



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

GRADUATE
PROGRAMS
IN THEOLOGY
2017-2018

Dr. Ian Levy
Program Director

Theology Office
Siena Hall
Room 202
Admin. Assistant: 401-865-2274

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN THEOLOGY

The Graduate Studies Program in Theology offers three courses of study leading to the Master of Theological Studies (M.T.S.), the Master of Arts (M.A.) in Biblical Studies, and the Master of Arts (M.A.) in Theology. The three graduate programs aim at the cultivation of a broad knowledge of the Catholic Christian tradition, in its sources, doctrines, and practices.

The program offers a comprehensive theological formation for those interested in developing professional competence for catechesis and religious education, secondary theological education, or the pursuit of further doctoral studies in theology. The program is also open to those who desire to study theology in an academic setting apart from specific vocational goals.

Admission Requirements:

- A completed admission application form and application fee
- A personal statement of purpose
- Graduate Record Examination scores (M.A. programs only)
- Official transcripts of undergraduate and graduate work
- Two letters of reference
- 18 credits in theology with a minimum B average
- Interview with the program director
- Approval by the Committee on Admissions

Tuition:

Tuition charges per three-credit course: \$1,230 .00

MASTER OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

The M.T.S degree introduces and explores the major themes in Catholic doctrine and practice. Required and elective courses permit the student both to develop a foundation and pursue an area of interest among courses in doctrine, biblical studies, morality, spirituality, Church history, and the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Degree Requirements:

For the M.T.S, students must complete 30 credit hours of graduate work, which includes 18 credits in these required courses:

- THL 500 Theology: History & Methods
- THL 512 Intro. to the Old Testament
- THL 520 Intro. to the New Testament
- THL 535 Patristic Theology
- THL 550 Christ: Word and Redeemer
- THL 670 Fundamental Moral Theology

The remaining 12 credits (4 courses) may be chosen from the courses offered through the M.A Program in Theology.

Students in the M.T.S program are required to take a comprehensive exam based on their coursework and the area of concentration (see pg. 8).

Concentration in Catholic Education

The Master of Theological Studies degree with a concentration in Catholic Education allows students the opportunity to earn a more specialized degree by taking four education courses that are offered each summer by the Providence Alliance for Catholic Teachers (PACT), which is centered at Providence College.

In addition to their 18 credit hours of required Theology courses, students devote their remaining 12 credits to the following PACT courses:

- THL 790/EDU 790 Introduction to Teaching
- THL 791/EDU 791 Educational Psychology
- THL 806/EDU 806 Mission and Culture of the Catholic School
- THL 808/EDU 808 Methods in Secondary Education

MASTER OF ARTS IN BIBLICAL STUDIES

The M.A in Biblical Studies develops the student's acumen for an informed and critical reading of biblical literature in the light of the Christian faith. Historical and cultural studies, as well as literary and theological analyses, are called upon as resources in the course of the program.

Degree Requirements:

Students must complete 36 credit hours of graduate-level courses in biblical studies, which includes 27 credits in the following required courses:

- THL 500 Theology: History and Methods
- THL 513 The Pentateuch
- THL 514 The Prophetic Faith
- THL 516 The Wisdom Literature
- THL 519 Introductory Hebrew
- THL 522 The Synoptic Gospels
- THL 526 The Johannine Writings
- THL 528 The Epistles of St. Paul
- THL 529 Introductory Biblical Greek
- THL 611 The History of Pre-Exilic Israel

Students are required to take a qualifying exam at the end of their coursework and write a thesis under the direction of a professor with an oral defense before the faculty (see pg. 12)

MASTER OF ARTS IN THEOLOGY

The M.A. in Theology introduces and explores the major themes in Catholic doctrine and practice, with an emphasis on the research methods that are central to theology as an academic discipline. Required and elective courses permit the student both to develop a foundation and pursue an area of interest among courses in doctrine, biblical studies, morality, spirituality, Church history and the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas. The M.A. in Theology also includes options for concentrations in Aquinas Studies or Early Christian Studies (see pg. 7).

Degree Requirements:

For the M.A. in Theology, students are required to complete 30 credit hours of graduate work, which includes 18 credits in the following required courses:

- THL 500 Theology History and Methods
- THL 512 Intro. to the Old Testament
- THL 520 Intro. to the New Testament
- THL 535 Patristic Theology
- THL 550 Christ: Word and Redeemer
- THL 670 Fundamental Moral Theology

The remaining 12 credits may be chosen from the other courses offered through the M.A. program in Theology.

All M.A. in Theology students are required to write a thesis under the direction of a professor and offer an oral defense before the faculty. Students also take a comprehensive exam based on a bibliography of primary sources in the field (see pg. 11-14)

AVAILABLE CONCENTRATIONS:

Aquinas Studies:

The concentration in Aquinas Studies offers a focused study of the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas. In the courses satisfying this concentration particular emphasis is placed both on the distinctive thought and on the theological method of St. Thomas Aquinas. Given the integral role of biblical, patristic and philosophical sources in Aquinas' thought, this program exposes the student to the foundational sources of Christian theology.

The remaining 12 credits (4 courses) required for the concentration in Aquinas Studies, are:

- THL 640 Thomas Aquinas: Doctrine of God
- THL 642 Thomas Aquinas: Doctrine of Christ
- THL 644 Thomas Aquinas: Moral Theology
- THL 646 Thomas Aquinas: Doctrine of Sacraments and the Church

Early Christian Studies

The concentration in Early Christian Studies allows students to focus their studies on the development of early Christian theology, literature, liturgy, and culture, through the ninth century. The study of doctrinal developments, literature, and the growth of nascent Christian communities is complemented by attention to the historical, social, and cultural contexts of antiquity.

Students pursuing the concentration in **Early Christian Studies** will take these six required courses:

- THL 500 - Theology: History and Methods
- THL 512 - Introduction to the Old Testament
- THL 520 - Introduction to the New Testament
- THL 535 - Patristic Theology
- THL 630 - Early Christian History
- THL 634 - Ecumenical Councils

Three additional courses in the field of Early Christianity are required, and one elective course chosen from among the theology course offerings.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS: MASTER OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

After completing coursework, M.T.S. students demonstrate their proficiency in theology by answering six 1/2-hour exams based on the courses they have taken.

1. At a minimum of ten weeks prior to their exams, students will speak with their advisor to identify the six courses on which the exam questions will be based.
2. The student will notify the Graduate Director and the department secretary of the six courses on which the exam shall be based, and schedule a day during that semester on which the student will take the exam.
3. The student may contact professors to ask for guidance in studying for their exam.
4. The student will come to the department offices on the appointed day, and write for three hours, choosing one question for each of six classes.
5. Within two weeks of the exam (or four weeks if the exam is administered outside the ordinary academic semester), the essays will each be graded by the faculty-members who composed each question, who will assign a letter grade on the A-F scale. Students who earn a "B" or better average grade for all essays, with no grades below a "C", will be considered to have passed the exams. A student with an average grade of "A-" or better will be considered to have passed the exams "With Distinction."
6. M.T.S. students who have passed their comprehensive exams will be eligible to graduate.

QUALIFYING EXAMS: M.A. IN BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

Following the completion of course work the student will take three 1-hour written exams over the span of one day. Each exam will be drawn up and graded by a single professor with whom the student has previously arranged a topic and bibliography. The topic chosen by professor and student should allow for a certain degree of breadth even within the limits of a manageable research area.

The bibliography will include both primary and secondary sources (5-7 books/articles) pertinent to the topic, the content of which the student will be expected to be conversant with by the time of the exam. The graduate director will approve the topic and bibliography for each exam in order to ensure basic uniformity across the board.

Within two weeks of the exam, the essays will each be graded by the individual faculty member who assigned the question. That professor will then assign a letter grade on the A-F scale. Students who earn a "B" or better average grade for all essays, with no grades below a "C", will be considered to have passed their exams. A student with an average grade of "A-" or better will be considered to have passed their exams "With Distinction."

QUALIFYING EXAMS: M.A. IN THEOLOGY

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PROCEDURES AFTER QUALIFYING EXAMS

M.A. Theology and **M.A. Biblical Theology** students who have passed the qualifying exams will be eligible to begin writing the thesis. The Graduate Director will notify the Records Office that the student has passed the qualifying exams, or has passed them with distinction.

Any student who has not passed the qualifying exam will be informed which essays were deficient, and will be permitted an opportunity to sit for the exam again within three months of the first attempt. A second failure to successfully answer the exam questions will mean that the student cannot proceed to the stage of thesis writing. At this point, at the discretion of the graduate faculty, the student may be granted the opportunity to receive a Master of Theological Studies degree upon completion of the requisite exams assigned to that degree program.

THESIS REQUIREMENTS

A thesis is a written product of original research of approximately 75 pages, produced by the student under the direction of an advisor and publicly defended before the faculty and students in the Graduate Program in Theology. This thesis is intended to demonstrate the student's mastery of the skills and theological knowledge acquired through their participation in the program.

Thesis Proposal:

1. Once a student has successfully passed comprehensive-exams, the student will meet with the Graduate Director to begin creating a thesis proposal. In light of the student's area of research interest and previous work with particular faculty, the Graduate Director will create a thesis committee consisting of a Thesis Director and Two Readers. The Thesis Director normally will have expertise in the student's area of research and take primary responsibility for guiding the student in the research and writing and defense of the thesis. The Readers will assist the Thesis Director and provide guidance to the student.
2. In consultation with the thesis-committee, the student will produce a five- to 10-page written thesis-proposal that will contain the following:
 - a) Cover sheet
 - b) Table of contents
 - c) A detailed description of the research problem or hypothesis to be addressed in a thesis, including an explanation of the appropriate methodology to be used
 - d) An annotated bibliography, accompanied by a substantial, preliminary literature review of the current and past research related to the chosen topic, and the additional sources to be examined and presented in the final thesis
 - e) A detailed explanation of the reasons for choosing the topic

THESIS REQUIREMENTS CONT.

f) A timeline for completion of the thesis that has been coordinated with the committee members, prior to the proposal Submission

3. After consultation, the Thesis Committee will either approve the Thesis Proposal, or return it to the student with recommendations for revisions prior to approval.

4. The Graduate Director will review the thesis-proposal approved by the thesis-committee, and either approve, or recommend revisions for the proposal.

Thesis Writing:

5. A student will ordinarily complete the thesis writing full-time during the semester in which it will be defended.

6. During that time, the student will remain in regular contact with the thesis-advisor, submitting portions of the work for review and revision.

7. The student will submit the final and complete version of the thesis to the thesis director for review by the thesis committee.

Thesis Defense:

8. Once the thesis-committee has agreed that the thesis is ready for its public defense, the thesis advisor will confer with the Graduate Director and the department secretary to schedule a date and reserve a room in which the public defense will take place. The thesis defense will be advertised to graduate faculty and students, who are all welcome to attend, along with friends and family of the candidate for the M.A. student.

9. At the appointed time, the thesis advisor and readers will take seats facing the candidate, and the thesis advisor will introduce the committee and candidate to the assembled faculty and students.

THESIS REQUIREMENTS CONT.

10. The candidate will introduce and summarize the topic of the thesis and the argument by which it proceeded. (15-20 minutes) In-turn, beginning with the thesis advisor, the members of the thesis-committee will raise questions to the candidate about the thesis. Each member will have approximately 20 minutes for such questions.

11. Once the committee has completed its questioning of the candidate, the floor will be opened to questions from the assembled audience, who may ask questions of the candidate, moderated by the thesis-advisor.

12. The committee will determine whether the candidate has successfully defended the thesis (letter-grade "B"), has defended the thesis with distinction (letter-grade "A"), or has failed to defend the thesis (letter-grade "F").

13. The grade assigned by the committee is final. The committee may recommend to the candidate minor corrections or revisions to be made to the written thesis, but these will not change the grade the faculty have assigned to the thesis.

Post-Defense Procedures:

14. Students who successfully defend will earn an M.A. and must submit to the Graduate Director an electronic copy with recommended revisions.

15. A student who has successfully defended the thesis will be eligible to graduate.





PROVIDENCE
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Providence College
1 Cunningham Square
Providence, RI
02918

Theology Department

Department Chair, Dr. Gary Culpepper
Graduate Director, Dr. Ian Levy

Siena Hall
Office: 202
Phone: 401-865-2274
Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.