 credits)

MCS 506: Overview of Christian Theology* (3 credits)

MCS 511: Liturgy Explored (3 credits)

MCS 512: Teaching Ministry of Christ (3 credits)

MCS 513: Christian Ethics (3 credits)

*Note: Required course for Evangelical track. Can only substitute an equivalent course.

Research Preparation (3 credits minimum)

RES 500: Research Methodology (3 credits)

*Or another class selected by Committee Chair from those published online:

<http://www.akamaiuniversity.us/Research.html#3>

Finishing Activities (10 credits minimum)

EXM 880: Comprehensive Examination (2 credits)

RES 885: Thesis Proposal (2 credits)

RES 890: Thesis Project (4 credits)

EXM 895: Oral Review of Thesis (2 credits)

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PROGRAM FACULTY

Harvey Menden, PhD

Program Co-Director

Dr. Menden possess years of ministerial service. He currently serves in the chaplaincy. He is a Bishop in the Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church (LEPC) and serves on the denominational Board of Advisors and as a Synod Regional Bishop. Dr. Menden's secular background includes serving as a Director, Training and Organizational Development for a multi-billion dollar business. He also previously held positions as a Senior Consultant for the Human Resources Organizational Capability Group at Amoco Corporation. He has provided services as either an employee or an external consultant to Fortune 500 companies such as The General Electric Company, The Coca-Cola Company, Black and Decker, Canada Life, and Little Tikes. He possesses extensive experience within Human Resources, Organizational Development, Organizational Behavior, International Business, Adult Education and Ministry. Dr. Menden is a member of the International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI) and has previously served on the Atlanta chapter's board. He is a member of the International Society of Christian Apologetics. Dr. Menden received his Ph.D. in Business Education from International Institute for Advanced Studies, Masters and Ph.D. from Southwest Seminary, an MBA from Newport University, and a BS in Political Science from the State University of New York.

Seamus Phan, Ph.D.

Program Co-Director

Dr Seamus Phan is an Orthodox Christian theologian, spiritual director, and priest. He studied the entire Tripitaka of the Mahayana Buddhist canon as well as key Vajrayana Buddhist texts, Confucianism, Taoism, Japanese Bushido, and Hindu Rigveda. He has written workbooks and led workshops for various Christian clergy in Ignatian Spiritual Exercises (prior-Orthodox). He also authored "Tweets of a humble pilgrim" (2012), "Spiritual Lessons from the Journeys of the Pilgrim" (2011, based on the Russian Orthodox classic "Journey of a pilgrim"), "Contemplative Thoughts of an Asian Seminarian" (2009, based on seminary and theological reflections). He has 30+ years of professional field experience in practicing and consulting fields. He is an award-winning, hands-on practitioner and thinker in cybersecurity, digitalization, marketing, branding, leadership, service quality, and philosophy. He has consulted successfully for top multinational corporations and startups. He became an entrepreneur at 10. He was an Internet and cybersecurity pioneer since 1996, and a software developer since 1970s. He was a pioneer computer-based training (CBT) and networked learning systems developer in 1987. He co-developed an Email Security Server Appliance in 2004. His doctoral research culminated in an UNIX-based business analysis system. His earlier biochemistry research was on advanced antioxidants and food lipids. He was also a pioneer Service Quality program consultant for aviation and corporations. He is a professional keynote and inspirational speaker, journalist (TV, radio, print and online), book author (business leadership, Internet, and theology). He earned a PhD in Business Administration from the twinned Universidad San Juan de la Cruz. He was a formally educated artist and calligrapher.

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THE THESIS COMMITTEE

Formation of Thesis Committee

Master's students have a Thesis Committee of two qualified graduate faculty appointed to oversee and govern the student's program structure, progress of studies, comprehensive examinations and thesis project

Responsibilities of Thesis Committee

The responsibilities of the Thesis Committee, under the leadership of the Committee Chair, are as follows:

- Directing the preparation and approval of the student's plan for study, clarifying the timeline for study and the assignment of faculty to provide instruction and to assist with the functions of the Thesis Committee.
- Providing direction regarding the student's foundational studies, core studies, specialization, and research preparation coursework.
- Providing leadership by integrating appropriate research preparation coursework or assignments within the plan for study, distributing the coursework to appropriate faculty for instruction and advisement.
- Providing leadership for the written and oral components of the student's comprehensive final examination, in unity with the other Committee members
- Providing oversight, direction, and mentorship during the conduct of the student's research project and manuscript preparation, in unity with the other Committee members
- Providing leadership for the physical and oral reviews of the research manuscript, in unity with the other Committee members. Assist the student in making formal changes in the study plan and timeline for completion, by written addendum, as needed to assure effective progress throughout the program of study.
- Providing final approval for the student's Thesis and overall degree program and cooperate fully in building the appropriate archival records for the University of record.

Master's Committee Appointment Schedule

The Committee Chair is appointed immediately following the Master's student's registration and continues in charge of the student's program until final completion is recorded at the school of record. While the secondary member of the Thesis Committee is identified and confirmed at the onset of the program, and listed in the plan of study, they become active later, just prior to the activities for which they are asked to participate. In lieu of the Thesis Committee Chair being appointed at the onset of the program, when appropriate, a primary faculty advisor will be appointed, in lieu of the Thesis Committee Chair, to guide the development of the Master's student's plan for study. Under this situation, the Chair will be appointed later, one month prior to the commencing of the written component of the Comprehensive Examination and shall continue with governance of the student's program until final completion is recorded at the school of record. The Secondary Committee Member becomes active one month prior to commencing the written component of the Comprehensive Examination and continues with the student's program until final completion is recorded at the school of record. Building the

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Student's Plan for Study Immediately following registration, Master's students begin work with their assigned Committee Chair in structuring their formal plan for study. The process determines and formalizes the elements of the student's actual program of studies.

The timeline for completion of the degree program.

These activities require active participation in program planning by the student and may take considerable time to complete the dialogue and exchange of information. Students are strongly advised to discuss in detail the elements in the plan for study including the coursework, the examinations, and elements of research including the manuscript guidelines. Once all of the decisions have been made concerning the plan for study, the student and Committee Chair sign the formal document. Copies of the document are sent to the University headquarters for entry to the permanent student record. The plan for study is then distributed to the participating schools and becomes the document that determines effective progress toward the degree. When the expectations laid out in the plan for study have been successfully accomplished, the student is recommended for the degree by the Committee Chair. Students are alerted that the University can make no commitment for inclusion of course modules and assignment of instructors to a student program until after the plan for study has been fully processed and approved.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

MCS 501: Old Testament Survey (3 credits)

Provides the student with the opportunity to read through and examine the complete Old Testament text. Provides an analysis of the overall Old Testament that includes an in-depth biblical exegesis of the text. Enables the student to examine historical, cultural, literary, methodological and biblical concepts.

MCS 502: New Testament Survey (3 credits)

Provides the student with the opportunity to read through and examine the complete New Testament text. This Survey of the totality of the New Testament in its historical and cultural context including the Intertestamental period to gain knowledge of the life of Christ, the establishment of the church, and the teachings concerning the believer's faith and practice.

MCS 503; Evangelical Doctrine: (3 credits)

Enables the student's theological formation examining biblical data as well as the classical Christian tradition, contemporary theology, and selected evangelical distinctives. Examines the importance of theology pertaining to the Christian Church. Prerequisites for this course include Old Testament and New Testament Survey

MCS 504: Study of the Early Church (3 credits)

Starts with a review of the beginning of the early church exploring the age of Jesus Christ and the Apostles. Discusses the origin of orthodoxy and provides details regarding the thoughts of the early church fathers. Reviews details of the early church through the Roman era and the growth of the church. The student will possess a solid understanding of the origin, experience and growth of the early church.

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MCS 505: Spiritual Formulation (3 credits)

Enables personal formulation through exploring the nature and process of spiritual formulation. An exploration of gifts of the Holy Spirit, along with a person's growth into a holistic level of spirituality. The thought of classical spiritual development and growth will receive coverage including a reflective time to identify one's own personal growth journey. Finally, participants review concepts of corporate and community spirituality.

MCS 506: Overview of Christian Theology (3 credits)

The individual explores key concepts including the following. The doctrine of the Bible as the inspired Word of God. The study of God and to gain an understanding of the Trinity. Explores mankind and the origin and effect of sin on one's relationship with God. Then the course will cover Jesus Christ and the concept of salvation.

MCS 511: Teaching Ministry of Christ (3 credits)

The course covers the teaching and fulfillment provided through the life of Jesus Christ. His early life will receive an exploration along with various teaching's provided during Jesus Christ's earthly ministry. The course culminates with His crucifixion, divine mandate, appearance and ascension.

MCS 512: Christian Ethics (3 credits)

Participants explore various ethical options and the basis for ethical decision making. Then current ethical issues will be explored in more detail. Some of the issues for exploration include; abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, biomedical considerations, capital punishment, war, Civil disobedience, marriage, divorce, ecology and animal rights.

MCS 513: Liturgy Explored (3 credits)

This course investigates the liturgy today including tradition, context, involvement of the people of God and language used. This study will explore the Lutheran Evangelic worship. The course will include Music's role in worship. The action and spirit of the celebration including review of baptism, altar, planning and preparation of prayer. Celebration of Holy Communion and daily prayer will receive coverage. Various corporate and personal celebrations will also be discussed.

RES 500: Survey of Research Methods (3 credits)

This course inspects the foundational techniques of scholarly research. Topics explore sources of scholarly research literature, proper methods for evaluating research reports, fundamentals of qualitative and quantitative research methods.

EXM 880: Comprehensive Examination (2 credits)

Masters students complete this comprehensive examination as a required element of their academic program, prior to undertaking the thesis. The examination usually includes both written and oral components and is confined to the program of studies completed by the student.

RES 885: Thesis Proposal (2 credits)

This course is required of all Master s students designed to guide them through the formal research proposal process for their final projects, including the development of the research methodology, data gathering device and data analysis techniques. Students also prepare

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annotated bibliographies of the major scholarly works underlying their project. [Parts of the Thesis or Dissertation Proposal](#)

RES 890: Thesis Project (4 credits)

This course governs the conduct of the thesis project for the Master's level student. The Master's thesis is the demonstration of the mastery of a body of knowledge in a given field and is presented in a manuscript usually 75 or more pages in length. The final Master of Science in project may take any of several forms; quantitative or qualitative research, participatory action research, or a major project demonstrating excellence. Master's students reenroll for this course for no-credit, as needed. [Notes on Standards](#)

[Sample Pages for Theses and Dissertations](#)

[Thesis and Dissertation Manuscript Guidelines](#)

EXM 895: Oral Review of Thesis (2 credits)

This examination is an oral review of the Master's thesis conducted by the graduate committee immediately following their reading of the thesis manuscript. [Oral Defense of Thesis Bindery and Finishing Activities](#)

===End of Syllabus===